

HOLY TRINITY

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



723 N BODINE ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

CHURCH BULLETIN

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Sunday of the Holy Pentecost

Gospel Reading John 7: 37 - 53; 8: 12



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At that time, on the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. When they heard these words, some of the people said, "This is really the prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Is the Christ to come from Galilee? Has not the scripture said that the Christ is descended from David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" So there was a division among the people over him. Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. The officers then went

back to the chief priest and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this man!" The Pharisees answered them, "Are you led astray, you also? Have any of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd, who do not know the law, are accursed." Nikodemos, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them, "Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?" They replied, "Are you from Galilee too? Search and you will see that no prophet is to rise from Galilee." Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Apostle Reading Acts of the Apostles 2: 1 - 11



In those days, when the day Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were

bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontos and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." with them all.

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Synaxarion. Sunday June 20, 2021 - The Holy Pentecost;
Monday June 21 - Holy Trinity Day (Holy Spirit Day)

Orthodox Homily on the Pentecost Sunday

This is a day of great joy, the birthday of the Church. All that Christ imparted to us through His saving incarnation, defeat of sin and death, and glorious ascension, has its fulfillment this day: We're here today worshipping God the Holy Trinity, one in essence and undivided, for this is also known as the day the Holy Trinity was first preached. We're here today proclaiming the truth of the Gospel and



Orthodox Faith preserved in the Church for 2,000 years. We're here today because of the promise of love made by Christ God Himself, saying, "You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5).

On this day, the disciples, who were confused and fearful, who continuously misunderstood and questioned the resurrection, are now made bold by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon them "as tongues of fire." In an instant, all is changed: the disciples speak with boldness—the Holy Spirit has come upon them and replaced their heart of fear with God's love and power from on high.

No longer are the disciples huddled together in an upper room for fear of the Jewish authorities, as they were when Jesus visited them after His resurrection. Now, we see them in the streets, preaching to the people with one voice and great courage the truth of new life in Christ Jesus, the fulfillment of all that God had promised Israel and the world in His great love and mercy.

Mankind's efforts at unity were prideful, seeking to take the place of God, as manifested in the Tower of Babel. To humble man and teach Him to fear God and follow Him so man could live and thirst after salvation in Him, God divided the tongues. But now, at Pentecost, God calls all mankind back to communion with Him. This communion is manifested not in man's efforts at unity, but by the gift of God, the seal of the Holy Spirit, given to each of us at our Chrismation.

The Holy Spirit leads us to unity in the faith of Christ's holy Church and to understanding of God's truth, just as Christ promised before His holy ascension: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I

will send Him to you... when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:7, 13).

By the Holy Spirit we are indeed led "into all truth." And what is truth? Jesus Christ says, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no one comes to the Father, except by Me" (John 14:6). Indeed, this is what it means to be an Orthodox Christian: We re-ceive Him who is the Truth by be-ing "born again," as Christ says to Nicodemus, through 'water and the spirit' without which, Christ says, we may not enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:5).

St. John the Baptist prepares the way, saying, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I.... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matthew 3:11). This is the baptism and chrismation, i.e., 'the sealing,' of which St. Paul speaks and which he himself received from Ananias, "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13).

For this reason, we sing today in place of the usual Trisagion, "As many as have been baptized, have put on Christ," (Gal. 3:27). Pentecost is for us our own personal renewal of our own baptism into Christ and sealing by the Holy Spirit. On this day, all is renewed; we are refreshed and empowered to struggle through repentance, [to thirst](#)

more after God, making spiritual progress by the work of the Holy Spirit in us and through us, to advance in God's Kingdom.

And so today, at the end of the service, we'll pray the prayers of repentance, return to kneeling and prostrating, and enjoin our bodies with our souls, bending both before the Lord and receive healing for our sin-sickness, resulting in salvation and strengthening our witness.

Pentecost is then the reversal of Babel and the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel to "pour out His Spirit on all flesh." Salvation from here on out will no longer be solely the gift of the Jews; through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Gentiles will respond to the Gospel message of new life in Christ, participation in the Life of the one God in Three Persons.

Those present at Pentecost from all nations hear the good news of salvation in their own tongue: They all hear in their own language, the one thing that can unite all mankind together in a community, not based on prideful human ambitions, but on communion with God, Life itself.

Life in the Spirit after Pentecost is manifested then not in chaos, confusion, but always in order, as St. Luke relates in Acts 2, "... they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship in the breaking of the (Eucharistic) bread, and in the prayers" (as it is written in the original Greek). This same order continues to be at the heart of Orthodox worship to this day! And despite the differences in language, culture, background, geography, time, the same message of healing and salvation, of life in communion with God and in accordance with His commandments, is proclaimed with the same unity of message.

This life in unity, in the Spirit, is depicted in the traditional icon of Pentecost we have here before us. We don't see the descent of the Holy Spirit through the eyes of the unbelievers gathered in Jerusalem, who, St. Luke relates, mock the Apostles in their exuberance, saying they're "full of new wine" (Acts 2:12). Instead, we see the heavenly reality of the descent, what it means for us, for the faithful in the Church.

The unity of common Orthodox (i.e., 'right-believing') faith is seen in the Apostles' communal gathering. The diversity of gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, teaching, prophecy, language (I Cor. 12), are depicted in their differing gestures, the Gospel writers are shown Gospel in hand, others with scrolls, showing

their gift of teaching. The space at the top is left vacant, signifying that Christ has ascended and is now invisibly present with us through the Holy Spirit, whom God the Father has sent to empower them to minister in Christ's name, in His stead, to be "everywhere present and filling all things" (Hymn of the Holy Spirit).

The Holy Spirit is here represented by tongues of fire. Why tongues, why fire? Because God spoke creation and life into being by His Word and became incarnate to redeem our human nature. God has sent us His Holy Spirit just so—to give us new life in Him and empower our speech and actions to proclaim to the world around us the Good News of salvation in Him. Today, God is proclaimed and manifested as Holy Trinity, a communion, a relationship of truth and love that you and I are invited to join in. The fire testifies to the truth that God is "a consuming fire," who offers us healing by "burning up all the thorns of our offenses," (Post-Communion prayer of St. Simeon) our passions, by growing in us as the "new man" He has given us by virtue of our Baptism and Chrismation.

To all of us wearied by sin, grudges, lack of faith, whatever passions, here represented in the holy icon as the old man, 'the cosmos,' ruled by sin and darkness, Christ proclaims today in His Gospel, "I am the light of

the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12). The Apostles and their successors in Christ's holy Church today, proclaim this same truth: there's freedom from enslavement to this world, there's fulfillment and enlightenment in Christ, there's healing from sin-sickness, there's new life in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit working in us and through us.

In this way, the prayer to the Holy Spirit becomes personal, our own Pentecost this day. There's no where He is not or cannot be. He is stronger than whatever weakness we possess. He empowers you and I that we too, however simple we may be, can find our courage and the love of God we need to proclaim and live the Good News of salvation and new life in Christ Jesus: Today we pray, beseeching God the Holy Spirit, "O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art everywhere and fillest all things, treasury of blessings and giver of life, come and abide in us, and cleanse us of every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One!"

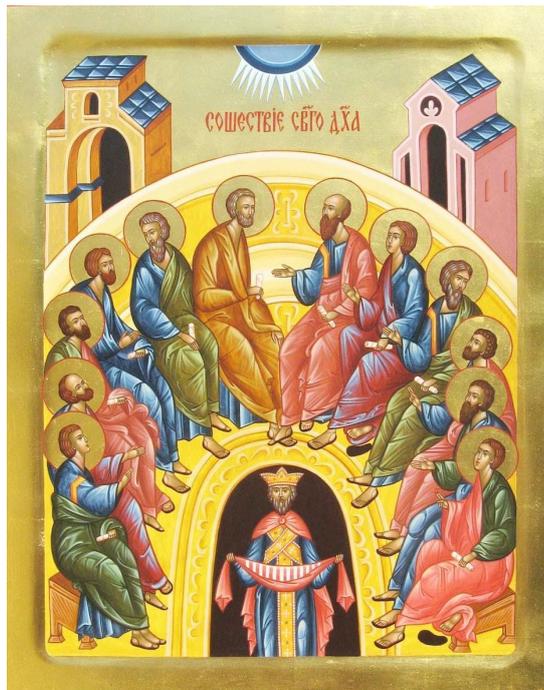
Fr. Robert Miclean

(Source: <https://www.orthodoxannapolis.org/>)

Persons in Communion with God and One Another

On today's great feast of Pentecost, we celebrate the Holy Spirit coming upon the followers of the Risen Jesus, which is the birthday of His Body, the Church.

