

APRIL 12, 2020

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

PALM SUNDAY

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– 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.

“REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS”

God told Adam that the consequence of sin is death (Genesis 2:7). But, instead of suffering death as individual persons, God Himself suffers all of the consequences of all of our sins - the pain; the shame; the crucifixion and the death. Indeed, Jesus Christ is the “Second Adam,” through Whom the gates of Paradise are opened to us. God sacrificed Himself in order to grant Eternal Life to us.

There is no other God Who loves us and the created world to such a great degree. And, His sacrifice upon the Cross was a

sacrifice given willingly. His entrance into Jerusalem is an act of divine love. As such, in a mysterious way, God’s love creates the same divine love in our souls, through which we are able to sacrifice ourselves for the salvation of our fellow human beings. We recognize this to be *philanthropy*. And, again, in a mysterious way, our every expression of sacrificial love fulfills the purpose of our lives. In this way, we are able to feel genuine and spiritual joy.

Let us seek spiritual joy that continues well beyond our formal celebration of Christ’s Resurrection from the dead.

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PRAYER FOR PALM SUNDAY PALMS -- *For those who can gather palm leaves from their trees, a good way to worship on Palm Sunday is to follow the internet live-streaming of Church services and make Palm Crosses with children while at home. Here is the prayer that is read for the Blessing of the Palms:*

“O Lord our God, Who rests upon the Cherubim and has reaffirmed Your power and sent forth Your Only-Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to save the world through His Cross, Burial and Resurrection: Who when He drew near to Jerusalem for His voluntary Passion, the people that sat in darkness and the shadow of death took as tokens of victory boughs of trees and branches of palms, thus foretelling His Resurrection. Do You Yourself, O Master and Lord, keep and preserve us also, who, following their example, on the pre-feast of that day, we carry in our hands palms and branches, and who, like the crowds and children cry out unto You, saying: “Hasanna!” That with hymns and spiritual songs we may be accounted worthy to attain the life-giving Resurrection on the third day: in Jesus Christ our Lord, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your All-Holy, Good and Life-giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.”

On page 3 of *The Ladder* today is a link connecting to Youtube showing how to make a Palm Cross. The palms can then be placed at your home altar for this year.

+FR. THEODORE



Ο Θεός ειπε στον Αδάμ ότι ο καρπός της αμαρτίας είναι ο θάνατος. (Γεν. 2:17). Αλλά αντί να υποφέρουμε τον θάνατο προσωπικά ως μεμονωμένα άτομα, Ο ίδιος ο Θεός υπέστη όλες τις συνέπειες των αμαρτιών όλων μας - τον πόνο, την ντροπή, την σταύρωση, και τον θάνατον. Πράγματι, ο Ιησούς Χριστός είναι ο "Δεύτερος Αδάμ", μέσω του Οποίου οι πύλες του Παραδείσου είναι και πάλι ανοιχτές σε εμάς. Ο Θεός εθυσίασε τον Εαυτόν Του για να χαρίσει στον άνθρωπο την αιώνιον ζωήν.

Δεν υπάρχει άλλος Θεός που αγαπά τον άνθρωπο και τη δημιουργία σε τόσο θείο βαθμό. Και η θυσία Του στον Σταυρό ήταν μια θυσία βασισμένη στη δική Του αγάπη και θέληση. Η είσοδος του Χριστού στα Ιεροσόλημα είναι πράξη θεϊκής αγάπης. Ωστόσο, κατά έναν μυστηριώδη τρόπο, η αγάπη του Θεού δημιουργεί την ίδια θεϊκή αγάπη στην ψυχή του ανθρώπου, δια μέσου του οποίου ο άνθρωπος θυσιάζεται για τη σωτηριάν του συνανθρώπου του. Αναγνωρίζουμε ότι αυτό είναι η *φιλανθρωπία*. Και, πάλι, κατά έναν μυστηριώδη τρόπο, η θυσιαστική αγάπη του ανθρώπου εκπληρώνει τον σκοπό της ζωής του. Και έτσι ο άνθρωπος μπορεί να νιώσει την πραγματική και πνευματική χαρά.

Ας αναζητήσουμε την πνευματική χαρά που συνεχίζεται πολύ πέραν από κάθε επιφανειακή εορτασμό της Αναστάσεως εκ των νεκρών του Χριστού. Καθώς εορτάζουμε το Πάσχα την επόμενη εβδομάδα, ας μοιρασθούμε το φως του Αναστημένου Χριστού με τον κόσμο γύρω μας κατά τη διάρκεια του υπόλοιπου χρόνου της ζωής μας.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

As we celebrate Pascha next week, let us continue to share the Light of Christ with the world around us for the rest of our lives.

The Epistle reading for today describes for us the ideal state in which our souls are to be found at this time. *"Rejoice in the Lord always! Again, I say: rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."* (Philippians 4: 4-6). Now is truly the time for prayer, because the Lord is at hand. He is entering the "Jerusalem" of our souls. Christ is in our midst as we speak. Knowing this, there is no reason for worry or to be with fear. The Lord will help us work things out for the best. He continues to give of Himself as He constantly answers our prayers. With regard to the prayers that we can offer today, let us remember by St. Paul's words: *"Whatever is noble and just; whatever is pure and lovely; whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things."* (Philippians 4:8).

