

JUNE 14, 2020

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

Mailing Address:

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Palm Desert, CA.92261

Tel: (760) 568-9901

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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.

WHY DO WE PRAY?

As we commemorate all of the Orthodox Christian Saints today, we draw our minds to the two most important characteristics of Saints: 1) constant prayer, and, 2) constant repentance. As a result, the people around them throughout their lives received the blessings of God's peace and love. They continue to influence our community to this day in the most positive way.

The Saints show us that prayer and repentance go hand-in-hand. The pur-

pose of prayer is to grow closer to Christ. Growing closer to Christ is a life of constant change in our mentality from one that is "self-centered" to one that is "God-centered." In spiritual terms, this change in mentality is called *repentance*. Unless we communicate with our Savior with a desire for repentance, our prayers lack the substance that provides us and others with blessings from which our faith in God can be strengthened.

St. Evagrios the Solitary explains the

Continued on Page 2

A TALE OF TWO MEN

Two men found themselves stranded on a remote island. They both decided to dedicate themselves to prayer, each taking a different part of the island. Everything the first man prayed for was granted to him: food, drink, warmth, shelter. But, the other man had nothing.

Eventually, the first man prayed for rescue and, sure enough, a boat came to take him away. As he boarded the boat, he heard God calling to him: 'Why are you leaving your brother behind on the island?'

The man said: 'He does not deserve to be rescued since none of his prayers were answered.'

'You are mistaken,' the Lord replied, 'He had but one prayer, which I did indeed answer. Were it not for that, you would have received nothing.'

'Tell me,' the man said, 'What did he pray for so that I should owe him?'

The Lord replied, 'He prayed that all your prayers be answered.'"

– *Thirty Steps to Heaven: The Ladder of Divine Ascent for All Walks of Life*, by Vassilios Papavassiliou, pg. 224



Καθώς εορτάζουμε όλους τους Ορθόδοξους Αγίους σήμερα, στρέφουμε τον νου μας στα δύο πιο σημαντικά χαρακτηριστικά των Αγίων: 1) η συνεχής προσευχή και 2) η συνεχής μετανοία. Ως αποτέλεσμα, οι άνθρωποι γύρω τους καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της ζωής τους έλαβαν τις ευλογίες της αγάπης του Θεού και είναι ευλογίες που συνεχίζουν μέχρι σήμερα να επηρεάζουν την κοινωνία μας με τον πιο θετικό τρόπο.

Οι Άγιοι μας δείχνουν ότι η προσευχή και η μετάνοια συνδέονται. Ο σκοπός της προσευχής είναι να πλησιάσουμε τον Χριστό. Το να πλησιάζει κανείς πιο κοντά στον Χριστό είναι μια βίωση συνεχούς αλλαγής της νοοτροπίας μας από μια «εγωκεντρική» σε μια «Θεοκεντρική» νοοτροπία. Αυτή η αλλαγή νοοτροπίας ονομάζεται *μετάνοια*--μια ζωή αφιερωμένη στην συνεχή προσευχή και προσοχή στις ψυχικές μας κινήσεις.

Ο Άγιος Ευάγγριος ο Ερημικός εξηγεί την σχέση μεταξύ προσευχής και μετανοίας, «*Πρώτα, ας προσευχηθούμε για εξαγνισμό από τα πάθη. Δεύτερον, να προσευχηθούμε για απελευθέρωση από άγνοια και αμέλεια. Τρίτον, να προσευχηθούμε για την απελευθέρωση από τον πειρασμό, τη δοκιμασία και την ανοησία.*» (Φιλοκαλία, Τομ. 1, σελ. 62). Οι Άγιοι μας υπενθυμίζουν ότι ο καθένας είναι υπεύθυνος μόνος του για τις σκέψεις του, για τις στάσεις και τα κίνητρά του. Είναι υπεύθυνος να γνωρίζει τις αρετές -- *την πίστη, την αγάπη, την υπακοή, την ευθύνη και την μετάνοια*. Είναι αρετές για τις οποίες πρέπει όλοι να προσευχόμεθα. Έχοντας μέσα στις ψυχές μας αυτές τις πνευματικές αρετές, μπορούμε επίσης να είμεθα και εμείς άγιοι.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

connection between prayer and repentance in this way: “*First, pray for the purification of passions. Second, pray for deliverance from ignorance and forgetfulness. Third, pray for deliverance from temptation, trial and dereliction.*” (Philokalia, Vol.1, pg. 60). With this in mind, we understand that prayer is a matter of watchfulness over the movements within our souls. If we have given way to such passions as gluttony, greed, pride, etc. and have been forgetful of God, or have fallen into temptations, we must *pray* to overcome all of these imperfections. Seeking to overcome them is the act of *repentance*.

Prayer is much more than “asking God for things.” What is missing from our society is the *life of prayer*. Prayer is the expression of a desire to take upon ourselves God’s characteristics of love and mercy as tokens of gratitude for our salvation through His Only-Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. In this regard, St. Moses the Ethiopian would advise his followers, saying, “*If one’s deeds are not in harmony with one’s prayer, he labors in vain. The awareness of one’s own faults, makes one unable to see the faults of another.*” (The Desert Fathers, Trisagion Publications on YouTube). That is, if we truly seek a relationship with God through prayer, we cannot at the same time be envious, self-righteous, self-centered, or hateful.

To be honest, we can all recall our *experience* of Christ’s blessings in response to prayer. We recall moments when we *thanked God* for the blessings we have received. We have *experienced* the feeling of gratitude, prompting us toward *repentance* for our disobedience of Christ’s teachings and renewed *obedience* to His Commandments. Our *experiences* of Christ’s love through *prayer, repentance, and obedience*, give way to increased *faith* in our God.

The Saints remind us that we alone are personally *responsible* for our thoughts; our prayers; our attitudes; our motives -- and for developing in our souls the virtues of *faith, obedience, and love* through on-going *repentance*. We are to pray that our Savior will guide our thoughts; purify our motives and enlighten our minds so that we can make those choices through which can express the love of Christ our God for all people around us at all times. Why do we pray? *Ultimately, we pray so that we can become saints.*

+FR. THEODORE



PRAYERS FOR READING HOLY SCRIPTURES

“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

“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 - Hebrews 11:33-40; 12:1-2

Brethren, all the saints through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfection of our faith.

GOSPEL - St. Matthew 10:32-33; 37-38; 19:27-30

The Lord said to his disciples, "Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." Then Peter said in reply, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you. What then shall we have?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

The church is “open” on a limited basis. IMPORTANT NOTE: Those who have discussed their intention to attend services with either **Presvytera Petula** or **Athena Snarskis** are placed on a list for entrance into the church on a given Sunday. Do not jump to the conclusion that, because you are on the list for one Sunday, you are automatically granted permission to enter for the next Liturgy. Each Liturgy will have a different list of names so that those who could not attend one Liturgy may be able to attend the next. This is all done in order to comply with social distancing requirements. Those who do not attend this Sunday’s Liturgy may “attend” a live-streamed Liturgy offered by the many other parishes of our Archdiocese. Go to the website telecasts from our Archdiocese at:

<https://www.goarch.org/live-broadcasts>.

MEMORIAL

Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Vera Hellman (40 days)**, the beloved sister of **Nadia Hector** and sister-in-law of **Tim Hector**. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Life and Salvation to **Vera Hellman** and may He grant peace and comfort to **Nadia and Tim Hector**. MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COFFEE HOUR AFTER CHURCH SERVICES TODAY – 11:30 a.m. The Coffee Hour "Zoom" link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88505459492>. You may also join by entering <https://zoom.us/join> at the upper "search-box-area" of your Google, Yahoo, or Firefox screen. Afterward, enter the following Meeting ID: 885 0545 9492 and then the Password: 172597. Also, see the enclosed flier.

BIBLE STUDY–Tuesday, June 16, 2020 -10:00 a.m. In the "search" link at the top of your computer type in: <https://zoom.us/join>. Enter the **Meeting ID: 820 6752 0518**. Then, enter the **Password: 194231**. Please join Father Ted on ZOOM for a weekly Bible Study discussion. Use the above ID and PW for the month of June beginning 6/2/2020. We will study – Romans 2:28-3:18.

PHILOPTOCHOS – The Philoptochos "Critical Food Drive" continues. *We will extend the food drive drop off into next week: Monday, June 8th - Friday, June 28th from 10:30 AM -1:00 PM – Monday through Friday.* Drop off at the church. Ring doorbell on the side door and we will gladly accept your food donation! See enclosed flier.

SAINT GEORGE BIBLE STUDY GROUP **VIA ZOOM RECURRING EVERY TUESDAY @ 10:00 AM**



Meeting ID: 820 6752 0518
Password: 194231

Please join Father Ted on ZOOM for a weekly Bible Study discussion. Use the above ID and PW for the month of June beginning 6/2/2020.

Saint George Virtual Coffee Hour
on Zoom, sponsored by Philoptochos
All Are Welcome!



Join us on Sunday, June 14th @ 11:30 AM

To join go to <https://zoom.us/join> and type in the meeting ID and Password

ID: 885 0545 9492

PW: 172597

Rhonda Latkovic is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: St. George Philoptochos Virtual Coffee Hour Zoom Meeting

Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime 11:30 AM (PST)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88505459492>

Meeting ID: 885 0545 9492

Password: 172597

One tap mobile

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Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

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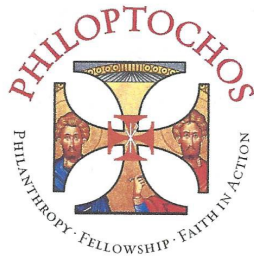
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

Meeting ID: 885 0545 9492 Password: 172597

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kUZFgMHD7>



ST GEORGE PHILOTOCHOS **CRITICAL FOOD DRIVE- June 12th-28th**

During the month of May, our Philoptochos food drive collected **480 pounds of food** that was distributed to local needy families! Our thanks to all who participated in the drive for your response and generosity! Our summer goal is to collect **1 TON of FOOD for Needy Families!** We are already 25% of the way there!

We will again collect food donations during the month of June **starting this Friday, June 12th** at the church. You may bring your donations into the hall and place them in the designated area **between the hours of 10:30 AM-1:00 PM, Monday thru Friday.** On Sundays, you can place your donations in the bin located outside the side door to the church. If you are unable to grocery shop, consider a monetary donation that we will use to purchase food. (Please make check out to Philoptochos-memo food drive.)

Below is the shopping list of the foods that are needed:

- Rice
- Beans
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Pasta
- Cereal/Oatmeal
- Canned Chili
- Canned Tuna/Chicken
- Canned Soup/Stew
- Canned Fruit/Vegetables
- Peanut Butter
- Crackers

Please make sure products are within expiration dates. No glass containers. No cans larger than 15 oz.

Thanks For Your Support!