

MAY 17, 2020

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, California 92260

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THE LADDER

SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN



Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 4755

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.

READY FOR THE HARVEST

As we consider the event of our Savior meeting the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well, we call to mind His words: "The fields are white for harvest." (St. John 4: 35). The Samaritan Woman will do what the Apostles themselves will be commissioned by our Lord to do: to preach Christ Risen from the dead; to proclaim that He is indeed the Messiah.

According to Apostolic Tradition, the Samaritan Woman became a devoted follower of our Lord, taking on the baptismal name, *Photini* (i. e. "The Woman

Enlightened"). She eventually became known as St. Photini.

As we follow the Gospel narrative, we notice how she became a changed woman. The Samaritans considered the Prophet Moses to be the only true Prophet. Therefore, they accepted the Ten Commandments. As a result, she was aware of the sin of adultery and the fact that having many husbands, as well as living outside the bonds of lawful marriage with a man, showed her disregard for God's Law.

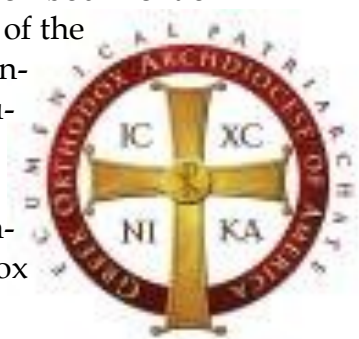
However, the confession of her sins is

Continued on Page 2

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SACRAMENTS

"The powers of the Kingdom already experienced in the Church are manifested through [the Holy Sacraments], offered in faith...God's life is infused into the present age and mingled with it, without change or confusion, through the mysteries. God touches, purifies, illumines, sanctifies and deifies human life in his uncreated divine energies through the mysteries. Christ becomes everyone's contemporary in the mysteries. All that He did one and for all for the salvation of the world has now passed over into the mysteries. Thus, the mysteries become the various manifestations of our Lord's saving power, and the means by which Christ is present and works in his Church...

[The] holy mysteries are at once inward and outward in character. Redeeming and sanctifying grace is transmitted by visible means. The embodiment of spiritual realities in material form is rooted in the mystery of the Incarnation and the ultimate redemption of matter. It is consistent with the very nature of the Church as the divine-human institution and the continuing mystery of Christ's presence in history. It also affirms the basic 'goodness' of nature and recognizes the psychosomatic nature of human-kind..." (Taken from "The Sacramental Life of the Orthodox Church," by Fr. Alciviadis C. Calivas: www.goarch.org



Καθώς μελετούμεν το γεγονός που ο Χριστός εσυνάντησε την Σαμαρείτιδα στην Πηγήν του Ιακωβ ενθυμούμεθα τα λόγια Του: «*θεάσασθε τὰς χώρας, ὅτι λευκαὶ εἰσι πρὸς θερισμόν*». (Αγ. Ιωάν. 4: 35). Μάλιστα, ἡ «Γυνὴ ἐκ τῆς Σαμαρείας» θα κάνει αὐτό που οἱ ἴδιοι οἱ Απόστολοι θα κάνουν: θα κηρύξουν τὸν Χριστὸ Ἀναστημένον ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ θα διακηρύξουν ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς εἶναι πράγματι ὁ Μεσσίας.

Σύμφωνα με τὴν Ἀποστολικὴ Παράδοση, ἡ «Γυνὴ ἐκ τῆς Σαμαρείας» ἐγένετο Χριστιανὴ, παίρνοντας τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ βαπτίσματος, Φωτεινὴ (δηλ. «Ἡ Γυναίκα Φωτισμένη»). Τελικὰ ἐγένετο γνωστὴ ὡς ἡ Ἁγία Φωτεινὴ.

Ἡ ἐξομολόγησις τῶν αμαρτιῶν τῆς εἶναι διδακτικὴ. Ἀρχικὰ, εἶναι ὁ ἴδιος ὁ Χριστὸς που ἀπεκάλυψε τὶς αμαρτίες τῆς. Σὲ αὐτὸ τὸ σημεῖο αὐτὴ ἡ γυναίκα ἔκανε τρία πράγματα: 1) ταπεινά καὶ ἐλεύθερα παραδέχθηκε τὴν ἀλήθεια περὶ τοῦ τρόπου τῆς ζωῆς τῆς, 2) συνειδητοποίησε ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς εἶναι ὁ Μεσσίας καὶ, 3) ἀνακοίνωσε στους συμπολίτες τῆς, κηρύσσοντας ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς εἶναι ὁ Μεσσίας.

