

JANUARY 23, 2022

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.

ST. PAUL: THE GREATEST SINNER

We are all sinners. That does not mean that we are depraved; nor does it mean that God has given up on us. It does not mean that we are worthless and there we cannot find joy in life.

In his book, *How to Be a Sinner*, Peter Bouteneff cites today's passage from St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the foremost of sinners; but I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display

His perfect patience for an example to those who were to believe in Him for eternal life. (1 Timothy 14-16). St. Paul confesses that he is a great sinner. After all, he was an accomplice to the murder of St. Stephen, the First Martyr. Bouteneff makes the following observation: "We are sinners surrounded by sinners... But this human condition, in all of its depravity, is what Christ came to save..." To paraphrase Bouteneff, we would say that St. Paul's message to us is that if God is patient and for-
Continued on page 2

LEARNING ABOUT OUR GREEK ORTHODOX FAITH --- Treasures Of Orthodoxy is a series of pamphlets written for the non-Orthodox, especially those who are considering becoming members of the Orthodox Church and who wish to deepen their appreciation of her faith, worship, and traditions. The pamphlets are authored by **Fr. Thomas Fitzgerald**, a faculty member of **Hellenic College-Holy Cross School of Theology**. The pamphlet titles are as follows:

Introduction - Introduces the non-Orthodox to Orthodox Christianity.

House of God - Describes the interior of the church building.

Worship - Discusses the form and characteristics of Orthodox worship.

Liturgy - Describes the meaning and celebration of the Eucharist.

Sacraments - Describes the meaning and importance of liturgical life.

Special Services and Blessings - Describes the non-sacramental services which contribute to spiritual life.

Teachings - Outlines the salient points of doctrine and basic credal affirmations.

Spirituality - Discusses the meaning of theosis as the goal of Christian life. SEE :: www.goarch.org/-/the-church



Είμεθα όλοι αμαρτωλοί. Αυτό δεν σημαίνει ότι είμεθα διεφθαρμένοι. ούτε σημαίνει ότι ο Θεός μας έχει εγκαταλείψει. Δεν σημαίνει ότι είμεθα άχρηστοι και δεν μπορούμε να ευρούμε χαρά στη ζωή.

Πολλοί άνθρωποι σήμερα δεν θέλουν να ακούσουν, όμως, τη λέξη «αμαρτία», επειδή, όπως φαίνεται, οι άνθρωποι θέλουν να πείσουν τον εαυτό τους ότι είναι «Ο.Κ. όπως ακριβώς νομίζουν». Μερικοί άνθρωποι κατηγορούν ακόμη και τον Θεό που ζητά πολλά από εμάς, αφού πιστεύουν ότι ό,τι και να κάνουμε, «είναι ανθρώπινο.»

Πραγματικά, δεν είμεθα "ΟΚ". Βαθιά μέσα μας γνωρίζουμε ότι υπάρχει περιθώριο βελτιώσεως. Ο Άγιος Παύλος δεν ήταν "Ο.Κ." Παραδέχθηκε ότι ήταν αμαρτωλός, αλλά, διά της ψυχικής αγώνος έγινε Άγιος. Το ίδιο ισχύει για τον καθέναν μας. Μπορεί να είμεθα αμαρτωλοί, αλλά ο Χριστός πάντα μας καλεί να γίνουμε Άγιοι. Όπως ακριβώς ο Άγιος Παύλος στράφηκε προς τον Χριστό και συγχωρήθηκε, το ίδιο ισχύει για τον καθέναν μας. Δεν πρέπει ποτέ να απελπιζόμεθα. Ο Θεός μας αγαπά και είναι έτοιμος να μας συγχωρήσει αν μετανοήσουμε.

