



SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

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

Mailing Address:

74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, CA.92260
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

SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



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

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.

GOSPEL– St. John. 3:13-17

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 NATIVITY OF THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD - Sts. Joachim and Anna, were childless for many years. Yet, they remained faithful to God, and prayed fervently for God to bless them with a child. As they prayed, Anna promised to offer her child as a gift to the Lord. In answer to their prayer, Anna gave birth to a daughter, Mary. The Liturgical celebration of this event, which was observed on September 8th, ends with today's Divine Liturgy.

THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS - At the same time, with today's Divine Liturgy, we prepare our souls to embrace the Holy Cross of our Lord, which was recovered by St. Constantine's mother, St. Helen, and restored to the Church, being raised up high so that the faithful could venerate It. As they venerated the Cross, they chanted "Lord, have mercy" repeatedly. On September 14th, this event is commemorated as the "Exaltation of the Holy Cross." +FR. THEODORE

Liturgical Notes for Today

At the Entrance of the Gospel: 1) *“O Faithful, let us sing a hymn of praise and worship to the Logos Who is co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, Who was born of the Virgin for our salvation. Of His own Will, He went upon the Cross in the flesh and suffered death, to raise the dead through His glorious Resurrection.”/Τον Συνάναρχον Λογον...*

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...*

3) *“Since You are a deliverer of captives...”/Ως των αιχμαλώτων ελευθεροτής...[Hymn for St. George]*

4) **Kontakion:** *“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 ονειδισμού...*

THE LARGE LETTERS OF THE BIBLE

The Israelites in St. Paul’s time observed the religious practice of circumcision as only a formality. However, St. Paul used “large letters” in writing to the Galatians in order to emphasize that, with Christ, the things we do and say are no longer matters of formality, but they have eternal implications, since, in Christ, our personalities gradually transform into living expressions of Divine Love – we become a new creation.

In anything we do, whether it is repentance, worship, or work, it doesn’t count if it is done with the motive of making sure we only follow the formalities, devoid of meaning and purpose. Repentance does not exist so that others can be impressed with our remorse for something gone wrong, but which (as is so common today) is “not really our fault.” The Divine Liturgy, the central point of our worship as Orthodox Christians, does not exist so that people can be impressed with the priest, deacon, hierarch, chanters, or choir, as if it’s a theater performance. Repentance and worship are given to us by our Savior so that we can unite ourselves with His love, finding peace in our hearts and strength to offer meaningful care for others in Christ’s Name.

In today’s Gospel passage we heard that God gave His Only-Begotten Son not so that we can be judged, but so that we can be saved. The only judgment that we face from our Savior is that which validates our own decision as to whether or not we want to be saved. If we do not want to repent of anything at all, or offer sincere humble worship to Christ, the question remains as to whether we want to be saved, or to just “go through the motions” for some other reasons, as in the case of the Israelites of St. Paul’s time.

+ FR. THEODORE

Οι Ισραηλίτες κατά την εποχή του Αγίου Παύλου τηρούσαν τη θρησκευτική τάξη της περιτομής ως απλώς μια τυπική διαδικασία. Ωστόσο, ο Άγιος Παύλος χρησιμοποίησε «μεγάλα γράμματα» καθώς έγραψε στους Γαλάτες για να τονίσει ότι αυτά που κάνουμε και λέμε δεν είναι πλέον τυπικά, αλλά έχουν αιώνια σημασία λόγω του γεγονότος ότι, εν Χριστώ, οι προσωπικότητές μας μεταβάλλονται σταδιακά σε ζωντανές εκφράσεις της Θείας Αγάπης ώστε να είμεθα μία νέα δημιουργία.

Σε οτιδήποτε κάνουμε, είτε είναι μετάνοια, λατρεία, ή εργασία, δεν μετράει αν γίνεται με το κίνητρο να βεβαιωθούμε ότι ακολουθούμε μόνο τις τυπικές διαδικασίες, όμως χωρίς θεϊκό νόημα και σκοπό. Η μετάνοια δεν υπάρχει για να εντυπωσιασθούν οι άλλοι με τις τήψεις μας για κάτι που επήγε στραβά, αλλά που (όπως συνηθίζεται σήμερα) «δεν είναι πραγματικά δικό μας λάθος». Η Θεία Λειτουργία, η κεντρική ακολουθία της λατρείας των Ορθοδόξων Χριστιανών, δεν υπάρχει για να εντυπωσιασθούν όλοι με τον ιερέα, τον διάκονο, τον ιεράρχη, τους ψάλτες ή τη χορωδία, σαν πως κάνουμε θέατρο. Η

Συνέχεια στην επόμενη σελίδα – – – – >

μετάνοια και η λατρεία δίνονται από τον Σωτήρα μας για να μπορούμε να ενωθούμε με την αγάπη Του, ευρίσκοντας ειρήνη στις καρδιές μας και δύναμη για να προσφέρουμε ουσιαστική βοήθεια και υποστήριξη προς σωτηριανών των άλλων εις το Όνομα του Χριστού.

