



JANUARY 21 2024

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

74-109 Larrea Street

Palm Desert, California 92260

Website: www.go-stgeorge.org

Email: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com

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

Mailing Address: 74-109 Larrea St. Palm Desert, CA.92260 Tel: (760) 568-9901 or: (760) 880-5869

- Fr. Theodore Pantels, M.Div. Proistamenos (Pastor) - Deacon Euthym Kontaxis, M.D.,M.Div.

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.

EPISTLE -- Colossians 3:4-11

Brethren, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

GOSPEL - St. Luke 17:12-19

At that time, as Jesus entered a village, He was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." When He saw them He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus's feet, giving Him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then said Jesus: "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him: "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

ST. MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR – Today we commemorate St. Maximus the Confessor. During his time, (the 7th Century) a false teaching emerged throughout the Empire called Monothelism (from the Greek word meaning "one will"). According to this false teaching, Jesus Christ was not fully human, since He had only one will, the divine will. This doctrine became extremely popular. St. Maximus, however, went against the popular opinion of the people and preached in favor of the declaration of the 4th Ecumenical Council, which stated that our Lord is fully human and fully divine. As Man, He actually died on the Cross to put death to death. As God, He actually arose from the dead, granting us Eternal Life with Him. In His human will, Jesus was tempted just like we are tempted, only He did not sin. As St. Paul notes, "Because He Himself has suffered when tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted." (Hebrews 2:18). St. Maximus confessed the True Faith. +FR. THEODORE

Liturgical Notes for Today

At the Entrance of the Gospel: 1) **Entrance hymn:** *“O Merciful One You came from on high, and condescended to Your three day burial, to save us from passions. You are our life and our resurrection, O Lord, glory to You.”* / Εξ ύψους κατήλθες ...

2) *“You are a guide of Orthodoxy, a teacher of piety and modesty, a luminary of the world and the God-inspired pride of monastics. O wise Maximus, you have enlightened everyone by your teachings. You are the harp of the Spirit. Intercede to Christ our God for the salvation of our souls.”* / Ορθοδοξίας οδηγέ, ευσεβείας διδάσκαλε...

3) *“Since you are a deliverer of captives...”* [Hymn of St. George]/ Ως των αιχμαλώτων ελευθερωτής...

4) **Kontakion:** *“Your birth sanctified the Virgin’s womb and fittingly blessed the hands of Simeon. You have now come and saved us O Christ our God. In troubled times, as the only loving One, give peace to Your commonwealth and strength to those in civil authority, whom You love.”* / Ο μήτραν παρθενικήν αγιάσας τῷ τόκῳ σου...

THE PRAYERS OF HOLY CONFESSION

In today’s Epistle passage, St. Paul points out several “common” sins that we commit. He tells us: *“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk.”* He begs us to *“not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.”* (Colossians 3: 5-11). This “being renewed” is an on-going process.

Repentance is an on-going process creating change in our personality in which Christ lives in us by the grace of the Holy Spirit. This change is the fruit of sincere participation in the Sacrament of Confession. From the prayers that are read during this Sacrament, we are reminded to be humble like the saintly figures in the Bible who sinned, such as Peter, who denied Christ three times; the sinful woman at the Lord’s feet, and King David. The prayers also impart a few other important messages:

- 1) We are reminded that sins are forgiven 70 times 70 – meaning that God’s love is constant and it is unconditional. Our Lord is willing to work with us on the journey leading to saintly perfection. God’s love for each of us is one of “enduring hope.” In turn our love for others is to be one of *“hoping all things and enduring all things.”* (1 Corinthians 13:7)
- 2) We are to have no further care for the sins that we confess. As one of the recent converts to the Orthodox Faith here at St. George quipped, *“God is ready to forget even before we can remember!”* That is, even before we can remember what we need to correct, God is ready to forgive us. In God’s forgiveness the past is forgotten so that we can take advantage of the present to make progress in improving our relationship with God on into the future. Spiritual progress is like that of a baby learning how to walk. Yes, the baby falls down in the beginning. But the baby does not focus on the fall, but on getting up again and taking another step – and eventually, the baby starts to run. Forgiveness does not mean that bad behavior is condoned, just as a baby’s fall when trying to walk is not applauded.

