



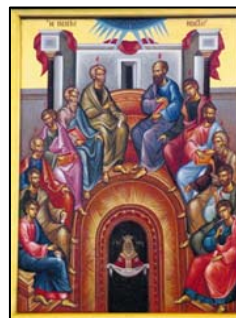
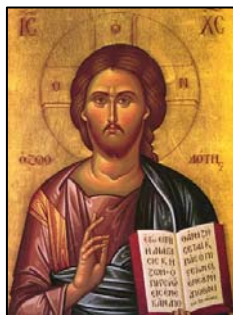
GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website: www.goarch.org

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website: www.atlanta.goarch.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website: www.saintchristopherhoc.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church



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Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, *Chancellor*

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, June 7, 2009

ON THIS DAY, THE EIGHTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA, THE CHURCH REMEMBERS PENTECOST, THE FIFTIETH DAY *AFTER* PASCHA. TODAY WE COMMEMORATE THE EVENTS DESCRIBED IN THE EPISTLE FOR THE FEAST. “THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”, THE COMFORTER, THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, WHO IS EVERYWHERE PRESENT AND FILLS ALL THINGS, AS THE BEAUTIFUL PRAYER OF THE CHURCH TO THE HOLY SPIRIT STATES. WE ALSO COMMEMORATE Righteous Father Michael the Confessor, Bishop of Synadon (+821); New-Martyr Luke; Mary the Myrrhbearer & wife of Cleopas; Holy Martyr Salonas the Roman; Holy Martyr Selefkos; and Synesios, Bishop of Cypress. Through their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

Welcome, Visitors and Newcomers, to our Mission Parish!

We invite you to enter your name, mail/email addresses in our Guest Register (near the entrance) if you are interested in joining and assisting with our mission’s development.

We want to keep you informed of our schedule and location of services. ***You and your family are welcome; we look forward to knowing you. We invite you and your family to join and assist us often!***

Please consider that only baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians in canonical good standing may approach for Holy Communion. All are invited to partake of the Antidoron ("instead of the gifts") distributed at the conclusion of today's Divine Liturgy.

From the Pentecostarion

Pentecost is the Greek word for "fifty," and it names today's Feast falling on the fiftieth day after Pascha. The day commemorates the events described in the Epistle for today's Feast, the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who is everywhere present and fills all things, as the beautiful prayer of the Church to the Holy Spirit states.

SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE

1./3./5./10. Special Hymn Commemorating Pentecost – (Hymnal-pp.172-173):

It is sung after the Doxology, before and after the Small Entrance, and following the distribution of Holy Communion.

Blessed are You, O Christ our God. You made wise men of poor fishermen by sending down upon them Your Holy Spirit, and through them You caught the whole world. O Lover of mankind, glory to You.

2. Second Antiphon Today – (Hymnal-pp.28-29):

Today, the following hymn is sung instead of the normal "Soson Imas": Save us, O Son of God, O Holy Counselor. We sing to You: Alleluia!"

4. Small Entrance Exclamation of the Priest:

On the occasion of today's feast, the Priest intones the following at the Small Entrance: "Be exalted, O Lord, in Your strength! We will sing and chant the praise of Your might. O Holy Counselor, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!"

6. Kontakion for the Feast of Pentecost – (Hymnal-pp.280-281):

When He came down and confused the tongues of men, the Most High divided the nations. But in sending forth parted tongues of flame, He called all mankind to unity, that with one accord we might glorify His all Holy Spirit.

7. Special Hymn instead of Trisagion Hymn – (Hymnal-pp.292-293):

On the occasion of today's feast, we sing the following hymn instead of the Trisagion hymn: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves in Christ. Alleluia. (3)"

8. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (Hymnal-pp.310-311):

Today, the following hymn is usually sung instead of "Axion Estin" or "Truly it is proper to call you blessed...": You conceived and gave birth in virginity; the Word Who created all, through you became incarnate. O Mother who knew not man, Virgin Theotokos, the boundless One was held by you, the dwelling of your infinite Creator; we magnify you.

9. Communion Hymn for Feast of Pentecost – (Hymnal-pp.322):

On the occasion of today's feast, the following hymn is usually sung instead of "Aineite" or "Praise the Lord": Let Your Good Spirit lead me along a path that is sure and straight. Alleluia. (Psalm 142[143]:10)

SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY

The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts. – St. John Chrysostom

Gospel Reading During Orthros Service (John 20:19-23)

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After He said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, so I send you." When He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Epistle Reading (Acts 2:1-11)

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were

filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, 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 Arabs — in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power."

Gospel Reading (John 7:37-52, 8:12)

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, He cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to Me, and let the one who believes in Me drink. As the Scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now He said this about the Spirit, which believers in Him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified. When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, "This is really the prophet." Others said, "This is the Messiah." But some asked, "Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does He? Has not the Scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?" So there was a division in the crowd because of Him. Some of them wanted to arrest Him, but no one laid hands on Him. Then the temple police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not arrest Him?" The police answered, "Never has anyone spoken like this!" Then the Pharisees replied, "Surely you have not been deceived too, have you? Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in Him? But this crowd, which does not know the law — they are accursed." Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before, and who was one of them, asked, "Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?" They replied, "Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee." Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

“God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (Romans 5:5)

(continued from last week!)

FEAST OF HOLY PENTECOST

INTRODUCTION

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.



BIBLICAL STORY

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).

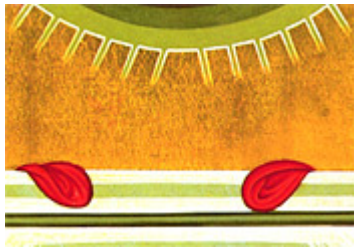
Peter, hearing these remarks, stood up and addressed the crowd. He preached to the people regarding the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of the Holy Spirit. He spoke about Jesus Christ and His death and glorious Resurrection. Great conviction fell upon the people, and they asked the Apostles, "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 (1). 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 (2).



1. Semicircle of rays pointing to each of the Apostles (detail).



2. A tongue of fire rests above the head of Saint Peter (detail).

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 (3). Included in the group of the Apostles is Saint Paul (4), 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 (5), Luke (6), and John—holding books of the Gospel, while the

other Apostles are holding scrolls that represent the teaching authority given to them by Christ.



3. The Apostles in the upper room being filled with the Holy Spirit.



4. Saint Paul, who was not present on the day of Pentecost, is included amongst the twelve (detail).



5. Saint Mark the Evangelist, who was not present with the twelve Disciples on this day, is included (detail).



6. Saint Luke the Evangelist, who also was not present on this day, is included (detail).

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 (7). However, the figure carries in his hands a cloth containing scrolls which represent the teaching of the Apostles (8). The tradition of the Church holds that the Apostles carried the message of the Gospel to all parts of the world.



7. The Cosmos, appearing in the center of the icon, representing the people of the world (detail).



8. The scrolls that are carried by the Cosmos are representing the teachings of the Apostles (detail).

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.

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

Some Assembly Required

Consider the story about a father who had ordered a tree house for his son's birthday one year. The time came to assemble the tree house. He laid out all the parts on the floor and began reading the instructions. To his dismay, he discovered that the instructions were for a tree house. However, the parts were for a sailboat! The next day he sent an angry letter to the company complaining about the mix-up. *He received the following reply:*

“We are truly sorry for the error and the inconvenience. However, it might help to consider the possibility that somewhere there is a man out on a lake trying to sail your tree house.”

The point is clear: To put something together, you have to have *the right parts and the right instructions*. This is where faith comes in. The only way you can put life together is through faith. *Faith* in Jesus Christ, our Lord, God, and Savior... that's what makes it work. That's the way to assemble your life – to *root* it in Jesus Christ *through faith*, to *tie* it to Jesus Christ, to *ground* it in Jesus Christ. On this the birthday of our Lord's Church, may His Holy Spirit guide and direct us according to His will always. Amen!

And on this the three hundred and twentieth Sunday of our St. Christopher's parish community, we continue to thank each of you for your presence and support. Although it may seem like we are just a handful of men, women and children, if we commit ourselves to serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we will experience the miracle of growth as the Holy Spirit brings others into

His service to help us build His new church in the Peachtree City, Georgia area for the glory of God!

COMMUNITY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Today is the 7th Sunday of Pascha

Sunday, May 23 (Feast of Pentecost – Trinity Sunday):

7:45 am Orthros Service

8:45 am Divine Liturgy

9:45 am Vespers – the Feast of the Holy Spirit (Kneeling Service)

10:30 am “Burn the Mortgage” Celebration & “Lamb Chop” Luncheon

12:00 pm GOYA Outing to the Georgia Aquarium

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!

With Feast of Pentecost, fasting is suspended from Monday, May 24 – Saturday, May 29. Looking Ahead – Fast of the Holy Apostles – Monday, May 31 – Monday, June 28.

Sunday, May 30 (Sunday of All Saints):

7:45 am Orthros Service

9:00 am Divine Liturgy/Coffee Fellowship Reception

10:45 am Religious Education Classes

11:30 am Philoptochos General Meeting

Monday, May 31 – Fast of the Apostles Begins and continues through June 28th

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!

YOU ARE INVITED TO A CELEBRATION!

MORTGAGE BURNING

(IMMEDIATELY AFTER CHURCH SERVICES)

PEACHCITY EVENT CENTER

(ADJACENT TO CHURCH)

LAMB CHOPS WILL BE SERVED FOR LUNCH (NO CHARGE)