

JANUARY 30, 2022

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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Palm Desert, California 92260**

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THE LADDER

THE THREE HOLY HIERARCHS



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.

DEFINING CHRISTIAN TERMS

There are “common threads” that run through the individual lives of our Saints that tie them together as Orthodox Christian Saints. First, their teachings is the same as that preached by the Holy Apostles themselves. Their teaching therefore is part of Apostolic Tradition. Second, their worship and way of life is consistent with that of the Holy Apostles, which is yet another part of Apostolic Tradition.

Regardless of gender, race, or place,

Orthodox Christian Saints can be found in every generation, with their preaching and way of life being truly Apostolic.

Today, we commemorate the Three Holy Hierarchs, St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St. John Chrysostom. However, in commemorating them, we must have in mind that we commemorate their faith and their view of life. They put into words what both all women and men Saints have put into practice and the reasons

THE ROLE OF GODPARENTS -- *“The institution of godparents (sponsors) is one that dates back to the first century of the Christian Church. Anyone approaching baptism, be they infant or adult, was required to have a godparent. In the case of an infant, it is the godparent that speaks for the child, answering the questions posed by the priest during the baptismal service. But it doesn’t stop there! The godparent is charged by the Church with the duty to make sure the newly baptized is instructed in the teachings of the Church, remains a frequent communicant within the Church and remains active in the Church. In the case of a child, it is to the godparents that the parents entrust their child, knowing that the godparent will remain actively supporting the child within the life of the Church. Should something happen to the parents, it is traditionally the godparent who will make sure the child continues to be taken to church, and remains Orthodox.*

Because of the awesome responsibility of godparents, it is all the more important that great care be taken when choosing someone who will take on this role. The Church does not allow anyone to become a godparent who is not Orthodox, for how can one who is not himself a pious, active Orthodox Christian give witness to living a life immersed in the Orthodox faith? The godparent must...be able to inspire the newly baptized to fulfill their baptismal vows.”

-Taken from: the website of Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Houston, TX: website:

<https://www.agoc.org/our-faith/godparents-in-the-orthodox-church>



Πράγματι, δεν είναι απλώς οι θεολογικές λέξεις των Αγίων που μας βοηθούν πνευματικά. Είναι το νόημα των λέξεων όπως αντανakλώνται στην καθημερινή ζωή των που μας εμπνέει. Γι' αυτόν τον λόγο, μελετώντας τη Αγίαν Γραφή, πρέπει να κατανοήσουμε και τον τρόπο ζωής των Αγίων. Ο τρόπος ζωής των έδωσε ορισμούς στις λέξεις που διαβάζουμε και ακούμε. Η λέξη «ο γάμος», για παράδειγμα, ορίζεται από τους Αγίους, σύμφωνα με την Αποστολική Παράδοση, ως ζωή *θυσίας* και *σεβασμού* στην προσπάθεια να σωθούν οι ψυχές ενός ανδρός, μιάς γυναίκας και του παιδιού των. Δεν είναι απλώς ένα «νόμιμο συμβόλαιο» ή μία κενή έκφραση, σαν αυτό που ακούμεν από τους ερωτευμένους: «Αγαπιόμαστε!»

Για τους Αγίους, η λέξη «λατρεία» σημαίνει «την προσπάθεια να κάνουμε όλα όσα δοξάζουν τον Θεό». Επομένως, ο άνθρωπος πρέπει να ζει έναν καθημερινό τρόπο ζωής που να αντανakλά την αγάπη του Θεού και τη συγχώρεση του Θεού, επειδή είμεθα *εγνωμονες* για την αγάπη του Θεού και τη συγχώρεση του Θεού, που εκφράζεται ως ο συνεχής εκτέλεση της Λειτουργίας -- δηλαδή η «Θεία Ευχαριστία» αφού ευχαριστούμεν τον Θεόν. Η Λατρεία δεν σημαίνει «ψυχαγωγία» ή «προσωπικός εμπλουτισμός.»

Ας μνημονεύουμε τους Αγίους Τρεις Ιεράρχες (τον Βασίλειον, τον Γρηγόριον τον Θεολόγον, και τον Ιωάννην του Χρυσόστομον) χωρίς να εγκαταλείψουμε ποτέ τις προσωπικές μας προσπάθειες να μάθουμε για τις διδασκαλίες των και μετά να βάλουμε αυτές τις διδασκαλίες στις δικές μας σκέψεις και στις πράξεις μας.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

for which they put them into practice. Their scholarly Christian understandings about philosophy were echoed by other outstanding Saints of our Church, such as St. Athanasios and St. Spyridon, among others, regardless of the generation in which they lived. St. Katherine is known for her grasp of rhetoric equal to that of the Three Hierarchs. The Abbess, St. Irene Chrysovalandou drew from St. Basil's writings and inspired her generation in her own style.

Indeed, it is not only the words of the Saints that help us spiritually; it is the *meaning* of the words as they are reflected in daily life that inspires us. It is for this reason that, in studying the Bible, we must also understand the way of life of the Saints. Their way of life give definitions to the words that we read and hear. The word "marriage," for example, is defined by the Saints, in accordance with Apostolic Tradition, as a life of *sacrifice* and *respect* in the effort to save the souls of a man, a woman, and their child. It is not simply a "legal contract," or the ultimate expression of temporarily "being in love."

For the Saints, the word "worship" means "the effort to do all things that glorify God." Therefore, one is to live a daily life-style that reflects the love of God and the forgiveness of God, because we are *grateful* for the love of God and the forgiveness of God. This gratitude is expressed as the on-going celebration of the Liturgy -- also known as "Eucharistia," or Eucharist (which means *gratitude*). Worship does not mean "entertainment" or "personal enrichment."

Let us commemorate the Saints today by never giving up in our personal efforts to learn about their thoughts and words, and then to put those thoughts and words into our way of thinking and our view or life according to their divine and *Apostolic meanings*.

+FR. THEODORE

MEMORIAL - Today's Memorial is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Presvytera Mary Kosturos**, the beloved mother of **Paul Kosturos**. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Salvation to **Presvytera Mary Kosturos** and may He grant peace and comfort to **Paul Kosturos** and the entire family. MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

GODPARENT SUNDAY -- Today is **Godparent Sunday!** Godparents are invited to worship together with their Godchildren and also attend Sunday School classes. Let us call to mind the beauty of the Sacrament of Baptism and to continue to commit ourselves and one another to Christ our God.

PHILOPTOCHOS --The monthly Philoptochos General Meeting will be held Monday, Jan. 31st at the church hall. Lunch is scheduled for 11:30 AM & the meeting will begin at noon. Our guest presenter is from SafeHouse of the Desert, an organization that assists youths who have been victims of human trafficking.

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 -- Hebrews 13:7-16

Brethren, remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their lives, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings; for it is well that the heart be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited their adherents. We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go forth to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come. Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have,

for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

GOSPEL -- St. Matthew 5:14-19

The Lord said to his disciples, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, January 31st.....Philoptochos General Members Meeting - 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, February 1st.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m. (Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82779591017?pwd=VGNYSUZpb1E3NlA1QlozRUc4SzBxZz09>)

Wednesday, February 2nd.....PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m./ Bible Study - 6:30 p.m. (Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86111452564>)

Thursday, February 3rd..... Choir Practice - 1:00 p.m.

CONGRATULATIONS OUR 2022 PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS:

Parish President.....Chris Maletis

Parish Treasurer.....Nicholas Latkovic

Parish Vice-President.....Nicholas Kaperonis

Parish Secretary.....Tina Veroulis*

*Tina Veroulis was elected to assist Nicholas Latkovic as Assistant Treasurer.

GREEK FOLK DANCE LESSONS -- Today, following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, those who are interested in signing up for Greek Folk Dance lessons are asked to see **Angeliki Pagoulatos** in our parish hall. Lessons are planned to be offered on Sunday afternoons, after the conclusion of our Divine Church Services. More details to be discussed as people sign up.

STEWARDSHIP -- Our Stewardship Sunday is planned for **February 6th**. Please bring your 2022 Pledge Cards to church on or before this date as we will be collecting them in order to be blessed during a special prayer service. Thank you.

SAVE-THE-DATE ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. GEORGE PARISH LENTEN RETREAT

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, April 2, 2022 at St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Palm Desert, California. The theme is: **"The Divine Liturgy: The Experience of Human Flourishing."** The speaker will be: **Fr. Philip Zymaris**, Assistant Professor of Liturgics at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School in Brookline, Massachusetts. Details to follow soon!

ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, April 30, 2022 at Desert Willow Golf Resort, Palm Desert, California. Details and registration forms will be sent out very soon.



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

ARCHIEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 11/2022

Archiepiscopal Encyclical on the Feast of the Three Hierarchs and the Day of Greek Letters

Unto....the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America.

"The Hierarchs of Christ, the pride of the Fathers, the pillars of the Faith, and the Teachers and guardians of the Faithful" (Great Vespers of the Three Hierarchs)

My Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Feast of the Sainly Three Hierarchs — Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom — is an occasion of the greatest joy in the Church. Together, as the hymn says, they stand as "pillars of the Faith," much like those established in the Book of Revelation when the Lord says: "I will make the victor a pillar in the Temple of My God.... (3:12). Indeed, each of these great Hierarchs was victorious, triumphing over heresy and sophistry. They were the finest examples of the Wisdom of God, who establishes Her own pillars (cf. Proverbs 9:1) to edify the House of God.

As exemplars of true philosophy, each Hierarch embodies what we call "Greek Letters," by which we mean the sum and substance of Hellenic culture, language, arts, and sciences. Greek Letters are the building blocks of Western civilization, and the intellectual tools which have shaped its worldview. They are also the means by which the "Preparation of the Gospel" was effected. On the one hand, there was the person of Saint John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the coming of the Lord to Israel. On the other hand, there was the genius that shone in the lands of ancient Hellas — a genius that not only prepared the Old Testament in the Greek Language (i.e., the Septuagint), but through the expansion of Hellenism through Alexander the Great, spread the fertile mind of Greece to the exact regions where the Gospel would be preached by the Apostles.

Thus, these Three Hierarchs of Christ, became the "Teachers and guardians of the Faithful," precisely because they paved the way for the best of the Greek heritage to become the handmaiden of the Lord, just like the Theotokos, who brought forth Christ in the world. Following them, "the pride of the Fathers," let us bring forth Christ in our lives with the fullness of our Hellenic inheritance.

With paternal love in our Lord Jesus Christ,
† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America

PRAYER FOR GODPARENT SUNDAY

A PRAYER

Blessed are You, O Lord Almighty, Source of all good things, Sun of Righteousness, Who sheds forth upon those who were in darkness the light of salvation, through the manifestation of Your Only Begotten Son, our God: and Who have given unto us, unworthy though we be, blessed purification through hallowed water, and divine sanctification, through life-creating Chrismation; Who have been graciously pleased to regenerate these Your servants through the only One Baptism by water and the Spirit, granting unto them remission of sins, whether voluntary or involuntary, and granting also unto them the seal of the gift of Your Holy, Almighty and adorable Spirit, and participation in the Holy Body and the precious Blood of Your Christ. Keep them in Your sanctification; confirm them in the Orthodox faith; deliver them from the Evil One and from his evil snares. And preserve them in purity and uprightness, through the saving fear of You. That they may please You in every one of their deeds and words, and may prove themselves to be children and heirs of Your heavenly Kingdom. For you are our God, the God of mercy and salvation, and unto You we ascribe glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

Kindness Counts Project

Assorted Greeting Cards Sale!

Made by our St. George Sunday School Students, showing how to **Color the World with Kindness** by giving encouragement to others! Blank inside, for your own personal message, envelopes included! **Great for any occasion!**

Call Rhonda (714) 875-4661 or
St. George Church (760) 568-9901

Single Card	\$2.00
Pack of 6	\$10.00
Pack of 12	\$20.00



Sponsored by:

The Ladies Philoptochos Society of Saint
George, Chapter 4035



Kindness Counts Initiative

St George Greek Orthodox of the Desert
74109 Larrea Street – Palm Desert, CA 92260

Our St. George Sunday School students have elected to donate all sales proceeds to:

1. Our local Feed the Hungry Projects!
2. Send Girl Scout Cookies and THANK YOU messages, using our cards, to our Eisenhower Health Hospital frontline workers for all their hard work, love, compassion and dedication during this pandemic!