

APRIL 19, 2020

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, California 92260

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THE LADDER

CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRISTOS ANESTI!



Mailing Address:

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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.

FORGIVENESS HAS ARISEN!

In His Paschal Encyclical of 2016, His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios asked us to keep in mind the following: *“Through our worship and His power and presence in our midst, we hear His voice, we affirm the fulfillment of His promises, and we proclaim to the world the salvation and abundant life found in Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. We see and hear, and we become the voice of Christ!”*

Having been unable to legally assemble in our churches throughout Lent and Holy Week, we struggle to capture within us true the spirit of worship, experi-

enced only when we are together in prayer assembled in the House of God as the family of God’s people. Yet, because we are united in Faith, every prayer that we have said (and that we continue to say) is our collective voice of worship. Every family gathered before their Icons at home is our Church.

That which connects us is our Baptism in Christ: *“As many as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ.”* This short hymn from the Divine Liturgy of the Resurrection explains the true purpose of our Baptism: that our entire personality is to be the image of the love of

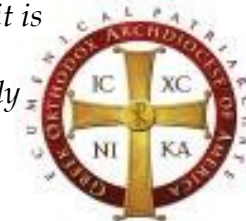
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“COME, RECEIVE THE LIGHT FROM THE UNWANING LIGHT AND GLORIFY CHRIST, WHO IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD!”

Christ is the Light of the world. Because we unite ourselves with Christ through the Holy Sacraments, we are, by extension, the Light of the world. That is why we have our Paschal, Easter Candles. Fr. Alexander Schmemmann explains what it means to be the Light of the world with Christ:

“‘Know you not,’ writes St. Paul to the Corinthians, ‘that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God and that you are not your own? For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.’ (I Cor. 6:19-20). These words are a real summary of St. Paul’s constant appeal to Christians: we must live according to what has ‘happened’ to us in Christ; yet we can live thus only because it has happened to us, because salvation, redemption, reconciliation and ‘buying with a price’ have already been given to us and we are ‘not our own.’ We can and must work at our salvation because we have been saved, yet it is only because we are saved that we can work at our salvation. We must always and at all times become and be that which – in Christ – we already are: ‘you are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.’ (I Cor. 3:22).”

- Great Lent, pg. 119



Στην Πασχαλινή Εγκύκλιο του 2016, ο Σεβασμιώτατος, ο Αριεπίσκοπος Δημήτριος μας παρεκάλεσε να έχουμε κατά νου αυτήν την σκέψη: «Μέσω της λατρείας μας και της δυνάμεως και της παρουσίας Του Χριστού <εν τω μέσω ημών>, ακούμε την φωνή Του, επιβεβαιώνουμε την εκπλήρωση των υποσχέσεών Του, και διακηρύσσουμε στον κόσμο την σωτηρία και την άφθονη ζωή που ευρίσκονται στον Ιησού Χριστό, τον αναστημένο Κύριό μας. Βλέπουμε και ακούμε, και γινόμαστε η φωνή του Χριστού!»

Επειδή δεν είμεθα εις θέσιν να συναντηθούμε νόμιμα στους ναούς μας κατά τη διάρκεια της Σαρακοστής και της Μεγάλης Εβδομάδος, αγωνιζόμεθα για να συλλάβουμε μέσα μας το πνεύμα της λατρείας που βιώνουμε μόνο όταν είμαστε μαζί σαν ένας λαός του Θεού, μέσα στον Οίκον Του όπως πρέπει – μια «κοινοτική-οικογένεια» του Θεού. Ας έχουμε κατά νου, όμως, ότι το σπίτι του καθενός είναι ναός του Θεού, επίσης. Ωστόσο, επειδή είμεθα ενωμένοι στην Πίστη και στην Αγάπη, κάθε προσωπική μας προσευχή είναι προσευχή όλων μας ως συλλογική φωνή λατρείας. Κάθε σπίτι στο οποίο μαζεύονται ολοι μπροστά στα εικονίσματα της οικογένειας είναι η Εκκλησία μας.

Αυτό που μας συνδέει είναι το Βάπτισμά μας στον Χριστό: «Όσοι εις Χριστόν εβαπτίσθητε, Χριστόν ενεδώσαθε.» Αυτός ο σύντομος ύμνος από τη Θεία Λειτουργία της Αναστάσεως, εξηγεί τον πραγματικό σκοπό του Βαπτίσματός μας: ότι η ολόκληρη η προσωπικότητά μας είναι να γίνει εικόνα της αιώνιου αγάπης του Αναστημένου Χριστού.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

our Resurrected Christ. It is the *death* of behaviors that are in conflict with God's love and the way of *life* that is reflective of God's eternal love.

St. John Chrysostom is careful to remind us in his Paschal Sermon that it is never too late to turn to Christ. This fact serves to help us from falling into despair over times when we have experienced the darkness that comes from our thoughts, words or actions that are in conflict with the life of Christ's divine love. St. John makes it clear: "Let no one despair that they have fallen again and again; for forgiveness has arisen from the grave..." Equally true is the fact that, just as it is never too late to turn to Christ, every hour presents the opportunity to forgive one another -- and it is never too late, while in this life, to seek forgiveness and to grant it.

At the same time, let us never forget one lesson from this year's crisis: that we may not always have a "tomorrow" in the same way that we have "today." Today and tomorrow are gifts from our loving God and new opportunities to live according to our Baptism in Christ. We "commit ourselves and one another" to our Risen Christ. To *commit* ourselves involves *action* from within us. It means "fighting the good fight" -- pushing ourselves away from evil and embracing the love of God.

