

JUNE 12, 2016

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY SAINTS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

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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.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

There is a verse from today's passage from the Book of Acts that particularly speaks to us today: "From Miletus, he [St. Paul] sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the Church and when they had come to him, he said to them: (20:17-18), 'Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the Church of God which He purchased with His own Blood.'" (20:28).

The work of the Holy Spirit has always been—and still is—to point us to Jesus Christ our Savior. The Holy Spirit does

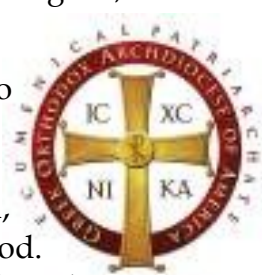
this in at least three ways: 1) through our participation in the Holy Sacraments, through which we take upon ourselves the Image of Christ; 2) by inspiring righteous people to preach the Word of God, which is that Christ is both God and Man—our Savior; 3) by granting to us, through prayer, the Divine Wisdom to counter the false-teachings of pagans and unbelievers.

At almost every formal prayer service of the Orthodox Church—and certainly every time the Divine Liturgy is celebrated—the faithful proclaim the

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ECUMENICAL COUNCIL vs. ECUMENISM—Definitions are needed. An *Ecumenical Council* is a gathering of all hierarchs and theologians of the Orthodox Christian Faith, based on the Apostolic Tradition described in the Book of Acts (), through which proclamation of the true teaching of the Bible is made, based on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Also, an Ecumenical Council gives guidance as to the proper governance of the Church in order for Her ministry to embrace all people. *Ecumenism* is a false belief which in one way or another teaches that all religions are the same and that, as a result, Jesus Christ, Buddha, Allah, Zeus, Apollo, etc., are all the same god, even though only Christ arose from the dead and conquered demons, who, by the way, also confessed Him to be True God. Ecumenism can easily deceive people into thinking that demons are gods, as well.

One of the great dangers to the Church today is that of falling into the traps of *Ecumenism*, while even maintaining our respect for the *Ecumenical Councils*. It is one thing to do charitable works with other religions so that hunger and suffering may be relieved, but Christians must always give thanks and glory to Christ our God. It is another thing to *compromise* our Church's moral and spiritual teaching in order to comply with a world-wide Ecumenical view. +FR. THEODORE



Στο <Πιστευω> ομολογουμεν:
 <Πιστευω...και εις το Πνευμα το
 Αγιον, το Κυριον, το ζωοποιον, το
 εκ του Πατρος εκπορευομενον, το
 συν Πατρι και Υιω συμπροσκυ-
 νουμενον και συνδοξαζομενον, το
 λαλησαν δια των Προφητων.> Οι
 Πατερες της Πρωτης Οικουμενικης
 Συνοδου, των οποιων μνημονευ-
 ουμεν σημερα εβαλαν τα θεμελια
 της Χριστιανικης Πιστεως, και οι
 Πατερες της Δευτερης Οικουμενι-
 κης Συνοδου προστεθησαν τα
 αρθρα της Χριστιανικης Πιστεως,
 σε δογματικο συμβολο το οποιο
 λεγεται το <Πιστευω.> Ειναι εργο
 του Αγιου Πνευματος, το Τριτον
 Προσωπο της Αγιας Τριαδος.

Σημαντικο ειναι οτι την Κυριακην
 πριν της Κυριακης της Πεντηκο-
 της, θυμομαστε τους Αγιους, διοτι
 οι Αγιοι – οσοι εξουσαν πριν απο
 τον Χριστον (οι Προφητες) , καθως
 επισης ολοι οι οποιοι υπηρχαν με-
 τα τον Χριστον – εδιδασκαν την
 ιδιαν πιστιν: οτι ο Ιησους Χριστος
 ειναι ο Μονογενης Υιος του Θεου,
 ο Οποιος ειναι τελειος Θεος και
 τελειος Ανθρωπος. Για αυτον τον
 λογον, το Αγιο Πνευμα λεγεται
 <ζωοποιον,> διοτι μας ενωνει με
 τον Χριστον, ο Οποιος ενικησε τον
 θανατον. Ο Χριστος επροσευχη-
 θηκε για τους Μαθητας Του:
 <Πατηρ Αγιε, τηρησον αυτους εν
 τω ονοματι Σου, ινα ωσιν εν καθως
 εμεις.> (Ιωαν. 17:11). Με αλλα λο-
 για, ο καθε Χριστιανος εχει τα
 προσωπικα του χαρακτηριστικα,
 ομως ολοι οι Χριστιανοι εργαζον-
 ται συλλογικα σαν ενα σωμα
 Χριστου με εμπνευσιν απο το Αγιο
 Πνευμα.

Καθως ετοιμαζομεθα για την Πεν-
 τηκοστην, ας ευχαριστησουμε
 τον Θεον για το δωρον της ζωης
 μας, ωστε να δοξαζουμεν τον
 Θεον.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

Nicene Creed, saying, *“I believe...in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke through the Prophets.”* The Saints who gathered at the First Ecumenical Council, whom we commemorate today, put down the foundations of the Christian Faith. The Saints of the Second Ecumenical Council added to the articles of the Christian Faith, making up the dogmatic statement known as the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed is itself inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.

It is significant that on the Sunday before Pentecost Sunday we remember the Saints. There are Saints who lived before the time of Christ (the Prophets) and those who existed after Christ’s Ascension – all of whom proclaimed the *same* faith: that Jesus Christ is the Only-Begotten Son of God, Who is Perfect God and Perfect Man. It is for this reason that the Holy Spirit is called, *“The Giver of Life,”* because It unites us with Christ Who conquered death. Christ our God prayed for His Disciples: *“Holy Father, keep them in Your Name, which You have given Me, that they may be one, even as We are one.”* (St. John 17: 11). Said another way, all believers are special individuals; yet, all work together collectively as the Body of Christ with inspiration from the Holy Spirit. The *“Life of the Church”* is, at the same time, the *“Life in the Holy Spirit.”* We then speak of living a *“spiritual life,”* which means that our motives, words and actions are reflections of our prayer life; our worship; our way of life according to the Bible, all leading to the Eternal Life.

Life in the Spirit is a life of prayer through which we seek Divine Wisdom. Only through this gift of the Holy Spirit will we be able to counter the deceptions of our age – teachings of pagans and unbelievers. We live in an age in which, not only must we resist various ideologies which are devoid of God’s Wisdom, but we must counter them and teach our youth to decipher that which is of God from that which is of the fallen world. We are called upon not only to tell the world what we believe about God, but to explain why we believe in God and outline the consequences of not being with God at all times and at every hour. We are called upon to explain why and how the world’s philosophies and false religions fail us and how only faith in Christ our God saves us from the disasters of the present, as well as those of the future life. We can only do this with the grace and enlightenment that is given through the Holy Spirit as we participate in the Holy Sacraments – as has always been the case even from the time of the Apostles.
 +FR. THEODORE

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

HYMNS FOR THIS SUNDAY'S CELEBRATION OF THE DIVINE LITURGY:

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

Verse 1— Oh, clap your hands, all you nations. Shout to God with the voice of rejoicing.

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

Verse 2—: For the Lord Most High is fearsome, a great King over all the earth.

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

Verse 3— He subdued the peoples under us and the nations under our feet.

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."*

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

Verse 1— Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy mountain.

Refrain: *"Soston imas Ie Theou, O en doxi analiftheis af imon eis tous ouranous, psallontas si alleluia."*

Verse 2— God is known in her palaces when He helps her.

Refrain: *"Save us, O Son of God, Who ascended in glory from us into heaven, we sing to You, Alleluia."*

Verse 3— For behold, the kings assembled; they came together.

Refrain: *"Soston imas Ie Theou, O en doxi analiftheis af imon eis tous ouranous, 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...)*

HYMNS FOR THE ENTRANCE WITH THE HOLY GOSPEL: ANTIPHON III— *Hear this, all you nations; give ear, all you inhabitants of the world.*

Sunday Resurrection Hymn: *Angelike dymameis [Tone 6]... (When the angelic powers appeared at Your grave, the soldiers guarding it feared and became as dead. And standing by the sepulcher was Mary who was seeking Your immaculate body. You devastated Hades, not afflicted by it. You went to meet the virgin, and granted eternal life. You resurrected from the dead. O Lord, glory to You.)*

Hymn for the Ascension: *Analiftheis en doxi... (You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, after You filled the Disciples with joy, by promising to send them the Holy Spirit, and You blessed them and established their faith, that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.)*

Hymn for the Holy Saints of the 1st Ecumenical Council: *Yper-de-doxasmenos... (Supremely blessed are You, O Christ our God. You established the holy Fathers upon the earth as beacons, and through them You have guided us all to the true Faith, O greatly merciful One, glory be to You.)*

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: *Tin yper imon plyrhasas... (When You had fulfilled the dispensation for our sake, and united things on earth with the things in heaven, You were taken up thither in glory, O Christ our God, going not away from any place, but continuing inseparable, and to them that love You crying out: "I am with you, and there is, therefore, none against you.")*

READINGS: Epistle - Acts 20: 16-18; 28-36 / Gospel - St. John 17: 1-13

Megalinarion: Axion Estin

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



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Greeter: Mariya Dunkel
Coffee Hour Hostess: Becky Allen

PHILOPTOCHOS – We need Coffee Hour Hostesses or Hosts for June 19 and 26 and for July 10, 17, and 24. Thank you for volunteering. Mochas for Missions will be ending on June 19. Please drop off your spare change in the specially marked cups on the hall tables.

STEWARDSHIP – As we approach the summer months, we need to remind one and all that any extra Stewardship offering will be a great blessing for our St. George parish. Anyone who has not yet submitted a 2016 Stewardship Pledge Card *and* contributed to the financial needs of our parish by virtue of fulfilling his or her pledge is fervently and prayerfully asked to do so at this time.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tuesday, June 14th.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, June 18th.....SATURDAY OF SOULS

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

Memorial Service- 10:30 a.m.

Vespers- 5:00 p.m.



THE HOLY and GREAT COUNCIL OF THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH

CONVENES FROM FRIDAY, JUNE 17th to MONDAY, JUNE 27th, 2016

OUR PRAYER

Let us pray to the Lord...O Lord, Jesus Christ, Holy God, You rest among Your Saints, the Apostles and their successors from age to age, including the present. You are hymned by the angels of the Seraphim and glorified by the Cherubic Hosts and adored by every heavenly power. You brought all things into being from nothing and created every human being after Your own Image and Likeness, and You pour upon us Your every gift, giving Your Wisdom and Understanding to all who ask. Truly, You do not despise us for our sins, for, You appointed repentance as the way to salvation and You have granted us, Your humble servants throughout the world, to stand before Your Holy Altar and render to You the adoration and praise that are due unto You. Therefore, do You the same Lord, accept from us the hymn of the angels— “Holy, Holy, Holy, are You” - and visit Your Church with Your goodness. Forgive us every transgression, whether voluntary or involuntary and sanctify our souls and bodies and grant that we may all, with one voice and one heart, serve You in righteousness all the days of our lives. This we ask, as we seek the intercessions on our behalf of the Most Holy Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary and the Saints of all the ages who have been well-pleasing to You. Amen.

*The LADDER for June 2016
is sponsored by
Mr. & Mrs. William G. Barringer
in celebration of their
21st Wedding Anniversary*

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.