



AUGUST 20, 2023

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT  
74-109 Larrea Street  
Palm Desert, California 92260  
Website: [www.go-stgeorge.org](http://www.go-stgeorge.org) Email: [pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com)

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 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—1 Corinthians 9:2-12**

Brethren, you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law say the same? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop. If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? If others share this rightful claim upon you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

**GOSPEL—St. Matthew 18: 23-35**

The Lord said this parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord delivered him to the jailors, till he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to everyone of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

### Liturgical Notes for Today

1. Entrance with the Holy Gospel: *"When You descended to death, O Immortal Life, then the light of Your Divinity destroyed Hades. When You raised the dead from the depths of darkness, all the heavenly powers cried out, 'Glory to You, O Christ our God, the Giver of Life.'"* / Οτε κατήλθες πρὸς τὸν θάνατον...
2. *"In birth, You preserved Your virginity; in death, You did not abandon the world, O Theotokos. As Mother of life, You departed to the Source of Life, delivering our souls from death by Your intercessions."* / Εν τη Γεννήσει, τὴν παρθενίαν εφύλαξας...
3. *"Since you are a deliverer of captives..."* [Hymn of St. George] / Ως τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ελευθερωτῆς...
4. **Kontakion:** *"Neither the grave nor death could contain the Theotokos, the unshakable hope, ever vigilant in intercession and protection. As Mother of life, He Who dwelt in the Ever-virginal womb transposed Her to life."* / Τὴν ἐν πρεσβείαις ἀκοίμητον Θεοτόκον...

### FORGIVING OTHERS IS THE PATHWAY TO OUR OWN FORGIVENESS

Warnings about judging others abound in the Gospels — *"He who is without sin, let him cast the first stone."* (St. John 8:7) *"By what measure you judge, you shall be judged."* (St. Matthew 7: 1). Of all human faults, our Lord condemned hypocrisy the most — *"Woe to you, you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites!"* (St. Matthew 23:13). The wicked servant of our Lord's parable, of whom we heard from today's Gospel passage, is yet one more figure to be condemned by our Lord for his hypocrisy. As much as he wanted mercy from his king — and even received it — he did not show mercy to his fellow servant.

It is only when we can read the Bible and apply it to ourselves, rather than using it to judge others, that we can realize our own flaws, weaknesses and sins, and, in this way, avoid the grave sin of hypocrisy, while growing spiritually. It is only then that we can be serious about repentance, which is always a matter of praying for ourselves and others rather than justifying ourselves and condemning others.

If we believe in God, we must believe in forgiveness. But, if we truly believe in forgiveness, we must believe that forgiving others is the pathway to our own forgiveness. Our Lord defines forgiveness through today's Gospel passage — that being, the total cancellation of all debt as if it never existed. An image of such innocent forgiveness can be found among small children who have not yet learned from adults how to hold grudges. Such an image shows that we have it in us to be able to forgive; we most often choose not to. Choosing not to carries dire consequences, as we understand from reading the Bible. It is critical, then, that we truly apply the Bible to ourselves, rather than using it to condemn others.  
+FR. THEODORE

Τα Ευαγγέλια μας προειδοποιούν να μην καταδικάζουμε τους άλλους - «Ο αναμάρτητος υμῶν πρῶτος βαλέτω λίθον ἐπ' αὐτήν.» (Ἰωάν. 8:7) «Μη κρίνετε, ἵνα μη κριθήτε.» (Ματθ. 7:1-3). Ἀπὸ ὅλα τα ἀνθρώπινα ἐλαττώματα, ὁ Κύριός μας καταδίκασε περισσότερο τὴν ὑποκρισία — «Οὐαὶ δε ὑμῖν γραμματεῖς καὶ Φαρισαῖοι ὑποκριταί!» (Ματθ. 23:13). Ὁ πονηρὸς ὑπηρέτης τῆς παραβολῆς τοῦ Κυρίου, γιὰ τὸν ὁποῖον ἀκούσαμε ἀπὸ τὴ σημερινή περικοπή τοῦ Ευαγγελίου, εἶναι ἀκόμη ἓνας ἄλλος που καταδικάσθηκε ἀπὸ τὸν Κύριο γιὰ τὴν ὑποκρισία του. Ὅσο κι ἂν ἤθελε ἔλεος ἀπὸ τὸν βασιλέαν του — καὶ μάλιστα το ἔλαβε — δὲν ἔδειξε ἔλεος στὸν συνδούλο του.