Truly, we are not worthless, because God forgives us; and God forgives us because God loves us. We are called to love one another in the same way. +FR. THEODORE

Στη σημερινή περικοπή της Επιστολής προς τους Κολασσαείς, ο Άγ. Παύλος επισημαίνει αρκετές «κοινές» αμαρτίες που κάνουμε. Μας λέει: «Νεκρώσατε σὺν τα μέλη υμῶν τα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, πορνείαν, ακαθαρσίαν, πάθος, ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν, καὶ τὴν πλεονεξίαν, ἥτις ἐστὶν εἰδωλολατρία». Μας παρακαλεῖ «μη φερόσεθε εἰς ἀλλήλους, ἀπεκδυσάμενοι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον σὺν ταῖς πράξεσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ενδυσάμενοι τὸν νέον τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ’ εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν...» (Κολασσαείς 3:5 -11). Αυτὴ ἡ «ανανέωσις» εἶναι μιὰ συνεχῆς διαδικασία.

Συνέχεια στὴν ἐπόμενη σελίδα-- -->

Μάλιστα, η μετάνοια είναι μια συνεχής διαδικασία που δημιουργεί αλλαγή στην προσωπικότητά μας στην οποία ο Χριστός ζει μέσα μας με τη χάρη του Αγίου Πνεύματος. Αυτή η αλλαγή είναι καρπός της συμμετοχής μας στο Μυστήριο της Θείας Εξομολογήσεως. Από τις προσευχές που διαβάζονται κατά την εκτέλεση αυτού του Μυστηρίου, γνωρίζομεν ότι πρέπει να είμεθα ταπεινοί όπως οι άγιοι της Αγίας Γραφής, οι οποίοι όμως αμάρτησαν, όπως ο Πέτρος, ο οποίος αρνήθηκε τον Χριστό τρεις φορές, η αμαρτωλή γυναίκα που ευρέθηκε στα πόδια του Κυρίου και ο Δαβίδ ο βασιλεύς. Οι προσευχές μεταδίδουν επίσης μερικές άλλες σημαντικές σημειώσεις:

1) Πρέπει να γνωρίσουμε ότι οι αμαρτίες συγχωρούνται 70 επί 70 – που σημαίνει ότι η αγάπη του Θεού είναι σταθερή και άνευ όρων. Ο Χριστός είναι πρόθυμος να συνεργασθεί μαζί μας στην πορεία μας που οδηγεί στην αγία τελειότητα. Η αγάπη του Θεού για τον καθένα μας είναι μια «διαρκής ελπίδα». Με τη σειρά της, η αγάπη μας για τους άλλους πρέπει να είναι αγάπη η οποία *«πάντα ελπίζει, πάντα υπομένει»*. (1 Κορ. 13:7)

2) Δεν πρέπει να ανησυχούμε συνεχώς για τις αμαρτίες που εξομολογούμε. Όπως είπε ένας από τους προσηλυτούς προς την Ορθόδοξη Πίστη μας εδώ στον Άγιο Γεώργιο, *«Ο Θεός είναι έτοιμος να ξεχάσει ακόμη και πριν να μπορέσουμε να θυμηθούμε!»* Δηλαδή, πριν ακόμα θυμηθούμε τι πρέπει να διορθώσουμε, ο Θεός είναι πρόθυμος να μας συγχωρήσει. Με τη συγχώρεση του Θεού, το παρελθόν ξεχνιέται, έτσι για να μπορέσουμε να κάνουμε πρόοδο στο να καλλιεργήσουμε την σχέση μας με τον Θεό. Η πνευματική πρόοδος μοιάζει με αυτή ενός μωρού που μαθαίνει πώς να περπατά. Ναι, το μωρό πέφτει κάτω στην αρχή. Αλλά το μωρό ξεχνά την πτώση, και σηκώνεται πάλι για να κάνει ένα άλλο βήμα – και τελικά, το μωρό αρχίζει να τρέχει. Η συγχώρεσις δεν σημαίνει ότι η κακή συμπεριφορά ανέχεται, όπως και η πτώση ενός μωρού όταν προσπαθεί να περπατήσει δεν χειροκροτείται.

