



FEBRUARY 26, 2023

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— Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

GOSPEL— St. Matthew 6:14-21

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

**FORGIVENESS SUNDAY**— Today is the last Sunday before the beginning of the Great Lenten season. For Orthodox Christians Great Lent begins tomorrow. The Greek word for forgiveness means "sharing the same space." The Greek word "syn-choroh" is a compound word—"syn" means "together," and "choron" means "space." As we dedicate ourselves to following Christ in His ministry and Self-sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins, we look forward to being with Him in His Everlasting Kingdom, which He opened for us by conquering death by His own death and by His Resurrection from the dead. Since Christ's ministry a ministry of forgiveness, forgiveness is the key to being with Christ both in this present life and in the next. +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 φαιδρὸν της αναστάσεως...

2) "Since you are a deliverer of captives..." [Hymn of St. George]/Ως των αιχμαλώτων ελευθερωτής...

3) **Kontakion:** "O Master, Prudence, Guide of Wisdom, Instruction to the foolish and Defender of the poor, strengthen my heart and grant it discernment. Give me words, Word of the Father, for behold, I shall not keep my lips from crying out to You, 'O Merciful One, have mercy on me who have fallen.'" /Της σοφίας οδηγή...

#### WHERE DOES FORGIVENESS COME FROM?

Today's Gospel passage speaks about three parts to our spiritual life: 1) the status of our heart; 2) the proper attitude toward prayer and fasting, and, 3) the gift of forgiveness.

Our Lord tells us that where we seek treasures is where we have our heart. Spiritually, our "heart" is the source from which our attentions and intentions are formed. Depending what we have in our heart, prayer and fasting can be either fruitful, or meaningless. Praying and fasting in order for others to praise us is motivated by our desire for glory and power. Praying in secret with God yields gratitude, love and wisdom, from which the blessing of forgiveness sprouts. In this, we participate in God's great mercy and we can be merciful others like God is merciful.

Experiencing the mercy of our Lord and Savior means that we were created to be able to forgive others just as God forgives us and others. In turn, forgiveness yields gratitude to our Lord, which we can show by loving God and others. Our ability to forgive ourselves and others is directly related to our love for God. Therefore, if we find it difficult to forgive, we should fear that our souls are not in good order in the presence of Christ our God. Thus, we must pray He will ignite within us His Divine love and wisdom so that we can forgive others and live according to the exclamation given to us by the priest or bishop during the Divine Liturgy with the words, "Peace be to all! +FR. THEODORE

Η σημερινή Ευαγγελική περικοπή ομιλά για τρεις παράγοντες της πνευματικής μας ζωής: 1) την κατάσταση της καρδιάς μας. 2) τη σωστή στάση απέναντι στην προσευχή και τη νηστεία και, 3) το χάρισμα της συγχωρήσεως.

Ο Χριστός μας λέει ότι όπου αναζητούμε τους θησαυρούς μας, εκεί έχουμε και την καρδιά μας. Στην πνευματική μας ζωή, η «καρδιά» μας είναι η πηγή από την οποία διαμορφώνονται η προσοχή και οι προθέσεις μας. Ανάλογα με το τι έχουμε στην καρδιά μας, είναι πιθανό η προσευχή και η νηστεία μας ως καρποφόρες, από τη μιά μεριά, ή ως άνευ σημασίας, από την άλλη. Το να κάνουμε προσευχή και νηστεία για να μας επαινούν οι άλλοι υποκινείται από την επιθυμία μας για δόξες και εξουσίες. Η προσευχή «εν τω κρυπτῷ» με τον Θεό αποδίδει ευγνωμοσύνη, αγάπη και σοφία, από τα οποία εκφύεται η ευλογία της συγχωρήσεως. Σε αυτό, συμμετέχουμε στο μεγάλο έλεος του Θεού και μπορούμε να είμεθα ελεήμονες με άλλους όπως είναι ο Θεός.

Το να βιώνουμε το έλεος του Χριστού σημαίνει ότι δημιουργηθήκαμε για να μπορούμε να συγχωρούμε τους άλλους όπως ο Θεός συγχωρεί εμάς και τους άλλους. Με τη σειρά της, η συγχώρεση αποδίδει ευγνωμοσύνη στον Θεό, που μπορούμε να δείξουμε αγαπώντας τον Θεό και τους άλλους. Η ικανότητά μας για να συγχωρούμε τον εαυτό μας και τους άλλους σχετίζεται άμεσα με την αγάπη μας για τον Θεό. Επομένως, εάν δυσκολευόμαστε να συγχωρήσουμε τους άλλους, μπορεί να υπάρχει φόβος πως μήπως η ψυχή μας δεν είναι σε καλή κατάσταση ενώπιον του Χριστού. Για αυτό, πρέπει να προσευχόμεθα να ανάψει μέσα μας τη Θεϊκή Του αγάπη και σοφία, ώστε να συγχωρήσουμε τους άλλους και να ζήσουμε σύμφωνα με την εκφώνηση του ιερέως ή του επισκόπου κατά τη Θείαν Λειτουργίαν με τα λόγια: «Ειρήνη πάσι!» +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

