



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 into 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 30: Presanctified Liturgy 6:30 p.m., followed by a Lenten supper and a presentation on the Spiritual Transformation of Society by Rev. Fr. Elie Estephan of Sts. Peter and Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church.

Friday, April 1: Salutations to the Most Holy Theotokos 7:00 p.m.



SECOND TRAY FOR EASTER FLOWERS

The Ladies Philoptochos will pass a second tray today for Easter flowers. The cost of flowers has increased dramatically and we need your assistance in order to adorn the house of the Lord for the celebration of Holy Pascha. Please be as generous as you can....and thank you!



MEMORIAL SERVICE

A Memorial Service will be offered today for **Ulyses Milli (40 Days)** requested by his wife Stavroula and family; for **Chrysoula Tiwari (Athanasopoulos) (40 Days)** requested by her husband Raj and her daughter Sheila; and for **Lula Nicholas (40 Days)**, requested by her son Chris, her sisters Presvytera Rita Kissal, Penny Calomiris, Peppie Limber, Tina Leigh, and her grandchildren. May their memories be eternal!

PRAYER LIST: Spiro Gianniotis, Ralph Vallone, Christopher Bacas, **Antonia “Nitsa” Kempf, Connie Kanaris, Diana Lazar, George Markomanolakis, Argie Palaios, Katherine Panagakos, George Virvan, Mariah Smiley, Doris Webb, the child Camille Feruzzi, the child Heather Greene, Irene Pappas, Marty Levine, Lindsey Reijsoo, the child Ashley Lyvers, the child Alexis Ross, Joseph Papadakis, the child Joseph Saxon, Francine Bruggeman, Stephanie Skanderis, Georgia Haldas, Eric Ricasa, Milton Kayafas, Mary Agis, Maureen Shriver, Tiffany Keiker, Mary O’Hara, William Coulopoulos, Matina Mantis, and Robert Shriver. **US ARMED FORCES:** Rev. Fr. John Kalantzis, Lt. Nicholas Karnaze, Spc. Spiro Nino, John Xanthakos, Colonel James Karas, and Gary Hogman (Iraq) and his wife Cindy, 2nd Lt. Phillip Natsios, Private Louis Tiches, EG Robert Stock, and PFC Brett Hughes.**

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR BOY RETREAT

On Sunday, April 10th, there will be an altar boy retreat after the Divine Liturgy from 12:00-1:30 p.m. We will be going over the Holy Week services. Lunch will be provided to all participants. Please RSVP to Fr. George at frgeorge@stgeorge.org, or call the church office at (301) 469-7990.

GOYA LOCK-IN

On Friday, April 1st, the St. George GOYA will hold their annual lock-in. As this is an overnight event, we are in need of adult chaperones, particularly members of the YAL or parents of Goyans. If you are able to help, please contact Fr. George at frgeorge@stgeorge.org, or call the church office at (301) 469-7990.

QUILT-A-THON VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need volunteers for our 2nd Annual Quilt-A-Thon, (APRIL 9TH, 9 A.M.) to make homemade quilts for at-risk babies and small children in our area hospitals. You do not need to know how to sew! We need help to cut, pin, measure and tie square knots. Fabric and supplies will be provided by The Ladies Philoptochos Society of Saint George. Please bring your own lunch. If you are interested in participating please contact Adrienne Barris 703/827-5757 or Stephanie Wilde 301/983-0879.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR FESTIVAL PREPARATION

Our Spring Festival is May 6-8. We need volunteers to help prepare food for the event. PLEASE sign up to help on the sheets that have been placed on the community bulletin board in the main corridor. **WE NEED HELP!** The festival is a success insofar as everyone pitches in. PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE SHEETS!!

50 PLUS CLUB

At the April 13th meeting, Dr. Nicholas Patronas of the National Institutes of Health, will speak on *Medical Imaging in the Evaluation of Diseases in the Aged Population*. Join us for this informative lecture.

LITERARY LUNCHEON

In Their Own Words...SOLD OUT!! You can still support St. George by buying raffle tickets...the prizes are great! 5 tickets for \$100. 1 ticket for \$25. Stop by the table in the hall today!

In response to continued inquiries regarding church financials, we decided beginning this week the Church we will publish weekly and year-to-date operating income and expenses in the Sunday bulletin. God bless you and thank you for your support.

Weekly Financial Report – General Income/Expenses 3/27/2011

March 16 through March 22, 2011

Income	<u>\$9,021.88*</u>
Expenses	<u>\$35,033.11**</u>

January 1 through March 22, 2011

Income	<u>\$229,784.55*</u>
Expenses	<u>\$247,413.03**</u>

* - Includes all income from Stewardship, Candles, Trays, General Donations, Facility Rentals, Spring Festival, and Harbor School Rent.

** - Includes expenses incurred (funds disbursed) for Administrative items, Candles, Facility Rentals, Spring Festival, Fall Fund Raiser, Archdiocese Stewardship, For those Who Serve, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment, Liturgical, Maintenance, Mortgage Interest, Program Expenses, Taxes & Insurance, and Utilities.

SUNDAY OF THE VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS MARCH 27, 2011



Hail! life-giving Cross, the fair Paradise of the Church, Tree of incorruption that brings us the enjoyment of eternal glory: through thee the hosts of demons have been driven back; and the hierarchies of angels rejoice with one accord, as the congregations of the faithful keep the feast. Thou art an invincible weapon, an unbroken stronghold; thou art the victory of kings and the glory of priests. Grant us now to draw near to the Passion of Christ and to His Resurrection. (From *Great Vespers for the Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross*)

Resurrectional Apolytikion

Let the heavens sing for joy, and let everything on earth be glad. * For with His Arm the Lord has worked power. * He trampled death under foot by means of death; * and He became the firstborn from the dead. * From the maw of Hades He delivered us; * and He granted the world His great mercy.

Resurrectional Kontakion

From the tomb You rose today, * O Lord of tender compassion, * also from the gates of death * You led us out, O our Savior. * On this day is Adam dancing and Eve rejoices, * and with them together Patriarchs and the Prophets * are unceasingly extolling the divine power of Your authority.

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