

OCTOBER 4, 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.

THE GOLDEN RULE

When Jesus taught, "As ye would that men should do unto you, do unto them likewise" (Luke 6: 1), He spoke as the Creator, who taught that self-knowledge is to be transformed into the fulfillment of our true identity, which is based on our imitation of God's love for all people. Doing good for someone as we would like it done for us is an integral part of our nature as created by God. It is the path to our inner, personal health, as well as to a community that creates the common good for all.

We were created to love as God loves. This is what we mean when we say that we are created in the image and likeness of God. In his classic book, *I and Thou*, Martin Buber explains the fact that a person is graced with the gift of self awareness and can state that "I am." This recognition as "I" contrasts with the fact that "I" is no other person. The "someone else" around me is "You." Parallel with our personal "I" is the revelation of God to Moses that He is "I" in relationship to us: "I am the One Who Is." This understand-

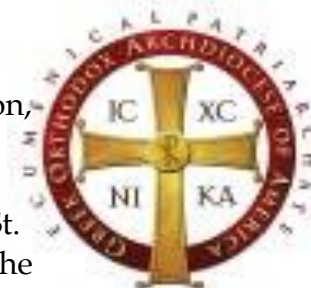
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ST. DOMNINA, THE DAUGHTER OF EMPEROR NERO

Today is the Feast Day of St. Domnina, the daughter of Nero. Her story begins with St. Photini.

St. Photini, who was also the Samaritan Woman, with whom the Savior conversed at Jacob's Well (John. 4:5-42). Summoned to appear before Emperor Nero, he asked St. Photini and the women who were with her whether they truly believed in Christ. They all refused to renounce the Savior. The emperor then gave orders to smash the martyrs' finger joints. During the torments, the women felt no pain, and their hands remained unharmed. St. Photini and her five sisters, Anatolia, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva and Kyriake, were then sent to the imperial court under the supervision of Nero's daughter, Domnina. This is when St. Photini converted Domnina, her daughters, and her servants to Christ.

According to a Christian tradition, recorded in *The Passiones of St. Photine*, **Domnina**, daughter of the Roman emperor Nero, was converted to Christianity along with her daughters and a hundred slave girls. With love for Christ, according to tradition, Domnina ordered that all the imperial gold be sold and the money to be distributed to the poor. In consequence of her conversion to Christianity and her act of selling off the gold, St. Domnina and her daughters were put to death as martyrs of the Faith.



Όταν ο Ιησούς εδίδαξε «*Καθώς θέλετε ίνα ποιώσιν υμίν οι άνθρωποι, και υμείς ποιεíte αυτοίς ομοίως.*» (Λκ.6.1), ομιλούσε ως ο Δημιουργός, ο Οποίος εδίδαξε ότι η αυτογνωσία μετατρέπεται σε εκπλήρωση της αληθινής οντότητός μας, με βάση ότι έχουμε την χάρη να μιμούμεθα την αγάπη του Θεού. Το να κάνουμε καλό για κάποιον όπως θα ηθέλαμε να γίνει για εμάς είναι αναπόσπαστο μέρος της φυσιολογίας μας ως πλάσματα του Θεού. Είναι ο δρόμος προς την εσωτερική, προσωπική υγεία μας, καθώς και προς μιά κοινότητα που δημιουργεί το γενικό καλό για όλους.

Εδημιουργηθήκαμε να αγαπήσουμε όπως αγαπά ο Θεός. Αυτό εννοούμε όταν λέμε ότι είμεθα πλασμένοι κατά την εικόνα και την ομοίωση του Θεού. Στο κλασικό του βιβλίο, «*Το Εγώ και το Εσύ,*» ο Martin Buber εξηγεί την πραγματικότητα ότι έχουμε την χάρη της αυτογνωσίας και μπορεί ο καθένας να πει ότι «*Εγώ είμαι!*» Αυτή η αναγνώριση ως «*εγώ*» έρχεται σε αντίθεση με το γεγονός ότι «*εγώ*» δεν είμαι άλλος. Ο «*κάποιος άλλος*» γύρω μου είναι το «*Εσύ.*» Παράλληλα με το προσωπικό μας «*Εγώ*» είναι η αποκάλυψη του Θεού στον Μωυσή ότι Αυτός είναι το «*Εγώ*» για εμάς: «*Εγώ Εγώ ο Ων.*» Αυτή η κατανόηση του «*Εγώ*» και του «*Εσύ*» είναι αυτό που μας κάνει *ανθρώπους*. Σύμφωνα με τον Buber, όταν βλέπουμε ένα άλλο άτομο, το «*Εγώ*» μας συναντά μια εικόνα του αιώνιου «*Εσύ*» του Θεού. Δηλαδή, «*Εγώ δεν υπάρχω χωρίς σχέση με τον Θεόν και με άλλους.*» Για αυτόν τον λόγο, έχουμε την ευθύνη να είμεθα ελεήμονες, όπως και ο Επουράνιος Πατέρας μας είναι ελεήμων.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

ing of "I" and "You" is what makes us human. According to Buber, when we behold another person, our sense of "I" encounters an image of the eternal "You" of God. Dr. Albert Rossi summarizes this reality accordingly: "*There is no 'me' without a relationship to God and to others.*" (*All is Well*, pg. 70).

Being merciful to one another as God is merciful to us is consistent with every healthy human relationship, with "I" and "You" caring for one another as God cares for us. One who is merciful to another person draws God's mercy to him or her, because the other person is also an image of God, Who is merciful to us. The purpose of God's mercy is for us to use the time that God gives us in life to be merciful to one another as an expression of gratitude toward God. Giving thanks to God gives way to humility and is the essence of the Divine Liturgy.

Ingratitude towards God weakens and destroys our relationship with God and with one another. It is the main element behind sin and corrupts our image of "self," due to thoughts of pride, thus causing our love to grow cold. In this way, we fall away from God's grace and sins are born, by which we fall away from each other. We find that others may be our enemies, while we might also be their enemies. Enmity against one another is always a matter of sinful pride. Either, through selfish pride we offend others, or we are offended because others "wound" our pride. As a result, at best we manipulate others; at worst, we harbor terrible hatred giving way to terrible deeds.

To repent of our sins, we call to mind the unconditional love of Christ our God. Therefore, the very mentality behind all of our Church's Liturgical prayers is to express our gratitude by committing ourselves to be *responsible* for enhancing our relationship with our loving Lord. With this in mind, we can pray in this way: "*As 'I' would want 'You' (God) to be merciful to me, Lord, 'I' want to show mercy for 'You' by being merciful to the person next to me, who is the Image of 'You. Amen.*"

+FR. THEODORE

BIBLE STUDY-Tuesday, September 29, 2020 -10:00 a.m.

Join Zoom Bible Study Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86878349877?pwd=OEVzOUdFR1VFVzd6bzhKbVl3cUoyUT09>

Meeting ID: 868 7834 9877

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 passage: St. Luke 5:17-26.

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>.



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 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 - 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; 7:1

Brethren, you are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.

GOSPEL - St. Luke 6:31-36

The Lord said, "And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Today.....Sunday School via “zoom” - 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Tuesday, October 6th.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m. – “zoom” format

Note Correction: The regular mailing address listed in the October 2020 *The Voice of St. George* is incorrect. Those who want to donate to the AHEPA 528 T. P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship Fund via regular mail are to send their donation to the following address:

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42-215 Washington St. A-154
Palm Desert, California 92211