



MARCH 23, 2025

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

74-109 Larrea Street

Palm Desert, California 92260

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

THE LADDER

SUNDAY OF THE VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



PRAYER FOR READING HOLY SCRIPTURES

“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- Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6

Brethren, since we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was

appointed by him who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; as he says also in another place, “You are a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.”

GOSPEL –St. Mark 8:34–38; 9:1

The Lord said: “If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.”

THE CROSS OF OUR SAVIOR BECOMES OUR CROSS TO CARRY

“Lent is our self-crucifixion, our experience, limited as it is, of Christ’s commandment heard in the Gospel lesson... ‘If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.’ (Mark 8:34). But we cannot take up our cross and follow Christ unless we have His Cross which He took up in order to save us. It is His Cross, not ours, that saves us... This is explained to us in the synaxarion: ‘...The Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is the tree that was planted in Paradise, and for this reason our fathers have planted it in the midst of Holy Lent, remembering both Adam’s bliss and how he was deprived of it, remembering also that partaking of this Tree we no longer die but are kept alive.’” ---Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, Great Lent: Journey to Pascha, St. Vladimir Seminary Press, pgs. 76-77.

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or: (760) 880-5869

– Fr. Theodore Pantels, M.Div. Proistamenos (Pastor)
– Deacon Euthym Kontaxis, M.D. ,M.Div.

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.

Liturgical Notes for Today

With the Entrance with the Gospel: 1) *"O Christ the angelic powers appeared at Your tomb, the guards were as dead and Mary stood by the grave, seeking Your sacred Body. You destroyed Hades, yet remained untouched by it. You encountered the Virgin, and through Her, bestowed life. Glory to You who have risen from the dead."/*Αγγελικαὶ δυνάμεις..

2) *"Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance, granting Your rulers to prevail over adversaries and protecting Your commonwealth by Your Holy Cross."/*Σώσον Κύριε τὸν λαὸν Σου...

3) *"Since You are a deliverer of captives and a protector of the poor; a physician for the sick; a noble attendant to kings, O Great among the martyrs and glorious George, intercede with Christ God that He may save our souls."/*Ὡς τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτῆς ...[Hymn for St. George]

4) **Kontakion:** *"To You, Theotokos, invincible Defender, having been delivered from peril, I, Your city, dedicate the victory festival as a thank offering. In Your irresistible might, keep me safe from all trials, that I may call out to You: 'Hail, Unwedded Bride.'"/*Τῆ Υπερμάχῳ...

Instead of "Holy God, Holy Mighty..." ("Aghios o Theos, Aghios Ischyros..."), we chant the following: *"We venerate Your Cross, O Christ, and Your Holy Resurrection we praise and glorify."/*Τὸν Σταυρὸν Σου προσκυνούμεν, Δέσποτα...

SERVICE OF THE VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

After Holy Communion is imparted to the faithful, set on a tray, the Cross, surrounded by flowers (or sweet basil) and adorned with three lit tapers is placed on the Holy Table. As the choir begins the slow processional chant of "Holy God" the priest censes the Cross. Then, he lifts the tray to eye level and exits the sanctuary from the north door. The deacon precedes him, walking backwards and censing the Cross. The acolytes lead as the procession proceeds down the side aisles, circling the Church and ending at the Soleas where all assume their customary places. The priest circles the table before him three times. Standing in the center (facing the Altar) he lifts the tray with the Cross high above his head and says:

"Wisdom! Arise!"

--He then places the Cross and tray on the table and circles it while censing and chanting:

"O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Grant victory to the faithful over their adversaries and protect You commonwealth by Your Holy Cross."

--The hymn is repeated by the choir or chanters twice.

--The priest venerates the Holy Cross and then chants:

"We venerate Your Cross, O Christ, and Your Holy Resurrection we praise and glorify." This is repeated by the choir or chanters twice.

--The flowers are given to the faithful after the dismissal.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, March 24th.....Great Vespers-6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 25th.....FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 26th.....PRESANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGY – 6:00 p.m.

