

# PENTECOST



# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Glorious Feast of Pentecost

June 15, 2008

Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;  
Father John Cmur; Deacon Kenneth E. Ellis and  
Subdeacon Daniel J. Korba and Nikitas Tsokris,  
Cantors

Rectory 215-862-9227; Parish Center 732-780-3158

## We Are A Stewardship Parish Of Time, Talent and Treasure

The mission of our parish faith community is to teach the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Orthodox Church; to enable people to reflect the image of Jesus Christ in every day activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Orthodox believers in our Freehold area.

We of St. Paul the Apostle Parish dedicate ourselves to maintaining the sanctity of worship and spiritual enlightenment in a family environment that reaches and involves all ages and unifies all people.

We believe in the spirit of ecumenism in which we share our faith by word and example and extend our spiritual insights to all people.

We accept the responsibility of Christian Stewardship that through generous giving we may all experience a faith communion with Christ as the Center of our lives.

We dedicate ourselves to insuring the well-being of all people so that we may truly experience the message of Christ's salutary gospel.

We are a beacon on a hill with the eyes of many upon us; that beacon is the inspired Light of Christ which must shine brightly in our lives.

*It is not ourselves we preach but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts, that we in turn might make known the glory of God shining on the face of Christ. This treasure we possess in earthen vessels to make it clear that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way possible, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in us 2 Corinthians 4: 5 – 8.*

## GLAD TIDINGS

+++ We graciously and happily welcome all our faithful and friends to the birthday celebration of our blessed Church celebrated together with the honors we bestow on our fathers as the nation remembers them. How blessed we are to be communicants of the Vehicle of Salvation our Lord left us as his legacy for



**our redemption. A joyous birthday celebration together with a Happy Fathers' Day to all our beloved fathers!**

+++ The annual Summer Bible Camp of our parish will be held the week of August 18 to 22.

+++ Today we have festal anointing on the occasion of this glorious fest of the Descent of the Holy Spirit. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we reply, "He Is And Shall Be!"

+++ On Monday evening we celebrate the simple feast of the Holy Spirit. The Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 7: 30 PM. Please come and join us in prayer and praise. Anointing with the oil of St. Nectarios will take place following the celebration.

+++ Since we celebrate Pentecost today along with Fathers' Day, the monthly remembrance of marriage anniversary celebrants will take place next Sunday.

+++ There are still several who have NOT turned in their diocesan dues for this year. Last year the same occurred and the parish covered the deficit. That practice will no longer be the policy of the parish. Please submit fifty dollars for each person 18 and above in your family as soon as possible.

+++ Since this is the birthday of the Church, we invite our faithful to celebrate it appropriately and appreciatively. We are grateful our God has provided us with a Church in which to save our souls. The special offering taken after the gospel is a token of our thanks for all our God has done for us. We pray every one is generous.

+++ We offer thanks to the Blessed Trinity for inspiring generosity in the souls of our faithful and the blessing of abundant grace in our midst with the offering received this past week-end: Tithes Offering, \$401.00; Candles, \$24.00; Food Coupons, \$320.00; Christian Fellowship, \$3.00; Pennies From Heaven, \$3.00; Flowers, \$16.00; Building Fund \$150.00; Rental, \$500.00, for a total of \$1417.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offered their God-given treasure for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls! The attendance was 38 adults and 14 children last Sunday.

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Pani Lucas, Father Lucas, Paul Szmajda, Bob Gorbich, Marilyn Korba, Louis Pasquino, Mary Jaakobs, and Pani Buletza.

+++ We make a PENNIES FROM HEAVEN Canister available for our faithful to bring in pennies for our altar and its appointments. We are already in receipt of \$1325.00 from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

+++ For the expansion of our much needed parochial facilities, our parish pledge support to date totals \$93, 555. 00. As we thank the Lord for inspiring generosity in the hearts of our faithful, we also thank the donors for accepting the challenge of the Lord in building up His Body. We cordially invite and look forward to receiving additional and increased pledges from all our devoted parishioners.

+++ Please check the Sign-Up-Sheet for the weekly Christian Fellowship for the coming weeks. Simple foods without need for preparation are the best. Marilyn Korba coordinates this vital apostolate. Please assist her in making it a success by bringing your donation early so that all are present at the worship of our God.

+++ We express our sincerest condolences and sympathies to Subdeacon Daniel J. and Marilyn Korba family on the recent death of her beloved mother, Margaret Alleruzzo. We pray the merciful Lord comforts them in their loss and grants the soul of +Margaret a blessed repose and creates for her Eternal Memory! We are very pleased to acknowledge donations totaling \$150.00 to our parish Building Fund in her blessed memory from Father & Pani Lucas, Deacon and Mrs. Kenneth Ellis, as well as Joseph & Kyra Choti family.

+++ Please be certain to see **Helen Karpiak** or a member of the Parish Council if you would like to help our parish by using **Shop Rite Food Coupons** available in \$20.00 denominations. We invite **ALL** to be caring and supportive and use Grocery Coupons for food shopping as we have gratefully realized \$4300.00 on this project to date!

+++ We express our deepest gratitude to all who secured orders, who prepared for and those who labored to make yesterday's Pirohi Sale, the last of the season, a great success. We invoke on all the souls who participated with helping hands the blessing of our Lord for continued good health in laboring for the good of the parish and for the spread of our Orthodox faith. May the Lord continue to bless all for Many and Blessed Years! Extras are available for those who did not place orders. Please see the women in the kitchen to secure yours.

