

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church
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The Great Feast of Pentecost
(06.23.2024.)

John 7:37-52, 8:12

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of Him. And some of them would have taken Him; but no man laid hands on Him. Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought Him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this Man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. **(KJV)**

We gather this day in God's Holy Church to celebrate the Great Feast of Pentecost. This is the time to be particularly mindful of the Descent of the Holy Spirit and the empowering of the Holy Apostles.

Today is a day to be grateful for the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. At Baptism we confess our belief in the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We confess our belief in the Trinity each time we recite The Creed.

Each time we make the Sign of the Cross in daily life, we pray to the Holy Trinity. Our love for God is manifested in the Sign of the Cross. Our love for God is nurtured and nourished in God's Holy Church.

We are blessed to have chapels, churches and cathedrals dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Our hunger for God is addressed when we worship in the Church. Our lives are guided by the work of the Holy Spirit.

As believers we are indebted to the Lord God and have the responsibility to be ever grateful for the blessings in our lives. The blessings we each experience exceed our ability to give thanks and are beyond our full comprehension.

The Lord Jesus Christ was reassuring in promising the coming of the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth. (Jn. 14:16-17, 15:26) Believers have unlimited opportunities throughout the day to pray to the Holy Spirit.

Each moment of life is an opportunity to be conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit in daily life. Truth is identified with the Holy Spirit. (Jn.15:26) Truth is essential in living the Christian life and in seeking eternal life.

Praying to the Holy Spirit keeps the believer on the narrow path to the Kingdom of God. Living within God's Holy Church and being nourished by the Church ensures the believer does not journey alone.

The journey from Baptism to the end of earthly life can be very long and is always challenging. God's Church provides the healthy and secure way to journey along the narrow path to the Heavenly Kingdom.

God's Church offers the immeasurable joy of the life in Jesus Christ. Joy is experienced in the Holy Mysteries of the Church. Joy is present in the Divine services and feasts of the Church.

Even in suffering, believers can experience joy in the Living, Loving God. Jesus Christ suffered on the Cross out of love for believers. Saints and martyrs of the Church have suffered out of love for Jesus Christ.

Today is a day to celebrate in God's Holy Church. Today is a day to be fully conscious and appreciative of the Holy Trinity. God's love is manifested and experienced in the Divine Liturgy today.

God's love is expressed everyday to believers. Believers with eyes to see and ears to hear experience God's reassuring presence in daily life. The Holy Apostle Paul made clear the nearness of the Lord God.

Holy Apostle Paul said. "In Him we live and move and have our being." (Acts. 17:28) Believers find reassurance in Jesus' words in the Gospel of St. Matthew. The Lord Jesus Christ said "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. (Mt. 28:20_

We experience God's love in the Church. God's love is communicated in the proclamation of the Holy Gospel. God's love is manifested in the Precious Body and Blood received in the Divine Liturgy,

God's love comes alive in the relationships formed and maintained in the Church. Believers reveal God's love in their homes and their communities.

God's love is realized when believers practice forgiveness in daily life.

Believers repenting of their sins appreciate God's demonstrated love through confession and forgiveness. The Great Feast of Pentecost increases believers' awareness of God's love.

Thank God for this Great Feast of Pentecost. Thank God for the Church.
Thank God for the freedom and joy to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. May today be filled with abundant joy and God's love in our hearts, minds and souls

The Great Feast of Pentecost. June 10/23, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.

Father Rodney Torbic

Holy Pentecost

The Feast of Holy Pentecost is celebrated each year on the fiftieth day after the Great and Holy Feast of Pascha (Easter) and ten days after the Feast of the Ascension of Christ. The Feast is always celebrated on a Sunday.

The Feast commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, a feast of the Jewish tradition. It also celebrates the establishment of the Church through the preaching of the Apostles and the baptism of the thousands who on that day believed in the Gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ. The Feast is also seen as the culmination of the revelation of the Holy Trinity.



The story of Pentecost is found in the book of The Acts of the Apostles. In Chapter two we are told that the Apostles of our Lord were gathered together in one place. Suddenly, a sound came from heaven like a rushing wind, filling the entire house where they were sitting. Then, tongues of fire appeared, and one sat upon each one of Apostles. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as directed by the Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).

This miraculous event occurred on the Jewish Feast of Pentecost, celebrated by the Jews on the fiftieth day after the Passover as the culmination of the Feast of Weeks (Exodus 34:22; Deuteronomy 16:10). The Feast of Weeks began on the third day after the Passover with the presentation of the first harvest sheaves to God, and it concluded on Pentecost with the offering of two loaves of unleavened bread, representing the first products of the harvest (Leviticus 23:17-20; Deuteronomy 16:9-10).

Since the Jewish Feast of Pentecost was a great pilgrimage feast, many people from throughout the Roman Empire were gathered in Jerusalem on this day. When the people in Jerusalem heard the sound, they came together and heard their own languages being spoken by the Apostles (Acts 2:5-6). The people were amazed, knowing that some of those speaking were Galileans, and not men who would normally speak many different languages. They wondered what this meant, and some even thought the Apostles were drunk (Acts 2:7-13).

Peter, hearing these remarks, stood up and addressed the crowd. He preached to the people regarding the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of the Holy Spirit. He spoke about Jesus Christ and His death and glorious Resurrection. Great conviction fell upon the people, and they asked the Apostles, "What shall we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38-39).

The Bible records that on that day about three thousand were baptized. Following, the book of Acts states that the newly baptized continued daily to hear the teaching of the Apostles, as the early Christians met together for fellowship, the breaking of bread, and for prayer. Many wonderful signs and miracles were done through the Apostles, and the Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:42-47).

Icon of the Feast

The icon of the Feast of Pentecost is known as "The Descent of the Holy Spirit". It is an icon of bold colors of red and gold signifying that this is a great event. The movement of the icon is from the top to the bottom. At the top of the icon is a semicircle with rays coming from it. The rays are pointing toward the Apostles, and the tongues of fire are seen descending upon each one of them signifying the descent of the Holy Spirit.

The building in the background of the icon represents the upper room where the Disciples of Christ gathered after the Ascension. The Apostles are shown seated in a semicircle which shows the unity of the Church. Included in the group of the Apostles is Saint Paul, who, though not present with the others on the day of Pentecost, became an Apostle of the Church and the greatest missionary. Also included are the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, holding books of the Gospel, while the other Apostles are holding scrolls that represent the teaching authority given to them by Christ.

In the center of the icon below the Apostles, a royal figure is seen against a dark background. This is a symbolic figure, Cosmos, representing the people of the world living in darkness and sin, and involved in pagan worship. However, the figure carries in his hands a cloth containing scrolls which represent the teaching of the Apostles. The tradition of the Church holds that the Apostles carried the message of the Gospel to all parts of the world.

In the icon of Pentecost we see the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit, sent down upon the Apostles who will teach the nations and baptize them in the name of the Holy Trinity. Here we see that the Church is brought together and sustained in unity through the presence and work of the Holy Spirit, that the Spirit guides the Church in the missionary endeavor throughout the world, and that the Spirit nurtures the Body of Christ, the Church, in truth and love.

Orthodox Christian Celebration of the Feast of Pentecost

This great Feast of the Church is celebrated with the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom on the Sunday that is the fiftieth day after the celebration of Pascha. The Liturgy is conducted on the day of the Feast, and is preceded the evening before by a Great Vespers service and on the morning of the Feast by the Matins service. On the day of the Feast a Vespers service is conducted that includes the kneeling prayers. These prayers mark the beginning of the practice of kneeling during the Liturgy at the time when the holy gifts of bread and wine are consecrated

as the body and blood of Christ. The practice of kneeling has been suspended during the Paschal season. On the Monday following the Feast, the Divine Liturgy is conducted in commemoration of the All-holy and Life-creating and All-powerful Spirit, Who is God, and One of the Trinity, and of one honor and one essence and one glory with the Father and the Son (From the Synaxarion of the Feast).

Scripture readings for the Feast are the following: At the Saturday Vespers: Numbers 11:16-17, 24-29; Joel 2:23-32; Ezekiel 36:24-28. At the Orthros (Matins): John 20:19-23. At the Pentecost Sunday Divine Liturgy: **Acts 2:1-11; John 7:37-52, 8:12**. At the Divine Liturgy on the Monday of the Holy Spirit: Ephesians 5:8-19; Matthew 18:10-20.

Prayer of the Holy Spirit

Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, everywhere present and filling all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of life: come and abide in us, cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One.

Hymns of the Feast

Apolytikion (Plagal Tone Four)

Blessed are You, O Christ our God, who made fisherman all-wise, by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit, and through them, drawing all the world into Your net. O Loving One, glory be to You.

Kontakion (Plagal Tone Four)

When the Most High came down and confounded tongues of men at Babel, He divided the nations. When He dispensed the tongues of fire, He called all to unity, and with one voice we glorify the Most Holy Spirit.

Services this Week

- **Pentecost Monday (06.24.2024.)**
 - Holy Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas
 - *Divine Liturgy starts at 09:30 AM*
- **Pentecost Tuesday (06.25.2024.)**
 - Ven. Onuphrius the Great; Ven. Peter of Mount Athos
 - *Divine Liturgy starts at 09:30 AM*
- **Friday (06.28.2024.)**
 - Holy Prophet Amos; Holy St. Lazarus and All Serbian Martyrs – Vidovdan
- **1st Sunday after Pentecost – of All Saints (06.30.2024.)**
 - Holy Martyrs Manuel, Sabel, and Ismael

Donations June 16, 2024

Offering - \$ 1,146.00 Candles - \$40.00 Dues - \$50

Donations

Best Wishes to my Dear Friend from Irene Nesdore
In Honor of Peti Gjurich's 97th birthday.

In Memory of Milos Tumbas from Dianna Dunnington - \$100

Large Candles

For Health of Olga Lucas from Sharon & Jim Urban
(2) IMO Devich & Lovrich Families from Tom & Carole McAllister
IMO Christine Bulich, Louis & Mary Daley from Olga Bulich
IMO Charles Bulich from Olga Bulich
IMO of Bartis & Pavich Families from Joe Bartis

TODAY

🎓 **Sunday, June 23rd** 🎓

Please join us in celebrating Sam Ribaric's High School graduation in
the church hall following Divine Liturgy
Everyone is welcome!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Band of Brothers - July 11-13th and 17 - 20th

JOIN US FOR



Taste of Serbia

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10TH 2024



Johnstown Slavic Festival - September 20-21st