Friday, March 28th.....PRESANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGY – 9:00 a.m.
SALUTATION SERVICE (Fourth Stanza) - 6:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPRING GENERAL ASSEMBLY - Our parish **Spring General Assembly Meeting** will be held in our parish hall **today** following our Sacred Church Services.

Continued on the next page – – –>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL - Today's Sunday School Lesson: "The Ten Commandments."

PHILOPTOCHOS – 1) Philoptochos General Meeting-April 7th; 2) Kids 'n' Cancer Luncheon-April 27th; 3) Philoptochos Board Elections-May 4th. 4) Mini-Icon Painting Workshop-Sunday, March 30th. **See the enclosed Mini-Icon Painting Workshop Flyer.**

BOOKSTORE - Now available: *The Akathist Hymn* (for Friday Salutation services) & *Services for Holy Week and Easter*. (Narthex Press Publications). A new book is also available, entitled, *Living as a Christian in a World that Rejects God*. See enclosed announcement.

PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON - Sunday, April 13th in our parish hall. See enclosed flyer. Note the **deadline to R.S.V.P. is April 7th.**

GOLF TOURNAMENT - Saturday, April 26th. See: <https://stgeorgepd.org/golf-tournament>

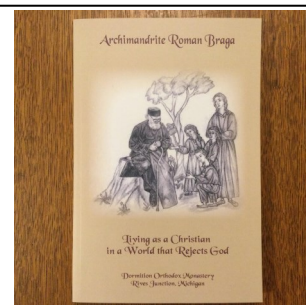
OFFERING OUR GIFTS FOR WORSHIP - Lessons are available to learn to prepare Altar Bread (Prosforo), Kollyva (boiled wheat) & "The Five Loaves" (Artoklasia). Contact our office to sign up.

Living as a Christian in a World that Rejects God

One new book is by a Romanian monk-priest, Father Roman Braga, who suffered in Communist prison camps. Our parishioner, Mary Brown, interviewed Fr. Roman and these conversations have now been published as **Living as a Christian in a World that Rejects God**. Father Roman leads us to a clear understanding of Holy Orthodoxy, and how it transforms us, fills us with the light of Christ, heals our souls and enables us to pour out love for others. Father shows us that this process produces a deep humility and contrition; when we look up to God from the certainty of our own sinfulness, the glory of his love for us is indescribable.

The book is organized into three sections: fundamental understandings, practical ways to grow in the image of God, and family life in Christ which includes ways to explain and live aspects of our Orthodox faith with children.

Frederica Mathewes-Green writes in her introduction to this book that "what Fr. Roman has to say about living as a Christian in a world that rejects God is well worth hearing. Because he did it--under unimaginable circumstances."





ST GEORGE PARISH

PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON

APRIL 13, 2025

Dear Parishioners

St. George Greek Orthodox Church of the Desert will hold the annual Palm Sunday Luncheon on Sunday April 13 following liturgy. It's all about Fellowship! We are certain that all of you will want to attend this meaningful and holy holiday celebration.

The cost for the luncheon will be \$10.00 per person. The menu will consist of appetizers, fish, our famous skordalia and a Lenten dessert. *Your support is greatly appreciated.*

Contact Tina Veroulis at (760) 568-9901 to make your reservations or complete this flyer and enclose your payment with this form. Checks can be made out to St. George Church. You can mail it to 74109 Larrea St., Palm Desert, CA 92260 or bring it to the office. **The deadline is April 7, 2025.**

Please print your name on the line below.

NAME _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

NUMBER ATTENDING _____ AMOUNT _____ CHECK _____ CASH _____

Philoptochos invites you to a



MINI ICON PAINTING WORKSHOP

Sunday, MARCH 30TH - Part I

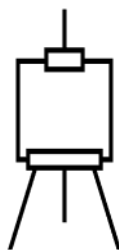
11:00 am – After the Divine Liturgy we will begin with prepping our canvas and step by step instructions by Louka.

Sunday, APRIL 6th - Part II

1145am – Louka will continue providing further step by step instructions and finishing touches to our Icon of Holy Theotokos.

Limited seating for 20

Register now to
Athena 219-313-6940
or sign up during
coffee hour



\$15.00 Total cost

includes canvas,
paint and
supplies