

medical mission team in August! Hooray! I still have to cover the flight and room/board expenses to cover for the rest of my ten week stay (about \$1,700). ¡Gracias! —*Kendra Sophia Meshnik*

Kendra, Alejandro Sandoval (also going to Guatemala to work) and Spencer Seraphim (now working in Serbia) are beautiful examples of how our parishioners are reaching out to do charitable and missionary work.

- NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN:

The birthday of Saint John the Baptist will be celebrated with Vespers at 6:15 PM, June 23 and Liturgy at 9 AM, on June 24. We remember that the Lord Jesus Christ praised St. John as the “greatest of those born of woman” and so we are eager to praise him too in the Divine Services.

- PILGRIMAGE TO FORT ROSS, JULY 4th

Each year Orthodox faithful gather on July 4th for the Divine Liturgy and picnic at Fort Ross (the Independence Day Pilgrimage has been going on since the 1920s). It takes some effort to plan and get out to the Fort, especially on a holiday. What great spiritual benefit there is to commune at the Liturgy, giving thanks to God in a place of sanctity and natural beauty, where St. Innocent prayed. Shouldn't Independence Day be a unique day of thanksgiving for our freedoms rather than just a long weekend's rest?

- SPIRITUAL GEMS:

All the weaknesses we find in ourselves and all the things that upset us, we tend to try and push aside and get rid of. But we cannot do this. We have to accept that 'this is me' and allow grace to come and heal it all. That is the great secret of suffering, not to push it back but to open the depths of the unconscious... —*Fr. Bede Griffiths*

The Fifth Beatitude that was spoken in the Sermon on the Mount is, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy (Matt. 5:7). It is possible that no other commandment of Christ is needed more in our epoch than this commandment of mercy, of charity. We live in the era of ideologies which in their attempt to be all-encompassing exist in continuous strife, and this strife fills the world with fear and hatred. We live in a world where mercy and charity are exiled, and that that is perhaps the most frightening thing about it, the sign of its dehumanization. How often it is told about Christ in the Gospels that He had compassion on them, that He was merciful to them!

—*Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, reposed Dec. 13, 1983*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holy Pentecost - June 19, 2016

- TROPARION OF PENTECOST, Tone Eight:

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast shown forth the fishermen as supremely wise, by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit, and through them Thou didst draw the world into Thy net; O Lover of man, glory be to Thee.

- KONTAKION, Tone Eight:

When the Most High came down and confused the tongues, He divided the nations; but when He distributed the tongues of fire, He called all to unity; therefore with one voice we glorify the All-holy Spirit.

Epistle: The Acts of the Apostles 2: 1–11

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, June 18: 9 AM, Memorial Divine Liturgy
Afternoon: decoration of the Church
5 PM, VIGIL for the Feast
- Sunday, June 19: 9–10 AM, Confessions
10 AM, Divine Liturgy and *Kneeling Vespers*
12:30 PM, Agape Meal
- Monday, June 20: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, Day of the Holy Spirit
- Wednesday, June 22: 6 PM, Daily Vespers
- Thurs., June 23: 6:15 PM, Great Vespers for the feast of the Nativity of John the Baptist
- Friday, June 24: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy

- HOLY COMMUNION:

We welcome our visitors and our guests this morning, and would remind them, as well as all Parish members, that the reception of Holy

Communion is reserved for Baptized and Chrismated Orthodox Christians. If you are a visitor to the Church, and would like to speak to a priest about Orthodoxy, please call or see Fr. Lawrence after the Divine Liturgy. No Orthodox Christian should approach the Chalice to receive Holy Communion unless he or she has prepared by fasting, *Prayers Before Holy Communion* and a regular and **recent participation** in the Holy Sacrament of Confession. *Recent* means: within the last month. It seems unfortunate—although necessary—to remind ourselves that the entire Divine Liturgy is important, and therefore we should arrive before the Liturgy starts, not after, especially if we are preparing to receive Holy Communion. Those who arrive late to the Liturgy should examine themselves to see if they are in fact prepared.

- PENTECOSTAL GRACE—Abbot George of Mount Athos:

At every Divine Liturgy of our Church we have Pentecost. How does the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ? Don't they become through the descent of the Holy Spirit? There is Pentecost! Every Holy Altar of the Orthodox Church is the Upper Room of Pentecost. At every Baptism we have Pentecost. With the grace of the Holy Spirit, a person becomes a Christian and becomes one with the Body of Christ. Every tonsuring of a Deacon, Priest and, of course, a Bishop, is a new Pentecost. The Holy Spirit descends and makes a person a co-worker with God. Every Confession of a Christian is again Pentecost. The moment the Christian kneels to his Confessor and with humility tells him his sins with repentance and the Confessor reads him the blessing of forgiveness, he is forgiven by the grace of the Holy Spirit. At every gathering and at every Mystery of the Church it is a continuation of Pentecost, because they are performed in the presence of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, all activities, prayers and the Mysteries of the Church begin with a prayer: "O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth...come and abide in us..." We ask the Comforter to come, the Paraklete, the Holy Spirit. And He comes. Wherever the Orthodox Church—the true Church of Christ—meets, there also is the grace of the Holy Spirit. Every Saint of our Church is a Spirit-bearing man or woman, full of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a person of Pentecost.

- HOLY CHRISM—Fr. Anthony Alevizopoulos

Through Holy Chrism the Church receives and accepts the entire man and sustains the human person; it is for this reason that the entire person is anointed, sanctified and armed in order to progress victoriously in his spiritual struggles, in which he participates with all his being. In this way the personal character of the gift of the Holy Spirit shows us that the human personality is not done away with by the induction of each and every believer into the Body of Christ. This union takes place without confusion of the various persons, who remain distinct and different; their unity in the one Body of Christ does not abrogate them, but to the contrary, shows them forth and elevates them. All the members of the body of the Newly-Illumined are anointed and sealed with the "seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit" and with the visible sign of Holy myrrh, and the entire man becomes God's property "God's dwelling-place" and "temple of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 3,16-17; 6, 19). The gifts of the Holy Spirit are transmitted to the newly-illuminated and he becomes in his entirety charismatic, putting on the the panoply of God, ready for spiritual battle (Eph. 6,10-18). This struggle can become very arduous (Eph. 6. 10-13). A Christian must labor in order to acquire the evangelical virtues. God accepts man's efforts and pains, He sanctifies him and offers him His Grace and mercy abundantly, showing him forth to be a victor (Rom. 9,16; I Cor. 3,7; Eph. 2,8).

- SAINT SERAPHIM WEEK:

Many thanks to the hardworking and very creative teachers at this year's St. Seraphim Week for kids. Once again, as last year, I would like to especially express my thanks and admiration for the involvement of our teens who were involved. Well done! —Fr. Lawrence

- GUATEMALA TRIP:

¡Adios! My final day at St. Seraphim is Pentecost (returning in October), after which I will be leaving for Guatemala to serve in an Orthodox medical center! If you are still considering supporting me, see me Sunday, or give your donation to our lovely secretary Bobbi anytime while I'm gone. She will be able to transfer the funds directly to me. Write check to *Kendra Meshnik*. Thank you to those who have already generously donated! I have raised \$1,300 which covers the cost of the two weeks OCMC