

Holy Cross

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Weekly Bulletin

Sunday, June 19, 2016



Holy Pentecost

After the Savior'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 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. Marveling 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 fulfillment 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 fulfillment 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 Savior, 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 marvelous 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 '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". Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus writes, "The Catholic Church, which exists from the ages, is revealed most clearly in the incarnate advent of Christ". 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". According to Saint Gregory the Theologian, "The Prophets established the Church, the Apostles conjoined it, and the Evangelists set it in order". 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". 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". And Saint Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem, writes, "After the visitation of the Comforter, the Apostles became high priests". 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. 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 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.

Hymns of the Day

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.

A Blessed Pentecost and Happy Father's Day!

This Week at Holy Cross

Monday	Monday of the Holy Spirit @ Holy Trinity North Hills 8:30 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Tuesday	7 pm IOCC Pittsburgh Metropolitan Committee Meeting
Wednesday	7 pm Parish Council Meeting
Thursday	7 pm Chant Class
Sunday	8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle Reading

The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11.

WHEN THE DAY of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and 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 Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

Gospel Reading

The Reading is from 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 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."

Welcome

We warmly welcome all visitors and seekers in our midst today, trusting that your experience here will be an uplifting and enriching one. The Greek Orthodox Churches are the ancient and native Christian communities of the biblical world, with centers in the Holy Lands, Syria, Egypt and Asia Minor, and by extension in Greece, Cyprus and throughout the world. Like the ancient Christians, we engage the whole person, heart, mind and all senses in Divine Worship. This experience has been so powerful to seekers in the past that it was often said "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. We knew only that there God dwelt among human beings." (Russian Primary Chronicle) That communion experience of heaven on earth and God in our midst forms the heart of all Orthodox worship. It culminates in the sharing of Holy Communion, which not only unites us with the Divine, but also expresses the deep unity in faith and life between all Orthodox believers. Since Holy Communion expresses that deep unity in belief and practice alike, it is reserved for observant Orthodox Christians. This does not mean, however, that non-Orthodox are 'excluded' – rather, the Orthodox choose not to make an external display of unity when actual unity does not exist.

While working to restore the full communion that did exist in antiquity, today we offer the sign of the blessed bread at the service's conclusion as a symbolic gift of hospitality and growing unity that is offered to all present. If you would like to learn more about the Orthodox way of life, or have any questions about worship or Holy Communion, please approach Fr. Michael or one of the clergy following services.

Thank you for joining us, and again, we welcome you all.

Stewardship at a Glance

As of May 31st, we have received 348 pledge cards, for a total pledge amount of \$408,552.00, making the average 2016 pledge thus far \$1,174.

About Stewardship

To be a member in good standing, it is necessary to submit a pledge card. Although pledge envelopes are mailed out to everyone, we still need you to submit your 2016 pledge. That is what stewardship is. It is making a commitment in support of our Holy Cross community. We base our budget on the pledge income and this determines what we can, and cannot do. You can pick up a pledge card in the narthex of the Church, pledge on-line at www.holycrosspgh.org or call Nena in the church office at 412-833-3355. If you have already turned in a pledge card, please try to stay current. We depend on your support.

Thank you.

Ted Sofis,
Stewardship Chair

A Note from Philoptochos

Thank you to ALL of the volunteers at this week's 44th food festival! The food food fair was successful because of your enthusiasm, time and dedication. Thank you, especially, to all of the chairpersons at the various venues. A HUGE thank you to Jim Spanos and Duane Ferencz who spent the last 6 months overseeing and planning our festival!

Please mark your calendars for the Philoptochos Food Fair and Yiayia Joan's Attic, October 5,6,7 We hope to have the same enthusiasm, volunteers and dedication to maintain our philanthropic efforts!

Elaine Sofis,
Philoptochos President

Community News

Vacation Church School is coming up fast! The dates of the program this year are July 25th - 29th and we have a need for teachers and volunteers to help in classes, with skits, athletics, music, arts & crafts, and snacks. If you are able and interested, please contact Jonathan McClish at 412.833.3355 or mcclish.jonathan@gmail.com

IOCC

Did you Know?

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) Pittsburgh Metropolitan Committee meets monthly at Holy Cross to plan activities to promote IOCC's awareness and funding. If you have are available please join us, there is a meeting at Holy Cross this Tuesday June 21 at 7 pm. Since the small local committee was started 11 years ago we have raised over \$400,000 to help fund many worthy causes that IOCC addresses. IOCC is able to leverage these funds with government grants to increase the actual funding by a factor of 7. Charity Navigator has rated IOCC with 4 stars (highest rating) and found that 92% of the funds go directly to those in need. Past IOCC events have earmarked funds associated with the Katrina Hurricane, Greek Fires, Serbian Crisis, Japan Tsunami, Greek Economic Crisis, Ethiopian Famine, Sandy Superstorm and Syrian Crisis.

New Parish Directory

Dear Parishioners,

Work on an UPDATED Parish Directory with pictures has begun. Please expect a call from a committee member to verify and update information.

In addition to confirming mailing addresses and home phone numbers, we are gathering email address and cell phone numbers to have that contact information in the church database. It is your choice whether to have it published or not in the directory, but for emergency purposes, we would like to have it for the church files.

Also, while all families may use this opportunity to have family photographs taken and published in the directory as they see fit, we are hoping all adult children - those over the age of 21 - will have their own entry in the directory. Please plan your time with the photographer accordingly.

Dates for taking pictures are:

Monday through Thursday July 18-21 4pm-9pm Saturday July 23 All Day

Monday through Thursday August 22-25 4pm-9pm Saturday August 26 All Day

We want to inform and encourage everyone to have a picture taken for the directory. Look for information in church bulletins and handouts soon in the narthex.

Thank you for your cooperation! The Directory Committee

*** All information for the Sunday Bulletin should be submitted to Jonathan McClish by 11:59 pm of the Wednesday prior for inclusion. Submit to mcclish.jonathan@gmail.com

Deposit from Week of 6/5	
Account Name	Deposit
Pledges from 2015	
Pledges for 2016	\$4,766
Bulletin	
Candles	\$394
Donations – Unspecified	
Flowers/Communion Wine	\$40
Loose Offerings	\$107
Greek School	
Sunday Church School	\$11
Vacation Church School	
Special Envelopes	
Holy Week Envelopes	
Christmas Cards	
Baptismal Candles	
Socials/Special Projects	
Hall Deposits – Current Year	
Hall Deposits – Next Year	
Hall Rental Income - 2016	
Caterers	
Miscellaneous Income	
Total Deposit	\$5,318

Mini Capital Campaign Update			
	Pledged	Received	Balance
Matching Donors	\$75,000	\$62,000	\$13,000
Donations from Parishioners	\$75,000	\$65,745	\$9,255
Total	\$150,000	\$127,745	\$22,255
Disbursements Made to Date			\$27,516
Building Fund Balance			\$141,450

Financial Snapshot based on \$2,075.33 per day operating cost				
Date	Weekly Collections	Weekly Collections Total	Estimated operational needs to following Sunday	Difference
Total through May	\$280,468.61	\$280,468.61	\$325,826.81	-45,358.20
6/5	\$12,102	\$292,570.61	\$340,354.12	-\$47,783.51
6/12	\$5,318	\$297,888.61	\$354,881.43	-\$56,992.82