

**NOVEMBER 22, 2020**

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

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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.*

## **RICH TOWARDS GOD**

Today's passages from St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians and St. Luke's Gospel are tied together with the theme of our unity in Christ-like love. St. Paul reminds us that the Nativity of Christ unites us together as people, since Christ is united to us according to His humanity. He also reminds us that we are united with the Heavenly Father by way of the Divine energies of Christ, Who is perfect God and perfect Man.

Our union with Christ gives us participation in Christ's Divine energies,

which are, at the same time, the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Also, our union with Christ unites us with one another so that we are "brethren in Christ." The Holy Cross brings before us the meaning of our union with God and our union with our fellow human being.

The Gospel passage tells us that our union with God and our union with our fellow human being can fall apart due to 1) materialism, and, 2) selfishness. The only purpose of material

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## **THOUGHTS REGARDING CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP**

Stewardship is everything we do after we say "I believe." Stewardship is about how we live our lives and make our choices.

Love and stewardship are inseparable when we consider God's blessings in our life. We use God's blessings with love and compassion for others and to honor, worship and give thanks to God.

The priority of compassionate stewardship is not to pay the bills. It is about how we, as a community, can do God's work with love and compassion. It is less about the parish's need to receive, and more about our need to give. It is our generosity with the gifts and blessings God has entrusted to us. Compassionate stewardship is an attitude and a way of life.

To love in the way Saint Paul writes to the Christians at Corinth, when he says, "...the greatest of these is love," means we can't live without compassion for others. Love and compassion are not expressed only in our offerings of money and other support. Love and compassion are not something we give in order to receive something in return. Pride has no place in acts of love and compassion.

– Taken from the Archdiocese Stewardship Tri-fold,  
*"...The Greatest of These is Love."*



Οι σημερινές περικοπές της Επιστολής του Αγ. Παύλου προς του Εφεσίου και του κατά Λουκάν Ευαγγελίου συνδέονται με το θέμα της ενότητός μας εις την «εν Χριστώ» αγάπην. Ο Αγ. Παύλος μας υπενθυμίζει ότι η Γέννησις του Χριστού ενώνει εμας ως άνθρωποι ο ένας με τον άλλο, αφού ο Χριστός είναι ενωμένος μαζί μας κατά την ανθρωπότητά Του. Μας υπενθυμίζει επίσης ότι είμεθα ενωμένοι με τον Επουράνιο Πατέρα μέσω των Θεϊκών δυνάμεων του Χριστού, ο Οποίος είναι τέλειος Θεός και τέλειος Άνθρωπος.

Η ένωσις μας με τον Χριστόν αποδίδει συμμετοχή στις θεϊκές δυνάμεις του Χριστού, τα οποία είναι ταυτοχρόνως τα δώρα του Αγίου Πνεύματος. Επίσης η ένωσις μας με τον Χριστό μας ενώνει ο ένας στον άλλο, έτσι ώστε να είμεθα «αδελφοί εν Χριστώ.» Ο Σταυρός μεταφέρει το νόημα της ενότητός μας με τον Θεό και της ενότητος με τον συνάνθρωπό μας.

Η Ευαγγελική περικοπή μας λέει ότι η ένωσις μας με τον Θεό και η ένωσις μας με τον συνάνθρωπό μας καταστρέφονται από: 1) τον υλισμό και 2) τον εγωισμό. Ο μοναδικός σκοπός των υλικών αγαθών είναι να ωφελήσει το σώμα καθώς και την ψυχή, ώστε να μπορούμε να κάνουμε καλές πράξεις προς δόξαν Θεού. Δεν υπάρχουν για να περιποιηθούμε μόνο τις δικές μας ανάγκες και επιθυμίες εις βάρος άλλων ανθρώπων. Ούτε υπάρχουν για να απομακρυνθούμε από τον Θεό. Τελικά, ο εγωισμός έρχεται σε αντίθεση με την αγάπη του Θεού.

Μιά ψυχή που χάνεται μέσα στον ιστό του εγωισμού χάνεται και από τον Θεό.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

goods is to benefit both the body and the soul so that we can perform good deeds unto the glory of God. They do not exist merely to service our desires and needs to the detriment of others. Nor do they exist so that we can distance ourselves from God. Finally, selfishness directly contradicts the love of God.

In one of his homilies, entitled, “I Will Tear Down My Barns,” St. Basil the Great offers as his central message this adage: *Simplify your life, so you have something to share with others.* True to Orthodox Spiritual Tradition among the Saints, living a life uncluttered by material gadgets and cares has less to do with “saving the planet” and more to do with having fewer distractions from prayer and good deeds for the saving of souls. This is consistent with St. John Chrysostom’s appeal for us to be rich toward God, reminding us in his treatise, *The Rich Man and Lazarus*, that one who seeks wealth is really poor, while one who is content with few possessions is really very rich.

Indeed, such a view of things is greatly foreign to today’s generation in which the latest, more pricey gadgets quickly make already existing gadgets out of date and we have before us a “throw-away” mentality. Unfortunately, our modern “throw-away” life-style does not only involve gadgets, but human beings, as well, as the very sanctity of human life seems to be challenged by ideas promoting abortion of innocent human life; physician-assisted suicide for the ill and elderly; capital punishment, and senseless crime -- all of which are fostered in our “land of opportunity.”

We have before us the “focus on self” versus the “focus on God.” Whereas focus on self ends with death, focus on God grows to Eternal Life. The Gospel of our Savior has a message of *equality* to it. Regardless of one’s wealth or social standing; regardless of governments, and regardless of genetics, every individual born into the world has *equal* opportunity to pray; *equal* opportunity to love; *equal* opportunity to give something good to another human being; *equal* opportunity to glorify Christ our God -- and, finally, *equal* opportunity to become a Saint of God and to inherit God’s Eternal Kingdom.  
+FR. THEODORE

### **BIBLE STUDY-Tuesday, November 24, 2020 -10:00 a.m.**

Join Zoom Bible Study Meeting by clicking on the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86794723099?pwd=WEErREgyRjkwNzg0aIRlUnkycCs0dz09>

Meeting ID: Meeting ID: **867 9472 3099**

Passcode: **898242**

Or, using your cell phone, call: 1 669 900 6833 and dial in the Meeting ID and Passcode numbers.

We will be studying the following passages: Ephesians 4:1-7 & St. Luke 18:18-27.

**NOTE:** When unable to attend Church Services in person due to state regulations regarding the Coronavirus or personal illness, follow the Divine Liturgy through live-streaming provided by various Archdiocese parishes at: <https://www.goarch.org/live-broadcasts>.



*“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 unto the ages of ages. Amen.”*

*“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—Ephesians 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.

**Gospel — St. Luke 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."

**WEEKDAY CALENDAR**

MEMORIAL -- Today’s Memorial is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Spyridon Canakis, (40 days)**, is the beloved husband of **Evangelia Canakis** and father of **Maria Angelos** and **Rubina Canakis**. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Life and Salvation to **Spyridon Canakis** and may He grant peace and comfort to **Evangelia Canakis** and the entire family. MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

Today.....Sunday School “zoom” - 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, November 24th..... Bible Study - 10:00 a.m. — “zoom” format

Wednesday, November 25th..**St. Catherine the Great Martyr** -Orthros-8:30/Liturgy -9:30 am  
(Due to Covid, please call our church office for directives regarding in-person worship)

Thursday, November 26th.....Thanksgiving Day (office closed)