

**FEBRUARY 24, 2019**

**ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT**

**74-109 Larrea Street  
Palm Desert, California 92260**

**Website: [www.go-stgeorge.org](http://www.go-stgeorge.org)**

**Email: [pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com)**

# THE LADDER

THE PRODIGAL SON

## Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 4755

Palm Desert, CA.92261

Tel: (760) 568-9901

or: (760) 880-5869

– Fr. Theodore Pantels,

Proistamenos (Pastor)

– Deacon Euthym Kontaxis,  
M.D.

## Holy Communion Order

1. Please remain standing while following the directions of our ushers.
2. Ladies, kindly remove lipstick before receiving.
3. When receiving Holy Communion, make the Sign of the Cross, state your name (baptismal name), and naturally receive as if being fed.
4. Non-Orthodox Christians may not receive Holy Communion, but they may receive the Holy Bread at the end of the service.
5. *All Orthodox Christians must be spiritually prepared to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Please see the priest if you have any questions.*

## THE OLDER BROTHER

There are at least five lessons that we can draw from the Parable of the Prodigal Son:

- 1) Our desires play a great role with regard to our actions—the Prodigal wanted to be free from his father and decided to leave him. By analogy, the desire to depart from God is the cause of sin.
- 2) The consequences of sin are tragic and ultimately lead to death, as in the case of the Prodigal who eventually lost his human dignity.
- 3) The road to God begins with repentance. Repentance began for the Prodigal Son at the moment when “he came to his senses” and decided to return to this father. Humility is needed.
- 4) God loves us and forgives us and, therefore, there is Divine joy when a person turns to God (as demonstrated by the father who rejoiced when he saw his son).
- 5) To the extent that we consider ourselves to be sinless, our pride

*Continued on page 2*

**UNWORTHY, YET PRECIOUS**— Like all of our Lord’s Parables, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, gives us insight into our relationship with God from God’s perspective. Sin is the rejection of God. There is no excuse for sin. Efforts to blame God and/or others are based on our delusion, because we dismiss the fact that God has given us Free Will and that, if we would always turn to Him in prayer, He will give us the wisdom and the means to work all things out for the good in His glory. From God’s perspective, sin makes us lost to Him. This is a tragedy. In the Parable, “unworthiness” is synonymous with “being lost” from God.

Having been created in the Image and Likeness of God, we are not inherently or permanently unworthy of God’s love. Christ God rejoices when we realize that we want to make the effort to return to Him after falling into sins. In this way, we are no longer *lost* (unworthy), but we are now *found* like God’s precious treasure. We are so valuable to God that He gave His Only-Begotten Son to die on the Cross in order to change us from being lost to being found—from being unworthy of Paradise (like Adam and Eve) to being precious members of God’s House (like the Prodigal Son and all the Saints).

+FR. THEODORE



Υπάρχουν τουλάχιστον πέντε πνευματικά μαθήματα που παίρνουμε από την Παραβολήν του Ασώτου: 1) Η θέλησίς μας παίζει μεγάλο ρόλο στις πράξεις μας και, για αυτόν τον λόγο, πρέπει να προσέξουμε να μην αποφύγουμε από τον Θεόν ποτέ – δηλ., να μην αμαρτάνουμε (όπως ο Άσωτος εξέφυγε από τον πατέρα του), 2) Η συνέπειες της αμαρτίας είναι τραγικές και θανάσιμες (όπως έχασε ο Άσωτος την αξιοπρέπειάν του), 3) Η οδός προς τον Θεόν αρχίζει με την μετάνοια (η μετάνοια άρχισε για τον Άσωτον την στιγμήν που <εις εαυτόν δε ἔλθῶν.> Απεφάσισε να υποστρέψει στον πατέρα του), 4) Ο Θεός μας αγαπά και μας συγχωρεί, και υπάρχει θεϊκή αγαλλίασις όταν πλησιάζουμε τον Θεόν (όπως ο πατέρας του Ασώτου εχάρηκε όταν ευρίκε τον Άσωτον Υιόν του), 5) Όσο νομίζουμε ότι είμαστε αναμάρτητοι (όπως ενόμιζε ο μεγάλος αδελφός του Ασώτου), η υπερφάνεια μας κάνει να κατηγορήσουμε άλλους, και, όσο δεν νιώθουμε χαρά για την μετάνοια του συνανθρώπου μας, μένουμε αιωνίως έξω από την Βασιλείαν του Θεού (όπως ο αδελφός του Ασώτου έμεινε στο τέλος έξω από το πατρικό του σπίτι).