+++ We thank those of our faithful who remembered their beloved fathers with prayers and seven day lights today. God grant them good health as well as Blessed Repose, Eternal Memory who have gone to their eternal reward!

+++ There is **NO** fasting this week because of the feast of Pentecost!

+++ **Please see Marilyn Korba to sign up for the Alaskan Cruise next August, 2009.**

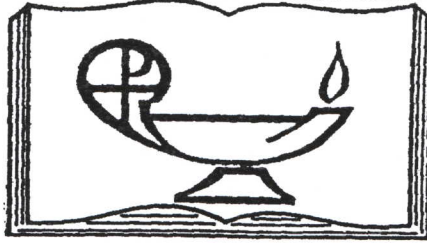
+++ **We have some remaining rolls and pirohi available from the recent sales. Please see the woman in the kitchen to secure yours if you had no order.**

+++ May all glory, adoration and worship be accorded our God in the Holy Trinity by all the faithful of our parish with one mind, one soul and one heart each day of the week!

**Come, Holy Spirit, in our souls do rest!**



LORD



TEACH  
US

## The Holy Spirit

*Yet I tell you the sober truth: It is much better for you that I go. If I fail to go, the Paraclete will never come to you, whereas if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes he will prove the world wrong about sin, about justice, about condemnation...When he comes, however, being the Spirit of truth, He will speak on his own, but will speak only what he hears and will announce to you the things to come* John 16: 7, 8, 13.

*Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight for us to obey you rather than God* Acts of the Apostles 4: 19.

*That you may tell a future generation that such is God, our God forever and ever; he will guide us* Psalms 48: 14, 15.

*When he comes, however, being the Spirit of truth, He will not speak on his own, but will speak only what he hears and will announce to you the things to come* John 16: 13.

*Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. May your good spirit guide me on level ground. For your names' sake, O Lord, preserve me; in your justice free me from distress, and in your kindness destroy my enemies; bring to nothing all my foes, for You're your servant* Psalms 143: 10 – 12.

*Where can I go from your spirit? From your presence where can I flee? If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I sink into the nether world, you are present there. If I take the wings of dawn, if I settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall guide me and your right hand hold me fast* Psalms 139: 7 – 10.

## Solemn Holyday Greetings

As we jubilantly celebrate the birthday and conception of the Body of Christ in our midst, we are overwhelmed our loving God has established for the sake of our salvation this glorious vehicle of redemption, to lift us, to elevate us, to sanctify us and restore us to our rightful dignity by delivering us to the portals of eternity holy and forgiven and reconciled.

How particularly fortunate and specially blessed is the man who is baptized, chrismated and sustained on Eucharistic nourishment to be a communicant of this Body of the Saviour. What heavenly joy is already experienced in the soul of him who is called by grace to salvation in sanctity by the Saviour by membership in the embracing and affirming Church of Jesus Christ.

As we celebrate the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples transforming them from learners/students into ambassadors/apostles of the Son of God, we recognize our own inherent dignity because ours is an identical vocation. We too are invited and commanded to go forth and preach the gospel by our lifestyle, by our actions and our sustained commitment to Christ.

In celebrating the birth and inception of the Church, we also celebrate our ongoing baptismal Christian lifestyle made possible only by the grace of the Holy Spirit. "Come, Holy Spirit," we pray. "Lead us, guide us, strengthen and affirm us," we beseech the third Person of the Trinity. "Thank You for coming among us!" we never tire of saying. As new life is apportioned in nature to all that was seemingly resting and apparently dead, so we ask for similar grace for our souls that so oftentimes dead to sin, they are restored to living radiance by the flaming tongues of fire which set upon the heads of the disciples. Burn away within us the misery of separation from the Father which sin produces so that Christ's Resurrection will have eternal value for us. Help us appropriate the grace of Christ's victory for ourselves that we may enjoy God's glory for all eternity. Take us to yourself, O Holy Spirit of God that we live and reign together with Christ the Saviour and the Eternal Father. Because of your infused, shared and sustained grace, may we partake of heavenly joy with the Blessed Mother of God, all the saints and the bodiless powers. May our loved ones be joined to us in eternal beatitude to sing forever the glories of our God.

This is our ardent, sincere and devoted prayer for each communicant of our parish as we celebrate the Birthday of our blessed Church and witness the awesome Descent of the Holy Spirit for renewal of life and regeneration of faith and salvation of souls.



## WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE

*Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth: You are everywhere present and fill all things. Treasury of blessings and Giver of life, come and dwell within us, cleanse us of all stain, and save our souls, O gracious Lord! Hymn to the Holy Spirit.*

*Blessed are You, O Christ God. You filled the fishermen with wisdom, sending down upon them the Holy Spirit. Through them, You have caught the whole world in Your net. O Lover of mankind, glory be to You! Troparion of Pentecost.*

*When the Most High came down and confused tongues, He scattered the nations; but when He distributed the tongues of fire, He called all men to unity. Therefore, with one voice, let us praise the Holy Spirit. Kontakion, Feast of Pentecost.*

*Through all the world their voice resounds, their message reaches to the ends of the earth. Prokimenon, Feast of Pentecost.*

