



OCTOBER 2024

VOICE OF ST. GEORGE

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



THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY UNCTION

Inside this Issue

This year, on **Wednesday, October 23rd**, we will commemorate **St. James the Brother of our Lord**, the first bishop of Jerusalem. Included in the Bible is *The Epistle of St. James*, through which he reminded the people of his time—as he reminds us today — that faith without good works means nothing. Faith in God is not simply a philosophical matter; it is to be lived and seen through our words and deeds. The rich availability to each of us (and to all of us) of God’s Grace does not nullify our personal responsibility to act according to God’s Commandments.

Furthermore, our prayers are to be consistent with our words and actions. In fact, prayer takes on a living power when our actions are based on the prayers that we hold in our hearts.

Given this understanding, St. James concluded his epistle with words related to our efforts to bring healing to ourselves and others. *“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.”* (St. James 5:13-15).

Calling for the elders (i.e., the priests) is tantamount to calling the entire Church to our aid, in that the clergy represent the members of the Church community. The clergy also represent the theological and moral teachings of the Church, given by our Savior and His Apostles. Our *personal* salvation involves our entire personhood — body and soul. The Sacrament of Holy Unction, therefore, has as its purpose the *healing* of body and soul.

The oil that is used for Holy Unction is oil that carries the prayers of the entire Church, calling upon our Lord to heal physical as well as spiritual wounds. Indeed, prayer in the Name of Christ our God truly holds divine power. Oil was widely used in ancient times to soothe the pains of illness or injury. The pure oil given by the high priest among the Chosen People was used in the miracle recorded in the Old Testament Book of Maccabees, which confirmed God’s Will that the people should worship Him in the Temple of Jerusalem. Hence, the oil represents the Grace of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

In that many of our physical ailments are the result of personal sins or the “collective sins” of society, forgiveness of sins is part of the healing process.
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HOLY UNCTION, Continued

In essence, the purpose of physical health is to do good deeds for the love and glory of God. The purpose of health is not to continue in sins, which only serve to undermine our own health and the health of others. The prayers of the Sacrament of Holy Unction include prayers for the healing of physical ailments, as well as for the forgiveness of sins. Repentance means *"a change of thinking,"* such that we are sorry for the wrongs that we have committed *so that we make sincere efforts to avoid committing the same wrongs in the future.* Hence, forgiveness and repentance are part of the same fabric – and the added purpose of health for which the Sacrament of Holy Unction is performed is to grant us time in this present life for repentance.

+FR. THEODORE

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our first **Family Sunday School** program will take place following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, October 13th.** The Sunday School "Service Project" for October is to help our Philoptochos members in their effort to donate needed socks to those in need. This effort is known to us as the **"Sock-Tober" Project.**

The theme for the 2024-2025 Sunday School season is: **"Who is God? Who am I? and Who is My Neighbor?"** In addition, we want to welcome to our Sunday School staff, **Nicole Nassar**, who has served as a camp counselor at St. Sophia Summer Camp this past summer. Along with Nicole, **Athena Snarskis** and **Pres. Pres. Petula Pantels**, along with **Alexandra Pappas**, continue to serve in maintaining this vital ministry of our parish.

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

At least three more volunteers are needed to offer blankets to those confined in hospital or convalescent settings. No sewing is required. Fabrics are "tied" together forming a **"No-Sew" blanket.**

The Philoptochos **"Sock-Tober" Project** is well underway in collecting donations of men and/or women's socks for distribution to those in need. Please note the "Sock-Tober" flyer available in our parish hall.

This Sunday is the deadline to register for the annual **"Paint El Paseo Pink" Walk (\$40)** in support of cancer research, which will take place on **Saturday, October 19th.** Help will be available this Sunday to register online!

To register for the "Paint El Paseo Pink" Walk and to volunteer for the "No-Sew" blanket project, as well as for more information regarding the Fall Philoptochos schedule of events, please contact our Philoptochos President, **Rhonda Latkovic.**

ST. GEORGE GREEK FESTIVAL

Preparations for our 2025 St. George Greek Festival are underway! **Festival chairman, George Argyros**, invites us all to a special Festival Meeting on **October 14th at 4:00 p.m.**

Discussions will center around the need for volunteer help; health code requirements; lay-out and the Clover credit card system. Publicity for the Festival will include visibility on our parish website; social media and the publication of flyers to be posted throughout the community.

ST. GEORGE FALL PARISH RETREAT

Sign-up is coming due for all who want to join in visiting **St. Anthony Monastery** in Florence, Arizona from **Friday, October 25th to Saturday, October 26th.** A "Sign - up" sheet is available in our parish hall (on the coffee counter). Sign-up can also be recorded by **sending an email to Fr. Ted at pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com.** **An important meeting** with Fr. Ted will be held on **Sunday, October 6th** (following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy), which will include discussions related to transportation, as well as a review of the *"Official Rules of Behavior"* while visiting **St. Anthony Monastery."**

BAPTISM & CHRISMATION

Many blessings to **Denise Bystrzycki**, who became an Orthodox Christian by **chrismation** on **Sunday, September 22nd.** **Eva Canakis** served as her sponsor. We also wish many blessings to **Shawn Wanta** who was **baptized** as an Orthodox Christian on **Sunday, September 29th.** **Denise Bystrzycki** served as Godmother.

