

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Divine Grace of Ordination



“For the Perfection of the Saints”

“The divine grace, which always heals that which is infirm, and supplies that which is lacking, ordains John, the most-pious subdeacon to be a deacon. Therefore, let us pray for him, that the gift of the Holy Spirit may come upon him.” With these words, His Eminence Melchisedek began the ordination of Evan Kerstetter to the holy diaconate on Saturday, the sixth of May. Quite naturally, as we reflect on this prayer, our thoughts center on the man being ordained, and we assume that the infirmity and want is in the man himself. And this is of course true. Every man chosen from the people of God for the work of ministry is a flawed human being who carries into the ministry patterns of sin, personal foibles, physical weaknesses, and undeveloped skills. Certainly, as we pray this prayer, we are asking God to heal the weakness of the newly-ordained and build him up with divine strength.

However, there is another way that we should consider interpreting these words. That is to say, there are always weaknesses and wants within the Church itself, whether on the parish level, the diocesan level, or even the global level. Although God has implanted the Truth in us and has poured out the Holy Spirit upon us, we all suffer from ignorance, blindness, and voluntary or involuntary sin. The need for the Church to be built up and perfected is evident even in the time of the Apostles, as we can actually see the Apostles themselves falling into sin (as Peter did in Antioch, cf. Gal 2:11ff), not knowing how to deal with dogmatic or moral issues for a time (cf. Acts 15), and speaking in an unclear manner (cf. Peter’s assessment of some of Paul’s words in 2 Pet 3:16). And if there are any weaknesses in the Apostles, how much more are there in the churches themselves! Just like subsequent Christian history, the New

(continued, see RECTOR’S DESK, following page)

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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS
June 4	Pentecost - Potluck	M. & T. Chambers	M. Fedkin & H. Torbic
June 11	Russian Ladies Group B	J. Johnson & A. Stickle	K. Cattell & M. Stickle
June 18	C. Swisher & S. Hunter	M. Fedkin & K. Bazilevskaya	G. Cattell & M. Fiori
June 25	A. Ashmore & C. Pellock	Mka. K. Oleynik & D. Swisher	M. Fedkin & B. Haupt
July 2	Russian Ladies Group A	TBA	H. Torbic & M. Stickle
July 9	A. Stickle & M. Leathers	TBA	K. Cattell & M. Fiori

■ FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

The Divine Grace

Testament is replete with sad examples of Christians behaving foolishly and sinfully, sometimes with such extreme sinfulness that it even outdoes the sinfulness of the surrounding culture (cf. 1 Cor 5:1).

Therefore, when we hear these words of the ordination, we should reflect on our own needs and weaknesses, but we should also take comfort in the coming ministry of the newly-ordained. Every ordination is full of joy and hope, hope especially that the Holy Spirit will use this man to heal and to build up the Church in faith and righteousness. Therefore, we rejoice with the Chapel of the Holy Spirit at this time, and look forward to Dn. John's uplifting work in the Lord's vineyard. Axios! He is worthy!

Now, with this joyous event just passed, we should also say at this time that we have happy news to

share from State College as well. Our own Evan Ashmore has been accepted to St. Tikhon's Seminary in South Canaan and will be starting school there in the fall. I would ask all the faithful to remember him in their prayers, as seminary, while a time of great blessing, is also a time of great spiritual trial. Truly, this is a joyous season. May God harvest much fruit through the lives and ministries of these two God-fearing men. ■

— Fr. Ignatius



■ CATECHESIS

On Pentecost

By Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko

The Old Testament feast of Pentecost occurred 50 days after Passover—the commemoration of the Exodus of the Israelites from captivity and slavery in Egypt—in celebration of God's gift of the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai.

In the New Covenant of the Messiah, the Passover event takes on its new meaning—the celebration of Christ's Resurrection, the "passing over" from death to life and from earth to heaven, the "exodus" of God's People from this sinful world to the eternal Kingdom. The New Testament Pentecost also is fulfilled and made new by the coming of the "new law" with the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Christ. As we read in the Acts of the Apostles 2:1-4,

"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed as resting upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit Christ promised to His disciples came on the day of Pentecost (John 14:26, 15:26; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5) as the apostles received "the power from on high" and began to preach and bear witness to Jesus as the risen Christ, the King and the Lord. Traditionally, this moment has been called the "birthday of the Church."

