

*We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.*

# Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

OCA – Diocese of New York-New Jersey

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson

Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Dean Inferrera



**Sunday, June 4, 2017**

Gospel: John 7:37-52; 8:12

**Tone 7**

Epistle: Acts 2:1-11

## **8th Sunday of Pascha: Holy Pentecost: Feast of the Holy Trinity.**

St. Metrophanes, First Patriarch of Constantinople (325-326). Righteous Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus (1st c.). Ven. Methodius “Peshnosha”, disciple of Ven. Sergius of Rádonezh (1392). Martyrs Frontasius, Severinus, Severian, and Silanus, of Gaul (1st c.). Martyr Concordius of Spoleto (ca. 175). Hieromartyr Astius, Bishop of Dyrrachium in Macedonia (ca. 110). Venerable Father Zosima the Bishop of Babylon (6th c.).

### **Troparion – Tone 8**

*Blessed art You O Christ Our God / You have revealed the fishermen as most wise / By sending down upon them the Holy Spirit / Through them You drew the world into Your net / O Lover of Man, Glory to You!*

### **Kontakion – Tone 8**

*When the most High came down and confused the tongues, / He divided the nations; / But when he distributed the tongues of fire / He called all to unity. / Therefore, with one voice, we glorify the All-holy Spirit!*



*Holy Pentecost: Feast of the Holy Trinity.*

### **Prayer Requests**

#### **For Health of:**

**Brianna** (daughter) & **Michael** (son-in-law), on their anniversary, offered by Trudy and Phil Ellmore.

**Alex Jankowski**, on his 29<sup>th</sup> birthday (June 2), offered by Linda, Paul, Andrew and Adam Jankowski.

**MaryAnn & Bill Kuzemchak**, on their 57<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, offered by their sons.

#### **In Memory of:**

Choir Director **Reader Paul Flurschutz** of Saint Nicholas Church (Auburn NY) who passed into eternal rest late Saturday (May 27). Our deepest sympathies are expressed to Marge, son Mark, family and friends, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

### **Orthodox Quote of the Day**

But do not be troubled or sad. The Lord sometimes allows people who are devoted to Him to fall into such dreadful vices; and this is in order to prevent them from falling into a still greater sin--pride. Your temptation will pass and you will spend the remaining days of your life in humility. Only do not forget your sin.

**St. Seraphim of Sarov**

### *Liturgical Schedule*

#### **Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:45 am: General  
Confession  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am: Last Sunday  
School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup>**

9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup>**

9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

### *Bulletin Sponsors*

**Trudy & Phil Ellmore;  
Jankowski Family;  
Kuzemchak Family**

### *Readings:*

#### **The Prokeimenon in the 8<sup>th</sup> Tone:**

Their proclamation hath gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the universe! (*Psalms 18:5*)  
vs. The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims His handiwork. (*Psalms 18:2*)

#### **Epistle: Acts 2:1-11**

**When the day** of 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, Pontus 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."

#### **Alleluia in the 1<sup>st</sup> Tone:**

By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made; and all their host by the Spirit of His mouth. (*Psalms 32:6*)  
vs. The Lord looked down from heaven, and saw all the sons of men. (*Psalms 32:13*)

#### **Gospel: John 7:37-52; 8:12**

**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."



### *Holy Pentecost: Feast of the Holy Trinity.*

In the Church's annual liturgical cycle, Pentecost is “the last and great day.” It is the celebration by the Church of the coming of the Holy Spirit as the end—the achievement and fulfillment—of the entire history of salvation. For the same reason, however, it is also the celebration of the beginning: it is the “birthday” of the Church as the presence among us of the Holy Spirit, of the new life in Christ, of grace, knowledge, adoption to God and holiness.

