

MARCH 15, 2020

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS



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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 ACQUIRE THE HOLY SPIRIT

Faith in Christ produces love for others, because Christ personifies the Divine Love. Thus, it is impossible to love God and to *not* love our fellow human being. This love was manifested by the friends of the paralytic: *"When they could not come near Him [i.e., Christ] because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was and, when they broke through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying."* (St. Mark 2:4).

We also note the reality that forgiveness of sins and the healing of maladies are tied together. By way of healing the par-

alytic, our Lord shows that He has the authority to forgive sins, since He Himself is God. In this, Christ teaches us that the work toward healing is a matter of love, through which our good intentions and good deeds intended for the benefit of others go together with the grace of forgiveness.

In the end, prayer is the fruit of faith and love, while at the same time, faith and love are the products of prayer. St. Gregory Palamas, whose memory we commemorate today, taught that prayer is not so much a matter of "asking for material goods," as much as it is a

Continued on page 2

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS – This divine Father, who was from Asia Minor, was from childhood reared in the royal court of Constantinople, where he was instructed in both religious and secular wisdom. Later, while still a youth, he left the imperial court and struggled in asceticism on Mount Athos, and in the Skete at Beroea. He spent some time in Thessalonica being treated for an illness that came from his harsh manner of life. He was present in Constantinople at the Council that was convened in 1341 against Barlaam of Calabria, and at the Council of 1347 against Acindynus, who was of like mind with Barlaam; Barlaam and Acindynus claimed that the grace of God is created. At both these Councils, the Saint contended courageously for the true dogmas of the Church of Christ, teaching in particular that divine grace is not created, but is the uncreated energies of God which are poured forth throughout creation: otherwise it would be impossible, if grace were created, for man to have genuine communion with the uncreated God. In 1347 he was appointed Metropolitan of Thessalonica. He tended his flock in an apostolic manner for some twelve years, and wrote many books and treatises on the most exalted doctrines of our Faith; and having lived for a total of sixty-three years, he reposed in the Lord in 1359.

– Taken from www.goarch.org



Η πίστη στον Χριστό παράγει αγάπη για τους άλλους, επειδή ο Χριστός προσωποποιεί τη Θεία Αγάπη. Έτσι, είναι αδύνατο να αγαπάμε τον Θεό και να μην αγαπάμε τον συνάνθρωπό μας. Αυτή η αγάπη εμφανίστηκε από τους φίλους του παραλυτικού: «*Μη δυνάμενοι να πλησιάσωσιν εις Αυτόν [τον Χριστόν] εξ αιτίας του όχλου, εχάλασαν την στέγην όπου ήτο, και διατρύπησαντες καταβιβάζουσι τον κράββατον εφ ου κατέκειτο ο παραλυτικός.*» (Μκ. 2:4).

Γνωρίζουμε επίσης την πραγματικότητα ότι η συγχώρηση των αμαρτιών και η θεραπεία των ασθενειών συνδέονται. Με τη θεραπεία του παραλυτικού, ο Κύριος δείχνει ότι έχει την εξουσία να συγχωρεί τις αμαρτίες, αφού ο Ιδιος είναι ο Θεός. Ως εκ τούτου, ο Χριστός μας διδάσκει ότι το έργο προς θεραπείαν για όλους είναι θέμα της «εν Χριστώ» αγάπης, κατά την οποίαν οι καλές προθέσεις, καθώς και οι καλές πράξεις προς συμφερον του συνανθρωπου μας συμβαδίζουν με τη χάρη της συγχωρήσεως.

Στο τέλος, η προσευχή είναι καρπος της πίστεως και της αγάπης, ενώ ταυτοχρόνως, η πίστις και η αγάπη είναι τα προϊόντα της προσευχής. Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος, τον οποίον μνημονεύουμε σημερα, έδιδασξε ότι η προσευχή δεν είναι τόσο θέμα «αιτήσεως υλικών αγαθών», όσο είναι θέμα αποκτήσεως της χάριτος του Αγίου Πνεύματος, δια του οποίου η προσωπικότητά μας αντανακλά την αγάπη του Θεού. Η χάρις του Αγίου Πνεύματος εμφυτεύεται στις ψυχές μας δια μέσου του Ονόματος του Ιησού Χριστού.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

matter of acquiring the Holy Spirit, through Whom our very personality reflects the Divine Love. The grace of the Holy Spirit is implanted in our souls as we continually call upon the Name of Jesus Christ. This practice embraced by Orthodox Tradition is performed by way of the "Jesus Prayer:" *"Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner."*

Today's Gospel passage makes it clear that Christ is God. He has the authority to forgive sins and knows the thoughts lurking in our hearts. Forgiveness of sins on our part begins with faith in God—it is with faith in God that we are careful to watch over our souls in order to avoid sins and, if we have sinned, to repent. Being that Christ knows what lies in our hearts, our prayers are to begin from within our hearts and souls. Hence, St. Gregory's defense of on-going, inner prayer of the heart, is commemorated today as a part of the Church's Lenten message.

Faith in Christ God emanates from the heart and soul. As such, it is a governing factor with regard to our words and deeds. Our awareness of sin is possible, because we notice it as something apart from the love of Christ our God. The more we are apart from God, the less we are aware of sin.

Thus, upon seeing the faith of the paralytic and his companions, our Savior granted them forgiveness of sins, based on the fact that by virtue of their faith they were aware of the existence of sin in their lives. We note that they were not the ones who questioned our Savior "in their hearts" when He pronounced the forgiveness of their sins, because the forgiveness of sins yields physical strength and healing. Ultimately, the forgiveness of sins places us before our Savior where there is "no pain; no sorrow; no sighing," as is chanted during our funeral services.

In short, the healing of the paralytic gives evidence of the forgiveness of sins. Along these lines, we can better understand the mind of the Church, when She prays *"for the cleansing and sanctification of both body and soul, and as a pledge of the life and Kingdom to come,"* as we draw near for Holy Communion— *with faith.*

+FR. THEODORE

EPISTLE—Heb. 1:10-14; 2:1-3

"In the beginning, Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end." But to what angel has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet?"

Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation? Therefore we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him.

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... *"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: *Angelike dynameis (Tone 6)... (When the Angelic powers appeared at Your tomb and those who guarded You became as though dead and standing by Your sepulcher was Mary seeking Your Pure and Sacred Body for You did vanquish Hades and uncorrupted by its touch, You came unto the Virgin Woman bestowing the gift of Life. O You, Who arose from the dead, O Lord, we give glory to You.)*

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 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: *Ti ypermachos...(O Champion General, I your City now ascribe to you triumphant anthems as the tokens of my gratitude, being rescued from the terrors, O Theotokos. Inasmuch as you have power unassailable, from all kinds of perils free me so that unto you I may cry aloud: Rejoice, O unwedded Bride.)*

Instead of "Axion Estin,": **Epi Si Cheri ke Charitomeni....** See the English translation on page 135 of our Divine Liturgy books (*"In you, O woman full of grace..."*)

Communion Hymn: *Enite ton Kyrion...(Praise the Lord in the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Alleluia.)*

GOSPEL— St. Mark 2:1-12 — At that time, Jesus entered Capernaum and it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man

say thus? It is a blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"



ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEMORIAL - Today's Memorial Service marking 61 and a half years is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servants of God, **Andrew & Anastasia Demetropoulos; Harriet & Alexander Demetropoulos, Thomas Demetropoulos; and Victoria & Diamond Demetropoulos**, as well as **Dorothy, James, Olga, Suzanne and Dena**, the beloved parents, brethren and relatives of **Nicholas Demetropoulos**. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant to all of them Eternal Rest and may He grant peace and comfort to **Nicholas Demetropoulos**. **MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE ETERNAL!**

PHILOPTOCHOS – We wish to thank everyone for their understanding in regards to the cancellation of the membership luncheon. We do plan to reschedule it at a future date. One issue of importance that our group must address immediately is the approval of the 2020 Budget. **After church today, we will have a table set up in the church hall to distribute copies of the budget and treasurer's report to members.** We must vote to accept the budget! A voting card will be available. Board members will assist you with this process. In regards to the planned outreach for March 30th, at this point it is still planned, but may be subject to cancellation. We are reaching out to Coachella Valley Rescue Mission for guidance and will advise volunteers of any change in plans. Our group is planning our annual Easter Bake Sale for April 5th-12th. Sweet bread and koulouria will be available. Baking is scheduled for March 23-24, 26, 30-31. We can use a few volunteers to assist with the baking. A volunteer sign-up sheet will be available. Please know that we will be implementing an increased level of hygiene including frequent hand washing, cleaning of kitchen surfaces, & wearing of protective gloves during the baking process.

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS-The following are the Contributors, and their Dedications for this Sunday:

- Mrs. Eve Meek - *"In memory of her husband James Norman Meek, Eternal rest!"*
- Nick and Rhonda Latkovic -- *"In loving memory of Patricia Fleming, Rhonda's mother. Mom, I miss you every day. May your memory be eternal."*

STEWARDSHIP – Enclosed is our list of St. George parishioners who have made their 2020 Stewardship Pledge at this point of the year.

MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN- Next **Sunday, March 15th**, we will dedicate our new **Memorial Wall Fountain** which has been installed at the corner of our church office edifice opposite the Memorial Wall.

AHEPA – Applications for the **AHEPA Fr. T. P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship** are available online at: www.ahepa528.org, where information is also posted regarding offering donations for this scholarship fund. Applications must be sent in by **April** so that awards can be granted on **AHEPA Sunday in May**.

PARISH HALL – Any future decorative donations for the church hall must be presented and approved by the Decorating Committee of our Parish Council. See or call **Becky Allen** at (760) 699-5439.

HAPPY WEDDING ANNIVERSARY TO SPIRO AND EVANGELIA CANAKIS (56 years!)

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tuesday, March 17th.....Bible Study is cancelled per Metropolis Guidelines

Wednesday, March 16th.....Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy - 6:00 p.m.

Friday, March 20th.....Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy- 9:00 a.m.
Salutation Service (Third Stanza) - 6:00 p.m.

2020 Stewardship Pledge Report

Received as of March 10, 2020

Our thanks to all who have made their Stewardship Pledge for 2020! Please note that to participate in the upcoming General Assembly on March 29th, one must complete their pledge card prior.

Name

Allen, Becky	Gallade, Adele & Ken Hoffman
Andros, Nick	Gannon, Dr. Robert & Sandy
Astmos, Spiro	Georgea, Spera
Attalia, Phillip "Ted"	Geotas, Despina
Barringer, Louise Dobbs	Halkidic, Anastasios & Penelope
Barringer, William G.	Haveles, John
Bozigian, Linda Jean	Hector, Tim & Nadia
Carkonen, Paul & Paulette	Heinrich, Bess
Castrale, Craig	Holm, Matthew
Chiotis, Antony & Penny	Kallis, Linda
Christopoulos, Dr. Jim & Gloria	Kaperonis, Nick
Clark, Susan	Karagianis, Lou & Penny
Curreri, Jeffrey	Kassotakis, Mary Ellen
Dalkas, Amthony & Patricia	Kayaloglou, John
Davis, Matthew & Christine	Kosturos, Paul & Dena
Delegans, Chris	Krespis, Nick & Fontini
Demetropoulos, Nicholas	Kripner, Robert & Eva
Desjoyners, Josie	Kundanis, Christine
Diamond, Michael & Mari Lou	Laskaris, Chris & Annette
Dixson, Richard & Ann	Latkovic, Nicholas & Rhonda
Dunkel, Mariya	Latkovic, Pauline
Dymond, Donald & Alexandra	Lee, Bill & Mary
Fakinos, Frank & Joan	Lehman, Gloria
	Lekas, Bill & Denise

Lewis, Annette
Lucas, Delphine & Steve Brown
Lyons, Doug & Carol
Makrianis, Julie
Maletis, Chris & Kristi
Manesis, Dr. John & Bess
Mantes, E. G. & Mary Ann
Maverick, Tommie
McEvoy, Peter & Stephanie
Meek, Eve
Nicholas, George & Fanny
Nicholau, George & Gaye
Pallis, Chris
Pappas, Dionisios & Louise
Petalas, John & Linda
Piggott, Bill & Mary
Pilafidis, Olympia
Pishue, Sam & Michelle
Platis, Harry PLLC
Poulos, Billie
Pousen, DJ
Prineas, Anna
Psaltis, Harry
Rassi, Abraham
Richards, Tasia
Sahpazis, Georgia
Sarikas, Kiriakos & Delores
Shaheen, Bernice
Spanos, George & Angie

Speliopoulos, Nick & Carol
Steele, Dr. Stephen
Tatomir, John & Mary
Velis, George
Veroulis, Angelo & Tina
Xitco, John V. & Kalitsa
Young, Diane
Zaharia, Gabriella
Zambrano, Nelly
Zaverdas, Larry & Pam