

DECEMBER 19, 2021

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, California 92260

Website: www.go-stgeorge.org

Email: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com



THE LADDER

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 4755

Palm Desert, CA.92261

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.

PROPHESIES FULFILLED!

References are made in both the Gospel and the Epistles passages today of the Prophets and forefathers described in the Old Testament. Not only is the prophesy of Christ's life-saving ministry in the world made known through the individual Prophets themselves, but it is made known through the historical events recorded in the Old Testament.

One such event is the Exodus. In itself, it is the prophesy of God saving humanity from slavery to sin and its deliverance into the "Promised Land" of repentance, forgiveness and eternal salvation. The

burning bush, which was on fire, yet remained unburned, is a prophesy of the Person of the Ever-Virgin, Who received Christ through the Holy Spirit, yet remained Ever-Virgin. Also, the crossing of the Red Sea is a prophesy of Holy Baptism, in which case we leave the old world of slavery to sin and turn to the new world of virtue in Christ. The Ten Commandments contain the expression of God's love for humanity, summarized in Christ's teaching that they hang upon two commandments: 1) love for God, and, 2) love for neighbor. These "sub-events" in the Exo-

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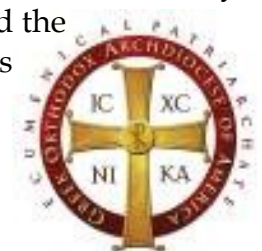
THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST OUR GOD

On the Sunday that occurs on or immediately after the eighteenth of this month, we celebrate all those who from ages past have been well-pleasing to God, beginning from Adam even unto Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, according to genealogy, as the Evangelist Luke hath recorded historically (Luke 3:23-38); we also commemorate the Prophets and Prophetesses, and especially the Prophet Daniel and the Holy Three Children.

The Apolytikion Hymn for this Sunday:

"Great are the accomplishments of faith. In the fountain of flame the three Holy Youths rejoiced as though they were resting by the waters. And the Prophet Daniel showed himself to be a shepherd to the lions, as though they were sheep. Through their prayers O Christ our God, save our souls."

-- Taken from our Archdiocese website: www.goarch.org



Αναφορές γίνονται τόσο στις σημερινές περικοπές του Ευαγγελίου όσο και της Επιστολής περι των Προφητών και των προπατόρων που περιγράφονται στην Παλαιά Διαθήκη. Όχι μόνο η γνώσις περί της διακονίας του Χριστού γίνεται μέσω των ιδίων των Προφητών, αλλά και μέσω των ιστορικών γεγονότων που καταγράφονται στην Παλαιά Διαθήκη.

Ένα τέτοιο γεγονός είναι η Έξοδος. Από μόνη της, είναι η προφητεία ότι ο Θεός θα σώσει την ανθρωπότητα από τη σκλαβιά της αμαρτίας και θα φέρει τους ανθρώπους στον «παράδεισο» της μετάνοιας, της συγχωρήσεως και της αιώνιου σωτηρίας. Ο φλεγόμενος θάμνος, που φλεγόταν, αλλά παρέμεινε άκαυτος, είναι μια προφητεία της Παναγίας, που συνέλαβε τον Χριστό μέσω του Αγίου Πνεύματος, αλλά παραμένει πάντα Παρθένος. Επίσης, η διάβασις της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης είναι μια προφητεία του Αγίου Βαπτίσματος, οπότε αφήνουμε τον παλιό κόσμο της δουλείας της αμαρτίας και στρεφόμεθα στον νέο κόσμο της εν Χριστώ αρετής. Οι Δέκα Εντολές περιέχουν την έκφραση της αγάπης του Θεού για την ανθρωπότητα, που συνοψίζεται στη διδασκαλία του Χριστού ότι όλα βασιζονται στις δυο εντολές: 1) να αγαπάμε τον Θεό και, 2) να αγαπάμε τον πλησίον μας.

Αυτά τα «υπογεγονότα» στην Έξοδο -- η διάβασις της Ερυθράς Θαλάσσης και η έκδοσις των Δέκα Εντολών -- είναι από μόνα τους διακηρύξεις που εκφωνούνται από την ουράνια χορωδία με τον Χριστό ξαπλωμένο στη φάτνη: «*Δόξα εν υψίστοις Θεώ και επί γης ειρήνη και ανθρώποις ευδοκία*».
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

thus are in themselves proclamations uttered by the heavenly choir with Christ lying in the manger: *"Peace on earth and goodwill toward all,"* thereby fulfilling Old Testament prophesy.

Of special importance is Moses' inner character, which is common to us all, as revealed in his dialogue with our Lord at the burning bush. Moses was called by God to do God's Will. In like manner, we too are called to do God's Will daily and in various ways. While God does not need us to exist, God wants to honor us as co-workers in the work of divine love. However, being such co-workers is not popular in a world in which sin has given way to ingrained habits of self-worship and also hatefulness, making it a "martyr-like" challenge to deliver people from sin into salvation.

Like Moses, we too are tempted to resist our calling by coming up with one excuse after another. And, like with Moses, God keeps assuring us that He will be with us all the way. Finally, like Moses, we confess our lack of faith by suggesting that God makes mistakes when we are called to do His Will. To the core, we imply that we feel incapable of repentance itself. We might find ourselves giving the impression that we would like to justify our *fear* of doing God's Will, which requires us to change our thinking, which can be a fearful thing to do, especially if we lack faith that God will be with us.

God communicates with us in His Personhood -- in the Person of Christ, the Word. In "personhood," God shares our joys; our sorrows, and our frustrations. Thus, in "personhood" God expressed frustration over Moses' weak faith and sent the Levite Priest Aaron to accompany Moses through his weaknesses. In like manner, God sends us the Holy Priesthood, which is the "personhood" of the Church, and Who is responsible, like Aaron, to help those called by God to do the work of God.

As we celebrate the Nativity of Christ, let us strengthen our faith and know that "God is with us," which is, in fact, the name: Emmanuel.
+FR. THEODORE

PHILOPTOCHOS CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE -- Today is the **last Sunday to pick up orders of Christmas breads and koulourakia** at our Philoptochos Christmas Bake Sale in our parish hall **after the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.**

VASILOPITA -- Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, January 9th, the annual Philoptochos Vasilopita Celebration** will take place in our parish hall. The Vasilopita Celebration is an opportunity to support the work of our St. George Philoptochos Chapter, as our Philoptochos members continue to contribute (through your support) toward the education of children in need at St. Basil's Academy.

PRAYER FOR READING HOLY SCRIPTURES



"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 11:9-10, 32-40

Brethren, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who 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.

GOSPEL - St. Matthew 1:1-25

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Ammin'adab, and Ammin'adab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Bo'az by Rahab, and Bo'az the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uri'ah, and Solomon the father of Rehobo'am,

and Rehobo'am the father of Abi'jah, and Abi'jah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehosh'aphat, and Jehosh'aphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzzi'ah, and Uzzi'ah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezeki'ah, and Hezeki'ah the father of Manas'eh, and Manas'eh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josi'ah, and Josi'ah the father of Jechoni'ah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoni'ah was the father of Sheal'tiel, and Sheal'tiel the father of Zerub'babel, and Zerub'babel the father of Abi'ud, and Abi'ud the father of Eli'akim, and Eli'akim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eli'ud, and Eli'ud the father of Elea'zar, and Elea'zar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emman'uel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

--Tuesday, December 21st...Bible Study - 10:00 a.m. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83371776876?pwd=UnEzUTRybjkwT2FraVW1LSWhlYk9Bdz09>

--Wednesday, December 22nd...Bible Study - 6:30 p.m. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86111452564>

--Friday, December 24th.....EVE OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST
Royal Hours - 8:00 a.m./Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great - 9:30 a.m.

--Saturday, December 25th.....THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST
Orthros- 8:30 a.m./ Hierarchical Divine Liturgy - 9:30 a.m.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: 2022 ST. GEORGE GREEK FESTIVAL POSTPONED

The Parish Council, in consultation with our Greek Festival Chairman, George Argyros, has decided to postpone our 2022 Greek Festival, which was scheduled for February 19-20,2022.

Along with this decision, **two committees** are being formed (which may overlap in some ways) in order to plan for the future:

1. Will our parish continue to have Greek Festivals in the future? A committee is needed to study our prospects for the future in this regard.
2. What parish events can help bring our parishioners come together throughout the year and also help the financial needs of our parish, especially in light of not having a festival? A committee is needed to help with ideas and plans for such events.

Mr. Chris Maletis will serve as chairman for both of these committees.

It is **now** that **we need volunteers** to offer time, thoughts, and efforts along these two committee objectives. Please contact me at **(760) 880-5869**, or call our church office at **(760) 568-9901** to volunteer as we look forward to the new year and the future.

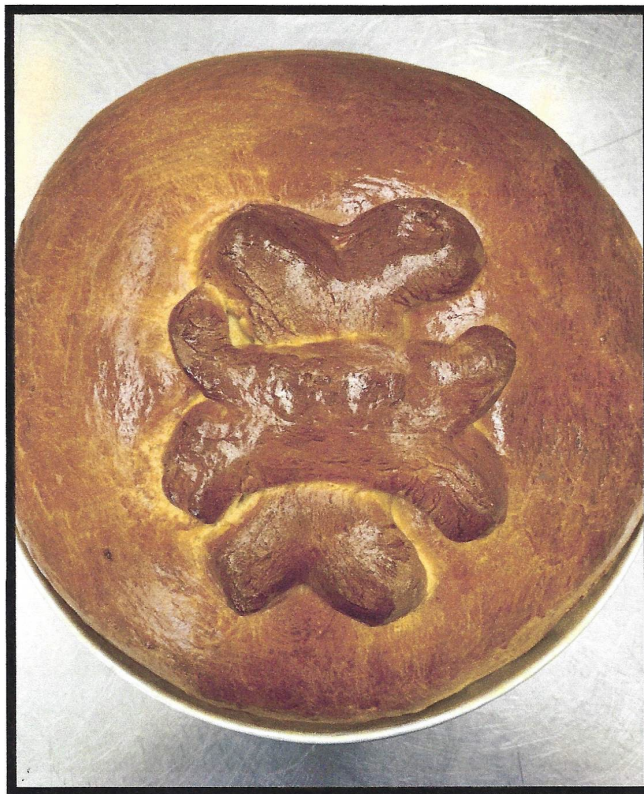
Many blessings from Christ our God,

+Fr. Ted

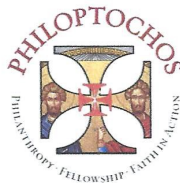
ST. GEORGE PHILOPTOCHOS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 9th, 2022

VASILOPITA SUNDAY



Vasilopita bread available for purchase after church on Sunday for a \$15.00 donation. All proceeds benefit St. Basil Academy.



Taverna Night
"Escape to the Greek Islands"

Featuring live music by *The Greeks*



Saturday January 22nd, 2022

Roast lamb on a spit, roasted potatoes, green beans, & Greek salad.
Cocktail hour from 5:00 - 6:00 pm with appetizers, followed by the dinner including a special
dessert made by our ladies and Greek dancing.

Beer, wine, ouzo, metaxa will be available for sale.

Location: St George Greek Orthodox Church
74-109 Larrea, Palm Desert, CA 92260
760.568.9901



\$50 per person

The event benefits our Philoptochos "Kids-N-Cancer / Camp Agape" ministry for 2022.

Pay by website, fee added:

<https://www.go-stgeorge.org/Ministries/Philoptochos/>

Reservations must be paid in advance by Sunday, January 16, 2022,
at the Philoptochos table OR mail your check to the office.

Check is payable to St. George Philoptochos and note on check Taverna Night.
St George Mailing Address: P.O. Box 4755, Palm Desert, CA. 92261

Sponsored by Ladies Philoptochos of St George

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Number attending: _____ Amt. enclosed: _____

PLEASE NOTE: EITHER PROOF OF VACCINATION OR TEST CONFIRMING THAT ONE IS NOT SUFFERING FROM COVID IS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO ATTEND. ATTENDEES ARE TO REMAIN AT THEIR TABLES WITH THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES IN ORDER TO AVOID MINGLING. THE DINNER WILL BE SERVED IN "RESTAURANT STYLE" FASHION.