

DECEMBER 1, 2019

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER



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– Fr. Theodore Pantels,

Proistamenos (Pastor)

– Deacon Euthym Kontaxis,

M.D.

Holy Communion Order

1. Please remain standing while following the directions of our ushers.
2. Ladies, kindly remove lipstick before receiving.
3. When receiving Holy Communion, make the Sign of the Cross, state your name (baptismal name), and naturally receive as if being fed.
4. Non-Orthodox Christians may not receive Holy Communion, but they may receive the Holy Bread at the end of the service.
5. All Orthodox Christians must be spiritually prepared to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Please see the priest if you have any questions.

VOICES

I try to picture in my mind the kinds of words that people who were following Jesus into Jericho were using when they rebuked the blind man who was crying out for Jesus to have mercy upon him. Maybe they were words like these: "Stop bothering us! Don't bother Jesus; He is not able to help you; you are not worth the effort needed to stop our procession."

The voices that the blind man of Jericho heard had to be carrying messages such as these. But the blind man cried out in prayer all more: "Jesus, Son of David,

have mercy on me!" (Luke 18: 39).

In fact, this single incident in the life of our Savior embodies the relationship of the world to the Church. The "voices" of the world around us cry out against the voice of the Church: "Be quiet! We don't want to listen to you." However, let us never forget the fact that Christ our God hears the voice of prayer, regardless of the many attempts to silence it.

The voice of the blind man of Jericho was overpowering, however. It was
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ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE

Yesterday, we celebrated the Feast Day of St. Andrew the Apostle, the Patron Saint of our Holy Patriarchate.

Saint Andrew was from Bethsaida of Galilee. He was the son of Jonas and the brother of Peter, the chief of the Apostles. He had first been a disciple of John the Baptist. However, on hearing the Baptist's witness concerning Jesus, when he pointed Him out and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1.29,36), Andrew immediately followed Christ, and became His first disciple. Saint Andrew is officially acknowledged in prayers commemorating him as the First-called of the Apostles.

After the Ascension of the Savior, he preached in various lands. In the efforts to silence his voice, he faced intense persecution and suffered many things for the sake of glorifying the Name of Jesus. He was martyred in Patras of Achaia, where he was crucified on a cross in the shape of an "X," the first letter of "Christ" in Greek. The figure of this "X-shaped" cross is also the symbol of Saint Andrew.



Προσπαθώ να φαντασθώ τα λόγια που οι άνθρωποι που ακολουθούσαν τον Ιησούν προς την Ιεριχώ εχρησιμοποίησαν όταν επετίμησαν τον τυφλό που εφώναζε για να χαρίσει σε αυτόν ο Ιησούς το μεγάλο έλεός Του. Ίσως ο τυφλός άκουσε τέτοια λόγια: <Σταματήστε να μας ενοχλείτε!> Επίσης, <Ο Ιησούς δεν μπορεί να κάνει τίποτα για εσένα και δεν αξίζει τον κόπο να σταματήσουμε για εσένα!> Δεν υπάρχει αμφιβολία ότι ο τυφλός άκουσε μηνύματα όπως αυτά. Αλλά, ο τυφλός προσευχήθηκε ακόμη πιο έντονα: <Ιησού, Υιέ Δαβίδ, ελέησόν με!> (Λκ. 18:39).

Στην πραγματικότητα, αυτό το μοναδικό περιστατικό στην ζωή του Σωτήρος μας ενσαρκώνει την σημερινή σχέση του κόσμου με την Εκκλησία. Οι <φωνές> του κόσμου γύρω μας φωνάζουν ενάντια στην φωνή της Εκκλησίας: <Να είστε ήσυχοι! Δεν θέλουμε να σας ακούσουμε!> Ωστόσο, ως μην ξεχάσουμε ποτέ το γεγονός ότι ο Χριστός ακούει την φωνή της προσευχής μας, ανεξαρτήτως από τις πολλές προσπάθειες του κόσμου να την σιωπήσει.