Πράγματι, δεν είμεθα καθόλου άχρηστοι, γιατί ο Θεός μας συγχωρεί – και ο Θεός μας συγχωρεί γιατί ο Θεός μας αγαπά. Ο Θεός θέλει να αγαπάμε ο ένας τον άλλον με τον ίδιο τρόπο.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

MEMORIAL – Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servants of God, **Katherine Meek (1 yr.)**, the beloved daughter of Eve Meek; **Aurel Silviu Valculescu (1 yr.)**, the beloved husband of Mihaila Valculescu, and **Naimeh Abdelnour (6 mos.)**, the beloved mother of Hilda Beshara. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Rest and Salvation to **Katherine Meek, Aurel Silviu Valculescu and Naimeh Abdelnour** and may He grant peace and comfort to Eve Meek, Mihaila Valculescu and Hilda Beshara and their families. MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE ETERNAL!

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, January 22ndFestival Preparations: Pastries- 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, January 23rd.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, January 24th...Online Orthodox Christian Catechism class – 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, January 25th ST. GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN

Orthros -8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Presentation regarding the prevention of human trafficking
at Safe House of the Desert – 5:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- GREEK FESTIVAL

1. Tomorrow. Beginning at 9:00 a.m., help is needed to prepare the pastries for the Festival

2. Festival flyers are now available in the parish hall and ready for distribution throughout the community.

- **PHILOPTOCHOS** – Today is the **Paint & Sip** event! If you enjoyed the wine bottle painting in November, then you will enjoy painting a Greek vase at **today's Paint & Sip** event. (See flier for details).

- **Human Trafficking Ministry** – Our Philoptochos members are invited to participate in either an **online webinar** or an **in-person presentation** regarding the need to **identify, report and prevent human trafficking**. The **webinar is at 5:00 p.m.**, the **in-person presentation at Safe House of the Desert at 72-710 E. Lynn St., Thousand Palms, CA is at 5:30 p.m.** Both programs take place on **January 25th**. To register for either program, contact Rhonda Latkovic. (See enclosed flyer.)

- **Save the Date** – **Philoptochos Membership Tea & Luncheon – March 9th...11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.**

- **SUNDAY SCHOOL** – On **Sunday, January 28, 2024**, our students will participate in a special **Sunday School service project**. We look forward to seeing all of our Sunday School students!

- **ONLINE ORTHODOX CATECHISM CLASS - Wednesday, January 24th, at 6:30 p.m.** All are welcome! To receive a zoom link, email pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com.



Support our Festival!



Our festival is just a few months away and, God willing, everyone will have a rewarding experience. We thank our parishioners and friends for your past support and want to take a moment to remind you of all the ways you can help this upcoming year.

Volunteering – Volunteers are welcome as of the 18th of December for cooking. Such support will be needed up until the festival in February. Please reach out to George or Stacy Argyros to get more information. In addition, assistance is appreciated during the week before the festival to help set up, during the festival and following the festival to assist with cleanup. If you've volunteered before and wish to continue, feel free to contact the past chairperson to again offer your assistance. If you'd like to volunteer for the first time or don't have contact information for the past chairperson, feel free to reach out to Jim Christopoulos at 760-902-8460 or at goofy_328@yahoo.com.

Sponsorships – Any person can pay for a sponsorship, whether it be to advertise your business or send a personal message. You may also ask friends and/or owners of businesses you frequent to buy a sponsorship. These not only provide financial support for the festival, but are a wonderful way to advertise businesses. Sponsorship donations can be sent to our parish office. For more information, please call our parish office at (760) 568-9901. Make checks payable to "St. George Greek Orthodox Church" and in the memo, write, "FESTIVAL DONATION."

Donations – Unable to volunteer? Sponsorship not appropriate? Another option would be to provide a cash donation. Such a donation would help offset our many expenses.

The success of our festival depends on us all. We strive to simultaneously satisfy the needs of our guests as well as to share our hospitality and religion with them. Please help in any way you can. You may contact George Argyros or Father Ted for more information.

WE INVITE YOU TO OUR

Paint & Sip

Sunday

01/21/2024 @ 1200 p.m.



HOSTED BY:

St George Ladies Philoptochos

74109 Larrea St – Palm Desert, CA 92260

Bring your friends and join us for an afternoon of appetizers, refreshments, wine and painting a beautiful small Grecian vase!

