



SEPTEMBER 18, 2022

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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– Fr. Theodore Pantels,
Proistamenos (Pastor)

– Deacon Euthym Kon-
taxis, M.D.

Holy Communion Or-
der

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 LADDER

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 — Galatians 2:16-20

GOSPEL — St. Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

Brethren, you know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

THE BLESSING OF THE HOLY CROSS

Today is the "Sunday After the Exaltation of the Holy Cross," which we commemorated this past Wednesday. We continue to contemplate the role of the Holy Cross in our spiritual lives; for, the Cross of Christ is the ultimate reality. Upon the Cross Christ gave His suffering and death, in order to "buy" - or "ransom" - the very will of human beings. Certainly, God has no need of Christ's Body and Blood; and most definitely the devil is never worthy of His Body and Blood.

However, the sacrifice of Christ God upon the Cross, gave power to human nature and human will so that each person can be victorious "in Christ" over the devil and evil. Metropolitan Ierotheos of Nafpaktos writes: "We should understand that Christ, Who freed Adam from the devil and from death, gave the ability to each person, with His own power, to be victorious, within the limits of one's own personal life." (The Major Feast Days of the Lord, pg. 227).

Liturgical Notes for Today

Just prior to the Entrance of the Gospel: *"Save us, O Son of God, crucified in the flesh, we sing to You, Allelouia."*
At the Entrance of the Gospel: 1) Entrance Hymn: *"Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance, granting our rulers to prevail over adversaries, and protecting Your commonwealth by Your Cross"/ Σωσον Κυριε τον λαον σου...;* **2) Resurrection Hymn, Tone 5:** *"O faithful, let us sing a hymn of praise and worship to the Logos Who is co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, Who was born of the Virgin for our salvation. Of His own will, He went upon the Cross in the flesh and suffered death, to raise the dead through His glorious Resurrection."/ Τον συναναρχον Λογον...;* **3) Hymn for St. George. 4) Kontakion Hymn:** *"Lifted upon the Cross by Your free will, Christ God, grant mercies to the new commonwealth that bears Your Name. Gladden our faithful rulers by Your power, giving them victory over their adversaries. May Your alliance be for them, a weapon of peace, and invincible standard."/ Ο υψωθεις εν τω Σταυρω...*

WHY "DENY YOURSELF"?

Our Lord showed an example of what it means to *"deny yourself"* when He was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, addressing our Father, saying, *"Not my will but Yours be done."* It is consistent with the Lord's Prayer: *"Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."* (Matthew 6:10) -- not my will be done.

How do we live out this prayer in real-life terms? One thing is to recognize that quite often anger comes upon us when our own will is frustrated. The Holy Cross is the Sign of God's Love in our lives. Therefore, we are always welcome to turn to God and seek heavenly peace (as we hear during the Divine Liturgy). St. John Cassian confessed his own tendency to anger in his writing, entitled, *"On the Eight Vices,"* in which he shares how he had once become so angry that he was scared of the "monster" within him (See: *Philokalia [Kindle Edition]*). Certainly, anger is an "equal-opportunity" emotion. But, St. Paul cautions, *"Be angry, but do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath."* (Ephesian 4: 26). Still, it is sobering to consider that people's entire lives can change radically for the worse in just one instant of anger.

This is why, when anger wells up inside of us, our best weapon is the Sign of the Holy Cross of our Savior, Who from the Cross gives us the power to overcome evil, as we sing, *"Save, O Lord, Your people and bless Your inheritance...granting [us] victory...by Your Holy Cross."* The Sign of the Cross, even if we contemplate it in our minds, is itself a powerful prayer. The words of our Church ring true in proclaiming the Cross as a "weapon of peace." For, through the grace of the Holy Cross, Christ our God dissipates our anger; our sorrows, and worries, and we can begin to experience the words of St. Paul, who said, *"God works all things together for the good, for those who love Him."* (Romans 8:28).
 +FR. THEODORE

Ο Χριστός έδειξε ένα καλό παράδειγμα περί του τι σημαίνει να «*αρνηθείς τον εαυτόν σου*» όταν προσευχόταν στη Γεθσημανή, απευθυνόμενος στον επουράνιον Πατέρα, λέγοντας, «*ουχι το εμού το θέλημα, αλλά το Σου γένητο*» (Λκ. 22.42), όπως και το «Πάτερ Ημών», «*Γενηθήτω το θέλημά Σου, ως εν ουρανώ και επί της γης.*»

Πώς ζούμε αυτή την προσευχή στην καθημερινή ζωή; Πρώτον, ας αναγνωρίσουμε ότι πολύ συχνά ο άγχος μας έρχεται όταν η δική μας θέληση ματαιώνεται. Ο Τιμιος Σταυρός είναι το Σημείο της Αγάπης του Θεού. Ως εκ τούτου, είμεθα πάντοτε ευπρόσδεκτοι να στραφούμε στον Θεό και να αναζητήσουμε την άνωθεν ειρήνη (όπως ακούμε κατά τη Θεία Λειτουργία). Ο Άγιος Ιωάννης Κασσιανός ομολόγησε τη δική του τάση προς θυμό στο γραπτό του, με τίτλο «Περί των Οκτώ Παθών», στο οποίο ομολογεί πώς είχε θυμώσει κάποτε τόσο πολύ που φοβόταν το «τέρας» μέσα του. Σίγουρα, ο θυμός είναι ένα συναίσθημα «ίσων ευκαιριών» (που λέγεται). Ωστόσο, είναι της ζωτικής σημασίας να λάβουμε υπόψη ότι η ζωή ενός ανθρώπου μπορεί να αλλάξει ριζικά προς το χειρότερο σε μία μόνο στιγμή θυμού.

