

Message from Fr. Michael...

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

Welcome to Pentecost Sunday. A blessed Father's Day greetings to fathers, grandfathers, Godfathers, and anyone who serves as a paternal mentor to others. Happy Father's Day!

Today, the Divine Liturgy will be immediately followed with the Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost. Please remain in the pews in order to receive the descent of the Holy Spirit upon you. This a very important event and blessing: God, once again, shines His grace, His Mercy, His Healing, His Forgiveness, and His Love upon us! Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit on that day. Before our Lord's Holy Ascension, He reminded us that He would not leave us, the faithful, as orphans. The Lord stated that He would send the Holy Spirit. The Lord stated, "But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in

My name, will teach you everything and remind you of everything that I told you" (John 14:26). He also stated, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:18). Fifty days after Pascha, the apostles gathered together and noise like rushing wind came from Heaven and tongues of fire descended upon each apostle. The Holy Apostles became filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak with other tongues. They each heard them in their own language. They were amazed! St. John Chrysostom once said, concerning this event, "the rabbit is transformed into a lion, the midget into a giant, at the descent of the Holy Spirit." Prior to the great event of Pentecost, the Church had numbered only 120 souls. However, quickly the Church grew and found her ranks to 3,000 as we read: "So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). Unfortunately, some doubted the news of this blessed event. The disciples were drunk with the Holy Spirit of God. However, this kind of drunkenness was not from imbibing alcohol. This kind is that where the Holy Spirit fills the soul of the individual for the purpose of rendering praises to the Lord. We should all strive to have drunkenness with the Holy Spirit. This enables us to endure the chaos and materialism of the world. It strengthens us to live in the world, without being of the world. This special drunkenness with the Holy Spirit gives us the Grace to live in God's word, protecting us from the soberness of evil. It is indeed unfortunate that we cannot understand these things perfectly, for the reason that we have never been drunk with the Holy Spirit of God. May the Holy Spirit of the Triune God guide our lives, as He did with the Holy Apostles.

May the descent of the Holy Spirit, today, be as flaming tongues of the Spirit resting upon each and every one of us. Let us be filled with the Grace of our Lord. Let us be reborn in faith and spirit!!! Prayerfully, in the spirit of those whom the Comforter as descended upon, Enjoy Father's Day! With every blessing, I remain,

In His service,

+Fr. Michael

Holy Pentecost



After the Saviour's Ascension into the Heavens, the eleven Apostles and the rest of His disciples, the God-loving women who followed after Him from the beginning, His Mother, the most holy Virgin Mary, and His brethren—all together about 120 souls returned from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem. Entering into the house where they gathered, they went into the upper room, and there they persevered in prayer and supplication, awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit, as their Divine Teacher had promised them. In the meanwhile, they chose Matthias, who was elected to take the place of Judas among the Apostles. Thus, on this day, the seventh Sunday of Pascha, the tenth day after the Ascension and the fiftieth day after

Pascha, at the third hour of the day from the rising of the sun, there suddenly came a sound from Heaven, as when a mighty wind blows, and it filled the whole house where the Apostles and the rest with them were gathered. Immediately after the sound, there appeared tongues of fire that divided and rested upon the head of each one. Filled with the Spirit, all those present began speaking not in their native tongue, but in other tongues and dialects, as the Holy Spirit instructed them. The multitudes that had come together from various places for the feast, most of whom were Jews by race and religion, were called Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and so forth, according to the places where they dwelt. Though they spoke many different tongues, they were present in Jerusalem by divine dispensation. When they heard that sound that came down from Heaven to the place where the disciples of Christ were gathered, all ran together to learn what had taken place. But they were confounded when they came and heard the Apostles speaking in their own tongues. Marvelling at this, they said one to another, "Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" But others, because of their foolishness and excess of evil, mocked the wonder and said that the Apostles were drunken. Then Peter stood up with the eleven, and raising his voice, spoke to all the people, proving that that which had taken place was not drunkenness, but the fulfilment of God's promise that had been spoken by the Prophet Joel: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that I shall pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy" (Joel 2:28), and he preached Jesus of Nazareth unto them, proving in many ways that He is Christ the Lord, Whom the Jews crucified but God raised from the dead. On hearing Peter's teaching, many were smitten with compunction and received the word. Thus, they were baptized, and on that day about three thousand souls were added to the Faith of Christ.

