

condition, to which man is handed over to, on account of obvious or hidden pride and which we pray against in the Lord's Prayer, when we ask from God "and lead us not into temptation". This refers to the utmost temptation of the darkening of the mind, where a person not only does not distinguish what is correct from what is mistaken, light from darkness, but he also hates the light, because his works are wicked (John 3:19-20).

The Descent of the Holy Spirit

The descent of the Holy Spirit at the moment of the changing of the Precious Gifts overshadows us also: "Send down Thy Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts here presented". Precisely as the disciples then, in the upper room of Jerusalem received the Holy Spirit in the form of fiery tongues, thus we also in the upper room of the sacred Church live the overshadowing of the Comforter in our mind, heart and body.

Furthermore the offering of incense also is related with the Holy Spirit. Before the priest senses he prays as follows: "We offer you incense oh Christ our God, unto a scent of spiritual fragrance, who has received in your super celestial altar, send down upon us the grace of your All Holy Spirit." With this sending down we believers are altered, by the grace of God, into all-fragrant incenses, exuding the grace of the Comforter and each one of us becomes capable of living his personal Pentecost, evangelizing the joy of Christ to others also.

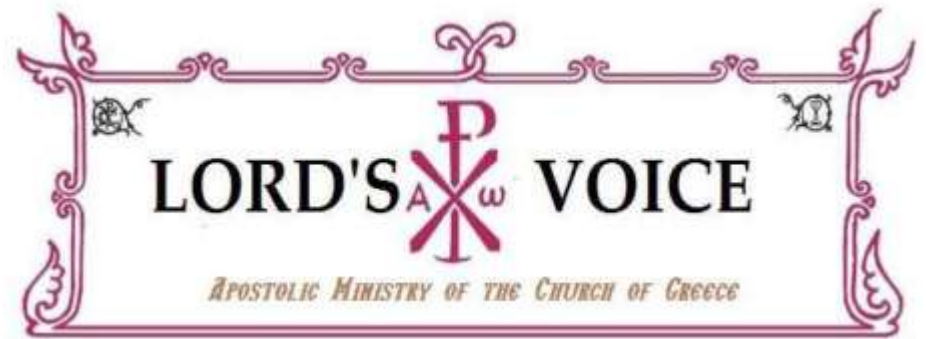
Archim. E. T.

JUNE 8 HOLY PENTECOST, Removal of the Relics of Theodore the Commander, Kalliope the Martyr, Melania the Righteous, Anastasios the New Martyr of Constantinople, Theophanes the New Martyr of Constantinople. **TONE OF THE WEEK:** Plagia 3rd, **Eothinon** Festal Orthros Gospel, **EPISTLE** Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11, **GOSPEL** John 7:37-52; 8:12

NEXT SUNDAY JUNE 15 THE SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS, Amos the Prophet, Our Righteous Father Hieronymus, Augustine the Blessed, Bishop of Hippo.

EPISTLE St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:33-40; 12:1-2

GOSPEL Matthew 10:32-33; 37-38; 19:27-30



62nd Year

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OUR

PERSONAL PENTECOST THE DIVINE LITURGY

Christ calls himself the spring which quenches people in today's gospel message, beloved brethren. More specifically He is speaking about the Holy Spirit, which whoever believes in Jesus Christ receives, how much more so whoever is participating in the liturgical life of our Church.

Truly, the reception of the Holy Spirit by people, as each one's personal Pentecost, is realized and is hymned in every Divine Liturgy in the way so that with the communion of the Body and the Blood of Christ, we cry out with joy and rejoicing: "We have seen the true light, we have received the heavenly spirit, we have found the true faith worshipping the indivisible Trinity, for this has saved us." Here the reception of the Holy Spirit is connected with the finding of the true and infallible faith. This again is expressed with the worship of our One and Triune God and the confession of our salvation. It could be maintained that this hymn comprises the victory song of our Church before the diverse uglinesses and "foul smelling" powers of darkness of every age.

Holy Pentecost

The Gospel of 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."

A Feast of reconciliation

Pentecost is a feast of reconciliation. We were reconciled with God. With the Ascension the deified human nature ascended

and sat at the right of the Father. The heavens received this gift and in exchange they send down the All Holy Spirit, a sign of reconciliation with humans (the sacred Chrysostom).

The All Holy Spirit proceeds timelessly from the Father, in time it is sent by the Son to us also and it rests on the Son. His gifts are infinite, they come from the one root and variously adorn each person. This occurs so that with humility and love people can complete each other, because the gift which one does not have, the other has and conversely. Thus, in a wholly spiritual manner all liturgized Orthodox Christians become relatives "by blood" also. We are constantly reconciled with each other and with the All Holy God.

The Divine Liturgy

The Divine Liturgy is paradise on earth. It is the revelation of the Kingdom, the utmost place and way of life of man. Here the primary goal of the Christian is realized, which according to Saint Seraphim of Sarov is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. Here is the workshop of holiness. Here we meet with the living God. Here we receive the infinite qualities of the Holy Spirit, when however with our life we make "room" for Him to come find us.

It is not by chance that the Holy Spirit "in the form of a dove" was revealed and stood on the head of the baptized Christ. The dove is a very sensitive bird, so that even the slightest noise and the slightest movement startle it and it leaves. So for this reason, Orthodox Christians must with the fear of God, be diligent in being cleansed from the many passions which are difficult to fight and name, which firmly possess us, thunder-striking them with repentance, desire and fervor for prayer, which these again are fruits of the All Holy Spirit.

If we do not pay attention to our life, the grace of the Holy Spirit departs, retreats, and the person, in the form of various punishments tastes the fruits of his works. This refers to that