

**NOVEMBER 28, 2021**

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

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

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# THE LADDER



## Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 4755

Palm Desert, CA.92261

Tel: (760) 568-9901

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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.*

## OUR AWARENESS OF GOD

Today's Epistle and Gospel passages allude to two factors that lead to our salvation: 1) the Gift of our Lord's Grace, and, 2) our efforts in following the Lord. Wealth and works, by themselves, add up to very little, because salvation itself is too precious to buy, and too great to accomplish on our own. If we could buy or acquire salvation on our own, we would have been able to save ourselves.

In essence, we need to watch out that we do not get infected with pride. The young lawyer of today's Gospel proudly announced that he was able to follow all the Commandments. However, he was

humbled by the fact that all his efforts in this were not enough. He still had to forget about his own ideas of righteousness and/or self-righteousness, and think about those who were not as "favored" as was he. On top of that, his concept of "goodness" was not *good* unless he gave up his self-centeredness and followed Christ our God.

Giving to those in need *and* following Christ are two lanes of the same road that leads to heaven, because when we give to those in need in order to offer our love to Christ, two things

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## ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE

This coming Tuesday, November 30th, we commemorate St. Andrew the Apostle. St. Andrew was from Bethsaida of Galilee; he was the son of Jonas and the brother of Peter, the chief of the Apostles. He had first been a disciple of John the Baptist; afterwards, on hearing the Baptist's witness concerning Jesus, when he pointed Him out with his finger and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1.29,36), he straightway followed Christ, and became His first disciple; wherefore he is called the First-called of the Apostles.

After the Ascension of the Savior, he preached in various lands; and having suffered many things for His Name's sake, he died in Patras of Achaia, where he was crucified on a cross in the shape of an "X," the first letter of "Christ" in Greek; this cross is also the symbol of Saint Andrew.

--Taken from the Archdiocese website: [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org).



Οι σημερινές περικοπές της Επιστολής και του Ευαγγελίου ομιλούν για δύο παράγοντες που οδηγούν στη σωτηρία μας: 1) το Δώρο της Χάριτος του Κυρίου, και, 2) τις προσπάθειές μας να ακολουθήσουμε τον Κύριο. Τα πλούτη και τα έργα, από μόνα τους, αθροίζονται σε πολύ λίγα, γιατί η ίδια η σωτηρία είναι τόσο πολύτιμη που τα χρήματα δεν μπορούν να την αγοράσουν, και είναι τόσο μεγαλειώδη που δεν μπορούμε να την πετύχουμε μόνοι μας. Αν μπορούσαμε να αγοράσουμε ή να αποκτήσουμε τη σωτηρία μόνοι μας, θα είχαμε σωθεί ήδη.

Ουσιαστικά, πρέπει να προσέχουμε να μην μολυνθούμε από την υπερηφάνια. Ο νεαρός δικηγόρος του σημερινού Ευαγγελίου ανακοίνωσε περήφανα ότι ήταν σε θέση να τηρήσει όλες τις Εντολές. Ωστόσο, εταπεινώθηκε από το γεγονός ότι όλες οι προσπάθειές του σε αυτό δεν ήταν αρκετές. Έπρεπε να παρατήρει τις δικές του ιδέες περί δικαιοσύνης ή/ και περί της αυτοδικαιώσεως και να σκεφτεί εκείνους που δεν ήταν τόσο «ευτηχισμένοι» όσο ήταν αυτός. Σύν τοις άλλοις, η αντίληψή του για την «καλοσύνη» δεν ήταν καλή αν δεν εγκατέλειπε τον εγωκεντρισμό του για να ακολουθησει τον Χριστό. Ο Άγ. Παύλος στην προς Φιλιππησίους Επιστολή του έγραψε ότι ό,τι εκέρδιζε για τον εαυτό του το θεωρούσε απώλεια σε σχέση του με τον Χριστό. (Φιλιππησίους 3:7). Αυτή η αυτογνωσία προέρχεται από τρεις παράγοντες: 1) το δικό μας προσωπικό «αυτεξούσιον», 2) τις προσπάθειές μας να καθοδηγήσουμε την ψυχή μας προς την προσευχή, και, 3) τη Χάρη του Κυρίου, που είναι ένα Δώρο ως απάντηση στις προσευχές μας.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

occur: 1) we help our neighbor, who is the image of God for the glory of God, and, 2) we simplify our lives so that we have fewer distractions, less stress, and more peace in union with Christ. St. John Chrysostom wrote that it is easy to abandon worldly cares when we consider the wealth of God's Kingdom. If we were to suppose the mountains; the earth and the sea to all be gold, we would have nothing compared to the wealth of the Kingdom of Heaven, which is attained by God's grace and our love toward our neighbor. (See *Nicene-Post Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 10, "Homily on the Gospel of St. Matthew.") Finally, St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Philippians, wrote: "But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ." (Philippians 3:7). Such awareness comes from three factors: our own personal Free Will; our efforts in guiding our Free Will toward prayer for our Savior's Wisdom, and, finally, the Grace of our Lord, which is a Gift in answer to our prayers.