Μόνο ὅταν μποροῦμε νὰ διαβάσουμε τὴν Ἁγία Γραφή καὶ νὰ τὴν ἐφαρμόσουμε στὸν εαυτό μας, ἀντὶ νὰ τὴν χρησιμοποιήσουμε γιὰ νὰ κατακρίνουμε τοὺς ἄλλους, μποροῦμε νὰ συνειδητοποιήσουμε τὰ δικά μας ἐλαττώματα, ἀδυναμίες καὶ ἀμαρτίες, καὶ, με αὐτὸν τὸν τρόπο, νὰ ἀποφύγουμε τὸ βαρὺ ἀμάρτημα τῆς ὑποκρισίας, ἐνῶ ωριμάζουμε στὴν πνευματικὴ ζωὴ. Μόνο τότε μποροῦμε νὰ μετανοήσουμε γιὰ τὶς ἀμαρτίες μας με σοβαρὸ τρόπο, που πάντοτε εἶναι θέμα προσευχῆς γιὰ τὸν εαυτό μας καὶ γιὰ τοὺς ἄλλους, παρά ζήτημα δικαιολογήσεως τοῦ εαυτοῦ μας καὶ καταδίκης τῶν ἄλλων.

Συνέχεια στὴν ἐπόμενη σελίδα — — — >

Αν πιστεύουμε στον Θεό, πρέπει να πιστεύουμε στη συγχώρεση. Αλλά, αν πιστεύουμε αληθινά στη συγχώρεση, πρέπει να πιστεύουμε ότι το να συγχωρούμε τους άλλους είναι και ο δρόμος προς τη δική μας συγχώρεση. Ο Χριστός μας ορίζει τη συγχώρεση μέσω της σημερινής περικοπής του Ευαγγελίου - ότι είναι η πλήρης διαγραφή όλου του χρέους σαν να μην υπήρχε ποτέ. Μιά εικόνα τέτοιας αθώας συγχώρεσεως ευρίσκεται ανάμεσα σε μικρά παιδιά που δεν έχουν μάθει ακόμη από τους μεγάλους πώς να κρατούν κακία. Μιά τέτοια εικόνα δείχνει ότι έχουμε την έμφυτη ικανότητα να συγχωρούμε. Ωστόσο, τις περισσότερες φορές επιλέγουμε να μην συγχωρούμε. Η επιλογή να μην συγχωρούμε τους άλλους έχει τρομερές συνέπειες, όπως καταλαβαίνουμε από την ανάγνωση της Αγίας Γραφής. Είναι κρίσιμο, λοιπόν, να εφαρμόζουμε αληθινά την Αγία Γραφή στον εαυτό μας, αντί να τη χρησιμοποιούμε για να καταδικάζουμε τους άλλους. +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

### WEEKDAY CALENDAR

- Fr. Ted will be away this week until Saturday, August 26th. In the event of an emergency, please contact **Fr. David Kruse, pastor of St. Raphael Antiochian Orthodox Church** in Thousand Palms at: **(760) 408-6116**. Fr. Ted can be contacted at: (760) 880-5869. (No Bible Study this week)