This double meaning and double joy is revealed to us, first of all, in the very name of the feast. Pentecost in Greek means fifty, and in the sacred biblical symbolism of numbers, the number fifty symbolizes both the fullness of time and that which is beyond time: the Kingdom of God itself. It symbolizes the fullness of time by its first component: 49, which is the fullness of seven (7 x 7): the number of time. And, it symbolizes that which is beyond time by its second component: 49 + 1, this one being the new day, the “day without evening” of God's eternal Kingdom. With the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Christ's disciples, the time of salvation, the Divine work of redemption has been completed, the fullness revealed, all gifts bestowed: it belongs to us now to “appropriate” these gifts, to be that which we have become in Christ: participants and citizens of His Kingdom.

#### **THE VIGIL OF PENTECOST**

The all-night Vigil service begins with a solemn invitation:

“Let us celebrate Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit,  
The appointed day of promise, and the fulfillment of hope,  
The mystery which is as great as it is precious.”

In the coming of the Spirit, the very essence of the Church is revealed:

“The Holy Spirit provides all,

Overflows with prophecy, fulfills the priesthood,

Has taught wisdom to illiterates, has revealed fishermen as theologians,

He brings together the whole council of the Church.”

In the three readings of the Old Testament (Numbers 11:16-17, 24-29; Joel 2:23-32; Ezekiel 36:24-28) we hear the prophecies concerning the Holy Spirit. We are taught that the entire history of mankind was directed towards the day on which God “would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh.” This day has come! All hope, all promises, all expectations have been fulfilled. At the end of the Postiche hymns, for the first time since Easter, we sing the hymn: “O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth...,” the one with which we inaugurate all our services, all prayers, which is, as it were, the life-breath of the Church, and whose coming to us, whose “descent” upon us in this festal Vigil, is indeed the very experience of the Holy Spirit “coming and abiding in us.”

Having reached its climax, the Vigil continues as an explosion of joy and light for “verily the light of the Comforter has come and illumined the world.” In the Gospel reading (John 20:19-23) the feast is interpreted to us as the feast of the Church, of her divine nature, power and authority. The Lord sends His disciples into the world, as He Himself was sent by His Father. Later, in the antiphons of the Liturgy, we proclaim the universality of the apostles' preaching, the cosmical significance of the feast, the sanctification of the whole world, the true manifestation of God's Kingdom.

#### **THE VESPERS OF PENTECOST**

The liturgical peculiarity of Pentecost is a very special Vespers of the day itself. Usually this service follows immediately the Divine Liturgy, is “added” to it as its own fulfillment. The service begins as a solemn “summing up” of the entire celebration, as its liturgical synthesis. We hold flowers in our hands symbolizing the joy of the eternal spring, inaugurated by the coming of the Holy Spirit. After the festal Entrance, this joy reaches its climax in the singing of the Great Prokeimenon:

“Who is so great a God as our God?”

Then, having reached this climax, we are invited to kneel. This is our first kneeling since Easter. It signifies that after these fifty days of Paschal joy and fullness, of experiencing the Kingdom of God, the Church now is about to begin her pilgrimage through time and history. It is evening again, and the night approaches, during which temptations and failures await us, when, more than anything else, we need Divine help, that presence and power of the Holy Spirit, who has already revealed to us the joyful End, who now will help us in our effort towards fulfillment and salvation.



*"Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful" founded in 1966*

All this is revealed in the three prayers which the celebrant reads now as we all kneel and listen to him. In the first prayer, we bring to God our repentance, our increased appeal for forgiveness of sins, the first condition for entering into the Kingdom of God.

In the second prayer, we ask the Holy Spirit to help us, to teach us to pray and to follow the true path in the dark and difficult night of our earthly existence. Finally, in the third prayer, we remember all those who have achieved their earthly journey, but who are united with us in the eternal God of Love.

The joy of Easter has been completed and we again have to wait for the dawn of the Eternal Day. Yet, knowing our weakness, humbling ourselves by kneeling, we also know the joy and the power of the Holy Spirit who has come. We know that God is with us, that in Him is our victory.

