

# THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

## Services Resume at Both Locations



*After 75 days of suspended services, parishioners gather in State College on Saturday, May 29 (the first day for the Chapel of the Holy Spirit in Beavertown was May 10). Both locations waited to reopen until no one—parishioner or visitor alike—would have to be turned away.*

**W**ITH SYNDER AND CENTRE COUNTIES moving to the Commonwealth’s “Yellow” and “Green” phases of reopening last month, His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek blessed the parish to resume worship at both locations. Because religious organizations are exempt from Governor Tom Wolf’s directives, the parish is asking all attendees to voluntarily follow distancing protocols, including the requirement that businesses limit attendance to 50% of declared occupancy (i.e., 30 at the Chapel and 74 at Holy Trinity). Additional times, locations, and methods to receive the Holy Mysteries have been established to ensure all have the opportunity to participate in the sacramental life of the parish according to their personal consciences and preparedness. Visit [holytrinity-oca.org](http://holytrinity-oca.org) or call (814) 231-2855 for more information. Thank you for your patience and cooperation during this period. ■

## A Perfect Time for Renewal

**T**HE PERIOD OF SPRING transitioning to summer (May and June, specifically) has long been my favorite season of the year. There is just something exhilarating about the rush of life we experience at this time: the trees all bursting forth into their glorious summer greens, the beautiful songs of the birds, the rabbits and chipmunks chasing one another playfully around the lawn. It’s a time of intense beauty. Perhaps not surprisingly, many of the Fathers of the Church identify the springtime as a symbol of resurrection.

*(continued, see FROM THE RECTOR’S DESK, page 2)*

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■ FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

# Let Us Rededicate Our Lives to Christ (continued from page 1)

It is no accident that Christ revealed the Resurrection to us in the springtime, since the spring gives us a visible symbol of life powerfully reemerging from its icy winter shutdown.

Similarly, it is not by accident that Christ sends the Holy Spirit on the Church in the period of the late spring, when life flourishes with particular vigor. In the Gospel of St. John, Christ images life in the Spirit as “rivers of living water” flowing from believers’ hearts (7:38). The “living water” of the Spirit is potent and transformative, bringing life to things that seem utterly desolate.

Jesus’ image of “rivers of living water” is reminiscent of a vision seen by the Prophet Ezekiel. During his prophetic ministry, Ezekiel had a vision of water coming forth from the Temple in Jerusalem and flowing eastward toward the Dead Sea. As Ezekiel watched the water flow outward, it seemed to multiply, becoming a river. And beside the river many trees emerged, and God spoke to Ezekiel, saying “everything will live where the river goes” and saying that even the Dead Sea itself will “be healed” and become a place of life and abundance (47:8-9).

This is a profound image of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is “the Lord, the Giver of Life,” and where He goes, life erupts with irrepressible vigor. We see this evidenced in the Book of Acts, which is a book of freedom, life, and growth. We call the book “the Acts of the Holy Apostles,” but in truth, its main character is the Holy Spirit! And throughout this book the fruits of the Spirit are manifest: the faithless become faithful, the weak become full of strength and courage, evildoers find repentance, and enemies find reconciliation. Such is the power of the Spirit of God! Such is the power of the Giver of Life! He gives abundant growth to the Church, bringing forth the fruits of “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith-

## Feast Days this Month

### PENTECOST—THE FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY

MEMORIAL SATURDAY...

VESPERS: Fri., June 5, 6pm

LITURGY: Sat., June 6, 9am

GREAT VESPERS: Sat., June 6, 6pm  
(A.T. Pelikan, *Litiya*)  
(K. Bazilevskaya, *Icon*)



MATINS, LITURGY, & “KNEELING” VESPERS OF PENTECOST:  
Sun., June 7, 9am

HOLY SPIRIT DAY: Mon., June 8, 8am

THIRD DAY OF THE TRINITY:

VESPERS: Mon, June 8, 6pm

LITURGY: Tues., June 9, 8am

### Nativity of St. John the Baptist

GREAT VESPERS: Tues, June 23, 6pm

LITURGY: Wed., June 24, 8am



### Apostles Peter and Paul

GREAT VESPERS: Sun., June 28, 6pm

LITURGY: Mon., June 29, 8am  
(P. Doty, *Prospora*)



fulness, [and] self-control” in our hearts, and through our growth in Him and the beauty and courage we have found in Him, He brings abundant growth to the body of believers (*Gal. 5:22-23*).