Ας προσέξουμε να μην ευρισκώμεθα έξω από την Βασιλείαν του Κυρίου διά μέσου της υπερφάνειας και της ζήλιας. Η ζήλια έδιωξε τον αδελφόν του Ασώτου από το σπίτι του πατέρα του όπως από την αρχήν η επιθυμία για την ακράτητην ελευθερίαν έδιωξε τον Άσωτον Υιόν από το σπίτι του πατέρα του επίσης.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

leads us to condemn others and, to the extent that we do not feel joy for their repentance, we remain outside the Kingdom of God (as did the Prodigal's brother, who, at the end, remained outside of his father's house).

We must be careful that we are not found outside of God's Kingdom by way of pride and jealousy. These are the traits that drove the older brother away from his father with as much power as did the younger brother's desire for unbridled freedom.

The case of the Prodigal Son's older brother provides us with an opportunity to understand the importance of avoiding such sinful traits as pride and jealousy. Pride leads us to want to feel more important than others, while, jealousy leads us to dislike those who, based on our illusions and deceptions, seem to us as being more important. Through pride and jealousy, the devil deceives us into misreading the love that others have to offer us. The older brother remained outside of the Kingdom because he *misread* the love of his father (i.e., the love of God) as an *unfair* love. Accordingly, if his father loved him, he *owed* more to him than to his younger brother. This is what made the older brother angry, rather than being grateful for all that his father gave to him from the beginning. His own love also was warped by his pride and jealousy, which led him to be "faithful" to his father with motives not arising from real love for his father, but from his own self-interests.

Sadly, the mentality of the older brother seems all too normal for people in our day and age. But, as it would appear in today's world, normalcy certainly does not lead to automatic happiness.

We can see, then, how we can be so easily tricked into sins by the devil, who prompts us to feel pride and jealousy, suggesting that such feelings are "normal." St. Gregory of Sinai has this advice for us: *"You need great discernment in order to distinguish between good and evil. So do not readily or lightly put your trust in appearances [or feelings], but weigh things well, testing everything to cleave to what is good and reject what is evil...The devil does not transform himself to produce these effects: he cannot induce you to be gentle; to be forbearing, or to be humble. [He cannot keep you from praying or overcoming temptations]...Instead, He produces vanity and arrogance. Thus, you can tell from its effect whether [it] is from God or from the devil."* (Philokalia, Vol. 4. "On Prayer: Seven Texts," pg. 1751).

+FR. THEODORE

HYMNS FOR THIS SUNDAY'S CELEBRATION OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

ANTIPHON I:

**Verse 1:** "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and everything within me, bless His holy name."

*Response: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soson imas."*

**Verse 2:** "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His rewards."

*Response: "By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, O save us."*

**Verse 3:** "The Lord prepared His throne in heaven, and His Kingdom rules over all."

*Response: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soson imas."*

**Chanter(s):** "Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, both now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen".

*Response: "By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, save us."*

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ANTIPHON II:

**Verse 1:** "Praise the Lord, O my soul! I shall praise the Lord while I live; I shall sing to my God as long as I exist."

*Response: "Soson imas Ie Theou, o Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si: Allilouia."*

**Verse 2:** "Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob; his hope is in the Lord his God."

*Response: Save us, O Son of God, Who arose from the dead, we sing to You: Alleluia.*

**Verse 3:** "The Lord shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, to all generations."

*Response: "Soson imas Ie Theou, o Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si: Allilouia."*

**Chanter(s):** "Doxa Patri ke Io, ke Ayio Pnevmati, ke nin ke ai ke is tous eonas ton eonon. Amin."

*People: O Monogenis Ios ke Logos tou Theou... (O Only-Begotten Son and Word of God...)*

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**ANTIPHON III:** *This is the day the Lord made; let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein.*

**Resurrection Hymn:** *Angelike dynameis [Tone 6]... (When the angelic powers appeared at Your tomb and those who guarded You became as though dead and standing by Your sepulcher was Mary seek-ing Your pure and sacred body. For, You did vanquish Hades and, uncorrupted by its touch, You came unto the Virgin Woman bestowing the gift of life, O You Who arose from the dead. Lord we give glory to You.)*

