

NOVEMBER 17, 2019

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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Palm Desert, California 92260

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# THE LADDER



## Mailing Address:

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– Fr. Theodore Pantels,

Proistamenos (Pastor)

– Deacon Euthym Kontaxis,  
M.D.

## Holy Communion Order

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

## THE TREASURE OF DIVINE LOVE

The Divine Liturgy is celebrated in order to change us into becoming saints. This is to be our purpose for which we attend worship. Thus, the priest intones before the Communion Hymn: *“Holy Gifts for the holy people of God.”* Our “saintliness” is in the fact that our faith in Christ helps us overcome our own imperfections, as well as those of the world around us.

To the Galatians, St. Paul writes: *“God forbid that I should boast except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the*

*world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”* (6:14). This indeed is the model for Orthodox sainthood in which *coping* with our own errors and the failings of the world around us, with God’s grace, leads to *overcoming* the world. In fact, the ability to *cope* is a benchmark for the spiritual health needed to work toward sainthood.

Our abilities to deal with set-backs or illnesses is often sabotaged by our lack of patience and our lack of faith. In this way, we bring upon ourselves more pain and suffering. The illusion

*Continued on page 2*

**BABY BOTTLES-** Today, our dynamic Ladies of Philoptochos presents the “Baby Bottle” drive in support of *Birth Choice of the Desert*, encouraging parents who are expecting the birth of a baby to bring their unborn child to natural birth and to give him or her the right to live, rather than to abort their unborn child. Counseling includes support for the care in raising their soon-to-be-born child, but also informs parents of options for adoption by families who will nurture the child as their own, giving him or her every opportunity to enjoy their right to live.

*“Since the earliest days of Her existence, the Christian Church has consistently declared willful abortion of a human fetus to be equivalent to murder. St. Basil in the fourth century declared that, ‘Those who give potions for the destruction of the child conceived in the womb are murderers; as are they who take the poisons to kill the child.’”* (8th Canon Law of St. Basil)...*That God Himself places ultimate value on the sanctity of human life is evident by the fact that out of His great love for us, ‘He gave His Only-Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.’* (John 3:16)...*[Regarding the personhood of the fetus], we profess that no human being is ever fully a ‘person,’ but that all persons have the potential to become ‘fully human,’ to achieve union with God. Therefore, we cannot declare on the basis of ‘personhood’ that the fetus in the womb has no value, or lesser value in the eyes of both God and man than a person born.”*

--Contemporary Moral Issues Facing the Orthodox Church, by  
Fr. Stanley Harakas, pgs.82-85)



Η Θεία Λειτουργία εκτελείται με σκοπόν να μας κάνει αγίους. Αυτός πρέπει να είναι ο σκοπός μας για να εκκλησιαζώμεθα. Η <αγιότητα> μας εγκείται στο γεγονός ότι η πίστις μας στον Χριστόν μας βοηθά να αντιμετωπίσουμεν και να ξεπεράσουμεν τις δικές μας ατέλειες και τις ατέλειες του πεσμένου κόσμου.

Προς τους Γαλάτας ο Απ. Παύλος γράφει: <...*Ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ ὁ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὰρ τῷ κόσμῳ.*> (6:14). Αυτό είναι πράγματι το <μοντέλο> της Ορθόδοξης αγιότητας, στο οποίο η αντιμετώπιση των δικών μας αδυναμιῶν και των αδυναμιῶν του κόσμου γύρω μας, με την χάριν του Θεού, οδηγεί στην υπερνίκηση του κόσμου.

Στην πραγματικότητα, η ικανότητα αντιμετώπισεως είναι ένα μέτρον της πνευματικής υγείας, με την οποίαν κάνουμεν άσκηση προς την αγιότητα. Η ψευδαίσθηση ότι ο πλούτος θα μας σώσει από δυσκολίες και θλήψεις υπονομεύει τις ικανότητές μας να τις αντιμετωπίσουμεν και να τις ξεπεράσουμεν.

Με ταπείνωσην προς τον Χριστόν, πρέπει να βάλουμεν στην άκρη τον εγωισμόν μας, κάνοντας κάθε δυνατή προσπάθειαν να <ανατρέψουμεν> τις αμαρτίες μας με την εξομολόγησιν και με την μετάνοιαν, που απαιτεί από εμάς να αντιμετωπίσουμεν τις συνήθειες και τα σφάλματά μας που είναι αντίθετα με τις Εντολές του Θεού.

Με αυτόν τον τρόπον η ίδια η παρουσία μας στις ζωές των άλλων παίρνει μαγάλη αξία. Είναι, μάλιστα, μεγαλύτερη αξία από τα υλικά πλούτη του κόσμου επειδή συγκρίνεται με την παρουσίαν των Αγίων.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

that wealth will rescue us from pain and suffering also sabotages our abilities to cope with and overcome them. To think that wealth will rescue us from death is certainly a fantasy.

We would be in denial if we thought that we do not commit sins, whether in our thoughts (jealousy, lust), our words (gossip, insults, lies), or our deeds (hatred, abuse). "To be crucified to the world" means that we put aside our pride by making every effort to "undo" our sins through confession and repentance, which requires that we grapple with habits or faults which are contrary to God's Commandments. This struggle requires our humility so as to seek spiritual advice from a priest or elder of the Church; from Scripture, and, if necessary from a professional Christian counselor. Ultimately, however, it is the grace of the Holy Spirit that is at work in us, if we are humble enough to allow it.

To be sure, material wealth is of little value compared to the vast treasure of our Savior's eternal blessings by which we become His co-workers in providing peace and wellbeing to others. In this way, our very presence in the lives of others takes on great value, equal in worth to that of the Saints. Even after their departure from this world, they lead us to Salvation in Christ by virtue of having struggled with their own imperfections. Their lives are of eternal worth, which is why during some feasts of the Church, the verse from Psalm 116 is chanted as a Communion Hymn: "*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.*"

Unfortunately, the rich man of today's Gospel defined the value of his life by his material wealth, rather than by his love for God.

While we should always be aware of our sins -- and repent of them -- let us not overlook those qualities in us that compare with the Saints. Our participation in the Sacraments today give testimony to the fact that we have saintly qualities that we must continue to nurture and never lose. In this, let us avoid boasting about ourselves, however. Let us boast about our Savior Jesus Christ, Who helps us to overcome the world, since, through the Cross, Christ conquered death itself.

+FR. THEODORE

*"What will I give back to the Lord for all that He render to me? I will take up the cup of salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His holy ones. O Lord, I am Your servant."*

--Psalm 116:15 (Orthodox Study Bible: Psalm 115 [116:5])



**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: Ton synanarchon Logon (Tone 5)... (Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, Who for our salvation was born of a Virgin for He willed to be lifted up bodily upon the Cross, to endure death and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.)****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.)****Hymn for St. Gregory of Caesarea: En prosefches gree-grorohn... (By your accomplishments, you earned the name that you bore, for you were vigilant in prayer and diligent in working miracles. Therefore, holy father Gregory, intercede with Christ our God, that He illumine our souls, lest we fall asleep in sin unto death.)****Kontakion Hymn for this Sunday : O katharotatos nah-ohs... (The Savior's most pure and immaculate temple, the very precious bridal chamber and Virgin, who is the sacred treasure of the glory of God, on this day is introduced into the House of the Lord, and with herself she brings the grace in the divine Spirit. She is extolled by the Angels of God. A heavenly tabernacle is she.)****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— Gal. 6:11-18 --- Brethren, see with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

**The Ladder for the month of November 2019 was sponsored by:  
Eve Meek**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**MEMORIAL** -Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Life and Salvation for the servant of God, **Georgia Spellman (40 days)**, the beloved sister of **Carol Lyons**, husband of **Bob Spellman** and the mother of **Lisa York** and **Jeff Spellman**. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Life and Salvation to **Georgia Spellman** and may He grant peace and comfort to **Carol Lyons, Bob Spellman, Lisa York** and **Jeff Spellman** and their families. **MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY** – Our parish **Fall General Assembly** will take place **today** following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. To participate, make sure that 2019 Stewardship Pledges are up to date.

**PHILOPTOCHOS** – Philoptochos “Holiday Baking” **begins tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.**, with the baking of the koulourakia. Also, **please see today’s insert in *The Ladder***.

**ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS** – Altar Flower contributors and their dedications for today:  
**--Mrs. Theresa Ayanopolis --in memory of her husband, Nicholas: “You are so missed. Rest in peace! My Scripture for today is Matt. 18:12-14 -- (*The Parable of the lost sheep*).**

**--Mrs. Eve Meek in memory of my daughter, Patricia Meek’s birthday. “May her memory be Eternal!”**

**To all parishioners: If you have an interest in participating in the Altar Flower program between now and the end of our Altar Flower season (May 2020), please act now, as there are only five available spaces -- February 16, 2020 (1 bouquet); March 1, 2020 (2 bouquets) and May 31, 2020 (1 bouquet). If you are interested in sharing a date with someone, that is also an option. See Louise Dobbs Barringer in the parish hall to sign up. December payments are now due. Many blessings to all.**

**AHEPA THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON** -- Next Sunday, November 24, 2019, following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at **Towne Center Café**. Everyone is invited to join in fellowship. See enclosed flier.

**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

Tuesday, November 19th.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m./ Adult Greek class-6:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 21st.....ENTRANCE INTO THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY THEOTOKOS  
 Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.  
 Choir Practice- 1:00 p.m.

GOSPEL — Lk. 12:16-21

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said these things, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

# Birth Choice of the Desert

maintains a

## Pro-Life Agenda



### CARING

We exist to be "A Voice of Love" for both mother and child in a time of need.

### CONFIDENTIAL

All appointments and discussions are always confidential.

### CHOICES

We offer education that assists women in making informed decisions regarding their pregnancies.

## CURRENT SERVICES

- Pregnancy Testing & Advocacy Appointments
- Material Assistance from our Boutique

♥ HELP US KEEP OUR SERVICES FREE OF CHARGE! ♥

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

In order to continue offering our services that aid mothers and save the unborn, we need your help!

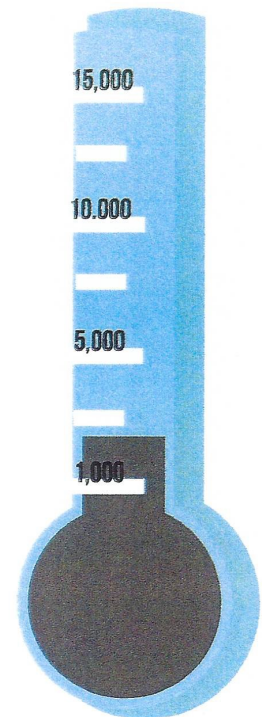
We need to raise \$25,000 by the end of the year. By holding a Baby Bottle Boomerang, you can help us get there!

Our goal is to become a Medical Clinic that offers:

- STI Testing
- Well Women Visits

Your gracious care that overflows from you allows us to be "A Voice of Love" in a time of need.

**\$25,000!!!**



**BIRTH CHOICE OF THE DESERT**

CONTACT US:

[WWW.DESERTBIRTHCHOICE.COM](http://WWW.DESERTBIRTHCHOICE.COM) (760) 895-4044

## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

The annual “Baby Bottle” drive to benefit Birth Choice of the Desert begins today through November 30th. This organization helps provide assistance to expectant young women & encourages the choice of life for their unborn child. If you would like to support this group, please choose a bottle & insert either a check or cash donation in any amount & place it in the collection basket. Thank you!

Our matinee event featuring the movie “*Faith, Hope & Love*” is scheduled on **Thursday, November 21st** starting at **6:00 p.m.** This is a free event and includes movie snacks and refreshments. Sign-up sheet is located in the hall.

The **Philoptochos Christmas Party** is on **December 7th** at **Palm Valley Country Club**. Cost is **\$37.00** and includes a choice of 5 different entrees, with salad, vegetables and a delectable dessert! All guests will receive a hostess gift and a chance to win fabulous raffle prizes! Please invite your spouse and friends to the party. All are welcome! and if you haven’t made your reservation yet, please do it today. **The reservation deadline is November 27th, just 10 days away!** You won’t want to miss this year’s holiday party at Palm Valley Country Club!

If you wish to give back to those less fortunate during the holidays, we have planned two “Homeless Outreach” opportunities with **Coachella Valley Rescue Mission** in Indio. The first is a food sorting & packing activity on Saturday, Nov. 23rd from 8-12 AM or 12-4 PM. The second is a servicing Christmas dinner activity on Christmas Eve Dec. 24th from 2-4 PM or 4-6 PM. Sign-up sheets are located in the church hall along with a volunteer handbook from CVRM for all volunteers to follow. If needed we can coordinate transportation from the church to CVRM and back.

And last, but certainly not least, our Holiday “**Giving Tree**” initiative will begin prior to Thanksgiving. This effort will benefit at risk children, ages 12-17, with small Christmas gifts coordinated with our partners at *Safe House of the Desert*. Philoptochos will provide a Christmas Wish List for the approximately 35 children currently being helped and you will have the opportunity to be a part of this effort by purchasing a gift. Many of these children are victims of human trafficking and their circumstances are quite tragic. Be a bright light for them this Christmas!

If you have read this article, yes, Philoptochos has many activities happening during this holiday season. There are “no excuses” to not sign up for at least one activity given the variety of choices!

Thank you for your on-going support of St. George Philoptochos! “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”

Yours in Christ,  
The Board Members of Philoptochos



**ST. GEORGE GREEK  
ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**THANKSGIVING  
LUNCH**

Let's Celebrate God's Goodness

**SUNDAY, 12:30 P.M.  
NOVEMBER 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**Town Center Cafe**

**44491 Town Center Way  
Palm Desert, CA**

**\$25.00**

**Children \$12.00 *under 12***

Tickets can be purchased from AHEPA 528

**All proceeds go to Fr. Theophilos Theophilos  
Memorial Scholarship Fund**

Donations accepted at [www.ahepa528.org](http://www.ahepa528.org) or mailed to:

**AHEPA 528 Scholarship fund**

**PO Box 1735 Palm Desert, CA 92261-1735**

**[contact@ahempa528.org](mailto:contact@ahempa528.org)**

*Please make any checks to AHEPA Chapter 528 or pay online [ahempa528.org](http://ahempa528.org)  
Scholarship awards benefit members of Saint George Church and the AHEPA 528 Family*

***Deadline for Reservations: Sunday, November 10, 2019***

***Thank You for your Continued Support!***