

JUNE 2019



Voice of St. George

SAINT GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF THE DESERT

74-109 LARREA ST., PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA



UNION WITH GOD

Inside this issue

For Orthodox Christians, one of the most pivotal statements in the Bible comes from St. Peter: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him, who called us by glory and virtue...that through these, you may be partakers of the divine nature..." (2 Peter 1:2-4).

The idea of *partaking in the divine nature of Christ God* is truly Apostolic, and it describes for us the very purpose of human life. St. Paul expressed this same point, as he wrote, "[Christ] will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body." (Philippians 3:21). Over time, this Apostolic Tradition was (and is) carried on, as St. Basil echoes it in his Divine Liturgy: "Although He is God before all the ages, He appeared on

earth and dwelled among us, being Incarnated of the Holy Virgin...taking the form of a servant, and becoming conformed to the fashion of our lowliness, that He might make us conformable to the image of His glory."

By the early-to-middle 1300s, **St. Gregory Palamas** would "ditto" these Apostolic words with an analysis, suggesting that, as the sun has its rays, God has His energies (among them, grace and light). By His energies, God creates, sustains, and governs the universe. By His energies, He transforms creation and makes it holy, using creation to serve His Will, filling it with His energies as water fills a sponge. We experience God's love through His divine powers. In this way God sanctifies humanity. It follows that God transforms our nature from that of "the dust of the earth" into that of divine likeness.

In the Apostolic "mind," human beings are destined to participate in God's energies even from the time of their earthly sojourn. This is made manifest in the lives of many Saints of the Church. Some examples include:

--**St. Peter**, through prayer to our Savior, raised Tabitha from the dead. These few examples illustrate how people, through strong faith in God and sincere prayer are given the divine powers of our Savior to do the very same things that He did during His sojourn in our human history.

--Over many years, through sincere, heart-felt prayer in faith, **St. Irene**, the Abbess of the Monastery of **Chrysovalantou**, was given the grace of the Holy Spirit receiving the gifts of prophesy and the same power as Christ to cast out demons from the demon-possessed.

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--St. Paraskevi, was given the divine power of God to heal the blind, just as our Lord did in His ministry.

--St. Nicholas of Myra was graced with the divine gift of calming the sea for seafarers who were facing certain death, calling to mind how Christ calmed the sea for His Apostles.

These few examples illustrate how people, through strong faith in God and sincere prayer are given the divine powers of our Savior to do the very same things that He did during His sojourn in our human history. Our Lord calls each of us to be His co-workers for the salvation of others.

The grace of the Holy Spirit allows for our union with God *to the degree of our love for God*. In the Divine Liturgy, we are called to "commit ourselves...and our whole life to Christ our God." Fr. Alexander Schmemmann says, "*The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit...[means that] the whole person is now the temple of God and one's life is from now on a liturgy,*" (*For the Life of the World*, pg. 92). Our efforts are aimed at strengthening our faith in God so that *with God*, we can participate in the "everyday" wonders of inspiring our youth; healing broken marriages; overcoming anger and depression, etc., all of which is "liturgy" (in other words: *work*) for salvation.

In this way, our self-image is no longer based on personal fantasies or the opinions of others. Our self-image is that of *the Image of God within us*. As the Saints, both male and female, performed wonders to the glory of God, we too are called to share in God's eternal love, which is a constant *giving* love, and which can only be met with *un-ceasing* prayer.

It all begins in the here and now. "*Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*" (1 Thessalonians 3:16). The true identity of every person is that of being a *temple of God*.

+FR. THEODORE

INTRODUCING HIS EMINENCE, ARCH-BISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS OF AMERICA

His Eminence Archbishop, Elpidophoros (Lambriniadis) of America was born in 1967 in Bakirköy, Istanbul, Turkey. He



studied at the Department of Pastoral Theology at the Theological School of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, graduating in 1991. In 1993, he completed postgraduate studies at the Philosophical School of the University of Bonn in Germany, submitting a dissertation entitled: "The Brothers Nicholas and John Mesarites." He was ordained to the Diaconate in 1994 at the Patriarchal Cathedral and was appointed to the position of *Kodikographos* (Scrivener) of the Holy and Sacred Synod.

In 1995, he was appointed Deputy Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod. From 1996-1997 he studied at the Theological School of St. John the Damascene in Balamand, Lebanon, where he advanced his knowledge of the Arabic language. In 2001, he presented a doctoral dissertation at the Theological School of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki under the title: "Severus of Antioch and the Council of Chalcedon" and was proclaimed a Doctor of Theology. In 2004, he was invited to Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Boston, where he taught as Visiting Professor for a semester.

