

**JUNE 21, 2020**

**ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT**

**74-109 Larrea Street**

**Palm Desert, California 92260**

**Website: [www.go-stgeorge.org](http://www.go-stgeorge.org)**

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# THE LADDER



## **Mailing Address:**

**P.O. Box 4755**

**Palm Desert, CA.92261**

**Tel: (760) 568-9901**

**or: (760) 880-5869**

**– 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.

## **GOD'S VOICE WITHIN US**

St. Paul reminds us, by way of today's passage from his Epistle to the Romans, that one thing common to all people in every place and at all times is that within them there is a divine conscience. "Those who are not under the Law of Moses, those who do not know of Christ, have an internal law from God, the natural law written into their hearts..." (Orthodox Study Bible [NT], pg. 341).

St. John of Kronstadt explains: "The conscience in people is none other than the voice of Almighty God moving in their hearts - the

*Lord knows all things...Follow your heart throughout your whole life. Examine it; listen to it and see what keeps it from union with the Lord. Let this be your highest and constant concern..." (My Life With Christ, pg. 405).*

The "inner law" which is written in people's hearts is that which guides us in understanding "right" from "wrong" – that which benefits self and others" from that which harms self and others. This natural law will grow in us through the grace of the Holy Spirit, whereby the soul

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## **THE MISSION OF THE HOLY APOSTLES**

The Holy Apostles of Christ had as their chief duty to bear witness to the Savior Jesus Christ, His life, teaching, and atoning work, and especially to bear witness to Christ's resurrection, "a witness to his resurrection", "proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead." "And with great power the Apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 1:22; 4:2,33).

The influence of their witness and testimony was enormous. They simply stated what they knew. There was no doubt in their minds as to the certainty of their knowledge. St. John, in finishing his Gospel, sealed it thus: "This is the disciple who bears witness to these things" (21:24); and in starting his first Epistle he states firmly: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, of the Word of life ... That which we have seen and heard we declare unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:1-3).

The ministry of the Apostles was guided and blessed, and they were aware of this. They felt the presence of Christ and the companionship of the Holy Spirit in every step and turn of their work.

*--Taken from [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)*



Ο Άγιος Παύλος μας υπενθυμίζει μέσω της επιστολής του προς τους Ρωμαίους ότι ένα πράγμα που είναι κοινό σε όλους τους ανθρώπους είναι η έμφυτη θείκη συνειδησή τους. «Οι άνθρωποι που δεν υπάγονται στον Νόμο του Μωυσή και εκείνοι που δεν γνωρίζουν τον Χριστό έχουν έναν εσωτερικό νόμο από τον Θεό - τον φυσικό νόμο που γράφεται στις καρδιές.» (Orthodox Study Bible [NT], pg. 341).

Ο Άγιος Ιωάννης του Κρόνσταντ εξηγεί: «Η συνειδηση στους ανθρώπους δεν είναι τίποτα άλλο παρά η φωνή του παντοδύναμου Θεού που κινείται στην καρδιά - ο Κύριος γνωρίζει όλα ... Παρακολουθήστε την καρδιά σας καθ 'όλη τη διάρκεια της ζωής σας. Εξετάστε την, ακούστε την και δείτε τι την εμποδίζει να ενωθεί με τον Κύριο. Ας είναι αυτή η ανώτατη και διαρκής μελέτη σας ...»

Ο «εσωτερικός νόμος» που είναι γραμμένος στις καρδιές των ανθρώπων είναι αυτός που καθοδηγεί τον άνθρωπο να κατανοήσει το «σωστό» από το «λάθος» – από ό, τι «ωφελεί τον εαυτόν μας και τους άλλους» από αυτό που «βλάπτει τον εαυτό μας και τους άλλους». Αυτός ο φυσικός νόμος θα αυξηθεί μέσα μας με τη χάρη του Αγίου Πνεύματος. Ως αποτέλεσμα, η ψυχή υποτάσσεται πραγματικά στον Θεό. Παύει να έχει τη δική του θέληση. Η μόνη του θέληση είναι να κάνει το θέλημα του Θεού πιο τέλεια. Τίποτα άλλο δεν μπορεί να ευχαριστήσει μια τέτοια ψυχή.

Ο τελικός σκοπός του Μυστηρίου της Ιεράς Εξομολογήσεως είναι να αυξηθούν οι δυνάμεις της ψυχής ώστε να ομιάσει ο άνθρωπος με την αγιότητα του Κυρίου και να νικήσει το κάθε ατυχία και κακό.  
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

voluntarily places itself under the authority of God. The soul then stops having its own will and, instead, seeks the Will of God. From the experience of the Saints, there is nothing else that can bring more joy to such a soul. Accordingly, the ultimate goal of the Sacrament of Holy Confession is to strengthen the powers of one's soul in resembling the holiness of God in order to overcome every form of evil and misfortune.

What is clearly seen in the media today is growing disregard on the part of society for traditional Christian values. Therefore, we can only wonder how the souls of our youth might be adversely affected. The lines between “right” and “wrong” are becoming increasingly blurred and the human conscience is growing cold. People are making choices no longer based on the solid foundations of God's Law, but instead primarily on the basis of unchecked emotions. Hence, *feelings* dictate *principles*, and the principles of God's Commandments are being constantly compromised. Therefore, the general awareness of sin nearly vanishes, meaning that forgiveness is not being sought and repentance is not contemplated. In the end, people are found justifying sins, holding prejudices and grudges from the past, as well as losing hope for the future.

In today's Gospel passage we are reminded that, upon being called by Jesus, the Apostles “left their nets and followed Him.” This does not mean that they abandoned their responsibilities to their loved ones – and certainly they went on to work gathering fish from the sea. (We note the fact that they were still fishing when Jesus, having resurrected from the dead, greeted them on the beach.) But, significantly, they left *their past* behind, following our Lord's words, *Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” (St. Matthew 4:20).

It's been said by many, “You can't carry your cross when you are still holding on to your nets.” Repentance requires that we leave the past behind us, neither resting on laurels of past good deeds, nor sulking in hopelessness over past sins. If we have sinned, we need to correct our lives today so that we can continue to draw closer to our Savior tomorrow. If we have been virtuous, we need to practice virtue today so that we can continue to grow in Christ's grace tomorrow. All of this, of course, depends on our willingness to listen to God's voice speaking to us through our conscience.

+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 - Rom. 2:10-16

Brethren, glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus .

GOSPEL - St. Matthew 4:18-23

At that time, as Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left their boat and their father, and followed him. And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

### **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](mailto: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.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**BIBLE STUDY-Tuesday, June 23, 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. Use the above ID and PW for the month of June beginning 6/2/2020. We will be studying the Gospel of St. Matthew 6:22-33.

**PHILOPTOCHOS – The Philoptochos “Critical Food Drive” continues.** *We will extend the food drive drop off into this week: Monday, June 22nd - Friday, June 28th from 10:30 AM -1:00 PM – Monday through Friday.* Drop off at the church. Ring doorbell on the side door and we will gladly accept your food donation! See enclosed flier.

## **SAINT GEORGE BIBLE STUDY GROUP** **VIA ZOOM RECURRING EVERY TUESDAY @ 10:00 AM**



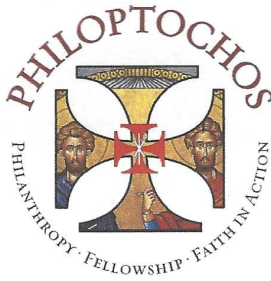
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Saint George Greek Orthodox Church  
74109 Larrea Street  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Rev. Fr. Theodore J. Pantels





## **ST GEORGE PHILOPTOCHOS** **CRITICAL FOOD DRIVE- NOW thru JUNE 28th**

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted our local community since March. The critical need for non-perishable food continues. More families than ever are out of work, unable to pay their mortgage or rent and are desperately trying to make ends meet. *Did you know 1 pound of non-perishable food like the items listed below feeds 4 meals?*

We are collecting food donations during **the month of June thru the 28th** at the church. You may bring your donations into the hall and place them in the designated area **between the hours of 10:30 AM-1:00 PM, Monday thru Friday & on Sundays from 9:30 AM-11:30 AM.** If you are unable to shop for groceries, please consider a monetary donation that we will use to purchase food for our drive. (Please make check out to Philoptochos-memo food drive.)

Below is the shopping list of the foods that are needed: (Smart & Final and the 99 Cent Store have competitive low prices!)

Rice  
Beans  
Spaghetti Sauce  
Pasta  
Cereal/Oatmeal  
Canned Chili  
Canned Tuna/Chicken  
Canned Soup/Stew  
Canned Fruit/Vegetables  
Peanut Butter  
Crackers

**Please make sure products are within expiration dates. No glass containers. No cans larger than 15 oz.**

*Thanks For Your Support!*  
*St. George Ladies Philoptochos*