Awareness of God is vital in order to live our lives wisely. Awareness of God allows us to be aware of ourselves -- i.e., to continue in behaving according to God's love, but to also correct our failings when we do not show God's love to others. Such awareness presses us to constantly seek to improve ourselves spiritually, while avoiding the temptations to condemn others. Knowing that the Kingdom of Heaven is infinitely a greater paradise than anything on earth, we turn to our Savior to learn how we can best take care of ourselves so that we can care for others and also give glory to Christ our True God.

Living according to such awareness of our relationship with Christ God is the gateway to making our lives in this present life a prelude to the Eternal Life in God's Kingdom.

+FR. THEODORE

**MEMORIAL** -- Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **George Nicholas (1 year)**, the beloved husband of **Theophania Nicholas &** father of **George Nicholas, Jr.** and **Constantina Kosturos**. **George Nicholas** is the Father of our Palm Desert church, beginning in 1979. In 1983 he transformed the old house into a small church. The garage itself was our church, where all of the divine Church Services were performed, and which was filled with many people. He single-handedly made the Altar Table and the set of Icons for our parish at that time. He took care of Holy Friday decorations and the Epitaphio, as well as the Artoklasia for special Church Services. He continued to serve with love and devotion. In 1996 the house was torn down to build the church structure that we now have. This was made possible through a generous donation of the great benefactors, Mr. and Mrs. Kostakis, a faithful family from Chicago. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Rest and Salvation to the servant of God, **George Nicholas**, and may He grant peace and comfort to his beloved wife, **Theophania Nicholas**, and their entire family. **MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**



*"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: 4-10

Brethren, God who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God: not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

At that time, a ruler came to Jesus and asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.' " And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God.

### WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tuesday, November 30th....ST. ANDREW THE FIRST-CALLED APOSTLE

Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy- 9:30 a.m.

**Bible Study - 10:00 a.m.**

"Zoom" link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85019077883pwd=eUhpY2FwZGwvRnJpdzRUWEZHRFJ1dz09>

Wednesday, December 1st.. Bible Study -6:30 p.m. ("Zoom" link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86111452564>)

Saturday, December 4th.....ST. BARBARA THE MARTYR

Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

**Annual Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon - 11:30 a.m.at Desert Willow Golf Resort, Palm Desert, CA**

**PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS** -- Parish Council Candidacy Forms are now available for those who want to become candidates for election for serving as members of the 2022 Parish Council. Please see Fr. Ted today to receive a Parish Candidacy Form which must be completed and returned to our church office by Sunday, December 5, 2021

**CHRISTMAS "UNWRAPPED"** is a three part virtual mini-series hosted by **Fr. Angelo Maginas** of Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Cardiff-by-the-Sea, California, in which the theology, history, and traditions surrounding our Orthodox Christian celebration of the Nativity of our Lord are explained. Virtual sessions will be held on **Mondays: November 29th, December 6th, and December 13th from 7:30 p.m - 8:30 p.m.** Register now at: [Orthodoxy.com/Register](https://Orthodoxy.com/Register).



# CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 2021

St. George Sunday School, Palm Desert, CA

**PRACTICE 11:15-11:45**

**SUNDAY 11/28**

**PRACTICE 11:15-11:45**

**SUNDAY 12/5**

## CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

**SUNDAY 12/12**

Dear Parents,

This year our Sunday School Christmas program will be held on Sunday, December 12, 2021, directly following the Divine Liturgy and will be about 15- 20 minutes.

2 rehearsals are scheduled to include part of Sunday School time and extra time after class in the church to allow for all to be comfortable in their roles.

**Please, let us know today** (either in person, phone call, text or email) if you would like your child to participate so we can plan for all roles and costumes.

With love in Christ,

***Athena Snarskis 219-313-6940..... [Athna2@aol.com](mailto:Athna2@aol.com)***

***Irene Stambolos 818-517-3169...[istambolos@verizon.net](mailto:istambolos@verizon.net)***





IT'S TIME TO GET COOKING!

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# CHRISTMAS BAKING WORKSHOPS

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*Where: St. George Church Hall & Kitchen*

**When:**

**Monday, November 29th at 9:00 AM**

**Vasilopita (Sweet Bread)**

**Wednesday, December 1 at 9:00 AM**

**Vasilopita (Sweet Bread)**

**Thursday, December 2 at 9:00 AM**

**Koulourakia**

**Monday, December 6 at 9:00 AM**

**Vasilopita (Sweet Bread)**

**Tuesday, December 7 at 9:00 AM**

**Koulourakia**

**Thursday, December 8 at 9:00 AM**

**Koulourakia**

*\* If you prefer to package, please arrive at noon on the above days.*

**Ladies Philoptochos Society of St. George**



# CHRISTMAS SUPPER

## \$25.00

Choice of Mizithra spaghetti, marinara spaghetti, meatballs, or breast of chicken fettuccine. Iced tea and sodas, bread, spumoni ice cream.

### Saturday

### 12/11/2021

### 5:30 pm at

### The Old Spaghetti Factory

71743 Highway 111 Ste A, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

### RSVP by 12/05

### [Ahepa528.org](http://Ahepa528.org)

### [Contact@ahempa528.org](mailto:Contact@ahempa528.org)

Nick L. @ 760.455.9727 *mobile/text*

Wynn @ 760.832.2825 *mobile/text*

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