In March 2005, at the proposal of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, he was elevated by the Holy and Sacred Synod to the position of Chief Secretary and ordained to the priesthood by the Ecumenical Patriarch in the Patriarchal Cathedral. In 2009, he submitted two dissertations to the Theological School of Thessaloniki and was unanimously elected Assistant Professor of Symbolics, Inter-Orthodox relations and the Ecumenical Movement. The dissertations

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ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS, Continued

are entitled: "The Synaxes of the Hierarchy of the Ecumenical Throne (1951-2004)" and "Luther's Ninety-five Theses: Historical and Theological Aspects. Text - Translation - Commentary."

In March 2011, he was elected Metropolitan of Bursa and in August of the same year was appointed Abbot of the Holy Patriarchal and Stavropegial Monastery of the Holy Trinity on the island of Halki. He has served as Orthodox Secretary of the Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Lutheran World Federation and member of the Patriarchal delegations to the General Assemblies of the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches. He was the Secretary of the Pan-Orthodox Synods in Sofia (1998), Istanbul (2005), Geneva (2006), and Istanbul (2008). He has been a member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches since 1996.

My Beloved Faithful of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America:

May 15, 2019

Χριστός Ἀνέστη! Christ is Risen! He is truly risen!

Even though I am, as the Apostle Paul once said, "absent in the body" from you, I am very much with you in heart, in mind, and in spirit (cf. I Cor. 5:3). I wanted to take this moment to communicate with you through this marvelous tool of social media, to express how much I desire to embrace all of you as spiritual children, and to manifest to you the love with which God has graced my heart for the precious flock of the Holy Archdiocese of America.

In the coming days and weeks, we will all be learning about one another. I have already received and continue to receive warm greetings and messages of congratulations from across America, and I am heartened by them all. You will be learning about me, but what I want all of you to know most importantly, is that that I am

coming to America not only to be your Archbishop, but I am coming to be your spiritual friend and brother, your servant in the Lord, your co-worker in Christ, and your fellow steward of all the gifts of God that have been bestowed upon the Greek Orthodox Faithful of America. Together we will bring the Holy Archdiocese of America to the greater understanding that we are the Body of Christ, and each of us a precious member.

To you and to all our Orthodox Christian Brethren across America, I bring the blessing of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. I am coming to you as your brother in Christ. And, on June 22nd at my Enthronement, I look forward to embracing our ecumenical and interfaith friends as well, and the whole pluralistic American society that values freedom of conscience and religious liberty with such intensity.

Let this be a time of hope. Let this be a time of hope and positive expectation for us all. We have much to accomplish together, and by God's grace and with His strength, we must surely be victorious.

Χριστός Ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς Ἀνέστη!

In the Risen Lord,

++ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS

Greek Orthodox Archbishop of America

ST. GEORGE BOOK STORE

As the summer months approach, there are three important things to keep in mind:

1. It's a good time to read a good book. The best books of all the good books are those that help one understand better how to pray and to live a peaceful life with faith in God. We have many books like that...and we can order books as needed.
2. Understanding our Orthodox Faith better helps us to learn more of God's love for us.
3. Just because it's summer time, don't take a vacation from God. God isn't going to take a vacation from you!

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS:**Homeless Outreach in May**

On May 7th, volunteers from our parish, working with the Street Life Project Organization, traveled to Miles Avenue Park in Indio and one additional location in the area, to feed and clothe the homeless.

We were fortunate to have leftover food from the St. George Golf Outing Saturday dinner, which was designated for our use by George Argyros. Volunteers from our Ladies Philoptochos group prepared the leftovers of lamb chops, green beans, & french fries in special "To Go" containers that were purchased for this purpose. The containers of food and clothing were then transported to the locations and handed out. We served 80 homeless on this outing.

Our thanks to all the volunteers who donated their time and talent with this latest effort.

In the future, our Ladies Philoptochos group will establish a monthly calendar for the rest of the year with the dates planned for outreach. The schedule will be posted very soon and we hope to have many volunteers from our parish to assist us with our homeless outreach efforts for the remainder of the year.

Eternal Light Society

The National Stewardship sub-committee for planned giving has established resources to assist the faithful Orthodox Christian in their estate planning and end-of-life concerns while encouraging them to remember the church in their plans. The Eternal Light Society was established in 2012 as an opportunity for us, as Orthodox Christians, to continue to contribute to the church through estate planning. Think of it as a way to continue to contribute and support our beloved church even after you are gone.

Much information is available via the on-line GOC website to assist one in their estate planning. Documents such as living wills, last wills and trusts, estate gifts, and legacy planning are available for your use. We encourage that one contact legal counsel for advice when making

end-of-life and estate plans.