After the Savior's resurrection, He ascended into heaven and sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples so that they would not be cut off from the new life that He has brought to the world. The Holy Spirit is, of course, the third Person of the Holy Trinity, fully divine and eternal as are the Father and the Son. By being filled with the Holy Spirit, the Lord's followers participate personally and communally in the unity, power, and blessing of the very life of God by grace.



Unlike the period before Christ's Passion, the disciples now no longer think of themselves as students of a mere teacher, prophet, or king. They no longer struggle to accept the good news of His resurrection. Instead, they experience the new life of the Kingdom as "rivers of living water" flowing from their hearts. By the Spirit, they participate by grace in the life of the Holy Trinity. God is not remote, distant, or removed from them, but present in their souls. By God's presence in their hearts, they become truly who He created them to be in the divine image and likeness.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes upon the apostles as a group who were gathered together in obedience to the Lord's command. The divine breath which first gave life to humanity comes upon them as a mighty wind. The divine glory beheld by Moses in the burning bush now rests upon each of them personally as flames of fire. The divided speech of the tower of Babel is now overcome by the miracle of speaking in different languages so that everyone can hear and understand the praise of the Lord. Not the possession of any nation or group, this great feast manifests the fulfillment of God's promises for the entire world and every human being.

God creates us all in His image with the calling to grow in His likeness, actually to become like Him in holiness. As those corrupted by sin and death, however, fulfilling that

vocation is beyond our ability. Only God is God, and our

only hope is to share by grace in His eternal life. This glorious participation in the divine life is made possible to us at Pentecost. Human distinctions of every kind become irrelevant here, for all that matters is that we respond with faith, humility, love, and repentance as we receive the Spirit poured out on the whole world and on every generation.

With the Holy Spirit present in our hearts, linking us together organically as one, our fallen, divided humanity is restored. Just as Father, Son, and Spirit share a

common life of love, unity, and holiness, we share a common life in Christ's Body, the Church. As particular people, we have the responsibility to believe, repent, and obey the Lord as we participate in the ministries of the Church and live faithfully each day. As members of Christ's Body, we are nurtured by worship, the sacraments, and spiritual instruction in our common life. The holy Tradition of the Church is the presence of the Holy Spirit, guiding the Body into ever greater knowledge of and participation in the life of the Holy Trinity.

For we receive the Holy Spirit not as isolated individuals, but as persons in communion, in loving relationship with Christ and with one another in His Body, the Church. The only proper way to celebrate Pentecost is to open ourselves as fully as possible to God's healing, transforming power in all areas of our lives. That is how we may become radiant with the divine glory as we celebrate this great feast of our salvation as living temples of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Fr. Philip LeMasters

(Source: <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/>)

Trinity Sunday

On this day, the fiftieth after Easter, we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost when the fullness of the Holy Trinity was revealed through the coming of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit.

On this day we sing that Christ 'made the fishermen most wise'. How did Christ do this? Did he sit them on a school bench and proceed to teach them? Did he give them advanced courses in Greek Philosophy? Did he set them a translation from Hebrew into Latin? Did he ask them to learn off by heart an Encyclopedia of Theology?

No, of course not. Instead He taught them humility and purity of heart, and then when they were ready, He sent down from His Father the Holy Spirit. This humility and purity of heart, crowned by the Holy Spirit, is the key to understanding, it is Wisdom.

This explains why very highly educated people are often the stupidest, responsible for terrible misfortunes and genocides. Thus, there have been many great geniuses in the history of the world and many of them have become blood-soaked dictators. It is one thing to have instruction, but it is quite another to know how to use that instruction. This is the meaning of wisdom. Wisdom is discernment, or the ability to use aright information and knowledge. On the other hand, the meaning of stupidity is to have instruction and instead of using it for good, to use it to blind oneself, to fall in love with oneself and be so full of oneself that one is blind to God and so denies the existence of God, which is so obvious to the simplest peasant. As the Scriptures say: 'The fool has said in his heart, there is no God'. Pride blinds but humility opens eyes. Pride makes the Holy Spirit to flee, but humility draws the Holy Spirit like a magnet. This is why two equally



educated people may read the Gospels, one will become a believer, the other will dismiss them as a myth. The first has humility and purity of heart and therefore his spiritual eyes will be opened.

The other has pride and therefore he will be blinded by pride and self-opinion and puffing himself up, will make himself ridiculous. Thus, under-

standing is quite independent of education, but dependent on humility and purity of heart. For it is not written, 'Blessed are the educated', but: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God'.

On account of this you will notice that wherever there is pride, there are stubbornly-held opinions and therefore divisions. For pride leads to disunity, humility to unity. This is what we sing of in another hymn today, the kontakion. We recognise that at the time when men in their pride built the Tower of Babel, there was a confusion of tongues. Indeed the very word 'Babel' has become a synonym for confusion. On the other hand, we recognise that among the humble the Holy Spirit brought unity and different peoples were able to understand one another despite difference of language. Why is this? It is because opinions and opinionatedness and so divisions are the fruit of impurity in the heart, the fruit of pride. For example, many people say of the Church: 'Ah yes, that is a good idea, but I do not go to Church because there are so many divisions and splits'. But no divisions exist in the Church, they exist only among those who break away from the Church and Her Spirit, the Holy Spirit. All divisions, from the most ancient to the most modern, exist because of pride. If we look at every single split from the Church, we find pride, either personal or collective.

Thus there are those split away from the Church because of their nationality and language and politics: collective pride They refuse to belong to the same Church as those of another nationality and language and politics. This is true of the Monophysites in Egypt and Armenia; it is true of Roman Catholics with their Latin racial and cultural base; it is true of Anglicans who prefer to follow a specific English Protestant culture from after the Reformation instead of English Orthodox culture of their forebears of the First Millennium. Then there are those who leave the Church because they prefer to follow one man instead of God. All such groups are named after the man they prefer to follow, be they Wesleyans or Calvinists, Lutherans or Arians and so on.

All these groups, whether they follow a political or a national or a personal ideology, end up leaving the Church. Why? Because they put the things of this world first and the Spirit second. Where there is the Holy Spirit, there is unity. Where the Holy Spirit is not, there is an ideology of whatever sort, and thus division. 'By their fruits ye shall know them'.

That is why today faithful Orthodox Christians, members of the Church, of all ages and all over the world and of all nationalities and languages celebrate the Feast of Pentecost together. Today we concelebrate the Feast with the Apostles and the Fathers, the Martyrs and the Confessors, of all ages, of ages past and of the present age and of the age to come. Today we concelebrate going back in history, with the New Russian Martyrs and Confessors, with the Martyrs and Confessors of the Croat yoke, with the Chinese Martyrs whose feast-day it is, with the Martyrs and Confessors under the Turks, with the English Martyrs under the Danes like St Edmund, with the Martyrs and Confessors of North Africa, with the Martyrs and Confessors of Ancient Rome, with the Martyrs and Confessors of Asia Minor, with all Orthodox Christians of all the ages. And this day we concelebrate the same Faith with the faithful in our churches in Jerusalem, in Alaska, in Siberia, in Argentina, in Uganda, in France, in Athens, in Tokyo, in Lisbon, in Sydney, in Bucharest, in Ottawa, in San Francisco. For we confess the same Orthodox Faith of the Holy Spirit, 'Who proceeds from the Father and rests on the Son', for we confess the same Orthodox Faith of the Holy Spirit, Who brings Wisdom and Unity wherever there is humility and purity of heart. Amen.

Fr. Andrew Phillips



HOLY TRINITY'S Liturgical Schedule from June 19 to June 27 2021

Saturday June 19 (Soul Saturday):

9:00 am - Matins

10:00 am - Holy Liturgy

11:00 am - Memorial Service

5:00 pm - Pan Orthodox Vespers

Sunday June 20 (Holy Pentecost - Descent of the Holy Ghost):

9:00 am - Matins

10:00 am - Holy Liturgy

1:00 pm - Dinner in Honor of HE
Archbishop and Metropolitan Nicolae

Monday June 21 (Holy Trinity Day):

9:00 am - Matins

10:00 am - Holy Liturgy

12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

Thursday June 24 - Nativity of Saint John the Baptist:

Sunday June 27 (First Sunday after Pentecost - All Saints Feast Day):

9:00 am - Matins

10:00 am - Holy Liturgy

11:00 am - Sunday School

12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

