



JANUARY 14, 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 Kontaxis, M.D.,M.Div.

Holy Communion Order

- 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

LEAVE-TAKING OF THEOPHANY



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 -- Ephesian 4:7-13

Brethren, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (in saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

GOSPEL - St. Matthew 4:12-17

At that time, Jesus heard that John had been arrested, He withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth He went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphthali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

“LEAVE-TAKING” OF THE HOLY THEOPHANY – Today is the “Leave-taking” of the celebration of Holy Theophany (Epiphany). As is the case with many feast days of the Orthodox Christian Church, the liturgical celebration of a feast is not necessarily a “one-day” affair. In many cases, the celebration continues for days or weeks following the initial observance of the feast. In the case of Easter (Pascha), for example, the celebration of our Lord’s Resurrection from the dead continues for forty days following the Sunday of the Resurrection. After forty days have passed, the Church “leaves the celebration” behind and moves on to the celebration of the next feast day – the Ascension. This “leaving the celebration” is called “leave-taking” of the Feast, on which some of the hymns of Theophany today are repeated for the last time. +FR. THEODORE

Liturgical Notes for Today

At the Entrance of the Gospel: Instead of "Come let us worship and bow down to Christ... (Δεῦτε προσκυνήσωμεν...), the following is chanted: "Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us. Save us, O Son of God, Who arose from the dead, we sing to You, Alleluia." / Ευλογημένος ο Ερχόμενος εν Ονόματι Κυρίου...

1) **Entrance hymn:** "By Your Cross O Christ our God You destroyed death. You opened Paradise to the thief. You transformed the lament of the myrrh bearing women, and You commanded the Apostles to proclaim You are risen, granting the world Your great mercy." / Κατέλυσας τῷ Σταυρῷ ...

2) "Lord, when You were baptized in the Jordan, the veneration of the Trinity was revealed. For the voice of the Father gave witness to You, calling You Beloved Son, and the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the certainty of His words. Glory to You, Christ our God, who appeared and enlightened the world." / Ἐν Ἰορδάνῃ Βαπτιζομένου...

3) "Since you are a deliverer of captives..." [Hymn of St. George] / Ως τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτῆς...

5) **Kontakion:** "You appeared to the world today, and Your light, O Lord, has left its mark upon us. With fuller understanding we sing to You: "You came, You were made manifest, the unapproachable light." / Ἐπεφάνης σήμερον...

Note: Instead of "Axion Estin...", we chant: "O my soul, magnify the ever-virgin Maid who from the curse has redeemed us... O all spotless Bride, surpassing comprehension are the wonders of your childbirth, blessed Mother! Through You obtaining comprehensive salvation, we bring You a gift in striking up this worthy hymn of gratitude to You our Benefactress." / Μεγάλυνον ψυχὴ μου...

THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST

Today's passage of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, in which he reminds us that God gives to some the ability to be apostles and others the ability to be prophets (and so on), is reminiscent of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, in which he compares the Church to the human body, saying, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!' ...If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it." (1 Corinthians 12: 21 & 26). Thus, he illustrates that we are all unique, but, in Christ, we are one Body.

Each Person of the Holy Trinity is special -- the Father, Who is the Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible; the Son, Who came down from heaven for us and our salvation; the Holy Spirit, Who is the Giver of Life. Yet, each Person of the Holy Trinity is of the same essence, meaning that God is One God in Three Persons. The Nature and Persons of God are replicated by each of us in the Church, each of us being special as individual persons created in God's Image and Likeness, yet, we are also One Body in Christ.

When Adam and Eve sinned by neglecting their relationship with God, in the interests of becoming their own gods, the spiritual health of humanity became flawed. Thus, human history is written around the "normal" sinful behaviors of abuses and neglects of people against people. Sin is the monster behind the wars and the injustices of the world. However, although human beings became spiritually flawed, they were never totally depraved and without the special ability to know and express God's love. In this, therefore, all that God wants is for us to repent of our sins and to love Him and our fellow human beings. Such love is expressed by honoring God and caring for ourselves so that we can care for the salvation of our neighbor. Repentance means that, through prayer and worship offered to our Lord, we grapple against our flawed spiritual health, and allow our Lord, in His own way and time, to replace our flaws with divine strength, health and grace, becoming ever more able to love like God so loves the world.