Our Saint George Stewardship & Endowment Committee's are responsible for making the information available to our parishioners. The committee is recommending that any financial gifts be made to the Saint George Endowment Fund. If interested, a parishioner can utilize the confidential gift form, fill out their designation, and give a copy to Father Ted Pantels. Gifts over \$5000 to the Endowment Fund will be acknowledged with an engraved nameplate on the Eternal Light Society Wall Board located in our church hall.

Please review the enclosed brochure and supporting documents which should provide all information needed. Any questions, please direct to the **Chairman of the Endowment Fund, Mr. Nick Latkovic**, at email address: n.m.latkovic@gmail.com or Father Theodore Pantels.

Memorial Wall Update

Our Saint George Memorial Wall & Garden bronze wall plaque manufacture has been completed and will be shipped to us in early June. Our plan is to have it installed as soon as it arrives. While we are waiting for delivery, we will be getting the landscape and lighting prepared around where it is to be installed. We have already been receiving the individual nameplates that parishioners have ordered to commemorate their loved ones that have fallen asleep in the Lord.

New nameplate orders can still be placed. We have approximately sixteen spaces available. Please utilize the order form located in the church hall or see Rhonda Latkovic to place your order. Currently the price is \$175.00 per nameplate (up to 25 letters max).

A Blessing Service and Memorial Service is tentatively planned for **Sunday, June 23rd** to commemorate the new memorial wall & garden area.

CHURCH & WELLNESS

"Thy Will be Done!"

Praying the Lord's Prayer, I often find myself saying the words "Thy Will be done," with a certain emphasis, silently asking God to intervene into a situation, while allowing me to be at peace with the outcome that God ordains. For a "nano-second" a thought goes through my head, flashing the words of the Serenity Prayer or the slogan of every recovering addict, "Let go and Let God," a seemingly adolescent interpretation of our Lord's words, "Thy Will be done."

I have always wanted to find inner peace at the notion of abandoning my worries and allowing God to take care of everything, "according to His Will." All I ever had to do is simply *surrender* to the Divine Will and all is at peace. Ultimately, this is all true.

However, God's Will often requires our full participation. Here is where our faith in God's Will is tested every day. More often than not, asking for God's Will to be done has required a tax on me which is not necessarily a comfortable thing, strongly tempting me to be even more anxious. I had to learn that asking for God's Will to be done requires from me that I actually do God's Will in all aspects of my life. There have been times when I haven't particularly been ready to be a part of it, due to timing in my "busy" schedule; due to my level of energy, due to the fact that I fail to feel the "spunk" to do something needed that I had not previously thought of doing or learning how to do. But, even now, if I want God's Will to be done, I have to - like it or not - become a co-worker with God in a very particular manner, often involving very specific, or maybe intricate skills or duties, which often takes me out of my comfort zone, and allow God to work with me - *work*, being the operative, uncomfortable word.

Specifically, about twenty-five years ago I "sprained" my ankle playing basketball with youth. As soon as the doctor raised his eyebrows with concern, I thought, "O God, I hope it's just a sprained ankle like I think it is, and not anything more serious. Oh, well, Lord, *Thy Will be done!*"

Well, it was a hairline fracture. Recovery and healing would require more long-term pain and discomfort. I had hoped that by asking for God's Will to be done, there would be a "quick fix" for me. I was hoping that God's Will was that an instant miracle would be performed so that *I could keep on doing what I want*. Instead, God's Will, like with St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh," would be that I should endure this small pain for longer than *I wanted*. It would become a real cross for me to carry for a while. I wasn't able to drive myself to places that I "had" to be, which really upset my schedule.

Over the years, I often remember my pain and the things it taught me: to try to be patient with other people in their weakness and to never take good health and happiness for granted. In the end, the small cross of an injured ankle was just a taste of the Cross of our Lord which He carries with (and for) each of us in all of our trials. Indeed, no matter how imperfect a situation is, we can always make it worse by giving up the effort to rehabilitate (or repent) -- and, anything can always be worse. Be *thankful* that it isn't.

It's been said that while people make plans, God already has the plan. Many trials come our way that can take us off our game. It's good to be humbled by God and to remain humble before God. That's how we learn to give love. We can choose to accept our trials as *opportunities* to be co-workers with God, offering salvation to others, as peacemakers and healers of one another's soul. Ultimately, we need to take seriously the words of St. John Cassian: "The Will of God is that all people should be saved, according to the saying of the blessed Paul, and come to the knowledge of the Truth." (*Selected Writing of St. John Cassian the Roman*, ed. by St. Paisios Orthodox Women's Monastery, pg. 29).

Be assured that asking for God's Will to be done will require us to humbly become part of the relentless, day-to-day drama that comes as God's Will unfolds.