PARISH ELECTIONS

Our Fall General Assembly will be held next month (in November). It is important for everyone to understand from now that those volunteering or being nominated for candidacy to serve as **members of the 2025 Parish Council** must have a **background check**; must complete **Youth Safety online training** and must be **fingerprinted** through the California state **Live Scan** program.

These are additional requirements to serve as a member of the Parish Council. **Requirements** to serve already include, **having been baptized, chrismated and married** (if married) according to the **Rites of the Greek Orthodox Church** and being a **regular participant in the worship and liturgical life** of the Greek Orthodox Church.

SOUND SYSTEM

The Parish Council has agreed that an upgrade is needed for **our sound system**. To make the necessary improvements, it will require a new system that will improve the quality of sound for our worship services, allow more flexibility for use by clergy and chanters, and feed into the parish hall, if needed. We are hoping to present the costs for the installation of a new sound system at our Fall General Assembly meeting.

A handsome donation among those who agree that we need a new system has already been made and we look forward to receiving more donations. If anyone wants to donate toward the costs for a new sound system (which would be in thousands of dollars), it will be a blessing for our parish as a whole. For more information, contact **Peter Snarskis** at psnarskis@aol.com. A full report for approval will be given to our parish General Assembly in November.

BELLS ACROSS AMERICA WAS A SUCCESS

On **Tuesday, September 17th**, our parish hosted the local **Daughters of the American Revolution** Chapter for a program observing the **237th Anniversary of the Signing of the U.S. Constitution**. A fabulous luncheon was provided by **Rhonda Latkovic**, who herself is a descendent of those

who fought in the American Revolution. Parishioners who welcomed our guests (local dignitaries), as well as the guests themselves enjoyed the festivities.



The members of local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution honored our parish with their presence on Tuesday, September 17th in observance of the anniversary of the Signing of the U. S. Constitution. From left to right: Rhonda Latkovic, representing our parish; Jan Harnik, Mayor Pro Tem of Palm Desert; Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter Vice Regent, Janet Dagley and Palm Desert City Council Representative, Kathleen Kelly.

ON FAITH--"It is good that we make God's mercy known to all and speak to those close to us of the compassion and inexpressible bounty He has shown us. For as you know I neither fasted, nor kept vigils, nor slept on bare ground, but -- to borrow the Psalmist's words - 'I humbled myself,' and, in short, 'the Lord saved me.'

Or, to put it even more briefly, I did no more than believe and the Lord accepted me (Ps. 116). Many things stand in the way of our acquiring humility, but there is nothing that prevents us from having faith. For if we want it with all our heart, it will immediately become active in us, since it is God's gift to us and a pre-eminent characteristic of our nature, even though it is also subject to our individual power of free will. Even Scythians and outlandish peoples have faith in [something]...As we contemplate the many miracles granted by our Lord, let us bring to mind what great things faith in God can bring about when it is confirmed by actions."

--St. Symeon the New Theologian (Taken from *The Philokalia*, Vol. IV, Faber & Faber, pgs. 16-17)

ΤΟ ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΕΛΑΙΟΥ --Εφέτος, την Τετάρτη 23 Οκτωβρίου, θα μνήμονεύουμε του Αγίου Ιακώβου του Αδελφοθέου. Στη Αγίαν Γραφή περιλαμβάνεται η Επιστολή του Αγίου Ιακώβου, μέσω της οποίας υπενθύμισε στους ανθρώπους της εποχής του – όπως μας υπενθυμίζει και σήμερα – ότι η πίστις χωρίς καλά έργα δεν έχει καμία αξία. Η πίστις στον Θεό δεν είναι απλώς ένα φιλοσοφικό ζήτημα. Είναι να την ζήσουμε και να την δούμε από τα λόγια και τις πράξεις μας. Η πλούσια διαθεσιμότητα στον καθέναν από εμάς (και σε όλους μας) της Χάριτος του Θεού δεν αναιρεί την προσωπική μας ευθύνη να ζούμε σύμφωνα με τις Εντολές του Θεού. Επιπλέον, οι προσευχές μας πρέπει να ταιριάζουν με τα λόγια και τις πράξεις μας.

