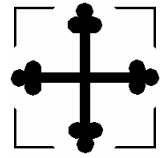




# Agape



## ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH MAY 2017

### Will I See My Relatives in Heaven: A Paschal Contemplation by Fr. John Parker

The joy of Easter, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, is a marvelous wonder. Because it is a Spring Feast (dated with the Spring equinox, as light overtakes darkness on the Earth, Easter is associated with new life, green grass, fresh flowers, warm days—the end, the death one could say, of winter. In mind—and soon in photos, Snapchats, and Facebook posts—is the innocence of little children dressed in their Easter dresses and tiny seersucker outfits hunting eggs. We recall that first Easter egg, when St. Mary Magdalene, one of the Myrrh-bearing women who were first to bear witness to Jesus' Resurrection. She had brought an egg to the Emperor to proclaim the Resurrection. And his reply, according to the tradition, was that a man could no more rise from the dead than her egg could turn red. It promptly did. These are the external signs and traditions of Easter—Paschal—joy. But what does it actually mean that Jesus arose from the dead? What is the importance of the Crucifixion, the Descent to Hades, and the Empty tomb? Is it simple enough to summarize in a short essay? In a few sentences, please allow me to try. Until the advent of Jesus Christ, God-made-man—every human person who was born—died, just as we do today. Only until Jesus lived and died his voluntary death, every dead person was buried or otherwise disposed of, and dwelt in the land of the dead. Some call it Hades. One's body became simply food for worms, and one's soul went to some sort of holding tank. Being sinless, it was impossible for Christ to die of "natural causes". Sin is the cause of death, and he had none. When Jesus died on Holy Friday, upon the Cross, he was on a direct mission: to get to that holding tank. He offered himself to be put to death. Death had to be inflicted upon him. That is to say, he was killed. He didn't "just die". Taken down from the Cross that Friday afternoon, he was put into a virgin tomb (how amazing—how beautiful! Born from a virgin's womb, buried in a virgin tomb!). Many people skip over Holy Saturday, and go straight to the Resurrection. But Holy Saturday is the link that makes it all make sense! What did Jesus "do" on that Saturday? In the Orthodox Christian Tradition we believe that Jesus "kept the Sabbath" by resting from his salvific work. He rested bodily in the tomb. And he descended to the dead, where he unchained those held captive by death (everyone who had died prior to him), and destroyed the gates of Hades. Death no longer, as a result, has a permanent hold on a single human being. No one is simple "dead and gone". No one is simply "food for worms." The Resurrection shows that death had and has no power over the Author of Life: Jesus Christ. And now that he has destroyed the power of death, there is an amazing result to every single human person on the earth: resurrection. Not a single person who is born and dies will be dead permanently. The message of the Gospel is that every human being will be raised from the dead. Everyone. No one will be left in the grave. And that is the miracle of Jesus' Crucifixion, Burial, and Resurrection. No one has to "follow Jesus" to be raised from the dead. It is a gift to every human being—good, bad, man, woman, stranger, friend, Christian, Muslim, Jew, Atheist. Everyone will be raised from the dead. The question that remains, and is left into the hands—or to the lips and to the hearts and actions—of us all is: raised "to what"? According to the Gospel of St. John: resurrection of Judgment or resurrection to Eternal Life? Jesus says directly, through St. John: those who have done good will be raised to the resurrection of Life, and those who have done evil will be raised to the Resurrection of Judgment (the Greek does not say, 'damnation', as is wrongly translated in the King James). Everyone's judgment is dependent on one's works. (Sorry, Reformation friends, it is a fact you have to face!) The doing of good is a union with Jesus Christ, the very essence of Goodness. And the doing of evil is a union with the Devil, the Prince of this World, whose influence is a bastardization of Good—good turned on itself. So, the meaning of the Resurrection is this: You and I shall be raised from the Dead! We will both stand naked before the