+FR. THEODORE

SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH

by
Deacon Euthym

"If we ask something from God without making any sacrifice, it has no value. If I sit and say, 'God, please heal this person.' without making some sacrifice, it's as though I'm just uttering good words." – Saint Paisios of Mount Athos

When have we ever achieved something in this world without some effort or sacrifice? This is the practice arena for our spiritual life. Everything from God is a gift, in our asking for a "gift" from God, we have to have the correct state of mind. Which is aligning our will with His will. To that end we must sacrifice at some level to make our will subservient. " Lord, Heal this person!" ...we might ask. Is it because we are just superficially being nice, or have we taken the time to care for the person, put our interests aside over the person we are praying for, through caring for them either directly or indirectly, taking time away from entertaining pursuits, financially, time spent etc. Many times we get discouraged when we ask and have sacrificed, but have not taken the final step, surrendering our will to God's will. This is when we become outcome independent but completely at peace, knowing that God's will is best no matter the outcome.

Doing God's will involves charity.

"Acts of charity, almsgiving and all the external good works do not suppress the arrogance of the heart; but noetic meditation, the labor of repentance, contrition and humility--these humble the proud mind." – Elder Joseph the Hesychast

Interesting comment about the attitude of service and giving. A good friend reminded me that we should **not** give until it "hurts" rather, we should give until it "feels good". That idea of feeling good is the realization that we are doing it for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that external good works do not suppress arrogance but often increase it. Rather the road to true charity is through prayer and a realization of God's creation, repent-

ance and realization of our sin through Holy Confession (contrition), and finally understanding that whatever we give has already been given to us by God in one way or another.

SUNDAY SCHOOL



Sunday, June 2nd is the End-of-the-Year ceremony for our Sunday School. We look forward, however, to seeing our Sunday School students participating in the Sunday of Pentecost Services on Sunday, June 16th - and we, of course, look forward to seeing them in Church Services throughout the summer. We also look forward to seeing our Sunday School students back in classes in September for the start of the 2019-2020 Sunday School year.

End-of-the-Year celebrations include bowling at the Fantasy Springs bowling alley, like last year. Like last year, as well, lunch will be served to both parents and students at the bowling alley -- and we look forward to full parental (and/or grandparental participation in connection with this event from each of our students' parents. Children have the best time when they can enjoy an event with their moms, dads and grandparents -- plus, we can help the "big people" share in learning the lessons that were taught in Sunday School this year.

CHOIR

Following Pentecost Sunday on June 16th, our parish choir will go "dark" for the summer. We invite one and all to join in congregational singing as we celebrate together the Divine Liturgy.

Choir will resume in September. To join the choir, contact Choir Director, **Annette Laskaris**. Those who join the parish choir need to make every effort to attend mid-week choir practices, the schedule for which will be posted in the August *Voice of St. George* parish newsletter.

Finally, many thanks to God for giving us **Annette Laskaris** as our Choir Director; **Tina Veroulis**, who worked countless hours in the efforts to organize the choir music from week-to-week..

ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT

The annual St. George parish Golf Tournament was held on **Saturday, May 4, 2019**, with **George Argyros** serving as Golf Tournament Chairman. This year's tournament was held at the **Desert Falls Country Club** in Palm Desert.

Following the 12 noon shot-gun start, the tournament participants attended the **St. George Golf Tournament Awards Dinner**, held at our St. George parish hall. Many thanks to **Vasilios Papadopoulos** and his wife, **Maria**, for preparing the delicious lamb appetizers. Assisting George Argyros in dinner preparations were **Linda and John Petalas, Peter Snarskis and Doug Lyons**. Preparing the galaktobouriko dessert was **Lula Valissarakos, Ana Doubaratzis and Stacey Argyros**. Live music was provided by **The Greeks**. **Jim Christopoulos** served as Masters of Ceremony as awards were given as follows:

First Place - Women's Foursome: Christie Malitis, Paulette Carkonen, Joan Panopoulos and Barbara Gietzen.

First Place - Men's Foursome: Chris Maletis, Paul Carkonen, Ray Gietzen and Jeff Curreri

Second Place - Mike Kartsonis, Casey Maldon, Nicholas Speliopoulos and Aldo Llamas

Third Place - Michael Swartz, Penny Swartz, Barry Baruh and Judy Baruh

Closest to the Pin - Paul Carkonen and Michael Vasilomanilakis (tie)

Many, many thanks to all who helped to acquire items for both the dinner raffle (which included fine and elaborate wine and snack baskets) and the silent auction.

Everyone is welcome to come back next year for our St. George parish Golf Tournament, which is tentatively scheduled for **Saturday, April 25, 2020**.



The parish hall begins to fill up with guests attending this year's annual St. George parish Golf Tournament.



Maria and Vasilios Papadopoulos ; the roasted lamb



The kitchen crew: left to right - John Petalas, George Argyros, Chairman, Linda Petalas.



First Place, Women's Foursome: left-right: Paulette Carkonen, Barbara Gietzen, Joan Panopoulos, and Christie Maletis

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ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT, Continued



First Place - Men's Foursome- Left to right: Paul Carkonen, Ray Gietzen and Chris Maletis (not pictured: Jeff Curreri)



Second Place: Left to right: Nicholas Speliopoulos and Mike Kartsonis (not pictured: Casey Maldon and Aldo Llamas)



Third Place- left to right: Penny Swartz, Michael Swartz, Judy Baruh and Barry Baruh



Closest to the Pin (tie): Left to right- Paul Carkonen, Michael Vasilomanilakis and George Argyros, Chairman

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES



The members of our Parish Council met on Tuesday, May 7, 2019. The meeting's highlights included:

- ◆ There was agreement that the St. George Golf Tournament was very successful and much appreciation was expressed for the efforts of **George Argyros**, who served as our Gold Tournament Chairman.
- ◆ Analysis of this year's St. George Greek Festival included concerns for quick service to patrons attending the Festival, in order to keep the crowd moving so that long lines do not keep forming. Discussion also included the probabilities involving expanding the annex in order to install walk-in refrigeration and freezing for food storage.
- ◆ A decision was made to upgrade the regular office computer in order to provide for up-to-date programs.
- ◆ **Linda Kallis** gave a report indicating preparations needed to begin renting our parish hall and/or our parish courtyard to non-parishioners for various social gatherings. Efforts will be made to prepare the parish hall and courtyard for advertising purposes.
- ◆ Security concerns were addressed in light of efforts to begin renting the parish hall and courtyard for various non-parish affairs. Discussion centered on placing security cameras in the church proper; the parking lot; the courtyard and the parish hall.
- ◆ Fr. Ted announced that the new mosaic icons will be delivered on May 15th. Installation will take place from May 15th to May 25th. The icons will be installed on the North and South walls of the church temple. The icons are: **The Transfiguration of Christ; Pentecost; The Annunciation, and The Presentation of Christ in the Temple.**

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST: COMPLETING JESUS' HUMAN ROLE & PREPARING FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Ascension of Christ will be celebrated on June 6th. His Ascension marks the fulfillment of His role and ministry as our Savior. The period of 40 days after His Resurrection from the dead is one in which He appears to His disciples in different ways which stress His divinity. We are given the vision of His real glory as God, arisen from the dead.

The Gospel of St. Luke gives the most outstanding example of Christ's last ministry to His disciples and a dramatic account of the Ascension, at which time He gave His final charge and blessing: *"...And lifting His hands He blessed them. While blessing them, He parted from them as was carried up into heaven. And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy."* (St. Luke 24: 21-52). In the Book of Acts, St. Luke serves as the great historian of the Church, showing believers the true meaning of the Early Church: *"To them He presented Himself alive after His Passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the Kingdom of God."* (Acts 1:3).

Not all sources are from St. Luke or from the Acts of the Apostles. St. Mark outlines the Ascension in Chapter 16, verse 19. St. Matthew also describes Christ's post-Resurrection ministry in Chapter 18, verses 17-20. In his First Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul explains one of the appearances of the Risen Christ: *"Then He appeared to more than five thousand brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep."* (1 Corinthians 15: 6-8).

Particularly in the Gospel of St. Matthew we are given the two statements of our Lord that deal with the salvation of humanity into the future. First, our Lord commanded His disciples, as they met Him on the mountain to which He had directed them, saying, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded*

you." These words are known as the "Great Commission," which is the purpose of the Church in the world. Second, our Lord added His promise to be with them (and their followers) with these words: *"Behold, I am with you always, to the close of the age."*

Most certainly there is the future. Only ten days following our Savior's Ascension, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Holy Apostles on the Day of Pentecost. The Feast of Pentecost will be celebrated by Orthodox Christians this year on Sunday, June 16th. It is important to note that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, just as the Son is eternally begotten from the Father. From now on, the ministry of Christ is through the Holy Spirit. Christ has not left. His ministry to the world is with us through the Holy Spirit.

In a real sense, our destiny is a new ministry - a new work among us. The work of redemption has been done. Now, the future of the Church is through the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Ascension of Christ shows us the mystery of our own relationship to the Church.

On the Sunday that follows the celebration of Christ's Ascension, and before Pentecost, we commemorate the Holy Fathers and Saints who convened at the First Ecumenical Council. This is the Council that formulated the Nicene Creed in which we confess that our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is both human and divine. Though His humanity, we partake in His divine energies. This is as true for us as individuals as it is for all of us collectively as His Church.

May we be received into His completed work and the Heavenly Church!

--MATTHEW DAVIS

NEW ICONS

Following a major and generous donation by **Nicholas Demetropoulos**, others have contributed to our "New Icon Project." A list of all who have contributed will be provided in the near future, given that some have now shown enthusiasm to add to the effort of installing icons and/or furnishings to our parish.

We are grateful to the iconographers, **Corrado Madanzi** and **Daniel Lochtmars**, who literally *pieced* together the new mosaic icons that grace the North and South walls of our church temple. On the North wall, the new icons are: **The Transfiguration of our Lord** and **Pentecost**, with the theme of the Holy Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. On the opposite wall, the new icons are: **The Annunciation** and **The Presentation of our Lord in the Temple**, with theme of our humanity in God - God became Man so that we can become like God; Christ our God was presented to the Temple, as we present our children to the Church and He welcomes them into His presence.

We are grateful to God for the theological oversight for this project offered by **His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos** and the Metropolis Art and Architecture Committee chaired by **Fr. Peter Salmas**, as well as **Deaconess Krisann Kontaxis**.



Top Picture:
Our Iconographers: left-right: Daniel Lochtmars, Deaconess Krisann Kontaxis & Corrado Madanzi



Bottom Picture:
Work begins to install the Icon of Pentecost.



Our newly installed Icons:
<---The Transfiguration of our Lord



<----Pentecost



<-----
The Annunciation



<----The Presentation of Christ in the Temple



<----The Iconographers give a special gift to our parish: The Icon of Christ. Left to right: Stefano Juliani (group leader), Deacon Euthym, Fr. Ted

Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, May 26th**, the new Icons were blessed with **Holy Water** during a special ceremony.

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS



Month Of May:

The Philoptochos final meeting before the summer break was held at Desert Willow Golf Resort on **Monday, May 13th**. Thirty members gathered for a group lunch in The Terrace Restaurant. A short meeting was held with the members prior to lunch being served. Newly elected President **Rhonda Latkovic** conducted the meeting. The main topics presented were the establishment of four Philoptochos Initiatives for the 2019 - 2020 season and teams are established for each. The four initiatives are:

- 1) Serving the Homeless
- 2) Human Trafficking
- 3) Operation Classroom
- 4) Assistance for Our Troops & Veterans

All board members have chosen to join one or more of the initiative teams and also general members were encouraged to do so and many signed up to join a team. Our direction for each team will be established over the summer season and rolled out to the membership at our next general meeting on Monday, September 16th. The meeting will begin at 11:30 AM and be held in the church hall.

The second main topic discussed was honoring our past President Linda Kallis for her service and commitment to the organization for the past four years. Linda was given a framed certificate from the National Philoptochos; a special communication from San Francisco Archdiocese Philoptochos President Jeannie Ranglas was read; a Philoptochos shawl was given to Linda, along with flowers; and lastly, a VISA gift card from the board members. We are grateful to Linda for her leadership and dedication over the past four years!

A Philoptochos calendar is in process of being put together and once complete, will be placed on the bulletin board in the church hall for reference. It will notate meeting dates, outreach dates, and so forth. Please look for it soon.

Over the summer we will be preparing a new, updated directory brochure with member information. This will be available in September to all members.

We wish everyone a wonderful summer break. Always remember that, *"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."*

--RHONDA LATKOVIC,
Philoptochos President



May Philoptochos Luncheon: left to right-Athena Harrigan, Pam Zaverdas, Lula Valissarakos, Margarita Pagoulatos, Paulette Carkonen, Irene Stambolas, Penny Karagianis, Pauline Latkovic.



May Philoptochos Luncheon: Incoming Philoptochos President, Rhonda Latkovic, honors past President, Linda Kallis, reading the appreciation of excellent service to Philoptochos from Metropolis President, Jeanie Ranglas.



May Philoptochos Luncheon: left to right- Terry Ayanopolis, Linda Petalas, Becky Allen, Joan Fakinos

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PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS, Continued



May Philoptochos Luncheon - View of Philoptochos members enjoying the annual May Luncheon.



AHEPA Sunday - Fr. T. P. Memorial Scholarship Awards: left to right: Kyriakos Seraphim, Vasilios Karalis (father of Constantina Karalis), Haig Shannazarian (father of Jack Shannazarian), Emmelia Shannazarian (sister of Jack Shannazarian), Fr. Ted, Katrina Storton, Wynn Storton, Jeff Curreri, Steve Steele.

AHEPA NEWS

AHEPA Sunday, May 19, 2019, our AHEPA Chapter 528 proudly presented the 2019 scholarship awards for two very deserving and hard-working students, of the St George/AHEPA community. This year marks 14 years of Scholarship awards amounting to over \$40,000. Present at the ceremony were many AHEPANS and Chapter President, Wynn Storton (Current Supreme Governor of Region #8). Fr. Theodore Pantels presided over the presentation of awards:

Jack Shannazarian (age 22). Jack is an adult member of AHEPA Chapter 528 (3 years). He attends Cal Poly University, San Luis Obispo, CA and is pursuing a bachelor's degree in History and eventual master's degree in education. His goal is to become a High School History teacher or College professor. Jack started as a St George, Cub Scout with Pack 848, under Cubmaster, Wynn Storton and has volunteered at the PD Greek Festival for 10 years. Jack is a Boy Scouts of America Eagle Scout and is also a member of the Coachella Valley Lions Club and recipient of Lyon's scholarship 2018/2019. He earned a Redlands University Scholarship in 2016 and was last year's recipient of the 2018 AHEPA Chapter 528 Periclean Award. Jack also received an AHEPA National Scholarship award as well as the AHEPA Journey to Greece, including a study abroad at Webster University in Athens, Greece in 2018. **Jack Shannazarian received the 2019 George Tcharos Educational Scholarship award, in the amount of \$500.00 dollars towards his academic needs.**

(* Jack Shannazarian couldn't be here. His sister is pictured receiving his award)

Our second Recipient, **Katrina Storton** (age 20) is a lifelong member of St George Greek Orthodox church. She will be graduating from the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) in June 2019. Katrina will begin studies at the Graduate School of the University of Glasgow, Scotland UK in the Fall. She plans to obtain a Master of Science (MSc) in Film Curation/Museum Studies from the University of Glasgow, Scotland. Katrina's plans to be a Film Curator/ Archivist and Exhibitor at the Academy of Arts Motion Picture Museum, LA or the V & A Museum, in London England.

On campus, Katrina is busy as the first ever, student, Archive Manager @ UCSB Film Archive overseeing 70,000 films. She is also the Lead Mender @UCSB Music Library restoring musical scores, texts, and manuscripts.

Her academic achievements include: Graduated with Honors from River Springs High School (4.23 GPA), in 3 years.

--Graduate - Santa Barbara City College with

Continued on next page ----->

AHEPA SUNDAY, Continued

Honors and earned 3 Associates Degrees, (*Film & Media Studies* (4.0) and *Art and Humanities* (4.0) and *Behavior Science*)...SBCC President's Honor List, all four semesters.

Awards: Osher Foundation/Bernard Kruse Scholarship for Academic Excellence.

-Recipient: AHEPA National 2017 Journey to Greece,

-Recipient: Scholarship to Study Abroad at Webster University, in Athens. 2017

-Recipient: AHEPA National Scholarship award 2017

-Recipient: AHEPA District 20 Scholarship award 2016, 2017

-Recipient: Daughters of Penelope National Scholarship 2016

Recipient: Daughters of Penelope National Scholarship 2016

-Recipient: AHEPA 528 Fr Theophilos Memorial Scholarship - 2015-2018

-Finalist - Top 10 Scholars Santa Barbara City College, President's Award

-Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Katina John Malta National Scholarship- 2018

We are proud to present **Katrina Storton** with the **St. George Award, in the amount of \$1000.00 towards graduate studies**. She is the 2nd recipient to receive an AHEPA 528 Graduate Studies award. AHEPA 528 offers Undergraduate/Graduate and STEM awards, as funded. Congratulations to both our 2019 AHEPA 528 Fr Theophilos Memorial Scholarship recipients. AHEPA 528 would also like to thank the generous donors, who contributed to perpetuate the legacy, of the George Tcharos Memorial Scholarship fund.

As we honor our college students, we congratulate **Constantina Karalis**, who has been chosen to receive the prestigious PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation Award, one of twenty, \$10,000 awards for exceptional Greek students nationwide.

We want to remind our AHEPA Chapter 528 members that our next meeting is on **Wednesday, June 5, 2019 at our St. George parish hall at 6:30 p.m.**

--WYNN STORTON,
President, Chapter 528,
Supreme Governor, Region #8

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS

This is the end of our 2018 - 2019 Altar Flower Season. Moreover, Fr. Theodore, and I are sincerely grateful for your diligent, and loyal support of the program. Since 2013 we have attempted to provide the best of brilliantly, beautiful bouquets of fresh flowers. Saint George is truly blessed to have faithful contributors such as you, and we pray that God will continue to lead us in our efforts to adorn His Holy Altar with beautiful bouquets! We acknowledge, and give thanks for the following parishioners:

Matushka Gloria Lehman

Ms. Terry Ayanopolis

George, Angie, & Vasili Spanos

Fr. Theodore & Presbyteria Petula Pantels

Mr. George Megalonakis

Mrs. Marya Dunkel

Mrs. Melissa Hawkins

Ms. Emily Tcharos

Ms. Doris Elmo

Ms. Debbie Pousen

Ms. Kathy Anos

Ms. Annette Lewis

Ms. Becky Allen

Mr. & Mrs. Frank Fakinos

Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Davis

Ms. Eve Meek

Mr. & Mrs Nick Latkovic

Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Hector

Mr. & Mrs. John Petalas

Ms. Pauline Latkovic

Mr. & Mrs. Bill Piggott

Ms. Josie Desnoyer

Mr. & Mrs. William G. Barringer

Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Dymond

Mr. & Mrs. Peter McEvoy

Mr. & Mrs. Antony Chiotis

Mr. & Mrs. Angelo Veroulis

Mr. & Mrs. Tony Dalkas

Mr. & Mrs. Chris Laskaras

Mr. Spiro Astmos

Mr. & Mrs. Nick Krespis

Thank you! May God bless you all,

--LOUISE DOBBS BARRINGER,
Altar Flower Coordinator

OUR CHUCH ANNEX LOOKS GOOD!



Our parish annex is back in order and ready for another season following the summer break.

Many thanks to God for the dedicated efforts of a few of our parishioners who took the time and offered their abilities to organize our parish annex as we take a break for summer. Everything is now ready to go as we enter the new season, beginning in September.

The four volunteers for this project were: **Pat Dalkas, Rhonda Latkovic, John Petalas, & Pete Snarskis.**

With our current inventory, we look forward to holding off from purchasing needed items in the near future.

ST.SOPHIA SUMMER CAMP

DATES:

Week 1:

Sunday, July 21, 2019 to
Saturday, July 27, 2019

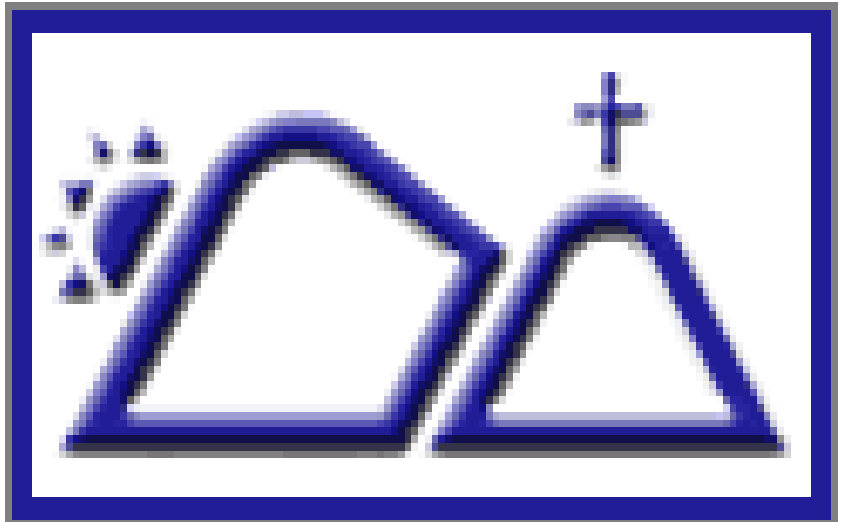
Week 2:

Saturday, July 27, 2019 to
Saturday, August 3, 2019

Camp Seeley

250 N. Highway 138

Crestline, CA 92325



To register children for this year's St. Sophia Summer Camp, Please contact:

Perry Skaggs

Saint Sophia Camp, Camp Director

www.saintsophiacamp.org

SaintSophiaCamp@gmail.com

(323) 397-5436

St. George Greek Orthodox Church of the Desert
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Palm Desert, California 92261
web: www.go-stgeorge.org/ email: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com
Telephone: (760)568-9901 / FAX: 9760) 568-9492

JUNE 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sunday Schedule Orthros-8:30 a.m. D. Liturgy-9:30 a.m. S.School-10:30 a.m. <i>Pentecost Sunday Sunday-See special schedule.</i>						1
2 The Blind Man Ep.Acts 16-16-34 Gos. John 9:1-38	3	4 Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.	5 AHEPA Meeting-6:30 pm	6 ASCENSION OF OUR LORD Orthros-8:30 a.m Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m. Choir Practice -1:00 pm	7	8
9 Holy Fathers of the 1st Ecc. Council Ep.Acts 20:16-18 28-36 Gos.John 17:1-13	10	11 Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.	12	13 Choir Practice-1:00 pm	14	15 SATURDAY OF SOULS Orthros-8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
16 PENECAST SUNDAY Orthros-8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy-9:15 a.m. Kneeling Service- 10:30 am	17	18 Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.	19	20	21	22
23 - All Saints Ep.Heb.11:33-40 12:1-2 Gos.Matth 10:32 33; 19: 27-30 30 Holy Apostles Ep.1 Cor.4:9-16 Gos. Matth 9:36- 10-1-8	24- NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST Orthros-8:30 p.m. Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.	25 Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.	26	27	28	29 SAINT PETER & PAUL Orthros-8:30 a.m Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.