Μάλιστα, η φωνή του τυφλού της Ιεριχώ ήταν υπερβολική. Ήταν η δυνατή φωνή της πίστωσης! Σύμφωνα με την Αγία Παράδοση των Αγίων μας, πρέπει να θυμόμαστε ότι η προσευχή που προσφέρεται στον Σωτήρα μας με ειλικρινή πίστη και με αγάπη έχει μεγάλη δύναμη. Αυτή ήταν η εμπειρία του τυφλού της Ιεριχώ.

Ας παραμείνουμε σταθεροί στην πίστη μας ακούγοντας την φωνή της Εκκλησίας με προθυμία για να γνωρίσουμε την αγάπη του Θεού.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

the loud voice of faith! In accordance with the Holy Tradition of our Saints, we must remember that prayer offered to our Savior with sincere faith and love has great power. This was the experience of the blind man of Jericho.

On the one hand, we can pray by embracing the voices we hear from the Liturgical prayers of the priest and the hymns sung by the choir. These are voices of "the household of God" (in reference to Ephesians 2:17-19). As such, they are voices of encouragement that we all need in order to maintain our spirit of prayer. On the other hand, we can pray, as did the blind man of Jericho, always rejecting voices that beg us to stop praying with thoughts of discouragement and doubt.

Let me point to two authorities greater than me that emphasize that prayer does indeed require great effort and faith:

- 1) St. Theophan the Recluse suggested to his disciples: "You are subject to wandering thoughts because you listen to idle talk, and memories of it remain with you...When this happens, you should descend into your heart, turning your eyes away from the illusory images presented by the enemy, and call out [fervently] to the Lord." -- as did the blind man of Jericho. (*The Art of Prayer*, pg. 265).
- 2) Amplifying St. Theophan's words, Metropolitan Anthony Bloom, in his book, *Living Prayer*, adds: "...When we of a sudden cry out to God, many voices try to silence our prayers with outward and inward voices. Is it worth praying?...We should never listen to these voices; the louder they shout, the stronger should be our purpose...We can learn from Bartimaeus (the blind man of Jericho) that when we turn to God wholeheartedly, God always hears us." (pgs. 48-49).

Spiritual warfare is very much a matter of discernment. We can either stand firm in our faith, willingly listening to voices of the Church as we pray for God's wisdom and enlightenment, or we can be deceived into listening to the voices of the fallen world, and allow our zeal for prayer to fade. This choice will always be before us. My prayer is that you and I will always choose wisely.
+FR. THEODORE

"The little children were brought to Jesus that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. And Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.'"

-- St. Matthew 19"13-14

HYMNS FOR THIS SUNDAY'S CELEBRATION OF THE DIVINE LITURGY:**ANTIPHON I: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou..." (By the prayers of the Theotokos...)****Verse 1-- Bless the Lord, O my soul, and everything within me, bless His holy name.****Refrain: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."****Verse 2- Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His rewards.****Refrain: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."****Verse 3- The Lord prepared His throne in heaven, and His Kingdom rules over all.****Refrain: "By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, save us."****Chanter(s): Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.****Refrain: " Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston****ANTIPHON II: "Soston imas Ie Theou..." (Save us, O Son of God...)****Verse 1- Praise the Lord, O my soul! I shall praise the Lord while I live; I shall sing to my God as long as I exist.****Refrain: "Soston imas Ie Theou, O Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si alleluia."****Verse 2 - Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob; his hope is in the Lord his God.****Refrain: "Save us, O Son of God, Who Arose from the dead; we sing to You, Alleluia."****Verse 3 - The Lord shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, to all generations.****Refrain: "Soston imas Ie Theou, O Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si alleluia."****Doxa Patri ke Yio ke Aghio Pnevmati ke nin ke aei ke eis tous aonas ton aonon. Amin. "O Monogenis Yios ke Logos tou Theou..."****ANTIPHON III- This is the day the Lord made; let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein.****Sunday Resurrection Hymn: Katelisas to Stavro Sou ton thanaton (Tone 7)... (O Lord by Your sacred Cross You abolished death and granted unto the thief blessed paradise. The Myrrh-bearers ceased lamenting and turned to joy. The Apostles did preach the good news at Your command that You had risen from the dead, O Christ our God, be-stowing Your mercy upon the world evermore..)****Hymn for St. George : Os ton ehmaloton eleftherotis... (As the one who sets the captives free and the protector of the poor; as physician to the sick and the champion defender of kings, bearer of trophies are you, O Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.)****Kontakion Hymn for this Sunday : Ee Parthenos Simeron... (On this day the Virgin Maid goes to the grotto to give birth to the pre-eternal Word in an ineffable manner. Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds Him who willed that He appear as a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God.)****Axion Estin - page 52 in our Divine Liturgy books.****Communion Hymn- Enite ton Kyrion ...(Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Allelouia.)**