Στη σημερινή περικοπή του Ευαγγελίου ακούσαμε ότι ο Θεός απέστειλε τον Μονογενή Του Υιό όχι για να κριθούμε, αλλά για να σωθούμε. Η μόνη κρίση που αντιμετωπίζουμε από τον Σωτήρα μας είναι αυτή που επικυρώνει τη δική μας απόφαση περί του εάν θέλουμε ή όχι να σωθούμε. Αν δεν θέλουμε να μετανοήσουμε καθόλου ή να προσφέρουμε ειλικρινή και ταπεινή λατρεία στον Χριστό, το ερώτημα παραμένει αν θέλουμε να σωθούμε, ή απλώς να τηρήσουμε τυπικότητες για επίδειξη, όπως στην περίπτωση των Ισραηλιτών κατά την εποχή του Αγίου Παύλου.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

- Today.....Blessing of the Waters Service (Agiasmo) on the occasion of the Beginning of the Sunday School Year: 2023-2024
- Tuesday, September 12th.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m.
AHEPA Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 13th....Group viewing of “My Big Fat Greek Wedding-3” at the Pickford Theater in Cathedral City – 5:00 p.m.
- Thursday, September 14th.....EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS & HOLY CROSS (Fasting day)
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
- Sunday, September 17th..... “Bell Ringing Ceremony” marking the Signing of the U.S. Constitution – 1:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **SUNDAY SCHOOL** classes for 2023-2024 begin **today!**
- **PHILOPTOCHOS** – Join the members of our Philoptochos for a private group viewing at the **Pickford Theater on September 13th of “My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3” at 5:00 p.m.** It’s \$20 to join, proceeds going to the support of our Philoptochos ministries. The \$20 include the movie, refreshments and popcorn! See the enclosed flyer!
- **AHEPA** – Post **Saturday, September 30, 2023** on your calendars and plan to attend the **AHEPA “Dinner Night Out.”** Proceeds to benefit AHEPA scholarships and philanthropic efforts.
- **ST. GEORGE “BELLS ACROSS AMERICA EVENT”** – On **Sunday, September 17th**, we will mark the 236th anniversary of the Signing of the United States Constitution which is commemorated annually by the **“Ring of the Bells” across America at 1:00 PM (PST)**. Our St. George Church was chosen as the location for this year’s bell ringing event sponsored by the **Daughters of the American Revolution** local Cahuilla Chapter, of which two of our St. George parishioners are members! We are honored to have this event at our parish in recognition of the fact that **the foundations of our American Constitution & Democracy were laid by our ancient Greek ancestors!** Also to let you know, **Mayor Kathleen Kelly is planning to attend the Bell Ringing** event as of now unless something comes up. We invite our St. George family to participate! See the attached flyer!

Continued on the next page – – – –>

ANNOUNCEMENTS, Continued

- **2024 ST. GEORGE GREEK FESTIVAL MEETING** – Our first **planning meeting for our Greek Festival**, scheduled for **February 17-18, 2024**, will be held on **Monday, September 25th at 4:00 p.m.** at our church. Everyone is invited!
- **SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, October 14, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. "PAINT EL PASEO PINK!"** More details to follow.

OCTOBER SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

The following is being scheduled during the month of October this year, 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 11th, at 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 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. Questions and Answers to follow at 2:00 p.m. Plan to join us! See enclosed flyer!



2024

GREEK FESTIVAL
MEETING

Monday

September 25th, 2023

At

Our parish hall

At

4:00 p.m.



**“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

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

together with GOD

Lesson 3

The Cross



God our Father sent His Son Jesus Christ
Jesus came to live with us.
Jesus showed us how to obey God.
Jesus came to bring us
to God our Father.
Jesus loved us very much.