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- STEWARDSHIP – Today’s passage from St. Paul’s 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, carries a strong message! Indeed, we don’t expect worldly things to be free. Let’s then not expect God’s blessings to always be free, without giving of our time, treasure, and/or talents back to God so we can worship Him as Orthodox Christians and share our Faith with others.
- SUNDAY SCHOOL is “just around the corner!” We look forward to welcoming our Sunday School parents and students on Sunday, September 10, 2023. See enclosed “Sunday School Supplement.”
- PHILOPTOCHOS – Our parish **Philoptochos will be joining all the Philoptochos Chapters** of our Metropolis in sending an initial donation of \$500 to our Metropolis “**Victims of Fires on Maui**” fund. More donations to be made as need arises. On another note, please note on the Master Calendar, that the annual **Philoptochos Membership Tea** is now scheduled for Saturday, March 9, 2024.
- AHEPA – Post **Saturday, September 30, 2023** on your calendars and plan to attend the AHEPA “**Dinner Night Out**” celebrating the New Ecclesiastical Year, which begins every year on September 1st. See enclosed flyer. Proceeds to benefit AHEPA scholarships and philanthropic efforts.
- OCTOBER SPIRITUAL RENEWAL – The month of October this year will be a season for spiritual renewal. The following is being scheduled, along with our weekly Bible Study group meetings held on every Tuesday morning at 10:00 a.m. (unless otherwise posted):
  1. **Wednesday evening Bible Study**, with commentary related to Orthodox worship– Every Wednesday evening, beginning on **October 4th, at 6:30 p.m. (in-person and on Zoom)**.
  2. **Re-Imagine Orthodoxy** – Question and Answer format on basic Orthodox Christian teachings and liturgical life at 10:00 a.m.– 12 noon (**in-person and on Zoom**) on Saturdays, **October 7th, November 11th, and December 2nd**. – Topics will be: “Orthodox Teaching regarding the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ our God’ and ‘Life after Death’” (October 7th); “Worship: Orthodox Hymns, Icons and Readings” (November 11th); “Parish Ministries” (December 2nd).
  3. **St. George Fall Spiritual Retreat - Saturday, October 28th**. Fr. Josiah Trenham, pastor of St. Andrew Antiochian Orthodox Church in Riverside, California, and founder of Patristic Nectar Publications will be our speaker on the theme, “*The Theotokos, Mother of the Light*.” It will be a two-part presentation: 10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Luncheon will be provided. Q and A to follow at 2:30 p.m. Plan to join us! See enclosed flyer!

# ST GEORGE'S 2023-2024 SUNDAY SCHOOL THEME



**"GROWING  
TOGETHER  
IN CHRIST"**

**"I am the vine, you are the  
branches. He who abides in Me,  
and I in him, bears much fruit; for  
without Me you can do nothing."**

**John 15:5**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL  
RESUMES ON  
SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>**



**REGISTER YOUR CHILD**

**FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES. CALL OR TEXT EITHER**

**Fr Ted Pantels 760-880-5869 or Mrs. Athena Snarskis 219-313-6940**

## Welcome Back Sunday School Families!

**SEPTEMBER 10<sup>th</sup>** - Sunday School Class resumes today!

***EACH STUDENT WILL RECEIVE A SPECIAL TAKE HOME GIFT TODAY!***

Join us in welcoming back our Sunday School students and their families to an exciting year we have planned with our 2023-2024 theme **"GROWING TOGETHER IN CHRIST"**. Our relationships with our family, friends and communities are important to our mental and physical health, but, even more so is our spiritual health. Through the many examples in the bible and of our saints we begin to experience and understand from right and wrong and that forgiveness is in the light of God's love. Our prayer life starts growing and we start showing others love and respect and loving God unconditionally.

**SEPTEMBER 17<sup>th</sup>** - Sunday School Outreach Project for Homeless after the Divine Liturgy. Also we will be celebrating American Veterans Constitution day with Philoptochos.

**SEPTEMBER 24<sup>th</sup> and OCTOBER 1<sup>st</sup>** - FAMILY WORSHIP SUNDAY (CLASSES NOT HELD)

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS SESSIONS** - Will be held once a month, as last year. We've dedicated a set schedule of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month in hopes to provide families opportunities to plan and grow in their commitment to not only Sunday school but also church attendance along side their other family activities. Much planning from our volunteer teachers goes into preparing to assure each student has proper books, lessons, activity supplies and even the amount of food when lunch is provided.

**OUTREACH PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES** - We've added another Sunday each month, that will vary, so we can actively participate, grow, experience and discover ways to use our talents and passions to help disciple others in God's faith, hope and love for all. We've been participating with our St George Philoptochos in their many community initiatives, on a local and national level. Last year we packaged many Hygiene kits, wrote personalized cards for each bag with messages of God's love and our prayers for them; folded over 400 pairs of socks and helped at THE NARROW DOOR to sort and package donated food items that is distributed to those families in need in the Coachella Valley.

**FAMILY WORSHIP SUNDAY** - Other Sundays of the month where classes are not held. This provides families the opportunity to plan and attend the Divine Liturgy, maybe even bring a friend, and come, see and learn with all your senses and prepare your heart, mind and body to receive the Holy Eucharist. We have a few varieties of children Divine Liturgy books if you are interested let us know.

**MEET OUR TEACHERS** - Each month we will highlight one of our volunteers. We have two classrooms and two small groups. Our roster has 27 students and 16 families.