Κατὰ συνέπεια, καταλαβαίνουμε τὴν σωστὴ διδασκαλία τῆς Ὀρθόδοξης Ἐκκλησίας σχετικὰ με τὸ Μυστήριον τῆς Θείας Ἐξομολογήσεως: ὁ σκοπὸς τῆς δὲν εἶναι νὰ καταδικάζεται ὁ ἀνθρώπος γιὰ τὶς αμαρτίες του, ἀλλὰ νὰ συγχωρεῖται ὁ ἀνθρώπος ἀπὸ τὶς αμαρτίες του. Ὅταν ἡ «Γυνὴ ἐκ τῆς Σαμαρείας» παραδέχθηκε τὴν πραγματικότηταν ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς ἤδη ἐγνώρισε τὸν τρόπο τῆς ζωῆς τῆς καὶ ἔμαθε ὅτι τὴν ἀγαποῦσε ἀκόμα, δὲν μποροῦσε νὰ συγκρατήσῃ τὴν χαρὰν τῆς. Ἐπρεπε νὰ κηρύξῃ! Ἀς κάνουμεν εμεῖς ὁμοίως!
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

instructive. At first, she does not openly confess her way of life. It is Christ Himself Who reveals her sins. At this point she does three things: 1) she humbly and freely admits the truth about the way she has been living, 2) she realizes that Christ is the Messiah, and, 3) she spreads the word to her fellow citizens, preaching that Christ is the Messiah.

We also understand something about Christ Himself: He never condemned her. He allowed her to recognize Him as God, just as He allowed St. Thomas to recognize Him as our Resurrected Savior, and St. Peter to learn of His love, even after he denied Him three times. From this, the proper teaching of the Orthodox Church regarding the Sacrament of Holy Confession is made clear: the purpose of Holy Confession is not for one to be condemned for sins, but to be forgiven of sins; not to be punished for sins, but to be granted the opportunity to repent of sins; not to be rejected, but to find the way back to our Savior and the life of His Church.

Indeed, Christ already knows our sins, just as He knew of the life of the Samaritan Woman. But, when the Samaritan Woman *accepted* the fact that Christ knew her way of life and *learned* that He still loved her, she could not contain her joy. She had to preach! In the same way, the Apostles were going to be commissioned to preach and baptize in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Samaritan Woman - St. Photini -- eventually became a Christian martyr during the persecution of the Roman Emperor Nero. She was thrown into a deep well after she converted the Emperor's daughter, Domnina and many others to Christianity.

Now it is our turn to preach the Gospel. For, especially in our own age, the "fields are white for harvest." Just as the fellow citizens of the Samaritan Woman were ready to hear that Christ is the Savior, there are many, who in our present society, are ready to hear the Holy Gospel. Today Christianity is being persecuted by both the coronavirus itself and by those who have politicized this crisis. If there was ever a time for our faith to be tested in our generation, it is now.

For St. Photini, the glory of Christ was more important than her own life. May that same spirit overshadow each of us during this time of persecution, knowing that our Lord will not abandon us and that the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church and the divine energies of the Holy, Life-Giving Sacraments.

+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."

"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 11:19-30

In those days, those apostles who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to none except Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number that believed turned to the Lord. News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad; and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose; for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a large company was added to the Lord. So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church, and taught a large company of people; and in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians. Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabos stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world; and this took place in the days of Claudius. And the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brethren who lived in Judea, and they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

GOSPEL- ST. JOHN 4:5-42

At that time, Jesus came to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and so Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey, sat down beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, and his sons, and his cattle?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give

him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband; this you said truly." The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain; and you say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he." Just then his disciples came. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but none said, "What do you wish?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" So the woman left her water jar, and went away into the city and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" They went out of the city and were coming to him. Meanwhile the disciples besought him, saying "Rabbi, eat." But he said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him food?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest. He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony. "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard ourselves, and we know that this is indeed Christ the Savior of the world."

MEMORIAL

Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Life and Salvation for the servant of God, **Diana Bacas (40 day)**, the beloved cousin of **Carol Lyons**. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, Arisen from the dead, grant Eternal Life and Salvation to **Diana Bacas** and to **Mr. and Mrs. Doug Lyons**. MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

PLEASE NOTE:

The church is closed. Deacon Euthym and I will be serving Church services behind closed doors. Video telecasts of our St. George church services are available by contacting our **parish website:** www.go-stgeorge.org (through Facebook link).

