



APRIL 20, 2025

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT
74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, California 92260
CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN!

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Holy Communion Or-
der

THE LADDER



PRAYER FOR HOLY SCRIPTURES DURING THE DIVINE LITURGY

Shine within our hearts, loving Master, the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our minds that we may comprehend the message of Your Gospel. Instill in us, also, reverence for Your blessed commandments, so that having conquered sinful desires, we may pursue a spiritual life, thinking and doing all these things that are pleasing to You. For You are the Light of our souls and bodies and to You we give glory together with Your Father Who is without beginning and Your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

EPISTLE—Acts 1:1 – 8
In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."
GOSPEL—St. John 1:1 – 17
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light. That was the true light that enlightens every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

- 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.

Liturgical Notes for Today

1. With the Entrance of the Gospel: Instead of "Come, let us worship and bow down to Christ" ... (Δεῦτε προσκυνήσωμεν...), we chant: "In the congregations bless God, the Lord Who springs out of Israel. Save us, O Son of God, Who arose from the dead, we sing to You, Alleluia." / *Ev ekκλησίαις...*
2. Entrance Hymn: "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death and bestowing life on those in the graves." / Χριστός Ανέστη...
3. Kontakion: "Though You went down into the tomb, You destroyed Hades' power, and You rose the victor, Christ God, saying to the myrrh-bearing women, 'Hail!' and granting peace to Your disciples, You Who raise up the fallen." / *Ει και εν τάφω...*
4. After the consecration of the Holy Gifts: "Shine, Shine new Jerusalem! For the glory of the Lord has dawned over you. Dance now and be glad, Sion; as for you, pure one, rejoice in the Resurrection of Your Child." / Φωτίζου, Φωτίζου η νέα Ιερουσαλήμ...
5. Communion Hymn: "Partake of the Body of Christ; taste of the spring of immortality, Alleluia." / Σώμα Χριστού...
6. After Holy Communion: The hymn "Chistos Anesti."

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

- Tuesday, April 22nd..... Bible Study-10:00 a.m./ Great Vespers-6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, April 23rd.....ST. GEORGE THE GREAT MARTYR
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
- Friday, April 25th.....LIFE-GIVING FONT
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
- Saturday, April 26th.....St. George Golf Tournament at Desert Willow- 12:30 p.m.
Awards Dinner at St. George parish hall- 5:30 p.m. (See our parish website at: <https://www.stgeorgepd.org>)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOLY FRIDAY EVENING- Services begin at 6:00 p.m. All who are helping to carry the Epitaphio and all the Myrrh-bearers are asked to arrive at church by 5:30 p.m.

PHILOPTOCHOS EVENTS:

- Sunday, April 27th, 2:00 PM-Kids-n-Cancer Event sponsored by the Metropolis at Newport Beach Country Club. Register on-line for tickets. **See enclosed two-page flier to support our parish Philoptochos "Kids 'n' Cancer" efforts. Visit our updated bookstore.**
- Monday, May 5th, 11:30 AM-Philoptochos General Meeting & Elections for the 2025-2027 term. See the enclosed flier with instructions on running for election to the Philoptochos Board for the 2025-2027 term. PLUS a Cinco De Mayo themed luncheon! More information to follow.

GOLF TOURNAMENT - Saturday, April 26th. To register and make reservations for the Awards Dinner, See: <https://stgeorgepd.org/golf-tournament>. We need **donations of items for raffle at our St. George Golf Tournament Awards Dinner. Items donated must be in good condition. Please schedule times for items may be brought to the parish hall. Call: (760) 568-9901.**

PAINT 'N' SIP EVENT – Saturday, May 3rd at our parish hall – 11:00 a.m. -1:30 p.m. (See enclosed flier.)



**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL**

Prot. No. 135/2025

Archiepiscopal Encyclical on Great and Holy Pascha, 2025

Holy Pascha, 2025

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, the Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, the Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America:

**You raised with Yourself the whole race of Adam,
when You arose from the tomb.
(Canon of Pascha, Ode 6)**

Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη! Christ is Risen!

When our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead, not a single witness is recorded as having seen this most monumental event in the history of the human race. His crucifiers, who posted sentries to ensure that no one tampered with the seal that had been set upon the Stone that covered His tomb, only felt the earthquake and bore false witness against the truth of His Resurrection (Matthew 27:62-66). But the Lord had no need to break that seal or roll away any stone, for His Arising from the grave transcended all categories of human understanding. Rather, the earthquake and the stone's rolling away by the angel happened for the astonished guards, the myrrhbearers and His perplexed disciples.

The Church, in Her divinely inspired wisdom, has given us a picture of this moment with the icon that is simply named, "Anastasis." The most famous version of this icon in the world, which has inspired countless reproductions, is in the Parecclesion of the Chora Church in Constantinople. Notably, it depicts the resplendent and risen Lord of Glory lifting Adam and Even out of their tombs by their wrists, and not their hands. This dramatic detail of humankind's rescue from death and Hades manifests that, as the Apostle Paul says, "by grace we are saved" (Ephesians 2:8). It is not by our efforts that Eternal Life is won for us. It is the Sacrifice of the Cross and its only possible conclusion – the Resurrection – that usher us into the Mansions of Heaven. God holds onto us with His fierce and glorious love! He will not let us go, and He does not depend on our strength to hold onto Him. For again, as the Apostle says, even "the weakness of God is mightier than any human power" (I Corinthians 1:25).

My dear Christians,

If this is how God loves us, how should we love one another? In this season of Pascha, when we sing: "let us forgive everything in the Resurrection" (*Doxastikon* of the Matins), what possible negativity could we hold on to? Rather, let us take hold of one another and lift up each other through love, compassion, forgiveness and mercy. For God lifted us up first, so that we might share the



exaltation of love with everyone around us. Because only then can we sing with true integrity and unfettered joy the gladsome Paschal anthem:

*Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down upon death,
and to those in the tombs He has granted life!*

Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη! Christ is Risen!

Holy Pascha 2025,

† ELPIDOPHOROS

Archbishop of America

"Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me"

~ Matthew 18:5

Kids 'N' Cancer/Camp Agape Philoptochos Fundraiser

🌟 *Word Bead Bracelets* 🌟

\$10 Donation

Sold in our new updated bookstore !



Beautiful inspirational
bracelets made by our
Sunday School students
and families!



Contact Rhonda @ 714-875-4661
Or Mrs. Athena @ 219-313-6940

100% of proceeds benefit San Fran Metropolis Kids 'N' Cancer / Camp Agape, a ministry supporting children with cancer and their families. It offers a loving, Christ-centered environment where lasting friendships and cherished memories are made.

Give your
heart to
a child



Nothing Can Stop the Love – Virtual Camp Agape Shines

Camp Agape. Two small words, yet they are full of power and love. For over 35 years, Camp Agape has been a signature ministry for the Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos, and not even the Coronavirus pandemic could stop the love that is shared unconditionally with these children who are battling cancer and their families.

“I have had the privilege of meeting several Camp Agape families and their courage and resilience are inspiring. I know that Camp Agape is a highlight for them, but the circumstances of the pandemic, coupled with their compromised health conditions, made it impossible for any type of in-person gathering, but the Metropolis Philoptochos, with their boundless enthusiasm and love, brought Camp Agape into their homes, and made an indelible mark on their hearts, especially during this time of great need,” remarked His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco.

Metropolis Philoptochos President Jeannie Ranglas, along with Board and Chapter members, quickly mobilized so that these special families did not miss out on the opportunity to participate in Camp Agape in a virtual format. The program included reunion night with former Camp Agape families, a trivia challenge, scavenger hunt, family puzzles, campfire songs, and sharing many memories of this life-changing camp. “Sharing agape is at the heart of our ministry. We often say when promoting Camp Agape, ‘Give your heart to a child’, and this is what is at the core of our efforts,” stated Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos President Jeannie Ranglas. “I am proud to be a part of this truly life-changing program. And while we have sadly lost many of our campers to cancer over nearly four decades, we also celebrate the survivors – the thrivers – who have conquered the mountain called cancer and continue to live life to its fullest.”

One unique component about Camp Agape is that it is not just for the children who are battling cancer. Rather, it is for the entire family – parents, siblings, and grandparents, too! Agape boxes – filled with love, activities, camp memorabilia and more – were sent to each family, and these care packages were a welcome surprise. Each year, the Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos offers four Camp Agape programs in the following locations: Orme School in Mayer, AZ; Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in Dunlap, CA; Whispering Winds in Julian, CA; and Camp Angelos in Corbett, OR. For 2020, Camp Agape was planned for each of these four camps in a virtual setting and welcomed over 100 families to celebrate the spirit and love of Camp Agape.

There are many memorable experiences associated with Camp Agape over the years, but the one thing that stands out is the hospitality – the true philoxenia – offered by the Metropolis Philoptochos to the Camp Agape families. Included in their care packages were restaurant and Amazon gift cards, puzzles, board games, arts and crafts supplies, Camp Agape t-shirts with the 2020 logo “United in Peace and Love”, and a special gift for each camper from their personal wish list.

The Kids ‘n’ Cancer – Agape Celebration of Love is a yearly event held to bring awareness to the ministry by providing a beautiful, fun-filled afternoon giving those in attendance the opportunity to participate in fundraising, meet Camp Agape families, and fellowship together.

Kids ‘N’ Cancer – Give your heart to a child.

St. George Greek Orthodox Church

74109 Larrea St., Palm Desert, CA 92260

LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

Invites you and your friends to our ...

PAINT N SIP

Grecian Style

OPA!

11 X 16 Santorini
scene on canvas



Saturday, May 3rd

11:00 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.

\$20.00 per person



RSVP by April 30

Rhonda 714-875-4661 or
Athena 219-313-6940



**GREEK APPETIZERS,
WINE &
REFRESHMENTS**