

**AUGUST 14, 2016**

**ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT**

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# THE LADDER

*EVE OF THE DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS*

## Mailing Address:

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Proistamenos (Pastor)

– Deacon Euthym Kontaxis,  
M.D.

## 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.*

## BAPTISM AND THE LITURGY

Today's passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians serves us as being the foundation of the Church's teaching regarding the validity of the Holy Sacraments. First of all, the validity of the Holy Sacraments does not rest on the human individual who performs the Sacrament. In other words, as St. Paul states, the true Performer of the Sacraments is Christ our God Himself regardless of who the earthly performer of the Sacraments may be in this pre-

sent life – whether it be “Apollon, or Paul, or Cefas” (1 Corinthians 1:12) - in other words, whether it be one priest or any other priest, it is Christ Who is the Performer of the Church's Sacraments.

The other lesson that we draw from today's passage of St. Paul's Epistle is that there is no supposed canonical age required, according to which one is not worthy to be baptized. “I baptized the household of Stephanos...” (1 Corinthians 1:16). That is, everyone

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## OFFERING PROSFORO (“THE OFFERING”) FOR THE DIVINE LITURGY

It is indeed a great blessing for both the family that offers the Prosforo for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and for the parish that is able to worship because of one's offering of the Prosforo. **Prosforo** is a Greek word for “the offering”; it is the bread which is used for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and which becomes, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the very Body and Blood of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. Prosforo, when blessed during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, is distributed to the faithful in attendance and is known as the “antidoron”, Greek for: “A blessing of the Holy Spirit other than receiving the Body and Blood of Christ.”

It is the product of dominion, a cooperation between God's blessing of the crops and man's labor in the fields. Bread in the Bible also functions as a social bond. The giving of bread to another is a major element of hospitality and serves as a sign of respect and concern (Gen14:18 ; 18:6 ;19:3 ; Deut..23:4; Ruth 2:14 ; 1 Sam 25:18 ; 28:24 ; 2 Sam 16:1-2). The blessing of the five loaves in the wilderness is a sign of God's respect for us. Our thanksgiving is to respect God.

We also note that the manna in the wilderness is the quintessential example of bread as a provision of God.



Η σημερινή περικοπή εκ της Επιστολής του Αγίου Παύλου προς τους Κορινθίους μας υπηρετεί ως θεμέλιον της Ορθοδόξου διδασκαλίας περί των Μυστηρίων της Εκκλησίας. Πρώτον, η αξία των Μυστηρίων δεν στηρίζεται στον άνθρωπον (τον ιερέαν η τον δεσποτην) ο οποίος εκτελεί το Μυστήριον. Δηλαδή, όπως το λέγει ο Αποστόλος Παύλος, ο πραγματικός τελετής των Μυστηρίων είναι ο Θεός μας ο Χριστός ασχετως ποιος είναι ο επιγίγιος ανθρωπίνος τελετής των Μυστηρίων – είτε είναι <ο Απολλος, είτε είναι ο Παυλος, είτε είναι ο Κηφας> (1 Κορ. 1:12) – δηλαδή, είτε είναι ο εφημέριος ιερέυς της ενορίας, είτε είναι οποιοσδήποτε άλλος ιερέυς, ο Χριστός ο Ιδιός είναι ο τελετής των Αγίων Μυστηρίων της Εκκλησίας.

Το άλλο μαθημα το οποίο αντλούμεν από την σημερινήν Επιστολικήν περικοπήν του Αγίου Παύλου είναι ότι δεν υπάρχει ταχα ορισμένη κανονική υλικία κατά την οποίαν δεν αξίζει για τον οποιονδήποτε άνθρωπον να βαπτίζεται. <Εβαπτισα δε και τον Στεφανα οικον...> (1 Κορ. 1:16). Δηλαδή, όλα τα πρόσωπα της οικογενείας του Στεφάνου εβαπτισθησαν – μικροί και μεγάλοι.

Συνδεόμενο με την σημερινήν Ευαγγελικήν περικοπήν, διδασκομεθα ότι όσοι βαπτίζονται εις Χριστον καταλαβαίνουν ότι ο Χριστός είναι ο αληθινός Θεός, ο Οποίος χαρίζει στον καθεναν <ένα άλλο αυριον> (εστω εαν είναι αυτο <το αυριον> η αιώνιος ζωη). Ωστε ας μην αγωνιζομεθα περί του φαγητού μας και της ενδυμασίας μας. Ας εχουμεν πιστιν ότι ο Θεός μας αγαπά, αφού πολλαπλασιάζει όλα τα αγαθα προς σωτηριαν μας.  
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

who was a member of Stephano's household was baptized – young and old. Hence, to this day, there is no “maximum” age limit or “minimum” age requirement for one to be baptized in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Today's Epistle passage ties into today's Gospel passage in that we are taught that all who are Baptized in Christ understand that Christ is the True God, Who grants us life both in this present world and in His Eternal Kingdom. So, let us have faith that God will grant us the things we need, which is the very meaning behind the miracle of feeding the multitude of five thousand with only two fish and five loaves of bread.

This Gospel passage forms the basis for our Orthodox Christian prayer service known as “The Blessing of the Five Loaves”, or, in Greek, *Artoklasia*. As this service is being performed the names of loved ones and especially those who are suffering from injury or illness are read as we pray for their health. Furthermore, prayers are said for the well-being of all who live in our community. This service dates back to the 4th Century A.D. where the faithful would hold this service in the narthex of the church so that catechumens could participate in prayer for health and well-being with the faithful. The service concludes with a statement of faith, which is chanted: *“The rich have turned poor and went hungry. But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.”*

These words connect us also with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. In the event of our Lord blessing the five loaves and the two fish, we have both a message of salvation through the symbolism of the two fish and a prophesy of the Sacrament of Holy Communion through the presence of the five loaves. The Greek word for fish is *ixthys*. The Apostolic Christians understood the letters of this word to represent the words: “Jesus Christ, Son of God.” The message is that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of both the Old and the New Testaments (the “2 fish”).

The five loaves represent the Law of Moses (the five books of the Old Testament). However, while the Law is the vehicle of God's guidance, Christ our God, is the Personality of God's love, through which, not only is the Law obeyed, but mercy and love are also added. As Christ is the celebrant of the blessing of the five loaves, He is also the Celebrant of the Divine Liturgy. As the Apostles are the “distributors” of the bread to the crowds, the Hierarchs of the Church are the “distributors” of the Sacraments to the faithful.

Let us move on with our lives with this faith and let us live out our baptism and all of our Church's Sacraments with the fear of God, faith and love.

+FR. THEODORE

**PRAY FOR THE SICK:** Yvonne Flessas, George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Kathy Ligeros, Nicholas Kyriakou, Jean Chronis, George Nicholas  
(*Many of the faithful on our Prayer List face chronic or serious illness*).

ANTIPHON I: *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou..." (By the prayers of the Theotokos...)*

Verse 1— Bless the Lord, O my soul, and everything within me, bless His holy name.

Refrain: *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou, soter, soston imas."*

Verse 2—: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and everything within me, bless His holy name.

Refrain: *"By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, save us."*

Verse 3— The Lord prepared His throne in heaven, and His Kingdom rules over all.

Refrain: *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou, soter, soston imas."*

Chanter(s): *Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.*

Refrain: *"By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, save us."*

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ANTIPHON II: *"Soston imas Ie Theou..." (Save us, O Son of God...)*

Verse 1— Praise the Lord, O my soul! I shall praise the Lord while I live; I shall sing to my God as long as I exist.

Refrain: *"Soston imas, Yie Theou, O Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si alleluia."*

Verse 2 - Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob; his hope is in the Lord his God.

Refrain: *"Save us, O Son of God, Who Arose from the dead, we sing to You, Alleluia."*

Verse 3 - The Lord shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, to all generations.

Refrain: *"Soston imas Ie Theou, O Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si alleluia."*

Doxa Patri ke Io ke Aghio Pnevmati ke nin ke aei ke eis tous eonas ton eonon.

People: *"O Monogenis Ios ke Logos tou Theou..." (O Only-Begotten Son and Word of God...)*

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**HYMNS FOR THE ENTRANCE WITH THE HOLY GOSPEL: ANTIPHON III—** *This is the day the Lord made; let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein.*

**Sunday Resurrection Hymn:** *Katelisas to Stavro [Tone 7]...(O Lord by Your sacred Cross You abolished death and granted unto the thief blessed paradise. The Myrrh-bearers ceased lamenting and turned to joy. The Apostles did preach the good news at Your command that You had risen from the dead, O Christ our God, bestowing Your mercy upon the world evermore.)*

**Hymn for the Eve of the Dormition of the Mother of God... Laoi proskirtisate...** *(O people, anticipate and leap for joy now with faith, and longingly congregate today applauding with joy, and all of you cheerfully shout now in exultation; for the Theotokos is preparing for her departure from the earth to the heavens with glory; and we sing hymns to her and glorify her as the Mother of God.)*

**Hymn for St. George:** *Os ton ehmaloton eleftherotis...(As the one who sets the captives free and the protector of the poor; as physician to the sick and the champion defender of kings, bearer of trophies are you, O Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.)*

**Kontakion Hymn:** *Ti endhoxo mneemi Sou...(On this day, your glorious memory, the whole world by the Holy Spirit's grace has been noetically adorned. With joy and gladness we cry to you, "Rejoice, O Virgin, the pride and joy of Christians all!")*

**READINGS:** Epistle - 1 Corinthians 1: 10-17/ Gospel— St. Matthew 14: 14-22

**Megalinarion:** Axion Estin (page 52 in the Divine Liturgy Books)

**Communion Hymn:** *Enite ton Kyrion...(Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Allelouia.)*

*"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the well-spring of life"*

*Proverbs 4:23*



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Coffee Hour: Presytera Petula Pantels

**PHILOPTOCHOS** – We look forward to starting our meetings this fall, in fact next month! Be sure to read your Ladder for dates and times of our upcoming meetings. We are starting "The Knitting Project - Part 2" in the a next couple of months. We will need knitters and crocheters to make afghans and headbands for the patients at City of Hope. To be part of the team see Rhonda Latkovic. We need Coffee Hour Hostesses or Hosts for this month and September. See Linda Petalas.

**WE THANK GOD FOR THOSE WHO WORK AND LABOR FOR OUR HOLY CHURCH** – We offer thanks to God for the efforts of the following members of our parish in cleaning and organizing the classrooms; the copy room and the choir room of our parish on Wednesday and Thursday, August 10th and 11th: **Rhonda Latkovic, Eve Meek, Annette Laskaris, Annette Lewis, Linda Kallis, Louise Dobbs Barringer, Spiro Astmos and Nick Kaperonis.** This is a valuable contribution of time and effort in preparation for the New Ecclesiastical Year on September 1st.

**SPECIAL DONATION FOR ALTAR FLOWERS** – As the beginning of the New Ecclesiastical Year draws near, we want to remind everyone that there are no Sundays available for donating Altar Flower bouquets until 2017. However, donations can be given from now to reserve Sundays in 2017 for Altar Flower bouquets to be displayed in prayer for those who are to be honored and/or remembered. In addition, donations toward the costs of permanent silk flower bouquets, serving to glorify our Altar Gates may be offered now. For more information about the Altar Flower Bouquet program, feel free to contact **Louise Dobbs Barringer.**

**PREPARING THE 2016-2017 ST. GEORGE MASTER CALENDAR** – Please contact Fr. Ted over the next two weeks in order to submit proposed dates for events or celebrations to be presented for approval by the Parish Council and placed on the 2016-2017 parish Master Calendar.

## WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tonight, August 14th.....Vespers – 5:00 p.m.

Monday, August 15th.....DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS  
Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, August 16th.....Bible Study-10:00 a.m.

Saturday, August 20th.....Vespers- 5:00 p.m.

*The LADDER for August 2016  
is sponsored by  
Annette Lewis in memory of:  
Skip Lewis (6 months), Teddy Ekonomos (3  
years) and Paula Kozlen (1 year)*

We encourage all of our parents to sit in the church with their entire family as they participate in the beauty and mysteries of the Divine Liturgy. For those with young children, feel free to sit near an aisle so that you may easily take your children for a break, as needed. If necessary, we have a "crying room" in the narthex for your use. God Bless.