Brethren, let us take this time of the late spring and early summer to rededicate our lives to the Holy Spirit, and through Him to Christ our God and to the Father of All. If we do this, we will find these days to be a time of intense renewal, life, and peace, and these things will pave the way for miraculous things and for great growth within the body of believers. “Come. Let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price,” to the Glory of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (*Rev. 22:17*). ■

— Fr. Ignatius

we did not have modern medicine that we have today to help assuage our fears and heal us. How ironic! Now that we have modern medicine to help cure us and extend our lives physically, that is no consolation. Medical and scientific advances cannot help our spiritual ills since now we have more doubt, more fear. There is something worse than Coronavirus: the instilling of doubt among the faithful by corrupting the *phronema* of the Church. Even the slightest suggestion that the Holy Mysteries can bring illness, is a terrible distortion of the Orthodox Faith and potentially affects the eternal salvation of countless innocent souls.

St. Paul gave instructions to the Corinthians about Holy Communion. He reminded them about what he had taught them regarding the sacred character of the Eucharist. They were not reverent during the divine service, “not discerning the Body and Blood,” thereby they were consuming in an “unworthy manner.” He wrote, “This is why some of you have become ill and some have died” (*1 Cor. 11:29*). This is an amazing statement! If one can become ill and even die from not discerning the Body and Blood, what does that say about us and our situation, our lack of faith, our fears? All of the “disposable spoons” or “multiple spoons” or other methods mean nothing if we can still become ill. By our very attitude we prove ourselves unworthy to receive.

If someone is afraid, let them not receive. We should not seek to alleviate the “fears” of a few while undermining the faith of countless others. To change what has been the universal practice of the Church around the world for hundreds of years is to introduce a far worse virus: conforming to the mentality of “the world.” Today it is Coronavirus. Tomorrow it will be some other illness or some other excuse to dilute the faith. The Church has weathered countless pandemics. The fear comes from our weakness, our fallenness, our brokenness, which the Church and the Holy Mysteries exist to heal, not to perpetuate. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Eugenia “Jeannie” Constantinou teaches *Biblical Studies & Early Christianity* at the Univ. of San Diego and hosts the “Search the Scriptures” podcasts at [ancientfaith.com](http://ancientfaith.com).

■ NEWS & NOTES

## Tragic Events the Subject of Synodal Encyclical

SYOSSET [via [oca.org](http://oca.org)]—Categorically rejecting racism in any form, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America issued a statement on the recent tragic events in Minneapolis and the civil unrest that ensued. The hierarchs, mourning and horrified over the tragic, violent, and senseless death of George Floyd, remind us that each of us are “one in Christ Jesus (*Galatians 3:28*).” The bishops call upon members of the Orthodox Church in America to “engage in the service of righteousness and peace in the Holy Spirit... [pursuing] what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding (*Romans 14:17, 19*).” They offer “prayers to God, for Mr. Floyd, his family, and to those communities that are experiencing anxiety, sadness, and despair, because they have seen destruction of life and property.” The full statement can be found at [oca.org](http://oca.org).

## Antiochian Village to Conduct “Virtual” Camp

BOLIVAR, PA [via [avcamp.org](http://avcamp.org)]—Antiochian Village here will conduct virtual sessions from June 15 to August 7 (its normal weeks of operation). Staff will provide 3-4 hours of programming Mondays through Fridays. Virtual Camp is free and open to everyone aged 9-17; no previous camping experience is necessary. Parents are invited to participate too. For more information, visit [avcamp.org](http://avcamp.org) or call (724) 238-9565.

## Learn About Mission Teams While at Home

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL [via [ocmc.org](http://ocmc.org)]—The Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) here is offering anyone interested in learning more about missions to email [teams@ocmc.org](mailto:teams@ocmc.org) to set up a Zoom call with Mr. Andrew Lekos and Presbyteria Renee Ritsi. They are offering a free one-hour Q&A on how the Teams Program of OCMC is making a difference in the lives of others. The content is perfect for the whole family. ■

# More Dangerous than COVID-19?

by Presbytera Dr. Eugenia Constantinou

Orthodoxy has always been flexible, but it has also been uncompromising in certain areas, including our core belief about Communion and our Orthodox *phronema*, our mindset, which is distinct from all other Christian groups. Isolated examples of past historical practices and rational arguments [are being] utilized to justify [changes to liturgical practice.] But the same types of arguments can be employed to justify or rationalize eliminating virtually every traditional practice and moral position of the Church. A greater threat exists than COVID-19: the undermining of our convictions and damage to the faith. What we need from our hierarchs and our priests at this moment is spiritual leadership, rather than presenting “logical” arguments which surrender to the “slavery of our human reasoning,” as the communion prayer to the Theotokos states...

The Church has always held that Holy Communion can never be the source of illness and [anything that] undermine[s] that core belief is more dangerous and more deadly than COVID-19 because nurturing such doubts impacts our eternal salvation. The evil one is dancing with delight because [these inferences cast] doubt which the devil will cultivate and will eagerly seek to extend to other areas of the faith...

God actually became man, therefore Holy Communion can never be an agent of illness, whether it is received on a spoon, or in the hand, or directly from the chalice. God became man—not simply to die on the cross or to rise from the dead. He became man to become flesh and blood so that we could physically receive His very Flesh and Blood. It is impossible, *impossible*, that we could become ill either by communion itself or through the instrumentality by which we receive it. When God became man, He sanctified our human nature by uniting it to His

divine nature. His divinity was not altered by its union with the humanity... Our assertion that Holy Communion can never be the vehicle for transmission of disease, regardless of the method by which it is received, has been proven true through the 2,000 year history of the Church... There has never been a single case in which a person can be demonstrated to have contracted any illness from Holy Communion...

St. John Chrysostom said in *Homily 25 on the Gospel of John*, “For nothing is worse than to relegate spiritual things to human reasoning... We ourselves are called ‘faithful’ precisely for this reason: in order that, having put aside the weakness of human reasoning, we may come to the sublimity of faith, and that we may entrust the greater part of our welfare to the teaching of faith.” The Church has never made decisions based on fear, only on faith. The Church also does not make decisions or reach theological conclusions based on human reasoning...

St. Gregory the Theologian commented on compromising the faith to conform to the values of this world: “For we are not as the many, able to corrupt the word of truth, and mix the wine, which makes glad the heart of man, with water, mix, that is, our doctrine with what is common and cheap, and debased, and stale, and tasteless, in order to turn the adulteration to our profit, ... and, to gain the special good will of the multitude, injuring in the highest degree, no, ruining ourselves, and shedding the innocent blood of simpler souls, which will be required at our hands.” (*Or. 2.46*)

All of us will die a physical death, but will we voluntarily die the Second Death, death of the soul? COVID-19 is not a very deadly disease compared to the terrible diseases which have afflicted humanity in the past. We never compromised our faith in difficult times even when those diseases were more deadly and

## Annual Men’s BBQ this Month

Usually Bright Friday, this year Men’s BBQ will be held on another Fast-Free Friday—the Friday after Pentecost, June 12, 6 p.m. at Trinity House. The parish will provide the meat; just bring *more* meat, a side, or your favorite beverage. Men of all ages are welcome.

## Beautify the Church for Pentecost

While the ladies of the Altar Society prepare the State College church interior for Pentecost, Anne Therese Pelikan will lead an outdoor work crew in mulching and planting so the parish grounds are beautiful as well. Both events take place on Saturday, June 6 at 11 a.m. following the Divine Liturgy. There will be light refreshments served for all who wish to participate.

## Where are the Schedules?

Instead of resuming volunteer rotations right where we left off, the ministries whose schedules you normally see here in the *Trisagion* (Coffee Hour, Greeters, Tellers, and Servers) will formally resume in the fall. In the meantime, Coffee Hour will remain suspended so the Parish Hall can serve as additional worship space, greeting and “telling” will be a bit more informal, and all boys aged 8 and over will be invited to serve each week. Let us all take this time to ease back into liturgical life and prayerfully discern: Look for a survey this summer to help the clergy gauge exactly what ministries you want the parish to have, what you would like to join, and what you might like to lead! May God bless this time of renewal and reflection.

## Church Will Remain Open Daily

The weekly—and then daily—Open Houses that were a comfort to so many during the health crisis will continue on in a new form. The clergy have moved back to their respective offices, but video technology will now allow them to monitor the front door so parishioners and visitors can still access the church daily. Please stop by as you are able to light a candle or say a prayer!

## Most Now Give Electronically

Last year just 15% of your donations came in through [holytrinity-oca.org/give](http://holytrinity-oca.org/give), now it is 60%! Thank you for remembering the parish through your sacrificial tithes.

## Thank You, Teachers!

The parish’s teachers, missing their students, decided to finish out the school year using Zoom. Each of the five classes at Holy Trinity and a new class at the Chapel met for a combined 15 hours of education last month. Students at Holy Trinity are finished for the academic year, but the Chapel will continue biweekly instruction. Thank you to our teachers, parents, and students for making the best of a difficult situation while learning and having fun along the way.

## June Bookstore Feature

Although the Bookstore’s current stock is available to you online at [holytrinity-oca.org](http://holytrinity-oca.org) and by appointment at (814) 231-2855, June’s feature, *The Spiritual Words of Matthew the Poor, Vol. II*, is available in paperback or electronically via the Ancient Faith Store, Amazon Kindle, or Apple iBooks. The twentieth-century elder Abba Matta of Egypt, known in the West as Matthew the Poor, is widely regarded as the greatest Egyptian elder since St. Antony the Great. This series constitutes the first appearance in English of a selection of the informal talks Abba Matta gave to his fellow monks and to visitors. In simple, accessible language, he addresses subjects ranging from Scripture to the church year to everyday life in the world. All versions of this new title can be found at [store.ancientfaith.com](http://store.ancientfaith.com).

## For the Record

### YOUR GENEROSITY

➤ **\$1,000** was donated to CommonFood Centre County last month through the **Matthew 25** to provide resources to under-served and under-employed elderly, single-parent, and low-income families adversely impacted by COVID-19. Thank you for your ongoing support of Matthew 25 and thanks to God for connecting us with a new partner ministry. (Learn more at [holytrinity-oca.org/partnerships](http://holytrinity-oca.org/partnerships).)

### GRADUATIONS

➤ Graduating this month from High School are **Anna Abashidze, Julia Rush, and Lauren Torbic**. They will be remembered with a special ceremony after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, June 14. **Many years to the Class of 2020!**



# Holy Trinity Calendar

All events take place at 119 South Sparks Street in State College, unless where noted. Events listed at **Trinity House** (T.H.) take place at 123 South Sparks Street, in State College.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 <b>Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> <i>(Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home (download at holytrinity-oca.org)</i>	June 1 <i>(No Knitting Group Ministry this month)</i>	2	3 Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	4 Adult Study Group on the Catechetical Lectures of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, 7pm via Zoom†	5 Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	6 <b>Memorial Saturday</b> Memorial Divine Lit., 9am Altar Society Decorating for Pentecost, 11am Outdoor Work Day, 11am Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers w/ Outdoor Litiya, 6pm <b>LIVE</b>
7 <b>PENTECOST</b> <i>(Fast-Free Week)</i> Typika @ Home, or... Festal Matins, 9am <b>LIVE</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> "Kneeling" Vespers of Pentecost, 11:45am <b>LIVE</b>	8 <b>Day of the Holy Spirit</b> Divine Liturgy, 8am <i>(Hours, 7:40am)</i> Vespers, 6pm	9 <b>Third Day of the Holy Trinity</b> Divine Liturgy, 8am <i>(Hours, 7:40am)</i> Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ <i>Housing Transitions, 217 E. Nittany Ave.</i>	10 Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council Meeting, 7pm @ <i>Trinity House &amp; via Zoom†</i>	11 <b>Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas</b>	12 Annual Men's BBQ, 6pm @ <i>Trinity House (rescheduled from Bright Friday)</i>	13 Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
14 <b>All Saints</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> <i>(Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home</i> Graduating Senior Recognition Ceremony, following	15 <i>Apostles' Fast Begins: Omit meat &amp; dairy (all days), and fish (Wednesdays and Fridays) through June 28.</i>	16	17 Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	18	19	20 Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
21 <b>All Saints of America</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> <i>(Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home</i>	22	23 Great Vespers, 6pm	24 <b>Nativity of St. John the Baptist</b> Divine Liturgy, 8am <i>(Hours, 7:40am)</i> Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	25	26	27 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
28 Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home</i> Great Vespers, 6pm	29 <b>Holy Apostles Ss. Peter and Paul</b> Divine Liturgy, 8am <i>(Hours, 7:40am)</i>	30	July 1 Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	2	3	4 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
5 Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i>	6 "Hats and Hugs Made with Love" Knitting Group, 1pm-2:30pm @ <i>Trinity House</i>	7	8 Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council Meeting, 7pm @ <i>Trinity House &amp; via Zoom†</i>	9	10	11 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following

# Chapel Calendar

All events take place at 145 North Kern Street in Beavertown, unless where noted.

Saturday 6 Great Vespers with Litiya for Pentecost, 6pm	Sunday 21 <b>All Saints of America</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home</i> Adult Catechesis, following
Sunday 7 <b>PENTECOST</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home (download at holytrinity-oca.org)</i>	Monday 22 <i>(No "Hats and Blankets for Babies" this month)</i>
Saturday 13 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	Saturday 27 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
Sunday 14 <b>All Saints</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home</i> Adult Catechesis, following Virtual Sunday School, 12:30pm via Zoom†	Sunday 28 Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home</i> Adult Catechesis, following Virtual Sunday School, 12:30pm via Zoom† Great Vespers, 6pm
Saturday 20 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	Monday 29 <b>Holy Apostles Ss. Peter and Paul</b>
	Saturday July 4 Great Vespers, 6pm

† to join, visit [holytrinity-oca.org/zoom](https://holytrinity-oca.org/zoom) or call 814-231-2855.

**LIVE** this service will be live-streamed at [holytrinity-oca.org](https://holytrinity-oca.org) and YouTube ([bit.ly/htoc-youtube](https://bit.ly/htoc-youtube)) and broadcasted in the Parish Hall and Trinity House to alleviate capacity in the Nave. If a Divine Liturgy, Holy Communion will be brought to these locations by a deacon.

June 2020