

AUGUST 1, 2021

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

**74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, California 92260**

Website: www.go-stgeorge.org

Email: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com

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.

EQUALITY & INDIVIDUALITY

Today's passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans helps us to understand better the exclamation that we hear during the Divine Liturgy: *"Having prayed for the unity of the faith and the communion of the Holy Spirit, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God."* It is an exclamation that speaks to the fact that the Church of Christ is One of *unity and diversity*. As such, it is spiritually important that we address modern ideas surrounding the theme of *equality*.

The first part of the exclamation, *"Having prayed for the unity of the faith and the communion of the Holy Spirit..."* speaks to the

unity of people in God's love. Saints have compared God's love to sunshine. Like God's love, sunshine shines on all people *equally*. Our *equality* is in the fact that each person has the common ability to grow spiritually; to understand the truth that Christ is God; and, to seek what is good and to avoid what is evil. The universal ability to comprehend God's love brings us to *unity* in faith. For, *"so God loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son..."*

The second part of this liturgical exclamation speaks to the *diverse* gifts
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HEALING OF SOUL & BODY BRINGS GLORY TO GOD

From today's Gospel passage, we call to mind how our Savior Jesus Christ granted forgiveness of the paralytic's sins and then healed his infirmity. Forgiveness of sins and healing of soul and body causes humanity to glorify our Lord, as we also note from today's Gospel passage, as the multitudes glorified Him. In fact, we would say that the *purpose* of forgiveness and healing is to give glory and thanksgiving to God. Giving glory and thanksgiving to God is the proper response by those who learn of the goodness of Christ our God through His healing of our souls and bodies.

With regard to the specifics of today's Gospel passage, the scholars of *The Orthodox Study Bible*, teach us the following: *"As shown by the healing of the paralytic, faith is an indispensable condition for salvation. Faith is collective as well as personal, for faith of the paralytic's friends helped his healing. There are three signs of Jesus' divinity shown here: (1) He knows the secrets of hearts (see 1 Kingdoms 16:7; 2 Chronicles 6:30); (2) He forgives sins, a power which belongs to God alone; and (3) He heals by the power of His word."* (pg. 1283)

+FR. THEODORE



Η σημερινή περικοπή εκ της Επιστολής του Αγ. Παύλου προς τους Ρωμαίους μας βοηθά να κατανοήσουμε καλύτερα την εκφώνηση που ακούμε κατά τη Θεία Λειτουργία: «*Την ενότητα της πίστεως και την κοινωνίαν του Αγίου Πνεύματος αιτησάμενοι, εαυτούς και αλλήλους και πάσαν την ζωήν ημών Χριστώ τω Θεώ παραθήμεθα.*». Η εκφώνηση ομιλά περί της πραγματικότητας ότι η Εκκλησία του Χριστού είναι Εκκλησία της ενότητας όλων και της διαφορετικότητας του καθενός. Ως εκ τούτου, είναι σημαντικό απο ψυχική αποψη να αναθεωρήσουμε τις σύγχρονες ιδέες που περιβάλλουν το θέμα της *ισότητας*.

Το πρώτο μέρος της εκφωνήσεως, «*Την ενότητα της πίστεως και την κοινωνίαν του Αγίου Πνεύματος...*» ομιλά σχετικώς για την ενότητα των ανθρώπων στην «εν Χριστώ» αγάπη. Οι Άγιοι εσυνέκριναν την αγάπη του Θεού με τον ήλιο. Σαν την αγάπη του Θεού, έτσι και ο ήλιος λάμπει σε όλους τους ανθρώπους *εξίσου*. Η ισότητα μας έγκειται στο γεγονός ότι κάθε άτομο έχει την *κοινή* ικανότητα να κατανοήσει την αλήθεια ότι ο Χριστός είναι ο Θεός και να αναζητεί το καλό αντι το κακό. Η καθολική ικανότητα κατανόησεως της αγάπης του Θεού μας φέρνει στην ενότητα της πίστεως. «*Ούτως ηγάπησε ο Θεός τον κόσμον, ώστε τον Υιόν Του τον Μονογενή δούναι ίνα πας ο πιστεύων εις Αυτόν μη απόλται, αλλά έχη ζωήν αιώνιον.*»

Το δεύτερο μέρος αυτής της λειτουργικής εκφωνήσεως ομιλά προς τα ποικίλα δώρα που παρέχουν την προσωπική μας ταυτότητα, η οποία έχει μεγάλη αξία ενώπιον του Θεού, όπως εννοείται από την σημερινήν Αποστολικήν περικοπή. +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

and qualities, which make each of us unique and special to God. Our God loves us so much that we have a personal identity, through which we express our own effort to give heart-felt, genuine love, as a personal act of Free Will. Without Free Will, we cannot express true love.

Our *equality* and *unity* in Christ is again emphasized in the liturgical intonation made when one partakes of Holy Communion. All of us in *unity* hear the same words, “*The servant of God, (The baptismal name of the person receiving Holy Communion is pronounced.), partakes of the Precious and Holy Body and Blood of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ unto the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting.*” The fact, however, that the individual’s *name* is intoned speaks to the *individuality* of each person. Forgiveness of sins leading to Eternal Life is *offered* to all people *equally*. At the same time the *individual by name* is forgiven of his or her particular sins, requiring their personal efforts in repentance.

