



FEBRUARY 18, 2024

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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Palm Desert, California 92260

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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 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 — 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; 7:1

Brethren, you are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.

GOSPEL—St. Matthew 15:21-28

At that time, Jesus went to the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon.” But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, “Send her away, for she is crying after us.” He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” And he answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

ST. LEO, POPE OF ROME – The Church of Rome was established by the First Ecumenical Council in 325 A.D. as one of the five Apostolic Patriarchates of the Christian Church – Rome, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria. All of the Patriarchs at that time were of the same Apostolic Faith. Thus, St. Leo who was Pope of Rome from 440-461 A.D., is one of our most important Orthodox Christian bishops. The title “Pope” is from the Latin word for “father.”

St. Leo wrote a theological treatise, known as the “Tome of Leo” confirming the Apostolic understanding that Christ is One Person Who is fully Man and fully God. His treatise was read at the 4th Ecumenical Council in 451 A.D. inspiring the entire Orthodox Christian Church to declare as doctrine that Christ is of two natures, divine and human, united in One Person.

+FR. THEODORE

Liturgical Notes for Today

With the Entrance with the Gospel: 1) *"The women disciples of the Lord heard from the an-gel 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 φαίδρον...

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

3) **Kontakion:** *"Champion of Christians not put to shame, advocate before the Maker always steadfast, do not spurn sinners' voices raised in prayer. In Your goodness respond to bring help to us who devoutly petition you. Hasten Your intercession and urgently make entreaty; for You unfailingly defend, Theotokos, those who honor You."*/Προστασία των Χριστιανών...

HUMILITY BEFORE GOD

The Canaanite Woman did not belong in the crowd that followed our Savior. Being a Canaanite, she was clearly not one of God's Chosen People. Although she was an outsider, she called out to Him, with words describing Him as being the Messiah, using the words that the Israelites would use to refer to the Messiah: *"Lord, Son of David."* Her faith remained strong even when tested by our Lord, Who referred to her as a *"little dog."* With faith, she said, *"Yes, Lord, but even the little dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."* Her reference to *"crumbs"* coincides with the fact that, through the Holy Spirit, bread becomes the Body of Christ Himself during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Like her, we are to approach our Lord with humility (which is what is meant by the words *"with the fear of God..."*). Like her, we are to also approach with faith and with love.

Humility before God means that we acknowledge the fact that Jesus Christ is the True God and our Savior. Without such humility, we fall into many deceptions and temptations, leading to our *"normal"* activity of discounting the blessings that we do have and making even worse the difficulties that come to us from an imperfect world, often influenced by evil forces.

Like so many other incidents in our Lord's ministry, the circumstance surrounding the Canaanite Woman's demon-possessed daughter was an opportunity for all of humanity to understand that Christ is God and that all people are God's people, regardless of origin or nationality. Indeed, as God, He takes our difficulties and illnesses upon Himself giving us the opportunity, through His love for us, inspire others with our faith. This is the lesson that we have come to understand today from the incident regarding the Canaanite Woman. Like with the Canaanite Woman, many of our circumstances are opportunities for us to inspire others as we turn to Christ our God with humility, faith and love. +FR. THEODORE

Η Χαναναία δεν ανήκε στο πλήθος που ακολουθούσε τον Χριστό. Ως Χαναναία, μάλιστα, δεν ήταν μία εκ των «Εκλεκτών» του Θεού. Εάν και ήταν ξένη, ανεγνώρισε τον Χριστόν πως να είναι ο Μεσσίας, χρησιμοποιώντας τις λέξεις που θα χρησιμοποιούσαν οι Ισραηλίτες σε σχέση με τον Μεσσία: «Κύριε, Υιέ του Δαβίδ». Η πίστις της επαρέμεινε ισχυρή ακόμη και όταν εδοκιμάσθηκε από τον Κύριο, ο Οποίος ανέφερε την ιδέα πως αυτή ήταν σαν ένα «σκυλάκι». Με πίστη, είπε: «Ναι, Κύριε, και γαρ τα κυνάρια εσθίει από των ψιχίων των πιπτόντων από της τραπέζης των κυρίων αυτών.» Η χρήση της λέξεως της «των ψιχίων» συμπίπτει με την πραγματικότητα ότι, διά μέσου του Αγίου Πνεύματος, ο άρτος γίνεται το Σώμα του Ίδιου του Χριστού κατά την εκτέλεση της Θ. Λειτουργίας. Όπως αυτή, έτσι και εμείς πρέπει να πλησιάσουμε τον Χριστόν με ταπεινώση (η ταπεινώσις εννοείται με τις λέξεις «μετά φόβου Θεού...»). Όπως έκανε και αυτή, έτσι και εμείς πρέπει να προσεγγίσουμε τον Χριστό με πίστη και αγάπη.

