

NOVEMBER 29, 2020

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

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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.

WEALTH OF VIRTUES

The philosophers of Ancient Greece would often speak about virtues. However, the basic virtue of humility was never emphasized. Yet, humility gives way to virtues and, in this regard, St. Paul wrote, "Lead a life...with patience, forbearing one another..." (Ephesians 1:1). In this way we can also obey those who care for our Eternal Salvation. In accordance with St. Paul's thinking, we are not only to obey our leaders, but we are to also obey one another with regard to offering spiritual goods for the salvation of all. In whatever we offer to

others with the love that God has for everyone, we offer our love to God, as well. It is impossible to love God and to not love those around us.

The Church never condemns a person for being wealthy. To some extent, we are all wealthy with blessings that God gives to us -- some have more than others, according to the measure that our Lord grants. We are called to be rich with the virtue of love for God and for others, and this love is the fruit of humility before God. All good things happen through faith in God,

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ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE -- Normally, tomorrow, if it were not for concerns surrounding the current Covid pandemic, we would celebrate the Divine Liturgy in honor of the Feast Day of St. Andrew the First-Called Apostle. He is the Patron Saint of our Holy Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. Saint Andrew was from Bethsaida of Galilee, the son of Jonas and the brother of Peter, the chief of the Apostles. He had first been a disciple of John the Baptist; afterwards, on hearing the Baptist's witness concerning Jesus, when he pointed Him out with his finger and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1.29,36), he immediately followed Christ and became His first disciple. Therefore, he bears the title as the "First-called of the Apostles."

After the Ascension of the Savior, he preached in various lands, having suffered many things for His Name's sake. He died in Patras of Achaia, where he was crucified on a cross in the shape of an "X," the first letter of "Christ" in Greek; this cross is also the symbol of Saint Andrew.

The Hymn for St. Andrew is as follows:

As first of the Apostles to be called, O Andrew, brother of him (Peter) who was foremost, beseech the Master of all to grant the world peace and our souls great mercy.



Οι φιλόσοφοι της αρχαίας Ελλάδος ομιλούσαν για πολλές αρετές. Ωστόσο, η βασική αρετή της ταπεινότητας δεν τονίσθηκε ποτέ. Όμως, η ταπεινοφροσύνη, αποδίδει αρετές. Ως εκ τούτου, ο Άγ. Παύλος έγραψε στους Εφεσίους, «*αξίως περιπατήται...μετά μακροθυμίας, ανεχόμενοι αλλήλων...*» (Εφ. 1:1). Κατά αυτόν τον τρόπον δυνάμεθα επίσης να υπακούμε σε εκείνους που ενδιαφέρονται για την αιώνιον σωτηρίαν μας. Σύμφωνα με τις σκέψεις του Αγίου Παύλου, δεν πρέπει να υπακούμε μόνο στις πνευματικές αρχές μας, αλλά πρέπει να υπακούμε ο ένας στον άλλο όσον αφορά την παροχή πνευματικών αγαθών προς τη σωτηρία όλων. Σε ο,τι προσφέρουμε σε άλλους με την αγάπη που έχει ο Θεός για όλους, προσφέρουμε επίσης την αγάπη μας στον Ιδιον τον Θεόν. Είναι αδύνατο να αγαπάμε τον Θεό και να μην αγαπάμε τον συνάνθρωπόν μας.

Αυτή είναι η ζωή της Εκκλησίας μας. Η Εκκλησία δεν καταδικάζει ποτέ τους πλούσιους. Σε ένα βαθμό, είμεθα όλοι πλούσιοι με ευλογίες που δίδονται από τον Θεό - μερικοί με περισσότερες από αυτές που έχουν άλλοι, σύμφωνα με το μέτρο που χαρίζει ο Κύριος. Καλούμεθα να είμεθα πλούσιοι στην αρετή της αγάπης μας για τον Θεό και για τους άλλους, και αυτή η αγάπη είναι ο καρπός της ταπεινότητας ενώπιον του Θεού. Όλα τα καλά γίνονται μέσω της πίστεώς μας στον Θεό, από την οποία αποκτούμε την ταπεινοφροσύνη και την αληθινή αγάπη.