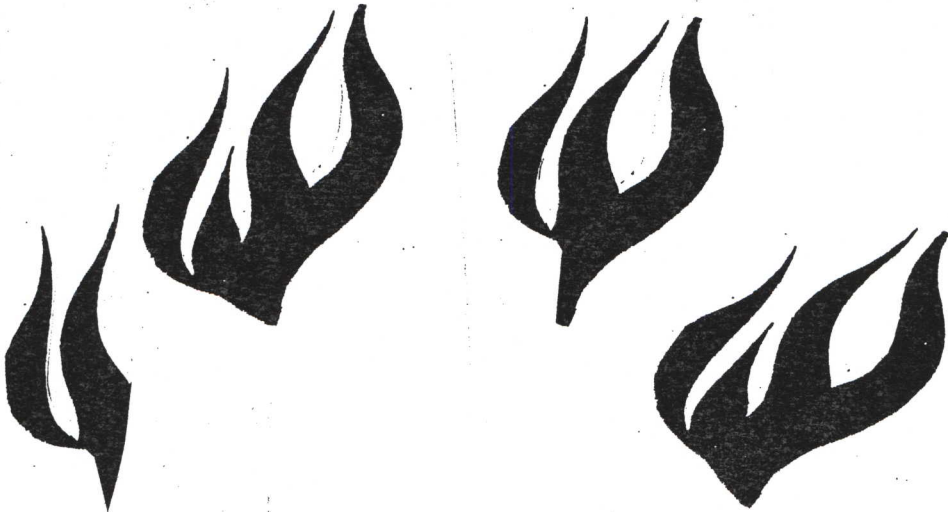
*O my soul, extol the One God in three divine persons. Hail, O Queen, glory of virgins and mothers; to adequately praise you is beyond the eloquence of the most cultured tongue. The wonderful manner in which you gave birth to Christ amazes all intelligence. Therefore, with one accord, we the faithful extol you. Hymn instead of 'It is truly proper,' Feast of Pentecost.*

*Your good Spirit shall lead me into the land of righteousness. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! Communion Hymn, Feast of Pentecost.*

*All the people have seen wonders today in the city of David, when the Holy Spirit descended in tongues of fire, as told by the God-inspired Luke, who said: "The disciples were gathered together; there was a sound like a mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And they began to speak in foreign tongues, teaching the doctrine of the Holy Trinity." Matins Hymn, Feast of Pentecost.*



**We are temples  
of the Holy Spirit**



*We ourselves are the Church in whom the Lord dwells.*





## The Not So Inconspicuous Third Person

It would seem there is a conspiracy of silence among believers about the personality of the Holy Spirit. Admittedly, there have been moments in salvation history when there has been much talk about what the Holy Spirit does. We are presently through one of these periods once again. But what the Holy Spirit is like, who the Holy Spirit is, the characteristics of the person of the Holy Spirit, these questions have received attention from hierarchs and theologians, particularly at the Constantinopolitan Council which formally defined the divinity of the third Person of the Holy Trinity. Sometimes, however, we think that our inclusion of the Holy Spirit in our doxologies is sufficient and an excuse for the virtual exclusion of the Holy Spirit from our formal and informal attention not so much in the life of the Church, but in our daily living exercises. Nothing could be further from the truth.

### **Transparent Wind**

There are probably many reasons for what some would consider silence, but the main one should be traced perhaps to the Holy Spirit himself. It seems that a major characteristic of the Holy Spirit's personality is transparency. The Holy Spirit aims at being inconspicuous. In activity, He points to the other, making us aware of Jesus as our Lord, our God, our Saviour, even our Father in salvation. The non-awareness of the Holy Spirit's presence, therefore may be a better proof of his activity in each individual baptized and chrismated believer, group, or community of faith than anything that brings him into explicit attention. Having said this, however, we must immediately add that there is a greater need than ever to pursue an inquiry into the personality of the Holy Spirit, notwithstanding the limitations that this tantalizing characteristic of transparency imposes on us. Though we approach the question obliquely, and from the effects of the workings of the Holy Spirit, we must address ourselves to it nonetheless.

The wind will teach us much about the personality of the Holy Spirit. In that it seems like a preposterous suggestion, consider how often Jesus himself played on the similarities between the qualities of wind and the characteristics of the Holy Spirit. "The wind blows where it pleases," He observed, for example, "You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. That is how it is with you who are born of the Spirit" John 3: 8.

## ***Ruah, Wind, Breath***

Even linguistically, there is an invitation to think of the Holy Spirit as if He were a divine wind, since the Hebrew word *ruah* does mean spirit, wind, breath. The Old Testament reflections of Yahweh's chosen people are enlightening in this respect. They see and understand Yahweh's own breath as an instrument for fashioning them. By a fierce blast of his breath, for example, He parted the seas, which his people walked through to escape from Egypt. "...when your wind blew, the sea covered them" Exodus 15: 10. It was a divinely sent wind that bore the manna and the quail that fed them as they journeyed to the land of promise. "...the winds brought quails from the sea" Numbers 11: 31. And Yahweh's very own Spirit had come to rest on special individuals while Israel was still in the age of the prophets. It was the word He breathed into the hearts of his prophets and put on their lips that nurtured his people and shaped their lives according to his designs for them.

When the divine *ruah* came, they reflected, it was sent by him bringing good things as well as chastisements. But it did not remain outside of man, they came to see, as if it were a mere creature of the environment, and an element of the atmosphere. It was breathed into them and became the principle of life in man. "God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life" Genesis 2: 7. Man became a living being, therefore, by the breath and Spirit of Yahweh himself. If he should withdraw his breath, and it never ceased to be his, then a man would die.

Gradually the wind He sent as his instrument, the breath He breathed into man and force of his own Spirit, which rested on chosen individuals, were conceived less vaguely and with more precision. In the course of this discernment, Israel did not cease to believe in or withdraw its credence from any of these ways of divine activity, but became more discriminating about Yahweh's own Spirit. It is conceived of less anthropomorphically, in a way that is increasingly immaterial and prospective. His Spirit becomes primarily something that is to come; it will accompany the person of the Messiah. The Messiah, in turn, will inaugurate a new age in which Yahweh himself promises, "I will give them a single heart and I will put a new spirit in them" Ezekiel 11: 19. At the first infusion of the Holy Spirit, "...he breathed on them and said, 'receive the Holy Spirit'" John 20: 22.

An inspirited Messiah was not to be a momentary eruption of the divine into the human order or the selection of an individual as a special instrument of God. No, the Messiah himself would inaugurate a new age. Yahweh's own spirit was to indwell a people in that age which was to last not for a fleeting moment but for all days, even to the very end of time. Needless to say, the monotheism of Judaism did not allow them to conceive of the Holy Spirit of Yahweh as a distinct, divine personality. So the wind that was heard at Pentecost would not yet be



someone to those who heard it, but a powerful sign nonetheless that what they had so long waited had finally come. "Suddenly from up in the sky, there came a noise like a strong driving wind which was heard...tongues of fire appeared which parted and came to rest on each of them. All were filled with the Holy Spirit" Acts of the Apostles 2: 2, 3.

### **No Controlled By Man**

It would do no harm – on the contrary, it would be fruitful – to sense the appropriateness of the wind as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The properties of the one are the inferable qualities of the other. As with both Spirit and wind; it is uncontainable by man, nor can man control it. Man has never been able to discover its origins nor renegotiate its direction and power. Though invisible, the wind's effects are palpable. What is not firmly planted and solidly rooted, the wind will overturn. It was inevitable, then, that paganism would fall before the truth of Christ's gospel.

It can be counted on to be sufficiently present so that man will not be left without shade or shower, thunder or calm. We can enjoy the toil of our labors and the fruit of the earth because of the wind's capacity to bring us variation. And yet this wind is unpredictable, capricious almost. It is pathless in its direction. And in intensity it can be a gale or a zephyr, confined to no one degree by mere man, wafting and caressing some, uprooting others ruthlessly.

Imagine a planet with too much wind, such as Venus. It would be intolerable for mortal man. And a planet with no wind at all, such as the moon, would be equally inhospitable. Man would not know the meaning of voyage if he lived in a world without wind. Other lands, new horizons, cultures other than his own would remain forever foreign if wind had not caught the sails men spread out to harness it. It carried them to where, under their own power, they could not have gone. Becalmed, we would have remained primitives. Even the mightiest of men dwarfed by the power of the wind and the greatest of man would still be the least in the human species if ours were a world without wind. As vital the wind in nature, even more so the Holy Spirit in truthful reality.

### **Riding The Wind**

The birds of the air seem wiser about it and more versed in utilizing the wind than humans. They learn rapidly how to glide with its waftings, and be one with its playfulness. Soaring would be too strenuous, even impossible, if attempted under their own power. Ready to alight any moment the wind stirs them, they live ready to leave, neither sowing nor reaping nor gathering into barns. And when all is still and no stirrings come, they seem to know that they

must be careful lest their wings grow heavy. No, an absence of wind will not last for very long. All of the properties of wind have something to tell us about the Holy Spirit and how He comes and works among us.

Jesus taught his followers relatively little about the Holy Spirit who proceeds from him and the Father. They did not know the particular qualities of this new force nor that He is a divine person. But the little He did teach them explicitly, they learned well. He claimed the Holy Spirit would be to their advantage that He should go in order that the Spirit could come. They had seen with their own eyes how the winds obeyed him and could have reasoned rather well He would not send them anything of such gale force that they would be capsized by his coming. “Stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high” He told them. “Wait rather for the fulfillment of my Father’s promise of which you have heard me speak. John baptized with water but within a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” Acts of the Apostles 1: 4, 5. They stayed and once they received heavenly power they were spirited, not unlike the birds of the air, all the way to the ends of the earth.

The Holy Spirit as divine breath or wind-like, enlightens one up to a point, but then its work done, He breaks down and becomes an ineffective means for contemplating the mystery of his own personality because He must be appropriated and experienced and cooperated with. Only then will He be understood as He is experienced. The grace He bestows and imparts must be gladly assumed and matched with personal effort and good works.

### *Parakletos*

Two of the descriptive names Jesus uses of the Holy Spirit when speaking to his own followers can bring us a step further into the Mystery of the third Person of the Holy Trinity. One of these names is Paraclete, according to St. John the Evangelist. *Parakletos* in Greek, meaning paraclete, or advocate, says a good deal both about the personality of the Holy Spirit and his relationship to us. By employing a term with legal connotations, Jesus is saying that the gift He sends to his own will give them someone who will argue their case on their behalf with God and it will suggest to their heart and soul ways of arguing their own cause with man, as well as teach, lead, inspire, affirm and defend them. Because of this gift there is to be a distinct divine element dwelling in man. The divine is now on the human side of an otherwise unbridgeable chasm between man and the wholly Other, God himself.

At first the hearers of Jesus thought the Holy Spirit was to be a divine force they would be enveloped in. Eventually, believing Christians came to see that the divine element that Jesus gifted them with is God, a distinct person with qualities and looked at from the side of time, a



history that the Saviour Jesus Christ did not seem to have and that they had not perceived in the divine personality of Yahweh.

### **Crossing The Chasm**

Without the Holy Spirit, Jesus would have been to Christians only a model, a goal, a memory, and an ideal. But given the personality of the Holy Spirit, Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. Because of the Holy Spirit, it is possible for the senders, Jesus and the Eternal Father, to join the one they send precisely because they are one. "If anyone loves me he will keep my word and my Father will love him and we shall come to him and make our home with him" John 14: 23. How can the Holy Spirit who is God, come to us and at the same time make room for God in us? This question isolates the mystery of the personality of the Holy Spirit. In other words, we have come to Mary's question: "How can this come about" Luke 1: 34? And if the gift has come to us, we will be able, not to answer the question, but more importantly, to live with our participation in the mystery. "Be it done to me according to your word" Luke 1:38.

Rather than being concerned with knowing the incomprehensible, we must be anxious that we are disposed to receiving the mystery of the Holy Spirit. We keep the Lord's Word, we obey his commands and follow the way He goes and become one with his being if we welcome the One "whom I shall send you from the Father" John 15: 26. Since the Holy Spirit is our advocate, He will breathe with us, pray in us with unceasing groanings, act on our behalf, enlighten us about who we are, while teaching us the way of life of Jesus and the Father. Counseling, consoling, interceding and pleading for us with our heavenly Father are the other roles that tradition in the life of the Body of Christ has attributed to the Holy Spirit.

### **The Spirit Of Truth**

The other description Jesus uses of the Holy Spirit is the "...Spirit of truth" John 16: 13, which one is quick to also associate with the Saviour, "I am the way, the truth and the life..." John 14: 6. This can sound like the Holy Spirit is an idea or the sender of truths or thoughts to us. Unlike the exchange of truths that pass between humans, what the Holy Spirit of truth says to us becomes the reality spoken and heard. The Holy Spirit effects the reality He speaks. Reductively, what the Holy Spirit always says is the message of love, since that is what our God is. "Beloved, let us love one another because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten of God and has knowledge of God. The man without love has known nothing of God, for God is love...Love then, consists in this: not that we have loved God but that he has loved us and sent his Son as an offering for our sins" 1 John 4: 7 – 10. It seems interchangeable and convertible, for the Holy Spirit to be called the Spirit of love, or the Spirit of truth. Both

references apply to the truth taught in a loving way by the Body of Christ which is one and indivisible.

When the Holy Spirit descends He touches those to whom He is sent with subsistent love. It brings man in some way into the actual presence of love, that love which exists uninterrupted between Father, Son and Holy Spirit; it creates communion with the Holy Trinity, the Source of life. This is the love of the saving Body of Christ, the Church of God on earth. Depending on the receptivity, the Holy Spirit empowers man to become the reality with which he is being touched, even pierced by: lovers of God and each other. Through the Holy Spirit, one's eyes can come to perceive, hesitantly at first, murkily for some time, but unmistakably nonetheless, new vistas and undreamed of panoramas of reality, "...for the Spirit reaches the depths of everything, even the depths of God" 1 Corinthians 2: 10. First and foremost what one sees is the truth of his own being enveloped by the love that the Father and Son have for him. In and through the Holy Spirit one comes to see who one really is, created in the image of God.. And what one is being led to become, comes into actual being. The words spoken and heard "will not return to me empty." The truth of one's being loved by God is the truest thing about one's own identity. From these roots, in the seeds of truth, one begins to be made wholly new, actually reborn in the Holy Spirit.

### **In Us But Not Ours**

What the Holy Spirit is within the Holy Trinity, the Spirit does among men in the Body of Jesus Christ, his salutary soul-saving Church. Our ordinary Christian speech seems to appreciate this creative power of the Holy Spirit to affect the reality it touches with the reality it is in a way that our minds do not always comprehend. Hence, our favorite way of referring to the Holy Spirit which confesses our realization that He sanctifies what He touches. His coming cleanses and purifies and makes holy that which He enters and indwells.

Words about the Holy Spirit as a person tantalize us more than satisfy us because He is far greater and beyond our comprehension than we can ever realize. Ideas about the Holy Spirit cannot contain the comprehensions they promise anymore than sails can become containers of the winds they catch. We trespass if we seek to know the Holy Spirit without the grace of the Holy Spirit's teaching and indwelling. The only valid way of inquiry is by asking the Holy Spirit to teach us about himself and his ways. If He can teach us "all things," He can shed a little light, in our understandable limited way, notwithstanding its transparency, on himself and how He goes about teaching us who we are in the eyes of both our Father and our Lord, as well as who they are for the sake of our salvation.



## Liberty, Political and Spiritual

*...proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all the inhabitants thereof Leviticus 25: 10.*

It was in 1776 that the now famous Liberty Bell was rung for the first time. Fifty years later, July 4, 1826, it ushered in what was known as the "Jubilee Anniversary" of the American Republic. The bell, now cracked, no longer tolls, but it is still symbolic of our national and political freedom.

Our national forefathers who founded this nation were acquainted with God's revelation to us in Scripture so it is not surmising they associated **liberty** and a **bell** with the blessing of our freedom.

We readily recall in the Old Testament on the Day of Atonement, the high priest was required to go alone into the Holy Of Holies to sprinkle blood for the sins of the people. When he entered the tabernacle he had on a beautiful vestment on the bottom of which were woven pomegranates of blue, purple and scarlet. Between these symbols of great fruitfulness there was attached a corresponding series of golden **bells** (Exodus 28: 33, 34).

As the high priest walked into the holy place, the congregation outside could hear the bells tinkling. Just before he presented the blood offering, however, he had to remove this vestment and could not put it on again until the sacrifice had been made and approved by God. The people, waiting outside in breathless silence, sent up a great shout when the bells rang once again; for they knew then that the sacrifice was accepted by God and their sins had been forgiven and spiritual freedom obtained.

Christ our Great High Priest, also laid aside his heavenly garments of glory and secured forgiveness of our sins on the Cross. Then He went back to heaven, to present the results of his blood sacrifice for our sins. The coming of the Holy Spirit is evidence that His work is accepted, but Christ still has not visibly returned among us. When He does, the "golden bells" will ring once again and all creation will rejoice in the glorious "liberty of the sons of God" Romans 8: 21 in happy jubilee. The Son has set us free.

How joyful is the believer in Christ because he fully knows freedom from sin is the greatest of all liberties!

## Reflection

To receive the Holy Spirit is to share the Holy Spirit. We who believe take pride in the fact that we are temples of the Holy Spirit. We glory in the fact that we are thereby a privileged dwelling place of the Spirit. Unfortunately we are also tempted to see this privilege as a personal monopoly. We may curtail our gifts and talents, namely manifestations of the Holy Spirit, to cater to our own personal needs. It is indeed difficult to accept the view that to receive the Spirit is to share the Spirit.

Appropriate readings for the feast of Pentecost violently denounce a purely private appropriation of the Holy Spirit. They see individual Christians as community members who are empowered to release the Holy Spirit for the common good. Salvation is never single file but always an arm in arm processional. The inspired authors staunchly maintain that to receive the Holy Spirit is to share his grace.

St. Luke, the author of the early history of the Church understands Pentecost as the start of the Church's universal mission that has the Holy Spirit as its driving force. The Holy Spirit is the power that utterly destroys all those barricades that keep people separated and apart. Fittingly he provides an international list of Jews and proselytes. He links the Pentecost event with the Tower of Babel story. "Let us go down there and confuse their language so that one will not understand what another says. Thus the Lord scattered them from there all over the earth and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel, because the Lord confused the speech of all the world. It was from that place that he scattered them over the earth" Genesis 11: 7 - 9. On this feast day, the outcome is vastly different. Here, there is unity, not division.

It is likely that St. Luke has changed the original charismatic speaking in tongues, into speaking in foreign languages. He then sees the reception of the Holy Spirit in terms of sharing with those assembled. He notes that the disciples made "bold proclamation as the Spirit prompted them" Acts of the Apostles 2: 4. Unquestionably, for St. Luke, to receive the Holy Spirit is to share the Holy Spirit.

St. Paul's Corinthian community included some high-strung individuals who flaunted their gifts of the Holy Spirit in an excessively individualistic manner. They understood the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in purely isolated terms. When



reacting, St. Paul has to educate his new Christians about unity and diversity. To be sure, there are *many* gifts but they are all manifestations of *one* Spirit. Hence, gifts are for others. "To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" 1 Corinthians 12: 7. The Apostle to the Gentiles buttresses his argument by appealing to the analogy of the human body. Each member does not exist in splendid isolation. Rather, each organ contributes to the overall good of the body. It is such a view of community that levels all ethnic (Jew and Greek) and social (slave and free) differences. St. Paul strongly insists that gifts are never purely personal acquisitions. For him, to receive the Holy Spirit is to share the Holy Spirit.

For St. John the Theologian, the coming of the Holy Spirit first occurs on the day of the Resurrection. On that occasion the glorified Jesus, who has already ascended to the Father, communicates the Spirit to the disciples. The word "peace," far from being a harmless greeting, suggests God's presence. "Be calm, do not fear; you shall not die" Judges 6: 23. By showing the disciples his wounds, the exalted Lord links the Crucifixion to the Resurrection. The sharing of the Holy Spirit is thereby grounded in a life of service. The Johannine commission is in terms of forgiving, abiding sins. The reception of the Holy Spirit empowers the disciples to force people to make decisions about Christ. In the teaching of St. John, "sin" is basically the refusal to accept Jesus. By breathing upon them, Jesus symbolizes the new creation. "The Lord God formed man out of the clay of the earth and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being" Genesis 2: 7. The task, therefore, of the Spirit-empowered disciples is to breathe upon others so that they may opt for the message of Christ. In this way, the Evangelist asserts that to receive the Holy Spirit is to share the Holy Spirit.

Pentecost was never intended to be an isolated experience. We are not entitled to look back nostalgically on this great event and limit it within the narrow confines of the early days of the Church. By its very nature the reception of the Holy Spirit is always dynamic, never static. We are challenged on this feast to confront divisions and separations that continue to exist in our family, in the Church. We are asked to heal ostracism of members of our family. We are urged to denounce insufficient care of the poor. We are called upon to protest misuse of power. Having received the Holy Spirit, we must not be content to keep our gifts of healing to ourselves. SS. Luke, Paul and John are clearly in agreement: To receive the Holy Spirit is to share the Holy Spirit!



Heavenly King,  
Comforter,  
Spirit of Truth,  
everywhere present and filling all things.  
Treasury of Blessings  
and  
Giver of Life,  
come and dwell within us,  
cleanse us of all stain,  
and save our souls,  
O Gracious Lord!



## Send Your Spirit

When the day of Pentecost came, it found the brethren gathered in one place. Suddenly from up in the sky there came a noise like a strong wind which was heard all through the house where they were seated. Tongues of fire appeared which parted and came to rest on each of them. All were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to express themselves in foreign tongues and make bold proclamation as the Spirit prompted them.

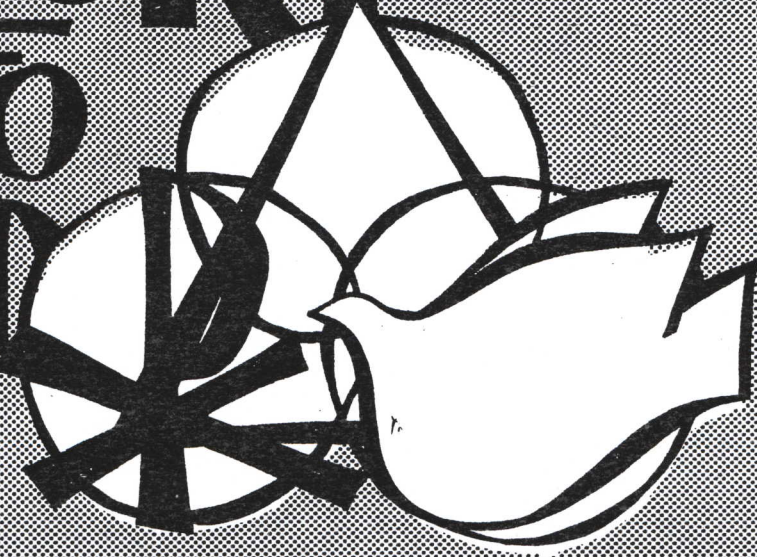
Staying in Jerusalem at the time were devout Jews of every nation under heaven. These heard the sound and assembled in a large crowd. They were much confused because each one heard them speaking his own language. The whole occurrence astonished them. They asked in utter amazement, "Are not all of these men who are speaking Galileans? How is that each of us hears them in his own native tongue? We are Parthians, Medes, Elamites. We live in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia. Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the regions of Libya around Cyrene. There are even visitors from Rome, all Jews, or those who have come over to Judaism; Cretans and Arabs too. Yet each of us hears them speaking in his own tongue about the marvels God has accomplished.

### Psalm 104

Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord, my God, you are great indeed!  
How manifold are your works, O Lord!  
The earth is full of your creatures.  
If you take away their breath, they perish and return to dust.  
when you send forth your spirit, they are created  
and you renew the face of the earth.  
May the glory of the Lord endure forever;  
may the Lord be glad in his works!  
Pleasing to him be my theme;  
I will be glad in the Lord.



**GLORY  
TO  
GOD**



**WHO IS FATHER,  
SON,  
AND HOLY SPIRIT**

---

**LIVE** *in harmony and peace*  
*and the* **GOD of LOVE** *and peace will be with you.*





## FATHERS

Blessed indeed is the man who hears many gentle voices call him father!

A dad is a man haunted by death, fears, anxieties. But who seems to his children the haven from all harm. And who makes them certain that whatever happens—it will all come right.

The impressions made by a father's voice can set in motion an entire trend of life.

All fathers...are invisible in daytime; daytime is ruled by mothers. But fathers come out at night. Darkness brings home the fathers, with their real, unspeakable power. There is more to them than meets the eye.

*Happy  
Father's Day!*

# Fathers' Day

Today we join the nation in honoring our fathers. It is vital to recognize and realize what an important idea it is to have a good image of our fatherhood. And we must begin realistically and recognize that we as fathers are from time to time inadequate to the challenges we face and that we do, in fact fail. And that we suffer pain, perhaps never known to our families of what it is to be a father who misses the mark. But inspired by hope in Christ, we never stop trying and we never stop giving thanks to the Lord for all that he has done for us in our paternal vocation.

We as fathers not only have to look at the habit of faith but the actual practice of faith in our lives and in that of our families. We may be blessed with the gift of faith, but it must be continually nurtured and constantly nourished, that we communicate it to those whom we love. Ideally of course, parents, both mothers and fathers transmit and communicate faith commitment to their families, but it is not always the case. In my own instance as father of this faith community, I always anguish and am in pain when all of our faithful are not in church worshipping and receiving the sacramental Mysteries each and every Sunday and holyday without exception, even though we remind everyone about it regularly. But not all listen, not all think it is important to do as God has asked us.

We have to start practicing our precious faith before we lose it entirely and our children are the ones who will suffer immeasurably because we have been lax in living our lives in a God-like way. As your spiritual father, I have asked you to offer yourselves generously in time and talent and treasure for the good of the Church, which is the Body of Christ left in our care so that it might endure and bring salvation to future generations as well as to us here and now. Fathers in the home see to it the family pursues its Christian vocation. It means we all must openly and dramatically profess the faith we say we are proud of and which will lead us to salvation. All fathers of the parish should be examples to their families. Mothers should join them in their vocation and reinforce their example to show why being Orthodox is valuable and important. Our children's values are going to be a reflection of our values. Their faith is a reflection of ours. Are we edified or embarrassed by this reality?

If we here and now do not make a sincere effort, we can be certain in most cases our children will not do it either. If faith response to Christ has vital and enduring



importance in our lives, we can be confident it will have the same position in theirs. Ask yourself as a father: "What kind of life am I living? What kind of faith do I practice? Is it that of the Saviour or my own delusion? How do I make it attractive, enticing, how do I make others want to live and respond to its challenges?"

Everything that happens to us in our lives has a purpose, regardless how distasteful it might be. If we grow in Christ as a result of it, it is worthwhile and we can be sure the Lord permitted it to occur simply to get us to reevaluate our position and grow in His grace.

Permit this Fathers' Day to be one of decision and new birth as well as renewed direction. Let it be a day that not only benefits personal life, but that of our parish family as well. We pray that it will be a joyful and spiritually edifying day for our fathers and their loved ones. May the Lord grant answers to your prayers that are beneficial to the salvation of our souls and those entrusted to our temporal and spiritual care. Happy even joyous and blessed celebration of this meaningful day!

## Happy Fathers' Day

We are overjoyed in soul and heart to greet our beloved Fathers on this day set aside to recognize the valuable importance of their vocation among us. Having been endowed with and sharing the very name of our Creator God, we are awed by the dignity ascribed to us in our divinely appointed vocation. It is we who must provide the security of responsive faith in our homes. It is we as fathers who impart our own pristine devotion to our youngsters that another generation might indeed be enriched by faith in Jesus Christ. As we are awed by the distinctness of our calling, we place ourselves in the care of our heavenly Father that his grace renders us loyal and upright.

Today we distribute blessed carnations to our fathers as an inspired reminder the beauty of the sanctity and holiness they exuded by the bloom is matched by the lifestyle of our fathers.

A very very happy and joyous celebration of this great day to all our Fathers for whom we offer a prayer of intercession that his glory is manifested in our lives!

## A Father Without Equal

*“Father.”* Few words evoke deeper emotions in human beings. A father who truly loves his children helps them to thrive. With good reason, God’s revelation to us provides a valuable insight of wisdom. It is self-identifying; God is revealed as “father” Matthew 6: 9. What kind of father is our God? To answer that, let us examine the words He spoke of Jesus on the occasion of his baptism. After all, the way a father speaks to his children reveals much about the kind of parent he is.

Jesus goes to the Jordan River to be baptized. Scripture tells us, “After Jesus was baptized, he came directly out of the water. Suddenly the sky opened and he saw the Spirit of God descend like a dove and hover over him. With that a voice from the heavens said, ‘This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased’” Matthew 3: 16, 17. Spoken by our heavenly Father, these tender words tell us much about the kind of Father He is. Notice three things expressed to the Son of God.

First, by the words, “This is my Son...” our heavenly Father is saying, in effect, ‘I am proud to be your Father.’ A discerning father satisfies his children’s hunger for recognition and attention. Children need to be reassured they are valued as unique members of the family. Imagine what it must have meant to Jesus – even as the Son of God – to receive such recognition from the Father for all around to hear and behold!

Secondly, by referring to his son as “my beloved,” our heavenly Father openly expresses his love for Jesus. In a sense, the Father is saying, “I love you.” A good father tells his children he dearly loves them. Such words, accompanied by wholesome affection, help children to flourish. How it must have touched the heart of Jesus to hear the Father’s voice expressing his love for him!

Thirdly, by words, “In whom I am well pleased,” the Father approves of the teaching vocation among us of Christ our Saviour. It is as if He is saying, Son, I am absolutely delighted with what you are doing, what you are accomplishing for the reconciliation of mankind with me.” A loving father looks for opportunities to let his children know he is pleased with the good things they say and do. Children draw strength and courage from parental approval. Surely it delights the soul of the Lord that his labors meet with the Father’s approval.

Truly, without question, our heavenly Father is without equal. Does your heart yearn for such a father? If so, take comfort in knowing that a relationship with our God through Jesus Christ our Saviour is within reach. If in faith you learn about him and sincerely try to do his will, He responds generously. We are taught by his wisdom, “Draw close to God and he will draw close to you” James 4: 8.

What can offer more security than having a close bond with our heavenly Father, the best Father imaginable?



## A FULFILLMENT OF EZEKIEL'S VISION

**I**n the Old Testament Book of Ezekiel, we read of a mysterious vision experienced by the prophet. He sees a spring coming from beneath the Temple's threshold, with its streams forming a small brook. A man measures its depth at various sources: the farther out the brook flows, the deeper it gets, until it ultimately becomes a mighty river. According to the vision, the waters increase with each passing day, with the banks of the river becoming laden with fruit trees and the land along it being rich and fertile. Fish of every kind could be found in this marvelous river!

What does this vision mean? The Church Fathers tell us that the river prefigures the "River of Grace" that is the Holy Spirit, which began to flow abundantly on the first Pentecost. On that day, there were a handful of believers gathered in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles "took to the streets" and converted thousands to Christianity! Through the Grace of the Holy Spirit, the ranks of Christians has continued to grow in great numbers - just like Ezekiel's river continued to swell. In spite of many obstacles and persecutions, the "mighty river" of the Christian Faith has flooded the entire world! How prophetic were Christ's own words: "If anyone thirsts, 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." (John 7:37-38)

On this glorious Feast of Pentecost, may we remember that the Holy Spirit is the power which regenerates and renews mankind. May He "come and dwell with us, and cleanse us of every blemish" as He saves our souls.