

APRIL 10, 2022

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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# THE LADDER

ST. MARY OF EGYPT

## 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.

## OUR OFFERING TO GOD

Today's Gospel passage begins with the words of Christ, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be given over to the high-priests and scribes and they will condemn Him to death." (St. Mark 10:33). With these words, we also prepare to go up to Jerusalem with Christ so that we can crucify our worldly desires and live the Resurrection for eternity.

Christ is God, Who loves us so much that He gives His life for us. Christ is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Indeed, our

Lord's journey to Jerusalem is an entirely voluntary act of God's love.

St. Gregory the Theologian in his writing entitled, "The Second Oration on Pascha," says, "[Why] did the Blood of His Only-Begotten Son delight the Father, Who would not receive even the Isaac, when he was being offered by his father?...because humanity was in need of being sanctified by the Humanity of God, that He might deliver us Himself and overcome the tyrant of death, drawing us to Himself by meditation of His Son..." (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,

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**ST. MARY OF EGYPT** -- Having committed many sins. When she wanted to worship the Holy Cross at the church in Jerusalem, there was a divine force that prevented her from doing so. In response, St. Mary decided to change her way of life and reconcile herself to God by means of repentance. Invoking our Lady the Theotokos as her Protectress, she asked her to open the way for her to worship the Cross, and vowed that she would renounce the world. And thus, returning once again to the church, she entered easily. When she had worshipped the precious Cross, she departed that same day from Jerusalem and passed over the Jordan. She went into the inner wilderness and for forty-seven years lived a most harsh manner of life, surpassing human strength, giving herself over to prayer and contemplation of God. She prayed to God alone. Toward the end of her life, she met a certain hermit named Zosimas. She appeared to him with a divine countenance and she related to him her life from the beginning. She requested of him to bring her the immaculate Mysteries that she might partake of them. According to her request, he did this the following year on Holy and Great Thursday. She is commemorated also on the Fifth Sunday of Great Lent. Her life was recorded by St. Sophronius of Jerusalem.

Proverbs: "Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge; but whoever hates reproof is foolish." (Proverbs 12:1)



Στη σημερινή Ευαγγελική περικοπή ακούσαμε ότι ο Χριστός ήθελε να πάει στην Ιερουσαλήμ, παρόλο που ήξερε ότι επρόκειτο να υποστεί θάνατο στον Σταυρό για τη Σωτηρία μας. Με τη σειρά μας, προετοιμαζόμεθα κι εμείς να ανεβούμε στην Ιερουσαλήμ με τον Χριστό για να σταυρώσουμε τις εγκόσμιες επιθυμίες μας και να ζήσουμε την εν Χριστώ Ανάσταση. Η πορεία Του στην Ιερουσαλήμ είναι μια εντελώς εθελοντική πράξη αγάπης του Θεού.

Από τον Σταυρό δίνεται σε εμάς το πολύτιμο Σώμα και Αίμα του Χριστού που είναι η πραγματική συγχώρεση του Θεού για τον καθένα μας, που λειτουργεί μέσα μας, δημιουργώντας την επιθυμία να μετανοήσουμε για τις αμαρτίες μας. Η τήρηση των εντολών του Θεού είναι η ευγνωμοσύνη μας προς τον Θεό για την αγάπη Του.

Η μετάνοια σημαίνει ότι ζούμε για τη δόξα του Σωτήρος μας Χριστού. Το να ζούμε για αυτόν τον σκοπό περιλαμβάνει όλες τις δυνάμεις μας.

Αυτός είναι ο τρόπος ζωής που μας προσφέρεται μέσω του παραδείγματος της Αγίας Μαρίας της Αιγύπτου, της οποίας τη μνήμη τιμούμε σήμερα. Είναι ο τρόπος ζωής των αγίων που μας κάνει συμμετέχοντας στη θεία χάρη της αγάπης του Θεού για όλη την ανθρωπότητα και για όλη τη δημιουργία -- προσφέροντας τα «όλα» μας για όλα που είναι του Θεού.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

Second Edition, Vol. 7, pg. 431). The precious Body and Blood of Christ given to us from the Cross is the real forgiveness of God for each of us. In His forgiveness, we find the desire to repent of our sins, which is our thanksgiving to God for our Salvation.

