

**MAY 28, 2017**

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

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# THE LADDER

*THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL*



## **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.*

## **WHAT IS ETERNAL LIFE?**

The Saints of the First Ecumenical Council, whom we commemorate today, gave the world a good example of the proper analysis of the Bible. In this they offered the example of the living application of Biblical teachings affecting our own mentality. Indeed, this mentality is a “spiritual mentality,” because in all that we do, we include God as the loving Person to Whom we commend ourselves through worship and in our relationships with our fellow human beings.

Analyzing today’s Gospel passage, these Saints remind us that the unity that we are to have among us in our Faith in Christ, is what unites us with God, Who is One God in Three Persons. This reality is expressed when we say the Nicene Creed during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Christ is, *“Light of Light...(and) of the same essence with the Father.”* This expression of truth is based on Christ’s words, *“[Holy Father] for those who do believe...that they may be*  
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## **THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**

The council was summoned in the year 325 by the Emperor St. Constantine the Great, assembled according to tradition on May 20 of 325. Early on, the Hierarchs and theologians in attendance faced a certain presbyter by the name of Arius, who questioned the divinity of Christ, suggesting that if Jesus was born, then there was a time when He did not exist. If He became God, then there was time when He was not. The Council declared Arius' teaching a heresy, unacceptable to the Church and decreed that Christ is God. In addressing this issue, the framework was laid for composing the Nicene Creed, which introduced the famous word, *homoousios*, a philosophical term meaning that the Son of God is of *one essence* with the Father. A number of renowned Saints were also present: Sts. Athanasius the Great, Nicholas of Myra, Spyridon of Trimythous, Alexander of Alexandria, and Paphnutius of Egypt.

This ecumenical council was the first effort to attain consensus in the Church through an assembly representing all of Christendom. St. Hosius of Cordoba, was one of the Papal legates and appeared to have *presided* over its deliberations. The main accomplishments of the First Ecumenical Council were: the construction of the first part of the Nicene Creed and establishing uniform observance of the date of Easter. In addition, Early Christian Canon Law took its beginnings with this Council.



Οι Άγιοι της Πρώτης Οικουμενικής Σύνοδου έδωσαν στον κόσμο καλό παράδειγμα της σωστής ανάλυσης της Αγίας Γραφής και της ζωντανής εφαρμογής της σε σχέση με την νοοτροπία μας. Η νοοτροπία αυτή είναι <πνευματική νοοτροπία,> διότι όλες οι υποθέσεις της ζωής μας περιλαμβάνουν τον Θεό ως αγαπητό Πρόσωπο στον Όποιον παραδίδωμεν τον εαυτόν μας δια μέσων της λατρείας και της στασεως μας απέναντι στους συνανθρώπους μας.

Αναλύοντας την σημερινή Ευαγγελική περικοπή, οι Άγιοι αυτοί μας υπενθυμίζουν ότι η ενότης αναμεταξύ μας με την Πίστη μας στον Χριστόν μας ενώνει με τον Θεόν, ο Όποιος είναι ο Ίδιος Θεός σε Τρία Πρόσωπα. Αυτή η αλήθεια εκφράζεται όταν εκφωνούμε <το Πίστευω> κατά την τελετή της Θείας Λειτουργίας. Ο Χριστός είναι <Φως εκ Φωτός ...(και) ομοούσιος τῷ Πατρὶ.> Αυτή η εκφραση της αληθείας βασιλεύει στα λόγια του Χριστού: <[Πατερ Ἅγιε ἐρώτω] περὶ τῶν πιστευόντων... ἵνα πάντες ἐνωσῶν, καθὼς Σὺ, Πατερ, ἐν ἔμοι, καὶ ἐν Σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ἐνωσῶν, ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεῦσῃ ὅτι Σὺ με ἀπέστηλας.> (Ἰωάν. 17: 20-21).

Στην απορία σε σχέση με τον τόπον του Παραδείσου, ο Χριστός είπε: <Αὕτη δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ, ἵνα γινώσκωσιν Σὲ τὸν Μόνον Ἀληθινὸν Θεὸν καὶ ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.> (Ἰωάν. 17:3). Καὶ στην απορία σε σχέση με το Πρόσωπο του Χριστού, ο Ίδιος εἶπε: <Νῦν δοξάσον Με Σὺ, Πατερ, παρὰ σεαυτῷ τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον προ τοῦ κόσμου εἶναι παρὰ Σοί.> (Ἰωάν. 17:5).

Ο Χριστός *εἶναι* ἡ δόξα του Θεού Πατρός. Ὅτι θελεῖ νὰ ἐκδηλωθεῖ ἡ δόξα Του σε ἐμᾶς, εἶναι μὴ ἀποκαλύψη τῆς ἀνθρωπίας Του. Ἡ δόξα Του <προ τοῦ κόσμου εἶναι> δείχνει ὅτι εἶναι ὁ Ἀληθινὸς Θεός, καὶ τὸ Ἅγιο Πνεῦμα ἀποκαλύπτει συνεχῶς τὸ γεγονός ὅτι ὁ Χριστός εἶναι ὁ Ἀληθινὸς Θεός.  
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

*One, as You are in Me, as I am in You, that they may be one in Us, so that the world may know that You sent Me.”* (St. John 17: 20-21).

To the mystery regarding the *place* of Paradise, Christ said, “*This is Eternal Life, that they may know You the Only True God and Him Whom You sent, Jesus Christ.*” (St. John 17: 3). To the issue of Christ’s identity as a Person, our Lord said, “*And now glorify Me, O Father, with the glory that I have with You even before the world was made.*” (St. John 17:5).

Christ is the glory of God the Father. That He wants His glory to be made manifest to us reveals His full humanity (since He appears in human flesh). The glory that He has “even before the world was made” shows that He is True God.

