

**JULY 11, 2021**

**ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT**

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# THE LADDER



## **Mailing Address:**

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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.*

## **ATTRIBUTES OF SAINTHOOD**

We have noted before that the liturgical season after Pentecost is one in which the Scriptural passages that are read during the Divine Liturgy emphasize the qualities that we are to acquire in order to become saints and which are common among all the Saints of the Church.

God implanted His Law in our souls when we were created. Thus, we are all the more accountable to our Lord than those who have never heard the Gospel. As a consequence, prayer involves a constant consultation with our conscience, since it is God's voice within us.

Our conscience is always pressing us to evaluate the strength and sincerity of our love for God and others. The example of God's love for us is found in the Person of our Savior, Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself to the extreme for our salvation.

It is this example that compelled St. Paul and St. Euphemia (whose memory we commemorate today), as well as all the Saints, to become martyrs, confessors, and teachers for the glory of Christ and for our salvation. It is this example that we are to follow if we are also seeking His glory

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## **ST. EUPHEMIA THE GREAT MARTYR**

Today we commemorate St. Euphemia the Great Martyr. St. Euphemia was likely born around 280-285 A.D. to Christian parents, Philphronos and Theodosia. As an adult, she was arrested for refusing to offer sacrifices to the false god, Ares. After suffering various tortures, she died in the arena at Chalcedon in 303 A.D., when the Emperor Diocletian began his "Great Persecution" of Christians.

The Council of Chalcedon, the Fourth Ecumenical Council, took place in the city of Chalcedon in the year 451 A.D., years after St. Euphemia's martyrdom. This Council decreed that Christ is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity and is fully Man and fully God. The truth of this decree was confirmed at the tomb of St. Euphemia, where the scroll of the Council's decree miraculously appeared in her hands.

St. Euphemia is a widely venerated as a saint among all Orthodox Christians, not only for her virginity and martyrdom, but also for her strengthening of the Orthodox Christian Faith.



Έχουμε παρατηρήσει προηγουμένως ότι η λειτουργική εποχή μετά την Πεντηκοστή είναι εκείνη στην οποία οι Ευαγγελικές περικοπές που αναγινώσκονται κατά τη Θεία Λειτουργία υπογραμμίζουν τις ιδιότητες που πρέπει να αποκτήσουμε προκειμένου να γίνουμε άγιοι και οι οποίες είναι κοινές μεταξύ όλων των Αγίων.

Ο Θεός εμφύτεψε τον Νόμο Του στις ψυχές μας όταν μας εδημιούργησε. Έτσι, εμείς που έχουμε ακούσει το Ευαγγέλιον είμεθα υπό υπεύθυνοι στον Κύριο από εκείνους που δεν έχουν ακούσει ποτέ το Ευαγγέλιο. Συνεπώς, η προσευχή περιλαμβάνει συνεχή διαβούλευση με τη συνείδησή μας, καθώς είναι η φωνή του Θεού μέσα μας.

Η συνείδησή μας μας πιάζει πάντα να αξιολογήσουμε τη δύναμη και την ελικρίνεια της αγάπης μας για τον Θεό και για τους άλλους. Το παράδειγμα της αγάπης του Θεού για εμάς ευρίσκεται στο Πρόσωπο του Σωτήρος μας, Ιησού Χριστού, ο Οποίος παρέδωσε τον Εαυτόν Του μέχρι θάνατον για τη σωτηρία μας.

Είναι αυτό το παράδειγμα που ανάγκασε τον Άγ. Παύλο, την Αγ. Ευφημία (της οποίας την μνήμη τιμούμεν σήμερα), καθώς και όλους τους Αγίους, να γίνουν μάρτυρες, εξομολογητές και διδάσκαλοι προς δόξαν του Χριστού.

Είναι αυτό το παράδειγμα που πρέπει να ακολουθήσουμε εάν επιδιώκουμε επίσης την δόξα Του προς σωτηριαν των γονέων μας, των παιδιών μας, και των συνανθρώπων μας. Στην ουσία, η θεοκεντρική αγάπη μας αποσυνδέει από τον εγωκεντρικό χαρακτήρα, θέτοντας σε πράξη την αγάπη του Θεού.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

and the salvation of our parents, children and the people around us.

Faith in Christ our God and love for Him are what prompt us to overcome our fears and anxieties. Faith and love are the same attributes that we are called to have as we approach for Holy Communion. From today's Gospel passage, we hear the words of our Savior urging us to trust Him. Such faith is to be made evident by way of our overall life-style.

St. Paul, in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which we heard today, presents this life-style, not only as a description of his own way of life, but as a description of the life-style of all the Saints. It is a life-style of self-sacrifice for the glory of our Lord in order to bring about the salvation of others. It is the ultimate characterization of the life-style of love.

In essence, God-centered love disengages us from self-centeredness. Hence, regardless of the obstacles; the set-backs, and the opinions of others, we strive to focus our efforts on putting the love of God into action. St. Maximos the Confessor explained God's love this way: *"But I say to you," the Lord says, 'Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you. Pray for those who persecute you.' Why did He command these things? So that He might free you from hatred, sadness, anger and grudges, and might grant you the greatest possession of all, perfect love, which is impossible to possess except by the one who loves all equally in imitation of God."* (Philokalia, Vol. 2, "Second Century on Love").

+FR. THEODORE

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**MEMORIAL** - Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation of the servant of God, **Jack Shaheen** the beloved husband of **Bernice Shaheen** and the beloved father of **Michele Tasoff** and **Michael Shaheen**. Also today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation of **Albert Refeedie**, the beloved father of **Bernice Shaheen** and **Rick Refeedie**, the beloved nephew of **Bernice Shaheen**. May our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Rest and Salvation to **Jack Shaheen, Albert Refeedie and Rick Refeedie** and may He grant peace and comfort to **Bernice Shaheen** and her family. MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE ETERNAL!

**Tuesday, July 13th.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m. (via "Zoom"):**

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83654895089?pwd=RDhkdlZWRDBhZmYyZCsyYUwUdU91Zz09>

You may also join by entering: <https://zoom.us/join> in your computer search engine at the top left corner of your screen and then enter the **Meeting ID: 836 5489 5089** & **Passcode: 247288** when prompted. You may also call in by cell phone at: **1 669 900 6833** and enter the herein noted Meeting ID number and Passcode.



*"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 6:1-10

Brethren, working together with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

## GOSPEL - St. Matthew 6:22-33

The Lord said, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

**NOTE:** Our beloved organist and dear friend, **Marge Guericke**, passed away early Wednesday morning, **July 7, 2021** while in hospice care. Marge was truly dedicated to the continued growth and success of our parish choir ministry. Since 1989 she served as organist for our choir on Sundays and she also served for various wedding ceremonies and celebrations of our parishioners. She was our parish organist serving over many years with our choir directors: **Emily Tcharos**, **Krisann Kontaxis**, and **Annette Laskaris**. Marge will be missed by all of us and by all who knew her.

# ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2021



Everyone is asked to help make our upcoming **St. George Golf Tournament on September 25th** a success! Items are needed for the **silent auction** that will be offered at the awards banquet following the tournament.

Items can be works of art, golf equipment, pre-paid dinner reservations, pre-paid golf rounds, tickets for travel, dinner ware, decorative table settings, electronic accessories, and the like.

Please start collecting silent auction items next month (August) so that items can be prepared and priced. Also, please call our parish office, or Fr. Ted regarding dates and times for these items to be brought to the church.

Registration material for participating in the golf tournament will be sent out in the near future. St. George golfers: make plans to join in for this important event and bring your friends! The tournament will be held at **Desert Willow Golf Resort in Palm Desert.**