Repentance means that we live for the glory of Christ our God and Savior. Living in this way involves our whole being, as is expressed when we offer the First Prayer of the Faithful in the Presanctified Divine Liturgy: *“O God, great and praised, through the life-giving death of Your Christ, You have borne us from corruption to immortality. Liberate all our senses from killing passion, setting over them as a benevolent sovereign our inner reason. Let the eye be averted from every evil sight, and the ear be deaf to idle talk. May the tongue be purged of unseemly speech. Purify these lips that praise You, Lord. Make our hands abstain from wicked deeds, doing only such things as are pleasing to You, thus sealing with Your grace all our members and our mind.”* (The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, Narthex Press, pg. 25).

A beautiful example of actually living in accordance with this prayer is that of St. Mary of Egypt, whose memory we commemorate today. It is the life-style of sainthood that makes us participants in the divine grace of God’s love for all of humanity and for all of creation -- offering our “all” for all that is from God.

+FR. THEODORE

**MEMORIAL** - Today’s Memorial Service is for the Eternal Life and Salvation for the servant of God, **Chris Laskaris (1 year)**, the beloved husband of **Annette Laskaris** (our choir director). Also included in today’s Memorial Service are: **Fr. George and Presvytera Helen Laskaris, Fr. Panagiotis and Presvytera Stamatoula Laskaris, and Dimitrios Laskaris**. Fr. George, Fr. Panagiotis and Dimitrios are the beloved brothers of Chris Laskaris. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Life and Salvation to **Chris Laskaris, Fr. George and Presvytera Helen Laskaris ; Fr. Panagiotis and Presvytera Stamatoula Laskaris, and Dimitrios Laskaris**, and may He grant peace and comfort to **Annette Laskaris**. **MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE ETERNAL!**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL RETREAT** - Our **Sunday School Lenten Retreat** will take place on **Friday, April 15th, at our St. George church, beginning at 10:00 a.m.** All of the children of our parish are most welcome to join in the activities of this educational experience, through which they will learn about Great Lent and our Holy Orthodox Christian way of life. Many thanks to our Sunday School teachers, **Athena Snarskis, Melissa Hawkins and Ana Storton** for all their devoted efforts for the spiritual education of our children.

## 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 9: 11-14

Brethren, when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

GOSPEL - St. Mark 10: 32-45

At that time, Jesus took his twelve disciples, and he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and

after three days he will rise." And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant of James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

### WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tuesday, April 12th.....Bible Study 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, April 13th...Presanctified Divine Liturgy - 6:30 p.m.

Friday, April 15th.....Sunday School Lenten Retreat: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 16th.....THE SATURDAY OF LAZARUS

Orthros-8:30 a.m./ Divine Liturgy - 9:30 a.m.

Preparation of the church sanctuary for Palm Sunday

**PHILOPTOCHOS** - Luminary Candles-the Philoptochos will have a table set up after church to sell **Luminary Candles for Holy Friday**. (see flier). Also, we are announcing our Philoptochos Lenten Food Sale--the Philoptochos is selling several Lenten food items including gigantes, dolmas, & halva. The Philoptochos **Easter Bake Sale** will begin **April 10th** offering bread, koulourakia, paximathia, kourembiethes, melamakarona, baklava, & karidopita.

**ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT** - Our **St. George Golf Tournament** will be held on **Saturday, April 30, 2022 at the Desert Willow Golf Resort in Palm Desert**. Enclosed is the registration and reservation form. We ask everyone to help make this event successful by having golfers register for the tournament and making reservations for the awards dinner which will follow. We are in need of silent auction items. Please contact **Fr. Ted** to arrange for delivery of silent auction items to the church office.