

DECEMBER 2019



Voice of St. George

**SAINT GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF THE DESERT**

74-109 LARREA ST., PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA



Inside this issue

LESSONS FROM THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

The appearance of the Star leading the Wise Men to Bethlehem confirms that Christ is God, the Creator of the universe. God used the Star to tell us that, His Only-Begotten Son is "the Sun of Righteousness," as is expressed through the Hymn of our Church. Furthermore, righteousness is the fruit of enlightenment, symbolized by "light" that emanates from a star or the sun. Enlightenment leads to knowledge and knowledge leads to worship, which brings us back to Christ, the "Sun of Righteousness."

The image of the Star of Bethlehem is before us during the Divine Liturgy as we celebrate our Savior's Nativity when the *Apolytikion* Hymn is chanted: "Your Nativity, [i.e., Your birth into the world] O Christ our God, has caused the light of knowledge to rise upon the world. For therein the

worshippers of the stars were by a star instructed to worship You, the Sun of Righteousness and to know You as Orient on high. Glory to You, O Lord." The Star is the "light of knowledge," guiding worshipers (such as the Wise Men) to know Christ through Whom we find True Wisdom.

All human beings are the beneficiaries of the grace of the Holy Spirit, since they are created in the Image and Likeness of God. The Wise Men represent all who are not the Chosen People of the Old Testament, the message being that, in essence, *every human individual is created to be an Orthodox Christian.*

The Star is a vehicle for the Holy Spirit to enlighten the world, revealing that Christ is the only God. As did the Wise Men, we now confess that Christ is God with these words: "We venerate Your Cross, O Christ, and Your Holy Resurrection we praise

and glorify; for, You are our God; we know no other god but You. It is Your Name that we invoke."

In sum, then, through the Christmas *Apolytikion* Hymn of the Church, the Star is the work of the Holy Spirit, enlightening all of humanity that Christ is God, the Creator of the universe and confirming the fact that Christ is the Savior of all people -- the Jewish People (as the Chosen Ones) and the Gentiles (all other people of the world), as represented by the Wise Men, the "worshippers of stars."

Christ God is the "Sun of Righteousness." Since He Himself is the Gospel, we seek His enlightenment during the Divine Liturgy through the prayer that is said prior to the reading of the Gospel: "Shine within our hearts the pure light of Your knowledge, that we may comprehend the message of Your Gospel...so that, putting aside our own

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bodily desires, we may pursue a spiritual way of life, thinking and doing only that which is well-pleasing to You."

Nicholas Cabasilas, in his classic book, *The Life in Christ*, explains that Christ is the Image of each of us in as much as we were created according to His Image and Likeness. As such, Christ's righteousness *defines* our own human standard of righteousness. The "The "New Adam" reverses the consequence of the "Old Adam's" disobedience to God.

In outlining the Beatitudes, Cabasilas notes, "We must regard Christ as the Archetype of the former Adam created from Him." (pg. 191). Gentleness, compassion and glory to God, are the virtues that describe the Person of Christ and, by extension, they are virtues that we are able to personify in our own character, due to the very nature of our created being. "It was not the old Adam who was the model for the New; but the New Adam was generated...because of the corruption which the old Adam initiated. (Romans 8:3)." (pg.190).

The Star of Bethlehem enlightens the whole world of the miracle of Christ being born into the world. Yet, it is Christ Himself Who enlightens us so that we can live with the purpose for which we were created.

+FR. THEODORE

**METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO
CLERGY-LAITY CONFERENCE**--The Metropolis of San Francisco Clergy-Laity Conference is scheduled for **February 24-26, 2020** at the **St. Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in Dunlap, California.**

Those who attend as delegates for our parish are asked to notify our Parish Council in order to obtain information and discuss requirements related to serving as a delegate of our parish at this important event.

ADVENT MESSAGE, 2019

Brethren in the Lord:



Having begun the Nativity Fast period and as we enter the holiday season, we have entered a rich time in our lives as Orthodox Christians. Like the beauty of the decor that will fill our homes, the Church fills us with spiritual beauty in this season, calling us to become more aware of God's presence in our lives.

This festive season begins with our American celebration of Thanksgiving. Our homes will be open to our family and friends for a feast that celebrates how we have been blessed by God. As we gather at the table, consider the following benediction from the Book of Sirach: "Bless the God of all, who in every way does great things...May He give us gladness of heart!" (Sirach 50:22-23). Our first action this season is to acknowledge that God blesses us every day for which we should bow our heads in thanks.

Then we will celebrate some of the most renowned saints of our Church: Katherine the Great Martyr who was just celebrated, Andrew the First-called, Barbara the Great Martyr, John of Damascus, Savas the Sanctified, Nicholas of Myra, Spyridon of Trimythous, and Eleftherios of Illyria. They adorn our calendar with beauty and light. Each in their unique lives, they are examples of lives lived in Christ. They are examples of faith, of witness, and of suffering, but they are also examples of philanthropy, of excellence in teaching, and of pastoral leadership. As we celebrate their feasts we should strive to study their lives as models for our imitation as followers of Christ today.

Finally, we will reach the culmination of the season when we begin the celebration of the Nativity of our Savior Jesus Christ. For us, desiring to know God, we look to Jesus Christ. God enters history and the world when Christ is born. As the Gospel of John states, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only

Continued on the next page ----->

ADVENT ENCYCLICAL, Continued

Son from the Father" (John 1:14). The incarnation of Christ is a mystery, that is to say, it is far beyond our understanding. Saint Gregory the Theologian taught, "He was laid in a manger-but he was glorified by angels, and proclaimed by a star, and worshiped by the Magi." We will all sing in the Kontakion of Christmas, "for to us there has been born a little child, God before the ages."

Dearly Beloved, the Church invites us to prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ through this rich and meaningful season. A hymn of Christmas begins, "Make ready...." These days are our time to ready ourselves through the fast, through prayers, through philanthropic acts, and reflection upon the mystery of the incarnation and on the lives of God's Saints, and as we continually thank Him for His divine condescension. God's presence in our lives must be evident by our awareness of this mystery of the incarnation, through this season of beauty, lights and color.

As we grow in awareness, as we see the lights and colors of the season, let us share them with our brothers and sisters who are in need. At a time when many live in the darkness of isolation and loneliness, of poverty, and ostracization and marginalization, our families and parishes can radiate the beauty and light of faith in Jesus Christ through acts of hospitality, understanding, and philanthropy. In so doing we bear witness to the light so that the world might believe (cf John 1, 7-8).

May our Savior, Who is coming to us as a little babe, grant you all His Kindness and Mercy. With Love in Christ,
++GERASIMOS,
Metropolitan of San Francisco

SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS OF THE MONTH

by

Deacon Euthym

"Sit in the presence of the Lord every moment of your life, as you think of Him and recollect Him in your heart. Otherwise, when you do not see only Him, after a period of time, you will lack freedom to converse with Him, out of shame; for great freedom of converse is born out of constant association with Him." St. Isaac the Syrian

We don't want any awkward moments with God, so it is important that we clean things up with Him daily. If we contemplate Him at all times, immediately return to Him when we fall, and imitate Christ in our decisions, we are comfortable in His presence. The awe we have in His presence (considering His creation, His love and His great mercy) leads us to choosing the "one good thing" who is Jesus Christ Himself. Loss, suffering, challenges, all are part of our existence... let us allow God to walk with us during these times as well as during the successes and joys that life brings. Glory be to His Holy Name.

"From a person with an argumentative character, you can hardly expect anything else. In the spiritual life there is nothing worse and more harmful than argumentativeness. For a while it is sometimes concealed, but then it again is revealed in its former strength." St. Ambrose

This is a difficult teaching considering the world today. It puts us in a very difficult position if we don't "stand up for ourselves" or "assert ourselves" etc. Some just want to confirm their own beliefs so they argue to prove they are right. Some argue because they get a rush from it. Some argue out of insecurity and the realization that there may be ideas that they haven't considered. All of it stems from ego and pride. A person confident in their relationships with Christ allows God to do the work. Say your opinion by all means...just don't say it a hundred times in a hundred different ways...its the same opinion, have a little humility and listen. Let the Lord convince through the peace of our convictions and the quality of our thoughts, arguing gets us "stuck"

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SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS, Continued

making ourselves God and forgetting the one who created us.

“Keep in mind that you must always be setting an example through your moral life and your actions. For the sick find and recognize good doctors, not just through their words, but through their actions.” St. Anthony of Egypt

Live as a Holy Icon. Shine the light of Christ in the world... our actions speak loudly and attract those who seek the peace of God. As we move forward in our lives remember that every step we take leaves a path. Let us try to have that path lead others who follow it, to the Lord himself. How beautiful if someone comes to God not because we hit them over the head with a Bible, but because we witnessed Christ with our actions and our demeanor. Petty comments, anger, envy, self righteousness, cold heartedness, lack of empathy, cruelty all turn others away from God. Mercy, kindness, generosity, forgiveness all bring others to Christ...let us focus on that which saves and put aside that which keeps others from the living God.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Brace yourselves for a truly inspiring Christmas Program which will be presented by our Sunday School students on **Sunday, December 15, 2019** immediately following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. See the enclosed “Sunday School Christmas Pageant” flier.

Sunday School students will be on “Christmas break” following the conclusion of the Christmas Program and will return to class following the New Year - the Eve of Theophany on Sunday, January 5, 2020.

As has become tradition, our Sunday School students will be Christmas caroling on Christmas Eve Day, following the Divine Liturgy commemorating the Eve of the Nativity (December 24th).

The Sunday School students have begun taking

an active part in the liturgical aspects of our Church by cleaning Communion Cloths on a once-a-month basis. As the New Year begins, they plan to learn how to bake *prosforo*. Congratulations to the students who have been reading the Epistle passages during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. They all read with great love from their hearts and inspire us all.

The Sunday School bulletin board in our parish hall has become a ray of joy for all of us, proving to be an inspiring addition to our Sunday coffee hour gatherings.



The Sunday School bulletin board located in our parish hall shows an inspiring picture of the beauty of our Sunday School students' learning.

PLAN FOR FUTURE OF HEALTH NEEDS

The notes and forms that were presented to our October Philoptochos General Members Meeting by **Nelly Zombrano**, entitled *Plan for the Worst Case Senario*, are now available. Her lecture outlined services offered by adult care facilities, as well as information related to giving consent to physicians, case workers and loved ones regarding decisions to be made related to one's care. Please see Fr. Ted to obtain a copy.

Recall that, during this meeting, Fr. Ted also spoke reminding those in attendance that, as Orthodox Christians, they are to avoid requesting physician-assisted suicide and setting up plans for cremation. He also reminded everyone that he and Deacon Euthym are to be informed about admittance to a hospital or rehabilitation facility in order that they may be offered the Sacraments.

CHURCH & WELLNESS

The Treasures of Life

The Wise Men remind us that the breath of God lives in every human being on earth at any time and in any place. It is evidence that each of us is definitely created in the Image and Likeness of God and that all people are "wired" to embrace the Orthodox Christian Faith. These Wise Men were not of the Chosen People. They were not necessarily *students* of the Old Testament Prophets. They were "worshippers of stars." None the less, they traveled in order to find the Messiah -- the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ, the Savior of humanity. Not only did they travel "from the East" (representing the rising of the sun for a *new day* in human history), but they brought gifts, knowing by way of the Holy Spirit that they were going to worship a King. It follows that these Wise Men were predisposed to bring gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. In that Christ is born in the flesh, these gifts have meaning for each of us, since, through the Christ Child, we are now all God's children. In a way, then, these gifts honor both the Lord Himself, as well as each person who is born into the world.

