



APRIL 7, 2024

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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- Fr. Theodore Pantels, M.Div. Proistamenos (Pastor)
- Deacon Euthym Kon-taxis, M.D. ,M.Div.

Holy Communion Or-der

- 1. Please remain standing while following the direc-tions of our ushers.
2. Ladies, kindly re-move lipstick be-fore receiving.
3. When receiving Holy Communion, make the Sign of the Cross, state your name (baptismal name) , and naturally re-ceive as if being fed.
4. Non-Orthodox Christians may not receive Holy Com-munion, but they may receive the Holy Bread at the end of the service.
5. All Orthodox Chris-tians must be spirit-ually prepared to receive the Sacra-ment of Holy Com-munion. Please see the priest if you have any questions.

THE LADDER

SUNDAY OF THE VENERATION 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- Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6

Brethren, since we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was

appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

GOSPEL -St. Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

SUNDAY OF THE VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

With the help of God, we have almost reached the middle of the course of the Fast, where our strength has been worn down through abstinence, and the full difficulty of the labour set before us becomes apparent. Therefore our Holy Mother, the Church of Christ, now brings to our help the all-holy Cross, the joy of the world, the strength of the faithful, the staff of the just, and the hope of sinners, so that by venerating it reverently, we might receive strength and grace to complete the divine struggle of the Fast.

- Taken from our Archdiocese website: www.goarch.org

Liturgical Notes for Today

Instead of “Holy God, Holy Mighty...” (“Aghios o Theos, Aghios Ischyros...”), we chant the following: *“We venerate Your Cross, O Christ, and Your Holy Resurrection we praise and glorify.”*/Τον Σταυρόν Σου προσκυνούμεν, Δέσποτα...

With the Entrance with the Gospel: 1) *“Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord, by His Mighty Arm, has created a Dominion. He has conquered death by death, and become the firstborn of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of Hades and has granted the world great mercy.”*/Ευφραινέσθω τα ουράνια...

2) *“Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance, granting Your rulers to prevail over adversaries and protecting Your commonwealth by Your Holy Cross.”*/Σώσον Κύριε τον λαόν Σου...

3) *“Since You are a deliverer of captives and a protector of the poor; a physician for the sick; a noble attendant to kings, O Great among the martyrs and glorious George, intercede with Christ God that He may save our souls.”*/Hymn for St. George

4) **Kontakion:** *“To You, Theotokos, invincible Defender, having been delivered from peril, I, Your city, dedicate the victory festival as a thank offering. In Your irresistible might, keep me safe from all trials, that I may call out to You: ‘Hail, Unwedded Bride.’”*/Τη Υπερμάχω...

SERVICE OF THE VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

After Holy Communion is imparted to the faithful, set on a tray, the Cross, surrounded by flowers (or sweet basil) and adorned with three lit tapers is placed on the Holy Table. As the choir begins the slow processional chant of “Holy God” the priest censens the Cross. Then, he lifts the tray to eye level and exits the sanctuary from the north door. The deacon precedes him, walking backwards and censens the Cross. The acolytes lead as the procession proceeds down the side aisles, circling the Church and ending at the Soleas where all assume their customary places. The priest circles the table before him three times. Standing in the center (facing the Altar) he lifts the tray with the Cross high above his head and says:

“Wisdom! Arise!”

He then places the Cross and tray on the table and circles it while censens and chanting:

“O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Grant victory to the faithful over their adversaries and protect You commonwealth by Your Holy Cross.”

The hymn is repeated by the choir or chanters twice.

The priest venerates the Holy Cross and then chants:

“We venerate Your Cross, O Christ, and Your Holy Resurrection we praise and glorify.” This is repeated by the choir or chanters twice.

The flowers are given to the faithful after the dismissal.

THE CROSS OF OUR SAVIOR BECOMES OUR CROSS TO CARRY

“Lent is our self-crucifixion, our experience, limited as it is, of Christ’s commandment heard in the Gospel lesson... ‘If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.’ (Mark 8:34). But we cannot take up our cross and follow Christ unless we have His Cross which He took up in order to save us. It is His Cross, not ours, that saves us. It is His Cross that gives not only meaning, but power to others. This is explained to us in the synaxarion of the Sunday of the Cross: ‘...The Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is the tree that was planted in Paradise, and for this reason our fathers have planted it in the midst of Holy Lent, remembering both Adam’s bliss and how he was deprived of it, remembering also that partaking of this Tree we no longer die but are kept alive.’”

– Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, *Great Lent: Journey to Pascha*, St. Vladimir Seminary Press, pgs. 76-77.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, April 8th.....Philoptochos General Meeting – 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, April 9th.....Bible Study (with Online Orthodox Catechism on Zoom) -10:00 a.m.
AHEPA Meeting-6:30 p.m

Wednesday, April 10th.....PRESANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGY – 6:00 p.m.

Friday, April 12th.....PRESANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGY – 9:00 a.m.
SALUTATION SERVICE (Fourth Stanza) - 6:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**SUNDAY SCHOOL - Next Sunday, April 14th is a Special School class for our students:
"Preparing for Pascha."**

PHILOPTOCHOS – General Members' Meeting- Tomorrow, Monday, April 8th with lunch served. Special presentation by **Mary Brown** entitled, **"Icons of the Panagia"** at **12:00 noon**. Also note: The **Metropolis Philoptochos Kids-n-Cancer event** will be held next **Sunday, April 14, 2024** at Newport Beach Country Club (\$100 per person). Contact **Rhonda Latkovic** for information.

