

**MAY 1, 2022**

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

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# THE LADDER

ST. THOMAS SUNDAY

## Mailing Address:

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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.*

## CHRIST IS IN OUR MIDST!

Characteristic of both today's Epistle and Gospel passages is that they reveal the wonders of our Lord, which He worked through His Apostles, as well as through those who followed them.

From the naïve point of view of ancient Greek sages, when Peter's shadow fell upon the paralytic and healed him, Peter would be a god, just like Zeus. In addition, the other Disciples of Christ would be gods, since the Risen Jesus

performed "signs and wonders" through His Apostles. I would imagine that having mocked Paul for preaching to them about the "Unknown God, Jesus," after learning of the wonders that our Lord performed through the Apostles, they would assume that the other Apostles were gods, as well. Indeed, Jesus Christ, having risen from the dead, has given to individual human beings the grace to participate in His great powers, so that wonders can be per-

*Continued on page 2*

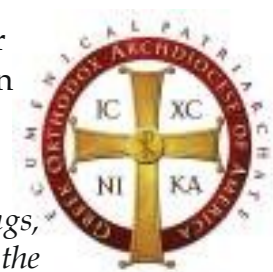
**THE SUNDAY OF ST. THOMAS** -- The Orthodox Church observes the Sunday of Thomas one week following the celebration of the Sunday of Holy Pascha. The day commemorates the appearance of Christ to His disciples. It also commemorates the appearance of the Lord to His disciples eight days later when Thomas was present and proclaimed "My Lord and my God" upon seeing the hands and side of Christ.

This Sunday is also called Antipascha (meaning "in the stead of Pascha," not "in opposition to Pascha") because with this day, the first Sunday after Pascha, the Church consecrates every Sunday of the year to the commemoration of Pascha, that is, the Resurrection.

*Taken from our Archdiocese website: [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)*

Note: This Sunday we commemorate the love of our Risen Christ through which He dispelled the doubts of St. Thomas and we call to mind the confession of St. Thomas, that Christ is truly our Lord and God. Commemoration of St. Thomas himself is held on October 6th every year.

Hymn for St. George in English: *"As the liberator of captives and the defender of the poor; as physician of the ailing, the champion of kings, beseech Christ our God, O Great Martyr George, Standard-bearer, for the salvation of our souls.*



Χαρακτηριστικό και των σημερινών περικοπών της Επιστολής και του Ευαγγελίου είναι ότι αποκαλύπτουν τα θαύματα του Κυρίου μας, τα οποία έκανε μέσω των Αποστόλων Του, καθώς και μέσω αυτών που τους ακολούθησαν. Το ότι ο Θεός όλης της δημιουργίας αγαπά τόσο τον καθένα μας που, μέσω του Θανάτου και της Αναστάσεως του Μονογενοῦς Υιού Του, δίνει σε οποιονδήποτε από εμάς τη δύναμη να κάνει τα θαύματά Του είναι κάτι πολύ συγκλονιστικό. Ο θάνατος και η Ανάσταση του Χριστού έχουν μια θεία χάρη που κάνει τον καθένα μας ένα ορισμένο θεϊκό ον. Είμεθα σαν θεοί, γιατί είμεθα τέκνα του Θεού με υιοθεσία δια μεσου του Ιησού Χριστού. Τελικά, μέσω της Αναστάσεως εκ νεκρών του Χριστού ξεφεύγουμε τον θάνατον.

Όταν μελετούμε τις αμαρτίες μας και αναλογιζόμεθα την «απανθρωπιά του ανθρώπου προς τον άνθρωπο» και σκεφτόμεθα τη μανία του ατελούς κόσμου, ας θυμηθούμε επίσης το έλεος του Χριστού -- τις φορές που μας εδόθηκε θάρρος να βοηθήσουμε τα θύματα της «απανθρωπιάς του ανθρώπου προς τον άνθρωπο» και τις στιγμές που μπορέσαμε, με τη βοήθεια του Θεού, να μετανοήσουμε τις αμαρτίες -- και, ακόμη, ας έχουμε στον νουν τα δώρα επιδή υπάρχουν άνθρωποι που μας έχει δώσει ο Θεός στη ζωή μας. Ας είμαστε ευγνώμονες για το γεγονός ότι ο Θεός έσβησε τις αμφιβολίες μας δείχνοντάς μας την αγάπη Του, όπως έκανε για τον Άγ. Θωμά.

Μάλιστα! Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη!

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

formed through union with Him. It is mind-boggling that the God of all creation so loves each us that, through the Death and Resurrection of His Only-Begotten Son, any one of us can be given the grace to do wonders. Peter is certainly not God; but Peter does what God does! His shadow heals. Later, he raises Tabitha, from the dead. Paul is not God; yet, Paul overcame the thorn in the flesh like Christ overcame crucifixion on the Cross. See? Christ's death and Resurrection have a divine grace that makes each of us divine, just like Peter and Paul. We are God's children by adoption through Jesus Christ the Only True God.

When we remember our own sins, or contemplate "man's inhumanity to man," as in the case of wars, or the raging of an imperfect world, as when we face natural disasters, we are tempted to think that God is mad at us and hates us. So, we might further be tempted to turn away from God, or to assume that God just doesn't exist. We are surrounded by doubts, just like in the case of St. Thomas.

When we remember our sins and contemplate "man's inhumanity to man" and think about the raging of the imperfect world, let us also remember the mercy of Christ our God -- the times we were given courage to help victims of "man's inhumanity to man;" the times when we were able, with God's help, to repent of a sin; and let us call to mind the gifts that we have in the people that God has given us in our lives -- and let us be thankful for the fact that God erased our doubts by showing us His love, like He did for St. Thomas. If we seek our Lord, we will know His love and confess that He is our Lord and our God. Knowing God's love gives us our strength.

Yes! Christ is Risen! Truly, He is Risen!

+FR. THEODORE

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## KIDS 'N CANCER

The annual Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos "Kids 'n Cancer" event will take place this evening at 7:00 p.m. in Newport Beach, California. Over the next few weeks, we look forward to everyone's participation in this event in terms of contributing financial blessings in order to maintain this vibrant ministry of our Holy Metropolis. Please see the officers of our parish Philoptochos Chapter, or call our parish office for more information. Plan on joining this event through live-streaming on Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89651833662>

## PHILOPTOCHOS GENERAL MEMBERS MEETING

The **Philoptochos General Meeting & Luncheon** will be on **May 9th, 2022 at 11:30 AM at Shield's Date Garden Restaurant** 80225 US Highway 111 Indio, CA. Let us all join together for our final meeting before the summer holiday begins. Please RSVP your attendance by Thursday, May 5th to Rhonda Latkovic via phone call, text or email. tel. 714-875-4661 or email: [r.s.fleminglatkovic@gmail.com](mailto:r.s.fleminglatkovic@gmail.com) Looking forward to seeing everyone at our luncheon meeting!

## 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 - Acts 5:12-20

In those days, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

GOSPEL - St. John 20: 19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them

His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe." Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to Him: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

## WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tuesday, May 3rd.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m.

**ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT** -- We offer thanks to God for the tireless efforts of **George Argyros** and his entire committee, who made our annual golf tournament a huge success. Our tournament was held yesterday at Desert Willow Golf Resort and we are indeed grateful to all who participated in this year's successful event.

**AHEPA** -- Applications for the **AHEPA 528 Fr. T. P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship** are now due. Scholarship awards will be given on **AHEPA Sunday, May 22nd**.