**Hymn for St. John the Baptist:** *Ek ghees anatilassa ee tou Prodhromou kefali... (The Forerunner's head has risen once again from the earth; it sends forth the brilliant rays of incorruption and cures to the faithful all. Above it has assembled the arrays of the Angels; below it calls the human race to gather together. In unison we offer up glory to Christ our God.)*

**Hymn for St. George:** *Os ton ehmaloton eleftherotis... (As the one who sets the captives free and the protector of the poor; as physician to the sick and the champion defender of kings, bearer of trophies are you, O Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.)*

**Kontakion Hymn for this Sunday:** *Tis patroh-as doxeis sou... (I revolted senselessly out of Your fatherly glory; I have squandered sinfully all of the riches You gave me. Hence to You, using the Prodigal's words, I cry out, I have sinned before You, merciful loving Father. O receive me in repentance, I pray, and treat me as one of Your hired hands.)*

**READINGS:** EPISTLE—2 Corinthians 4:6-15 / GOSPEL—St. Luke 15: 11-32

**Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos):** Axion Estin... (Divine Liturgy Book, Pg. 51)

**Communion Hymn:** Enite ton Kyrion (Divine Liturgy Book, pg. 64)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### Coffee Hour: Linda Petalas

**PHILOPTOCHOS-Today, Philoptochos will be passing a tray for Autism.** Thank you for your donations. We have had three events that have come very close together. One was feeding the homeless on February 19 and 21, as well as yesterday, February 23 at the Swing and Hop on El Paseo. We have supported the Church by purchasing leftover food from the Festival. **Tomorrow, February 25 at 11:30 a.m. we will have our General Meeting.** Our speakers will be Father Ted and Rhonda Latkovic and we will have lunch (for a donation of \$7.00). SAVE THE DATE! Our Membership Luncheon will be on Saturday, March 9. Come to the Philoptochos table to make a reservation.

**STREET LIFE – Tuesday, February 19th and Thursday, February 21st**, our parish sponsored meals for the homeless in Indio and in Palm Springs. In addition, over the past few weeks, we have helped them by offering blankets, coats, socks and winter caps during this cold weather. Our ongoing efforts to help the homeless through the Street Life Organization have been most appreciated by those in need.

**CLEO ANTON FUNERAL SERVICE – Funeral Services** for our beloved sister in the Lord, **Cleo Anton**, will be held at **St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral at 324 Normandie Ave, Los Angeles, California on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 11:00 a.m.** Her life-time commitment to serve God and His Church, together with her love and devotion for our St. George parish serve as an example for all to follow. She will be truly missed by all. **MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

**SWING & HOP –** The efforts to raise funds for our Philoptochos Ladies at the “Swing and Hop” event on El Paseo yesterday were met with great success. Many thanks to all who supported this event and who worked so hard toward its success for Philoptochos.

**STEWARDSHIP-** We thank all who have returned their 2019 Stewardship Cards. We would like to remind those who have yet to return their Stewardship Cards for this year to please do so. The continued support from those who love our St. George parish is truly a blessing for all who seek our Savior’s blessings throughout the year.

**MEMORIAL WALL & GARDEN –** Parishioners of St. George are encouraged to review the “Memorial Wall and Garden” participation form posted in our parish hall in order to join in the efforts to offer lasting tribute to family and relatives.

**ST.GEORGE PARISH LENTEN SYMPOSIUM -** April 6, 2019. See enclosed flier.

## WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, February 25th.....Philoptochos General Meeting – 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, February 26th.....Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, February 28th.....Choir Practice - 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 2nd.....SATURDAY OF SOULS  
Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

*The Ladder for February 2019 is lovingly sponsored by:  
Harry Psaltis*

*“In memory of my first friends: Stephen Geotas,  
George Tcharos, Pasquale (Pat) DiLuzio &  
George Flessas”*

**We encourage all of our parents to sit in the church with their entire family as they participate in the beauty and mysteries of the Divine Liturgy. For those with young children, feel free to sit near an aisle so that you may easily take your children for a break, as needed. If necessary, we have a “crying room” in the narthex for your use. God Bless.**



TO ALL 2019 FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS

The Parish Council of St. George Church and George Argyros, Festival Chairman, would like to extend their heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all the parish members and their friends for their unselfish volunteer work in preparing the festival food and the long hours of work the weekend of the festival despite the rain and cooler weather.

Your love and dedication to our church is truly appreciated.

Yours in Christ,

Father Theodore Pantels

George Argyros, Festival Chairman

Chris Maletis, Parish Council President

Parish Council Members

SAVE THE DATE!

ST. GEORGE  
LENTEN PARISH SYMPOSIUM:

*“LIFE AFTER DEATH: INQUIRE WITHIN”*

SYMPOSIUM INCLUDING TOPICS RELATED TO  
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL LIFE & DISCIPLINE:

-- THE NATURE & PRACTICE OF THE  
HOLY SACRAMENTS IN DAILY LIVES

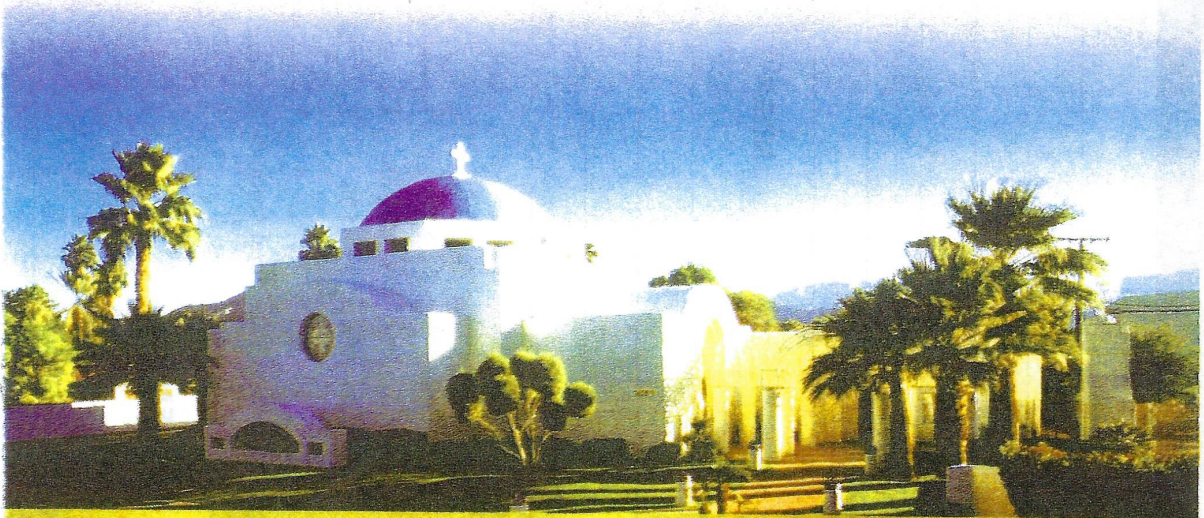
SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2019

AT:

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA

10:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

MORE DETAILS & INFORMATION TO FOLLOW IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.



**ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
**ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT**

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**SATURDAY • MAY 4 • 2019**



**DESERT FALLS COUNTRY CLUB**

**111 DESERT FALLS PARKWAY • PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA**

**FOR INFO CALL: 760-568-9901**

# TOURNAMENT DETAILS

**Date & Time**  
 Saturday, May 4, 2019  
 11am Registration  
 12 noon Shotgun Scramble Format

**Entry Fee**  
 \$175 includes golf and dinner

**Entry Deadline**  
 April 26, 2019

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS	
11 am	Registration & Raffle
12 noon	Shotgun Start / Scramble Format
5 pm	Social Hour / Appetizers St. George Greek Orthodox 74109 Larrea Street, Palm Desert, CA 92260
6 pm	Traditional Greek Dinner / Dance

**Hole in One**  
 Sponsored by Unicars Honda



**Payment**  
 Entry Fee due by April 26, 2019  
 Pay by credit card or check.

**Contact**  
 760.568.9901  
 gargyros@verizon.net

# EVENT REGISTRATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company (Organization) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**PLAYER NAME(S) INDEX**

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

Individual Player(s) \_\_\_\_\_ (# of players) x \$175 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Tee Sponsorship (s) \_\_\_\_\_ (# of sponsorships) x \$100 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Traditional Greek Dinner \_\_\_\_\_ (# of dinners) x \$35 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT**

**Registration deadline:**  
 Friday, April 26, 2019

**Pay by credit card or make checks payable to:**  
 St. George Greek Orthodox Church

**Send check and registration form to:**  
 PO Box 4755 Palm Desert, CA 92261