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# THE TRISAGION

The Monthly Newsletter of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church  
119 S. Sparks Street, State College, PA 16801 814-231-2855  
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## PENTECOST: THE FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY – PART II

Key to our understanding of the import of Pentecost is the emphasis which Orthodoxy places on the Church as the recipient of the Life-creating Spirit. The Church receives the Holy Spirit and only as members of the Church—and members of one another thereby—do we have a share in the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. This is not a once upon a time event in a distant past. This is not a once in a lifetime occurrence. This is an ongoing reality in our life together as the Body of Christ. The Spirit unites us one to another, unites us to Christ, purging us of every impurity, sanctifying us and saving our souls. St. Paul expressed it this way:

Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (*Ephesians 5:25-27*)

In another place, St Paul refers to the gift of the Holy Spirit as “the earnest,” the guarantee of the nuptials which await. Unlike the typical image of marriage wherein the Bride prepares herself to receive her Bridegroom, the Scriptural image is one of the Bridegroom who takes the initiative to prepare the Bride, washing, cleansing, clothing her by means of the Holy Spirit, doing those things for her which she cannot do for herself.

So it is with salvation. We cannot sanctify or cleanse ourselves. Only by God’s action is this made possible by water and the Spirit in Baptism, that we should be holy and without blemish.

When we are tempted to think that we can save ourselves, or that we can somehow be “Christians”—literally, followers of Christ—without being part of the Church which is both His Body and His Bride, we deceive ourselves. It is God’s action that saves us. Our intentions, no matter how noble, will never prove sufficient to offer ourselves without blemish to God as His Bride. The gift of His Spirit to the Church is the very means by which we know Christ, by which we are brought to Christ, by which we are cleansed and offered to Christ. It is never something we can do on our own.

This is the ongoing message of Pentecost. What we can never do for ourselves is made possible by Christ’s Spirit given on Pentecost to His Church.

## ORTHODOX MISSION IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following series is excerpted from an article on missiology by Bishop HILARION (Alfeyev), a noted theologian, historian, composer, and author.*

### Part I: Introduction

Any Christian church has to be missionary if it wants to be faithful to its call to be the Church. Orthodox history knows many great missionaries, among whom there are men and women, bishops, monks and lay people. St Nina the Enlightener of Georgia (4<sup>th</sup> c.), St. Vladimir the Baptiser of Rus' and his grandmother Olga (10<sup>th</sup> c.), St. Cyril and Methodius (10<sup>th</sup> c.), St. Nicholas of Japan (19<sup>th</sup> c.) and many others are venerated as "equal to the apostles."

In spite of a certain "jurisdictional mess", which is, regrettably, characteristic of the Orthodox Church not only on the American continent but also in other parts of the world..., the Orthodox Church worldwide continues to be involved in a variety of missionary activities. One of the most notable theologians of the twentieth century, Father Alexander Schmemmann, wrote several decades ago:

To recover the missionary dimension of the Church is today's greatest imperative. We have to recover a very basic truth: that the Church is essentially Mission; the very roots of her life are in the commandment of Christ: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19).

A Christian community that would lose this missionary zeal and purpose, that would become selfish and self-centered, that would limit itself to "satisfying the spiritual needs of its members", that would identify itself completely with a nation, a society, a social or ethnic group—is on its way to spiritual decadence and death, because the essential spiritual need of a Christian is precisely that of sharing the life and the Truth with as many men as possible and ultimately with the whole world. Mission thus is the organic need and task of the Church in the world, the real meaning of Church's presence in history between the first and the second advents of her Lord, or, in other terms, the meaning of Christian history. Obviously not all members of the Church can go and preach in the literal sense of the word. But all can have a concern for the missionary function of the Church, feel responsible for it, help and support it. In this respect each diocese, each parish and each member of the Church are involved in the missionary ministry.

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## HTOC ESTABLISHES NEW MINISTRY PARTNERSHIPS

In the spirit of our ongoing *Matthew 25* ministry, Holy Trinity has begun two new ministry partnerships. The first partnership is with *Housing Transitions*, an area homeless shelter located on East Nittany Avenue. On the second Tuesday of every month, volunteers from Holy Trinity provide a home-cooked meal, committing to a four-hour shift (roughly 4:30 to 8:30pm) with dinner being served at 6pm. The evening provides a great opportunity to cook, eat, and socialize with the residents and employees of the shelter. Our participation in this monthly program began last month, blessing us with one successful night at the shelter so far, and we hope to have many more. We are looking for 2-3 more volunteers to participate each month.

The second partnership is with *Yokefellowship*, an organization made up of Christian volunteers that minister to prison inmates. The group opens with several hymns and a prayer, followed by a Bible study which is prepared by a different member each week. For the past two months Jesse Dominick has traveled to Rockview Federal Prison on Monday afternoons to offer an Orthodox perspective. Two weeks ago he led his first study which was on the topic of suffering and its redemptive value—how one can participate in the suffering of Christ and truly experience His presence in it. The inmates are very participatory in the discussions and have a great desire to serve God, and more volunteers are always welcome.

If you are interested in lending a hand in one of these ministries or if you would like to learn more, please see Jesse Dominick. He can also be reached at 717-887-0218 or [jckstraw72@yahoo.com](mailto:jckstraw72@yahoo.com).

## ARE YOU ON OUR EMAILING LIST?

In June, Holy Trinity established an electronic mailing list to offer members and friends of our community occasional updates about the many ministries occurring in the life of our parish. Subscribers to the list can expect about 1 or 2 messages a week including our new weekly publication, *This Week at Holy Trinity*, which is replete with a list of all the week's events, daily Scripture readings, and the saints commemorated each day. If you are not yet receiving our emails, please see Dn. Alexander or email [deacon.alexander@gmail.com](mailto:deacon.alexander@gmail.com).

## HOLY TRINITY YOUTH: MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Orthodox Youth Association (OYA) for anyone entering grades 7 to 12 will be offering two exciting events this summer. In July, OYA members will have an opportunity to go an overnight camping trip. We will meet at the church on Friday, July 17 at 6:30pm and return at 11:00am the following morning. Then on Tuesday, August 18, OYA takes its annual trip to Hershey Park! Be sure to save these dates and look for more in next month's *Trisagion*.

### ANNOUNCING THE EXPANSION OF OUR TLC MINISTRY

With the arrival of Maria Renee Finke (newborn daughter of Matt and Jill Finke, and the first of many births expected in our parish family in the upcoming months) comes a new tradition at Holy Trinity. In an expansion of our existing TLC ministry that continues to offer meals for shut-ins, volunteers are teaming up to bake a few days worth of meals to aid moms recovering from childbirth. If you would like to be added to the list for consideration (which does not mean you have to provide a meal, just that you would like to be asked), please contact Corene Swisher at [corene.swisher@gmail.com](mailto:corene.swisher@gmail.com).



Thank  
you!

### TAKE ME TO THE WATER!

All children aged 4-14 are invited to take an educational and fun weeklong journey at this year's Vacation Bible School (VBS). Exploring God's creation of water and its necessity for both physical and spiritual life through activities, songs, crafts, and more, "*Take Me to the Water*" is an all-new curriculum developed especially for Holy Trinity by Fr. John. VBS begins Monday, August 3 and ends Friday, August 7, running from 9am to 12noon in the Parish Hall (on Thursday VBS immediately follows the 8am Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Transfiguration). **Registration is required.** To register, use the sign-up sheet in the narthex or contact the Parish Office.

### TOWN HALL MEETING LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

What our future might look like if God's Will were to be done, especially as it pertains to the office building next door at 123 S. Sparks (should it become available for purchase), was the subject of a unique "Town Hall" meeting held last month in the Parish Hall. Each parishioner who attended played a vital part in the initial strategic planning of Holy Trinity over the five years. During a workshop lead by Fr. John, participants took turns brainstorming on how acquiring the property does and does not further our parish's five-fold vision of living our faith, worship, fellowship, outreach, and stewardship.

A consensus was reached among the group determining that the purchase of the building would be a prime opportunity to expand office, fellowship, and storage space; acquire permanent parking; grow the bookstore and open it to the public; and/or establish campus or guest housing. Downsides to a purchase were mostly financial in nature and cognizant of the fact that the amount of worship space, which is becoming tight again, remains unchanged. The session ended with a Strength-Weakness-Opportunity-Threat analysis. Results will be reported in a future edition of *The Trisagion*.

### FROM THE DESK OF DEACON ALEXANDER

During the Divine Liturgy, you will hear the deacon offer several prayers for Bishop MELCHISEDEK, who was newly consecrated just last week in Pittsburgh. Unlike those in other religious or civil authorities, we always pray for our bishop by name, underscoring the office's importance—and even go so far as to call him "Lord." Why?

St. Paul reminds us to "obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account" for us to God (Hebrews 13:17). Writing a few decades later, St. Ignatius instructed the faithful to give their bishops the same reverence they would give to God the Father, for without them "there is not even the name of a church."

The bishop is directly responsible for all the parishes located in his diocese and is called upon to maintain undeviating continuity between the present and the Twelve Apostles themselves. This "Apostolic Succession" is not just an unbroken historical line of ordination that goes all the way back to Christ, but also a mandate for the hierarch to preserve without alteration the very beliefs handed to him that have been taught to all people in all places at all times. That is why those who had an opportunity to attend Bishop MELCHISEDEK's consecration heard him recite the Creed and two other statements of faith recapitulating the entire doctrine of the Church expressed through its Councils.

May the Lord our God remember His Grace, the Right Reverend MELCHISEDEK, in His Kingdom, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages!

### FATHER JOHN ON VACATION

Father John will be on vacation Wednesday, July 1 through Saturday, July 25. Deacon Alexander is available to assist you in the event any pastoral need or concern arises. Please contact the Parish Office by calling 814-231-2855 or email Dn. Alexander directly at [deacon.alexander@gmail.com](mailto:deacon.alexander@gmail.com).

### JULY SCHEDULES

#### Coffee Hour

July 5 — Beth Roberts and Elaine Stewart  
July 12 — Ellen George and Anne-Therese Pelikan  
July 19 — Anne Swisher and Corene Swisher  
July 26 — Karen Cattell and Jean Miranda

#### Greeters

July 5 — Beth Roberts and Ed Miranda  
July 12 — Mark Radomsky and Leslyn Radomsky  
July 19 — Melody Thompson and Mark Fedkin  
July 26 — Megan Leathers and David Swisher