## WEEKDAY CALENDAR

- Monday, February 27th.....GREAT LENT BEGINS. Lenten Service-9:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, February 28th.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, March 1st.....PRESANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGY – 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, March 3rd.....PRESANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGY – 9:00 a.m.  
Salutations – First Stanza – 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, March 4th.....SATURDAY OF SOULS  
Orthros -8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy -9:30 a.m.
- Sunday, March 5th.....SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY  
Orthros -8:30 a.m./ Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m. / Procession with the Icons – 9:45 a.m.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **ST. GEORGE GREEK FESTIVAL** – Our Festival Chairman, George Argyros, along with our Parish Council, Fr. Ted and Deacon Euthym express great gratitude to all of our parishioners who rose to the occasion to offer valuable help toward the tremendous success of this year’s St. George Greek Festival. Many blessings to all!
- **SUNDAY SCHOOL** -- Please join us for **FAMILY SUNDAY** on **Sunday, February 26th**, with the theme being, Preparation for Great Lent. Topics will include: explanation of prayers of the Vespers for Forgiveness Sunday; the meaning of fasting during Lent. Parents are encouraged to join.  
  
On **Sunday, March 5th**, our students will participate in the Blessing of the Waters Service (“Agiasmo”) along with their parents.  
  
On **Sunday, March 12th**, Mrs. Mary Brown, will be presenting The Passion of Christ Iconography.
- **PHILOPTOCHOS**- Our annual **Ladies Philoptochos Chapter Membership event** is planned for **Saturday, March 11, 2023 at 11:30 am in the church hall**. Our theme this year is “Membership & Aloha”. This event is **open to both men & women** in our community wishing to join our chapter for the 2023 year. If you plan on attending, the **RSVP deadline is Friday, March 3rd**. Please respond to **President Rhonda Latkovic** via phone, text, or email by the deadline. tel. (714) 875-4661 email: [r.s.fleminglatkovic@gmail.com](mailto:r.s.fleminglatkovic@gmail.com).
- **AHEPA** - Our AHEPA Chapter 528 is accepting student applications for the **AHEPA 528 Fr. T. P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship**. **Applications are due by April 2nd**. Please see our AHEPA 528 website at [ahepa528.org](http://ahepa528.org) to download a copy of the application and to learn the details surrounding the awarding of scholarships to those who are attending college. Scholarships will be announced and delivered on May 21st - AHEPA Sunday.
- **PARISH LENTEN RETREAT** - Please circle the date: **Saturday, March 18, 2023** in order to join us for our annual **St. George Parish Lenten Retreat**. Fr. Steven Tschlis, pastor of St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church and author of the pamphlet entitled “Worshiper’s Guide to the Divine Liturgy,” will be the speaker for this Retreat. Please see the enclosed flyer!
- **BOOK STORE** - Newly ordered **Akathist Hymn Books** and **Holy Week Books** are now available in our parish book store for those who still want to prepare for the Friday evening Salutation Services during Lent and for Holy Week - April 9-16th.

**St. George Greek Orthodox Church's  
2023 Lenten Retreat**

# Living the Liturgy

with

**Father Steven Tsihchlis**

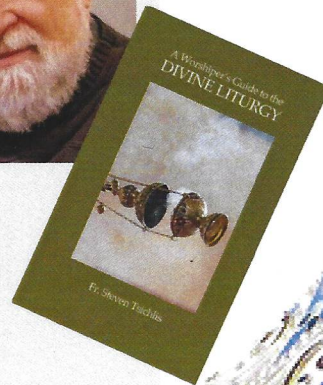
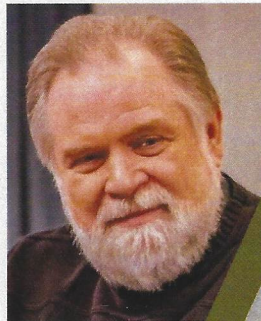
Pastor of St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church, Irvine, CA

Author of *A Worshiper's Guide to the Divine Liturgy*

**Saturday, March 18**

10:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Lenten Lunch Included



**Session 1**

10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

"The Lord's Table: How Our  
Participation in Liturgy Impacts  
Our Lives"

**Session 2**

1:00 - 2:30 PM

"Living the Liturgy: Eating and Drinking  
the Lord Jesus"



A freewill  
donation of  
\$10  
is appreciated

**To Register:**

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