Η Θεία Κοινωνία είναι η διαρκής και ζωντανή μαρτυρία της Αγάπης του Θεού για τον καθέναν μας. Σε κάθε Θεία Λειτουργία βιώνουμε την αγάπη του Θεού: «ούτως γαρ ηγάπησεν ο θεός τον κόσμον, ώστε τον Υιόν τον μονογενή έδωκεν, ίνα πας ο πιστεών εις Αυτόν μη απόληται αλλά έχη ζωήν αιώνιον, ου γαρ απέστειλεν ο Θεός τον Υιόν Αυτού εις τον κόσμον ίνα κρίνη τον κόσμον αλλά ίνα σωθή ο κόσμος δι Αυτού.» (Ιωαν. 3:16-17)
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

giving with a person like St. Paul, then we must believe that God will be merciful to all people.

Many people today do not want to hear the word "sin," because, it would seem, that people want to convince themselves that they are "O.K. just the way they are." Some people even blame God for asking too much from us, since, after all, "we are only human."

Truly, we are not "O.K." Deep down we know there is room for improvement. St. Paul was not "O.K." He admitted to being a sinner; but, he went on to become a Saint. The same is true for each of us. We may be sinners, but Christ our Savior is always calling us to become Saints. Just like St. Paul turned to Christ and was forgiven, the same holds true for each of us. We should never despair. God loves us and is ready to forgive us if we sincerely repent.

Holy Communion is the on-going and living testimony to the Love of God for each of us. At each Divine Liturgy we experience the truth of Holy Scriptures: "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, that all who believe in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For, God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him." (St. John 3:16-17). We should fear that we would ever reject God's love for us, because by rejecting God, we also continue committing sins, which are deeds and words contrary to God's love.

Indeed, let us turn to our Lord and seek forgiveness and offer gratitude for our salvation through a way of life that gives Christ our God glory and that shares His divine love with all people.

+FR. THEODORE

WELCOME TO DELEGATES OF THE AHEPA DISTRICT 20

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE -- This year, our AHEPA Chapter 528 had the honor of hosting the Annual AHEPA District 20 Mid-Winter Conference, with activities and meetings beginning of Friday evening, January 21st and continuing through yesterday, January 22nd at the Homewood Suites in Palm Desert, California. We welcome Conference delegates who have joined us today for worship.

GODPARENT SUNDAY -- Next **Sunday, January 30th!** Godparents are invited to worship together with their Godchildren and also attend Sunday School classes. See the enclosed flier.

GREEK FOLK DANCE LESSONS --After the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, January 30th**, an initial meeting and registration will be held for **Greek Folk Dance lessons**. Children and adults are encouraged to join. Dates and times for the lessons will be decided in the near future.

PRAYER FOR READING HOLY SCRIPTURES



"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,

EPISTLE - 1 Timothy 1:15-17

Timothy, my son, the saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the foremost of sinners; but I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display His perfect patience for an example to those who were to believe in Him for eternal life. To the King of Ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory to the ages of ages. Amen.

GOSPEL - St. Luke 18:35-23

At that time, as Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And he cried, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me receive my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tuesday, January 25th..... ST. GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN

Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m. /Bible Study - 11:00 a.m. (Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83371776876?pwd=UnEzUTRybjkwT2FraWlSWWhlYk9Bdz09>)

Wednesday, January 26th...Bible Study - 6:30 p.m. (Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86111452564>)

Today we will have the Oath of Office for the members of our Parish Council for 2022. They are listed below in alphabetical order:

Becky Allen

Tony Dalkas

Matthew Holm

Linda Kallis

Nicholas Kaperonis

Nicholas Latkovic

Chris Maletis

Peter Snarskis

Tina Veroulis

Let us all commit ourselves to working with our Parish Council members for the glory of our Lord and for the wellbeing of our St. George parish now and into the future!



GODPARENT /GODCHILD SUNDAY

**YOU'RE INVITED!
JANUARY 30TH**

**LITURGY 9:30 AM
SPECIAL PRAYER
FELLOWSHIP
PHOTOS**

**St George Greek Orthodox Church,
74109 Larea Street, Palm Desert, Ca 92260**