



MAY 28, 2023

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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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.*

THE LADDER



EPISTLE— Acts 20:16-18;28-36

In those days, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesos, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. And from Miletos he sent to Ephesos and called to him the elders of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.' " And when he had spoken thus, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

GOSPEL—St. John 17: 1-13

At that time, Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, you glorify me in your own presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made. I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world; yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you; for I have given them the words which you gave me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you did send me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are mine; all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Today we commemorate the First Ecumenical Council held in Nicaea in 325 A.D. At that time, the presbyter by the name of Arius preached that Christ was not the True God and that there was a time when He did not exist. To address this falsehood, the Emperor at the time, St. Constantine the Great summoned the First Ecumenical Council, using as its basis the Apostolic Council in Jerusalem that is recorded in the Book of Acts.

Shepherds and teachers of the Faith from all regions gathered and, after fervent prayer shared by all in attendance, they all proclaimed with one mind and one heart that the Son and Word of God is of the same essence with the Father – True God of True God. Along with their proclamation, they composed the Creed of our Faith, known at the Nicene Creed, which we recite during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

The Church honors those who gathered for the First Ecumenical Council as heralds of the Faith, since they upheld the teachings of the Holy Apostles.

Liturgical Notes for Today

At the Entrance of the Gospel: 1) *"O Christ, the angelic powers appeared at Your tomb, the guards were as dead, and Mary stood by the grave seeking Your sacred Body. Your destroyed Hades, yet remained untouched by it. Your encounter with the Virgin and, through Her, bestowed life. Glory to You Who have risen from the dead!"* / Αγγελικαὶ δυνάμεις...

2) *"O Christ our God, You ascended in glory and gladdened Your disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Your blessing assured them that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world."* / Ανελήφθης ἐν δόξῃ...

3) *"You are greatly glorified, O Christ our God, Who established our fathers as luminaries upon the earth, and through them led us all to the true Faith. O most Compassionate, glory to You."* / Υπερδεδοξασμένους.

4) *"Since you are a deliverer of captives..."* [Hymn of St. George] / Ως τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτῆς...

5) **Kontakion:** *"O Christ our God, upon fulfilling Your dispensation for our sake, You ascended in Glory, uniting the earthly with the heavenly. You were never separate but remained inseparable, and cried out to those who love You, 'I am with you and no one is against you.'" / Τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πληρώσας οἰκονομίαν...*

THE UNION OF ALL IN CHRIST

From today's Gospel passage, we heard how our Savior prayed for His disciples to be *one body* which represents the Divine Love emanating from the one essence with Christ, God the Father and the Holy Spirit. This oneness with God is preserved through the worship and lifestyle of the faithful, which is exemplified in the lives of the saints down through the ages. The idea of "unity of all people," however, lacks substance without people also having union with Christ.

Our Holy Greek Orthodox Church has indeed developed Her doctrines over time, since the need arose to crystalize Her message in response to the many deceptions from a world that ignores God. These developments, however, did not *change* the doctrines of the Church, nor the effects of Her doctrines on Her faithful and their lifestyle – a lifestyle that is still "do-able" in our "modern" world.

Let us as one body become fervent students of the Bible and of our Orthodox Christian teachings so that we can defend our Faith against the heresies of our times and, at the same time, teach our Faith to the next generation so that they can find their way to salvation and inspire others in the same way. This is how we will make good on our prayers during the Divine Liturgy: *"For the peace of the whole world; for the stability of God's Holy Churches and for the oneness of all... [as well as] "For [our] holy house and all who enter it with faith, reverence and Godly fear..."*

+FR. THEODORE

Από την σημερινή Ευαγγελική περικοπή ακούσαμε πως ο Κύριος επροσευχήθηκε ώστε οι μαθητοί Του να είναι ηνωμένοι ως «ένα πρόσωπο» που αντιπροσωπεύει την Θεϊκήν αγάπη που πηγάζει εκ της μίας ουσίας του Πατρός, και του Υιού και του Αγίου Πνεύματος. Αυτή η ενότης της εν Χριστώ αγάπης διατηρείται διά μέσου της λατρείας των πιστών που παραδειγματίζεται από τρόπο ζωής των αγίων της Εκκλησίας από γενεά εις γενεάν.

Η Αγία Ελληνο-Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία πράγματι έχει αναπτύξει τις διδασκαλίες Της με την πάροδο του χρόνου αφού προέκυψε η ανάγκη να αποκρυσταλλωθεί το μήνυμα Της ως απάντηση στις πολλές απάτες ενός κόσμου που αγνοεί τον Θεόν. Αυτές οι εξελίξεις, ωστόσο, δεν άλλαξαν τις επιταγές της Εκκλησίας μας, ούτε τις επιπτώσεις των δογμάτων Της στους πιστούς και τον τρόπο ζωής των – ένας τρόπος ζωής που εξακολουθεί ως δυνατόν να βιωθεί στον σημερινό «μοδέρνο» κόσμο.

Ας γίνουμε ένθερμοι μαθητές της Αγίας Γραφής και της διδασκαλίας της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας μας για να μπορέσουμε να υπερασπισθούμε την Πίστη μας, και, ταυτοχρόνως να διδάξουμε την θρησκεία μας στην επόμενη γενεά προς την αιώνιον σωτηρίαν των και την σωτηρίαν άλλων. Έτσι μπορούμε να πραγματοποιήσουμε στην ζωή μας τις ευχές της Θείας Λειτουργίας: «Υπέρ της ειρήνης του σύμπαντος κόσμου, ευσταθείας των αγίων του Θεού εκκλησιών και της των πάντων ενώσεως...» [και] «Υπέρ του αγίου οίκου τούτου και των μετά πίστεως, ευλαβείας και φόβου Θεού εισιόντων εν αυτώ...»
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Tuesday, May 30th.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m.
- Saturday, June 3rd.....SATURDAY OF SOULS
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
- Next Sunday, June 4th....PENTECOST SUNDAY
Orthros-8:15 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:15 a.m./ Pentecost Service of Kneeling-10:15 a.m.

A BLESSED MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND TO ONE AND ALL!

MAY OUR LORD AND GOD JESUS CHRIST HAVE MERCY ON THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR OUR FREEDOM IN THIS COUNTRY AND MAY WE HONOR THEIR SACRIFICE BY EXERCISING OUR FREEDOM TO WORSHIP JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR, WHO IS THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD, BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER BEFORE ALL AGES: LIGHT OF LIGHT, TRUE GOD OF TRUE GOD, BEGOTTEN NOT CREATED, OF ONE ESSENCE WITH THE FATHER, THROUGH WHOM ALL THINGS WERE MADE!

“The gift of freedom to worship is a gift from God’s gift of our free will and it is a gift from those who gave of themselves for our freedom.”

(Anonymous)