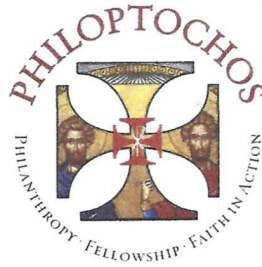
Sign up during Coffee Hour or call
St. George Church @ 760-568-9901

\$15

PER PERSON

Check out our talented and fun group from our first Paint & Sip Art Event on 11/12/2023. A great time was had by all!



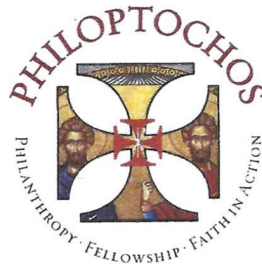


Save the Date!

March 9th, 2024

11:30 AM-2:00 PM

***2024 St. George Philoptochos
Membership Tea & Luncheon***



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11:30 AM-2:00 PM

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Membership Tea & Luncheon***





SAFEHOUSE

*January is National Human Trafficking
Awareness Month*



See it, Say it, Stop it!

SafeHouse of the Desert is proud to host our first community event of the year at our campus located at 72-710 E. Lynn Street, Thousand Palms, CA 92276 on January 25, 2024 from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm.

Join us and our community partners the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, REACH, Rebirth Homes and the Barbara Sinatra Children's Center as we discuss how to identify, report and prevent human trafficking within our community.

Attendees will have the opportunity to hear from experts in the field and connect with like-minded individuals who share their passion for protecting vulnerable children in Riverside County. By joining together we can raise awareness and help put an end to human trafficking!

To reserve your seat at the table please contact Kiany Zaldivar at kzaldivar@operationsafehouse.org.

Volunteer for the 2024 Festival

What Kind of Person Are You?

In this world there are four kinds of people: Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did.

Somebody got angry about it because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Somebody would do it, but Nobody realized it wouldn't get done by Anybody. It ended up that not only was the job not done, but Everybody accused Somebody, and Nobody accepted the responsibility.

Moral: Everybody's job is Anybody's. Nobody can be Somebody unless they are willing to do Anybody's work.



If you haven't already, please sign up to volunteer for our festival. Complete and drop off this form to Jim Christopoulos or Father Ted. You may also contact Jim Christopoulos at 760-902-8460 or goofy_328@yahoo.com. God bless!

.....
Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Check Availability: Saturday 2/17: ____ 9:45-3:00 ____ 2:45-8:00

Sunday 2/18: ____ 9:45-3:00 ____ 2:45-8:00

Set up (week before festival): ____

Clean up (day after festival): ____

- GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - LOUKOUMADES -
 GREEK CHICKEN - MOUSAKA - SPANAKOPITA - DOLMADE - PASTICHIO - GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - DOLMADES
 GREEK CHICKEN - MOUSAKA - SPANAKOPITA - DOLMADE - PASTICHIO - GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - DOLMADES -
 GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - LOUKOUMADES -



AUTHENTIC GREEK FOOD
 HEAVENLY PASTRIES
 GREEK FOLK DANCERS
 OUZO ▶ RETSINA ▶ METAXA
 ART & SOUVENIRS
 RELIGIOUS ITEMS
 CHURCH TOURS
 KIDZ ZONE
 FUN FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

**Saint George
 Greek Orthodox Church**

Proudly presents the

26TH ANNUAL

**GREEK
 FESTIVAL**

in Palm Desert, CA

Saturday & Sunday

February 17th & 18th 2024

10am to 8pm

on the Church Grounds

74-109 Larrea, Palm Desert, CA

(760) 568-9901



NO CASH PAYMENT Credit Card and contactless payment **only** at this time



NO PETS ALLOWED Service Animals specifically trained to aid a person with a disability are welcome



SMOKING and use of tobacco products **PROHIBITED** on church grounds

EL PASEO COURTESY CARTS available for festival attendee pick up & drop off. Route along El Paseo from San Pablo to Portola & church festival entrance.

ADDITIONAL PARKING AVAILABLE at Washington Charter School, and Hope Lutheran Church & Spiritual Center.

SHUTTLE SERVICE PROVIDED.



We are pleased to provide assistance to anyone requesting it. If you need help, please ask.