Thus is completed the feast of Pentecost and we enter "the ordinary time" of the year. Yet, every Sunday now will be called "after Pentecost"—and this means that it is from the power and light of these fifty days that we shall receive our own power, the Divine help in our daily struggle. At Pentecost we decorate our churches with flowers and green branches—for the Church "never grows old, but is always young." It is an evergreen, ever-living Tree of grace and life, of joy and comfort. For the Holy Spirit—"the Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life—comes and abides in us, and cleanses us from all impurity," and fills our life with meaning, love, faith and hope.

Father Alexander Schmemmann (1974)



**Bulletin Sponsor:** Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend, for a donation of \$10. Sponsors will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

**Memorial Candles:** Candles be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one.

**Private Confessions:** Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times.

**General Confession:** Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

**Pannikhida Service:** The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

**Special Announcements** for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail:

[OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com](mailto:OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com) ; [reader.charles@hotmail.com](mailto:reader.charles@hotmail.com) or [rsub-deacon.vlashi@outlook.com](mailto:rsub-deacon.vlashi@outlook.com)

**The Living Clean Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.

**The Grey Book Step Meeting Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.



*Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News*

**Sunday School schedule update:** The 9:30 Sunday School class will meet this Sunday, June 4th. The final Sunday School class for all classes this school year will be next Sunday, June 11th. Thank you to everyone who participated in Sunday school this year,

and enjoy your summer!



*NY/NJ Diocese News*

**PENTECOST: Archpastoral Letter from Archbishop Michael**

His Eminence, Archbishop Michael has issued an Archpastoral Letter to the faithful of the diocese for the Feast-Day of Holy Pentecost celebrated on 4 June 2017. In part, he writes: "How clearly we see the Trinity in God's plan of salvation. 'God (the Father) so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son (Jesus) that whoever believes in Him may not perish but have life everlasting' (John 3:16). Then Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to abide with us forever."



**Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News**  
**Metropolitan Tikhon presides at 113th annual Memorial Day Pilgrimage**

Archimandrite Sergius and the Brotherhood of Saint Tikhon’s Monastery welcomed pilgrims “from near and far” at the 113th annual Memorial Day Pilgrimage May 26-29, 2017.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, presided at the pilgrimage’s official opening on Friday, May 26 as the Myrrh Streaming Hawaiian Icon of the Iveron Mother of God was welcomed and brought into the Monastery Church of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk. Many pilgrims were anointed at the conclusion of the opening Molieben. The icon was available throughout the weekend for veneration by hundreds of faithful.

On Saturday, May 27, Metropolitan Tikhon presided at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and, in the afternoon, the 75th Commencement of Saint Tikhon’s Seminary, during which His Grace, Bishop Thomas of the Diocese of Charleston, Oakland, and the Mid-Atlantic of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America addressed the graduates and was awarded a Doctorate of Divinity *Honoris Causa*. See related story.

“We have just completed the bright Paschal season and are awaiting the Great and Last Feast of Pentecost,” Metropolitan Tikhon said in his stirring homily at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Memorial Day—Monday, May 29. “All of us who are devoted to the life of the Church have some pangs when we bid farewell to the Paschal season. And yet as Saint John of Kronstadt said, the Resurrection remains with us, as Christ remains with us. Saint John poses the question, ‘What has Pascha left in our souls?’ On this Memorial Day, perhaps what Pascha might leave in our souls are the words of the Paschal verses: ‘Let us call ‘brothers’ even those that hate us, and forgive all by the Resurrection.’ That would be a worthy memory, a worthy celebration of Memorial Day, to guide us daily through the ups and downs of life throughout the year.

“May this be granted to us through the prayers of our Holy Founder and Confessor for the Faith, Saint Tikhon, together with all the Holy Saints who have walked these hallowed grounds; by the intercessions of the Mother of God, whose wonderworking icon from Hawaii is gracing us during this Pilgrimage; and through the life of the Holy Trinity, One God in Three Persons, Who is worshipped by all of us who are pilgrims on a journey towards the Heavenly Kingdom,” Metropolitan Tikhon concluded.

