



## Parish Information Bulletin

### Program for 4—10 June, 2023

#### Telephone Contact Numbers

St Vasilios Church  
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Fr Athanasios and  
Fr Ephraim are available  
at the Church every  
Monday to Friday  
between 4.00 and 6.00pm  
for Holy Confession and  
any spiritual need.

<b>SUNDAY 4 JUNE</b>	<b>Pentecost Sunday, John 7: 37-52, 8:12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>7.30am</b> Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li></ul>
<b>2023 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES - 2023</b> (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) <b>Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am until Church dismissal.</b> We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.	
<b>MONDAY 5 JUNE</b> <i>of the Holy Spirit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>7.30am</b> Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li><li>• <b>10.00am</b> Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall</li></ul>
<b>WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>5.00pm</b> Paraklesis to the Theotokos</li></ul>
<b>THURSDAY 8 JUNE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>8.00—9.00pm</b> ➡ <b>TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP 2023</b> <b>ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME</b> Join the group and learn about your faith, make friends, enjoy refreshments, in a friendly, relaxing environment. <b>* In Church Hall, upstairs behind the Church</b></li></ul>
<b>SUNDAY 11 JUNE</b>	<b>GOSPEL READING: Matthew 10: 32-33, 37,38, 19: 27-30</b> <b>EPISTLE READING: Hebrews 11: 33-40, 12:1-2</b>

### Orthodox Hymns to the Trinity

"Who is so great a God as our God? You alone are the  
God who does wonders!"

Come people, let us worship God in Three Persons,  
the Son who abides in the Father together  
with the Holy Spirit... one Power, one Essence, one God,  
whom we worship saying:  
Holy God who created all things through the Son  
and in the Holy Spirit!  
Holy Mighty, through whom we have known the Father  
and the Spirit has come to the world!  
Holy Immortal, Comforter and Spirit,  
who proceeds from the Father and rests in the Son.  
Holy Trinity, glory to You!

*Hymn of Great Vespers, Sunday of Pentecost*

I glorify the Holy Father,  
I honour the Holy Son,  
I sing the praises of the Holy Spirit:  
Simple Trinity, one in essence.  
Each person is God: three lights,  
Yet one light coming from a single sun.

The Trinity supreme in Godhead  
Is by essence an undivided unity:  
single in nature, yet distinguished in persons;  
indivisible, yet divided;  
one, yet three:  
Father, Son and Spirit of life,  
Together guarding all things.

Unity Through Wind, Flame, and Language: Homily for the Great Feast of Pentecost in the Orthodox Church

On today's great feast of Pentecost, we celebrate the Holy Spirit coming upon the followers of the risen Lord Jesus Christ, which is the birthday of His Body, the Church. After the Saviour's resurrection, He ascended into heaven and sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples so that they would not be cut off from Him and the new life that He brought to the world. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity, fully divine and eternal as are the Father and the Son. By being filled with the Holy Spirit, the Lord's followers participate personally and communally in the unity, power, and blessing of the very life of God by grace.

Unlike the period before Christ's Passion, the disciples now no longer think of themselves as students of a mere teacher, prophet, or king. They no longer struggle to accept the good news of His resurrection. Instead, they experience the new life of the Kingdom as "rivers of living water" flowing from their hearts. By the Spirit, they participate by grace in the life of the Holy Trinity. God is not remote, distant, or removed from them; but present and active in their souls. By God's presence in their hearts, they become truly who He created them to be in the divine image and likeness.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes upon the apostles as a group who were gathered together in obedience to the Lord's command. The same divine breath which first gave life to humanity comes upon them as a mighty wind. The divine glory beheld by Moses in the burning bush now rests upon each of them personally as flames of fire. The divided speech of the tower of Babel is now overcome by the miracle of speaking in different languages as a sign that everyone is invited to share in the life of the Lord. Not the possession of any nation or group, this great feast manifests the fulfilment of God's promises for the entire world and every human being.

God creates us all in His image with the calling to grow in His likeness, actually to become like Him in holiness. This glorious participation in Him is made possible for us at Pentecost. Human distinctions of every kind become irrelevant here, for all that matters is that we respond with faith, humility, love, and repentance as we embrace the Spirit poured out on the whole world and on every generation.

With the Holy Spirit present in our hearts, linking us together organically as one, our fallen, divided humanity is restored. Just as Father, Son, and Spirit share a common life of love, unity, and holiness, we share a common life in Christ's Body, the Church. As particular people, we have the responsibility to believe, repent, and obey the Lord as we live faithfully each day and participate in the ministries of the Church. As members of Christ's Body, we are nurtured by worship, the sacraments, and spiritual instruction in our common life. The Tradition of the Church is the presence of the Holy Spirit, guiding us all into ever greater knowledge of and participation in the life of the Holy Trinity.

We receive the Holy Spirit not as isolated individuals, but as persons in communion, in loving relationship with Christ and with one another in His Body, the Church. The only proper way to celebrate Pentecost is to open ourselves as fully as possible to God's healing, transforming power in our life together in a way that overcomes all worldly distinctions. That is how we, despite all our problems and weaknesses, may become radiant with the divine glory as we celebrate this great feast of our salvation as living temples of the Holy Spirit. That is how we too may experience "rivers of living water" that quench the thirst of our souls.

- Fr. Philip LeMasters



**Homily by St. Nikolai Velimirovich**

**- on how one must not grieve the Spirit of God.**

*'And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption' (Eph. 4:30).*

'The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit' - these words are pronounced, my brethren, over each one of us who is baptised with water and the Spirit. The Spirit of God is given to us, not according to our merits - let no-one think that - but by the mercy of the living God. In normal relations between people, both he who gives a gift and he who receives it are joyous. The act of giving is an act of joy on both sides. And the greater the gift, the greater the joy. If God rejoices in the giving of the grace of the Holy Spirit, how can those receiving it not rejoice also? A poor man who receives something will usually rejoice more than the rich man who makes the gift - how then can we poor men not rejoice when we receive this enormous gift from the God in whose hand lie all riches?

In what way do men grieve the Spirit of God? The Apostle, having exhorted us not to grieve the Spirit of God, goes on to explain what grieves this Spirit: all bitterness and wrath, and anger and clamour, and blasphemy (cursing) and all malice. Let it all be put away from you, says the Apostle. In brief, the Spirit of God is grieved by our every sin. Let every sin be put away from us, and the Spirit of God will be filled with joy, and we shall rejoice in Him. When we have an important guest in the house, we do our utmost to give him pleasure. And yet, can there be a greater guest than the Spirit of God? And, since He is our most important and our most desired guest, we must make the greatest efforts to please Him. And we know what pleases the Spirit of God - the very same thing that pleases Christ the Lord. The Lord has said: 'If you love Me, keep My commandments' (Jn 14:15). He who keeps Christ's commandments, therefore, has love for the Son, keeping His commandments, and pleases the Father and the Holy Spirit also. The Apostle especially commends meekness, mercy and forgiveness. If we are meek, if we are merciful, if we forgive one another, then we shall please the Spirit of God that dwells in our hearts. And the Spirit of God will then rejoice in us, and our whole being will vibrate with ineffable joy. Oh, my brethren, let us strive not to grieve our most high Guest, who comes to us with the richest of gifts.