BOOKSTORE - Now available: *The Akathist Hymn* (for Friday Salutation services) & *Services for Holy Week and Easter*. (Narthex Press Publications).

GOLF TOURNAMENT - Saturday, May 18th at 12:15 p.m. at Eldorado Country Club.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS FOR WORSHIP - Lessons are available to learn to prepare Altar Bread (Prosforo), Kollyva (boiled wheat) & "The Five Loaves" (Artoklasia). Contact our office to sign up.

PRAYER REQUESTS - Call Fr. Ted at (760) 880-5869. Please pray for: Evangelia, Nancy, Ann, Diane, Bess, Tanya, Michael, Mary, Athanasios, Nicholas.



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
ARCHEPISCOPAL & SYNODICAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 79/2024

Archepiscopal & Synodical Encyclical for the Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross

April 7, 2024

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

Καὶ τὰ φύλλα τοῦ ἔϋλου εἰς θεραπείαν τῶν ἐθνῶν. (Ἀποκάλυψις 22:2)
And the leaves of the Tree were for the healing of the Nations. (Revelation 22:2)

Beloved sisters and brothers in Christ,

In the midway point of the Holy Lent, we arrive at the oasis of the Sunday of the Veneration of
Continued on the next page -->



ARCHEPISCOPAL & SYNODICAL ENCYCLICAL, Continued

the Holy Cross. Now the Tree of the Cross overshadows us with its healing leaves and fruits, and the flowers with which we adorn It in the Divine Service reflect Its lively glory. The Cross, once an instrument of suffering and death, has become the Tree of Eternal Life, and we are invited to share in Its mission of redemption and salvation. It is because of this mission that the Holy Eparchial Synod has decided that an Encyclical should be issued every year for Feast of the Veneration of the Holy Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord calls each and every one of us to pick up our own cross and follow Him, to walk the path of self-sacrificial love that led Him to Golgotha and to the Garden Tomb. This invitation is for every Christian, whether we have fully understand that call or not. Those who aspire to the Holy Priesthood through the laying on of hands often tell of hearing a distinct calling, which is named a “vocation.” They feel they are being summoned to serve Christ and His Church as clergy, and so they work with their local priest and Hierarch, and find their way to our beloved Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology, to pursue studies that lead to ordination. We should all encourage this noble and indeed sacred pursuit, and fill Hellenic College and Holy Cross with candidates to serve the future generations of our Church in America.

In this season of the Great Lent, when our fasting is to be augmented by almsgiving, let us all strive to dedicate an offering to our beloved Theological School, and give tangible, financial support to those who are answering the call of the Lord in their very specific mission. Those who choose to take up the cross of service in the Holy Priesthood – whether they are called to be Deacons, Presbyters, or Hierarchs – are called to a lifelong sacrifice of their will, and they surely merit our support and our appreciation.

Therefore, let us answer the call of the Lord today as best as we are able, and enter into the oasis of the Veneration of the Holy Cross. There, we will find refreshment and healing from the Tree of Eternal Life, and find the strength to continue our Lenten journey to the Great and Holy Pascha.

With paternal love in Christ,
†ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America

Methodios Metropolitan of Boston

Alexios Metropolitan of Atlanta

Nicholas Metropolitan of Detroit

Savas Metropolitan of Pittsburgh

Gerasimos Metropolitan of San Francisco

Apostolos Metropolitan of New Jersey

Nathanael Metropolitan of Chicago

SAINT GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH GOLF TOURNAMENT

Saturday, May 18, 2024 | 12:15pm Shotgun Start | Eldorado Country Club



ENTRY INFORMATION

Saturday, May 18, 2024

- \$185 per player (includes Golf and Awards Dinner)
- 12:15 PM Shotgun Start at Eldorado Country Club
- 5:00 PM Social Hour at St. George Greek Orthodox Church
- 6:00 PM Traditional Greek Dinner at St. George Greek Orthodox Church | Silent Action and Live Music

ENTRY INFORMATION

- Individual Player(s) ____ (# of players) x \$185 \$ _____
- Tee Sponsorship(s) ____ (# of sponsorships) x \$100 \$ _____
- Traditional Greek Dinner ____ (# of dinners) x \$50 \$ _____
- Donation \$ _____
- Total Amount \$ _____**

CREDIT CARD (please mark one) VISA MASTER CARD

ACCOUNT NUMBER: _____

EXP. DATE: ____/____ 3-DIGIT SECURITY NO: _____

CARD HOLDER NAME: _____

BILLING ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: (____) _____-____ FAX: (____) _____-____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

EVENT REGISTRATION

Name _____

Company/Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

PLAYER NAMES

1. _____ INDEX _____

2. _____ INDEX _____

3. _____ INDEX _____

4. _____ INDEX _____

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MONDAY, MAY 6, 2024

Sign up online at www.go-stgeorge.org/Events/Golf/

Mail Checks and Registration Form to:
74109 Larrea Street | Palm Desert, CA | 92260

Make Checks Payable To:
"Saint George Greek Orthodox Church"