- 1) Gold. A King is honored with a gift of gold. It is a gift of great value. The Wise Men honored the *Kingship* of Christ our God, through Whom people are to reclaim their original *kingship* over the created world, consistent with the purpose of their creation as recorded in the Book of Genesis. The honor bestowed on Christ is transferred to each of us, as well, since we are brothers and sisters in Christ. It is not without notice that the Orthodox Church places the Book of Gospels with a *golden cover* on Her Altar. The spiritual "gold" that we give to Christ is our humble surrender to God's Will with our love. The message of our reconciliation with God and the opportunity to commune with God through prayer and the Sacraments means that our lives are more precious than gold.
- 2) Frankincense. "*We offer to You incense as a breath of spiritual fragrance; send in return upon us the grace of the Holy Spirit.*" These words are

intoned by the priest as he completes the service of the Preparation of the Holy Gifts, which will become the very Body and Blood of Christ during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Our prayers rise to our Lord with the incense. In return, incense becomes a vehicle of Christ's breath of the Holy Spirit, filling our lives with divine grace. This is why the priest or deacon censes the icons of the church and the faithful in attendance. Fr. Emmanuel Hatzidakis writes, "*Censing was inherited from the Jewish worship...[representing] the grace of God [filling] every nook of the church with its fragrance, so the grace of God is being spread over the world.*" (*The Heavenly Banquet*, pg. 142). Incense reminds us of our love for God and our neighbor. The message is that each person in the world is worth the blessing of God's Grace. Our purpose in life is to convey God's grace to others through a life of prayer and worship.

- 3) Myrrh. Myrrh oil was commonly used in the ancient world to honor one's suffering and death. Myrrh (*Holy Chrism*) is used to impart the grace of the Holy Spirit upon newly baptized individuals. As one is born through the baptismal font, one is given the "breath of life" through the Holy Spirit. Baptism is the Sacrament of our death and resurrection in Christ. We then are to live a life-style that is guided by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit imparts to us the Divine energies needed to live as did the Apostles, who inspired the whole world to worship Christ our God. This new way of life, filled with joy and purpose, comes through Christ's death on the Cross. Our life in Christ is constantly one in which we each "pick up our cross" and follow our Savior with faith and love.

With these gifts come the sanctity of human life and, as the Heavenly Host announced, "*good will among all.*"

+FR. THEODORE

ST. NICHOLAS, OF MYRA: POINTING TO THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

In the late era of the Roman Empire, the message of Christ reached the upper classes among the citizens. One of the most outstanding of those of the upper classes who received the Gospel message was Nicholas. In short order, he became the bishop of Myra. His identification as a doer of good deeds and follower of Jesus Christ became so well-known that even in Western Europe, his name became synonymous with charity and sacrifice for promoting the meaning of the Gospel.

Nicholas became bishop during the reign of Constantine the Great and he changed the way Christians looked at the deeds of bishops. People of the upper classes were beginning to turn to Christ as the Lord and Master of their lives, if even secretly. The powerful emperors such as Diocletian and his successor, Galerius, considered this to be a threat to the Empire. Subsequently, they attacked the Church and their persecution of Christians became ruthless and greatly violent -- the greatest attempt to stamp out and reverse the spread of Christianity.

Not only was Christianity attacked from outside the Church; attacks came from within the Church, as well. St. Nicholas rose to prominence in his defense of Orthodoxy against the heretic Arius and his followers. Arius proclaimed that Christ is not truly God, since "there was a time when He was not." St. Nicholas was one of the Saints of the Church who were present at the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea and participated in the official proclamation of the Nicene Creed, which we recite during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy to this day. Over time, St. Nicholas became a well known figure of the Church by the time of the Emperor Justinian.

The story of his rescue of sailors in the Aegean Sea during his lifetime established St. Nicholas as the Patron Saint for travelers and seafarers.

Associating his name to the Christmas season may be attributed to a well-known incident surrounding one of his parishioners. St. Nicholas'

parishioner lost all of his wealth through tragedy. He wanted to provide for the marriages of his daughters. This involved a dowry so that the girls could marry good husbands. But their father had no resources. He would need to give up his daughters into a slave arrangement. St. Nicholas sought to help this poor man and his daughters, since he had inherited great wealth from the estate of his parents. He secretly gathered many gold coins so that the eldest daughter could marry. He did the same for the second daughter - and, once again, St. Nicholas gathered more gold coins for the third daughter. While the father was not sure of the identity of this "gift-giver," he grew more suspicious and watchful. In time, he discovered that it was indeed St. Nicholas who had been arranging for his daughters' marriages. However, St. Nicholas begged him not to say how the money was given, but that it was like the miracle at Cana of Galilee. Yet, the truth became known that St. Nicholas was a benefactor of the poor. St. Nicholas used his wealth to help his flock. He showed the example of how human wealth can assist the human needs of people in the Church.

As the advocate for the poor, St. Nicholas freed certain sailors who were unjustly accused of a crime. The knowledge of his love spread even into Russia.

St. Nicholas fell asleep in the Lord on December 6, 342 A.D., when Constantius II was the Emperor. Since this was the Advent season, St. Nicholas' reputation for helping the poor became associated with the celebration of Christmas. However, the Church remembers St. Nicholas as being more than a wonderful "Santa Claus." He is honored as the teacher of the True Christian Faith; as a vigilant bishop of the Church who excelled in pastoral care; as leader for Christians everywhere, who inspired his own people, as well as those of future generations in the spirit of genuine Christian love and philanthropy.

--MATTHEW DAVIS

2020 GREEK FESTIVAL



Publicizing our 2020 Festival at Fantasy Springs Hotel- (left to right) George Argyros, Elias Doubaratzis, John Petalas and Pete Snarskis.



On November 14th, our 2020 Greek Festival (February 22-23, 2020) was featured at a community events fair at the Fantasy Springs Hotel and Spa.

This early exposure to the public in advertising our Festival rivaled our "regular" efforts to advertise our Festival at the annual

Golf Cart Parade, held on El Paseo in October.

Our next 2020 Greek Festival Meeting will take place at our parish hall on Wednesday, December 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

Reports will include plans for Festival parking and requirements for city approvals. In addition, there are still many availabilities to volunteer in helping toward the success of this year's Festival:

- ◆ Obtaining and/or contributing for an ad in our 2020 Festival Program Book.
- ◆ Help for baking. Baking days will begin on January 8, 2020 and continue throughout the weeks leading up to the Festival dates.
- ◆ Help with the set-up of the Festival lay-out. Set-up begins around the second week of February.
- ◆ Volunteer from now to help at the various Festival stations during the days of the Festival itself (February 22-23, 2020).
- ◆ Sponsor a paid worker for the Festival set-up, take-down, and/or Festival weekend station services.
- ◆ Donate toward the costs of Festival items.

AHEPA NEWS



Many thanks to our AHEPA brother, Silas "Pete" Peterson, who gave a most inspirational speech in honor of our military veterans on the occasion of this year's Veterans Day Program, held at our St. George Church on November 10, 2019. His presentation included a clear picture of the sacrifices that military personnel make in order to preserve the freedoms that we enjoy as a nation -- particularly, the freedom of religion. His theme was, "When you see a Veteran, thank a Veteran."

AHEPA is grateful to those who did participate in the annual AHEPA Thanksgiving Luncheon on November 24th. We look forward to everyone's support going forward, since AHEPA is now committed to two special efforts:

1) the continued support of the **Fr. T.P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship Fund.**

2) the "**Win For Wynn**" effort to provide guide dogs to wounded military veterans.

For details related to these two important local AHEPA Chapter efforts, please go to the AHEPA 528 website: www.ahepa528.org/.

The next AHEPA 528 meeting will be on Wednesday, December 4th at 6:30 p.m. at our parish hall. The agenda topics include: Membership; AHEPA District 20 Mid-Winter Conference; the Super Bowl Party, and 2020 Festival



Military Veterans honored at the annual St. George Veterans Day Program: (left to right) - Michael Greenwood (Air Force), Bill Piggott (Air Force), Mary Piggott (Air Force), George Megalonakis (Navy), John Manesis (Navy), Silas "Pete" Peterson (Navy), Lou Karagianis (Air Force), George Spanos (U.S. Marines).

PARISH COUNCIL & GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Parish Council: The Parish Council met on Tuesday, November 5, 2019 in order to plan for the Fall General Assembly, scheduled for Sunday, November 17th.

The Parish Council voted to install surveillance cameras following a price analysis to be given by the same organization that monitors our alarm system.

In addition, the Council voted to begin renting the parish hall to people throughout our general community. Final details still need to be addressed and reported to the Parish Council as plans continue to develop.

The agenda for the Fall General Assembly was approved.

General Assembly: Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on December 17, 2019 our St. George Fall General Assembly was held.

-The 2020 Proposed Budget was passed; the Festival Report was given with the appeal for participation and support from everyone.

-As part of the Festival report, it was noted that the format of the Festival Program Book, which allows for various levels of sponsorships and ads promises to add much to the Festival's net profit.

-A glowing Stewardship report was given, noting that parishioners have made impressive commitments in support of our St. George parish. It was announced that the 2020 Archdiocese Stewardship Campaign is "Stewardship of Time."

-Nominations for candidates to serve as members of the 2020 Parish Council was closed after the following candidates were announced: **Tony Dalkas, Becky Allen, and Pete Snarskis.**

-Parish Elections will take place on Sunday, December 8, 2019 immediately following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

ST. GEORGE PARISH BOOK STORE

During this season of Advent, attention is given to our parish book store.

Book Suggestions: *The Life in Christ*, by Nicholas Cabasilas; *Thirty Steps to Heaven*, by Vassilios Papavassiliou.

Icon greeting cards, as well as incense, hand censers, crosses and book marks make great Christmas gifts.

Our book store will be open on Sundays following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. In addition, it will be open upon request.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Mark your calendars for April 25, 2020 and plan to join us for our annual St. George Golf Tournament. This year, our tournament will be held at Desert Willow Country Club in Palm Desert.

The schedule for the day will, as always, feature the golf tournament itself, followed in the evening with the awards dinner, which is always fabulous.

OUTREACH TO THE HOMELESS

Over the past few years our parishioners have joined in the Philoptochos efforts to feed the homeless, working with the Street Life Project.

With the holiday season of Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year, parishioners have extended their efforts to help feed the homeless by volunteering at the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission.

We received encouraging news that Palm Springs has opened a facility to house and feed the homeless and we look forward to helping to meet the needs of the homeless there.

The Coachella Valley communities have banded together to help the homeless. We look forward to getting involved either through monetary donations, or "hands-on" help as 2020 unfolds.

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS



Can you believe the holidays are here! That was fast! Our November General Members Meeting was held on Monday, Nov. 11th. We had 28 members present. Highlights of our meeting included a presentation from guest speaker **Norma Vazquez**, Safe House of the Desert, Community Director. She gave an informative presentation about Human Trafficking and how their organization assists victims. Currently they are housing children aged 11-18 in their facility, assisting them with basic care, counseling, training, and more. Our Philoptochos Chapter will be providing eighteen children with Christmas Gifts through our **"Giving Tree"** initiative for the holiday. Parishioners may review the sign-up sheet to see the wish list of the children and commit to purchase one of the gifts. All gifts are to be brought back to the church, unwrapped, and placed in the bins under the Christmas tree prior to December 15th.

The Philoptochos bank balance was \$10,722.81 as of Nov. 11, 2019. The tray for the Ecumenical Patriarchate was \$170 and our chapter added another \$100 for a total donation of \$270. In addition, we made a donation of \$250 for the service dogs for warriors program sponsored by our own Saint George AHEPA group.

Our annual holiday bake sale will begin on December 8th through December 15th. Both koulorakia and sweet bread will be available for purchase. We prepared 100 sandwiches for the homeless and delivered them to Miles Avenue Park on Tuesday, Nov. 17th in conjunction with the Street Life Project group. This makes our year-to-date total **1155 meals** served for 2019! Unfortunately, both cities of Palm Springs and Indio are not issuing permits to the group for Thanksgiving and Christmas events like the ones we have participated in the past where we provided hot food, toys, clothing and more. Therefore, we have shifted our future efforts with assisting Coachella Valley Rescue Mission in Indio. A group of five volunteers worked in the pantry at CVRM on Saturday, Nov. 23rd for three hours, organizing

canned, boxed, and bagged food donations on to the pantry shelves. Another group of eight volunteers are scheduled to help out on Tuesday, Dec. 24th with the Christmas Eve meal. Duties will include kitchen prep, pantry organizing, and serving food.

The **Philoptochos Christmas luncheon** is scheduled for **Saturday, Dec. 7th at Palm Valley Country Club starting at 11:30 AM**. We look forward to seeing everyone there. Reservations were due as of Sunday, Dec. 1st.

We will be assembling and delivering the annual Christmas baskets for the homebound in our community on Friday, Dec. 13th from 10:00-12:30 PM. We are in need of volunteers to help assemble and deliver baskets. Please let us know if you can assist.

The next **"Movie Matinee"** event will be held on **Thursday, Dec. 19th from 2:30-4:30 PM**. Our movie will be **"Christmas With The Karountzoses"**, a comedy featuring Greeks and Greek culture. This movie is appropriate for the entire family! Our own Fanny Nicholas is in the movie, and will be on hand to speak to the attendees about her role and how she became involved with the film. Please be sure to RSVP by Dec. 15th if you plan on attending. This is a free event and we provide "movie snacks and refreshments."



Norma Vasquez from Safe House of the Desert, addressed the St. George Ladies of Philoptochos with information regarding Human Trafficking. (November 11, 2019).

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PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS, Continued

Our January General Members Meeting will be held on Friday, Jan. 19th at 11:30 AM in the church hall.

The Ladies Philoptochos wishes you a joyous holiday season and happy new year!

--RHONDA LATKOVIC,
Philoptochos Chapter President



St. George parishioners, Vincent and Eve-Marie Gandrillion, (pictured to the right) helped Pauline and Rhonda Latkovic (pictured to the left) serving meals at the Coachella Rescue Mission during the Thanksgiving holiday. Not pictured among those who helped at this event is Angelo Veroulis. Helping the homeless is a major project of our St. George Philoptochos.



**SAINT GEORGE
SUNDAY SCHOOL
CHRISTMAS
PAGEANT**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2019

Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy

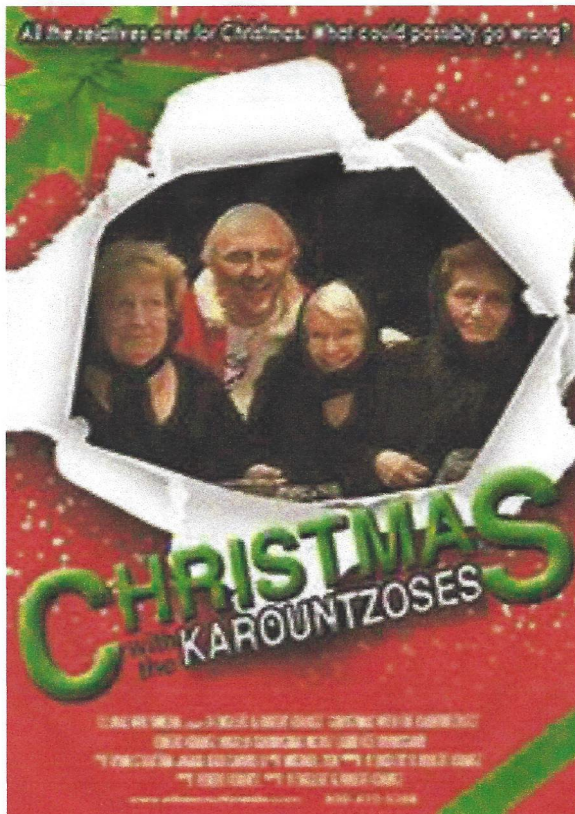
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DECEMBER 2019

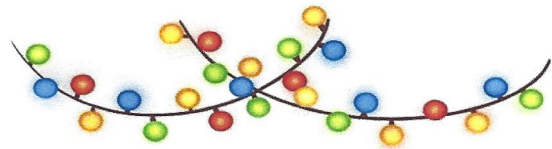
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1-14th Sunday of St. Luke Ep.-Eph 2:14-22 Gos.Luke18-35-43	2	3 Bible Study-10:00 a.m. Adult Greek School-6:00 p.m.	4-ST. BARBARA Orthros-8:30 a.m <u>D.Liturgy-9:30am</u> Parish Council-2:30 p.m. <u>Festival Mtg.-6pm</u> AHEPA -6:30 p.m	5- Choir Practice-1:00 p.m. <u>_____</u> Vespers at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, Murrietta, CA-7:00 p.m.	6-ST. NICHOLAS Orthros-8:30 am D.Liturgy-9:30 am	7 Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon at Palm Valley County Club 11:30 a.m.
8-10th Sunday of St. Luke Ep.-Eph. 4: 1-7 Gos.-Luke 13: 10-17 Parish Elections	9- ST. ANNA Orthros-8:30 a.m. D. Liturgy-9:30 am. Philoptochos Board Meeting-11:30 a.m.	10 Bible Study-10:00 a.m. Adult Greek School-6:00 p.m.	11	12 ST.SPYRIDON Orthros-8:30 a.m. <u>D.Liturgy-9:30 am</u> Choir Practice-1:00 p.m. <u>_____</u> Parish Council-2:30 p.m.	13	14
15-11th Sunday of St. Luke Ep. 2 Tim 1:8-18 Gos. Luke 14: 16-24 Christmas Program	16	17- ST.DIONYSIOS Orthros-8:30 am D.Liturgy-9:30am Bible Study-10:00 a.m.	18	19 Choir Practice-1:00 p.m.	20	21
22-Sunday Before the Nativity Ep. Heb.11:9-10 32-40 Gos.Matt.1:1-25	23	24-EVE OF THE NATIVITY-Royal Hours- 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy-9:30 a.m. <u>_____</u> S. School caroling-11 a.m. CVRM*: 2-4 p.m.	25-CHRISTMAS: THE NATIVITY OF OUR GOD & SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST-Orthros-8:30am D.Liturgy-9:30 a.m.	26	27-ST. STEPHEN Orthros-8:30 a.m. D.Liturgy-9:30 am	28
29-Sunday After the Nativity Ep. Gal.1:11-19 Gos. Matt.2:13-23	30	31 Bible Study-10:00 a.m.	<u>JANUARY 1</u> New Year's Day CIRCUMCISION OF THE LORD/ FEAST OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT Orthros-8:30 a.m D.Liturgy-9:30 am		* Philoptochos Outreach to the Homeless, serving food for Christmas at the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission (CVRM) in Indio.	Sunday Schedule: Orthros-8:30 a.m. D.Liturgy-9:30 am. Sunday School-10:30 a.m.

SAINT GEORGE LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS

ST. GEORGE CHURCH, 74109 LARREA ST, PALM DESERT, CA



MOVIE MATINEE



**THURSDAY,
NOVEMBER 21ST, 2019**

2:30 – 4:30 P.M

ROBERT KRANTZ (Karountzos) is a Greek-American writer, actor, director and USC graduate.



All the Greek relatives over for Christmas!

What could possibly go wrong?

Please RSVP to Rhonda (714) 875-4661 or Athena (219) 313-9640

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