

GENERAL & SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION

Regarding the Temple: In our tradition, the church temple is a house of prayer. Upon entering it, please refrain from unnecessary conversation before, during and after church services, most especially during the Divine Liturgy. Prior to divine services, or during coffee hour in the Church Hall is the appropriate place to exchange personal greetings and converse with one another. May God bless your reverence and piety!

Sick/Emergency Calls/Institutional Visitations: are answered as requests are received. All visitations are by request. Call to schedule an appointment.

Confessions: Are heard one half-hour before every service at Holy Assumption, and once a month at Ss. Peter & Paul. Special arrangements by necessity, and thereby, appointment only.

Sacraments of Illumination: In the case of infants, Baptism, Chrismation, & Eucharist are administered on ordinary Sundays of the church year, preferably in the context of Divine Liturgy. At least one sponsor must be of the Orthodox Faith and in good sacramental standing. The newly baptized must have one name that is Biblical or Christian in its origin.

What is Church Membership? By regulation, active membership in the church consists not merely in the payment of a set sum, or by fulfilling a *minimum* sacramental obligation, but rather in participation in the life of the church (commensurate with your physical ability). This includes entering into the spirit of the faith through regular and frequent attendance, participation in the divine mysteries, sustained financial support (at a percentage that reflects your ability), and adherence to the parish, diocesan, and national church statutes.

Receiving Communion: while all are welcome to pray with us, we politely offer a reminder that the Orthodox Church maintains a closed communion. All are welcome to Antidoron bread following the Divine Liturgy, but only prepared Orthodox Christians may receive the Eucharist. Orthodox Christians do not commune in non-Orthodox churches, and the non-Orthodox are not communed in an Orthodox Church. Thank you!

Lapsed Members: You are always welcome home, and we need you! Generally speaking, sincere Confession, Communion, and regular attendance are all that is required to begin parish life anew! See Fr. Elijah for specific details.

New Members/Adult Chrismation: new members are always welcome. In the case of interested adults seeking Chrismation, a period of catechesis prescribed by the pastor is necessary before the administration of Holy Mysteries. An Orthodox sponsor is required.

Weddings: A minimum six-month notice is requested. Either Bride or Bride-groom must be an Orthodox Christian, and a parishioner in good standing. Dispensations may be required for inter-faith marriages (the marriage of an Orthodox & any non-Orthodox person). Banns of matrimony published 3 weeks before ceremony. No Weddings performed during fasting seasons!!!

Burial in Church Cemetery: Burial in consecrated ground is reserved for the Orthodox and their spouses/children. Charity burials, or odd circumstances are at the rector's discretion. It is strongly encouraged to hold viewings and visitation of the reposed in the church.

Our Stewardship of the Church: "Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art the good steward, who redeemed Adam and Eve of their failed stewardship by offering Thyself for the life of the world. Thou didst teach us in the feeding of the multitudes that whatever we give to God is returned to us multiplied. Thou didst praise those good and faithful servants in the parable of the talents who returned to the Master their gifts. So help us to learn the joy of stewardship, remembering that everything we have comes from Thee and belongs to Thee. We know, Lord, that we often live in fear of the future and insecurity. Help us to remember the lilies of the field and so to trust in Thy providence. Grant to us a cheerful and generous spirit. Enkindle in the hearts of all Thy people a zealous love for Thee. For Thou art the Good Steward, and to Thee we give thanks, praise and glory, together with Thy Father who is from everlasting and Thine all holy good and life-giving Spirit now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Prayer When Lighting A Candle: "Set our hearts on fire with love for Thee, O Christ our God, so that in this flame we may love Thee with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul and with all our strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, so that by keeping Thy commandments we may glorify Thee, the giver of all good gifts. Amen."

HOLY ASSUMPTION ORTHODOX CHURCH

629 Sunshine Avenue • Central City, Pa. 15926

SS. PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

Tipple Road • Goodtown, Pa. 15530



Very Rev. Archpriest Elijah J. Bremer, Rector
412 Short Cut Road • Alum Bank, Pa 15521
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**Descent of the Holy Spirit/Trinity Sunday/Pentecost
8 June 2025**

"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."
(John 8: 12)

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE: 8 - 15 JUNE 2025

**Sunday
8 June
Tone 7**
*Sunday of the Holy Spirit
(Trinity Sunday/Pentecost)*
Epistle: Acts 2:1-11
Gospel: John 7:37-52; 8:12

~ The week following Pentecost is a week of privilege during which all foods are permitted! ~

**Sunday
15 June
Tone 8**
*1st Sunday Post-Pentecost
Sunday of All Saints*
Epistle: Hebrews 11:33-12:2
Gospel: Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38; 19:27-30

**Monday
16 June**
Apostles (Peter & Paul) Fast (Petrivka) Begins!

~**Important Considerations**~

All persons are present at their own risk. Please refrain from attending if you are currently sick, or if you were exposed to a contagious disease. Also understand that if you do not attend Church for more than three weeks without just cause, according to canon law you must go to confession prior to receiving Holy Communion.

ARCHDIOCESAN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Parish financial officers are reminded that June 30th is the deadline to successfully submit the completed ASSESSMENT FORM for 2026 to receive the 5% “discount.” I’ve attached the info again here - info that was originally mailed to each parish office on March 1, 2025, and subsequently sent again via email on March 19. Similarly, parishes that have not as yet completed/returned the 2025 PARISH INFORMATION FORM must do so ASAP. Especially critical is the completion of the section dealing with adherence to the OCA/Archdiocese of PGH and W PA sexual abuse prevention policy. Question about this info form? Please contact me at this email: chancery@ocadwpa.org.

Presentation by Dr. David Ford on Human Sexuality on Tuesday, June 24: "Created Male and Female: The Wisdom of St. John Chrysostom on Human Sexuality" is the topic for a presentation by Dr. David Ford from St. Tikhon’s Seminary. You are warmly invited to hear him on Tuesday, June 24 at 7:00 p.m. at St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Canonsburg, PA, following vespers, which will be at 6:00 p.m.

Hayley Horner Registered Nurse, Network of Life on Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at 7:45 pm, St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral will be a guest speaker discussing “The Journey of the Client.” Refreshments will be provided.

The Orpheus Singers and Grantham Consort, under the directions of Jacob Mandell and Joy Meade, are proud to be presenting Sergei Rachmaninoff’s "All-Night Vigil", Op. 37, on Saturday, June 14th @ 7:00pm in State College Presbyterian Church. This historic collaboration brings together Orthodox and non-Orthodox from central Pennsylvania and across the state to perform a most beloved setting of the hymns of the Vespers and Matins. Tickets will be \$12 and can be purchased ahead of time at <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/rachmaninoffs-all-night-vigil-4288293>. Tickets will be available at the door.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sincere Condolences: the parishes of Holy Assumption & Ss. Peter & Paul offer heartfelt condolences to Michelle Kephart & family on the repose of her father, Gary. He reposed on Thursday following a short hospital stay. Memory Eternal!

It Just Wouldn’t be Summer, Unless: with the summer upon us, it is also garage/yard sale season, and graduation season. We removed (and disposed of) the first yard sale sign on church property this week. As a polite community reminder, there is a proper way to do things. Non-profit, community, and religious organizations are welcome to post their events, after receiving approval from Fr. Elijah, and provided their causes align with Orthodox moral expectations. No political groups or private individuals may advertise on church property for any reason. Parishioners are encouraged to remove yard sale signs or graduation announcements as soon as they see them. If in doubt, call Fr. Elijah and ask. He might make good on his threat to post lawn signs with our service times on the yards of people who tried to advertise on church property!

Prayers for St. Catherine’s Monastery, Sinai (Egypt): by order of the Egyptian Supreme Court, the Egyptian government wants to close St. Catherine’s Monastery, confiscate its property, and evict its monks. According to orthodoxia.info, the oldest functioning Christian monastery in the world, St. Catherine’s Monastery in Sinai, along with all its properties in Egypt, is being transferred to the Egyptian state. Nearly fifteen centuries after its founding by Byzantine Emperor Justinian, and having survived remarkable historical challenges, the world-renowned and respected St. Catherine’s Monastery is on the verge of being converted into a museum. Please pray for the monastic community!

Altar & Volunteer Society Meeting: the society would like to meet on 6/22 immediately following Liturgy. All are welcome!

Cemetery Blessing: in the event of prohibitive rain, the cemetery will be blessed next weekend. At the printing of this bulletin, we are still scheduled to bless Holy Assumption Cemetery today. Thank you for your cooperation and flexibility!

Fr. Elijah’s Schedule: this is a polite reminder that Fr. Elijah’s doctoral residency begins on 6/9 and ends on 6/20. Father and family also have vacation plans for the 23-27 June. This will not affect Sunday Liturgy, but it will mean that Father is away from the parish during that week. Emergency contacts are published below. Thank you!

- Fr. George Johnson, St. John’s, Conemaugh:
(814) 539-8613
- Fr. Dragan Vukovic, St. Nicholas, Johnstown:
(814) 244-4063
- Fr. Donald Shadid, St. Mary’s, Johnstown:
(814)-255-2148



WHY DO WE DECORATE CHURCHES WITH GRASS, FLOWERS AND TREE BRANCHES ON PENTECOST?

By: Archpriest Boris Stark



“It symbolizes the soul, which blossoms and turns green after its winter sleep because the grace of God has touched it.”

Since ancient times, there is a pious tradition to decorate churches on the day of Pentecost with greenery – leaves, flowers, birch branches and so on. What is the origin of this tradition? Many people ask this question. I think there are two reasons for it: the first reason is church-historical, while the second one is symbolic.

From the historical viewpoint, I believe, these branches remind us about the Mamre oak-wood: there was the oak under which the Lord, the Holy Trinity, appeared to Abraham in the shape of three angels. We can see this in the icons that are lying on the analogion on this feast day.

Besides, the day of the Jewish Old Testament Pentecost, on which the Holy Spirit descended to the apostles, was the day of commemoration of the 50th day after the exodus out of Egypt. On the 50th day they came to Mount Sinai, where the Lord gave Moses the tablets with the Ten Commandments, which serve us as the guideline in our life until now. It was the time of spring, and the whole mountain was covers with blooming flowers and trees. So, maybe this is why in the ancient Church there was a tradition to decorate homes and churches with greenery – people imagined as if they were on Mount Sinai with Moses again.

There is no doubt that when the disciples gathered on the day of Pentecost, their chamber was also covered with greenery. In remembrance of this, we decorate our churches today and hold flowers in our hands.

However, there is also a symbolical meaning. It symbolizes the soul, which blossoms and turns green after its winter sleep because the grace of God has touched it. In winter, there were only bald branches, but the spring came and turned them green, flowers and leaves appeared. There was winter in our heart, but then the grace of the Holy Spirit touched us, and our heart became alive.

A branch is fresh only when it grows on the tree. If it is cut from the tree, it will dry out in several days. The same concerns our soul: until it holds on to the stem, to the vine to which it is grafted, it remains alive and blossoms. Should it separate from this vine, it will dry out, too. The Lord told us: *“I am the vine, you are the branches” (John 15:5).*

If the soul separates from its Vine, it begin to dry out just like a branch. This is why let us strive to be with God. Let us always try to be with our Vine, which fills our hearts with the life-giving juice, blessing rays of the Divine light, and the grace of the Holy Spirit. On this feast day we should pray to God even more sincerely and ask Him that He does not abandon us and does not deprive us of this grace that was given to us at the moment of our baptism, that we receive thorough the sacraments of the Holy Church and from which we often distance ourselves because of our sins.

“Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save him, the Lord shall raise him up” – James, 5: 14-15

Abp. Nathaniel Mat. Sasha	Abp. Melchisedek Mat. Laryssa	Abp. Michael Fr. Jim	Fr. Michael Mat. Sarah	Mat. Valeria	
Allison	Elaine	Charles	Katie	Mike	Pat
Sandi	Stephanie	Sophie	Nancy	Chrystyna	Damian
Noah	Emma	Henry	Natalia	Peter	Ashley
Mary-Evelyn	Bryan	Gregory	Debbie	Nancy	Mike
Donna	Kevin	Nick	Anne	Nick	Agnes
Robert	Mary Etta	Cory	Sharon	Kara	Michelle M.
Helen	Sandy	Kenneth	Scott	Jon	Rhonda
Bill	Sam	Betty	Jerry	Allan	Julie
Charles	Dakota	Kathy	Sue	Debbie	Ruth
Mary-Elizabeth	Darcel	Jennifer	Mary	Karis	Jeremiah
Lisa	Thelma	Shane	Mary Ann	Peter	Lawrence
Jonathan	Tammy	Kathie	Chris	Larry	Matthew
Betty Lou	Renée	Alexandra	Roxanne	Alexis	Gordon
Izzy	James	Curtis	Lita	Suzanne	Shirley-Ruth
George	Jean	Dale	Allen	Steven	Jim
Mitch	Johnnie	Charles	Nancy	Annette	Darren
Johnnie-Mac	David	Agnes	Barbara	Katherine	Joseph
Jan	Larry	Daniel	Monica	Dwain	Michael
Magdalena	Dorothy	Francesca	Kara	Andrew	Tim
Taissia	Daniel	Barbara	Mary Ann	Dave	Ashley
James	Eric	Mary-Louise	Barbara	Denise	Rachelle
Andy	Andrea	Amanda	John, Jr.	Mike	Jean
Ann	Mark	Samantha	Susan	Mary	Maria
Robert	Tim	Don	Mary Ann	Judith	Roxanne
Phyllis	George	Mary	Heidi	Dee Ann	Christine
Jeanne	Tim	Samantha	Bernie	Gene	Kim
Eleanor	John	Dave	Chuck	Anna-Sophie	Betty
Ray	Helen	Maryann	Julia	Jim	Antoinette
Shirley	Greg	Megan	Bob	Ann-Marie	Marie
Walt	Edward	Shaun	Hayes	Sue Y.	Donna
Betty	Robert	Jennifer	Ron	Linda	Gloria
Judy	Richie	Ray	McKenzie	Brady	Betty
Richard	Josephine	Shirley	Sandy	Karl	Gail
Janet	Tammy	Donna	John S.	Paige	Michelle B.
Pastor Dave	Keith	Johannes	Marcella	Linda	Gladys
Tammy	Jodi	Nancy K.	Rod	Larry	Ansley
Marsha	George	Louise	Jessica	Matthew	James
Mike	Hannah	Mike	Lubomyr	Tom	Lilly
Emerson	Cairo	Toni	Gary	Cindy	

Do you have prayer intentions? Remember you may add or remove intentions at any time. You do not have to be members of our parish, or even Orthodox to be placed on the list!



PENTECOST: THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
From: The Orthodox Faith, Volume II, “Worship”

In the Old Testament Pentecost was the feast which occurred fifty days after Passover. As the Passover feast celebrated the exodus of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt, so Pentecost celebrated God’s gift of the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai.

In the new covenant of the Messiah, the Passover event takes on its new meaning as the celebration of Christ’s death and resurrection, the “exodus” of men from this sinful world to the Kingdom of God. And in the New Testament as well, the Pentecostal feast is fulfilled and made new by the coming of the “new law,” the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Christ.

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 as resting upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit . . . (Acts 2.1–4).

The Holy Spirit that Christ had promised to his disciples came on the day of Pentecost (Jn 14.26, 15.26; Lk 24.49; Acts 1.5). The apostles received “the power from on high,” and they began to preach and bear witness to Jesus as the risen Christ, the King and the Lord. This moment has traditionally been called the birthday of the Church.

In the liturgical services of the feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit is celebrated together with the full revelation of the divine Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The fullness of the Godhead is manifested with the Spirit’s coming to man, and the Church hymns celebrate this manifestation as the final act of God’s self-disclosure and self-donation to the world of His creation. For this reason Pentecost Sunday is also called Trinity Day in the Orthodox tradition. Often on this day the icon of the Holy Trinity—particularly that of the three angelic figures who appeared to Abraham, the forefather of the Christian faith—is placed in the center of the church. This icon is used with the traditional pentecostal icon which shows the tongues of fire hovering over Mary and the Twelve Apostles, the original prototype of the Church, who are themselves sitting in unity surrounding a symbolic image of “cosmos,” the world.

On Pentecost we have the final fulfillment of the mission of Jesus Christ and the first beginning of the messianic age of the Kingdom of God mystically present in this world in the Church of the Messiah. For this reason the fiftieth day stands as the beginning of the era which is beyond the limitations of this world, fifty being that number which stands for eternal and heavenly fulfillment in Jewish and Christian mystical piety: seven times seven, plus one.

Thus, Pentecost is called an apocalyptic day, which means the day of final revelation. It is also called an eschatological day, which means the day of the final and perfect end (in Greek eschaton means the end). For when the Messiah comes and the Lord’s Day is at hand, the “last days” are inaugurated in which “God declares: . . . I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.”; This is the ancient prophecy to which the Apostle Peter refers in the first sermon of the Christian Church which was preached on the first Sunday of Pentecost (Acts 2: 1 7; Joel 2: 28–32).

Once again it must be noted that the feast of Pentecost is not simply the celebration of an event which took place centuries ago. It is the celebration of what must happen and does happen to us in the Church today. We all have died and risen with the Messiah-King, and we all have received his Most Holy Spirit. We are the “temples of the Holy Spirit.” God’s Spirit dwells in us (Rom 8; 1 Cor 2–3, 12; 2 Cor 3; Gal 5; Eph 2–3). We, by our own membership in the Church, have received “the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit” in the sacrament of chrismation. Pentecost has happened to us.



The Divine Liturgy of Pentecost recalls our baptism into Christ with the verse from Galatians again replacing the Thrice-Holy Hymn. Special verses from the psalms also replace the usual antiphonal psalms of the liturgy. The epistle and gospel readings tell of the Spirit’s coming to men. The kontakion sings of the reversal of Babel as God unites the nations into the unity of his Spirit. The troparion proclaims the gathering of the whole universe into God’s net through the work of the inspired apostles. The hymns “O Heavenly King” and “We have seen the True Light” are sung for the first time since Easter, calling the Holy Spirit to “come and abide in us,” and proclaiming that “we have received the heavenly Spirit.” The church building is decorated with flowers and the green leaves of the summer to show that God’s divine Breath comes to renew all creation as the “life-creating Spirit.” In Hebrew the word for Spirit, breath and wind is the same word, ruah.

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit: through them Thou didst draw the world into Thy net. O Lover of Man, Glory to Thee (Troparion).

When the Most High came down and confused the tongues, he divided the nations. But when he distributed the tongues of fire, he called all to unity. Therefore, with one voice, we glorify the All-Holy Spirit! (Kontakion).

The Great Vespers of Pentecost evening features three long prayers at which the faithful kneel for the first time since Easter. The Monday after Pentecost is the feast of the Holy Spirit in the Orthodox Church, and the Sunday after Pentecost is the feast of All Saints. This is the logical liturgical sequence since the coming of the Holy Spirit is fulfilled in men by their becoming saints, and this is the very purpose of the creation and salvation of the world. “Thus says the Lord: Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I your God am holy” (Lev 11.44–45, 1 Pet 1.15–16).