

MAY 22, 2016

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

THE FOUNTAIN OF NEW LIFE

In reality, as a result of the Resurrection of Christ from the dead, we have inherited eternal life – but, at the same time, we have received the power to impart the gift of life to others.

We see this from the reading of today's passage from the Book of Acts. St. Peter, through faith and prayer cured the paralysis of Aeneas and he raised Tabitha from the dead. From the passage of today's Gospel according to St. John, we heard of the incident when Jesus cured the paralytic at the pool, "which in Heb-

rew is called Bethesda."

This incident in itself symbolizes the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, through which we inherit eternal life. Again, we realize that our role as followers of Christ is to give life to others as teachers of the Gospel and as Godparents for the newly baptized.

The hieromonk, Maximos the Ariorite, writes: *"In the basic symbolism of the baptismal waters, the Apostle Paul adds that there is the descent and ascent of the*

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THE SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

Given the many problems of today's world, some people ask: 'But why does Christ not intervene to heal the illnesses of the world? The answer to this question too is also contained in today's Gospel.

If you remember, before Christ healed the paralytic, He first asked him if he *wanted to be healed*. Christ does not heal those who do not want to be healed. He gives us freedom. Thus: Do we, honestly, want to be healed of our own sinfulness and passions, of our indifference to God, our crucifying lack of faith in the Church of Christ?

If we show no sign that we want to be healed, then we too will continue to lie paralysed in the same old rut as before. And if the world shows no sign that it wants to be healed, then it too will continue to lie in the paralysis of its old hatreds and evil ways.

– Taken from: www.orthodoxengland.org.uk



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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.*

Πραγματι, μεσου της Αναστασεως του Χριστου εκ των νεκρων, εχουμε κληρονομηση την αιωνιον ζωην – αλλα, ταυτοχρονως, εχουμε αναλαβη την δυναμιν να χαρισουμε σε αλλους το δωρον της ζωης.

Αυτο παρατηρουμε απο την αναγνωσιν της σημερινης Επιστολικης περικοπης εκ των Πραξεων των Αποστολων. Ο Αγιος Πετρος, δια μεσων της πιστεως και της προσευχης, με την δυναμιν του Θεου, εθεραπευε τον Αινεαν και ανεστησε την Ταβηθαν εκ των νεκρων. Απο το αναγνωσμα του κατα Ιωαννην Ευαγγελιου ακουσαμεν το περιστατικο κατα το οποιο ο Χριστος εθεραπευε τον παραλυτον στην κολυμβηθραν <η επιλεγομενη Εβραιστι Βηθθαισδα.>

Αυτο το περιστατικο συμβολιζει το Μυστηριον του Αγιου Βαπτισματος, δια του οποιου εχουμε την αιωνιον ζωην. Πάλι, καταλαβαινουμε οτι ο ρολος μας ως οπαδοι του Χριστου ειναι να χαρισουμεν το δωρον της ζωης σε ολους, ως διδασκαλοι του Ευαγγελιου και ως διαδοχοι των νεοφωτιστων.

Γραφει ο Ιερομοναχος Μαξιμος Αγειορειτης: <Στο βασικο συμβολισμο του βαπτιστικου νερου, Ο Αποστολος Παυλος ερχεται να προσθεση και εναν αλλον: την καταδυση και ανδυση του νεοφωτιστου, που συμβολιζουν την ταφην του μαζι με τον Χριστον και την πνευματικην του αναστασιν... Το βαπτισμα, τελος, ειναι πηγη νεας ζωης, διοτι μας μεταδιδει το Πνευμα του Θεου.> (Οδηγος Σωτηριας, σελ. 72).

Οσο ζουμεν την <εν Χριστω Ζωη>, τοσο χαριζει ο Χριστος σε εμας τις δυναμεις να κανουμεν μικρα και μεγαλα θαυματα προς σωτηριαν αλλων και προς δοξαν Θεου.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

newly baptized individual, which symbolizes his or her burial and resurrection with Christ. In the end, Holy Baptism is the fountain of a new life, because it imparts to us the Spirit of God.” (pg. 72).

At the website: www.pravmir.com/, a website dedicated to “How to be an Orthodox Christian Today,” Fr. Alexander Schmemmann’s words are imparted to all of us as a reminder of the life-giving mission we all have toward each other as a Church. *“To the extent that we live ‘the life in Christ,’ to the same extent, Christ our God imparts to us the powers to perform small and great miracles for the salvation of others and for God’s glory. So, in this particular gospel story, what is eternal and enduring? At its center, very clearly, are the paralytic’s words to Christ, ‘I have no man.’ This truly is the cry of someone who has come to know the terrible power of human selfishness, narcissism. Every man for himself. Looking out for number one. All of them, all that great multitude of blind, sick, paralyzed, are all ‘waiting for the troubling of the waters,’ in other words, waiting for help, concern, healing, comfort. But...each waits by himself, for himself. And when the waters are troubled, each throws himself forward and forgets about the others... From the gospel’s point of view, this pool is of course an image of the world, an image of human society, a symbol of the very organization of human consciousness...But even when someone has apparently overcome personal selfishness, he is still held prisoner by the category of ‘his.’ He may have overcome bondage to himself as an individual, but then it is ‘his’ family, and for ‘his’ family, since ‘charity begins at home.’... It is important to understand that this [self-oriented] kind of religion, in spite of whatever Christian cloak it might be wearing, is in reality not Christianity ... For the whole of Christianity consists of breaking through the terrible walls of self-centeredness, breaking through to that love which, in the words of St Paul, God has ‘poured into our hearts’ (Rom 5:5). That is Christianity’s new, eternal commandment, and the content of the entire gospel and all our faith.”*

Baptism requires us to love one another as Christ loves us. In a certain way, we are all “Godparents” to one another, commending each other to Christ our God. Let us impart the Gospel of Eternal Life with Christ to others, considering each other and our children as “extensions” of our own personal families – as one great family of God.

