



SEPTEMBER 11, 2022

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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– Fr. Theodore Pantels,
Proistamenos (Pastor)

– Deacon Euthym Kon-
taxis, M.D.

**Holy Communion Or-
der**

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.*

THE LADDER

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, and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.”

EPISTLE - Galatians 6:11-18

GOSPEL - John 3:13-17

Brethren, see with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

The Lord said, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him."

THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

By the deception of the serpent, humanity was cut off from God. The "golden" serpent of Moses in the wilderness, about which we heard in today's reading of the Gospel passage, was the beginning of the "unraveling" of the deception of the first serpent, which caused the "fall of Man". When Christ was raised upon the Cross, it was the "rise of Man" in the person of Christ, the Son of God.

St. John of Kronstadt explained the life-giving nature of the Holy Cross in our lives today:

“Let us enter into the meaning of the mystery of the Cross...The human race, would have been given over to eternal death, according to the unchanging, most strict justice of God, if the Son of God had not become, out of His limitless goodness, a voluntary Intermediary and Redeemer of all of humanity, which became corrupted by sin.”

+FR. THEODORE

Liturgical Notes for Today

At the Entrance of the Gospel: **1) Entrance Hymn:** *“The Women Disciples of the Lord heard from the angel the joyful news of the Resurrection and the repeal of the sentence imposed upon our forefathers. With pride they said to the Apostles, ‘Death is vanquished. Christ our God is risen, bestowing upon the world His great mercy.’/ Το φαιδρόν...; 2) “Your birth, O Theotokos, brought joy to the whole world, for from You dawned the sun of righteousness, Christ our God. Freeing us from the curse, He gave us His blessings. Abolishing death, He granted us eternal life.”/ Η Γέννησις σου Θεοτόκε...; 3) Hymn for St. George. 4) Kontakion Hymn: *“In Your holy birth, Immaculate One, Joachim and Anna were rid of the shame of childlessness; Adam and Eve of corruption and death. And so Your people, free of guilt of their sins, celebrate crying: ‘The barren one gives birth to the Theotokos, Who nourishes our life.’”/ Ιωακείμ και Αννα ονειδισμόν.**

OUR THOUGHTS AND THE HOLY CROSS

The Holy Cross of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ stands as the unifying message throughout the Bible – bringing together the Book of Genesis and the Book of Revelation, guiding us against the deception of the serpent in the Garden of Eden and leading us to the truth of God’s Eternal Love. In Genesis, we have the tree of the forbidden fruit, with the temptation of the serpent leading humanity to disobedience. Yet, the “Tree” of the Cross of our Lord is our way to salvation.

Let me quote from the religious poet, J.P. Theodoropoulos, from his book, *Musings in Catechism*:

“Have you ever felt deep within you the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist – that amazing and indescribable sacrifice? At the moment at which the Sacrament is celebrated, the very same angels from the Orders of the Cherubim and the Seraphim are present at the Holy Altar, shielding their faces out of awe and great respect. The powers of heaven, along with the bishop, the priests and the deacons, pray for you; for all those who are laden with sin, since the Blood of Christ drips from His most pure Side from the Cross and into the Holy Chalice . Think about the great holiness of this moment. Live with respect for God and pray.” (pg. 37).

Let us become aware of our daily thoughts and ideals and compare them to the thoughts and ideals of our Lord’s Holy Gospel. Let us bring ourselves to judgment so that we can turn to repentance, which is the synonym for “taking up one’s Cross” and following our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and let us always pray.
+FR. THEODORE

Ο Τιμὸς Σταυρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας καθοδηγεῖ ἐνάντια στὴν ἀπάτη τοῦ φιδιοῦ τῆς ἐξαπατήσεως καὶ μας ὀδηγεῖ στὴν ἀλήθεια τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ Θεοῦ. Στὴ Γένεση, ἔχουμε τὸ δέντρο τοῦ ἀπαγορευμένου καρποῦ, μετὸν πειρασμὸ τοῦ φιδιοῦ νὰ ὀδηγεῖ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα στὴν ἀνυπακοή. Ὡστόσο, τὸ «Δέντρο» τοῦ Σταυροῦ εἶναι ὁ δρόμος μας πρὸς τὴ σωτηρία.

Ἐπιτρέψτε μου νὰ παραθέσω λόγια τοῦ θρησκευτικοῦ ποιητῆ, Ι. Π. Θεοδωρόπουλου, ἀπὸ τὸ βιβλίο του, *Συζητήσεις στὴν Κατήχηση*:

«Ἐχετε νιώσει ποτέ βαθιά μέσα σας τὸ Μυστήριο τῆς Θείας Ευχαριστίας – αὐτὴ τὴν καταπληκτικὴ καὶ ἀπερίγραπτη θυσία; Τὴν στιγμή που τελείται τὸ Μυστήριο, οἱ ἴδιοι ἄγγελοι ἀπὸ τὰ Τάγματα τῶν Χερουβείμ καὶ τῶν Σεραφεῖμ εἶναι παρόντες στὴν Ἁγία Τράπεζα, θωρακίζοντας τὰ πρόσωπά τους ἀπὸ δέος καὶ μεγάλο σεβασμὸ. Οἱ δυνάμεις τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, μαζί με τὸν ἐπίσκοπο, τοὺς ἱερεῖς καὶ τοὺς διακόνους, προσεύχονται γιὰ εσάς, γιὰ ὅλους ὅσους εἶναι φορτωμένοι με ἀμαρτία, ἀφοῦ τὸ Αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ στάζει ἀπὸ τὴν πιο ἀγνή Πλευρὰ Του ἀπὸ τὸν Σταυρὸ καὶ μέσα στο Ἅγιο Ποτήριο. Σκεφτεῖτε τὴν μεγάλῃ αγιότητα αὐτῆς τῆς στιγμῆς. Ζήστε με σεβασμὸ στὸν Θεὸ καὶ προσευχηθεῖτε». (σελ. 37).

Ἀς συνειδητοποιήσουμε τὶς καθημερινές μας σκέψεις καὶ ἰδανικά καὶ ας τὰ συγκρίνουμε με τὶς σκέψεις καὶ τὰ ἰδανικά τοῦ Ἱεροῦ Ευαγγελίου. Ἀς φέρουμε τοὺς εαυτοὺς μας στὴν κρίση, ὥστε νὰ μπορέσουμε νὰ στραφούμε στὴ μετάνοια, που εἶναι τὸ συνώνυμο τοῦ «νὰ σηκώσουμε τὸν Σταυρὸ μας» καὶ νὰ ἀκολουθήσουμε τὸν Κύριο καὶ Σωτῆρα μας Ἰησοῦ Χριστό.
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tuesday, September 13th.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m.
AHEPA Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 14th.....EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS & LIFE-GIVING CROSS
Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL IS "JUST AROUND THE CORNER" --Next Sunday, September 18th, parents are welcome to confirm their contact information with our Sunday School staff and/or Fr. Ted. Many of our Sunday School lessons will be sent to you for the purpose of supplementing our Sunday School lessons with your children throughout each week, in the effort to **make God Real in our Orthodox Christian homes. Sunday School classes will be held next Sunday, September 25th.**

OUR ST. GEORGE PARISH DIRECTORY is currently available in our parish hall! We ask that our parishioners take one copy per household with them and to "sign-out" on the "Sign-out" form provided. Copies will be sent by postage mail to those who are unable to attend church services. We want to thank all of our parishioners who participated in this effort and who helped in meeting the needs required for publication.

FUNERAL SERVICES FOR MRS. EMILY TCHAROS

The schedule for the funeral services for Mrs. Emily Tcharos is as follows:

Monday, September 19, 2022 - Visitation at the St. George Greek Orthodox Church - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Trisagion Service at St. George Greek Orthodox Church - 7:00 p.m.
Reception in the parish hall- 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 20, 2022 - Funeral Service at St. George Greek Orthodox Church - 10:00 a.m.
Internment at Desert Memorial Park - 12:30 p.m.
Mercy Meal (Makaria) - 2:15 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, please contribute in Memory of Mrs. Emily Tcharos to our St. George Greek Orthodox parish here in Palm Desert.



**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL**

Prot. No. 190/2022

**Archepiscopal Encyclical on the Feast of the
Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross**

September 14, 2022

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, the Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, the Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America:

Κάγὼ ἐὰν ὑψωθῶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς, πάντα ἐλκύνω πρὸς ἐμαυτόν. (κατὰ Ἰωάννην 12:32)
And I, if I be exalted from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself. (John 12:32)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Sacred Feastday, which reminds every parishioner from coast to coast of our beloved Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology, speaks to the love of God for every human being. But it also speaks of our service to the Holy Cross by being Σταυροφόροι – those who bear the Cross. And how do we do carry His Cross? First, by picking up our own and carrying it with all the love and compassion we can muster for ourselves and for those around us. To elevate, to exalt, to raise the Cross as did the saintly Archbishop Makarios on that first September Fourteenth in Jerusalem so many centuries ago, is to exalt the One Who died upon it in order to redeem our lives. Our Lord Jesus Christ willingly ascended the Cross to die for us, as we chant in the Kontakion of the Feast: Ὁ ὑψωθείς ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ ἐκουσίως. The question for us, then, is what are we willing to do?

Are we willing to sacrifice, to give of ourselves generously, to show compassion, mercy and forgiveness? This is what the Lord did on the Cross, the Cross to which He was nailed by the hands of every human being who has ever lived or will live. His mercy and grace creates a spiritual vortex of love that draws all people into its whirling effulgence, which is the nature, the mission, and the glory of the Church.

My dear brethren in Christ: we could have no better name and purpose for our beloved Σχολή, for it is to this magnetic and powerful grace that our future clergy are called. Their vocation is nothing less than to continually raise up the Cross of Christ, as Saint Paul says: “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Galatians 6:14). Therefore, let us exalt the Cross of Christ in our lives, and lift up our School – with prayers, support, and above all, committed students, who will carry the Cross on high and bring glory to our Lord and God.

With paternal blessings and love in Christ,
† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America