The role of the Holy Spirit is to constantly reveal the fact that Christ is the True God. The greatest part of our commemoration of the Saints is that we acknowledge the fact that the Holy Spirit has guided their analysis of Holy Scripture so that there is no misinterpretation of God’s teachings. It is the Holy Spirit that imparted wisdom to them and it is the Holy Spirit that continues to guide us in our lives with Godly wisdom, if only we seek it through prayer, worship and by studying the lives of the Saints and the Bible itself.

Commemoration of the Saints today is preparation for Pentecost Sunday, which will be our experience next Sunday. We will experience the hymns and prayers of the Divine Liturgy as a part of our very being—much like we experience our own breathing and the beating of our hearts. As we ask that the Holy Spirit descend upon us, our thoughts go to the Saints, as we ponder how the Holy Spirit enlightened them. We also know that we, too, can be given the same Divine wisdom for our lives.

Too often we cannot understand the answers to our prayers, because our souls are crowded with so many obstacles, such as guilt over our sins; resentment over some perceived unfairness; ambition for worldly possessions and glory, etc. We need to clean all of that out of our souls, if we are to know the answers to prayer. The prayers of Pentecost direct us to do just that. In so doing, we can find the grace of the Holy Spirit giving us new life in Christ; new hope for our future; new strength against our fears. Indeed, we always find Christ in each present moment, which always holds the balance of our lives in its hands. In every moment that we can experience the presence of Christ we also find Eternal Life and Paradise.

+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, Tillie Lockshire, 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—**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:** *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."*

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

**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"*

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**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 aneliftheis 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 from us in glory into the heavens, we sing to You, Alleluia."*

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

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

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**ANTIPHON III—**Hear this, all you nations; give ear, all you inhabitants of the world. I will incline my ear to a parable; I will open my riddle on the harp.

**HYMN FOR THE ASCENSION:** *Aneliftheis en doxi Christe o Theos...(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.)*

**Sunday Hymn :** *Angelike dynameis [Tone 6]... (When the angelic powers appeared at Your tomb and those who guarded You became as though dead and standing by Your sepulcher was Mary seek-ing Your pure and sacred body. For, You did vanquish Hades and, uncorrupted by its touch, You came unto the Virgin Woman bestowing the gift of life, O You Who arose from the dead. Lord we give glory to You.)*

**Hymn for the Holy Fathers ...** *Yper-theh-doxasmenos iparcheis...(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... (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 God that He may save our souls.)*

**Sunday Kontakion Hymn:** *Tin iper 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*  
*The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is celebrated*

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



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Coffee Hour:** Today Philoptochos' Coffee Hour is sponsored by:  
**Chris and Annette Laskaris:** In memory of Chris Laskaris' brother Demetrios.  
**Mike and Christina Long:** In memory of all who died defending our nation.  
**Debbie Pousen:** In memory of her brother.

**MEMORIAL** – Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Life and Salvation for the servants of God, **Michael Ligeros (40 days)**, the beloved husband of **Kathy Ligeros**, and **Demetrios Laskaris (40 days)**, the beloved brother of **Christ Laskaris**. We pray that our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ will grant Eternal Life and Salvation to **Michael Ligeros** and **Demetrios Laskaris** and that He grant peace and comfort to **Kathy Ligeros**, **Chris Laskaris** and their entire families. **MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE ETERNAL!**

**PHILOPTOCHOS** – We will be updating our Philoptochos Directory this summer. All members in good standing will be listed. If you are considering renewing your membership or becoming a new member, see Linda Kallis or Linda Petalas. You may also mail your check (made out to Philoptochos) to the office. Please sign up in the next few weeks so we can include you in the directory. We need Coffee Hour Sponsors for the month of July. See Athena Snarskis or Linda Kallis.

**ORTHODOX CEMETERY PLOTS** – The deadline for purchasing cemetery plots at impressive discount rates at Desert Memorial Park in Cathedral City has been extended. **The new deadline is: June 7, 2017.** It is projected that spaces will be completely sold by then. Please see the enclosed flier explaining the details for purchasing these Orthodox cemetery plots.

**SEEKING NEW "YIAYIA" TO CHAIR YIAYIA'S ATTIC FOR 2018 FESTIVAL** – Please contact **Becky Allen** for more information.

## WEEKDAY SERVICES

Monday, May 29th.....Memorial Day (office closed)  
Tuesday, May 30th.....Bible Study-10:00 a.m.  
Men's Bible Study-6:30 p.m. (Acts 2: 1-24)  
Thursday, June 1st.....Choir Practice -1:00 p.m.  
Parish Council - 6:30 p.m.  
Saturday, June 3rd.....SATURDAY OF SOULS  
Orthros-8:30 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.  
Vespes-5:00 p.m.

**Next Sunday, June 4th:**  
**Pentecost Sunday.** Orthros will begin at 8:00 a.m.; the Divine Liturgy will begin around 9:15 a.m. The Pentecost Kneeling Service will follow the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at about 10:30 a.m.

*The Ladder for the month of May 2017 is  
donated 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.

# **Desert Memorial Park**

## **Orthodox Cemetery Plots**

**31-705 Da Vall Drive**  
**Cathedral City, Ca 92234**  
**760-328-3316**

- Plots are \$1585 per plot**
- For an additional \$100 and 30% down you can have 18 months to pay off your plot.**
- All contracts are individual and must be purchased at Desert Memorial by JUNE 7<sup>th</sup> to be grouped together in the Orthodox section.**
- The Orthodox section will be blessed as an Orthodox Cemetery as Holy Ground.**
- When contacting Desert Memorial speak with Stephanie or John and ask for the Orthodox section**