St. John of Kronstadt offers these words of advice as we move on in life living our Baptism in Christ: "*Always ask the help of Christ our Savior...At every step; at every moment, call upon the Savior and you will save yourself and others...If you fall, arise and you will be saved. As sinners, you too will fall. Learn how to rise! This is wisdom. This is what wisdom consists of: learning by heart the Psalm, 'Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your great goodness.'... Bless the Name of our Heavenly Father by your actions; help God to spread His Kingdom on earth. For, 'We are laborers together with God.'* (1 Corinthians 3:9)." (*My Life in Christ*, published by Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, N.Y., Part II, pg. 47).

May the Light of Christ, Resurrected from the dead, be within us so that we, with Christ, can be the "light of the world."

+FR. THEODORE



On Holy Thursday, Fr. Ted blessed the "card-stock" images of Palm Crosses and Epitaphio Flowers that were mailed to St. George parishioners (with a portion of a palm leaf from the Palm Sunday Divine Liturgy included).

In blessing these "card-stock" images, Fr. Ted and Deacon Euthym send the prayers of the entire Church to our St. George family members. We encourage one and all to cherish these images as "antitypes" of the real Palm Crosses and Epitaphio Flowers that the faithful use in prayer before their home altars, since normal Orthodox worship has been interrupted by the coronavirus this year.

If anyone has not received these "card-stock" Palm Crosses and Epitaphio Flowers, please contact Fr. Ted at (760) 880-5869.



“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”

EPISTLE - Acts 1:1-8-- In the first book, O Theophilos, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

GOSPEL - St. John 1:1-17-- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were

made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light. The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.' ") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

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).

JOIN IN FOR BIBLE STUDY-Holy Tuesday, April 21st -10:00 a.m. (Contact Fr. Ted 760-880-5869 on Monday, April 20th for Zoom Meeting ID numbers)

Thursday, April 23rd - ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR. Divine Liturgy-9:00 a.m. via live streaming

Friday, April 24th – THE LIFE-GIVING FONT-Divine Liturgy behind closed doors.

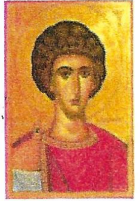


ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

HOLY METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO

PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA

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Email: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com - website: www.go-stgeorge.org — Non-Profit 501 (c) 3



"My hope is that we will seize the opportunity that is literally being forced upon us, to become more altruistic, more compassionate toward others, more patient, and indeed more faithful."
-Archbishop Elpidophoros of America

April 16, 2020
Great and Holy Thursday

Dear Member of our Saint George Family,

These are difficult days. We aren't able to gather in our spiritual home for prayer and fellowship. Yet we remain united as a family of faith, always present for one another in love and support. We miss you and look forward to the time when we can safely gather together in our beloved Saint George Orthodox Church.

It is important to remember that, in the words of Archbishop Elpidophoros, *"The Ekklesia extends far beyond the four walls of any church building."* We are reminded that the Church is not the building. It is the people of faith that remain connected, drawing spiritual nourishment from God and strength from one another. If you or someone you know is in need of assistance, please contact us and we will help in any way we can.


As leaders of our parish, we are working to build upon existing ministries and to initiate new ministries that will keep us connected as the Saint George family. New ministries include streaming of services on Facebook and our website to help better connect us, support for a more active spiritual life in the home, and existing ministries that have become essential in the current crisis. These initiatives and ministries will continue to support our long-term mission when this current crisis has passed.


Thank you for your support and participation that make these ministries and initiatives possible. We ask that you continue to support the Church so that together we may serve our family of Saint George and our community during this difficult time.

Your offerings of support may be submitted by mail to the church. (P.O. Box 4755, Palm Desert, CA 92261). We have also made online giving available on our church website (www.gostgeorge.org) for one-time and periodic giving. Again, we thank you for your generous support.

As we continue to "shelter in place" and practice "social distancing," we have an opportunity to strengthen the way we practice our faith in our home. Through our faith, we can trust that we will soon gather once again in our beloved Saint George, our spiritual home.

With love in Christ,


Father Theodore Pantels
Parish Priest


Rhonda "Evangelia" Latkovic
Stewardship Chairperson

"For God, Infinite though He be, has chosen to work through us, through our gifts, to continue His saving work in the world today." -Fr. Anthony M. Coniaris



Light A Candle....Say A Prayer!



Single Candle
\$1.00 min. donation each



Memorial Candle
\$10.00 min. donation each

or Give as the Spirit moves you!

Even though we cannot physically attend church right now due to the shelter in place order, we CAN "light a candle" & "say a prayer!" How can this be done?

Contact Father Ted either via email (frt.j.pantels@gmail.com) or regular mail. Include your form with which type candle you want & the name(s) for the prayer(s). Father will light the candle(s) and say the prayer for you!

Just mail in a check for your candle donation, payable to Saint George, memo-candles, (along with the attached form) to P.O. Box 4755, Palm Desert, CA 92261 or use the PayPal donation link on our church website at www.go-stgeorge.org to pay via credit card.

"As you pray for our parish, prayers are offered for you and your family during this time when the Church services are conducted, behind closed doors. Your generosity is appreciated, but for us, your spiritual and physical well-being is most precious. Please keep in touch and let us know how you are doing. Beyond any donation that you may want to offer, your candle is important, because it means that you are praying for all of us as members of our Saint George family." Father Ted Pantels

Saint George Orthodox Church Candle Ministry

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Candle Order Form

Parishioner Name: _____ (person making the order)

For Health

Name(s): (Indicate type of candle-Single or Memorial)

_____, _____
_____, _____
_____, _____

In Memory

Names: (Indicate type of candle-Single or Memorial)

_____, _____
_____, _____
_____, _____

Note or Message to Father Ted: