

**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  
814-977-7397 • otets.ilya@yahoo.com

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Post-Pentecost**

**13 July 2025**

*“What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God?  
Have You come here to torment us before the time?”*

**(Matthew 8: 29)**

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE: 13 – 20 JULY 2025

**Sunday  
13 July  
Tone 4**      **5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Post-Pentecost**      **8:40 am**, Hours of Prayer (CC)  
Epistle: Romans 10: 1-10      **9:00 am**, Divine Liturgy (CC)  
Gospel: Matthew 8:28-9:1

**Sunday  
20 July  
Tone 5**      **6<sup>th</sup> Sunday Post-Pentecost**      **8:40 am**, Hours (CC)  
Epistle: Romans 12: 6-14      **9:00 am**, Divine Liturgy (CC)  
Gospel: Matthew 9: 1-8

~**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.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Father, you’ve used the term **Nous** (rhymes with “juice”) many times.  
I’ve never heard this before, and I don’t know what that means. Could you please tell me?

The answer to this question comes from Eugenia Scarvelis Constantinou, Ph.D., and is found in her book, **Thinking Orthodox: Understanding and Acquiring the Orthodox Mind.**

How does one acquire an Orthodox phronema [mindset], and what does it mean to have it? It is to have the “mind of Christ,” which is also the mind of the Church, since the Church is the Body of Christ. This means that one is essentially living a spiritual life. The opposite of a spiritual life is a life of the flesh, of the world, a secular life, in which one adopts the manner of thought of “the world.” Saint Paul encouraged Christians to have “the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2: 16), for which he used the Greek word *nous* [voûς].

In Orthodox theology, nous refers not to the rational operation of the mind but to that part of the soul that allows the human person to know God, “the purest part of the soul, the eye of the soul.”

True knowledge of God is gained through purification of the intellect (nous), and this comes about only with prayer. A purified intellect grows in its knowledge of God through spiritual experience.

Addendum to Dr. Constantinou: put in other words, the nous is the Orthodox version of “knowing better.” Individuals learn this skill through practice, so it is very reasonable (very Orthodox) to say that those who do not practice their faith never truly understand how to be an Orthodox Christian. Our theology teaches us that God reveals himself to the human heart. The heart must first learn how to receive him, then, the whole person behaves in a way that reflects God with us. As usual, it’s not enough just to “know better,” but be willing to “do better.” Think about the following verses from St. Matthew: “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them” (7: 18-20). A well formed nous knows how to bring forth good fruits!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Feast of Ss. Peter & Paul:** yesterday, we celebrated Liturgy for the feast of Ss. Peter & Paul at Holy Assumption Orthodox Church. This was a major feast day, with its own fasting period preceding it. Seven people (excluding the clergy family) were in attendance. Thank you to those in attendance!

**Resources Available:** lately, there is renewed interest in Orthodox resources dealing with death and dying. There is a link on our website to the OCA page dealing with this issue, as well as a PDF of a booklet “Additional Resources - In Preparation for Dying, Death, and Burial.” Many years ago, we copied and distributed this pamphlet to help provide a resource for non-Orthodox children and grandchildren planning funerals for Orthodox Christians. With a number of new people in our churches, we are making this resource available on our website. For other material and prayers, please visit:  
<https://www.oca.org/parish-ministry/familylife/resources-in-preparation-for-dying-death-and-burial-and-prayers-in-time-of->

**From the Archdiocese:** We have received word of the repose in the Lord yesterday of +Archpriest Paul Kucynda. Fr. Paul was a priestly vocation of the Holy Trinity Church, Charleroi, and a priest of the New York-New Jersey OCA Diocese, retiring after serving many years of faithful service in that diocese as well as the OCA national level. Please keep the newly departed +Archpriest Paul in prayer. Memory Eternal!

**More From the Archdiocese:** The Saint Constantine School is raising money over the summer through a Steelers ticket raffle. Participants can win 2 regular season tickets to 8 home games (16 tickets total). **Pair of 2025-2026 Regular Season Tickets (8 Regular Season Home Games)** Section 101 | Row F | Seats 1-2; **1 Chance for \$100, 3 Chances for \$250;** Live drawing at the school on August 23rd! 2nd and 3rd Place Prizes Available! To Be Announced Soon! All proceeds go directly to the school's operational budget, which includes salaries for the new teachers we must hire to support our growing student body.

**Just utilize the following link to purchase your raffle tickets:**  
[https://host.nxt.blackbaud.com/registration-form/?formId=e7163b4c-2957-4d4d-bf65-ef24486873a7&envId=p-E6s1zn-4mE2IKhR\\_ZPRGFw&zona=usa&bbeml=tp-E6s1zn-4mE2IKhR\\_ZPRGFw.jQT9SxHH9gUSuoGJJuZ5GXw.rgSlSQo7nLkCjrL\\_yVi43BQ.IWPh99SY4wUKLOWFhJVsgbA](https://host.nxt.blackbaud.com/registration-form/?formId=e7163b4c-2957-4d4d-bf65-ef24486873a7&envId=p-E6s1zn-4mE2IKhR_ZPRGFw&zona=usa&bbeml=tp-E6s1zn-4mE2IKhR_ZPRGFw.jQT9SxHH9gUSuoGJJuZ5GXw.rgSlSQo7nLkCjrL_yVi43BQ.IWPh99SY4wUKLOWFhJVsgbA)





ASKING GOD TO LEAVE US ALONE  
by: Archpriest Alexander Men

We often read in the Gospel about how different people turned to the Lord Jesus with a request, question, demand, or even a rebuke or reproach. Here is the unfortunate father of the sick child, saying with tears in his voice, with both hope and doubt: “I believe, Lord. Help my unbelief!” Here is the Roman centurion who is asking the Lord to heal his servant; this officer has no doubts. He says: “Just as I give orders to my soldiers, so do You have the authority to give the order and the sickness will leave my beloved servant.” Another approaches Him and asks: “What do I need to do to attain eternal life?” A third comes to thank the Lord for a healing He had performed. When reading the Holy Gospel, each one of us can easily recognize himself in one of these people, since we continue to turn to the Lord in just the same way.

It is no accident that today we heard these words of the Apostle: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” The same! It is as if He were here with us, as if He were standing right here. We can turn to Him, each with his own needs, his own thoughts, his own suffering of heart, and his own joy and gratitude. Each such movement of soul is a kind of prayer addressed to the Lord. But in today’s Gospel reading we heard an appeal that is extraordinary, strange, and seemingly inexplicable: the Gadarenes ask Him to go away from them, to leave, to depart from their coasts. Why did they ask Him to leave? Let us recall what happened. A violent wind arose over the sea, carrying the boat in which the Lord and His disciples were sailing to the barren western shore inhabited by the pagan Gadarenes. As soon as the Lord stepped onto the shore, two half-naked men – ragged, frightful, wild, and feared by all in the region – ran out to meet Him. They lived in desert caves where the dead were laid; people avoided these places out of fear of these possessed men. People tried to bind them, but they tore through all ropes and chains.

These two possessed and afflicted men rushed out to meet Christ, frantically crying out: “Leave us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come here to torment us before the time?” Before the time... It seems that the dark forces of paganism knew that they would be defeated; it is as if they were occupying these people and saying to the Lord: “You have come before the time to torment and destroy us.” The Lord cured these two demoniacs. But the swineherds who grazed their swine on the sea bank saw everything and went running into the city to tell the people. Then, as the Evangelist relates, the whole city poured out to see the miracle. And what did they see? They saw the sick, mad, afflicted men sitting calmly at the Teacher’s feet. And what did the people do? Instead of praising God or thanking the miraculous Healer, they asked Him to leave their region. They were frightened and did not want to listen to His words; this miracle shocked and terrified them.

So it is with us: for souls without faith, a miracle is not strengthening; on the contrary, it is frightening and destructive. One *still* does not want to know, one *still* turns away: “Get away from us! Don’t bother us! Don’t bother our souls and dreams!” The ancient pagan Gadarenes were not alone in thinking and feeling this way, however. Many of us do the same, because we do not want to respond when the Lord knocks at our hearts. We brush it aside, thinking something to the effect of “leave us alone.” As Blessed Augustine himself relates, before his conversion to God he prayed: “Lord, save me and deliver me from sin – only not now. For now let me stay like this.” Many of us reason the same way. We do not want the Lord to bother us. Even when we enter the Church and do everything required of us, we do not want to lift a finger to live a truly Christian life or to perform deeds that correspond to Christ’s will. It is easier for us to push it away from us, to brush it aside, to turn our back on it. We do not explicitly say: “Leave us alone,” but we act as if we wanted to get rid of this power, this will of the Lord, that seems to press upon us. But in fact the Lord does not push or lay a heavy burden on anyone. He simply says: “Here is the path of life: follow this path and you will find happiness greater than any on earth.” But we – through our stagnation, coldness, negligence, and laziness of soul – are often incapable of hearing this voice and of making use of the path to the Heavenly Kingdom that has been shown to us.

You see, the words of people who turned to the Lord can teach us a great deal: some encourage faith in us: “Lord, help my unbelief!”; others teach us how to give thanks; some will help us question the Lord about the mysteries of life and the right way; and finally, words like those of the Gadarenes will warn us not to miss the right moment, our time, when the Lord sends His gift to us, but rather to accept it wholeheartedly and respond to it with our entire lives.

***“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!***

## THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF THE FEAST OF SS. PETER & PAUL

*By: Archpriest Artemy Vladimirov  
Translation by Nun Cornelia (Rees)*

Dear friends, behind us is the Apostle’s fast, which by God’s mercy was observed only by those Local Orthodox Churches that are true to the Julian calendar as to the sun. And we truly delight in this great time, recalling the very reason why in deep antiquity this fast was introduced at the threshold of the feast of the chief apostles Peter and Paul. And why was this fast established?

In the Acts of the Apostles we discover that twelve chosen disciples of the Savior were abiding in prayer and fasting before ordaining their co-laborers, whom the Holy Spirit was to set apart for travelling and spreading the Gospel. Among the great apostle’s comrades at arms were Sts. Barnabas, Silas, and Mark—all were disciples of the chief apostle Paul. It follows that the fast is very helpful to us, because by repressing the body and limiting its needs, giving freedom to the spirit, we acquire the ability to pray attentively, fervently, and to express our thoughts in words that are simple, clear, and beautiful—which we need in order to serve our neighbor in a spirit of love and truth.

So, now the lesser summer fast is over, and we gaze with our spiritual eyes upon two brothers in Christ—Sts. Peter and Paul, who according to tradition died in the sixtieth year after the birth of Christ in the “Eternal City”, Rome, having received a martyr’s death. They still are a kind of “sentinel of love”, whose prayers uphold the whole world, so that in accordance with the ancient Psalter verse, *Their sound has gone forth unto all the world*, the voice of Sts. Peter Paul are heard *unto the ends of the earth* (Ps. 18:5).

Let us recall Peter, who surpassed all the other apostles in age and life experience, and stood out for his particular fervency and impetuosity. When the disciples were fishing and a Stranger appeared on the shore, the virgin John the Theologian recognized Him as the Lord, and Peter without thinking twice threw himself overboard so that he could reach the shore faster and fall at the feet of His beloved Teacher, Whom he had denied out of faintheartedness but Who restores him and rewards him with ardent tears over his own unworthiness. And may God grant that we too would adopt from the Apostle Peter this living and zealous spirit, this fervency for repentance, in acts of mercy. For today’s Christians are often lukewarm, lethargic, relaxed—they lack that spiritual gusto, that joy in Christ, which can be heard in the words of Simon Peter, standing out from the other apostles. At the Savior’s question, “Who do you think that I am?” Peter answered on behalf of all the others, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” This was Peter’s confession, which made him the rock—strong, like a rock—and thanks to this Peter received, as did the other disciples, the grace-filled keys of the priesthood; this confession lives in the Church, on our lips and in our hearts every time we secretly turn our souls to the Savior and call upon His most holy name, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God...” and then add the prayer of the publican: “Be merciful to me, a sinner!” “Have mercy on me a sinner!

Accordingly, if any of us feels this captivity to sloth, lethargy of movement, the lack of desire to bridle our own bodies as we should, then it would be good if the spark—“O burn, burn brightly, be not extinguished!”—of the grace of the Holy Spirit might always vitalize our initiatives, illumine our thoughts, and work together with our good undertakings. We must hide Peter’s confession in our hearts; let it shine there like a pearl, and we, drawn by the rays of this spiritual light, will call upon the Savior at all times and in every place: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” And this prayer will become for us either a staff, or a vessel of cold water, or heavenly bread, which strengthens us spiritually and physically. For one who loves God this prayer is air, light, rest, clothing, shield, and sword, of which St. Peter himself convinces us, since he died as a martyr for the Lord, counting it happiness to spill his blood for Him, and to this day embraces the whole world with his prayers.

But we will not forget the chief apostle Paul. You recall this disciple of Christ, who was converted into a follower of Jesus not by a man, nor by Scripture, but by Divine revelation when on the road to Damascus he fell down, blinded by divine light, and learned that it was difficult for him, Saul to kick against the pricks, that he was very guilty before Jesus, Whom he persecuted by tormenting the primitive Church, torturing its brothers and sisters, subjugating the Lord’s followers to torments. And he was baptized and became strong, having received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

He was the inheritor of exclusive spiritual gifts, taken up to the third heaven, knew foreign languages, possessed the gift of prophecy and elucidating prophecies, a builder of the Church, and a knower of fallen human hearts. However, Paul did not exalt himself as we do; he did not suffer from self-assuredness, a treacherous feeling of his own exclusiveness—but always and everywhere humbled himself before the Lord in dust and ashes and left us as an inheritance this confession, which God forbid we should forget for even a half day: *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief* (1 Tim. 1:15). This is the moral confession of the apostle Paul, which makes the little great, the weak strong, the coward brave, the impure chaste, the depressive and sorrowful filled with higher life and joyful energy.

Why is it so important for the apostles to confess that they are the least among all other people? Why is it so important to put yourself in the last place, and not push yourself forward? Why does humility have such beneficial consequences for the immortal human soul? Only because God resists prideful people, people who exalt themselves, who are inclined to judge, who have contempt for others. Self-infatuated narcissists who think very highly of themselves are continually falling into the pit that they dig for themselves by their critical judgment of other people. And on the contrary, grace works together with those disciples of Christ who are humble and modest, who know how not to think highly of themselves, who defer to those stronger and superior to them in all respects.

The Apostle Paul teaches us that we Christians should not think of ourselves as distinguished from our brothers and sisters. He had none of that rotten individualism and egoism, as we would say today. In attentively reading and re-reading the epistles of the Apostle Paul—and we have fourteen whole epistles—you will find wondrous revelations of our oneness, our unity with Christ and in Christ. Inasmuch as a person confesses an egotistic philosophy, considering himself a lonely sufferer or an unrecognized, unaccepted genius in this world, he sets himself contrary to his neighbor—and such a person is condemned to suffering. But just as soon as we feel that we are members of one family, just as soon as we start thinking of ourselves as a leaf attached to the same branch and thus making up part of the tree’s crown—I mean the Mother Church, the vineyard of Christ, into which we have been grafted through the Sacrament of Baptism—as soon as the feeling of real fraternity and unity in the Lord awakens in us, our life, dear friends, begins to change for the better; and witness to this is the apostle Paul. He did not live for his own gain, there was no lucre in him, no low forms, but he beheld all of mankind in the person of God’s chosen ones—those who desired to received Baptism and enter the bosom of the Mother Church. He beheld them as a happy family in which everything should be built upon the foundation of mutual love and brotherhood. This is why the apostle Paul, as if addressing himself to the proud twenty-first century, teaches us not to exalt ourselves above our neighbor but to follow after the humble, not think highly of ourselves, but to confess ourselves as the worst sinners before the face of the Lord.

And if we unite these two virtues that we are discussing today as applicable to the apostles Peter and Paul—Paul’s humility and Peter’s burning faith in Jesus Christ the God-man, if we add also the modesty and self-reproach of the apostle Paul and Peter’s joyful striving to serve the Lord, to get closer to Him, to hold on to the hem of His garment, as Peter said, *Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life* (Jn. 6:68), then humility, prayer, and love, united in our souls, will make us happy, peaceful, calm, balanced, sober-minded, having sympathy, compassion, and empathy with people who bear Christ in themselves.

The day of the holy apostles Peter and Paul completes, as we recall, the summer Apostle’s fast. May God grant that today, after having been vouchsafed Communion of Christ’s Holy Mysteries, as the apostle Paul teaches us, having tested our own conscience, approaching the common chalice with reverence, we have taken out of the church the grace of the Holy Spirit—the grace that the chief apostles bear even today, the grace that they witness in their writings, the grace that is the true treasure and inheritance of every Orthodox Christian. May it be spread about as living water through us, through our lips and deeds, and give drink to all our relatives and neighbors near and far. And we Orthodox Christians, confessing ourselves as the worst sinners, shall be fragrant, in the words of the apostle, with the fragrances of joy, peace, and love, witnessing by this to the great victory the Lord won by trampling the devil and rising from the dead.