Τα λόγια της Εκκλησίας μας λένε την αλήθεια. Ο Σταυρός είναι ένα «*όπλον ειρήνης*». Διότι, διά της χάριτος του Τιμίου Σταυρού, ο Χριστός ο Θεός μας διαλύει την οργή μας, τις λύπες και τις στενοχώριες μας, και μπορούμε να αρχίσουμε να βιώνουμε στην πραγματικότητα τα λόγια του Αγίου Παύλου, ο οποίος είπε: «*Πάντα συνεργούσι προς το αγαθόν εις τους αγαπόντας τον Θεόν.*» (Ρωμ. 8:28).
 +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tuesday, September 20th.....No Bible Study this week.

Thursday, September 22nd.....Parish Council - 2:30 p.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL IS "JUST AROUND THE CORNER" --Next Sunday, September 25th, - Sunday School classes begin. Sunday School will be a **one-hour session with lunch for the students and parents. Adults are invited to join in a religious discussion group during the Sunday School class sessions. Many of our Sunday School lessons will be sent to you for the purpose of supplementing our Sunday School lessons with your children throughout each week, in the effort to **make God Real in our Orthodox Christian homes**.**

OUR ST. GEORGE PARISH DIRECTORY is currently available in our parish hall! We ask that our parishioners take one copy per household with them and to "sign-out" on the "Sign-out" form provided. Copies will be sent by postage mail to those who are unable to attend church services. We want to thank all of our parishioners who participated in this effort and who helped in meeting the needs required for publication.

FUNERAL SERVICES FOR MRS. EMILY TCHAROS

The schedule for the funeral services for Mrs. Emily Tcharos is as follows:

Monday, September 19, 2022 - Visitation at the St. George Greek Orthodox Church - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Trisagion Service at St. George Greek Orthodox Church - 7:00 p.m.
Reception in the parish hall- 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 20, 2022 - Funeral Service at St. George Greek Orthodox Church - 10:00 a.m.
Internment at Desert Memorial Park - 12:30 p.m.
Mercy Meal (Makaria) - 2:15 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, please contribute in Memory of Mrs. Emily Tcharos to our St. George Greek Orthodox parish here in Palm Desert.

PHILOPTOCHOS ANNOUNCEMENTS

1). We are currently building our **Saint George walk team for the Paint El Paseo Pink Walk** to benefit local cancer patients. The walk is on **Saturday, October 8th at 8:00 am**. A \$35 donation to Philoptochos gets you registered for the walk and an event tee shirt. See Margarita or Irene after church to sign-up.

2). **Philoptochos** in coordination with our **Sunday School will be building 50 hygiene kits for the homeless on Sunday, September 25th**. Anyone interested in helping out, please come to the church hall after liturgy.

3). Our **Philoptochos General Members** meeting will be help on **Monday, October 3rd at 11:30 am**.

FESTIVAL MEETING - Our St. George Greek Festival will take place on February 18-19, 2023. The first Festival Meeting of the year is scheduled for **Monday, September 26th at our parish hall at 4:00 p.m**. We need everyone's help and we look forward to everyone's participation at this important first Festival Meeting.

UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING – Sunday, October 2, 2022 - Lunch will be provided via donations. Presentations include: Report on the Results of the St. George Questionnaire (Embracing Converts); Report from Clergy-Laity Assembly; Report from National Philoptochos Convention; Report on Sunday School Renewal; Welcome Committee & Parish Retreats. Everyone is welcome to join in.

“PAINT EL PASEO PINK” – Saturday, October 8, 2022 – If you are interested in participating in this year’s **“PAINT EL PASEO PINK WALK”**, please see Rhonda Latkovic after church for a sign-up form. The walk will start at 8:00 AM. Through this event, funds are raised to help cure breast cancer. A donation of **\$35 payable to Ladies Philoptochos** covers the registration fee and includes a special event tee shirt!

BRING-A-FRIEND-TO-CHURCH SUNDAY – Sunday, October 16th is our Fall **“Bring-a-Friend-to-Church” Sunday**. All parishioners of St. George are asked to invite a friend to join us for worship in our beautiful St. George Church temple. We look forward to introducing our visitors to our congregation during our special coffee hour held in their honor.

ST. GEORGE PARISH FALL SPIRITUAL RETREAT – Please reserve **Saturday, November 12, 2022** to join fellow St. George parishioners for a special spiritual event -- our **St. George Parish Fall Retreat**. The theme for our Fall Parish Retreat is: **“Understanding the Divine Liturgy.”** It promises to be a special day to learn more about the meaning of our Divine Liturgy as we live out our daily lives. The day will begin at 10:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:00 p.m., with a superb lunch being served for all in attendance....Our speaker for our Fall Retreat is **Eve Tibbs**.

Eve Tibbs received her PhD from Fuller Theological Seminary and she is the affiliate assistant professor of theology at Fuller Theological Seminary. She just recently authored a most educational book about our Greek Orthodox Faith, entitled, *A Basic Guide to Eastern Orthodox Theology*. Copies of her book will be available in our parish book store. In addition, Eve Tibbs is the director of our Metropolis of San Francisco Christian Education Ministry. It is truly our honor to host her for this spiritual event in our parish!