

JUNE 25, 2017

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER



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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.*

BLESSED IS THE KINGDOM

"Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages." These are the words with which the celebration of the Divine Liturgy begins. However, there is the question: "In what way are we in the Kingdom of Heaven?" The answer is that Christ our God gives (and still gives) us entrance into God's Kingdom, which is Eternal Life with God. During the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, we point to the words of the Gospel: "You

[O God] are He Who so loved Your world that You gave Your Only-Begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

The Divine Liturgy (as are all of the Sacraments) is the Kingdom of God on earth. As a newly baptized individual comes out of the baptismal font, he or she receives the Body and Blood of Christ. Holy Confession, Marriage, Ordination, Unction – are all related to Holy Communion,
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THE NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Yesterday was the Feast Day of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. St. John's parents, Zechariah or *Zachary* – a Jewish priest – and Elizabeth, were without children and both were beyond the age of child-bearing. During Zechariah's rotation to serve in the Temple in Jerusalem, he was chosen by lot to offer incense at the Golden Altar in the Holy Place. Gabriel appeared to him and announced that he and his wife would give birth to a child, and that they should name him John. However, because Zechariah did not believe the message of Gabriel, he was rendered speechless until the time of John's birth. At that time, his relatives wanted to name the child after his father, and Zechariah wrote, "*His name is John*", whereupon he recovered his ability to speak (Luke 1:5-25; 1:57-66). Following Zechariah's obedience to the command of God, he was given the gift of prophecy, and foretold the future ministry of John (Luke 1:67-79) In our Church, St John the Baptist is usually called St John the Forerunner, a title used also in the West ("*Πρόδρομος*" in Greek). This title indicates that the purpose of his ministry was to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus Christ.

– taken, in part, from the internet



<Ευλογημενη η Βασιλεια του Πατρος και του Υιου και του Αγιου Πνευματος...> Αυτα ειναι τα λογια με τα οποια αρχιζει η τελετη της Θ. Λειτουργιας. Ομως, υπαρχει ενα ερωτημα: Πως ετσι ευρισκομεθα στην Βασιλειαν του Θεου; Η απαντησις ειναι οτι ο Θεανθρωπος Χριστος εχαρισε (και χαριζει) σε εμας εισοδον στην Βασιλειαν Του, αφου κατα την τελετην της Θ. Λειτουργιας αναφερομεν τα λογια του Ευαγγελιου: <[Συ]...ος τον κοσμον σου ουτως ηγαπησας, ωστε τον Υιον σου τον Μονογενη δουναι, ινα πας ο πιστευων εις Αυτον μη αποληται αλλα εχη ζωην αιωνιον.>

Η αιωνια ζωη ειναι μια ατελειωτη ζωη της Θ. Λειτουργιας, η οποια περιλαμβανει ολα τα αλλα Μυστηρια της Εκκλησιας. Ο νεοφωτιστος, μολις βγαινει απο την κολημβηθραν, μεταλαμβανει το Τιμιον Σωμα και Αιμα του Χριστου. Η Εξομολογησις, ο Γαμος, η Ιεροσυνη, το Ευχελαιον – ολα σχετιζονται με την Θειαν Κοινωνιαν, η οποια ειναι ο καρπος της τελετης της Θ. Λειτουργιας.

Η τελετη της Θ. Λειτουργιας, ειναι τελετη μεσα στην οποιαν ανανεωνουμεν την ψυχικην μας ζωην, ετσι ωστε να τελεσει ο καθενας τα εργα του Θεου καθως συναναστρεφεται με τον κοσμον καθημερινως. Δια των Αγιων Μυστηριων της Εκκλησιας, εφαρμοζουμεν στις κουβεντες και στις πραξεις μας την αγαπην του Θεου την οποιαν γνωριζουμεν στο Προσωπον του Χριστου. Συνεπως, η πιστις μας στον Χριστον ζωντανευεται δια μεσων των λογων και εγρων με βασην της αγαπης του Θεου.
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

which is the fruit of the Divine Liturgy.

The celebration of the Divine Liturgy is a Sacrament in which we renew our spiritual lives so that we can do God's work as we interact with people on a daily basis. Through the Holy Sacraments, we put God's love, seen in the Person of Christ, into practice through our words and deeds. It follows that our faith in Christ becomes alive through words and deeds based upon God's love. In short, faith is not a static credo, but an entire life-style – a life in God's Kingdom.

The Gospel lesson for today comes alive in the words of the Divine Liturgy's Cherubic Hymn: "...Let us set aside all the worldly cares of life so that we may receive the King of all." Indeed, receiving the King is tantamount to entering His Kingdom. Hence, the words of our Lord in today's Gospel remind us of a reality we cannot live in two kingdoms. Either we will be in one kingdom or we will dwell in another. This is a reality that seems so evident, yet people throughout history have not wanted to accept it. As a result, the world is filled with the very anxiety about which our Lord speaks.