Concelebrating with Metropolitan Tikhon and Bishop Thomas at Monday’s Liturgy were His Eminence, Archbishop Mark of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania; His Eminence, Archbishop Irénée of Ottawa and the Archdiocese of Canada; and His Eminence, Archbishop Michael of New York and New Jersey, Rector of Saint Tikhon’s Seminary.

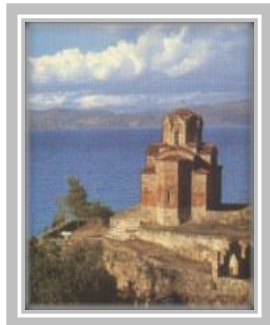
Among the other services celebrated on Memorial Day were a Panikhida for departed veterans and the Anointing of the sick, infirm and all pilgrims. The Akathistos Hymn in honor of Saint Alexis Toth, whose relics are enshrined in the Monastery Church of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk, was sung the same afternoon by a group of seminarians, a video of which is available for viewing.

In related news, Metropolitan Tikhon was delighted to receive Archimandrite Pimen of the Diocese of Khust and Vinohradova of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, who traveled to the United States for the pilgrimage to venerate Saint Alexis’ relics. Located in western Ukraine near the Slovak and Hungarian borders, the Diocese of Khust is in the area in which Saint Alexis was born and ministered prior to his arrival in the US in the 1880s. Metropolitan Tikhon presented a relic of Saint Alexis to Father Pimen, a gift to His Eminence, Metropolitan Mark of Khust and his diocese. Reflecting on how for many years, Orthodox Christians from the US made pilgrimages abroad to venerate the relics of the saints, Metropolitan Tikhon remarked that it is “something wonderful to see pilgrims from Europe coming to America to venerate our saints!”

Throughout the weekend, pilgrims flocked to the monastery not only for services and spiritual refreshment, but to pray at the graves of loved ones, visit the Metropolitan Museum and Icon Repository, and engage in fellowship with old and new friends alike.

Photo galleries are available on the OCA web site, on Facebook, on the web site of Saint Tikhon’s Monastery and the web site of St. Tikhon’s Seminary.





***Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, IX:***

*O Lord, my soul's most cherished mystery, how light this world is, when I weigh it on a scale with You!*

*On one side of the scale is a lake of molten gold, and on the other a cloud of smoke.*

*All my cares, along with my body and its foolish convulsions of sweetness and bitterness-what are they except smoke, beneath which my soul is swimming in a golden lake?*

*How can I confess to people the mystery that I see through the rings of Your archangels? How can I tell particles about totality? How can fingernails understand the circulation of blood in the body? It is truly painful for one struck dumb with wonder to*

*speak to those deafened by noise.*

First comes begetting and then creating. Just as a miraculous thought is quietly and mysteriously begotten in a man, and the begotten thought thereafter creates, so also did the Ultimate Man, the Only-Begotten, appear in You, and thereafter created everything that God can create.

In Your inviolate chastity, through the activity of the All-Holy Spirit, the Son was begotten. This is the begetting of God from above.

As above, so below—the ancients used to say. What happened in heaven happened also on earth. What happened in eternity happened also in time.

You are dear to me, my love, because You are a mystery to me. Every love burns without burning out as long as the mystery lasts. Mystery revealed is love burned out. I promise myself to You with eternal love even as I pledge Yourself to me with eternal mystery.

You have clothed Yourself with seven heavens; You have hidden Yourself too deep for any eyes. If all the suns were to merge into a single eye, they would be unable to burn through all Your veils. You have not concealed Yourself intentionally, O Great Lord, but because of our imperfection. A divided and dissected creature does not see You. You are unhidden only to one who has become one with You. You are unhidden only to one for whom the wall between "I" and "You" has been razed.

*O Lord, my soul's most cherished mystery, how light this world is, when I weigh it on a scale with You!*

*On one side of the scale is a lake of molten gold, and on the other a cloud of smoke.*

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***Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, CIX:***

**III. Us and Our Neighbors**

**Judging**

A discerning man, when he eats grapes, takes only the ripe ones and leaves the sour. Thus also the discerning mind carefully marks the virtues which he sees in any person. A mindless man seeks out the vices and failings ... Even if you see someone sin with your own eyes, do not judge; for often even your eyes are deceived.

**St. John of the Ladder, Ladder, 10.16-17**



***The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon***

**A Missionary People**

*Imparting the faith as a missionary people*

Two Byzantine brothers, Saints Cyril and Methodius, brought Orthodox Christianity to the Slavs in the ninth century. The brilliance of Eastern Orthodox missionary outreach, as opposed to that of the Latin Church, was in the very use of the vernacular. These great saints who became known as the Apostles to the Slavs, left the Slavs with a liturgical language that was understandable to them. The services were not imparted in the Greek language, as though it alone was sacred enough to be used in Divine Worship, but helped them understand their new faith by worshipping in their own language.

The first missionary monks to the North American came to a land where Orthodoxy had never been. Their encounter with the native peoples was one of mutual respect. They did not greet their new neighbors as pagans, but as a people who's experience with God was limited, but who nevertheless held to certain truths that were, by their

very nature, Orthodox truths. Sharing with these peoples, the Orthodox monks came to know that the native Alaskans did not worship totem poles, but used them as tools for passing on family and tribal history. The monks honored the indigenous peoples, befriending them, and, most important of all, treating them as God’s children.

As Orthodox Christians, we are duty bound to share our faith with others. Christ is for everyone, but with all the bad press Christianity has been getting during the past decade, it is especially important that we approach evangelism in light of the historic Church. The missionary mind of the Orthodox Church must be rekindled in our time. Parishes must not remain enclaves of Greeks, Russians, Bulgarians, Romanians, Palestinians, or Serbs. The doors of the churches must be opened wide, welcoming all.

Having unlocked doors is worthless if a visitor is greeted with a frown upon entering the temple. I’ve lost count at how many people have shared their experience at having been ignored by other worshipers, upon entering an Orthodox parish for the first time. Numerous people have told me about being confronted with the question, “are you Greek”, followed by, “then why are you here”. Others have shared their sadness at having been ignored in the parish hall, because they did not speak Russian, or Arabic.

A Roman Catholic friar once told me he’d gone to an Orthodox church to attend his first Divine Liturgy. The first service had concluded, and as the clergy walked down the steps, they looked right through him, as though he were invisible, even though he was wearing his Franciscan habit. He’d felt so unwelcome, he turned and left, and was deprived of his first experience of Orthodox worship. What kind of witness was this? Have we reduced Orthodoxy to the status of a private club? Do we see the Church only in ethnic terms? What if Saints Cyril and Methodius had treated the Slavs in such a manner? What if the Jewish Christians of the first century had treated the gentiles in such a manner?

Orthodox clergy must remember that we are the first line of witness for the Faith, and if we hold ourselves aloof while wearing our cassocks and crosses in public, we are in essence slamming the door in the faces of potential converts to our faith. And, as priests belonging to different jurisdictions, we must cooperate in the foundation of new missions, so we don’t undermine the ability of any one mission to support a full time priest, and raise the necessary funds to construct a permanent church. Having numerous little mission parishes without proper facilities, and a full time priest, is counterproductive to the overall goal of a mission, because the witness it gives to the community at large is one of disunity among the Orthodox, and the promotion of the commonly held view that we are multiple denominations.



**Daily Reflection**  
**Pentecost - Sunday**

*“When the day of 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...” (Acts 2: 1-4)*



There is much to be said, and internalized, and lived, on the basis of this great event in our common history, celebrated today, of the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, and through them on all of us. But I would just like to comment on the “sound” (ἦχος) in which He chose to descend, “like the rush of a mighty wind.” – Wind, of all things! For most of us who are not meteorologists, wind is unpredictable and unfathomable. We “do not know whence it comes or whither it goes,” as our Lord says to Nicodemus about the way(s) of the Holy Spirit (Jn 3: 8).