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: Yvonne and George Flessas, George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Kathy Ligeros, Bob Maverick, Nicholas Kyriakou (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— Shout to God, all the earth. Sing now to His name; give glory to His praise.

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

Verse 2—: Say to God, "How fearful are Your works; in the greatness of Your power Your enemies will lie to You."

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

Verse 3— Let all the earth worship You and sing to You; let them sing to Your name.

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— May God be gracious to us, and bless us; may He cause His face to shine upon us.

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

Verse 2— That we may know His way on the earth, Your salvation among all the Gentiles. Let the peoples give thanks to You, O God; let all the peoples praise You.

Refrain: "Save us, O Son of God, We arose from the dead, we sing to You, Alleluia."

Verse 3— May God bless us, and let all the ends of the earth be in fear of Him.

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...)

HYMNS FOR THE ENTRANCE WITH THE HOLY GOSPEL: ANTIPHON III— Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered, and let those who hate Him flee from before His face. This is the day the Lord made; let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein.

Sunday Resurrection Hymn: Christos Anesti... (Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down upon death and unto those in the tombs, bestowing life.)

Hymn for St. Thomas Sunday: Efrenestho ta ourania [Tone 3]... (Let all things above in heaven rejoice and let all things below on earth be glad. With all the might and strength of His arm an eternal deed the Lord did perform. Beneath His feet He has trampled down death by death and First Born of the dead has He become. From the womb of Hades has He delivered us and to all the world has granted His great redeeming mercy.)

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.")

READINGS: Acts 6: 1-7/ St. Mark 15:43-47; 16: 1-8

Kontakion Hymn: Ei ke en tafo katilthes... (Though You went down into the tomb, O Immortal One, yet You brought down the dominion of Hades; and You rose as the victor, O Christ our God; and You called out "Rejoice" to the Myrrh-bearing women, and gave peace to Your Apostles, O Lord who to the fallen grant resurrection.)

READINGS: Epistle - Acts 9:32-42 / Gospel - St. John 5: 1-5

Instead of "Axion Estin," the following hymn: (The Angel cried aloud to the Lady full of grace: Rejoice, O pure Virgin; and again I say Rejoice. Your Son has resurrected from the grave on the third day. With one voice, O Virgin, we the believers call you blest. O rejoice, You the Lord's gate; city animate, rejoice. Lady, rejoice, for today the light of the resurrection from the dead of the Son whom You have borne, has shone on us.)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ushers: Jim Christopoulos, John Petalas
Greeter: Melissa Hawkins

MEMORIAL – Today’s Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation of **Paraskevi (Paulette) Akrividis (1 year)**, the beloved mother of **Garifalia Jumper**. We pray that our Risen Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ will grant to **Paraskevi Akrividis** Eternal Life and that He will grant peace and comfort to **Garifalia Jumper** and her family. **MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

PHILOPTOCHOS – Please renew your membership; we hope you will join us. See **Linda Kallis or Annette Lewis**. Our last General Meeting of the season was last Monday, May 16. We had a short meeting and then lunch at the Old Spaghetti Factory. It was a nice way to end the season. We will resume our meetings in September. Please support Mochas for Missions by dropping your change into one of the designated cups on the tables in the hall. We need Coffee Hour Hostesses for the month of June. See **Linda Petales** or **Linda Kallis**.

CHOIR- The Choir will be “off” for the summer. The last Sunday for the choir, before the summer break, is: Sunday, May 29, 2016. We welcome congregational singing as we celebrate the Divine Liturgy on Sundays during the summer months.

2016 ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT – We wish to provide an update regarding our recent St. George Golf Tournament. With the receipt of the \$15,000 “Hole-in-One” prize won by Dr. Steve Steele, this year’s Golf Tournament report at this point is as follows:

St. George Golf Tournament Preliminary Figures	
Revenue.....	\$31,372
Expenses.....	\$ 6,033
Net Profit.....	\$25,339

Again, we give thanks to God to George Argyros, Golf Tournament Chairman, and his 2016 Golf Tournament Committee.

SUNDAY SCHOOL – Sunday School “End-of-the-Year” ceremonies will be held following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, June 5, 2016**. As always, our Sunday School “End-of-the-Year” ceremonies are educational and most enjoyable.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

- Tuesday, May 24th.....Bible Study-10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, May 25th.....MID-PENTECOST
Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
- Saturday, May 28th.....No Vespers

*The LADDER for May 2016
is sponsored by
Tillie Lockshire*

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.