+FR. THEODORE

Η σημερινή περικοπή της προς Εφεσίους επιστολής του Αγ. Παύλου, όπου μας υπενθυμίζει ότι ο Θεός δίνει σε μερικούς την ικανότητα να είναι απόστολοι και σε άλλους την ικανότητα να είναι προφήτες (και ούτω καθεξής), μας θυμίζει την Πρώτη Επιστολή του προς τους Κορινθίους, που συγκρίνει την Εκκλησία με το ανθρώπινο σώμα, λέγοντας: «Δεν δύναται ο οφθαλμός να ειπή προς την χείρα, δεν έχω χρείαν σου - ή πάλιν η κεφαλή προς τους πόδας, δεν έχω χρείαν ημών...είτε πάσχει έν μέλος, πάντα τα μέλη συμπάσχουσιν - είτε τιμάται έν μέλος, πάντα τα μέλη συγχαίρουσι.» (1 Κορ. 12: 21 και 26). Έτσι, δείχνει ότι είμεθα όλοι μοναδικοί, αλλά, εν Χριστώ, είμεθα ένα Σώμα.

Κάθε Πρόσωπο της Αγίας Τριάδος είναι ιδιαίτερο-- Ο Πατήρ, ο Οποίος είναι ο Δημιουργός του ουρανού και της γης και όλων των ορατών και αοράτων, Ο Μονογενής Υιός, που, για την ημετέραν σωτηρίαν κατήλθε εκ των ουρανών, Το Άγιο Πνεύμα που είναι ο Χορηγός της Ζωής. Ωστόσο, κάθε Πρόσωπο της Αγίας Τριάδος είναι της ίδιας ουσίας, που σημαίνει ότι ο Θεός είναι Ένας Θεός σε Τρία Πρόσωπα. Η Φύσις και τα Πρόσωπα του Θεού αναπαράγονται από τον καθένα μας ως Εκκλησία. Ο καθένας μας είναι ιδιαίτερος ως μεμονωμένα πρόσωπα που δημιουργήθηκαν κατ' εικόνα και καθ' ομοίωσιν του Θεού, αλλά είμεθα επίσης ως Εκκλησία Ένα Σώμα εν Χριστώ.

Όταν ο Αδάμ και η Εύα αμάρτησαν παραμελώντας τη σχέση τους με τον Θεό, για να γίνουν θεοί του εαυτού τους, όλη η ανθρωπότης αρρώστησε ψυχικώς. Έτσι, η ανθρώπινη ιστορία γράφεται γύρω από τις «κανονικές» αμαρτωλές συμπεριφορές καταχρήσεων και της γενικής παραμελήσεως ανθρώπων εναντίον ανθρώπων. Η αμαρτία είναι το τέρας πίσω από τους πολέμους και τις αδικίες του κόσμου. Ωμως, παρόλο που ο άνθρωπος αρρώστησε ψυχικώς, δεν ήταν ποτέ τελείως διεφθαρμένος και χωρίς την ειδική ικανότητα να γνωρίσει και να εκφράσει την αγάπη του Θεού. Σε αυτό, λοιπόν, το μόνο που θέλει ο Θεός είναι να μετανοήσουμε για τις αμαρτίες μας και να αγαπήσουμε Αυτόν και τους συνανθρώπους μας. Αυτή η αγάπη εκφράζεται με το να τιμούμε τον Θεό και να φροντίζουμε για την πνευματική μας υγεία, ώστε να μπορούμε να φροντίζουμε και για τη σωτηρία του πλησίον μας. Η μετάνοια σημαίνει ότι, μέσω της προσευχής και της λατρείας που προσφέρουμε στον Θεόν, παλεύουμε ενάντια στην ελαττωματική ψυχική μας υγεία και επιτρέπουμε στον Θεόν, με τον δικό Του τρόπο και χρόνο, να αντικαταστήσει τα ελαττώματά μας με θεϊκή δύναμη, με πνευματική υγεία και με την Θεία χάρη, ώστε να μπορέσουμε να γίνουμε όλο και πιο ικανοί να αγαπάμε τον κόσμο όπως ο Θεός αγαπά τον κόσμο. +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, January 15th.....Philoptochos General Members Meeting – 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, January 16th.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, January 17th...EVENING DIVINE LITURGY – 5:00 p.m.

(Sts. Anthony the Great & Athanasios the Great)

No Online Orthodox Christian Catechism class

Saturday, January 20th ST. EUTHYMIOS THE GREAT

Orthos -8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

• GREEK FESTIVAL

1. **Today is the deadline to contribute an ad for the St. George Greek Festival program book.** Company “trade-mark” ads of about a quarter in size will be printed in color on the back of the program. Personal ads of the same size are welcome. **Ads are \$500 each.** This deadline is for the printed copy of the program only. Those who want to have an ad after today, may still contribute for the online Greek Festival program book, which will be updated throughout the weeks leading up to the Festival. Check in to our parish office to donate by check or credit card.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS, Continued