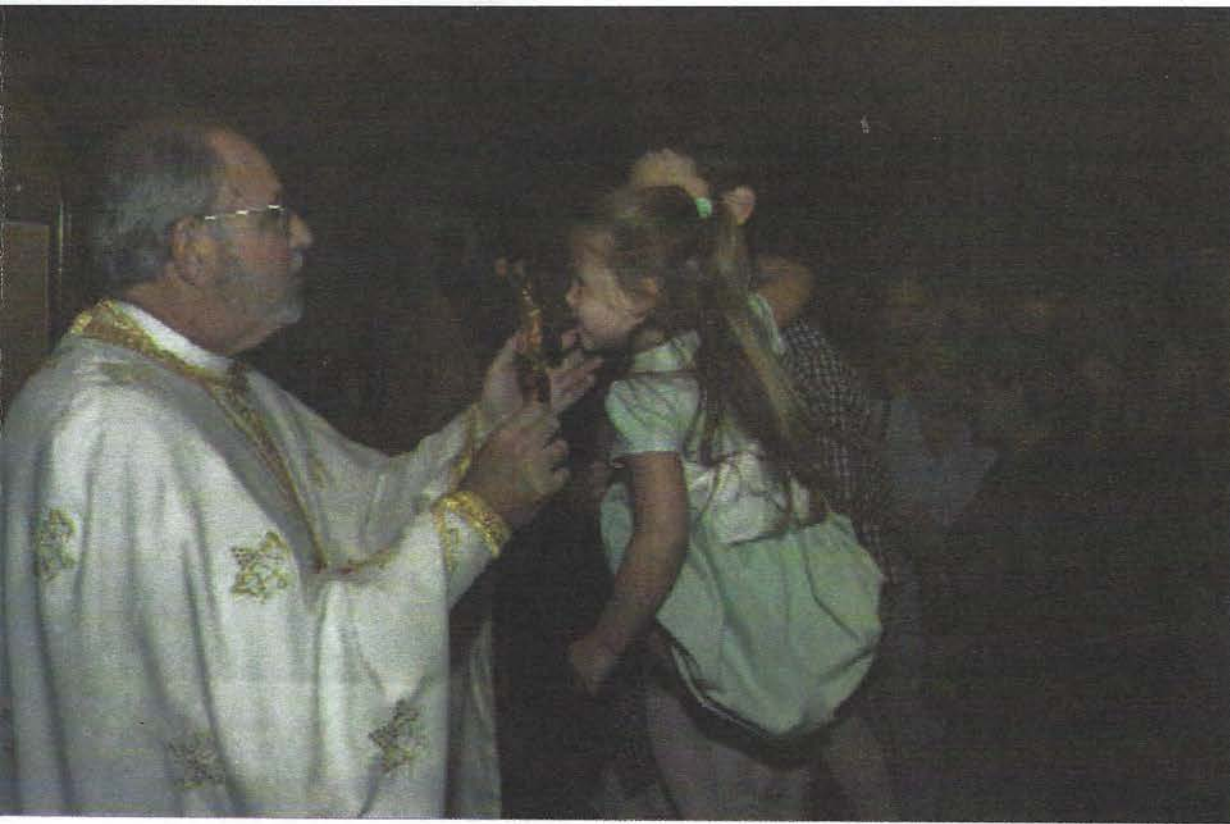
Jesus died on a cross, so that we could come to see God and live with Him. Whenever we see a Cross, we remember how God sent His Son Jesus to us.

We put crosses on church buildings.



We wear crosses around our necks.



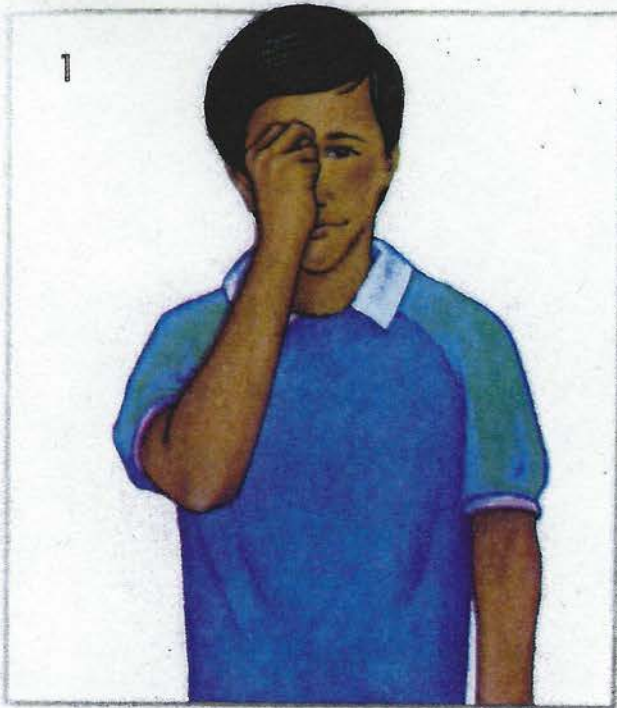


We kiss the Cross.

We bow down before the Cross and
we sing a special song about the Cross:

Before Thy cross,
we bow down
in worship
O Master,
And Thy Holy
Resurrection
we glorify.





It helps us to think about **Jesus**.



To make the Sign of the Cross, we use our right hand and press the thumb together with the two first fingers. This represents the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The other two fingers represent the two natures of Christ – being God *and* Man.



Paint El Paseo Pink is a beloved community walk that takes place on Oct. 14th to help raise awareness for breast cancer and to raise much needed funds for Desert Cancer Foundation (DCF). Your support and all funds raised will help provide for residents who need financial assistance with cancer care and treatment.

Saturday, October 14th

Please join our Saint George Team to support cancer care treatment through Desert Cancer Foundation's annual "Pink Walk" and celebrate our **6th year** of participation!

\$35 Donation

Registration closes Oct. 8th

(Event Tee shirts will be distributed a few days prior to the walk.)

You can register directly through this link:

<https://www.paintelpaseopink.org/join-a-team/saint-george-2023>

OR

Donate \$35 directly to Philoptochos and we will register you.
(Indicate tee shirt size wanted.)

Bells Across America Event!



*You're invited to help us celebrate the 236th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution!
Please join us in the annual Bells Across America bell ringing event to kick off Constitution Week
on Sunday, September 17th, 1:00 PM!*

Refreshments and light snacks will be served after the bell ringing!

Location:

*St. George Greek Orthodox Church
74109 Larrea St.
Palm Desert, CA*



Bell Tower



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

RSVP at 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