Η παροχή του εαυτού μας για κάθε καλό του συνανθρώπου μας απαιτεί πίστη στον Θεό. Σε ό,τι κάνουμε, ας έχουμε κατά νου ότι όλα είναι δυνατά με τον Θεό.
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

from which we acquire humility and genuine love.

Our Savior's answer to the rich ruler of today's Gospel passage has three facets to it: 1) focus on material wealth, rather than spiritual wealth puts our salvation in jeopardy; 2) spiritual wealth involves giving of ourselves to others, and, 3) giving of ourselves for the benefit and salvation of others requires faith in the fact that *"with God all things are possible."*

So many people will attest to the fact that focus on material wealth puts our salvation in jeopardy. This is why we hear the old adage, *"love of money is the root of evil."*

Many of the Saints remind us that the road to one's own salvation runs right by the front door of one's neighbor. We therefore not only pray for ourselves, but for our fellow human being; we not only seek benefits for ourselves, but benefits for others, also; we not only acquire goods for our own peace of mind, but we acquire goods so that we have things to give to those in need. In the Orthodox Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, the priest reads the prayers of blessing for the bride and groom, asking our Lord to give them an abundance of His blessings, *"so that they may have to give to those in need."*

Finally, faith in God gives way to a wealth of virtues. Perhaps one of the greatest concerns that we have before us as a Church is the fact that the virtues of humility and genuine love are being worn away by the onslaught of messages sent through social media. Minds are focused on "selfies," self-reliance and self-absorption. This seems to offer strong competition to the spirit of humility anchored with faith in God. As long as we are involved with "self-image" and not on God's glory, even our spiritual feats of fasting and almsgiving are tainted with love for "self" rather than for God and others.

In all that we do, let us have in mind that all things are possible with God.

+FR. THEODORE

BIBLE STUDY-Tuesday, December 1, 2020 -10:00 a.m.

Join Zoom Bible Study Meeting by clicking on the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86794723099?pwd=WEEREGyRjkwNzg0alRIUnkycCs0dz09>

Meeting ID: Meeting ID: **867 9472 3099**

Passcode: **898242**

Or, using your cell phone, call: 1 669 900 6833 and dial in the Meeting ID and Passcode numbers.

We will be studying the following passages: [Hebrews 13:17-21](#) and [St. Luke 13:10-17](#).

NOTE: When unable to attend Church Services in person due to state regulations regarding the Coronavirus or personal illness, follow the Divine Liturgy through live-streaming provided by various Archdiocese parishes at: <https://www.goarch.org/live-broadcasts>.



“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 - Ephesians . 4:1-7

Brethren, I, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

GOSPEL - St. Luke 18:18-27

At that time, a ruler came to Jesus and asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus

said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.' " And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Today.....Sunday School “zoom” - 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, December 1st..... Bible Study – 10:00 a.m. – “zoom” format

Saturday, December 5th.....**Hierarchical Vesper Service - 5:00 p.m.**

officiated by His Grace, Bishop Spyridon of Amastris

(Due to Covid, please call our church office for directives regarding in-person worship)

Sunday, December 6th.....**Hierarchical Divine Liturgy - Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.**

celebrated by His Grace, Bishop Spyridon of Amastris

(Due to Covid, please call our church office for directives regarding in-person worship)

ST. GEORGE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD -- Through the tireless efforts of Tina Veroulis, we are nearly ready to publish our annual St. George Community Christmas Card. The deadline for inclusion in this year’s Christmas Card is this **Tuesday, December 1, 2020**. Contact **Tina Veroulis**, our parish office by this Tuesday to participate!

BOOK & ITEM SALE - Available following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy today are copies of the newly published St. George Philoptochos Cookbook and various items from our parish bookstore that can be shared as wonderful Christmas gifts.

GOOGLE GROUPS EMAIL - Those who are not receiving our parish publications through our St. George “Google Groups” email system, please inform Fr. Ted as soon as possible.