Η Ταπεινώσις ενώπιον του Θεού σημαίνει ότι αναγνωρίζουμε την πραγματικότητα ότι ο Χριστός είναι ο Αληθινός Θεός. Χωρίς τέτοια ταπεινοφροσύνη, πέφτουμε σε πολλές απάτες και πειρασμούς,

Συνέχεια στην επόμενη σελίδα – – – >

οδηγώντας στον «συνηθισμένο» μας τρόπο να απορρίπτουμε τις ευλογίες που έχουμε και να κάνουμε ακόμη χειρότερες τις δυσκολίες που μας έρχονται από έναν ατελή κόσμο, συχνά επηρεασμένο από κακές δυνάμεις.

Όπως τόσα άλλα περιστατικά στη διακονία του Κυρίου, η περίστασις γύρω από την δαιμονισμένη κόρη της Χαναναίας ήταν μιά ευκαιρία για όλη την ανθρωπότητα να καταλάβει ότι ο Χριστός είναι Θεός και ότι όλοι οι άνθρωποι είναι άνθρωποι του Θεού, ανεξαρτήτως καταγωγής ή εθνικότητας. Μάλιστα, ως Θεός, αναλαμβάνει τις δυσκολίες μας και τις ασθένειές μας, ώστε να έχουμε την ευκαιρία, διά μέσου της αγάπης Του για εμάς, να εμπνεύσουμε τους άλλους με την πίστη μας. Αυτό είναι το μάθημα από το γεγονός που εγνωρίσαμεν σήμερα περί της Χαναναίας. Όπως και με την Χαναναία, πολλές από τις περιστάσεις μας είναι ευκαιρίες για εμάς να εμπνεύσουμε άλλους καθώς πλησιάζουμε τον Χριστό με ταπείνωση, πίστη και αγάπη.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

MEMORIAL – Today’s Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Peter (Panagiotis) Christopoulos**, the beloved husband of **Anastasia Christopoulos** and father of **Jim Christopoulos** and **Athena Bertucci**. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Rest and Salvation to **Peter (Panagiotis) Christopoulos** and may He grant peace and comfort to **Anastasia Christopoulos, Jim Christopoulos** and **Athena Bertucci** and the entire family. **MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, February 19thFestival Appreciation Dinner – 5:00 p.m.

(Monday, February 19th to Thursday, February 22nd: Take-down from this past St. George Festival.)

Tuesday, February 20th.....Bible Study-10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, February 21st.....Online Orthodox Catechism Class (Zoom) - 6:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **2024 ST. GEORGE GREEK FESTIVAL** – Tomorrow evening our “Festival Appreciation Dinner” will be held at our parish hall at **5:00 p.m.** Also, **beginning tomorrow**, work will begin for **taking down** the furnishings that were put up for our Greek Festival. **Take-down will continue throughout this week, beginning in the mornings at 9:00 a.m.**
- **SUNDAY SCHOOL** – On **Sunday, March 10th** our Sunday School lesson be about Great Lent. On **Sunday, March 24th**, a very special presentation by **Mary Brown**, who has extensively studied Orthodox Christian iconography, will be offered to **Sunday School students, parents and members** of our parish in general during our coffee hour. The presentation will feature the meaning of Orthodox Christian icons.
- **PHILOPTOCHOS** – **Sunday, March 3rd** will be our next “**Paint-n-Sip**” Sunday. Following a brief presentation by **Mary Brown**, **Louka** will guide participants in painting a simple icon of Christ which can be blessed by **Fr. Ted** and used for family prayer. On another note, please **save the date for the Philoptochos Membership Tea and Luncheon on March 9th**. R.S.V.P. by March 1st to Rhonda Latkovic.
- **ST. GEORGE PARISH LENTEN RETREAT** – **Saturday, April 6, 2024**. **Fr. Steven Tsihchlis**, pastor of St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Irvine, California and author of *A Worshiper’s Guide to the Divine Liturgy*. This year, Fr. Steven will offer a detailed explanation of the prayers of the Divine Liturgy will be presented. See the enclosed flier.



St George Ladies Philoptochos invites you to a

Membership Tea & Luncheon

Saturday, March 9

11:30 -2:00 P.M.

St. George Greek Orthodox Church Hall

RSVP By March 1st

Rhonda 714-875-4661



Wear your favorite hat!
Hat Contest ~ Music ~ Raffle



St. George
Greek Orthodox Church's
2024 Lenten Retreat

Living the Liturgy

with

Father Steven Tsichlis

Pastor of St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church, Irvine, CA
Author of *A Worshiper's Guide to the Divine Liturgy*

Saturday, April 6, 2024

10:30 AM – 2:30 PM

Lenten Lunch Included

Session 1

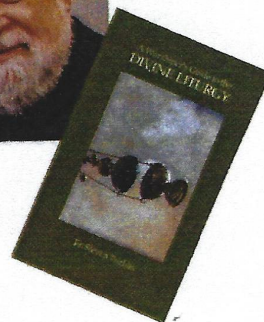
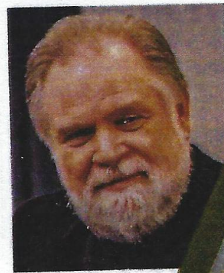
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Liturgy of the Word

Session 2

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Liturgy of the Eucharist



A freewill
donation of
\$10
is appreciated

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