Follow some of the website telecasts from our Archdiocese at: <https://www.goarch.org/live-broadcasts>.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

"ZOOM" COFFEE HOUR AFTER CHURCH SERVICES TODAY – 11:30 a.m. See attached flier for **Zoom Meeting information and be sure to join us!...<https://zoom.us/join> and type in the meeting ID and Password ID: 885 0545 9492 /Password: 172597.** Everyone is invited to our **Philoptochos Virtual Coffee Hour Zoom Meeting.** Join by telephone if you cannot connect to Zoom: **1-669-900-6833; dial in the Password: 172597.**

AHEPA- Our Holy Archdiocese recognizes today as **AHEPA SUNDAY.** Please see the attached Encyclical from **His Eminence, Archbishop Elpidophoros.** At **2:00 p.m. today,** go to our **St. George parish website: www.go-stgeorge.org** to view the post of today's **AHEPA 528 "Zoom Scholarship Presentation Ceremony."** In addition, we will express our congratulations to our AHEPA 528 Scholarship recipients in up-coming editions of *The Ladder* and *The Voice of St. George.*

PHULOPTOCHOS GENERAL "ZOOM" MEETING--Monday, May 18th --11:30 a.m.
Zoom ID: 845-2622-4059/ Password: 097801 (video & audio with computer). Call-in number is: 1-669-900-6833 (audio only using a phone)

BIBLE STUDY--Tuesday, May 19th -10:00 a.m. Selected Bible Passage for the Study is: St. John 9: 1-38. (Contact Fr. Ted 760-880-5869 on Monday, May 18th for Zoom Meeting details or complications.) The **Meeting ID : 895 8854 9472 .** Call-in number is: 1-669-900-6833. Be sure to also use the **Password: 592427**

STS. CONSTANTINE & HELEN- Thursday, May 21st - Divine Liturgy: 9:00 a.m. (no live-stream)



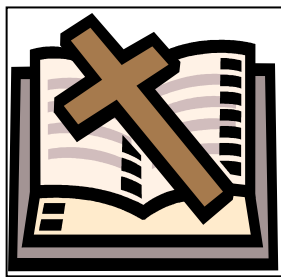
Date: May 18, 2020

Start Time: 11:30 AM

Philoptochos General Members Zoom Meeting

Zoom ID: 845-2622-4059 / Password: 097801 (video & audio w/ computer

Call-In Number: 1-669-900-6833 (audio only using a phone)



JOIN US FOR: ST. GEORGE TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday, May 12, 2020

At: 10:00 a.m.

Selected Scripture Passage for Study: St. John 9:1-38-- "At that time, as Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him. We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." As he said this, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man's eyes with the clay, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is he"; others said, "No, but he is like him." He said, "I am the man." They said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes and I washed, and I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" There was a division among them. So they again said to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight, and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess him to be Christ he was to be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age, ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "Whether he is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you too want to become his disciples?" And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Why, this is a marvel! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you." He said, "Lord, I believe": and he worshiped him."

ZOOM Bible Study Sign-in Information is:

Meeting ID : 895 8854 9472

Password: 592427

If you can't figure out how to do the video you can always join with audio only.

You can join the Zoom meeting via your desktop computer, laptop, tablet, iPad, or iPhone.

1-669-900-6833. Dial the password: 592427

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

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774-0237

www.goarch.org - Email: communications@goarch.org

Protocol No. 56/2020

May 17, 2020

AHEPA Sunday

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

My Beloved Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Christ,

Χριστὸς Ανέστη! Christ is Risen!

On behalf of the entire family of the Holy Archdiocese of America, I extend the warmest greetings and congratulations to all the esteemed and beloved members of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association on the occasion of the annual observance of AHEPA Sunday.

This year, in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic, we may have to be distant from our usual festive celebrations that commemorate the positive mission of AHEPA, but all of us can take a moment to remember the work of AHEPA, which for nearly one hundred years has been foundational to the Greek-American experience of the United States and beyond. Whether it was the defense of the Greek Orthodox Faith in times of anti-immigrant prejudice, establishing medical and housing facilities both here and in Greece, or advocacy for the freedom of Greece and especially for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, AHEPA has always been among the extraordinary pillars of the *Omogeneia*.

Now, AHEPA is helping to meet the crisis with their faithful chapters across America, and we are thankful for their ceaseless contributions. Together, we will get through this crisis, but we must work even more closely now to preserve our Church and our communities, and to advance the goals of AHEPA in this hour of need. May God always bless the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, its chapters and families, and keep them safe and healthy for many more years to come.

With paternal love in our Risen Lord,



† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America

Saint George Ladies Philoptochos **Virtual Coffee Hour on Zoom!**



Join us on Sunday, May 17th @ 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

+16699006833,,88505459492#,,1#,172597# US (San Jose)

+12532158782,,88505459492#,,1#,172597# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+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>