Returning this year for Preschool - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade is **Alexandra Pappas and Angela Tsiamagos** who answered our prayers last year and volunteered to teach. The children enjoy their enthusiasm, story telling and both have the sweetest voice! We are blessed to have you both!

Elementary to High School group (yes that's a big range in age, but it works for now) we are so blessed to have **Presb. Petula Pantels** helping our students and families. She has been my right hand in planning lessons, ordering supplies, lunch setup, cleanup etc. The children love her knowledge especially of the bible, the saints and is always eager to help out anywhere! **Julia Hays and Emily Kayalogou** are a tremendous gift to our class group in energetically keeping the lessons and projects in order and moving along while encouraging discussions. Much needed for this age group! We are blessed to have you also!

**NOTE: Due to Archdiocese Youth Protection Policies, anyone who has not had a background check or completed the online training...may not go into the classroom and interact with the children, However, if you would like to complete the training (takes about one hour), please contact Fr Ted or myself, Athena Snarskis. Once you complete the training, the Archdiocese notifies us, and you will be able to remain in the classroom and assist the teacher (s) as needed.**

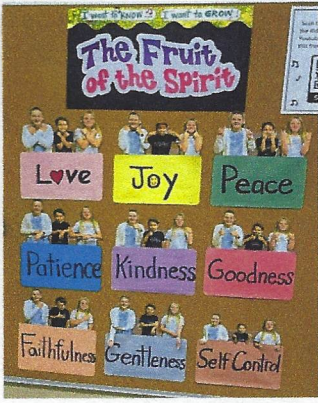
God Bless!

Mrs. Athena Snarskis, Sunday School Coordinator

*If you ever have any ideas, suggestions or are interested in becoming a volunteer for our Sunday School program please let us know. Contact Fr Ted Pantels at 760-880-5869 or Mrs. Athena Snarskis, Sunday School Coordinator at 219-313-6940. -*

**"I am the vine, you are the  
branches. He who abides in  
Me, and I in him, bears much  
fruit; for without Me you  
can do nothing."**

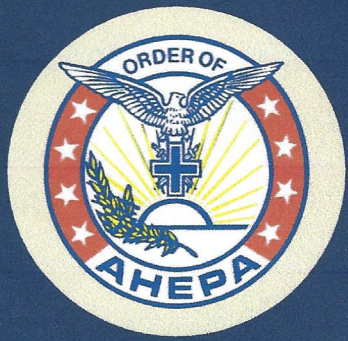
**John 15:5**



**Don't worry about anything.  
Instead pray about everything.  
Tell God what you need.  
And thank him for all He has done.  
Amen. - Philippians 4:6**