In the liturgical services for the Great Feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit is celebrated together with the full revelation of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The fullness of the Godhead is manifested with the Spirit's coming to man, and the

(continued, see CATECHESIS, following page)

■ NEWS & NOTES

For the Record

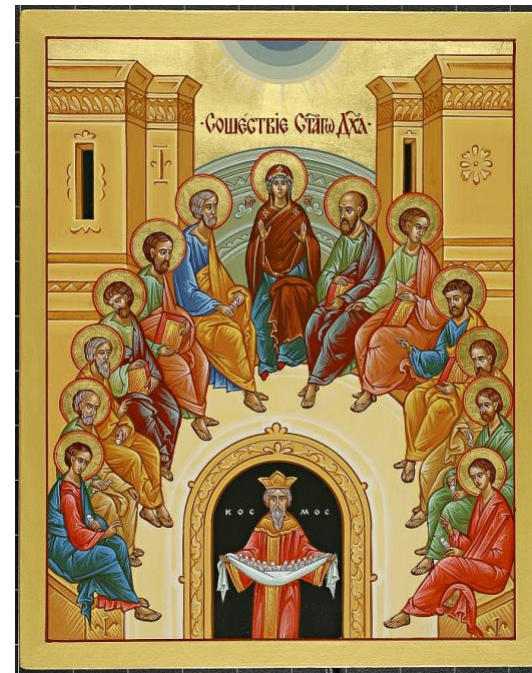
Evan John Kerstetter was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by the hand of Archbishop Melchisedek on May 6th at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, where he is attached. Axios!

Liturgy for Holy Apostles

Please join us on June 30th at 9:30am as we celebrate the patronal feast day of Holy Apostles in Mechanicsburg, PA! This is an excellent opportunity to visit this growing young parish and to fellowship with other believers in our region.

Congratulations High School Grads!

Congratulations to our high school graduates, Josiah Cadman and Abigail Swisher. Josiah will enroll next year in the University of Kentucky; Abby will take a gap year to prepare for the next step. Congratulations!



Holy Unction

On Sunday, June 11, the commemoration of St. Luke the Blessed Surgeon, a 20th century bishop of Simferopol in Crimea who was both a groundbreaking medical doctor and a wonderworking healer, our parish will celebrate a general unction service in which all baptized Orthodox Christians are invited to be anointed for healing and sanctification. This service will follow after the coffee hour and begin at approximately 12:30. As unction is a sacrament, it is to be prepared for with a recent confession and by partaking of the holy mysteries the morning prior.

June Adult Education with St. Vladimir's Seminary

At 8 pm on Tuesdays throughout the month of June, our parish will be participating in St. Vladimir's Seminary's new "Online School of Theology" by offering a non-degree course free to parishioners at the Trinity House. This course will consist of four hour-long lectures by Fr. Bodgan Bocur, the professor of patristics at St. Vladimir's. Our group will attend via Zoom. The titles of the lectures are:

- **June 6** - Christ, "The Glory of Israel": The Jewish Apocalyptic Inheritance
- **June 13** - "The Light to illumine the Gentiles": Christianity as True Philosophy
- **June 20** - Opening and Entering the Scriptures with the Fathers
- **June 27** - A Distillate of Patristic Thought: The Hymns of the Church

Popcorn will be provided and, as time provides, we will discuss the lectures among ourselves following. For those who would like to attend but are unable to come in person, this course is open to the public and can be independently registered for at www.online.svots.edu/courses/preparing-to-read-the-fathers

■ CATECHESIS

On Pentecost

Church's hymns celebrate this manifestation as the final act of God's self-disclosure and self-donation to the world of His creation. For this reason, Pentecost Sunday also is called Trinity Day in the Orthodox Christian tradition. On this day, the icon of the Holy Trinity — particularly that of the three angelic figures who appeared to Abraham, the forefather of the Christian faith—often is placed in the center of the church, alongside the traditional Pentecost icon depicting the tongues of fire hovering over the Theotokos and the 12 Apostles, the original prototype of the Church, who sit in unity surrounding a symbolic image of “cosmos,” the world.

On Pentecost, we have the final fulfillment of the mission of Jesus Christ and the first beginning of the messianic age of the Kingdom of God mystically present in this world in the Church of the Messiah. For this reason the 50th day stands as the beginning of the era that is beyond the limitations of this world, 50 being that number which stands for eternal and heavenly fulfillment in Jewish as well as Christian mystical piety: seven times seven, plus one.

Thus, Pentecost is called an “apocalyptic day,” which means the day of final revelation. It is also called an “eschatological day,” which means that it is the day of the final and perfect end—in Greek, the eschaton. When the Messiah comes and the Day of the Lord is at hand, the “last days” are inaugurated, in which “God declares, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.’” This is the ancient prophecy to which the Apostle Peter refers in the first sermon of the Christian Church, preached on that first Pentecost Sunday (Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28-32).

The Great Feast of Pentecost is not simply the celebration of an event which took place centuries ago. Rather, it is the celebration of what must happen—and indeed does happen—to us in the Church today. We have died and risen with the Messiah-King, and we have received His Most Holy Spirit. We are the “temples of the Holy Spirit.” God's Spirit dwells in us (Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 2-3, 12; 2 Corinthians 3; Galatians 5;

Ephesians 2-3). We, by our own membership in the Church, have received “the Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit” in the sacrament of Chrismation. Pentecost has happened to us.

During the Divine Liturgy on Pentecost, we recall our baptism into Christ as we sing, in place of the Trisagion, the well known verse from Galatians: “As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.” The usual antiphons are replaced by special psalm verses that emphasize the meaning of the feast, while the day's readings from the Epistles and Gospels recall the Holy Spirit's coming to men. The kontakion speaks of the reversal of Babel, as God unites the nations into the unity of His Spirit. And the troparion proclaims the gathering of the entire universe into God's “net” through the work of the inspired apostles. In the hymns “O Heavenly King” and “We have seen the True Light” — sung on Pentecost for the first time since Holy Pascha—we invoke the Holy Spirit to “come and abide in us” while proclaiming that “we have received the heavenly Spirit.” On the evening of Pentecost Sunday, at Vespers, three lengthy prayers are recited, during which we kneel for the first time since Pascha. The Monday after Pentecost is the Feast of the Holy Spirit, while the Sunday after Pentecost is the Feast of All Saints. This is the logical liturgical sequence, since the coming of the Holy Spirit is fulfilled in us as we pursue holiness and sanctity in our own lives—that holiness and sanctity which constitute the very purpose of the creation and salvation of the world: “Thus says the Lord: ‘Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I your God am holy’” (Leviticus 11:44-45, 1 Peter 1:15-16).

Thus, Pentecost ushers in a new era, in which we are called to pursue sainthood by acquiring the Holy Spirit, by opening ourselves to the fullness of Christ's revelation to mankind, and by anticipating the Kingdom of God, yet to be fully revealed, but already fully present in our midst as we entreat the Holy Spirit to “come and abide in us” now and in the life of the world to come. ■

Fr. Thomas Hopko (1939-2015) was an American Orthodox priest and theologian known for his non-academic writings and books for converts.

■ ORTHODOX LIFE EVENTS

Preparing for The Baptism of a Child

In the Orthodox Church, typically a child will be brought to church for baptism about **forty days** after birth. During those forty days, as the child becomes stronger and bonds with his mother, preparations need to begin to be made for the baptism.

First of all, an **appropriate date** needs to be selected. For most people in the West, baptism is not merely a religious initiation, but it is also a familial celebration. Therefore, parents need to reflect on what dates might or might not work for family and friends to be in attendance. Likewise, the good of the parish needs to be considered, as well as the liturgical calendar. Properly celebrated, the baptism of a child should serve an evangelistic and community building function in addition to bringing a new member into Christ's holy Church.

Additionally, the parents need to identify baptismal **sponsors** (a.k.a. “godparents”). Sponsors need to be Orthodox Christians in good standing. Typically, they will be a married couple, but other configurations are possible as well. If there is only one godparent, it is typical that it should be a person of the same gender as the baby. Just like with the scheduling of the date for the baptism, parents must choose godparents for the child in consultation with their priest.

After a date is set, the parents and sponsors need to make or acquire the following items: **a cross pendant, a baptismal candle, and a white robe**. The cross can be made of any material and need only be identifiable as a Christian cross. The candle, likewise, can be of any size, but larger candles are preferred. There is no particular decoration that is required for the candle, although many families desire to have elaborately decorated candles. Similarly, the white robe or “baptismal dress” may take virtually any form that is appropriate to an infant, it simply needs to fit the child.

At some point before the baptism, parents should select a **patron saint** for their child, whose name the child will receive in baptism. This is the name under which the child will receive sacraments (i.e. communion,



confession, marriage, etc.) throughout life, unless there is a name change due to ordination, monastic tonsure, etc. The name of the child's patron does not need to match any part of the child's legal or civil name. Many parents like to purchase an icon of their child's patron saint and bring it to the baptism.























When the day of the baptism draws near, the parents and godparents should receive **holy confession**. Additionally, the godparents should consider undertaking a **strict fast** (i.e. only water) on the day prior to the baptism as a means of spiritual purification. This is an ancient custom and associates the baptism with Holy Friday, the day of Christ's death, which is the strictest of all fasting days.

The parents and godparents should also prepare to **receive holy communion** with the child at the next liturgy that follows the baptism. The infant will be the first communicant for three successive weeks following the baptism and should be presented for communion by the godparents and parents together. Baptism is not complete and fulfilled until the child has received holy communion, so this should be attended to at the earliest possible opportunity. ■

Holy Trinity Calendar LIVE Please note that at this time, all services at Holy Trinity are being live-streamed. To watch them online, please visit holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube

Chapel Calendar

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28 Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Council Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	29	30	31  Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	June 1 	2 Vespers, 6pm	3 Memorial Divine Liturgy, 9am
4 HOLY PENTECOST Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Kneeling Vespers, 11:45 Annual Parish Picnic, Holmes-Foster Park, 1pm	5 Day of the Holy Spirit Divine Liturgy, 8am Vespers, 6pm	6 Divine Liturgy, 8am Lecture series: "Preparing to Read the Fathers," 8pm	7 Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	8	9	10 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confession, following
11 All Saints Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Holy Unction, 12:30pm	12 	13  Lecture series: "Preparing to Read the Fathers," 8pm	14  Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council Meeting, 7pm	15 	16 	17  Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confession, following
 All Saints of North America Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	18 	19  Lecture series: "Preparing to Read the Fathers," 8pm	20  Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	21 	22  Vespers, 6pm	23  Nativity of St. John Divine Liturgy, 9am Great Vespers, 6pm Confession, following
 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	25 	26  Lecture series: "Preparing to Read the Fathers," 8pm	27  Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	28 Sts. Peter & Paul Divine Liturgy, 8am Vespers, 6pm	29  Divine Liturgy, 9:30am @ Holy Apostles, 7111 Wertzville Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17015	30 July 1 Great Vespers, 6pm Confession, following
2 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Akathist to St. John of San Francisco, 12:30pm	3	4  Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	5	6 	7	8 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confession, following

- 6/3/23 10:00 a.m. Pentecost Memorial Saturday Divine Liturgy (Provide names of those departed you wish remembered)
- 6/3/23 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers with Litya
- 6/4/23 10:00 a.m. Pentecost Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.
- 6/4/23 12:00 p.m. Pentecost Kneeling Prayers
- 6/4/23 1:00 p.m. Patronal Feast Picnic @ the Rectory (CHS provides meat/ beverages; bring covered dishes to share as well as a chair)
- 6/6/23 6:00 p.m. Choir rehearsal
- 6/7/23 6:00 p.m. Daily Vespers/Akathist to St. Nectarius following
- 6/10/23 10:00 a.m. Spring Flower Planting
- 6/10/23 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 6/11/23 10:00 a.m. All Saints Sunday Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis (TBD)
- 6/11/23 5:30 p.m. Mini Golf Outing
APOSTLES' (Sts. Peter and Paul) FAST
- 6/13/23 6:00 p.m. Choir rehearsal
- 6/17/23 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 6/18/23 10:00 a.m. All Saints of America Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis (TBD)
- 6/20/23 6:00 p.m. Choir rehearsal
- 6/24/23 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 6/25/23 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis @ 1:30 p.m.
- 6/26/23 6:30 p.m. "Hats and Blankets for Babies" Knitting/Crocheting
- 6/27/23 6:00 p.m. Choir rehearsal
- 6/28/23 6:00 p.m. Sts. Peter and Paul Vespers Divine Liturgy
- 7/1/23 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 7/2/23 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis @ 1:30 p.m.

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

June 2023