

PASTORAL VISITATIONS

Please inform the Church Office 301-469-7990 (ext 300) of any loved ones who are hospitalized or "shut-ins," so they may be visited and receive the grace of Holy Communion.

ORTHODOX INQUIRY

If you or anyone you may know are interested in embracing Holy Orthodoxy and being baptized or chrismated, please contact Fr. Dimitrios at 301-469-7990 or by email at FrAntokas@stgeorge.org

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS The next Philoptochos Society General Meeting will take place this coming Tuesday, **March 9, 2010 @7:30 p.m.** in the Founders' Hall. We welcome new members! We are happy to announce that we will be holding our first "Day Circle" meeting for Philoptochos members who cannot make the evening meetings, however, everyone is welcome. This Circle will focus on Crafting for Charity, it will be a "hands-on" outreach! We will meet on the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. If you have any questions, please call Lia Kent, 301-762-8976 or email kent_amalia@yahoo.com.

FIFTY PLUS Meeting on **March 10** at 11:30 am in the Founder's Hall. Fr. Dimitrios Antokas will be speaking on "Pastoral Reflections". Guests are always welcomed. Keep in mind as you do your spring cleaning to save any unwanted items for Yiayia's Attic. No clothing or cook books, please.

GOYA The GOYA Lock-In has been rescheduled to take place **March 12, 7:00 p.m. to March 13, 7:00 a.m.** Parents are asked to pick up their children at 7:00 a.m. On **March 14th**, the GOYA is holding its Annual Lenten Spaghetti Luncheon! Immediately after church until 2pm, enjoy a plate of delicious spaghetti with tomato sauce accompanied by a side salad, cookie, and drink! Admission is \$8 for adults and \$5 for kids under the age of 12. All proceeds benefit the St. George GOYA!

SALT TALKS the SALT Talks (Sunday Afternoon Lenten Talks) will be held each Sunday during Great Lent from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. These Lenten talks are for students from 12 to 18 years of age and will deal with spiritual messages in the context of their lives and experience.



EASTER FLOWER COLLECTION

The Ladies Philoptochos is once again raising funds for flowers for the celebration of Holy Pascha. Flowers add so much to the celebration of the Lord's Rising from the dead. Please make a generous donation to our Pascha flower fund. Make sure you put your name, telephone number and donation amount on the envelope. Make checks payable to the St. George Philoptochos. Many thanks!

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDARS may be obtained during the week in the Parish Office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO NOTE ON YOUR STEWARDSHIP CHECKS "STEWARDSHIP 2010". If you have not submitted a 2010 pledge card, please do so as soon as possible. You need not give a check when submitting a pledge card.

ST. GEORGE BULLETIN

MARCH 7, 2010

SUNDAY OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS



**THY CROSS WE ADORE, O MASTER,
AND THY HOLY RESURRECTION WE GLORIFY!**

**THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF
SAINT GEORGE**

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Rev. Fr. Nicholas Despotides, Emeritus



With the help of God, we have almost reached the middle of the course of the Fast, where our strength has been worn down through abstinence, and the full difficulty of the labour set before us becomes apparent. Therefore our holy Mother, the Church of Christ, now brings to our help the all-holy Cross, the joy of the world, the strength of the faithful, the staff of the just, and the hope of sinners, so that by venerating it reverently, we might receive strength and grace to complete the divine struggle of the Fast. Let us redouble our efforts to keep the Fast. Let us continue to work to improve our relationship with God through prayer and spiritual reading. Let us fully meditate on the Holy Cross of Christ — sign of God’s infinite love for mankind. *Behold the wood of the Cross on which has hung the Salvation of the world! Come, let us adore!*

TODAY’S READER: GEORGE COMINOS

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, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

GOSPEL 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."

PRAYER TO THE CRUCIFIED LORD JESUS



Behold I who am unworthy and of all men most sinful, humbly bow the knee of my heart before the glory of Thy majesty and praise Thy Cross and Passion, and offer thanksgiving to Thee, the King and God of all, that Thou wast pleased to bear as man all labours and hardships, all temptations and tortures, that Thou mightest be our Fellow-sufferer and Helper, and a Saviour to all of us in all our sorrows, needs, and sufferings. I know, O all-powerful Lord, that all these things were not necessary for Thee, but for us men and for our salvation Thou didst endure Thy Cross and Passion that Thou mightest redeem us from all cruel bondage to the enemy. What, then, shall I give in return to Thee, O Lover of mankind, for all that Thou hast suffered for me, a sinner? I cannot say, for soul and body and all blessings come from Thee, and all that I have is Thine, and I am Thine. Yet I know that love is repaid only by love. Teach me, then, to love and praise Thee. Trusting solely in Thine infinite compassion and mercy, O Lord, I praise Thine unspeakable patience, I magnify Thine unutterable exhaustion, I glorify Thy boundless mercy, I adore Thy purest Passion, and most lovingly kissing Thy wounds, I cry: Have mercy on me a sinner, and cause that Thy holy Cross may not be fruitless in me, that I may participate here with faith in Thy sufferings and be vouchsafed to behold also the glory of Thy Kingdom in Heaven. *Amen. (From the Akathist to the Divine Passion of Christ)*



THE WONDER OF THE HOLY CROSS

All of the Holy Mysteries of the Church of Christ are intimately tied to the Cross... In Holy Baptism, everything is done under the sign of the Cross. In Chrismation; the same. Repentance is a "second Baptism," a "Baptism of tears." Holy Unction is an augmented Baptism of tears of repentance. Holy Matrimony is a Baptism into life together as husband and wife. Ordination is Baptism into service to the Church. Without the Cross, the Holy Eucharist would be utterly unimaginable. Reflecting on the Mystery of the Cross as Eucharist [i.e. Thanksgiving], St. John Cassian the Roman, asserts that this Mystery will be performed eternally by Christ the High Priest in the Kingdom of Heaven, for Christ’s Sacrifice on the Cross can never be forgotten even unto ages of ages. To a true Christian, the Cross of Christ cannot but evoke a reciprocal, grateful, compassionate and sacrificial love for the Lord, together with a yearning to be crucified with Christ. After all, the Cross wordlessly prays about that very thing. In bearing a Cross upon one’s breast, or signing oneself with the sign of the Cross, or crossing one’s arms over one’s breast, we Christians testify that we are ready to carry the Cross without complaint, to carry it humbly, voluntarily, and joyfully, for we love Christ and want to share in His suffering, for His sake. The Cross of Christ not only calls us to voluntary suffer, but also shows us the example of undeserved travails crowned with the highest honor, the Crown of Thorns upon His Holy Head. And the whole “Karamazov” question... how can the suffering of innocent children be justified... is resolved so clearly and profoundly simply by just looking upon the Savior, the Innocent One, nailed to the Cross. However, the Cross is not simply a symbol of suffering. It is also a symbol of victory, and of the triumph of love and truth. It is also a symbol of the eternal joy that follows temporary suffering, a joy that nothing can ever take from us. The Cross truthfully promises us that every little tear will be wiped away, that all sorrow borne for Christ’s sake, will turn to joy, that the droplets of tears, blood, and sweat a Christian who loves Christ sheds before his death will become

diamonds, rubies and pearls of inexpressible beauty in the Kingdom of Heaven. The Cross calls us to spiritual struggle, and promises us help, victory, triumph, and the glory of the Resurrection.

DIVINE SERVICES THIS WEEK

Wednesday, March 10: Fourth Presanctified Liturgy 6:30 p.m., followed by Lenten supper and discussion with Fr. George on “The Church of Christ” **Confessions at 5:30 p.m.**

Friday, March 12: Fourth Salutations to the Most Holy Theotokos 7:00 p.m. **Confessions at 6:00 p.m.**



GREAT LENT: A CALL TO ALMSGIVING

Along with fasting during Great Lent, the Holy Church calls us to ALMSGIVING — to share what we have with those who are in need. Though we should do so throughout the year, Great Lent is a time when we deliberately reflect on the spiritual quality of our lives and whether or not we have heeded the Lord’s command to charity. Recall the words of St. John: “...if any one has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?” (1 John 3:17) Find YOUR way to reach out to those in need — to someone sick in your life, to an aged person, to a young person who is confused, to someone who is homeless or jobless. Look for Christ’s brothers and sisters — the least — and do something concrete for them.. Turn good intentions into action. As you do so, heed the words of our Holy Father St. Basil the Great: “*The bread in your cupboard belongs to the hungry man; the coat hanging unused in your closet belongs to the man who needs it; the shoes rotting in your closet belong to the man who has no shoes; the money which you put in the bank belongs to the poor. You do wrong to everyone you could help, but fail to help.*”

PRAYER LIST: Antonia “Nitsa” Kempf, Connie Kanaris, Diana Lazar, George Markomanolakis, Argie Palaios, Katherine Panagakos, Priscilla Preuss, George Virvan, Sylvia Basdekas, George Speris, Mariah Smiley, Doris Webb, the child Camille Feruzzi who is gravely ill, the child Heather Greene, Irene Pappas, Marty Levine, Lindsey Reijsoo, the child Ashley Lyvers, the child Alexis Ross, the child Joseph Saxon, Francine Bruggeman, Estrella Grandea Ocampo, Stephanie Skanderis, Michael Giatzis, Georgia Haldas, Theodosia Karmiris, and Robert Shriver. **US ARMED FORCES:** (Col.) Fr. Alexander Webster, Rev. Fr. John Kalantzis, Lt. Nicholas Karnaze, Spc. Spiro Nino, John Xanthakos, Maj. Sydney Pennix, Colonel James Karas, and Gary Hogman (Iraq) and his wife Cindy, and 2nd Lt. Phillip Natsios