

JULY 5, 2020

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.*

TO BE WORTHY OF FREEDOM

The Orthodox Church's Liturgical Prayers which are offered in celebration of a nation's independence call our attention to the fact that God created us to be free. We have been given Free Will. Accordingly, we ask our Savior to bless us so that we are worthy of freedom, while, at the same time, we ask Him to grant Eternal Life to those who laid down their lives against evil forces in the defense of our freedom.

Being worthy of freedom requires faith in God, because faith in God places us in

the presence of God's love. By extension, our experience of God's love inspires us to share His love with all people at all times and in all places. In faith, the prayers for ourselves are interconnected with prayers for the world—as we are blessed by God, we bless others; as others are blessed by God, we are blessed through them. Hence, the purpose of freedom is for us to be free to worship Christ our God, and, aside from this purpose, there is no other purpose for freedom; for, without God, "freedom" becomes frightful chaos.

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PRAYER FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

"Lord our God, Who governs all of creation and You direct all things according to Your divine and wise plan, with each country having its boundaries set, and blessing especially our own land, giving to it the knowledge of Your truth and guiding us to the light of our true religion, from which the Saints and Teachers of our Church have been shown to all. Keep our country free unto the ages by Your divine grace, working to establish, save and raise up life that is free. Do You, Most Powerful Lord, hear our prayers of thanksgiving for the independence and birth of our country. Give Eternal Rest to the souls of those who heroically fought and who gloriously fell in battle for freedom, and for our brethren who were victims of battle, so that they may rest with those who have been well-pleasing to You. Make us, who are here now, worthy of freedom, keeping us in peace and harmony and offering every good work to you, directing it so as to be well-pleasing to You. Steady our rulers and keep them safe in peace and harmony, guiding them and speaking good things to their hearts for Your Church and for all Your people. For You are the King of peace and the Savior of our souls and to You we give glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen."



Οι Λειτουργικές Προσευχές της Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας που αναγιγνώσκονται κατά τον εορτασμό της ανεξαρτησίας ενός έθνους, επιφορμίζουν την προσοχή μας στο γεγονός ότι ο Θεός μας εδημιούργησε για να είμαστε ελεύθεροι. Εδόθηκε σε εμάς το *αυτεξούσιον*. Κατά συνέπεια, ζητάμε από τον Σωτήρα μας να μας ευλογεί ώστε να είμαστε άξιοι της ελευθερίας, ενώ, ταυτόχρονα, Του ζητούμε να παραχωρήσει την Αιώνια Ζωήν σε εκείνους που έδωσαν την ζωή τους ενάντια στις κακές δυνάμεις για την υπεράσπιση της ελευθερίας μας.

Το να είμαστε άξιοι της ελευθερίας απαιτεί από εμάς πίστη στον Θεό, γιατί η πίστη στον Θεό μας τοποθετεί προς την παρουσία του Θεού της Αγάπης. Κατά επέκταση, η εμπειρία της αγάπης του Θεού μας εμπνέει να μοιραστούμε την αγάπη Του με όλους τους ανθρώπους παντού. Διά πίστεως, οι προσευχές για τον εαυτόν μας είναι αλληλένδετες με προσευχές για τον κόσμο – καθώς έχουμε τις ευλογίες από τον Θεό, ευλογούμε τους άλλους, και, καθώς οι άλλοι έχουν τις ευλογίες του Θεού, έχουμε εμείς τις ευλογίες Του δια μέσων αυτών. Ως εκ τούτου, ο σκοπός της ελευθερίας είναι να είμαστε ελεύθεροι να προσευχόμεθα και να λατρεύουμε τον Χριστό τον Θεό μας, και, εκτός από αυτόν τον σκοπό, δεν υπάρχει άλλος σκοπός για την ελευθερία. Διαφορετικά, χωρίς τον Θεό, η «ελευθερία» μετατρέπεται σε χάος, αναρχία και κακό.

Η Θεία Λειτουργία μάς διδάσκει ότι η ελευθερία είναι ανταμοιβή της λατρείας μας καθώς ευχόμεθα *«υπέρ της ειρήνης του κόσμου.»*
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

Prayer is a matter of energy that goes beyond physical boundaries, as is illustrated in today's Gospel passage. The energy that comes from us is that of inner self-sacrifice of love based on faith, which can be said as: *"it is not about me, but about You."* This is the energy of love based in humility before God, which gives power to our prayer. The prayer of the centurion for his servant in today's Gospel had the elements of faith and humility: *"I am not worthy,"* he said. But, he also said, *"say the word only."* The interaction between his humility and our Lord's divinity is the power of prayer. This event reveals Christ as being Perfect Man and Perfect God. In His humanity, Christ physically stands before the centurion to hear his request. In His Divinity, His Word alone heals the servant. It is this Word which commanded the creation of the universe.

Our sacrifices of humility and faith meet with Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. Our faith is born from our experience of Christ's love through our prayer and worship. This, in turn, prompts us to share our evidence of Christ's Love for us, through which forgiveness of sins is granted. This awareness helps us to be humbly grateful to our Lord, which gives birth to repentance. Repentance does not happen without Free Will. We have the *freedom* to use our *will power* for God's glory.

The centurion demonstrated the faith and the humility that characterize the prayers of the Liturgy. We pray for the whole world as did the centurion pray for his servant, so that we and everyone around us can freely live God-pleasing lives. The Divine Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil teach us the purpose of freedom. As we pray for "peace in the whole world," we also pray for our civil authorities so that, as in the prayer of St. John Chrysostom's Liturgy, they may be permitted to govern in peace, *"That through the faithful conduct of their duties, we may live peaceful and serene lives in all piety and holiness."* In St. Basil's Liturgy we pray, *"Remember our most faithful public authorities...grant them deep peace that cannot be taken away; speak good things to their hearts for Your Church and all Your people so that, within their peace, we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in godliness and honesty."*

Let us celebrate freedom by living in godliness, piety and holiness, understanding that the purpose of freedom is for us to worship God in everything we do. In this way we will always be *worthy* of freedom.
+FR. THEODORE



PRAYERS FOR READING HOLY SCRIPTURES

“Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. Blessed are You at Your throne of the glory of Your Kingdom, seated above the Cherubic angels, now and forever and

“Shine within our hearts, loving Master, the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our minds that we may comprehend the message of Your Gospel. Instill in us, also, reverence for Your blessed commandments, so that having conquered sinful desires, we may pursue a spiritual life, thinking and doing all these things that are pleasing to You. For You are the Light of our souls and bodies and to You we give glory together with Your Father Who is without beginning and Your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen”

EPISTLE — Gal. 5:22-26; 6:1-2

Brethren, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

GOSPEL — St. Matthew 8:5-13

At that time, as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching him and saying, "Lord, my

servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress." And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion answered him, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard him, he marveled, and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIBLE STUDY-Tuesday, July 7, 2020 -10:00 a.m. In the “search” link at the top of your computer type in: <https://zoom.us/join>. Enter the Meeting ID: **820 6752 0518**. Then, enter the Password: **194231**. Please join Father Ted on ZOOM for a weekly Bible Study discussion. We will be studying **Romans 10:1-10**.

PARISH COUNCIL “ZOOM” MEETING- Wednesday, July 8, 2020 – 2:30 p.m. Key agenda items: 1) the options related to holding our annual parish Festival; 2) the over-all status of our parish with regard to the concerns of the coronavirus.

The church is "open" on a limited basis. IMPORTANT NOTE:

Dear parishioners,

Now that we've made phone calls for last three weeks we are now going to change our format to **holding reservations on a weekly basis for Sunday Church Attendance on a first call first serve basis.**

1. Each week please email our church at: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com, or call the church at (760) 568-9901 or (760) 880-5869 Monday thru Friday and make your intent known that you want to attend church for the coming Sunday. If you call the church, leave a message if there is no answer. Whether using email or by phone call, provide names of any family members attending with you.

2. All rules still apply that you have read the guidelines and protocols and you understand them and will adhere to them. Remember that entrance for worship on Sunday is granted no later than 9:30 a.m.

3. Once reservations reach our capacity for that Sunday you can ask to be put on for the following Sunday.

4. Those who do not attend a particular Sunday's Liturgy may "attend" a live-streamed Liturgy offered by the many other parishes of our Archdiocese. Go to the website telecasts from our Archdiocese at: <https://www.goarch.org/live-broadcasts>.

We will try this format for the next few weeks and see how it goes. Thank you and God Bless.

**PLEA TO AHEPA 528
BROTHERS TO HELP**



Wind-driven flames have destroyed more than 40 homes overnight in Niland, near the Salton Sea. The Calipatria Fire Chief said 150 people have been displaced due to the fire. Imperial and San Diego County units were expected to respond to the fire. There are some items that are in dire need for these victims. The PAL Building at 210 N Railroad, Calipatria is accepting donations for these fire victims. Items for now:

- Gift cards to WalMart
- New underwear for adults and kids
- New socks for adults and kids
- PJs for all
- New sandals for all
- New towels
- Clothes for all ages. There are children affected as young as 3 days old to seniors in their 80s.
- Toiletry items
- baby Wipes
- Diapers all sizes
- Laundry detergent
- Hampers or laundry bags
- sanitizing products.
- PPE (masks)
- Red Cross will be feeding all these families for

now. Please avoid refrigerated foods.

Monetary donations may be sent to AHEPA 528; 42-215 Washington St., A-154, Palm Desert, California 92211-8031, or [Donate through Paypal](#)

**ST. GEORGE PHILOPTOCHOS
"CRITICAL FOOD DRIVE"**



The Ladies Philoptochos would like to thank everyone who donated food or funds plus those that volunteered to organize & box the food for our **May & June Food Drives**. Our June total food donated was **422 lbs.** Added to our May total, we have donated a total of **902 lbs. of food** to "The Narrow Door" in Indio to help needy families. God Bless You! Pictured below are (left-right): Margarita Pagoulatos, Rhonda & Nick Latkovic.