*Experience Authentic Greek Food
 Devour Heavenly Pastries
 Dance to live Greek music, and
Be Greek for a Day!*

ADMISSION \$5

(Children 12 & under free)
 Active Duty Military, Police,
 Fire & EMT Free w/ ID

www.PDGreekFest.org

PDGreekFest



"Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me"
Matthew 18:5

Kids 'N' Cancer/Camp Agape Fundraiser

Give your
heart to
a child



We will be creating our very own "Taylor Swift style"

WORD BEAD BRACELETS



*Using inspirational words
of encouragement with a
variety of colorful beads
and many beautiful
embellishments!*



**Please come join us in making
these on Sundays after the
Divine Liturgy**

Jan. 28th, Feb 4th and 11th



Look for our display at Greek Fest on Feb 17th & 18th in
our Religious Bookstore Booth selling each
for a \$10 donation. Tell your friends to stop by!

Call Rhonda @ 714-875-4661 or Mrs. Athena @ 219-313-6940

Sponsored by:

St. George
Ladies
Philoptochos & our
Sunday School
students &
families.

100% of proceeds
to

San Fran
Metropolis
Kids 'N' Cancer
/Camp Agape
Ministry that is
dedicated to
providing support
for children
afflicted with
cancer and their
families. This
beloved ministry
offers a
compassionate
and caring
environment,
exemplary of
Christ's
unconditional
love, along with
an opportunity to
shape meaningful
friendships and
create precious
memories.

Nothing Can Stop the Love – Virtual Camp Agape Shines

Camp Agape. Two small words, yet they are full of power and love. For over 35 years, Camp Agape has been a signature ministry for the Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos, and not even the Coronavirus pandemic could stop the love that is shared unconditionally with these children who are battling cancer and their families.

“I have had the privilege of meeting several Camp Agape families and their courage and resilience are inspiring. I know that Camp Agape is a highlight for them, but the circumstances of the pandemic, coupled with their compromised health conditions, made it impossible for any type of in-person gathering, but the Metropolis Philoptochos, with their boundless enthusiasm and love, brought Camp Agape into their homes, and made an indelible mark on their hearts, especially during this time of great need,” remarked His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco.

Metropolis Philoptochos President Jeannie Ranglas, along with Board and Chapter members, quickly mobilized so that these special families did not miss out on the opportunity to participate in Camp Agape in a virtual format. The program included reunion night with former Camp Agape families, a trivia challenge, scavenger hunt, family puzzles, campfire songs, and sharing many memories of this life-changing camp.

“Sharing agape is at the heart of our ministry. We often say when promoting Camp Agape, ‘Give your heart to a child’, and this is what is at the core of our efforts,” stated Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos President Jeannie Ranglas. “I am proud to be a part of this truly life-changing program. And while we have sadly lost many of our campers to cancer over nearly four decades, we also celebrate the survivors – the thrivers – who have conquered the mountain called cancer and continue to live life to its fullest.”

One unique component about Camp Agape is that it is not just for the children who are battling cancer. Rather, it is for the entire family – parents, siblings, and grandparents, too! Agape boxes – filled with love, activities, camp memorabilia and more – were sent to each family, and these care packages were a welcome surprise. Each year, the Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos offers four Camp Agape programs in the following locations: Orme School in Mayer, AZ; Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in Dunlap, CA; Whispering Winds in Julian, CA; and Camp Angelos in Corbett, OR. For 2020, Camp Agape was planned for each of these four camps in a virtual setting and welcomed over 100 families to celebrate the spirit and love of Camp Agape.

There are many memorable experiences associated with Camp Agape over the years, but the one thing that stands out is the hospitality – the true philoxenia – offered by the Metropolis Philoptochos to the Camp Agape families. Included in their care packages were restaurant and Amazon gift cards, puzzles, board games, arts and crafts supplies, Camp Agape t-shirts with the 2020 logo “United in Peace and Love”, and a special gift for each camper from their personal wish list.

The Kids ‘n’ Cancer – Agape Celebration of Love is a yearly event held to bring awareness to the ministry by providing a beautiful, fun-filled afternoon giving those in attendance the opportunity to participate in fundraising, meet Camp Agape families, and fellowship together



Kids ‘N’ Cancer – Give your heart to a child.