Such, therefore, are the reasons for today's feast: the coming of the All-holy Spirit into the world, the completion of the Lord Jesus Christ's promise, and the fulfilment of the hope of the sacred disciples, which we celebrate today. This is the final feast of the great mystery and dispensation of God's incarnation. On this last, and great, and saving day of Pentecost, the Apostles of the Saviour, who were unlearned fishermen, made wise now of a sudden by the Holy Spirit, clearly and with divine authority spoke the heavenly doctrines. They became heralds of the truth and teachers of the whole world. On this day they were ordained and began their apostleship, of which the salvation of those three thousand souls in one day was the comely and marvellous first fruit.

Some erroneously hold that Pentecost is the "birthday of the Church." But this is not true, for the teaching of the holy Fathers is that the Church existed before all other things. In the second vision of The Shepherd of Hermas we read: "Now brethren, a revelation was made unto me in my sleep by a youth of exceeding fair form, who said to me, 'Whom thinkest thou the aged woman, from whom thou receivedst the book, to be?' I say, 'The Sibyl.' 'Thou art wrong,' saith he, 'she is not.' 'Who then is she?' I say. 'The Church,' saith he. I said unto him, 'Wherefore then is she aged?' 'Because,' saith he, 'she was created before all things; therefore is she aged, and for her sake the world was framed.'" Saint Gregory the Theologian also speaks of "the Church of Christ ... both before Christ and after Christ" (PG 35:1108-9). Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus writes, "The Catholic Church, which exists from the ages, is revealed most clearly in the incarnate advent of Christ" (PG 42:640). Saint John Damascene observes, "The Holy Catholic Church of God, therefore, is the assembly of the holy Fathers, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, and Martyrs who have been from the very beginning, to whom were added all the nations who believed with one accord" (PG 96, 1357c). According to Saint Gregory the Theologian, "The Prophets established the Church, the Apostles conjoined it, and the Evangelists set it in order" (PG 35, 589 A). The Church existed from the creation of the Angels, for the Angels came into existence before the creation of the world, and they have always been members of the Church. Saint Clement, Bishop of Rome, says in his second epistle to the Corinthians, the Church "was created before the sun and moon"; and a little further on, "The Church existeth not now for the first time, but hath been from the beginning" (II Cor. 14).

That which came to pass at Pentecost, then, was the ordination of the Apostles, the commencement of the apostolic preaching to the nations, and the inauguration of the priesthood of the new Israel. Saint Cyril of Alexandria says that "Our Lord Jesus Christ herein ordained the instructors and teachers of the world and the stewards of His divine Mysteries ... showing together with the dignity of Apostleship, the incomparable glory of the authority given them ... Revealing them to be splendid with the great dignity of the Apostleship and showing them forth as both stewards and priests of the divine altars . . . they became fit to initiate others through the enlightening guidance of the Holy Spirit" (PG 74, 708-712). Saint Gregory Palamas says, "Now, therefore ... the Holy Spirit descended ... showing the Disciples to be supernal luminaries ... and the distributed grace of the Divine Spirit came through the ordination of the Apostles upon their successors" (Homily 24, 10). And Saint Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem, writes, "After the visitation of the Comforter, the Apostles became

high priests" (PG 87, 3981B). Therefore, together with the baptism of the Holy Spirit which came upon them who were present in the upper chamber, which the Lord had foretold as recorded in the Acts, "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence" (Acts 1:5), the Apostles were also appointed and raised to the high priestly rank, according to Saint John Chrysostom (PG 60, 21). On this day commenced the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by which we become "partakers of the Divine Nature" (II Peter 1:4). For before Pentecost, it is said of the Apostles and disciples only that they abode in "prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14); it is only after the coming of the Holy Spirit that they persevered in the "breaking of bread," that is, the communion of the Holy Mysteries-"and in prayer" (Acts 2:42).

The feast of holy Pentecost, therefore, determined the beginning of the priesthood of grace, not the beginning of the Church. Henceforth, the Apostles proclaimed the good tidings "in country and town," preaching and baptizing and appointing shepherds, imparting the priesthood to them whom they judged were worthy to minister, as Saint Clement writes in his first Epistle to the Corinthians (I Cor. 42). All foods allowed during the week following Pentecost.

Apolytikion for Pentecost in the Plagal Fourth Mode

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast shown forth the fishermen as supremely wise by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit, and through them didst draw the world into Thy net. O Befriender of man, glory be to Thee.

Seasonal Kontakion in the Plagal Fourth Mode

Once, when He descended and confounded the tongues, the Most High divided the nations; and when He divided the tongues of fire, He called all men into unity; and with one accord we glorify the All-holy Spirit.

Tychon the Wonderworker

This Saint was born of pious Christian parents and flourished in the fifth century. Because of his piety and purity of life he was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Amathus, and later was made Bishop of Amathus by the great Epiphanius (see May 12). He worked many signs and wonders and turned many from the worship of idols unto Christ. Once he planted a vine in the ground and it wondrously sprouted and brought forth ripe grapes. After his death, on his annual feast-day on June 16, it being yet early in the season, that vine would be laden with unripe grapes, as is natural; but as the Divine Liturgy began, the grapes would begin to darken, and by the end of it, they would be fully ripened. The third of the Vespers stichera in the Menaion service to Saint Tychon alludes to this yearly miracle.

June 16

40 Martyrs of Rome

FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Angelo Romas, Maria Lambrinos, Lilly Kashou, Issam Kashou, and Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

Sunday School Graduation will be held next Sunday, June 23 at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. Please join us in congratulating our Sunday School students.

We would like to thank the following individuals who donated for the purchase of icons for the church:

Jeanet Hazar	Icon of Mary Magdalene
Ernie Skiadas	Icon of St. Mary of Egypt
Jim and Lynda Ivan	Sunday of Thomas
Giannoula Alikakos	Icon of St. John Climacus of the Ladder
Ted Simon	Icon of Sts. Theodore and Theodore
Fanny Anthony & Mioara Iosub	Icon of Sts. Constantine and Helen
Dcns. Pam Yacalis	Icon of St. Haralambos
The Anastos Family	Icon of St. Barbara
Joe Laskaris	Icon of St. Dionysious of Zakynthos
Scott McHugh & Family	Icon of St. Andrew the First Called
Ernie Skiadas	Icon of Sts. Athanasios and Cyril
Dino & Brenda Gianisis	Icon of St. Anthony the Great
Marian Recu	Archangels Michael & Gabriel

We thank them for their generosity and their willingness to help the church. May God bless them!

SPECIAL SERVICES for June 2019

Today, June 16th, at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy: Kneeling Service of Vespers for Pentecost

Saturday, June 22nd: Divine Liturgy 10 am at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox in Binghamton

Saturday, June 29th: Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul - Orthros 9 am & Divine Liturgy 10 am

Attention to everyone:

Please make sure that we have your correct address and contact information as we are in the process of updating our church records. If you have moved/changed your address within the past 5 years or have never received any mail from the church, please write down your contact information clearly and legibly and give it to any of the Parish Council officers. God bless.

Post festival meeting will be held on June 18 at 6:30 pm in the hall of our Church. All sector leaders are invited to participate in a contributory and constructive manner. Look forward to seeing you. Kostas

Wisdom of the Fathers

For as thirsty men, when they have taken a bowl, eagerly drain it and then desist, so too they who hear the divine oracles if they receive them thirsting, will never be weary until they have drunk them up. For to show that men ought ever to thirst and hunger, "Blessed," It said, "are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matt.5:6)

St. John Chrysostom Homily 51 on John 7, 4th Century

For the grace of the Spirit, when it has entered into the mind and has been established, springs up more than any fountain, fails not, becomes not empty, stays not. To signify therefore at once its unfailing supply and unlimited operation, He has called it "a well" and "rivers," not one river but numberless.

St. John Chrysostom Homily 51 on John 7, 4th Century

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact the Parish Council President or a member of the council. Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 Thursday.

Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

PHILOPTOCHOS FUNDRAISER



Join us on Friday, June 28th

From 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Tractor Supply Parking Lot, Vestal

ORDER BBQ SANDWICH OR MEAL

Brisket Meal with beans and Cole slaw \$13.50

Pulled pork or chicken meal with beans and Cole slaw \$11.50

Brisket sandwich \$8.25

Pork or chicken sandwich \$7.25

Small side of beans or Cole slaw \$2.75

Large side of beans or Cole slaw \$4

Soda \$1.50

Water \$1.00

GREEK BAKLAVA!