The cause of much anxiety in life is found in our general lack of spiritual discernment. With this in mind, St. John writes in his First Universal Epistle, "Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world." (1 John 4: 1). Through the grace of the Holy Spirit we come to know the reality of our lives in the context of God's creation and love. That is, we experience "glimpses" of God's Kingdom in this present life. This experience comes through prayer and worship.

In this experience, we see the difference between self will and God's Will. It is, in other words, the difference between "need" and "greed." The necessity of food and clothing is found in the goal of working with God so that the Kingdom of God can be on earth as it is in heaven. Having faith in God gives way to love and peace. Having anxiety over worldly cares gives way to the unrest in our world.

Spiritual discernment through prayer allows us to also understand ourselves in light of God's love. While faith helps us to do good deeds, anxiety tempts us to do evil deeds. Faith also allows us to accept God's forgiveness and to grant forgiveness to others, which is part of the Lord's Prayer, asking God: "Thy Kingdom come." This is why the priest during the Great Entrance calls to mind the words of the thief on the cross, exclaiming, "May the Lord our God remember us all in His Kingdom now and forever..."

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Kathy Ligeros, Nicholas Kyriakou, Argyroula Krespis (Nick Krespis' mother), Constantine Papapetru, Erika Aguilar, Nicholas Coussoulis, Mary Mitsias, Nula Papapetru, Jim Alex, Jean Chronis-Kuhn (*Many 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—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: *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."*

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

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

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

Refrain: *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston"*

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 Ie 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 Yio ke Aghio Pnevmati ke nin ke aei ke eis tous aonas ton aonon. Amin. *"O Monogenis Yios ke Logos tou Theou..."*

ANTIPHON III—This is the day the Lord made; let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein.

Sunday Hymn : *Ote katilthes pros ton thanaton [Tone 2]... (When You descended to the realm of death, You, as Life Immortal, rendered to Hades a mortal blow by Your all-radiant divinity. And when You, from the inner depths and the darkness below did raise the dead, all the hosts of heavens did proclaim and cry out: O Life-giving Christ and our God we give glory.)*

Hymn for St. George : *Os ton ehmaloton eleftherotis... (Since you are a deliverer of captives and a defender of the poor; a physician for the sick and a noble attendant to kings, O Great among the Martyrs and Glorious George, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.)*

Kontakion Hymn: *Prostasia ton Christianon... (O Protection of Christians unshamable, mediation with the Creator immovable, we sinners beg you, do not despise the voices of our prayers, but anticipate, since you are good, and swiftly come unto our aid as we cry out to you with faith: Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who defend now and ever those who honor you.)*

READINGS: *Epistle:-Romans 5: 1-11 / Gospel-St. Matthew 6: 22-33*

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is celebrated

Communion Hymn: *"Enite ton Kyron ek ton ouranon. Enite Afton en tis ipsisteis, Alleluia." (Praise the Lord from the heaven. Praise Him in the highest. Alleluia)*

"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the well-spring of life"
Proverbs 4:23



ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Coffee Hour: The Philoptochos Coffee Hour is sponsored by:
Christina and Mike Long in memory of Frank and Helen Long**

MEMORIAL – Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Evangelos Stambolos**, the beloved husband of **Pricilla Stambolos**, the father of **Sharon Stambolos** and 4 step-children, grandfather of 5 grandchildren, and brother of **Angela Manolakas**, **Irene Stambolos** and **Vera Manolakas**. We pray that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ grants the Eternal Rest and salvation for **Evangelos Stambolos** and that He grants peace and comfort to the entire family . **MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

AHEPA – We welcome delegates for the AHEPA Family District 20 Convention which was held in Indian Wells this past week .

PHILOPTOCHOS – We are updating our Philoptochos directory. Members in good standing will be listed. If you have not renewed your membership by the end of the month, you will not be in the directory. Make your check payable to Philoptochos for \$45.00 and mail it to the office by June 30. Thank you. We now have sponsors for July and August for Coffee Hour. If you would like to sponsor a Coffee Hour in September see Linda Kallis or Athena Snarskis.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Fr. Ted will be away Monday to Saturday, June 26-July 1, returning to celebrate the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, July 2. In the event of emergency, feel free to contact Fr. David Kruse of St. Raphael Antiochian Orthodox Church in Thousand Palms (760) 408-6116) or Fr. Andrew Lesko of St. Nicholas Church in Temecula (909) 224-5046. My cell phone number is (760) 880-5869.

"Then the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to His Disciples, was taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it. Amen."

--St. Mark 16: 20

*The Ladder for the month of June 2017 is
donated by
Mr. & Mrs. William G. Barringer
"We thank God for our Anniversary, and
for His healing miracles!"*

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.