



JUNE 2024

VOICE OF ST. GEORGE

**SAINT GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT
74-109 LARREA ST.,
PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA**



THE GOOD NEWS

Inside this Issue

Christ's Resurrection from the dead means that we are all given Eternal Life -- that, for every one of us, death has "lost its sting," as St. John Chrysostom would say. Indeed, we are grateful to God, Who has done all things to lead us to His Kingdom. Our gratitude is expressed as *joy* in sharing God's love. The *joy* is found in our comprehension that sharing God's love is a *privilege* and an *honor*. This is the blessing that is given to us through the virtue of love as it is described by St. Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter 13 -- that love is a sacrifice for all good things unto God's glory.

This "joyful gratitude" to God the Father was first expressed by Christ God Himself. At the Last Supper "[The Lord] thanks God the Father for the salvation that He Himself will grant to the world. This salvation is included in its entirety in this Mystery...the Holy Mystery called Thanksgiving [Eucharist]." (*The Heavenly Banquet*, by Fr. Emmanuel Hatzidakis, pg. 244). This is the basis of our union with Christ and with each other -- that we are grateful to God, as God is grateful for us - for our personal salvation, as we, with God, seek the salvation of whole world.

As our Lord was grateful for the participation of His Disciples in the Last Supper, we are grateful for each oth-

er's participation in the Sacramental life of the Church.

With the celebration of **Pentecost on June 23rd**, we will mystically re-live the event of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, taking upon ourselves the life and ministry of the Apostles in our present world, as we open our hearts and souls to the grace of the Holy Spirit and continue the soul-saving ministry of our Savior as His Apostles as members of His Holy Church.

+FR. THEODORE
SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS by
Deacon Euthym

"Everything, the merest trifles, even the smoke of a candle blowing on him, irritates and angers the impatient man, because he is very self-loving, and cares much for the welfare and comfort of his carnal man, which he ought oftener to crucify in different ways..." Righteous John, Wonderworker of Kronstadt

When we find ourselves irritable at the smallest of things... it is time for a self-assessment. We are impatient and short tempered when we are filled with self love. Nothing is good enough for us. We don't appreciate those who love us, who work with and for us. We care for our own needs and desires and ignore what might harm others, or

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SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS, continued

what is right, honest and true. Righteous John is giving us a tool to measure ourselves. We should die to the worldly man and live for our true self, the one created in the image and likeness of God, not for God's sake but for our own. It is a miserable existence when we become our own god. But it is joy and peace when we align our will with God's will and strive for oneness with Him.

"There is nothing better than peace in Christ, for it brings victory over all the evil spirits on earth and in the air. When peace dwells in a man's heart it enables him to contemplate the grace of the Holy Spirit from within. He who dwells in peace collects spiritual gifts as it were with a scoop, and he sheds the light of knowledge on others. All our thoughts, all our desires, all our efforts, and all our actions should make us say constantly with the Church: "O Lord, give us peace!" When a man lives in peace, God reveals mysteries to him.."- St. Seraphim of Sarov

When Christ resurrected and first saw His disciples, He said, "My peace I give to you". The peace of Christ is what defeats evil. As Christian's we are in a war with evil. Christ reminds us that we are guaranteed victory in Him. In this way, we always have peace and can rest in our Lord without fear. We then are no longer limited by the constraints of this world, and we are open to witness and receive His holy Mysteries the more we desire His peace and seek it. "Peace be with you"

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

As reported in our St. George Philoptochos June 2024 newsletter, *Philo Strong...*

Starting this **June 30th through July 4th, the Philoptochos National Convention** will be held in San Diego. Chapter delegates that will be attending the convention are President **Rhonda Latkovic** and Vice-President(s) **Margarita Pagoulatos** and **Irene Stambolos**. The convention is held every two years.

Now is the time to join or re-new your annual Philoptochos Chapter membership. We currently have 70 total chapter members! We will be pub-

lishing a **new directory for our chapter** that will be available this fall. Directory committee members will soon be contacting all current members to verify their information that will be included in the directory.

Our Philoptochos Chapter sponsored another successful **"Sip & Paint"** on Sunday May 19th! Attendees delighted in designing floral decorated tote bags. The session, led by **Louka**, was enjoyed by all. The tote bags, artificial flowers, and glue guns were provided to the attendees in order to create their custom tote bag. Light refreshments & snacks were served. We will be pausing these sessions during the summer months and re-starting them in the September/October period, date to yet be determined. Please join us in the future!

Our chapter presented the Indio, CA **"Narrow Door"** food bank with total donations of **\$ 1,600 on May 3rd, Great & Holy Friday**. The donation included \$ 500 from the Philoptochos treasury and \$1,100 that was collected from donations for the Palm Sunday fish luncheon. The food bank was very grateful for our support and will use the funds to supply food boxes for 400 families who experience food insecurity in our East Valley. We wish to acknowledge and thank **His Grace, Bishop Spyridon** for inspiring the **Palm Sunday luncheon donation**. In addition the food bank is in need of volunteer assistance to build the food boxes in the month of June. Philoptochos is in need of volunteers for **Saturday, June 15th from 8:45-11:45 AM** to help work in their warehouse to build the food boxes. We have a sign-up sheet set up in the church hall. So far, we have about 15 members signed up to assist. We would love to have double that amount! Please consider helping us with this life saving outreach and get to know our community partners that are making a difference for those less fortunate.

AHEPA NEWS

Congratulations to our **AHEPA 528 Chapter President, Wynn Storton**, who is honored by our **AHEPA District 20** for being the recipient of the **Periclean award**. The Periclean award is given annually to a Greek Orthodox Christian of sterling character, whose life and work manifests consistent and profound devotion to our Holy Orthodox Faith, and is most dedicated in support of Hellenic values.

On another note, the **AHEPA Western Regional District Convention** will be held in Reno, Nevada from **June 9th-June 12, 2024**. For more information, contact: ahepa-wrdc.org/.

ARCHDIOCESE CLERGY-LAITY CONGRESS

His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos is asking each of our San Francisco Metropolis parishes to offer a donation toward the success of the Archdiocese **Clergy-Laity Congress**, which will take place in San Diego from June 30th - July 4th. **Our immediate attention to this request prior to the June 7 deadline** would be most appreciated. We are asked to contribute **\$1,000 or more** by June 7th. With a contribution of **\$2,500**, our St. George parish will be recognized as a contributor along with the other parishes of our Metropolis.

GREEK ORTHODOX YOUTH SUMMER CAMPS

This year we find that our area Greek Orthodox youth summer camps – **St. Sophia Summer Camp near San Bernardino** and **St. Nicholas Summer Camp near Fresno** – are already sold out with campers from last year returning for this year's camping season.

However, **both summer camps are accepting applicants to be placed on a waiting list** with the anticipation that some who have indicated that they are returning to summer camp this year may change their mind, due changes in family plans or summer job status (for the older teenagers).

Given herein are the websites for both St. Sophia Summer Camp and St. Nicholas Summer Camp. For those interested in our Church summer camp programs near us, it's worth looking into.

<https://www.saintsophiacamp.org>

<https://gosfyouth.org/summer-camp-2024>

PARISH CALENDAR – JUNE 2024

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

Tuesdays, June 4th, June 11th, June 18th & June 25th.....Bible Study-10:00 a.m.

Wednesdays, June 5th, June 12th, June 19th & June 26th....Orthodox Christian Catechism (online)-6:30 p.m. Send an email to our parish email address at pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com to receive a Zoom link.

Thursday, June 13th.....ASCENSION OF OUR LORD: Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Saturday, June 22nd.....SATURDAY OF SOULS: Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Sunday, June 23rd.....PENTECOST SUNDAY: Orthros-8:00 a.m. followed by the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and the "Office of the Great Vespers of Pentecost (The Kneeling)" [Abridged]

Monday, June 24th.....FEAST DAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30

Saturday, June 29th.....STS. PETER & PAUL: Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Η Ανάστασις του Χριστού εκ των νεκρών σημαίνει ότι η Αιώνιον Ζωή δίνεται σε όλους μας -- ότι, για τον καθένα μας, ο θάνατος έχει «χάσει τη δύναμή του», όπως θα έλεγε ο Άγ. Ιωάννης ο Χρυσόστομος. Πράγματι, πρέπει να είμεθα ευγνώμονες στον Θεό, που έκανε τα πάντα για να μας φέρει στη Βασιλεία Του. Η ευγνωμοσύνη μας εκφράζεται από τη χαρά που έχουμε όταν δείχνουμε την αγάπη του Θεού σε άλλους. Αυτή η χαρά ευρίσκεται στην κατανόησή μας ότι είναι για εμάς προνόμιο και τιμή να δείξουμε την αγάπη του Θεού. Αυτή είναι η ευλογία που έρχεται σε εμάς μέσω της αρετής της αγάπης όπως την περιγράφει ο Άγιος Παύλος στην Πρώτη Επιστολή του προς τους Κορινθίους, Κεφάλαιο 13 – η αγάπη είναι θυσία για κάθε καλό προς δόξαν Θεού.

Αυτή η «χαρμόσυνη ευγνωμοσύνη» προς τον Θεό εκφράστηκε για πρώτη φορά από τον Ίδιο τον Χριστό. Στον Μυστικό Δείπνο «[Ο Κύριος] ευχαρίστησε τον Θεό Πατέρα για τη σωτηρία που θα χαρίσει ο Ίδιος στον κόσμο. Αυτή η σωτηρία υπάρχει στο σύνολό της σε αυτό το Μυστήριο...[δηλαδή] στο Μυστήριο της Θείας Ευχαριστίας». (*The Heavenly Banquet*, υπό π. Εμμανουήλ Χατζηδάκη, σελ. 244). Αυτή είναι η βάση της ενώσεώς μας με τον Χριστό και της ενώσεώς μας με τους συνανθρώπους μας - ότι ευχαριστούμε τον Θεό - για την προσωπική μας σωτηρία, καθώς εργαζόμεθα μαζί Του για την σωτηρία όλου του κόσμου.

Καθώς ο Χριστός ήταν ευγνώμων για τη συμμετοχή των Μαθητών Του στον Μυστικό Δείπνο, είμεθα ευγνώμονες ο ένας για τη συμμετοχή του άλλου στα Μυστήρια της Εκκλησίας.

Με τον εορτασμό της Πεντηκοστής στις 23 Ιουνίου, θα ξαναζήσουμε κατά μυστικό τρόπο το γεγονός της εκχύσεως του Αγίου Πνεύματος στους Αποστόλους. Θα αναλαμβάνουμε τον τρόπο ζωής και τη διακονία των Αποστόλων στον σημερινό μας κόσμο, καθώς ανοίγουμε τις καρδιές και τις ψυχές μας για να δεχθούμε την χάρη του Αγίου Πνεύματος. Επίσης, θα συνεχίσουμε την ψυχοσωτήρια διακονία του Σωτήρος μας ως μέλη της Αγίας Αυτού Εκκλησίας. +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMNET

We thank God for the efforts of **George Argyros** and **Nicholas Speliopoulos** for leading the way in making our **St. George Annual Golf Tournament a huge success**. Over **60 golfers** participated in the tournament **held on May 18th at Eldorado Country Club in Indian Wells** (with an “overflow” number of golfers who participated by playing at Desert Horizons Golf and Country Club). In addition, somewhere around **200 guests** enjoyed the delicious **Greek-style Golf Tournament Awards Dinner** at our St. George parish hall following the tournament. This number of guests is the most in many, many years! Congratulations to George Argyros, Nicholas Speliopoulos and the entire Golf Tournament committee for making this year’s tournament as resounding success!

PICTURES, PICTURES, PICTURES –

Pictures from our 2024 Greek Festival, Holy Paschal Services and Golf Tournament will be available over the summer as we re-format our publications going into the Fall. Work is also being done to prepare a “collage of pictures” for viewing in our parish hall. We look forward to seeing all of our parishioners in the pictures of our parish life.