2. Tomorrow. Beginning at 9:00 a.m., help is needed to prepare the tyropita and spanakopita for the Festival.
 3. Festival flyers are now available in the parish hall and ready for distribution throughout the community.
- **Philoptochos General Meeting** is scheduled for tomorrow, **Monday, January 15th at 11:30 AM**. In addition, remember to sign up for **next Sunday's Paint & Sip** event! If you enjoyed the wine bottle painting in November, then you will enjoy painting a Greek vase at **next Sunday's Paint & Sip** event. (See flier for details)
 - **SUNDAY SCHOOL – Sunday School classes resume today!** In addition, on **Sunday, January 28, 2024**, our students will participate in a special Sunday School service project.
 - **ONLINE ORTHODOX CATECHISM CLASS** - The Online Orthodox Christian Catechism class for this week will **not be held** this Wednesday, due to the scheduling of the evening celebration of the Divine Liturgy at 5:00 p.m. If anyone is interested in scheduling a different day and time for this week, please contact Fr. Ted. The Online Orthodox Christian Catechism class will **resume next Wednesday, January 24th, at 6:30 p.m.** All are welcome! To receive a zoom link, email pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com.



Support our Festival!

Our festival is just a few months away and, God willing, everyone will have a rewarding experience. We thank our parishioners and friends for your past support and want to take a moment to remind you of all the ways you can help this upcoming year.

Volunteering – Volunteers are welcome as of the 18th of December for cooking. Such support will be needed up until the festival in February. Please reach out to George or Stacy Argyros to get more information. In addition, assistance is appreciated during the week before the festival to help set up, during the festival and following the festival to assist with cleanup. If you've volunteered before and wish to continue, feel free to contact the past chairperson to again offer your assistance. If you'd like to volunteer for the first time or don't have contact information for the past chairperson, feel free to reach out to Jim Christopoulos at 760-902-8460 or at goofy_328@yahoo.com.

Sponsorships – Any person can pay for a sponsorship, whether it be to advertise your business or send a personal message. You may also ask friends and/or owners of businesses you frequent to buy a sponsorship. These not only provide financial support for the festival, but are a wonderful way to advertise businesses. Sponsorship donations can be sent to our parish office. For more information, please call our parish office at (760) 568-9901. Make checks payable to "St. George Greek Orthodox Church" and in the memo, write, "FESTIVAL DONATION."

Donations – Unable to volunteer? Sponsorship not appropriate? Another option would be to provide a cash donation. Such a donation would help offset our many expenses.

The success of our festival depends on us all. We strive to simultaneously satisfy the needs of our guests as well as to share our hospitality and religion with them. Please help in any way you can. You may contact George Argyros or Father Ted for more information.

WE INVITE YOU TO OUR

Paint & Sip

Sunday

01/21/2024 @ 1200 p.m.



HOSTED BY:

St George Ladies Philoptochos

74109 Larrea St – Palm Desert, CA 92260

Bring your friends and join us for an afternoon of appetizers, refreshments, wine and painting a beautiful small Grecian vase!

Sign up during Coffee Hour or call
St. George Church @ 760-568-9901

\$15

PER PERSON

Check out our talented and fun group from our first Paint & Sip Art Event on 11/12/2023. A great time was had by all!



- GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - LOUKOUMADES -
 GREEK CHICKEN - MOUSAKA - SPANAKOPITA - DOLMADE - PASTIKHIO - SOULVAKI - BAKLAVA - DOLMADES - GYROS
 GREEK CHICKEN - MOUSAKA - SPANAKOPITA - DOLMADE - PASTIKHIO - SOULVAKI - BAKLAVA - DOLMADES - GYROS
 - GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - LOUKOUMADES -



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 CHURCH TOURS
 KIDZ ZONE
 FUN FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

**Saint George
 Greek Orthodox Church**

Proudly presents the

26TH ANNUAL

**GREEK
 FESTIVAL**

in Palm Desert, CA

Saturday & Sunday

February 17th & 18th 2024

10am to 8pm

on the Church Grounds

74-109 Larrea, Palm Desert, CA

(760) 568-9901



NO CASH PAYMENT Credit Card and contactless payment **only** at this time



NO PETS ALLOWED Service Animals specifically trained to aid a person with a disability are welcome



SMOKING and use of tobacco products **PROHIBITED** on church grounds

EL PASEO COURTESY CARTS available for festival attendee pick up & drop off. Route along El Paseo from San Pablo to Portola & church festival entrance.

ADDITIONAL PARKING AVAILABLE at Washington Charter School, and Hope Lutheran Church & Spiritual Center.

SHUTTLE SERVICE PROVIDED.



We are pleased to provide assistance to anyone requesting it. If you need help, please ask.

*Experience Authentic Greek Food
 Devour Heavenly Pastries
 Dance to live Greek music, and
Be Greek for a Day!*

ADMISSION \$5

(Children 12 & under free)
 Active Duty Military, Police,
 Fire & EMT Free w/ ID

www.PDGreekFest.org

PDGreekFest