EPISTLE--Eph. 2:14-22: Brethren, Christ is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

**The Ladder for the month of December 2019 is sponsored by:
Bess and John Manesis**

ANNOUNCEMENTS**Coffee Hour: Matushka Gloria Lehman**

PHILOPTOCHOS— Our Philoptochos "Giving Tree" now graces our parish hall for Christmas. This tree is an invitation for all of us to provide gifts for children who have been rescued from human trafficking and are now being cared for at Safe House of the Desert. Holiday Baking is scheduled for tomorrow, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Also, there is a Philoptochos Board Meeting tomorrow at 11:30 a.m. We look forward to seeing everyone at our Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon this Saturday at 11:30 a.m. at Palm Valley Country Club.

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS --The contributions and dedications for this Sunday:

-Ms. Becky Allen--"To my beautiful family, may God protect them, and keep them in His loving care!"

-Ms. Gabrilla Zaharia - "In loving memory of my Dear mother Elena Stefiuc!"

Please note: There are only three available 2020 Altar Flower contribution spaces left **two bouquets on March 1st, and one bouquet on May 31st.** See Louise Dobbs Barringer to sign up for these two remaining Sundays. Forever giving God all the praise for your continued support!

PARISH ELECTIONS--Next Sunday, **December 8, 2019** immediately following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT -- "**The Christmas Story,**" will be held **on Sunday, December 15, 2019** in church directly following the Divine Liturgy. Guaranteed to be a joy for us all!

2020 GREEK FESTIVAL FLIERS--"**2020 Greek Festival Sponsorship/Ad Forms**" are available in our parish hall. Buying and/or selling **sponsorships and/or ads** for our **2020 St. George Greek Festival Program Book** will insure the success of our Festival.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, December 2nd.....Philoptochos Board Meeting - 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, December 3rd.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m./ Adult Greek class-6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 4th.....ST. BARBARA THE MARTYR

Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m./Parish Council - 2:30 p.m.

Festival Meeting- 6:00 p.m./AHEPA Meeting- 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 5th.....Choir Practice- 1:00 p.m.

Vespers at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church,
Murrietta, CA - 7:00 p.m.

Friday, December 6th.....ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER

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

Saturday, December 7th.....Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon at

Palm Valley Country Club - 11:30 a.m.

GOSPEL — Lk. 18:35-43

At that time, as Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And he cried, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me receive my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Philoptochos Annual Christmas Luncheon

Saturday, December 7th, 2019 at 11:30 AM



**Palm Valley Country Club
39205 Palm Valley Dr.
Palm Desert, CA 92211**

R.S.V.P. by Friday, November 29th, 2019

Music
Cash Bar

Family and Friends are invited!

Raffle
Prizes

\$37.00 per person for the pre-fixe menu, no substitutions.

Choice of: circle your choice below *all meals include unlimited soft drinks, coffee, iced or hot tea, water, house salad, mashed potatoes, seasonal vegetable, & chocolate mousse cake & ice cream dessert.

1. Chicken Marsala; mushroom sauce & fresh herbs
2. Roast Pork Tenderloin; shallot & cranberry sauce
3. Almond Crusted Sole; sun dried tomato & caper sauce
4. Pasta Tortellini; Alfredo sauce & parmesan cheese
5. Vegan

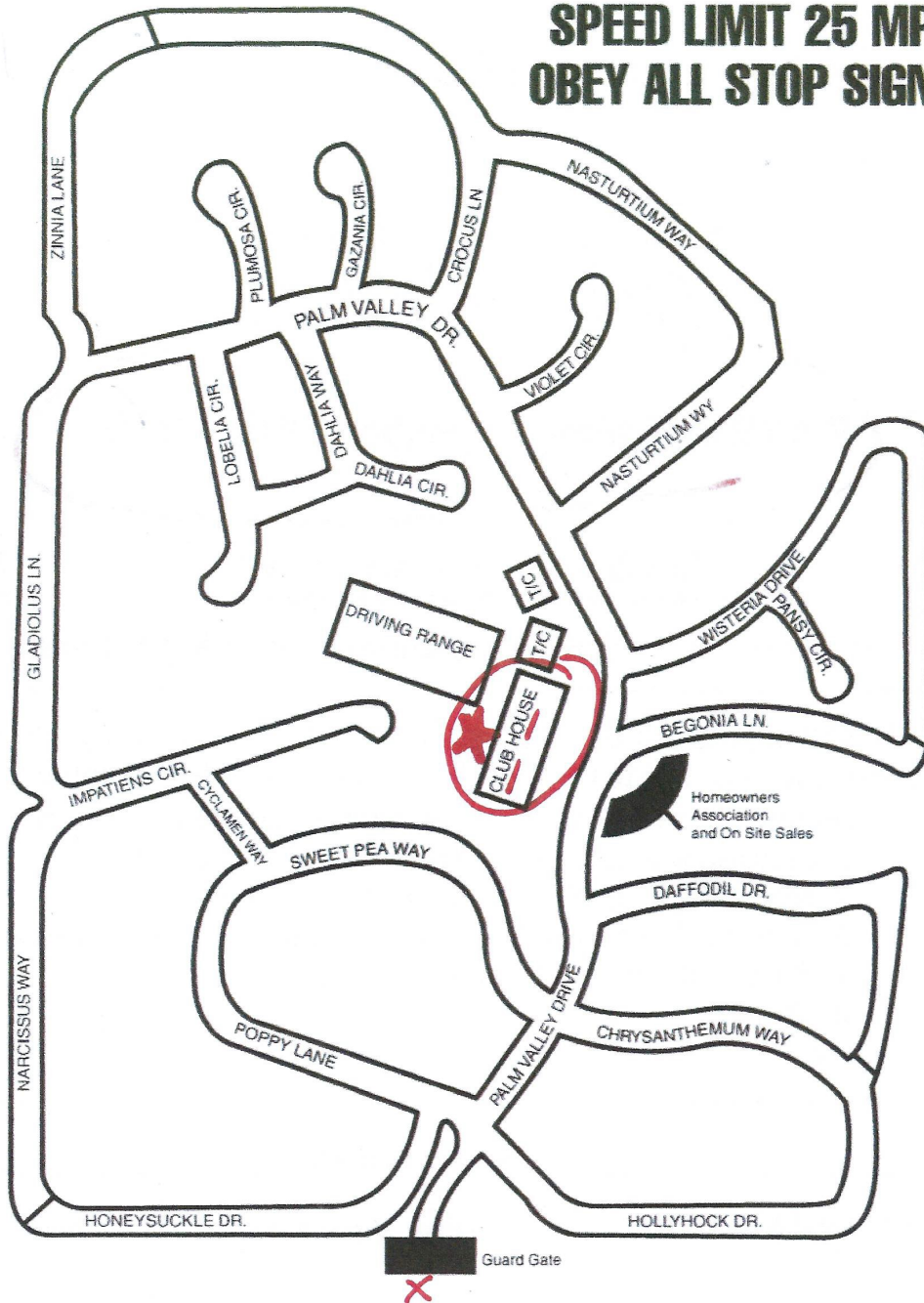
Name _____

Phone _____ Number Attending _____

Amount Paid Total \$ _____ cash or check payable to Philoptochos

PALM VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB
39205 Palm Valley Drive
Palm Desert, CA 92211
tel. (760) 345-2737

**SPEED LIMIT 25 MPH
OBEY ALL STOP SIGNS**



↑
Cook
↓

← Country Club Drive →

↑
Washington
↓



**SAINT GEORGE
SUNDAY SCHOOL
CHRISTMAS
PAGEANT**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2019

Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy