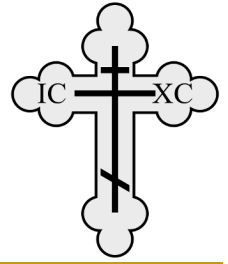




Agape



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH MAY-2020

"Peace be to all"

Christ is risen! Truly He is risen!

For my message this month, I want to share some excerpts from Dn. Steve's homily which he gave on Thomas Sunday.

What is this peace that Christ gives to His apostles and to us after His resurrection? St. Maximos the Confessor explains it so simply and beautifully "Peace is truly the complete and undisturbed possession of what is desired. Christ's peace has the ability to finally satisfy all of our deepest desires in a complete and unshakable way. This definition is expanded if we look to both the Greek and Hebrew words for peace. ειρήνη in Greek, has the root word εἶρω which means to join; and thus when we acquire Christ's peace, we are joined to Him. Shalom in Hebrew expresses the idea of wholeness, completeness, and tranquility in the soul that is unaffected by outward circumstances or pressures. This is why the beatitudes say 'blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God' (Matthew 5:9). When we acquire true peace we are jointed to Christ, are fulfilled by His presence and are complete; we truly become children of God; we have reached the end state that we all desire. This is why Christ offers His peace to the disciples when He first comes to them and to Thomas; when Christ offers His peace, He is offering Himself to us. The peace of Christ is communion with Him.

When we focus our desire towards Him everything else fades away. When we accept His sovereignty over all things, both in heaven and earth, everything falls in its proper place. When we realize our weaknesses and sinfulness simultaneously with His forgiveness and healing we are transformed. And when we experience His love and we respond in love we experience heaven. This is a peace that goes beyond emotional feelings and intellectual certitudes since it surpasses all that this world can offer. It is only Christ's peace that can guard our hearts and minds against every affliction so that we can finally have eternal contentment, relaxation, and be without stress. This peace is the actualization of God's grace within our lives which is why St. Seraphim of Sarov says, 'Acquire the Spirit of peace, and thousands around you will be saved.' It is this peace that turns people into saints, and how the good news of resurrection shines in a dark world.

My dear brothers and sisters, it is in this time of pandemic that the peace we receive from our Lord is continually being attacked and we must stay focused on the reality of the resurrection to maintain it. Like Thomas, we can begin to doubt our Lord and His resurrection. We lose the peace He offers to us because we stop desiring our Savior and start desiring to only be freed from the negative symptoms we are experiencing. We bind our sight to only earthly things rather than heavenly and so we cannot see the transcendent peace our Savior extends to us and we only seek temporary peace from our immediate suffering.

This is why we need to spend time in prayer to connect with our resurrected Lord and so we don't fall into continual fear and worry. This is how we resist distractions that misguide our desires away from communion with the living God. May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus, amidst this pandemic. *Father Jerry*

Building a Stronger Orthodox Christian Community by: Spiritually growing together; Sharing the Orthodox Faith through fellowship, outreach, and philanthropy; Worshiping in a traditional Byzantine church; Supported through Stewardship

202 Hillview #1 Eugene, Oregon 97408
Phone: (541) 683-3519

Website: www.stgeorgeor.org
Email: frgerasimos@sntgrg.org

Parish Council

Christos Anesti! Christ has Risen!

How wonderful it is to say these words again. Pascha is in our hearts, and a virus does not take the glory of Christ from us. Saying that we, the members of the Parish Council realize it is very important for all of us to stay connected.

Please join us during our 'virtual - Zoom' Coffee hour. It is a pleasure to see smiling faces. Also the sound of a caring voice is precious. Please consider calling a fellow church member you miss seeing. It means so much! Your Parish Council is meeting weekly. If you have any concerns please let us know.

These are difficult times for all of us. But for many it is devastating. If you know of someone that needs support in any way please call Father Jerry. We are fortunate to have a Parish Benevolence Fund to help our Parishioners in need. Father Jerry is the administrator of the fund, We also have a Care Ministry Committee that works closely with Father Jerry to meet the needs in our Parish.

I hope you have been able to participate in the services through the live streaming, via YouTube. Sunday Liturgy on April 26, 38 computers/iPads./Cell phones were viewing the streaming of our liturgy at St. George. Assuming there is on average three individuals watching on each device around 114 people were participating in our service. It feels good to stand and sing along as we do during church even if it is a bit off key and only one or two voices are being heard. It is the spirit that counts until we are able to participate again at our beautiful St. George. Remember the church is open during Father Jerry's office hours during the week and by appointment. All social distancing and sanitizing guidelines are being followed according to the Federal/State Executive Orders.

In Christ's Love,
Kay

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

We hope you are all safe and doing well. All fundraisers are on hold until COVID restrictions have been lifted. Most likely, our next fundraising effort will be for the Bake Sale in December. Our next committee meeting TBA.

Pres. Maria

TREASURER'S REPORT

Operating Funds Balance April 28: \$59,009

Dedicated Funds Balance April 28: \$49,365

Stewardship Report

Your giving during these difficult times has been exemplary and a manifestation of everyone's love for our parish and each other. In spite of the limitations on access to the church, virtually everyone has found a way to get their stewardship or free will offerings to the parish. Thank you very, very much for those efforts. A special thank you goes out to those of you who have also contributed to the parish benevolence fund. This fund is our way of helping each other and great example of generosity and love for your spiritual neighbor. Our patron saint is known for being quick to answer our supplications. Our appreciation goes out to all of you who have chosen to follow in Saint George's footsteps!

COVID-19 Update

We want to provide a quick update on COVID-19. We have been participating in many Metropolis level meetings (sometimes 3 a week!) covering the well being of our parishes and parishioners, sharing resources, supporting one another, evaluating financial impact, and planning for re-opening strategies. Additionally, the Parish Council developed a Contingency Plan and has been meeting weekly to connect, plan, and spiritually support our beautiful community. We currently do not have a time frame on when we will re-open but we wanted to let you know that all of us are actively working to prepare for the day when we can open the church and reunite together. If you have any concerns or further questions please feel free to reach out to Fr. Jerry. As a reminder, we have established a Benevolent Fund for anyone experiencing financial difficulties. Please contact Father Jerry directly, if there is a need.

Greetings from the Bookstore! Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!

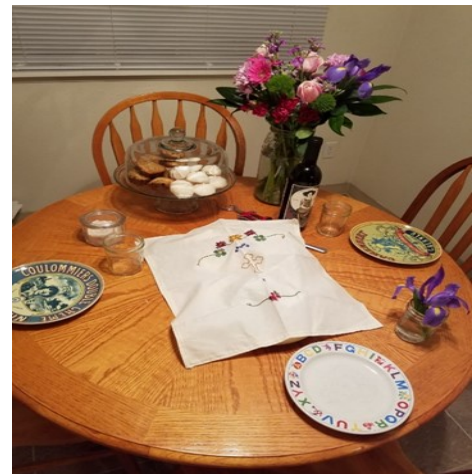
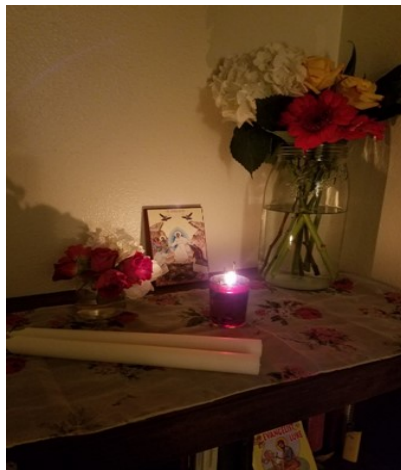
Bookstore Highlights: Church in the Home .

I hope you all had a blessed Pascha. It is sad and difficult to not be able to worship in our Church among our family and friends. Nonetheless, we are fortunate and blessed to be able to participate in services at home by live stream. We can burn incense at home, pray at our altar corner, read our prayer books, and sing the hymns. So, for the time being, we will adjust however long the duration. The Bookstore highlight this month will focus on the children. There is no Church school for them, and the inevitable likelihood is that classes will not resume for the remainder of this school year. The younger children rely on us, as adults, to help guide and nurture them in their Orthodox Christian faith. Even though families can watch the live stream services together, the children might be observers of these services; whereas we already know the meaning and significance of the various stages of the service. We can turn to our faith for strength and peace during life challenges. So, with the children in mind, the highlights this month are:

- * Blueprints for the Little Church, Creating an Orthodox Home
- * Following a Sacred Heart, Raising Godly Children
- * A Child's Guide to Prayer
- * A Child's Guide to the Divine Liturgy
- * Pictures of God, A Child's Guide to Understanding Icons
- * From God to you, The Icon's Journey to Your Heart
- * Making God Real in the Orthodox Home

I recently was reminded about being mindful in how I participate in services (especially now). I have my copy of the Divine Liturgy, which was passed down to me from my mother. I usually turn right to the beginning of the Divine Liturgy. This past Sunday, however, I read through the introduction, the Preface and the Prologue. This particular edition (Fourth Edition 2009) was published for Archbishop Iakovos on his 30th anniversary as Archbishop of North and South America. In his Prologue he wrote: "..... It is to all of you, therefore, that I address these words in order that I might ask you to study the Divine Liturgy often, to celebrate it each time as though it were your first time and, above all, to live it. Try very hard not to allow the Divine Liturgy to become routine, something without feeling or meaning, for it is not a simple rite or ritual, but something that must become part of your personal life, so that each time you celebrate it you will feel spiritually rewarded and renewed. Celebrate the Divine Liturgy, therefore, with a praying congregation which hopes to make the Liturgy a personal experience, since it has the power to transport us to heaven." I miss tending to the Bookstore, and I miss all of you. And I look forward to when we can once again be together to worship in Church. If there is anything the Bookstore can provide, I would be happy to schedule times for you. I wish you many blessings, much peace, and well being.

In Christ, Stella Kallianis



PHILIA

Christ Has Risen! We are entering another month of the new normal. Our church services are now streamed live and our communications are mostly electronic. Philia will experiment with our first meeting via Zoom this Sunday, May 3. An invite has been emailed out. Despite not being able to meet physically, we were, nevertheless, able to operate from our homes as a group. Thank you to Stella, for making a bunch of homemade masks which were donated. Katie Tus-sing's gift basket meant to be presented at her husband's ordination, was delivered without any fanfare. The thought was there, and it looks that the goodies are being enjoyed by the family. Philia also had an electronic meeting and voted to donate \$600 to local food banks and pantries to help those who find themselves in a position of needing assistance. So, even while staying in place we managed to keep our ministry going. Thank you Ladies! Looking forward to seeing you all this Sunday.

Plans for the future:

- Community Court Lunches on May 1, June 5, Aug 7, Aug 14, Sept 4, 2020.
- Tsoureki Baking - TBD-Gloria to advise
- Philia Meeting on May 3rd via Zoom

For info on wedding or baptismal items contact Gloria at 541-424-0575 or via email at zezeastimmons@gmail.com.

Next meetings: May 3rd and June 14, 2020.

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,
julielenkoff2@comcast.net

Missions and Evangelism Ministry Report:**Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!**

Greetings to everyone during this beautiful Paschal season when we are still able to bask in the beauty of the services of Holy Week and long to proclaim everywhere "Christ is Risen!" Since we are all "hunkered" down at home currently, this seems a little more difficult than usual. One thing we all can still do to spread the gospel, is to support the Missions Possible campaign of the Metropolis. The Missions and Evangelism ministry of our metropolis has been instrumental in helping us here locally at St. George in many ways. One visible way was helping us design the beautiful blue welcome packets we give to visitors and our new matching sign. Two years ago, Thomaida gave a mini retreat to inspire us in our personal evangelistic efforts. This ministry also helps the 6 mission churches in our metropolis in many ways. Over the years, the funds have supported these missions to send delegates to the Clergy Laity Conference. It has also covered traveling expenses for visiting priests, given money to start bookstores and allowed staff to talk to seminarians about missions.

Due to the pandemic, the giving will be done one of two ways this year:

- (1) The traditional way of sending a check to the parish with Missions Possible designated in the memo or
- (2) Go to the groworthodoxy.org page and click on our parish's drop down page.

Our goal is \$2000 this year! If you are still able to participate, it will be greatly appreciated.

We should have this up and running soon and if you have any questions, please contact me:

Kathryn at beckerettes@msn.com or 971-506-7161

From the Missions...**Christ is Risen!**

Though our Holy Week and Pascha did not turn out quite like we expected, we have some great things to share: Many of us 'attended' more Lent and Holy Week services than ever, thanks to St George's streaming capability, we are at 'full stewardship' this month, thanks to our dedicated parishioners and the capacity to give online, and for the first time ever we have created a dedicated Benevolence fund for parishioners in need. These things may not have come about without the unique challenges of late, so we are grateful. As we look forward to what the next months will bring, we pray that we all continue to live in the light of Christ's glorious Resurrection. Truly, He is Risen!

In Christ ~ Lisa Buck, Holy Cross Mission, Roseburg.

From "Our Thoughts Determine our Lives: the Life and Teachings of Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica"

"The Lord has said that we save our souls by patient longsuffering. We know that many misfortunes and sorrows come upon both the pious and the impious, both the righteous and the sinful. We all receive our share of misfortunes--this is a means of learning to accept everything in peace. On our own we have no strength, but God has strength. It is to Him that we must turn, deep down in our heart, and He will give us the strength to overcome all difficulties, for it is very important to rise above all those little things that take away our inner peace. We rarely pay any attention to this but allow the injustice that we come across everywhere in our lives to shatter our inner peace. Often we are the ones who do injustice to others. It may seem to us at the time that we are doing the right thing, but later it turns out that we were very wrong. We must learn to overcome all these little things with peace, united with the Lord, so that disquiet will not enter us from the outside, and so that we will always have our inner peace.

May Celebrations

Birthdays

May 2nd-Kim Bentley; Michael Buck
 May 7th-Andrew Lilles
 May 10th-Michael Becker
 May 13th-Neal Zoumboukos
 May 14th-Elena Kokkino
 May 15th-Michelle Creech
 May 17th-Ben Hauser
 May 19th-Kay Mehas
 May 20th-Art Mehas, Stephen Hughes
 May 25th-Maria Hauser
 May 30th-Brad Thomas

Feast Days

May 8th-St Emilia
 Emily Kaelin

May 21st-Ss. Constantine & Helen
 Elena Kokkino, Lisa Lilles, Eliana Hauser, Helen Spears

May 23rd-Holy Myrrh bearer Mary
 Maria Hauser

Wedding Anniversaries

May 17th-John & Gloria Timmons
 May 19th-Art & Kay Mehas
 May 24th-Jerry and Joanie Rundt

Baptized in Christ/Chrismated

May 29th-Michael Creech

Many Years! Chronia Polla!

News and Events

What's New!

- **First Saturday Breakfast:** We received word from Peter Mead, one of the coordinators of the First Saturday Breakfast, that per a directive from Bishop Maxim, they are to desist from providing the breakfast until further notice. Hopefully, they'll be back serving the homeless soon. In the meantime, there are other ways to help those in need. I know that Adrienne volunteers at Catholic Community Service, and that Ron and Carmen Muresan are involved with Occupy Medical. If you need help getting in contact with them, please let me know.
- **Congratulations:** We want to congratulate Dimitri Lilles, his parents Andrew and Larisa, and the whole Lilles family, on the occasion of Dimitri becoming an Eagle Scout. We commend Dimitri for all the effort, time and sacrifice he put in to become an Eagle Scout. We look forward to celebrating this great achievement with him in person.
- **Memory Eternal:** Constandina Kostopoulos reposed in the Lord on Saturday, April 4th, surrounded by her loving family, and the staff of the assisted living facility she had been living in. Dina's health issues prevented her from attending on Sundays, but she was certainly with us in spirit. Dina knitted countless hats for needy children and donated them to us for distribution. May her memory be eternal!
- **COVID-19 Update:** We (the clergy) are awaiting the next directives from the Metropolitan, which will take precedence over local and state directives. Until then, the last set of directives remains in effect. We appreciate your patience and prayers .
- **Holy Week and Pascha 2020:** Special thanks to our chanters, Ann Marie Kaelin and Brad Thomas, as well as our lone acolyte, Stephen Kaelin, for their offering of time and talent, so that the services of the Church could happen during Holy Week and Pascha. Special thanks also to those who helped keep the church decorated with flowers throughout Lent and Holy Week/Pascha.
- **Link to our YouTube Channel:** Even though our church is "temporarily closed" to help slow the spread of COVID-19, the Divine Services continue to be done. We invite you to tune in to our YouTube Channel (Saint George GOC), and pray the services with us. You can access the link by visiting our website www.stgeorgeor.org
- **Zoom Teleconferences:** In an attempt to stay connected, and to continue to do classes and meetings, Zoom teleconferences are being scheduled. You will receive an invitation in your email inbox with instructions on how to participate. We will also be doing Sunday Virtual Fellowship, every other Sunday.
- **Reminders:** I wanted to remind everyone that the church remains open during Office Hours, Tuesday-Friday, 10-4, and you are welcome to come and light a candle, pray, etc. I also want to remind you that I am still doing pastoral visits, confessions, and meetings. I can do phone calls, Face Time, Skype, and Zoom meetings, as well as in person. These are all efforts to stay connected to you and your needs. I would ask that you also make an effort to connect more with each other, and others within your reach. We'll get through this a lot quicker and better, by being together.
- **A note of thanks from Nicholas at OSP:** "I do want to thank you very much for writing me. I did receive your beautiful cards. It's always a blessing for me to get a card or letter. Thank you for thinking of me. I want to thank all your church friends that signed the Thanksgiving and Christmas card for me. Tell them I thank them."

KOINONIA

	5/3	5/10	5/17	5/24	5/31
FELLOWSHIP					
GREETER					
PROSFORON	Creech	Lilles	Kaelin	Markopoulos	Freezer
FLOWERS	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
READERS	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas
CLEANING CREW	Zoumboukos/ Rundt	Thomas/ Sumstine	Avalos/ Creech	Spears/ Kennedy	Sebastian/ Muresan

GET INVOLVED!!!

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

PARISH COUNCIL	Kay Mehas 541-954-0152
SAFETY COMMITTEE	Gloria Zezeas Timmons 541-484-0575
BOOKSTORE	Stella Kallianis 541-274-9110
PHILIA WOMEN'S GROUP	Julie Lenkoff 541-345-2107
CHURCH SCHOOL	Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-1331
CHANTER/CHANT GROUP	Brad Thomas 541-689-9690, Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-1331
FAMILY WELLNESS	Ashli Mueller 541-731-3319
FELLOWSHIP	Neal Zoumboukos 541-344-4485
STEWARDSHIP	Neal Zoumboukos 541-344-4485
GREETERS	Larisa Lilles 541-484-7525
CARE MINISTRY	Gloria Zezeas Timmons 541-484-0575
PRAYER CIRCLE	Bonnie Sollars 541-852-9496
MISSIONS & EVANGELISM	Kathryn Becker 971-506-7161
FUNDRAISERS	Presbytera Maria 971-678-5112

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Saint George Greek Orthodox Church
202 Hillview 1
Eugene, OR 97408-5018

A Good word...

Prayer for Protection against a Pandemic

Lord Jesus Christ our God, You Who created human beings with utter goodness, the healer of our souls and bodies, heed now the supplication of Your children, and save us from the impending threat against the world. For this affliction has spread ferociously and the fear of death has surrounded us. Many have suffered and many have passed on to repose, and there is none to save us, except You, O Lord.

We know, Merciful Lord, that all this will cultivate our faith, as we implore you, crying out in utter repentance. Undo, O Lord, the dangerous effects of the virus and heal all people, as a most Gracious Lord. For those, who repose in peace, give rest in Your heavenly abode. Grant peace to the world, so that all people know that You are the Only God, and your faithful are not bound by death, but live forever.

For You are our hope and our whole life is in Your benevolent hands, and to You we give glory, as well as to the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen