

JANUARY 17, 2021

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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

Website: www.go-stgeorge.org

Email: stgeorgepd@aol.com

THE LADDER

St. Anthony the Great



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.*

WORSHIP IS A PRIORITY

It's been said that unless God watches, the watchman watches in vain. An amateur ship builder built Noah's Ark and high-grade scientists built the Titanic. The one was built for God, the other was built with human pride, being dubbed "unsinkable." The one was built out of obedience to God; the other was built for profit. We know the fate of both vessels.

St. Paul, in today's passage from his Epistle to the Hebrews, asks that we be obedient to those who care for us and to

pray for them. This is why we pray for our Church and civic leaders. As we pray, St. Paul urges us to seek "a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably." (Hebrews 13:18).

Indeed, there seems to be a strong correlation between our feelings of gratitude toward those who care and our desire to be obedient to their needs. Everywhere we see signs showing appreciation for our "essential workers" during these times, while we also see obedience in the form of wearing masks, social distancing, etc.

Continued on Page 2

ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

St. Anthony, the Father of monks, was born in Egypt in 251 of pious parents who departed this life while he was yet young. On hearing the words of the Gospel: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, and give to the poor" (Matt. 19:21), he immediately put it into action. Distributing to the poor all he had, and fleeing from all the turmoil of the world, he departed to the desert. The manifold temptations he endured continually for the span of twenty years are incredible. His ascetic struggles by day and by night, whereby he mortified the uprisings of the passions and attained to the height of dispassion, surpass the bounds of nature; and the report of his deeds of virtue drew such a multitude to follow him that the desert was transformed into a city, while he became, so to speak, the governor, lawgiver, and master-trainer of all the citizens of this newly-formed city.

The cities of the world also enjoyed the fruit of his virtue. When the Christians were being persecuted and put to death under Maximinus in 312, he hastened to their aid and consolation. When the Church was troubled by the Arians, he went with zeal to Alexandria in 335 and struggled against them in behalf of Orthodoxy. During this time, by the grace of his words, he also turned many unbelievers to Christ.

--Taken from: www.goarch.org



Ας μην ξεχάσουμε ότι ένας ερασιτέχνης ναυπηγός έκτισε την Κιβωτό του Νώε, και οι σοφοί επιστήμονες έκτισαν τον Τιτανικό. Το ένα εκτίσθηκε για τον Θεό, το άλλο εκτίσθηκε με ανθρώπινο εγωισμό και με καύχια πως ήταν «αβύθιστο». Το ένα εκτίσθηκε διά της υπακοής προς τον Θεό, το άλλο εκτίσθηκε για το ανθρώπινο κέρδος. Γνωρίζουμε, όμως, την μοίρα των δύο. Ο Άπ. Παύλος, στην σημερινή περικοπή της Επιστολής του προς τους Εβραίους, ζητά να είμεθα υπάκουοι σε εκείνους που μας φροντίζουν και να προσευχόμεθα για αυτούς. Για αυτό προσευχόμεθα για τις Εκκλησιαστικές και πολιτικές αρχές μας.

Υπάρχει μιά ισχυρή συσχέτιση μεταξύ των αισθήσεων ευγνωμοσύνης προς εκείνους που εννοιάζονται για το κάθε καλό μας και το ζήλον μας να τους ευχαριστήσουμε. Εχομεν υποχρέωση σε μεγαλύτερο βαθμό να εκφράσουμε την ευγνωμοσύνη μας προς τον Θεό για όλες τις ευλογίες Του διά μέσων λατρείας και προσευχών.

Ακριβώς όπως εκείνοι που έμειναν έξω από την Κιβωτό εκινδύνευαν να πνιγούν κατά τη διάρκεια του Κατακλισμού, αναλόγως, όσοι επιλέγουν να παραμείνουν έξω από την Εκκλησία κινδυνεύουν να πνιγούν στην αναταραχή της κοινωνίας μας.

Η ζωή στην Εκκλησία είναι μιά ζωή ευγνωμοσύνης προς τον Θεό, που εκφράζεται στη λατρεία, από την οποία ρέουν ζωντανές προσευχές καλών πράξεων, ακολουθώντας το παράδειγμα του Αγ. Αντωνίου, του οποίου την μνήμην εορτάζουμεν σήμερα, και όλων των άλλων Αγίων μας.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

Our relationship with our Lord works the same way. As we are grateful for His blessings, we find in ourselves the need to offer thanksgiving – i.e., the need to worship our God.

In that the Divine Liturgy is *Eucharist* (“*eucharistia*,” in Greek), which means *thanksgiving*, it makes sense that, since every good gift is from our Lord, worship is to be a priority, especially, if we consider worship to be an entire life-style. Worship as a life-style is at the same time a life of prayer – a living relationship with Christ our God, in which we confess our thoughts and feelings, while also expressing our gratitude by obeying His teachings and emulating His example.

The episode involving the Ten Lepers about which we heard in today’s Gospel is indicative of a fallen society, in general. The masses fail to recognize Christ and His Commandments, just like the nine lepers who were healed by our Lord. Only a few, represented by the one leper – a Samaritan – offer thanksgiving to Him, through worship and the struggle to avoid sin. Indeed, those few stand to be considered as outcasts of our society, much like the Jewish People of our Lord’s time considered the Samaritans to be outcasts.

As we celebrate the Feast Day of St. Anthony the Great today, we see a certain irony. At the time, St. Anthony voluntarily became an outcast of society so that he could devote himself to a life of prayer without distractions. Through prayer, he acquired the Wisdom of God through which he inspired others to live with “good consciences,” doing good deeds for God’s glory and for the benefit of humanity. However, today, as a major Saint of our Church, he stands before society as an outcast, ignored by virtually everyone who seeks popularity.

Noah’s Ark has become a representation of the Church. Just as people who were outside of the Ark stood to drown in the waters, so too, people stand to drown in the turmoil of our world if they remain outside of the Church. Life in the Church is a life of gratitude to God, expressed in worship, from which flow living prayers of good deeds, following the example of St. Anthony the Great and the host of our other Saints.

+FR. THEODORE

BIBLE STUDY -RESCHEDULED: Friday, January 22, 2020 - 10:00 a.m.

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86578988907?pwd=cFBoaDg3b25hdTU1L3o1NDV2ay83dz09>

Meeting ID: **865 7898 8907**

Passcode: **919868**

Or, using your cell phone, call: 1 699 900 6833 and dial in the Meeting ID and Passcode numbers. We will be studying the following passages: St. Luke 18:35-43.

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”

<p>EPISTLE -- Hebrews 13:17-21</p> <p>Brethren, obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you. Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner. Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.</p>	<p>GOSPEL -- St. Luke 17:12-19</p> <p>At that time, as Jesus entered a village, He was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." When He saw them He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus's feet, giving Him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then said Jesus: "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him: "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."</p>
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today.....Sunday School - 11:30 a.m. (“Zoom” format)

NOTE: Monday, January 18th.....There will be no celebration of the Divine Liturgy in memory of St. Athanasios

NOTE: Tuesday, January 19th....Bible Study is rescheduled for Friday, January 22nd.

Friday, January 22nd.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m. (“Zoom” format)