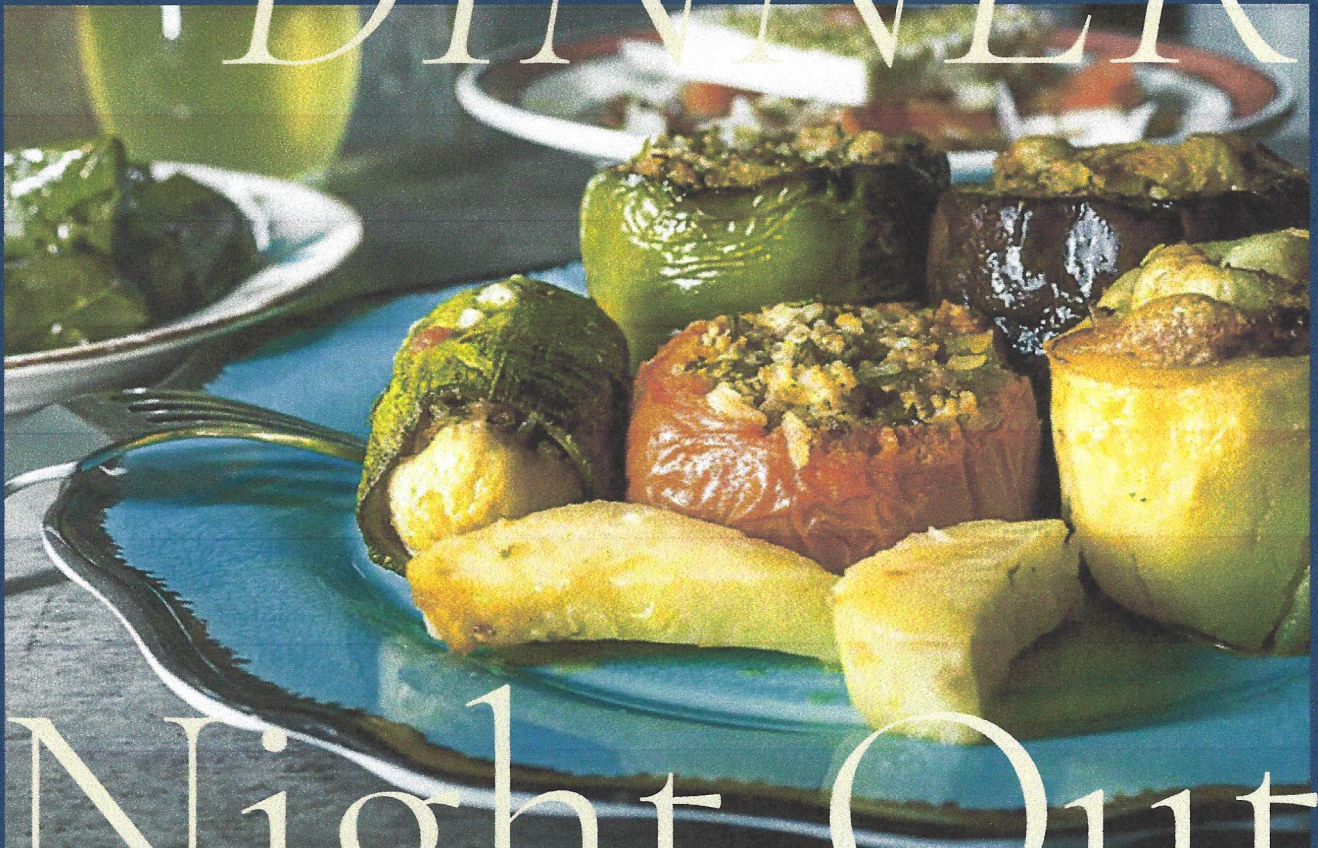


**"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."  
- Matthew 19:14**



SEPTEMBER 30th 2023

# DINNER



# Night Out

*AHEPA Chapter 528 invites you*

Please, join us for a dinner night out  
cooked by your local AHEPA Chapter 528 brothers.  
Vegetarian Yemista with traditional sides  
Donation of \$25.00 requested, beer and wine available  
At St. George Church, Palm Desert, CA. Seating at 5:30pm



**\$25**

[ahepa528.org](http://ahepa528.org)

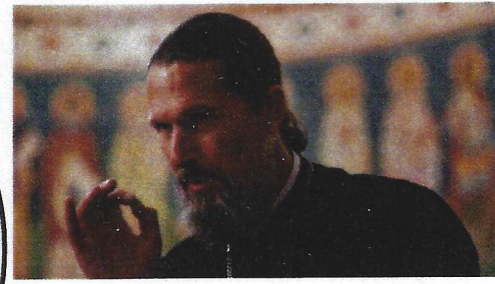
RSVP at [contact@ahepa28.org](mailto:contact@ahepa28.org) / Bill Rellos Chair; 818.371.7995  
Chapter 528 President, Wynn Storton; 760.832.2825

**All proceeds benefit AHEPA Scholarships and Philanthropic projects**





**“THE  
THEOTOKOS,  
THE MOTHER  
OF THE LIGHT”**



Father Josiah Trenham is the Pastor of St. Andrew Antiochian Orthodox Church, Riverside, California and he is the founder and director of Patristic Nectar Publications.

**ST. GEORGE  
FALL SPIRITUAL RETREAT  
Saturday, October 28, 2023  
Father Josiah Trenham, Guest Speaker  
10:00 a.m.—2:30 p.m.  
St. George Greek Orthodox Church  
74-109 Larrea Street  
Palm Desert, California 92260  
At will donation: \$15.00 (Lunch included)**

R.S.V. P. to: St. George Fall Spiritual Retreat:  
St. George Greek Orthodox Church  
74-109 Larrea St.  
Palm Desert, California 92260

Telephone; (760) 568-9901/ email: [pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com)

Or, contact Fr. Theodore Pantels, pastor, St. George Greek Orthodox Church:  
Telephone: (760) 880-5869