



**"IF ANYONE THIRSTS  
LET HIM COME TO ME AND DRINK!"**

# CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN OF MAY 10, 2009

### Please Remember in Prayer

Carole Boris (newly-departed), Archpriest Michael, Monk Christian, Nadia, Kathy & Bill Parrish, Diane Evanusa, Marie, Thomas, Judith Kocinski, Jane Koshutko, Robert Evanusa, Nicholas & Linda, Nicholas, Anna, Yvonne, Katherine, Michael, Gregory, Todd & Olga Leisure, Nina Gordon, Constantina & Christos. Requests? Let Fr. John know.

**SUNDAY, MAY 10<sup>TH</sup>**  
**SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC**  
8:40a.m. Hours  
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour

**MONDAY, MAY 11<sup>TH</sup>**  
7:00p.m. Reading Group

**TUESDAY, MAY 12<sup>TH</sup>**  
7:00p.m. Blessing of Water

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>**  
**MID-PENTECOST**  
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy

**SATURDAY, MAY 16<sup>TH</sup>**  
6:00p.m. Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, MAY 17<sup>TH</sup>**  
**SAMARITAN WOMAN SUNDAY**  
8:40a.m. Hours  
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour



### On Gratitude to God

*He who has received a gift from God, and is ungrateful for it, is already on the way to losing it.*

*St. Peter of Damascus*

### READER SCHEDULE

**Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**  
Troy Duker  
**Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>**  
Kathy Parrish



### Congratulations!

to all those who are celebrating the civil holiday of "Mother's Day": mothers, grandmothers, mothers-in-law, godmothers. May God grant you many blessed years!

### Reading Group – Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>

The next Reading Group will meet this Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the church. The text is "The Essence of Christianity" by Bishop Alexander (Mileant). Copies are available for pickup at the candle stand. All are encouraged to take the reading and attend the group for discussion.



### The Feast of Mid-Pentecost – May 13<sup>th</sup>

is celebrated this year on Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>. On this feast we bless water, recalling how the Lord cried out to all in the middle of the feast, "If anyone thirsts let him come to me and drink!" The Blessing of Water will be served on Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm, and the Divine Liturgy on Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am. All are encouraged to come and partake of the blessed water.

### About Holy Water

The water that will be blessed on Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm, may be used for drinking (health of soul and body) and for blessing (homes, cars, gardens, etc.). Holy Water is grace-filled and offers health, protection, and sanctification. Often a bottle of Holy Water is kept in the refrigerator for frequent use throughout the year.

### Bible Study – Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>

On Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm, there will be a Bible Study at the church on the events and teachings of the Lord during Midfeast. The relevant New Testament passages are from the Gospel of St. John, chapters 7 and 8. Please read these two chapters in advance, bring your Bible, and, if you like, a friend. All are invited!

### Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery – Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup>

Each year on Memorial Day a Pilgrimage is made to St. Tikhon's Orthodox Monastery in South Canaan, PA. This year, Fr. John and his family will be going. If you are interested in the pilgrimage too, please let Fr. John know by today, Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, at the latest, as there is a possibility for a bus with another Orthodox parish. If you have any questions about the Pilgrimage, please see Fr. John.



## MIDFEAST OF PENTECOST

The time of Pentecost is 50 days. Indeed, the word Pentecost, means "fifty." In the middle of the feast, that is on the 25<sup>th</sup> day, always a Wednesday, we celebrate the feast known as Mid-Pentecost. The feast unites and connects Pascha (the beginning) with Pentecost (the ending).

The symbol of water provides the theme for the feast of Mid-Pentecost. "Whoever is thirsty should come to Me and drink." As the Scriptures says, "Whoever believes in Me, streams of life-giving water will pour out from his heart." Christ said this about the Spirit which those who believe in Him were going to receive (John 7:37-38). This passage is also part of the Gospel reading for the Sunday of Pentecost.

Anticipating the gift of the Holy Spirit by Christ, the Troparion and Kontakion of Mid-Pentecost express the yearning of the believer with these words:

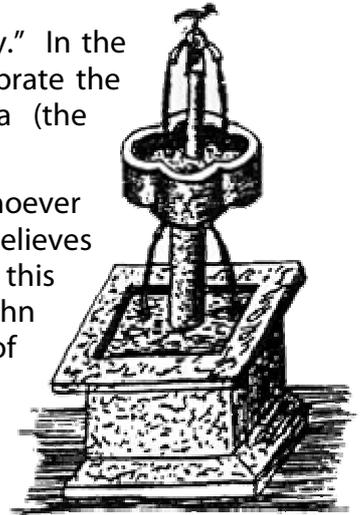
### Troparion

In the middle of the Feast, O Savior, fill my thirsting soul with the waters of godliness, as Thou didst cry to all: If anyone thirsts let him come to Me and drink! O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee!

### Kontakion

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: Come and draw the water of immortality! We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: Grant us Thy bounties, for Thou art the Fountain of our life.

A Blessing of Water takes place on this feast. We may bring vessels to church the next time we come for services so as to bring the newly-blessed waters to our homes.



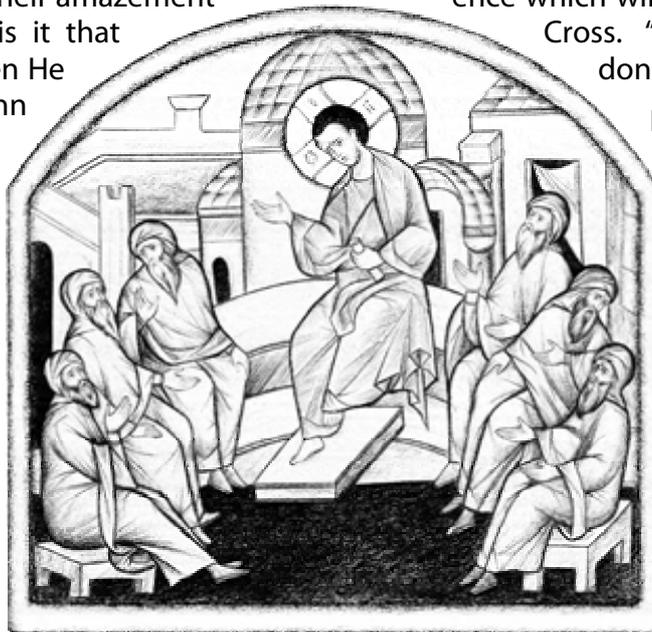
## THE ICON OF MID-PENTECOST

*From the Incarnate God – Volume 2*



The iconography adopted by the Church to illustrate Mid-Pentecost shows us Jesus Christ teaching in the Temple, just as in the Gospel. Christ is sitting at the center of a circle of Jewish scholars and wise men. These express their amazement at His knowledge: "How is it that this Man has learning, when He has never studied?" (John 7:15). In answer to this question, Jesus speaks of His connection to the Father, of His divine origin.

Most often, the icons of Mid-Pentecost represent Christ's first encounter in the Temple with the doctors of the Law – this is the episode described by St. Luke, when Jesus was twelve years old (Luke 2:41-50). "Did you not know that I must be in My Father's house?," He says to His worried parents, thus openly declaring that He is the Son of God and that He must carry out His mission. On



that day, Christ declares His independence from Joseph and Mary, escaping their tutelage. He tells them about His unique link with God the Father. He accepts filial obedience to the end, an obedience which will lead Him all the way to the Cross. "Not My will, but Thy will be done!" (Luke 22:42).

Divine Wisdom is revealed to the doctors of the Law who admire the wisdom of the Child, revealing Jesus as the Child-Emmanuel announced by the Prophets (Isaiah 7:14). The authority of His teaching is already confirmed during His infancy, for "He is before all things," He precedes creation (Colossians 1:17 and Proverbs 8:22-30), "He is begotten, not made, of one essence

with the Father" (the Creed). He is "the Wisdom, the Word, and the Power of God" (From Matins of Pascha).

### 3 QUESTIONS / ANSWERS: FROM OCA.ORG

**1) Could you tell me the main difference between a "mission", a "church", and a "cathedral"? At what point does one progress from a mission to a church, or from a church to a cathedral, or does "growth" really have anything to do with it?**

A "mission" is generally a small group of individuals who have formed a community that at some point would become a parish. Generally a mission is an offshoot of a "mother parish" or a completely new community which is started in an area where there had formerly been no Orthodox presence. It does not have an assigned pastor of its own but has a priest visit with some regularity, sometimes even weekly. It does not own its own facilities. When the mission has grown sufficiently that it can support a priest of its own and can purchase a facility of its own, it is usually elevated to the status of a "parish" or "church."

In the Orthodox Church there are two kinds of cathedrals: 1) a cathedral can be the bishop's church; and 2) a major church in a given region, city, town, or other designated geographic region is often called a cathedral, even if it is not the bishop's church.

**2) The Orthodox Church looks like a highly clerical body with strong hierarchal control. What about the laymen in the Church? Do they have a role?**

First of all, it has to be understood that all members of the Church are full members, each with his own calling and responsibility. The clergy are those members who have a special service within the body, and not over it or apart from it. They are chosen from the people and are ordained within the community with the special sacramental function to lead and to care for the life of the faithful. The clergy, however, are in no way infallible. They also have no "personal" rights or powers. Their entire service is organically carried on in and for the Church. If they fail in their service and prove themselves unworthy, they may be challenged by the lay people and by procedures clearly indicated in church laws they may be removed from their ministry. There are many examples in Orthodox Church history when lay people have preserved the Faith in opposition to unworthy hierarchs.

Also it must be seen that there are conciliar bodies on every level of church life in which lay people participate. The majority of theologians and teachers in the Orthodox Church, as well as church administrators and workers of various sorts, are lay people and not clergymen.

Thus, although the clergy have their own particular function of leadership, and that by sacramental grace and not merely by human choice or selection, the lay people have their functions as well. All, however, are responsible for the integrity of the Church. This traditional Orthodox position has the official confirmation of the famous Encyclical Letter of the Eastern Patriarchs of 1848. In this letter it is clearly expressed that the entire body of the Church is the bearer of the Orthodox Faith and Life, with each member bearing full responsibility before God and men for Christian unity in the truth and love of God. Thus if we can speak about any infallibility at all, or of any power or authority, it must belong to God who lives and acts in all of His People, led by the sacramental hierarchy.

**3) I am writing a research paper on the culture war, the clash between conservatives and liberals, in America. In order to fully write about the Christian perspective behind this issue, I need the OCA position in my paper. Will you please give me this position, your scriptural basis behind it, and the actions the OCA has taken to combat the liberal attacks on Christian morality.**

Neither the Orthodox Church in America, nor any other Orthodox Church, has an "official policy" in this regard, primarily because the Church throughout its history, and throughout the world today, has lived and continues to live in a wide variety of civil societies and cultures, all of which are transitory in nature, and none of which are fully Christian in essence. Hence, for Orthodox Christianity, such things are not a matter of "liberal" vs. "conservative," especially in the political arena; it's a matter of truth vs. the lack of truth. As Christians, we strive for the fullness of truth, which the Church possesses, and we attempt to discern the presence of truth elsewhere, as in political circles.

The basic principle at work here is found in Christ's words in Mark 12:17: "Render under Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's." Orthodox Christians are called to obey the laws of the land in which they happen to live, unless those laws require a Christian to do something that stands in conflict with his or her faith.

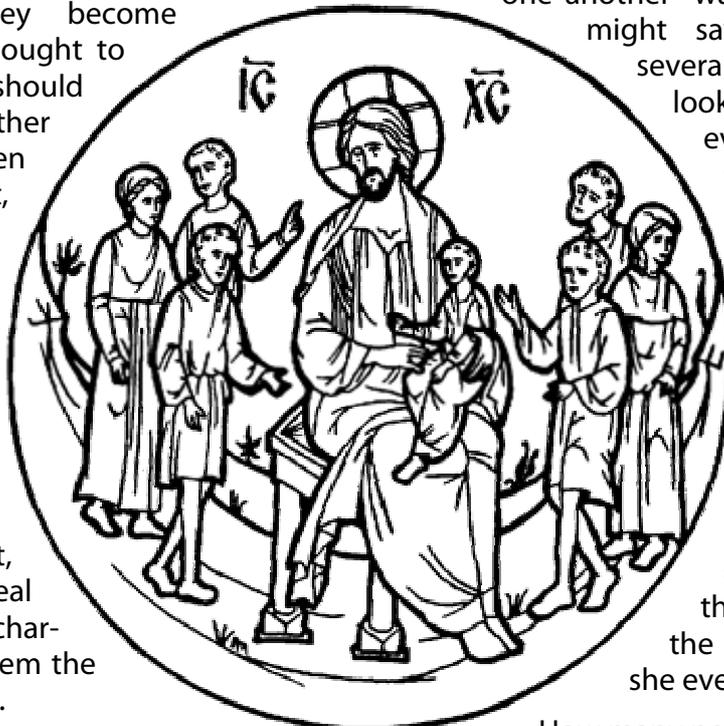




**"And calling to Him a child, He put him in the midst of them, and said, 'Truly I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven'" (Matthew 18:10)**

**"In the adult there is a hidden child -- an eternal child, something is always becoming, is never completed, and that calls for unceasing care, attention, and fostering. This is the part of personality that wishes to develop and complete itself. But the human being of our time is as far from completion as heaven is from the earth." (C.G. Jung, Psychological Reflections)**

The hidden child within each of us goes on in search of fulfillment of what are clearly affirmations of those elements in experience that verify his or her instinctive awareness of the good, right, enjoyable, happy discoveries in the world outside of himself. That happens throughout our lifetime. They even continue beyond death, as St. Gregory of Nyssa insists. It is the essence of hope. Those who aid in the quest are trustworthy and positive influences. When in subsequent settings they display consistency, they become divine agents. Parents ought to fulfill that function as should teachers, pastors and other authority figures. Even when they correct, discipline and deny, the child -- if he or she has formed a relationship of trust -- will stand corrected. And when he meets those who are opposed to his growth, development and ego enhancement, he will be able to deal with them as negative characters, learning from them the true nature of the world.



we have dozens of opportunities in each situation to sense the presence of another living person and connect in some way with a smile from our lips or our eyes.

Early Christians and true Christians through the centuries were identified as those who did more than pass through life as objects encountering other living objects without paying much attention to them. "See the Christians how they love one another" was more than a cliché. We might say something similar in several meaningful ways. If we look for the hidden child in every person we encounter, we might help him or her to visit again what he had been before adulthood settled in like a lingering disease of the soul. We speak of looking for Christ in each person, because each human being carries the image of God, even if it is too often hidden so deeply that the bearer has long lost the will to recover it, if he or she ever had such a thought.

But for the eternal child, all life is an adventure. Every confrontation with the world outside teaches, modifies, contradicts and eventually assimilates the learning process that he or she takes through death and into the life beyond. Our purpose as Orthodox Christians is to make love happen in every situation. Throughout our lives, we shall be placed in constant relationships with other human beings. Some of them will treat us as mere objects, and we them. How often do we check out our purchases at the store counter, pass others at our offices, work places or schools, order a meal, get on or off a bus or train, and pay no attention to the functionaries who serve us? And yet

How many people do you know who are dissatisfied with life and don't know why? Like the writer of Ecclesiastes, he or she tried everything. They have enough money, surely they have too much "stuff," they've been on various vacations and seen many sights, but something is not right. They blame it on many things, but none of it matters. They lose their way in life, and they do not understand that the route leads to the heart. How tragic the death of those who never find the purpose and meaning of life.

*Fr. Vladimir, is rector of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Parma, OH. His articles can be read on OCA.org under Reflections in Christ.*