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Lord of Heaven and Earth, and have to give an account for every deed done. For every careless word spoken. Are we grateful that death has been overcome? Do we show it by our actions, by a change of life—by a metanoia—a repentance—a change of direction and of thinking? Grateful for this resurrection, shall we not accuse ourselves now (repent)? Or shall we risk being accused on that last day, with no resort? Do you and I wish to “see our loved ones again?” This bit of popular theology has to be nuanced. Jesus himself told us, “not all who say to me, ‘Lord, Lord’ shall enter the Kingdom of heaven”. Simply “calling on the name of the Lord” is insufficient. Those ‘saved’ are saved by their lives marked by love of God and love of neighbor, by tangible activities of all the senses, in short, again to quote the Lord, “those who do the will of [the] Father in heaven, by a life of mercy, kindness, generosity, long-suffering, gratitude, etc., in the Name of Jesus—who is the Resurrection and the Life. Will I see Aunt Helen in Heaven? Well, that is not automatic for either or both of us. Did Aunt Helen do the will of the Father? Do I? Is either of us Jesus, able to say and judge rightly? Is it not better biblically to hope humbly than to declare daringly? These may be startling questions, but Christians must apply themselves to the Apostolic Preaching and Teaching to make any declaration about anything or anyone. This is why, in the traditional Christian funeral, we pray for the forgiveness of the sins of the departed and why we trust in the mercy and long-suffering of God! The point is that human beings, who were the pinnacle of God’s creation, missed the mark and became selfish and ungrateful. Jesus, in his Crucifixion, Burial, Descent to the Dead, and Resurrection, gives us a new opportunity for humility and gratitude. But it is not generic humility and gratitude. Rather it is humility in imitation of the Humble King of Glory and gratitude to the same who has blazed for all a path of Resurrection and life, of which the Baptized life is the way and the means. With the Sacred Triduum—the Holy Three Days—the Crucifixion and Death, the Burial and Descent to Hades, and the Third-day Resurrection—the invitation is given to every one of us, as it was given by the Lord through Moses: I set before you today blessings and curses, life and death. Choose life, and live! Through the Cross, joy has come into all the world. Christ is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and on those in the tombs, bestowing life!

#### **Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

Christ is Risen! We continue to see our parish family grow, and with that growth we continue to work towards the growth our various ministries. In some cases as we grow some of our ministries in development are needed more than ever. We as a Parish Council wish to thank all for their efforts to continue to grow our ministries. Along with inviting more parishioners to get involved as they can and where

they can. As it is through the actions of all of us, our Parish has seen the growth it has achieved. Once again the annual Metropolis Clergy Laity Assembly has taken place this last week of April. It is always a joy to speak with our brothers and sisters from across the Metropolis about the efforts and growth of our Church and the family that we are. What we achieve in our Parish serves as inspiration to others. We look forward to seeing the continuing efforts to meet our goals.

In Christ, Greg Sebastian President

#### **Fundraising Committee**

Final plans are being made for our annual Evening in Greece dinners, May 13th & 20th. Hope to see you all there and bring a friend or two. The dinners are very festive, with wonderful Greek food, drinks and dancing. Remember to make reservations, because seating is limited. This year we are adding a Take-out option, for those who wish to take food home. Please see me if you have any questions about our events. Thank you to all the volunteers. You all make this fundraiser so special.

#### **Pres. Maria**

#### **STEWARDSHIP REPORT**

Our stewardship numbers continue to grow. The parish now has fifty-two stewards plus six free-will givers. Thank you very much to everyone who is supporting Saint George. Please remember your offering of talent and time is just as important - if not more so - than your offering of treasure. The more you are involved in the church ministries and events, the stronger the parish becomes. The more we all work together, the more we can accomplish; and we still have much of the Lord's work to do.

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

All of April's expenses have been paid. We are very grateful to those who offered Pascha donations for the extras which are incurred during this special time in the church calendar. Just under a thousand dollars was given. Presently, there is \$18,797 in the operations account. This does not include any stewardship, free-will giving or donations given on April 30th. The dedicated account is unchanged (\$7,393) from the beginning of the April. Thank you very much for your support of Saint George.

## Care Ministry

Eight Tsoureki, Pascha gifts were given to our Homebound and as a special thank-you to parishioners. Our first volunteer training will be held, Saturday, May 6th, from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm in our Board Room. If you have signed up to volunteer, please make every effort to attend. If you have thought about volunteering for the Care Ministry or want to find out more about what we will be doing, please feel free to attend.

## Care Notes

Happy Mother's Day to all Mothers, Grandmothers, and Godmothers!  
Mothers are like a FLOWER each one BEAUTIFUL and UNIQUE- anonymous  
Gloria Zeazeas-Timmons  
Care Ministry Coordinator

## Missions & Evangelism: Mochas for Missions:

Mochas for Missions: So far we have collected \$620 toward our goal of \$1500 to support our Metropolis' mentored and mission churches. Thank you very much! The campaign ends June 4th. Please remember we are asking for 30 of you to give \$50 each to reach our goal. Place your donation in the "Mochas for Missions" envelope to receive tax credit. Otherwise, donate using the coffee pot on the MFM table in the fellowship hall.

Welcome Packet: Our new Welcome Packet will be available in May. It includes updated materials about St. George and Orthodoxy. It is intended for guests interested in learning about our Faith.

Follow-up: Father is sending out "Thank you for visiting" post cards to guests, and "We miss you" post cards to those we have not seen for some time.

Welcome Team: We are asking for volunteers to comprise a "Welcome Team" to greet guests after Liturgy and invite them to join us for Fellowship Hour. The volunteer would visit with them and obtain the guest information card from their Welcome Packet. If you are interested, please contact Father or Melita.

In service,

Melita Green

## Bookstore News

Christ is Risen!

I want to thank everyone for having patience with us during this transitional time at the bookstore. It's been a long wait, but I'm confident that you will soon see big changes as our efforts to revitalize start to come to fruition. Here are some of the things that will be arriving on the shelves in the next few weeks: prayer ropes of many different sizes from St. Paisius, a plethora of children's books from Potamitis, some great titles about living the Orthodox life in today's world from Ancient Faith publishing house, a couple of "masterpiece grade" icons from a new supplier for us called Legacy Icons, an interesting array of Orthodox ephemera (icon magnets, lapel pins, incense boxes) from St. Joseph School for Boys. We will also have the ability to accept credit card payments. We are keen to have feedback from you, so please don't hesitate to let us know your thoughts as we move forward.

-Brett

**PHILIA**

Thank you to Gloria for heading our Tsoureki fundraiser, to the ladies who helped bake this tasty traditional Greek Easter Bread and to all of you who supported this endeavor. There are still loaves available for sale at \$8.00 each. Please check with Gloria if interested.

We are all very busy planning for the upcoming Greek Dinners coming up in mid-May. Please invite your friends and families and join us for a fun-filled evening. Flyers are available in the fellowship hall. This is a fundraiser for the parish and reservations are required.

**Plans for the future:**

- May 13 and 20 -- Greek Dinners
- Community Court Lunches June - September

For info on wedding or baptismal items contact Gloria at 541-424-0575 or via email at zezeastimmons@gmail.com. And see Melita if interested in Rada products.

**Next meetings: May 7 and June 11, 2017**

**Reminder:** Philia is a philanthropic organization open to ALL women in the parish, Come and join us!  
We could always use helping hands and helpful minds.

Julie Lenkoff, Philia Coordinator

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**COFFEE CHAT :**

The pantry has been reorganized. A few shelves have been added and some things moved around to allow for ease of storage and access. Please keep that in mind when looking for fellowship items. New labels will soon be affixed as well.

Julie Lenkoff, Fellowship Coordinator

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**CLEANUP CORNER:**

Please be aware that there is a janitorial supplies closet located by the restrooms. Buckets, mops, large brooms and even vacuum cleaners should be kept there. Smaller items such as laundry soap, bleach, Simple Green and other cleansers housed in the pantry, have been moved to shelving on the opposite side. And, a reminder, if you need to have the door opened for you on your scheduled cleaning day, please contact Neal at nealzoumboukos@msn.com

Julie Lenkoff, Cleanup Coordinator (email: julielenkoff@comcast.net)

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ ~**

Christ is Risen!

Thank you for welcoming Holy Cross parishioners to Holy Week and Pascha! What a blessing you are to us!

We also want to thank Gloria and John for making the trek down to Roseburg to attend Bright Saturday Liturgy and our annual Pascha Picnic. The picnic was a huge success with lots of food, games, and sweet fellowship.

This month we plan to get back into our Missions and Evangelism work with renewed vigor. Plans include fine tuning our new Greeters ministry which debuted this past Saturday, a revamped website, and a structured meeting of our Missions and Evangelism volunteers to create goals and objectives. Pray for us, that we can bring the light of Christ's glorious resurrection to Douglas County!

In Christ ~ Lisa Buck

**Greetings from the Salem Mission,**

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

Thank you once again for warmly welcoming the faithful and even a few inquirers from our Salem mission parish to the beautiful Holy Week and Pascha services at St. George. It is such an inspiring week for everyone, but especially for the newer people who have not yet been able to fully experience the depth of each Holy Week service which requires driving about an hour each way to get to a service. Yet, we thank our Lord that it is only about an hour! It's especially eye opening for those that spend all of Holy Friday at church. It's truly amazing to witness all that has to get done between the end of Royal Hours and the 3 p.m. Taking Down from the Cross: from the last minute cleaning before the floor is covered with bay leaves for 40 days to decorating the Kouvouklion and iconostasis (which requires significant prior planning and purchasing, thank you Katharine) to cleaning and stripping the bay leaves for Saturday morning, and getting the candles ready for the Lamentations and procession. As someone said to me with wide eyes, "WOW, we have a lot to think about when we one day have a priest for Holy Week services in Salem! And this is only Friday!" After the joyful Saturday morning service, our largest group arrives for the awesomeness of Pascha and the red eggs, and soothing our hungry, fasting tummies fellowshiping with you over Pete's delicious Avgolemono and bread. Truly the feast of all feasts and festival of festivals!

Glory to God!

Maria Hauser

## May Celebrations Birthdays

May 2nd-Michael Buck  
 May 7th-Andrew Lilles  
 May 13th-Neal Zoumboukos  
 May 15th-Michelle Creech  
 May 16th-Ray Knerl  
 May 17th-Ben Hauser  
 May 18th-Bridgid Groomer  
 May 19th-Kay Mehas  
 May 20th-Art Mehas  
 May 25th – Maria Hauser  
 May 29th-Lewace Knerl  
 May 30th-Brad Thomas

## Feast Days

May 8th-St Emilia  
 Emily Kaelin  
 May 21st-Sts. Constantine & Helen  
 Liana Creech, Elena Kokkino, Lisa Lilles,  
 Elianna Hauser  
 May 23rd-Holy Myrrhbearer Mary  
 Maria Hauser

## Wedding Anniversaries

May 17th-John & Gloria  
 May 19th-Art & Kay  
 May 24th-Jerry & Joanie

## Baptized in Christ/Chrismated

May 29th-Michael Creech

Many Years! Chronia Polla!



## News and Events

**What's New!**

- **First Saturday Breakfast:** The dates of the First Saturday Breakfast in May are: Food prep on Friday, May 5th and the breakfast on Saturday, May 6th. Many hands make for light work so please lend us yours!
- **Baptized in Christ:** On Lazaros Saturday we received Eileen Chanti into the Church by Chrismation. Her sponsor is Ashli Mueller and she took the name "Maria" (St Maria of Paris). On Holy Saturday we received Clementine & Eulalie Chanti-Sizemore into the Church by baptism. Their sponsors are Tom and Marianne Kaczmarek, and they took the names, "Theodora & Eulalia". We also received Jason Taylor into the Church by baptism that day. His sponsor is Pete Drakatos and he took the name "Paisios". Mark Lipson was also received into the Church by baptism that day. His sponsor is Brett Batterson and he took the name "Mark". May they live for us!
- **"Thank You":** We thank God first and foremost for blessing us with a beautiful Great Lent, Holy Week and Pascha! We also would like to thank our Chanters and Acolytes for their faithful service at this time and throughout the year. A special thanks to Pres. Maria, Julie, Liana, Melita, Katherine, Stephanie, Stella, Lisa, Debbie, Ann Marie, Emily and Joanie, for hosting meals after the Presanctified Liturgies. A special thanks to Stella, Melita, Ann Marie, and Emily for volunteering to decorate the icon for the Salutations and Akathist services. A special thanks to Katherine and Debbie for organizing the decorating of the Kouvouklion. A special thanks to Pete Drakatos for the delicious Avgolemeno soup and bread. A special thanks to Lisa Buck for coordinating the eggs. A special thanks to the Parish Council for the delicious Palm Sunday luncheon. A special thanks to Neal Zoumboukos who coordinated the procession with the Kouvouklion. A special thank you to Cassandra Batterson for coordinating the Almsgiving project and for coordinating the egg hunt. A special thanks to the Mehas and Katsoyannos families for hosting a special Fellowship meal on our patronal Feast Day. And a special thank you to all those I forgot to mention.
- **Mochas for Missions:** Our Mochas for Missions campaign continues in May and we've raised \$620 dollars towards our goal of \$1500 dollars. The math is simple: 30 of us give \$50 each (\$12.50/month or \$4/week). Please help us spread Orthodoxy in the West!
- **Tsoureki (Greek Easter Bread):** Thank you to all who helped make our Philia fundraiser a success! A special thank-you to the Dough Master and Philia Prep-Workers and Bakers! We baked 101 loaves and put in a total of 76.5 hours - talk about a labor of love!-Gloria Zezeas-Timmons
- **Care Ministry Volunteer Training:** There will be a training session for Care Ministry volunteers on Saturday, May 6th, from 2-3 pm. All are welcome!
- **Mother's Day Potluck:** Sunday, May 14th is Mothers Day and Fellowship that day is a potluck. Please bring a dish to share and join us in honoring all the mothers, grandmothers and godmothers.
- **Save the Dates:** Summer is a great time to experience an Orthodox camp program. Check out Holy Trinity's Summer Camp, July 9-14th; and St John's Family Camp, July 17th-21st.
- **St Nicholas Giving Book:** Thanks to all those who helped fund two of the three items in the St Nicholas Book. The third item is a set of books that we want give to Inquirers. The St Nicholas Giving Book is located in the Narthex. Please consider helping us fund these unbudgeted items.
- **Offering Box:** As a reminder, two boxes are in place and ready for use, one in the Nave and one in the Narthex. You may deposit your offering in this box whether it be stewardship, loose offerings, or a donation. We thank Michael Creech for designing and constructing the box!
- **"Pray for one another that you might be healed" (James 5:16):** The Prayer Circle at St George meets every Thursday at 11 am in the Conference Room. Everyone is invited!

# KOINONIA

	5/7	5/14	5/21	5/28	
<b>FELLOWSHIP</b>	Zoumboukos	Mother's Day Potluck	Hauser	Carroll & Kal- lianis	
<b>GREETER</b>	Ann L	Larisa L	John & Gloria	Jerry R	
<b>PROSFORON</b>	Hauser	Lilles	Creech	Freezer	
<b>FLOWERS</b>	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	
<b>READERS</b>	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	
<b>CLEANING CREW</b>	5/6 Sollars	5/13 Hauser	5/20 Everyone	5/27 Carmack	

## GET INVOLVED!!!

Look through this list of organizations, programs, and ministries at our parish,  
then call the contact person and get involved!!!

<b>PARISH COUNCIL</b>	Greg Sebastian 541-220-9560
<b>ACOLYTES</b>	Greg Sebastian 541-220-9560
<b>BOOKSTORE</b>	Greg Sebastian 541-220-9560
<b>PHILIA WOMEN'S GROUP</b>	Julie Lenkoff 541-345-2107
<b>CHURCH SCHOOL</b>	Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-9256
<b>CHANTER/CHANT GROUP</b>	Brad Thomas 541-689-9690, Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-9256
<b>FRIENDS OF ST. JOHN</b>	Art Mehas 541-485-8671
<b>FELLOWSHIP</b>	Julie Lenkoff 541-345-2107
<b>STEWARDSHIP</b>	Neal Zoumboukos 541-344-4485
<b>GREETERS</b>	Larisa Lilles 541-484-7525
<b>1ST SAT. BREAKFAST</b>	Volunteer needed
<b>PRAYER CIRCLE</b>	Bonnie Sollars 541-726-3606
<b>MISSIONS &amp; EVANGELISM</b>	Melita Green 541-543-8792
<b>FUNDRAISERS</b>	Presbytera Maria 971-678-5112
<b>CARE MINISTRY</b>	Gloria Timmons 541-484-0575

**es**  
Saint George Greek Orthodox Church  
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**Have you heard the Good News?**

**Christ is risen from the dead,  
Trampling death by death,  
And to those in the tombs,  
Bestowing life!**

**Jesus having risen from the dead,  
as He foretold,  
Has granted us eternal life,  
And His Great Mercy!**