St. Paul’s words to the Romans, which we heard today, make it clear that there is *unity* in the faith, while, at the same time, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are imparted to us as *special* and *unique* individuals. We are called to serve God with *genuine love*, described as Christ-like care for the other person. Hence, as we bow our heads unto the Lord during the Divine Liturgy, a prayer is read for everyone, saying, “[*Lord*] *look down from heaven upon all who have bowed their heads before You...*” but the request of the prayer is also for each *individual* saying, “*Guide the course of our lives for the benefit according to the need of each of us...*”

For Christians, *equality* does not mean that we are all the same. Nor does it mean that we are *entitled* to automatically get all the same worldly things that others have. Instead, we are equally *responsible* to love others as Christ loves them, and to offer our individual abilities in caring for each person, since that person is precious in the sight of God.

+FR. THEODORE

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, August 2nd.....Paraklisis – 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, August 3rd.....Bible Study- 10:00 a.m. **In-person at our parish hall and via “Zoom” at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86498724291?pwd=aVVFZUdIcHhqR2FwSXdBdGx6c3hYdz09>** Meeting ID: 864 9872 4291 / Passcode: 821010...One tap mobile: +16699006833 ...Note: You may also join by entering: <https://zoom.us/join> in your computer search engine at the top left corner of your screen and then enter the Meeting ID: **864 9872 4291** & Passcode: **821010** when prompted. You may also call in by cell phone at: 1 669 900 6833 and enter the herein noted Meeting ID number and Passcode.

Wednesday, August 4th....Paraklisis – 10:00 a.m. [Morning Service]

Thursday, August 5th.....Great Vespers – 6:30 p.m.

Friday, August 6th.....TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.



"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 -- Romans 12: 6-14

Brethren, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

GOSPEL -- St. Matthew 9: 1-8

At that time, getting into a boat Jesus crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say 'Rise and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins," he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

SAVE THE DATES

1. **Monday, August 16th...Helping those in need at the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission.** Contact **Ronda Latkovic** or **Fr. Ted** to volunteer.
2. **Saturday, September 25th...St. George Golf Tournament at Desert Willow Golf Resort in Palm Desert.** Items are needed for sale at our silent auction which will be held at the awards banquet. Contact **Fr. Ted** to arrange delivery of items at the church.

DIVINE LITURGY BOOKS – The new Divine Liturgy books for our church pews have been ordered. This edition is currently in the process of being published. As soon as we receive them, we will place them, along with Bibles, in our church pews so that everyone can more easily follow along with the Divine Liturgy.

CHURCH MAINTENANCE – We thank God for the efforts of **Peter Snarskis** in coordinating the upgrade of our parish Air Conditioning system in order to maintain our parish’s inside temperatures to a comfortable and healthy standard during the remainder of the summer season. A professional church cleaning will be cleaning our church and parish hall on Wednesday afternoons/early evenings. In addition, estimates are being reviewed for our church/parish hall tile restoration and carpet cleaning.

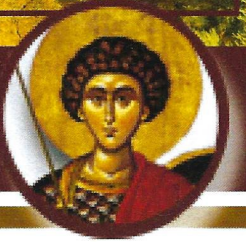
SUNDAY SCHOOL – The 2021-2022 School Year is just around the corner. With this in mind, we plan to acquaint parents with the course work of our religious education efforts, reminding them of the importance of bringing their children to church for worship and their Sunday School classes, as well as by following up with the weekly lessons through home discussions and activities. We look forward to the beginning of our new Sunday School year in September.

NO MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 15th -- Sunday, August 15th is the Feast Day of the Most Holy Theotokos. We are to be reminded of the Archdiocese Pastoral Guidelines, which state: *"Memorial Services may not be chanted from the Saturday of Lazarus through the Sunday of Thomas, nor on any Feast Day of the Lord or any Feast Day of the Theotokos."*



Saint George Greek Orthodox Church Golf Tournament

Saturday, September 25, 2021 | 12:30 PM Shotgun Start | Desert Willow Golf Resort



ENTRY INFORMATION

Saturday, September 25, 2021

- \$175 per player (includes Golf and Awards Dinner)
- 12:30 PM Shotgun Start at Desert Willow Golf Resort
- 5:00 PM Social Hour at St. George Greek Orthodox Church
- 6:00 PM Traditional Greek Dinner at St. George Greek Orthodox Church | Silent Auction and Live Music

INDIVIDUALS AND SPONSORSHIPS

Individual Player(s) ___ (# of Players) x \$175 \$ _____

Tee Sponsorship(s) ___ (# of Sponsorships) x \$100 \$ _____

Traditional Greek Dinner ___ (# of Dinners) x \$35 \$ _____

Donation \$ _____

Total Amount \$ _____

EVENT REGISTRATION

Name _____

Company/Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

PLAYER NAMES

1. _____ GHIN# _____

2. _____ GHIN# _____

3. _____ GHIN# _____

4. _____ GHIN# _____

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2021

Sign up online at www.desertwillow.com/StGeorge
Make Checks Payable To:

“Saint George Greek Orthodox Church”

Send Checks and Registration Form to:

PO Box 4755 | Palm Desert, CA | 92261

