



AUGUST 13, 2023

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT
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- Fr. Theodore Pantels,
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- 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—1 Corinthians 4:9-16
Brethren, God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things. I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.
GOSPEL— St. Matthew 17:14-23
At that time, a man came up to Him and kneeling before Him said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not heal him." And Jesus answered, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move hence to yonder place,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting." As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day."

LEAVE-TAKING OF THE FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD
Today is the "Leave-taking" of the Feast of our Lord's Transfiguration. "Leave-Taking" is a Liturgical term of our Holy Orthodox Church, which means that it is the final day of a days-long commemoration of a major Feast Day. Liturgically, a major Feast Day of our Lord or of the Most Holy Mother of God is not
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simply a one-day event; it is an event which is commemorated over eight days. This is because Orthodox Christians define “The “8th Day” as the Day of Eternal Life, on which the sun never sets. August 13th is the “Leave-Taking” for the Transfiguration; August 23rd is the “Leave-Taking” for the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God. The “Leave-Taking” for Pascha is 39 days (June 12th) in 2024—the 40th Day being our Lord’s Ascension on June 13th. Hence, some of the hymns that we heard last Sunday, when, as we celebrated our Lord’s Resurrection, we also celebrated our Lord’s Transfiguration, we will hear again this Sunday, since today is the “Leave-Taking” of the Feast of the Transfiguration, while we also celebrate our Lord’s Resurrection — as we do every Sunday. +FR. THEODORE

Liturgical Notes for Today

1. Instead of “Save us, O Son of God, Who arose from the dead...” **This Sunday, we sing, “Save us, O Son of God, Who was Transfigured on Mt. Tabor. We sing to You, Alleluia.”** /...ο εν τω ὄρει τῷ Θαβῶρ μεταμορφωθείς...
2. Entrance with the Holy Gospel: “You were transfigured on the Mount, Christ God, revealing Your glory to Your disciples, in so far as they could comprehend. Illuminate us sinners also with Your everlasting light, through the intercessions of the Theotokos, Giver of light, glory to You.” /Μετεμορφώθης εν τῷ ὄρει Χριστέ ο Θεός...
3. Instead of “Come let us worship and bow down before Christ...” **This Sunday, the following is chanted: “For You are the fountain of life: in Your life, we shall see light. Save us, O Son of God, Who was transfigured on Mount Tabor, as we sing to You, Alleluia.”**
4. “O Savior Your tomb was sealed by the Jews with a stone; soldiers kept watch over Your sacred Body. Yet, You rose on the third day, giving life to the world. Wherefore, the powers of heaven cried out to You, O Giver of Life, ‘Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ; glory to Your Kingdom; glory to Your dispensation, Who alone are the Loving One.” / Του λίθου σφραγισθέντος...
5. Repeat: “You were transfigured on the Mount, Christ God...”
6. Hymn of St. George: “Since you are a deliverer of captives...” [Ὡς τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτής...]
7. **Kontakion:** “You were transfigured upon the mount, O Christ our God, and Your disciples, in so far as they could bear, beheld Your glory. Thus, when they see You crucified, they may understand Your voluntary passion and proclaim to the world that You are truly the effulgence of the Father.” /Ἐπὶ τοῦ ὄρους Μετεμορφώθης...
8. Instead of “Axion Estin...” **This Sunday, the following hymn is sung: “Your childbirth occurred without corruption. It was God, wearing flesh, who came forth from your all-holy womb. He was seen upon the earth and lived among men, O Theotokos; therefore we all magnify you.”** / Ὁ τόκος σου ἀφθορος εδείχθη...
9. The Communion Hymn: “We shall walk in the light of the glory of Your face, O Lord, forever. Alleluia.” /Ἐν τῷ φωτὶ τῆς δόξης τοῦ προσώπου Σου ...

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Monday, August 14th — Great Vespers — 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, August 15th — THE DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m. (No Bible Study)
- NOTE: OUR CHOIR WILL RETURN TO WORSHIP ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2023. Choir practice will be on Thursday, August 31st. New Choir members are welcome. See Annette Laskaris.

FAITH, WILLPOWER, AND GRACE

Our Savior said, *“Truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed...nothing will be impossible to you.”* (St. Matthew 17: 20 & 22). He then reminded His Apostles that, with regard to expelling a demon, prayer and fasting are needed. Indeed, without faith in God, efforts in prayer and fasting are very weak. Faith in God is a matter of knowing that, with God’s grace, all good things are possible, since we are co-workers with God, bearing His Image and Likeness. Faith in God helps us to pray properly, *“For all that is good and profitable for our souls,”* as is exclaimed in the Divine Liturgy. It is faith in God that helps us realize that God gives us blessings so that we can give of ourselves for all that is good and beneficial.

