

**FEBRUARY 20, 2022**

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

**74-109 Larrea Street  
Palm Desert, California 92260**

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# THE LADDER

*THE SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON*



## **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.*

## **THE MEANS OF OUR SALVATION**

The meaning of the Parable of the Prodigal Son becomes clear as we celebrate the Divine Liturgy.

All of humanity is the Prodigal Son. Like the Prodigal Son, we have all rebelled against our Father in Heaven, asking for what is “ours” in order to live in “freedom” from His authority and do whatever we want.

The Thanksgiving Prayer in the Divine Liturgy alludes to the father of the Parable with these words, “*It is fitting and*

*right to sing of You, to bless You...You brought us into being out of nothingness, and when we had fallen, raised us up again, leaving nothing undone until You could lead us to heaven and grant us Your future kingdom. For all these things we thank You and Your Only-Begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit...”*

The gratitude of the Prodigal Son is seen in his repentance. Without gratitude to God, true repentance is impossible. Yet, it was only after he had fallen into a miserable state that the

*Continued on page 2*

## **NOTES ABOUT THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON AS VIEWED IN THE TRADITION OF THE SAINTS OF OUR CHURCH**

1. The Prodigal Son’s request for his portion of goods indicates Man receiving his free will and his rational mind from God. As Adam did in Eden, the younger son uses these possessions to rebel against his father. The far away country represents life in exile from God.
2. The “feeding swine” could rightly be called “Jewish Skid Row.” The Prodigal Son could not have sunk any lower.
3. The Prodigal Son “came to himself.” A person immersed in sin is living outside his true self (Romans 7:17-20). The Prodigal realizes his hopeless condition. The bread symbolizes Christ, Who is known through the Scriptures and the Eucharist.
4. The father ran to the Prodigal. This self-humiliation for the sake of the lost indicates the way in which our Heavenly Father, through Christ’s sacrifice, actively seeks those who go astray.
5. The robe signifies baptism (righteousness); the ring is family identity (life in the Church) and the sandals refer to walking according to the Gospel

(Source: *Orthodox Study Bible*, pg. 1397)



Το νόημα της Παραβολής του Ασωτού γίνεται σαφές καθώς εκτελούμε την Θεία Λειτουργία.

Όλη η ανθρωπότης είναι ο Άσωτος Υιός. Όπως ο Άσωτος Υιός, όλοι έχουμε επαναστατήσει εναντίον στον Επουράνιον Πατέρα μας, ζητώντας ό,τι είναι «δικό μας» για να ζήσουμε «ελεύθεροι» από την εξουσία Του και να κάνουμε ό,τι θέλουμε.

Η Ευχή της Αναφοράς κατά την εκτέλεση της Θ. Λειτουργίας σχετίζεται με τον πατέρα της Παραβολής με αυτά τα λόγια: «*Αξιον και δίκαιον Σε υμνεῖν, ... Σὺ ἐκ τοῦ μη ὄντος εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς παρήγαγες και παραπεσόντας ἀνέστησας πάλιν, και οὐκ ἀπέστης πάντα ποιῶν, εὼς ἡμᾶς εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνήγαγες...*»

Διὰ μέσου της Θείας Κοινωνίας μεταλαμβάνουμεν το πραγματικό Σώμα και Αἷμα του Σωτήρος μας, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ σε ἀνάμνηση ὅλων ὅσων κάνει για να μας σώσει ἀπὸ την καταστροφή. Το Σώμα και το Αἷμα Του εθυσιάστηκαν στον Σταυρό προς συγχώρηση των αμαρτιῶν μας. Ο Σταυρός είναι το μέσο του Θεου με το οποίο πάντοτε αναζητά την σωτηρία μας, ὅπως ο πατέρας εσυμπονοῦσε τον Άσωτο Υιό. Γι' αυτό, ὅταν ο ιερεὺς σηκῶνει το Δισκοπότηρο και εκφωνεῖ, «*Τα Σα ἐκ των Σων*», κάνει το Σημεῖο του Σταυροῦ κρατώντας το Δισκοπότηρο.

Ο σκοπός της Θ. Εξομολογήσεως είναι να εἴμεθα υπόλογοι ἐνώπιον του Κυρίου μας - να ζητήσουμε συγχώρηση με το να αποφύγουμε την αμαρτιαν. Ο σκοπός της Θ. Κοινωνίας είναι να εἴμεθα ἐνωμένοι στην ἀγάπη του Θεοῦ, ὥστε να συνεχίσουμε να αποφύγουμε την αμαρτιαν.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

Prodigal Son called to mind the things for which he was grateful for his father, who cared not only for him as his son, but for his hired workers, as well; for, he thought, *"How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare?"* His words of repentance were these: *"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you..."* The Communion Prayers of the Divine Liturgy parallel this sentiment, *"I believe, Lord, and confess that You are the Christ, Son of the living God, Who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the greatest."*

In the Sacrament of Holy Communion, we receive the very Body and Blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ in remembrance of all that He does in order to save us from destruction. His Body and Blood were sacrificed on the Cross in order to forgive us. The Cross is His means by which He is always seeking our salvation, just like the father saw the Prodigal Son far away and had compassion on him. This is why, when the priest raises the Chalice and the Paten and intones, *"Offering You these gifts from Your own gifts in all and for all,"* he makes the Sign of the Cross with the Chalice and the Paten.

Like the Prodigal Son, we confess our sin and God forgive us. However, we must remember that the Prodigal Son confessed his sin of rebellion against his father, which led to even more sins of debauchery. We, too, are to confess our sins. The purpose of Holy Confession is for us to be accountable before our Lord; to seek forgiveness by making efforts to avoid sin. It makes no sense to seek forgiveness and to continue sinning. The purpose of Holy Communion is for us to be united in God's love so that we have the spiritual strength and wisdom to keep from sinning so that we can inherit a place at our Lord's eternal banquet.

FR.THEODORE

**AHEPA -- THE MOVIE: MAN OF GOD** -- Our AHEPA 528 Chapter is organizing a **group screening** for the movie *Man of God*, which is scheduled to be shown in theaters on a one-time basis. See the flier on the last page of today's *Ladder!* For tickets, information and more details, see **Wynn Storton, Nick Latkovic, Fr. Ted, or other AHEPA members** after the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Sundays, beginning this Sunday.

**SOCIAL TUESDAYS** - Every Tuesday, parishioners are invited to our parish hall for Bible Study and fellowship activities, beginning at 10:00 a.m. To RSVP, contact our parish office assistant, **Vincent Gandrillon at (760) 844-2026**, or **Fr. Ted at (760)880-5869**.

**ST.GEORGE PARISH LENTEN RETREAT** - **Saturday, April 2, 2022**. See Enclosed flier.

**DATA BASE & PARISH DIRECTORY** - Anyone aware of parishioners who do not receive our parish information via email or regular mail is asked to inform our parish office at **(760) 568-9901**, or at **[pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com)** (email) as soon as possible so that they can be contacted.

## 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,*

### EPISTLE — 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Brethren, "all things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body and in your spirit which belong to God.

### GOSPEL — St. Luke 15:11-32

The Lord said this parable: "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him

into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

## WEEKDAY CALENDAR

MEMORIAL -- Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Spyridon Astmos (40 days)**, a beloved member of our parish, Parish Council member and Altar Server. **MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

Tuesday, February 22nd..... "Social Tuesday" ...Bible Study-10:00 a.m. followed by fellowship activities.  
Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82779591017?pwd=VGNYSUZpb1E3NlA1Q>

Wednesday, February 23rd...Bible Study – 6:30 p.m. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86111452564>

Saturday, February 26th.....SATURDAY OF SOULS

Orthros-8:00 a.m./ Divine Liturgy-9:00 a.m.

(Note that services begin a half-hour earlier than normal.)



ARIS  
SERVETALIS

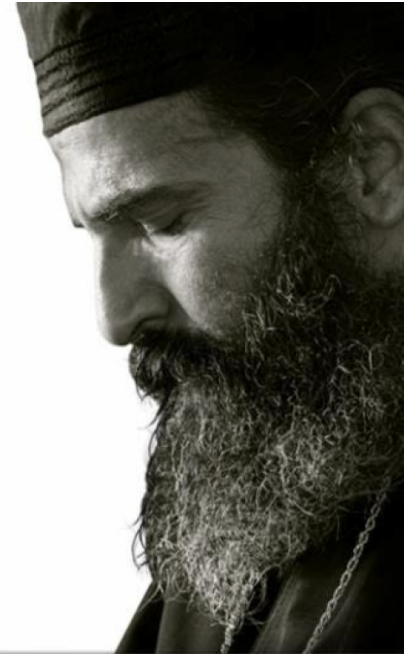
ALEXANDER  
PETROV

MICKEY  
ROURKE

# MAN OF GOD

IN SELECT MOVIE THEATRES  
MON. MARCH 21 ONLY

#MANOFGODTHEMOVIE



**Coming to 800 theatres on March 21st as a one-night only**

AHEPA 528 Chapter is organizing a group screening for the movie *Man of God*, which is scheduled to be shown in theaters on a one-time basis. The movie is an inspiring documentary about the life of our beloved St. Nektarios of Aigina, the Wonderworker. We are inviting all our St. George parishioners to become members of our group, joining together to see this movie at the Century Theater at the River on Monday, March 21, 2022. Showtime is 7:00 p.m.; we want to assemble as a group at the theater at 6:30 p.m.

**WE BOOKED THE THEATRE SEATS AND SELLING TICKETS FOR  
\$12.50 each seat**

*You will receive your ticket at time of purchase*

**PLEASE JOIN AS GROUP TO CELEBRATE THIS MOVIE PREMIERE.**

**CHECKS MADE OUT TO *AHEPA CHAPTER 528***

## ***ABOUT MAN OF GOD***

Exiled unjustly, convicted without a trial and slandered without cause, St. Nektarios of Aegina's life was one of persecution and prosecution. A priest of the common people, St. Nektarios's popularity provoked the jealousy of the clergy in Alexandria and, as a result, he was defrocked and expelled from Egypt. In contrast to his religious "superiors", Nektarios cared for the poor, taught peasant girls to read and write, and performed miracles. Even his last moment on earth was used to help another: upon his death, Nektarios' undergarment was removed, and as it fell upon a paralyzed man in the hospital bed next to him, the lame man miraculously arose to walk. Nektarios was recognized as a saint in the Eastern Orthodox Church in 1961, and his feast day is celebrated Nov. 9. The music for the film was composed by two-time French Cesar winner Zbigniew Preisner with special performance by Golden Globe winner Lisa Gerrard.



**ST. GEORGE GREEK  
ORTHODOX CHURCH  
PARISH LENTEN RETREAT  
SATURDAY & SUNDAY,**

**74-109 LARREA STREET, PALM DESERT, CA**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 2ND - 10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.**

**(ST. GEORGE PARISH HALL)**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 3RD - ORTHROS - 8:30 A.M./ DIVINE LITURGY - 9:30 A.M.**

**(ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH)**

**SPEAKER:**

**FR. PHILIP ZYMARIS, THD**

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF LITURGICS**

**HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX  
THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL**

**CHURCH TOURS**

**Sat. April 2, 2022**

**12:30 p.m.- 1:15 p.m.**

**5:00 - 5:30 p.m.**

**"THE DIVINE LITURGY: THE EXPERIENCE OF HUMAN FLOURISHING"**

- "THE MEANING BEHIND THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENTS"
- "BECOMING CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM: THE PRAYERS, HYMNOLOGY, ARCHITECTURE AND ICONOGRAPHY THAT FORM US."

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**REGISTRATION: \$20 (INCLUDES LUNCH)**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**CELL PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**R.S.V.P BY: FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 2022**

**CHECKS PAYABLE TO: ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH. IN MEMO, WRITE: "PARISH RETREAT."**