Ο σκοπός της σωματικής υγείας είναι να κάνουμε καλές πράξεις διά μέσου της αγάπης μας για τον Θεόν και για τον πλησίον μας προς δόξαν του Θεού. Ο σκοπός της υγείας δεν είναι να συνεχίσουμε στις αμαρτίες, που πάντοτε ενεργούν να υπονομεύουν τη δική μας υγεία και την υγεία των άλλων. Οι προσευχές του Μυστηρίου του Αγίου Ελαίου περιλαμβάνουν προσευχές για θεραπεία σωματικών ασθενειών, καθώς και για την άφεση των αμαρτιών. Η μετάνοια σημαίνει ότι λυπούμεθα για τα λάθη που έχουμε διαπράξει, ώστε να καταβάλουμε την κάθε προσπάθεια για να αποφύγουμε τα ίδια λάθη στο μέλλον. Ως εκ τούτου, η συγχώρεσις και η μετάνοια είναι μέρος του ίδιου ιστού – και ο πρόσθετος σκοπός της υγείας – και συνεπώς του Μυστηρίου του Αγίου Ελαίου – είναι να παρέχει σε εμάς χρόνον σε αυτήν την παρούσαν ζωήν για μετάνοια. +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

PARISH CALENDAR – OCTOBER 2024

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

Tuesday, October 1st.....Bible Study-10:00 a.m./Blessing of the Waters (Agiasmo) -11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, October 2nd.....Orthodox Christian Catechism (online)-6:30 p.m.
(To register, email Fr. Ted at pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com)

Sunday, October 6th.....**Deadline to register** for “Paint El Paseo Pink Walk” / **Meeting** with those signed up to **visit St. Anthony Monastery**

Tuesday, October 8th.....Bible Study -10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, October 9th.....Orthodox Christian Catechism (online)-6:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 13th.....**Family Sunday School** program following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy

Monday, October 14th.....Philoptochos General Members’ Meeting – 11:30 a.m.
Festival Meeting-4:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 19th.....“Paint El Paseo Pink” Walk - 8:00 a.m.

Tuesday, October 22nd..... Bible Study -10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, October 23rd..... ST. JAMES THE APOSTLE
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
Orthodox Christian Catechism (online)-6:30 p.m.

Friday, October 25th..... Planned departure for St. Anthony Monastery-To be Announced

Saturday, October 26th..... Divine Liturgy in honor of St. Demetrios at St. Anthony Monastery and return to Palm Desert.

Tuesday, October 30th..... Bible Study -10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, October 31st..... Orthodox Christian Catechism (online)-6:30 p.m.

SAINT GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH – PALM DESERT, CA

FAMILY SUNDAY SCHOOL THEME

2024-2025



Who is God?

Who am I?

Who is my neighbor?

**So He answered and said,
"You shall love the
Lord your God with all
your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your strength,
and with all your mind,
and your neighbor as
yourself."**

Luke 10:27

**SUNDAY SCHOOL
RESUMES on
SEPTEMBER 22ND**

**REGISTER YOUR FAMILY IN PERSON or
ONLINE at www.go-stgeorge.org**

**Any questions call:
Fr. Ted Pantels 760-880-5869
Mrs. Athena Snarskis 219-313-6940**



FAMILY SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES WILL BE HELD ON THE FOLLOWING SUNDAYS (2023):

- October 13th
- November 10th
- December 15th



Saturday, October 19th

Pre-race program 7:30 AM-Race begins 8:00 AM

Please join our Saint George Team to support cancer care treatment through Desert Cancer Foundation's annual "Pink Walk" and celebrate our **7th year** of participation!

NEW THIS YEAR:

Register to walk for as little as a \$ 5.00 donation!
Registration is \$40.00 if you want a new *tee shirt.

Registration closes Oct. 8th, 2024.

*(Event Tee shirts will be distributed Wed.10/16-Fri.10/18 from 10:00 AM-6:00 PM-this year you must pick up your own tee at the Hotel Paseo)

Register directly via the Desert Cancer Foundation website by clicking on the pink #PEPP box in the upper left hand corner, then click on the pink box "Join a Team" and select Saint George, then enter your personal information & submit.

For those needing help signing up, please see Rhonda or Athena.

**NOTE: LAST DAY TO REGISTER FOR THE "PAINT EL PASEO PINK" WALK IS
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6th!**

SAVE THE DATE!

ST. GEORGE PHILOPTOCHOS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2024

11:30 a.m.

(Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy)

More details and information to follow in the very near future.

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

PALM DESERT, CA

Join us for Monastery Worship services and discussions about the spiritual way of life in Orthodox Christian Monasteries

SPIRITUAL RETREAT TO ST. ANTHONY MONASTERY

FLORENCE, ARIZONA

OCTOBER 25-26, 2024



St. Anthony Monastery was established in the mid-1990s with Fr. Ephraim serving as the first abbot. It has now become an Orthodox Christian spiritual center to where many Orthodox Christians come for spiritual enlightenment.



No more than 35 adults can be accommodated.

No charge for overnight arrangements (donations are welcome).

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 1, 2024.

Contact Fr. Ted at: (760) 880-5869

ST. ANTHONY MONASTERY VISITOR'S GUIDE will be available for those who register to participate.