However, the Holy Spirit is unlike other unpredictable and unfathomable aspects of our lives, which cause us anxiety and insecurity. I mean, like the ambivalences of a shaky relationship, an insecure job-position, or financial situation, as these might tend to drive me crazy, when I have no clear “answer” or solution to them. But the unpredictability and unfathomability (if that’s a word) of the Holy Spirit is not like that. He, as “The Good One,” and “Treasury of Blessings/Good Things,” is full of good surprises, whenever I open up to Him. He also carries me through the above-mentioned ambivalences, to which I have no clear answer today, in His stabilizing, unchanging, and comforting grace.

So let me re-connect with Him today, in heartfelt prayer, that I may have peace, in Him, even when I don’t have all the answers. As Bob Dylan reminds me, “The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind. The answer is blowing in the wind.”



### *Holy Orthodox Quotes*

"In my pride I dared to seek that which no one can find unless he practices humility."

- St. Augustine

#### **1 Peter 5:5-7 (OSB)**

Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." † Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

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### *The Philokalia: Daily Readings*

Traversing the fields a bee gathers the ingredients for honey, traversing the ages the soul infuses sweetness into the mind.

- St Elijah the Priest, Gnostic Anthology

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### *Ancient Christian Wisdom*

If your heart has been softened either by repentance before God or by learning the boundless love of God towards you, do not be proud with those whose hearts are still hard. Remember how long your heart was hard and incorrigible. Seven brothers were ill in one hospital. One recovered from his illness and got up and rushed to serve his other brothers with brotherly love, to speed their recovery. Be like this brother. Consider all men to be your brothers, and sick brothers at that. And if you come to feel that God has given you better health than others, know that it is given through mercy, so in health you may serve your frailer brothers.

+ St. Nicholay Velimirovich

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### *Wisdom of the Church Fathers*

"She (Mother of God) that assumed the exploit of love teaches us humble acceptance of these crosses of others. She summons each Christian soul to incessantly repeat after Her: "Behold the handmaiden of the Lord", ever flowing with blood, even while sensing the sword slicing at the heart. Such is the measure of love, such is the extent, to which the human soul ought to strive. It might even be said, that such is the sole obligatory attitude of man towards man. It is only when the soul takes hold the cross of another man, his doubts, his grief, his temptations, downfalls, sins, -- only then can one speak about an obligatory attitude towards the other".

St. Maria Skobtsova  
(1891-1945)

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### *Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers*

#### **"True Humility" by St. John Chrysostom**

In whatever you do for a fellow servant, remember that your Master has done it to your servants. Listen and shudder! Never be pleased by your humility! Perhaps you laugh at that statement, as if humility could puff you up. But don't be surprised if it puffs you up when it isn't genuine. How and in what way could it do this? When it is practiced to gain human favor and not God's favor. When it is practiced to that we could be praised and be considered great. For this is of the devil. Those who boast because they aren't boastful please themselves by their humility and high regard...Have you done any act out of humility? Don't be proud of it, otherwise all its merit is lost. The Pharisee was like this. He was puffed up because he gave his tithes to the poor, and, as a result, he lost the honor of the deed. But not so with the tax collector. Nor with Paul who said, "I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified." See how he doesn't exalt himself, but in every way lowers and humbles himself, even when he had arrived at the summit...When you think about admiring yourself because you are humble, consider your Master. Remember what He descend into and you won't admire or praise yourself anymore.



*"Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful" founded in 1966*

## Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

Cordially invites you

# ANOINTING HEALING SERVICE

MYRRH FROM THE HAWAIIAN MYRRH  
STREAMING ICON OF THE IVERON  
MOTHER OF GOD

**June 7, 2017**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**830 Jefferson Avenue**  
**Rahway, New Jersey 07065**

*A brief Service of Healing  
Will be followed by the anointing of Myrrh*

**Come, Worship with us and Receive God's Blessing!**

"From thy Holy Icon, O Lady Theotokos, blessed myrrh has flowed abundantly. Thou hast thereby consoled those, in exile, faithful unto thee, and hast enlighten the unbelievers by thy Son's light. Therefore, O Lady, with tears we bow down to thee. Be merciful to us in the hour of judgment. Lest having received thy mercy we be punished as those who have been contemptuous of it. But grant us through thy prayers to bring forth spiritual fruit, and save our souls" - **Troparion to the Iveron Icon, Tone 7**

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## ***Archpastoral Letter of His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, For the Feast of Holy Pentecost 2017***

Beloved Concelebrants at the Holy Altar  
and Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

Christ is in our midst! – He is and ever shall be!

*My hope is God the Father; My refuge is God the Son;  
My protection is God the Holy Spirit; O Holy Trinity, glory to Thee.*

Today, Pentecost Sunday, is the holyday on which we commemorate the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Holy Apostles in the form of fiery tongues. It also marks the Birthday of our Holy Orthodox Church. And it also commemorates the feast that enables us to understand the One True God as the Holy Trinity.

The proclamation of the Trinity, the One God in Three Persons, is based primarily on the experience of the early Christians. When they met Christ, they met God. St. Thomas proclaimed Jesus, “My Lord and my God!” St. Peter’s great profession of faith in our Lord was, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” And our Savior Himself said, “Whoever sees Me, sees the Father ... I and the Father are one.” Saint Paul wrote: “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” And on Pentecost the Apostles experienced the overwhelming sense of the Divine Presence in their lives, and they remembered that this was the Spirit of God promised by the prophet Joel in the Old Testament.

The doctrine of the Trinity was not dropped from Heaven by God. In fact, the word “Trinity” is never even mentioned in the Scriptures. It came from the way the first followers of Christ experienced God. It was an experience before it ever became a doctrine. The doctrine was an intellectual expression of what the early Christians found to be compellingly real in their own lives.

Peter, for example, knew God in three ways: He knew God as “Father.” He knew God as “Son” in the person of Jesus Christ. And on Pentecost he experienced God as “Holy Spirit,” as a Presence and Power within his own heart and within the Church.

How clearly we see the Trinity in God’s plan of salvation. “God (the Father) so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son (Jesus) that whoever believes in Him may not perish but have life everlasting” (John 3:16). Then Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to abide with us forever.

This teaching of the Trinity is anchored in the Scriptures. The Lord Jesus said in His great commission, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...” (Matthew 28:19). The Three Persons are mentioned specifically, yet their unity is strikingly shown in the use of the word “name”, not “names.” Our

Lord taught that no one can be a Christian unless he believes in the Trinity. This is the great gate, the only entrance into the Church, into Christianity.

The Trinity was present at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River. Christ stood there as the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and the voice of the Father was heard saying, “This is My beloved Son.” The Three Persons appeared together.

Saint Paul speaks of “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit” in II Corinthians 13:14. And St. Peter mentions the Trinity in his first letter: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ ... chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ ...” (I Peter 1:2).

There are also glimpses of the Trinity in the Old Testament. We read in the first chapter of Genesis, “Let us make man in our image and likeness” (Genesis 1:26). In the next verse it says: “And God made man in His image and likeness.” The plural words, “us” and “our,” seem to suggest several persons. The singular word “His,” however, suggests that the several persons are somehow one. The Hebrew word for God in the Old Testament, “Elohim”, is plural, yet it takes a verb in the singular, and if an adjective goes with it, that too is in the singular. Three Persons – one God!

Our belief in the Trinity, although firmly anchored as it is in the Scripture, remains a mystery. It reveals the fullness of God to us and yet at the same time it hides Him from us. We can realize that the all-knowing and all-powerful God has to be more complex a being than we humans are. But no one can understand how God can be three distinct Persons and yet one God.



When we say that the Trinity is a mystery, we should define what we mean by “mystery.” An excellent definition of “mystery” is found in the book, *What Is Faith?* by Eugene Joly: “A mystery is not a wall against which you run your head, but an ocean into which you plunge. A mystery is not night; it is the sun, so brilliant that we cannot gaze at it, but so luminous that everything in it is illuminated by it.”

This is what the mystery of the Trinity is to us, like “the sun, so brilliant that we cannot gaze at it; but so luminous that everything is illuminated by it.”

Augustine was walking across the seashore one day. His thoughts were centered on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. How could God be Three – and yet be One? He passed by a little girl filling a hole in the sand with water. He asked her what she was doing. Her reply was, “I’m going to empty the sea into this little hole I’ve dug.” The wise theologian smiled and said to himself, “I am trying to do exactly what that little girl is doing. I am trying to crowd the infinite God into this finite mind of mine.”

It is not that we cannot understand God at all. The very purpose of the Trinity is to help reveal God to us. The water in the sand hole is part of the ocean, yet not the whole of it. Out there, there is more – infinitely more. So it is with our knowledge of God. Though we can never understand Him completely, it is enough to know that He is a Father who loves me, a Son who saves me, a Holy Spirit who lives in me.

Throughout history, many analogies have been used to try to help us understand how God can be three Persons, yet one God. None of these analogies is perfect, yet each helps to cast some light on the mystery. For example, a soul has three capacities – will, understanding, and memory; yet it is but one soul. Fire is a burning flame, an illuminating light and a warming heat. In Ireland, St. Patrick compared the Holy Trinity to the shamrock – one clover with three leaves. In our church services, the bishop blesses with the triple candle – one candle with three flames. All these analogies are but weak human efforts to try to understand the Infinite God. It is good that God is so great, so high above our understanding. That is the kind of God we need – a God who cannot be captured with words, a God who stretches our thoughts so that we have to use symbols and sacraments to express Him.

Nonetheless, the word “mystery” never means sheer mystery in the New Testament. It means a divine secret which God has been pleased to reveal to us; a secret so mysterious that we could never begin to discover it for ourselves by human searching, if God had not taken the initiative and given us the clue. But He has done this in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

So then what does the Holy Trinity mean? What does the proclamation of God in Trinity say to us? It says, first of all, not only how mysterious God is but how accessible. He becomes one of us in Christ. He becomes man – sharing our sorrows, our weaknesses, our temptations, our suffering, our death. The ancient pagan gods were depicted high on Mt. Olympus – aloof, cold, unfeeling, and uninvolved. The Son of God comes to stand beside us as “Immanuel” – God with us. How near, how approachable, how available, how inescapable, every day, everywhere, with ordinary people in this ordinary world – this is the God Who became man in Jesus; the God Who at Pentecost came as the Holy Spirit to abide within each one of us, filling us with the Presence and Power of God – God above us, God beside us, God within us. This is what the teaching of the Trinity tells us. Without the Trinity, God would be unknowable as well as inaccessible to us.

The doctrine of the Trinity preserves God in His fullness. To the Christian, the word “God” by itself is incomplete, too vague. The Trinity amplifies and describes God more fully. To us, “God” means the Father Who loves us, the Son Who saves us, and the Holy Spirit Who abides within us. Anything else would not be the God of the New Testament. The meaning of the Holy Trinity sums up the whole Gospel, presenting us with the fullness of God’s presence, power and love: God above me. God beside me. God inside me.

As we celebrate this glorious Feast of Pentecost, the revelation to us of God as the Holy Trinity, let us recall the words of the French author, Francois Mauriac, who said that no one who is created by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and born anew by the Holy Spirit can count himself as unimportant. That is why the Orthodox Church never tires of singing in gratitude: “Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.”

May all the blessings that come from the Holy Trinity, the God Who loves us more than we love ourselves, be yours today and always.

**With my humble prayers, Archpastoral blessing, and sincere love,**

**+Michael**

**Archbishop of New York and the  
Diocese of New York and New Jersey**