As our Savior enters the "Jerusalem" of our hearts and minds today, let us take upon ourselves the love of Christ our God, thinking and doing His Will. In our own way and circumstance, let us follow Him to the Cross so that we can be with Christ our Savior in His Resurrection and Everlasting Life. +FR. THEODORE

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SATURDAY OF LAZARUS & PALM SUNDAY -- The raising of Lazarus from the tomb and Christ's triumphal entrance into Jerusalem are closely tied together. Thus, we cannot understand the significance of these two events apart from one another.

On the Saturday of Lazarus, the Church celebrates Lazarus' resurrection from the dead as the prophesy of the general resurrection from the dead of all of humanity through Christ. The ruling presence of Christ before the tomb and before death itself; His authoritative voice, through which Lazarus' soul returned to his dead body; the enlivening of his dead body and the full 'aliveness' of Lazarus' presence at his house with his relatives -- all of this is a prototype of all that is to occur at the Second Advent of Christ. St. Cyril of Alexandria notes that, in reality, Christ performed this miracle as a foretaste "of the resurrection of all the dead."

Palm Sunday is Christ's Triumphal entry into Jerusalem. He is at once both the *Offerer* and the *One Offered*." He is the "Offerer" as the King over both the living and the dead, offering the Eternal Kingdom (the "New Jerusalem," the Church Triumphant) to those who follow Him. He is "The Offered," Who is *humble*, riding on a donkey, and He is the New Adam (the one who does the Will of God, *willingly*), as opposed to the Old Adam (the one who *pridefully* did not obey God). People honored Him as King, because of Lazarus' resurrection, which is only a preview of the Resurrection of Christ, and, with Him, all of humanity. +FR. THEODORE



"Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Blessed are You at Your throne of the glory of Your Kingdom, seated above the Cherubic angels, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen."

"Shine within our hearts, loving Master, the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our minds that we may comprehend the message of Your Gospel. Instill in us, also, reverence for Your blessed commandments, so that having conquered sinful desires, we may pursue a spiritual life, thinking and doing all these things that are pleasing to You. For You are the Light of our souls and bodies and to You we give glory together with Your Father Who is without beginning and Your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen"

Phil. 4:4-9 --Brethren, rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

Jn. 12:1-18 --Six days before Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazaros was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Lazaros was one of those at table with him. Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said, "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for

the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it. Jesus said, "Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial. The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me." When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came, not only on account of Jesus but also to see Lazaros, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazaros also to death, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus. The next day a great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" And Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it; as it is written, "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him. The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazaros out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

HOLY WEEK

The church is closed. Deacon Euthym and I will be serving Church services behind closed doors. Follow some of the website telecasts from our Archdiocese at: <https://www.goarch.org/live-broadcasts>.

P.S.: Video telecasts of our St. George church services are available by contacting our parish website: www.go-stgeorge.org (through Facebook link). ****See the schedule for the live-streaming of St. George Holy Week Services on the attached page.****

JOIN IN FOR BIBLE STUDY-Holy Tuesday, April 14th -10:00 a.m. (Contact Fr. Ted 760-880-5869 on Monday, April 13th for Zoom Meeting ID numbers)

NOTE; Direction on How to Make a Palm Cross: https://www.google.com/search?sxsr=AleKk001icdrYqWoi5BtDWoRo7qWW_1Qw%3A1586299074132&source=hp&ei=wgCNXticDdbb-wTd76L4BA&q=how+to+make+orthodox+palm+crosses&oq=ho&gs_lcp=CgZwc3ktYWIQARgAMgQlIxAnMgQlABBDMgQlABBDMgUIA BCRAjIFCAAQkQlYBAgAEEMyBQgAEIMBMgQlABBDMgQlABBDsG0IFxIJMGcxNjdnMTE5SgkIGBIFMGcxZzFQu3tY_XxgoYcBaAFwAHgAgAGFAYgB7AGSAQMwLjKYAQcGAGQgAQdnd3Mtd2l6&scient=psy-ab

Holy Week and Pascha Services

Services at St George are abbreviated this year in light of social distancing, and specific rules in Riverside County regulating gatherings in houses of worship during the coronavirus Pandemic. The services will be performed only by the priest behind locked doors and the number of services has been intentionally abbreviated. Only the services below will be live streamed from our Facebook page. You will find services online through the Archdiocese as well. Our Archdiocese has indicated no flowers, palm crosses, Holy Unction or Eucharist will be distributed during this time. Below are two Greek Orthodox parishes that Live Stream their services. One is on East Coast time for those who want to follow services 3 hours early; the other is West Coast time for those who want to follow services in own Southern California locale.

St Barbara Greek Orthodox Church Manhattan -- Eastern Time (Michael Kontaxis, chanter)
Assumption Greek Orthodox Church Long Beach -- Pacific Time (Thanos Vorris, chanter)

We suggest you read your Holy Week book (Papadeus) at home and follow services online. This Lent and Holy Week will be unique and help us to fill our hearts with longing for our Lord, who loves us and cares for us.

SCHEDULE

Sunday April 12th..... Palm Sunday: Liturgy 8:30am-Live Streamed

Monday April 13th... Bridegroom Service: 6pm-Live Streamed

Thursday April 16th 9am... Vespereal Liturgy: Holy Thursday-Live Streamed

Thursday April 16th 6pm... Orthros of the Crucifixion-Live Streamed

Friday April 17th 3pm...Taking down from the Cross-Live Streamed

Friday April 17th 6pm...Lamentations Service Holy Friday-Live Streamed

Saturday April 18th 9am...Vespereal Liturgy Holy Saturday-Live Streamed

Sunday April 19th 12 Midnight...Resurrection Service, Orthros & Divine Liturgy-Live Streamed