

**AUGUST 28, 2016**

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

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# THE LADDER

## Mailing Address:

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– Fr. Theodore Pantels,

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.*

## "THY WILL BE DONE!"

From the official documents of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, which convened recently, we read the following regarding the proper spirit in which to fast. "As a spiritual endeavor, the true fast is inseparable from unceasing prayer and genuine repentance. Repentance without fasting is fruitless (Basil the Great, *On Fasting* 1, 3. PG 31, 168A), as fasting without merciful deeds is dead, especially nowadays when the unequal and unjust distribution of goods deprives entire nations of their daily bread

*'While fasting physically, brethren, let us also fast spiritually. Let us loose every knot of iniquity; let us tear up every unrighteous bond; let us distribute bread to the hungry, and welcome into our homes those who have no roof over their heads...'* (Sticheron Verse at Vespers on Wednesday of the First Week of Lent; cf. Is 58:6-7). Fasting cannot be reduced to simple and formal abstinence from certain foods. 'So let us not be selfish as we begin the abstinence from foods that is the noble fast. Let us fast in an acceptable manner, one that is pleasing to God. A

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## THE PROPHET MOSES

Moses was of the tribe of Levi, the son of Amram and Jochabed (Num. 26:59). He was born in Egypt in the seventeenth century before Christ. While yet a babe of three months, he was placed in a basket made of papyrus and covered with pitch, and cast into the streams of the Nile for fear of Pharaoh's decree to the mid-wives of the Hebrews, that all the male children of the Hebrews be put to death.

He was taken up from the river by Pharaoh's daughter, became her adopted son, and was reared and dwelt in the King's palace for forty years. Afterward, when he was some sixty years old, he fled to Madian, where, on Mount Horeb, he saw the vision of the burning bush. Thus he was ordained by God to lead Israel and bring it out of the land of Egypt. He led Israel through the Red Sea as it were dry land and governed the people for forty years. He wrought many signs and wonders, and wrote the first five books of the Old Testament, which are called the Pentateuch. The first two Odes of the Old Testament, "Let us sing to the Lord" and "Attend, O heaven, and I will speak," were written by him. Of these hymns, the first was chanted by the shore of the Red Sea as soon as the Israelites had crossed it; the second, in the land of Moab, a few days before he left this present life.

-Taken from [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)



Απο το επισημο εγγραφο που παρ-  
ουσιασθηκε στην προσφατην Αγ-  
αν και Μεγαλην Συνοδον της  
Ορθοδοξου Χριστιανικης Εκκλη-  
σιας διαβαζουμεν το εξης σχετι-  
κως με την Ορθοδοξη διδασκαλιαν  
περι της πραγματικης νηστειας: <Η  
αληθης νηστεια, ως πνευματικον  
αγωνισμα, συνδεεται προς την  
αδιαλειπτον προσευχην και την  
ελικρινη μετανοιαν. «Μετανοια  
χωρις νηστειας αργη» (Μ.  
Βασιλειου, Περι Νηστειας 1, 3. PG  
31, 168Α), ως επισης και νηστεια ανευ  
εργων ευποιας ειναι νεκρα, ιδια δε  
κατα την συγχρονον εποχην, καθ' ην η  
ανισος και αδικος κατανομη των  
αγαθων στερει και αυτου του  
επιουσιου αρτου ολοκληρους  
λαους. «Νηστευοντες  
αδελφοι σωματικως, νηστευσωμεν  
και πνευματικως· λυσωμεν παντα  
συνδεσμον αδικιας· διαρρηξωμεν  
στραγγαλιας βιαιων  
συναλλαγματων· πασαν συγγραφην  
αδικον διασπασωμεν· δωσωμεν  
πεινωσιν αρτον, και πτωχους  
αστεγους εισαγαγωμεν εις  
οικους» (Στιχηρον, Ιδιομελον  
Τεταρτης, Α' Εβδομαδος Νηστειων.  
Πρβλ. Ησαιου νη', 6-7). Η νηστεια δεν  
εξαντλειται εις απλην και τυπικην  
αποχην εκ τινων μονον  
καθωρισμενων τροφων. «Ου μεντοι  
εξαρκει καθ' εαυτην η αποχη  
βρωματων προς την επαινετην  
νηστειαν, αλλα νηστευσωμεν  
νηστειαν δεκτην, ευαρεστον τω Θεω.  
Αληθης νηστεια η του κακου  
αλλοτριωσις, εγκρατεια γλωσσης,  
θυμου αποχη, επιθυμιων χωρισμος,  
καταλαλιας, ψευδους, επιορκιας. Η  
τουτων ενδεια νηστεια εστιν αληθης.  
Εν τουτοις μεν η νηστεια καλον» (Μ.  
Βασιλειου, Περι Νηστειας 2, 7. PG  
31, 196D).>

Δια μεσου της πιστεως μπορουμεν  
να ζησουμεν στην Βασιλειαν του  
Θεου <ως εν ουρανω και επι της  
γης.> +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

*true fast is one that is set against evil, it is self-control of the tongue. It is the checking of anger, separation from things like lusts, evil-speaking, lies, and false oaths. Self-denial from these things is a true fast, so fasting from these negative things is good*" (Basil the Great, *On Fasting*, 2, 7. PG 31, 196D).

Faith, prayer and fasting are part of one complete spiritual discipline. Prayer allows us to contemplate the love of God; fasting helps us to practice our love for God, and faith is the foundation of both prayer and fasting. Without faith, prayer is void; without prayer, fasting is no more than a simple diet. Instead, prayer, faith and fasting comprise a life-style, through which we find ourselves being true servants of God so that whatever our circumstance may be, we remain God's people for the salvation of all people.

In fact, let us not assume that "total reliance upon God" guarantees the result that we want. The curing of the epileptic by Christ in today's Gospel passage had no other purpose than to teach two things: 1) Christ is God, Who, by His Word alone commands all things; and 2) trust in God is strengthened through spiritual efforts: prayer and fasting. Beyond these lessons, in and of itself, the miracle for the epileptic had little value in terms of anyone's Eternal Salvation. Indeed, our Lord *uses* us to teach the truth about His love for us – and He uses us as He wants. The whole idea of being "used" as another "wants" strikes us as harsh, given our independent spirit and our common sense of entitlement, which is prevalent in today's culture. Yet, we pray: "*Thy Will be done.*"

It explains why the epileptic; the paralytic; the blind; the lepers and the lame were healed and St. Paul, for example, was not. "*My grace is sufficient for you. For, My strength is made perfect in your weakness.*" (2 Corinthians 12:9). This was as close to being healed from his "thorn in the flesh" as St. Paul got. Other examples: St. Basil the Great suffered intestinal disorders from which he passed away to our Lord at 52; St. Nectarios, a Wonderworker himself, suffered from cancer, and eventually also passed away to our Lord at 74. These are Saints that God *used* to inspire others in their trials and to help us all to find salvation through their examples.

Along with praying for God to "make things better" in our lives, let us also pray for God to use us as needed in accordance to His Divine Will. This would be our expression of having "faith as much as a grain of mustard seed."

+FR. THEODORE

**PRAY FOR THE SICK:** Yvonne Flessas, George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Kathy Ligeros, Nicholas Kyriakou, Jean Chronis (*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 forget not all His rewards.

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:** *Tou lithou sfraghisthedos [Tone 1]... (The stone that had been sealed before Your tomb by the Judeans and the soldiers guarding watch o'er Your pure and sacred Body, O Savior, the third day You arose. And unto all the world did you give life whereby all the heavenly powers did proclaim that you are the Giver of Life. Glory unto our Resurrected Christ; glory unto Your King-dom; glory to Your dispensation, O You alone Who loves all.)*

**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:** *Ioakim ke Anna onidhismou... (Both Joachim and Anna from their sterility's stigma, and Adam and Eve from their mortality's ruin have been set free, O immaculate Maid, by your holy nativity. For this do your people hold celebration, redeemed from the guilt of transgression as they cry to you, "The barren one bears the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life.")*

**READINGS:** Epistle - 1 Corinthians 4: 9-16/ Gospel— St. Matthew 17: 14-23

**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: Eve Meek, Christina Kundanis, Annette Lewis**

**MEMORIAL** – Today’s Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Paula Ekonomos Kozlen (1 year)**, the beloved wife of **Vern Kozlen** and the sister of **Katherine Wolcott (Keene)**. Also, today’s Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Teddy Ekonomos, (3 years)**, the beloved mother of **Paula Ekonomos Kozlen** and **Katherine Wolcott (Keene)**. We pray that our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grants Eternal Life to **Paula Ekonomos Kozlen and Teddy Ekonomos** and that He grants peace and comfort to the entire family.

**PHILOPTOCHOS** – We need volunteers to knit and crochet for the Knitting Project - Part 2 supporting the patients at City of Hope. Please see **Rhonda Latkovic** or **Linda Kallis**. We have need Hostesses and Hosts for the Coffee Hour in October. See **Linda Petalas**. Our meetings start again in September with the Board Meeting on Monday, September 12 at 11:00 a.m. Our General Assembly Meeting will be on Monday, September 19 at 11:30 a.m.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF MEETING** - Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy today, all who will be members of our Sunday School staff will meet to prepare for the upcoming Sunday School year.

**PREPARING THE 2016-2017 ST. GEORGE MASTER CALENDAR**– Please contact Fr. Ted over the by **September 4th** 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.

**COLORING BOOK SESSION**– Mark your calendars for **Friday, September 16, 2016** and plan to join the Coloring Book Session at our parish hall. See the enclosed flier for details.

**SPECIAL FUNDRAISER FOR THE MONASTERY AT ST. NICHOLAS RANCH**– A special fundraiser will be held on **Saturday, October 1, 2016 at the St. Prophet Elias Greek Orthodox Church** in San Bernardino for the **Monastery at St. Nicholas Ranch**. Fliers indicating details are available in our parish hall.

**WEEKDAY CALENDAR**

- Tonight.....Vespers – 5: 00 p.m.
- Monday, August 29th.....BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, August 30th.....Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.
- Thursday, September 1st.....ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR  
Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy - 9:30 a.m.
- Saturday, September 3rd.....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.**