

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

28 Cross Street - Auburn, New York, 13021 (www.stnicholasauburn.com)

Very Reverend Michael Speck – Pastor
(315) 246-6051 - mspeck100@gmail.com

Office Hours Thursday from 2PM to 4PM or by Appointment

Reverend Deacon David Donch Reverend Deacon Michael W. Speck Reader Nathaniel Donch

Sr. Warden - Greg Michaels
Secretary – Jane Kimak

Jr. Warden – Reverend Deacon David Donch
Treasurer - Glenn Peters



Sunday, June 12, 2022 - Holy Pentecost



Services and Activities

Saturday, June 11 – 8:30 AM – Divine Liturgy–Memorial Soul Saturday
- 5:00 PM – Vespers with Litya

Sunday, June 12 – 9:30 AM – Festal Divine Liturgy of Holy Pentecost
and Kneeling Vespers followed by Coffee Hour
- 1:30 PM - Panikhida at St Nicholas Cemetery

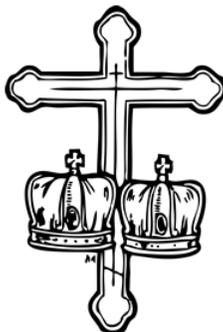
Monday, June 13 - 8:30 AM – Divine Liturgy - Feast of the Holy Spirit

Wednesday, June 15 – No Liturgy

Saturday, June 18 – 5:00 PM - Vespers

Sunday, June 19 - 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy with Panikhida for
Fathers, Sisterhood Meeting, and Coffee Hour.

Congratulations to Noah and Kaleigh Donch on their entering into the Community of Holy Matrimony on Sunday, June 5. May God Grant Noah, Kaleigh and Faylin and their families Many Happy, Prosperous, and Blessed Years!



In the back of the church today you will find copies of the Pentecost Cemetery Panikhida. If you would like to have a brief Panikhida Litya sung at the grave(s) of family members or friends at the services Sunday afternoon, please write their names on the back page of this book and give it to me graveside. Please also point out to me the graves of those you would like to have blessed. This is a great help in serving these brief services. Thank you!

Tickets for the June 26 Pork Chop Dinner are now available. Please see Greg Michaels to pick up tickets.

The Sisterhood will hold a brief meeting on Sunday, June 19 following Divine Liturgy.

Holy Pentecost

THE VIGIL OF PENTECOST

The all-night Vigil service begins with a solemn invitation:

**“Let us celebrate Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit,
The appointed day of promise, and the fulfillment of hope,
The mystery which is as great as it is precious.”**

In the coming of the Spirit, the very essence of the Church is revealed:

**“The Holy Spirit provides all, Overflows with prophecy, fulfills the priesthood,
Has taught wisdom to illiterates, has revealed fishermen as theologians,
He brings together the whole council of the Church.”**

In the three readings of the Old Testament (Numbers 11:16-17, 24-29; Joel 2:23-32; Ezekiel 36:24-28) we hear the prophecies concerning the Holy Spirit. We are taught that the entire history of mankind was directed towards the day on which God “would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh.” This day has come! All hope, all promises, all expectations have been fulfilled. At the end of the Aposticha hymns, for the first time since Easter, we sing the hymn: “O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth...,” the one with which we inaugurate all our services, all prayers, which is, as it were, the life-breath of the Church, and whose coming to us, whose “descent” upon us in this festal Vigil, is indeed the very experience of the Holy Spirit “coming and abiding in us.” Having reached its climax, the Vigil continues as an explosion of joy and light for “verily the light of the Comforter has come and illumined the world.” In the Gospel reading (John 20:19-23) the feast is interpreted to us as the feast of the Church, of her divine nature, power and authority. The Lord sends His disciples into the world, as He Himself was sent by His Father. Later, in the antiphons of the Liturgy, we proclaim the universality of the apostles’ preaching, the cosmical significance of the feast, the sanctification of the whole world, the true manifestation of God’s Kingdom.

THE VESPERS OF PENTECOST

The liturgical peculiarity of Pentecost is a very special Vespers of the day itself. Usually this service follows immediately the Divine Liturgy, is “added” to it as its

own fulfillment. The service begins as a solemn “summing up” of the entire celebration, as its liturgical synthesis. We hold flowers in our hands symbolizing the joy of the eternal spring, inaugurated by the coming of the Holy Spirit. After the festal Entrance, this joy reaches its climax in the singing of the Great

Prokeimenon: “Who is so great a God as our God?”

Then, having reached this climax, we are invited to kneel. This is our first kneeling since Easter. It signifies that after these fifty days of Paschal joy and fulness, of experiencing the Kingdom of God, the Church now is about to begin her pilgrimage through time and history. It is evening again, and the night approaches, during which temptations and failures await us, when, more than anything else, we need Divine help, that presence and power of the Holy Spirit, who has already revealed to us the joyful End, who now will help us in our effort towards fulfillment and salvation. All this is revealed in the three prayers which the celebrant reads now as we all kneel and listen to him. In the first prayer, we bring to God our repentance, our increased appeal for forgiveness of sins, the first condition for entering into the Kingdom of God.

In the second prayer, we ask the Holy Spirit to help us, to teach us to pray and to follow the true path in the dark and difficult night of our earthly existence. Finally, in the third prayer, we remember all those who have achieved their earthly journey, but who are united with us in the eternal God of Love. The joy of Easter has been completed and we again have to wait for the dawn of the Eternal Day. Yet, knowing our weakness, humbling ourselves by kneeling, we also know the joy and the power of the Holy Spirit who has come. We know that God is with us, that in Him is our victory.

Thus is completed the feast of Pentecost and we enter “the ordinary time” of the year. Yet, every Sunday now will be called “after Pentecost”—and this means that it is from the power and light of these fifty days that we shall receive our own power, the Divine help in our daily struggle. At Pentecost we decorate our churches with flowers and green branches—for the Church “never grows old, but is always young.” It is an evergreen, ever-living Tree of grace and life, of joy and comfort. For the Holy Spirit—“the Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life—comes and abides in us, and cleanses us from all impurity,” and fills our life with meaning, love, faith and hope.

Father Alexander Schmemmann (1974)

The Church's Birthday – on the Feast of Holy Pentecost



Today we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of our Savior, which occurred on the fiftieth day after the Resurrection of Christ. In a miraculous and mystical manner the apostles spoke in various languages. People, having come from various lands and nations and who spoke different languages and ordinarily would not be able to understand each other, heard the apostles speaking in their own native tongues and understood each word, which penetrated not only their minds but their hearts.

Sometimes this day is called the birthday of the Church, because with the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, began the victorious spreading of Christianity throughout the entire world, which continues even until today. We think about the fact that when the Lord Jesus Christ left this earthly life, here, on the earth, there remained only a small handful of His disciples, and the amount of those who believed in Him were numbered in the tens, hundreds or perhaps a few thousand people, but not more than that. Then Christianity began to spread throughout the entire world, and today there are more than two billion Christians. And how many more Christians there were who have lived their lives and passed on into the next world during the course of the two thousand year history of the Church!

In what way did the Word of God reach the ears and hearts of people? Why did so many people believe in the Resurrection of Christ? Why do so many people strive to follow Christ and to keep His commandments? Why have so many people been attracted to the Evangelical way of life, despite its difficulty? Because for centuries the Holy Spirit has been inspiring the Church, her sons and daughters, and today continues to operate in the Church the same way that He operated in the lives of the first Christians. The same way that the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples and they were able to speak in various languages and were understood by those who heard them, today, as well, the Divine Spirit touches the hearts and tongues of preachers, so that they may overcome their human weakness, their feebleness, their lack of wisdom, and would be able to speak the words of God so that the hearts of people would respond to these words.

The Holy Spirit never dissipates and will never run dry in the Church. Incorrect are those who think that only in the early years of the Church the Holy Spirit was poured out abundantly, and think that today His grace is dried up and is only poured out in small portions to certain people. The grace of the Holy Spirit is accessible to all of us and is poured out on each of us. When we turn to God during the Divine Liturgy with the words: “O Lord, who didst send down Thy Most Holy Spirit upon Thine apostles at the third hour: Take Him not from us, O Good One, but renew Him in us who pray to Thee”, — we know that at that moment the Lord in actual fact is sending the Holy Spirit to us. He renews our human nature, and when we pray: “Send down Thy Holy Spirit upon us and upon these Gifts here offered”, we know that the Holy Spirit descends upon the Holy Gifts (on the bread and wine which are on the altar table), and descends upon us as well. Bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, and we sinful earthy people become new people, renewed in the image and likeness of God. Through receiving Holy Communion, when the Lord touches our hearts, when He enters our body, our blood, our thoughts, our feelings, and unites with our entire being, our mystical union with God takes place, and we are mystically filled with the Holy Spirit.

On the day of Pentecost we say the prayer which we did not read during the Paschal period, but which we will now say during the entire year: “O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, Who art everywhere and fillest all things, Treasury of Blessings, and Giver of life: Come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.” The Holy Spirit “is everywhere present and fillest all things,” i.e., He is present everywhere and in all places, regardless of whether or not we call on Him, regardless of whether or not we ask

that He comes to us. The Holy Spirit always and everywhere abides in this world; He acts in nature when every spring seemingly dead trees begin to bloom, when the fragrance spreads over the whole earth, and when the Lord, as in previous years, sends His mercy and grace to our sinful earth, renewing her and giving her new life. She is filled with the Divine Spirit so that every year the grass, flora, plants and wonderful aromatic flowers may grow and bloom again.

What is needed in order for the Holy Spirit to come and abide in us? You see, He is right near us and with us all the time. All that is needed is for us to open our hearts to Him in order to meet Him, that our hearts would not be hardened; that we would live our lives in congruence with the Evangelical ideal, with which we have been sealed by Christ, that we would always be ready for the Holy Spirit to come and abide in us. If it seems that the Holy Spirit is not near us, if we should fall into misfortune, as often happens, times of despondency, laziness, weakness or despair, — let us not throw up our arms and be despondent. We must understand that the reason for this does not lie with God: God never leaves us and goes far away from us, the Holy Spirit never abandons us and leaves us. He is always here, near us and with us. The reason for this can only lie with us: either because of our sinfulness or human weakness.

Let us not allow our human passions, weaknesses or callousness create an impediment for the Holy Spirit, Who desires to come and abide in us, and Who wants each of us to transform ourselves from fishermen into apostles, and change from weak human beings into people who in word and deed, and by how we live our lives, proclaim the perfection of God.

This sermon was given by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the Church of the Icon of the Mother of God “Joy of All Who Sorrow” in Moscow on June 12, 2011.