Giving of ourselves is quite often an issue of willpower. Willpower comes from our free will, through which we choose to work with our Lord to accomplish His Will, which is always good, because God is good. Often, in the effort to do God’s Will, whether it be to raise and nurture our children, or to help others along their road to salvation, we find that our will, connected to God’s Will, is a greater strength that we could have imagined, because, added to our willpower is the Grace of God.

Last Sunday, we were reminded that the Transfiguration of our Savior on Mount Tabor had as its purpose the strengthening of the Apostles’ faith so that they would know that Christ’s Crucifixion and Resurrection were voluntarily given for the forgiveness of our sins by Him as our loving God. The voluntary nature of our Lord’s suffering and crucifixion is confirmed today, as our Lord stated to His Apostles, *“The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day”* (St. Matthew 17: 23). Christ our God foretells His suffering and death, thereby showing that He is not the victim of sin, but the Victor over sin. His Divine Will to save us empowers our will to be saved and to do God’s work for others. Because of His sacrificial love for us, Orthodox Christians, on certain Feast Days, chant: *“Who is so great a God as is our God?!”* +FR. THEODORE

Ο Κύριος εἶπε: «*Ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ ἔχητε πίστιν ὡς κόκκον σινάπεως, ...οὐδὲν ἀδυνατήσῃ ὑμῖν.*» (Αγ. Ματθ. 17:20 & 22). Στη συνέχεια υπενθύμισε στους Αποστόλους Του ὅτι, ὅσον αφορά τὴν ἀποβολὴ τῶν δαιμόνων, χρειάζεται προσευχὴ καὶ νηστεία. Πράγματι, χωρὶς πίστη στὸν Θεό, οἱ προσπάθειές μας νὰ προσευχόμεθα καὶ νὰ νηστεύουμε εἶναι μάταιες. Ἡ πίστις στὸν Θεό εἶναι θέμα γνώσεως στὸ ὅτι, με τὴ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅλα τα καλά μποροῦν νὰ πραγματοποιηθοῦν, ἀφοῦ εἴμεθα συνεργάτες με τὸν Θεό, καθὼς εἴμεθα κατ' Εἰκόνα καὶ κατ' Ομοίωσή Του. Ἡ πίστις στὸν Θεό μάς βοηθᾷ νὰ προσευχόμεθα σωστά, «για τὰ καλά καὶ συμφέροντα ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἡμῶν», ὅπως ἀναφωνεῖται στὴ ἐκτέλεση τῆς Θείας Λειτουργίας. Εἶναι ἡ πίστις στὸν Θεό που μάς βοηθᾷ νὰ συνειδητοποιήσουμε ὅτι ὁ Θεός μας δίνει εὐλογίες ὥστε νὰ μποροῦμε νὰ δίνουμε εὐλογίες ἀπὸ τὸν εαυτό μας γιὰ ὅ,τι εἶναι καλὸ καὶ ωφέλιμο.

Ἡ προσφορὰ ἐκ τῶν δικῶν μας δυνάμεων εἶναι πολὺ συχνὰ θέμα θελήσεως. Ἡ δύναμις τῆς θελήσεώς μας προέρχεται ἀπὸ τὴν αὐτεξουσιότην μας, μέσω τῆς ὁποίας ἐπιλέγουμε νὰ ἐργαζόμεθα μαζί με τὸν Θεό γιὰ νὰ ἐκπληρώσουμε τὸ δικό Του Θέλημα, τὸ ὁποῖο εἶναι πάντοτε γιὰ τὸ καλὸ, γιὰτὶ ὁ Θεός εἶναι καλός. Συχνά, στὴν προσπάθεια νὰ κάνουμε τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ, εἴτε εἶναι νὰ μεγαλώσουμε καὶ νὰ ἀναθρέψουμε τὰ παιδιὰ μας, εἴτε νὰ βοηθήσουμε ἄλλους στὸν δρόμο τους πρὸς τὴ σωτηρία, διαπιστώνουμε ὅτι ἡ θέλησίς μας, συνδεδεμένη με τὸ Θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ, εἶναι μιὰ πρὸ μεγαλύτερη δύναμις ἀπὸ ὅ,τι θὰ μπορούσαμε νὰ φαντασθοῦμε, γιὰτὶ, προστιθέμενη στὴ δύναμη τῆς θελήσεώς μας εἶναι καὶ ἡ Χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Τὴν περασμένη Κυριακὴ, ἐγνωρήσαμε ὅτι ἡ Μεταμόρφωση τοῦ Σωτήρος μας στὸ Ὄρος Θαβώρ εἶχε ὡς σκοπὸ τὴν ἐνίσχυση τῆς πίστεως τῶν Αποστόλων ὥστε νὰ γνωρίζουν ὅτι ἡ Σταύρωση καὶ ἡ Ἀνάστασις τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγέναν ἐθελοντικά γιὰ τὴ συγχώρηση τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν μας, ἐπιδὴ εἶναι ὁ Ἴδιος ὁ Φιλάνθρωπος Θεός. Ὁ ἐκούσιος χαρακτήρ τῆς Σταυρώσεως τοῦ Κυρίου ἐπιβεβαιώνεται σήμερα,

Συνέχεια στὴν ἐπόμενη σελίδα – – – >

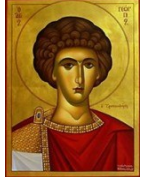
με τα λόγια Του προς τους Αποστόλους: «Μέλλει ο Υιὸς του ανθρώπου παραδίδοσθαι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθήσεται.» (Αγ. Ματθ. 17:23). Ο Χριστὸς προλέγει τα βάσανα καὶ τὸν θάνατό Του, δείχνοντας ἔτσι ὅτι δὲν εἶναι θύμα τῆς αμαρτίας, ἀλλὰ ὁ Νικητὴς τῆς αμαρτίας. Ἡ Θεία Του Θέλησις νὰ μας σώσει ἐνδυναμώνει τὴ θέλησή μας νὰ σωθοῦμε καὶ νὰ κάνουμε τὸ ἔργο τοῦ Θεοῦ γιὰ ἄλλους. Ἐξαιτίας τῆς θυσιαστικῆς Του Ἀγάπης, οἱ Ὁρθόδοξοι Χριστιανοί, σε ὀρισμένες εορτὲς, ψάλλουν: «Τὶς Θεὸς μέγας ὡς ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν!» +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

HOLY METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO

PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA



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August 5, 2023

Plan for the Future of St George Greek Orthodox Church of the Desert

Including St George Greek Orthodox Church of the Desert as a beneficiary in your Will or Living Trust will strengthen our ability to provide spiritual and social care to parishioners in the future.

If you have included us as a beneficiary in your Will or Living Trust, please inform us personally or through the form available at the parish office. We care not of the amount. This is not a legally binding commitment. We know that life events change.

Knowing about your extraordinary gift intention allows us to document your legacy intentions, and it gives us the opportunity to **thank you and welcome you into The Eternal Light Legacy Society**. By doing so, you will always “Be in the Pew” and contributing to the Parish.

To those parishioners who have already informed us of their intentions, thank you.

Nick Latkovic

St George Greek Orthodox Church of the Desert Endowment Chair

PRAYER FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE FIRES ON MAUI

His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco has directed us to pray for those who have been suffering as the result of the recent fires on Maui. Accordingly, our Chancellor, His Grace, Bishop Ioannis of Phocaea, sent this message:

"The recent fires on the Hawaiian island of Maui this past week have seen devastation and loss of life. The historic town of Lahaina has been destroyed and it is feared that many more victims will be found in the coming days. Entire towns have been consumed by the flames, including the historic town of Lahaina. Please read the attached press release from the Metropolis as well as visit mauimission.org for ways to help.

His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos is directing that all clergy throughout the Metropolis pray for those whose lives have been forever changed.

1. *Please add the following petition during the Great Litany following the petition "For our deliverance from all affliction, danger and necessity..." :*

"For a rapid end to the fires in our Metropolis, on the island of Maui, and throughout the world, for comfort and safekeeping of all who have been impacted by these fires, eternal rest to those who have perished, and for strength and endurance to the firefighters, first responders and all those who bring aid and relief, let us pray to the Lord."

2. *Prior to the Dismissal, please also offer the following prayer:*

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord Our God, Whose peace surpasses all understanding and Whose grace and mercy abound, send down your Holy Spirit to comfort those who are suffering in mind, body, and spirit as a result of the devastating fires in our Metropolis, and throughout the world. We ask that You stretch forth Your mighty hand during these days, steadying us by Your love, compassion, and peace. Grant strength to those who are fighting these fires, calm the winds, and open the heavens so that rain may pour forth and cease further destruction. We especially ask for Your blessings and protection upon all those who have fled their homes and livelihood, that they may be spared injury, and that their lives may be preserved. May You, through the intercessions of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary whose Dormition we will celebrate, grant peaceful repose to those whose lives have been lost, as well as comfort to those who are grieving. For You are a merciful and loving God, and to You we give Glory, to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages. Amen."