

- CHRISTIAN JOY:

*These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full* (John 15:11). It is perhaps, the greatest misrepresentation of Christianity; that it is somehow “joyless” and thus powerless against the general unhappiness and misery of human existence—an unhappiness that must *never* be admitted as being our own fault. I am struggling with my own unhappiness this morning. Things are definitely not going the way I would like—and it’s my fault. Thy will be damned—I want my way! “We must empty ourselves, therefore, of the immoderately high faith we have in ourselves. Often it is so deeply rooted in us that we do not see how it rules over our heart. It is precisely our egotism, our self-centeredness and self love that cause all our difficulties, our lack of freedom in suffering, our disappointments and our anguish of soul and body.” (*The Way of the Ascetics*, Tito Colliander). There it is! How can I expect any joy to come from such “orbiting” around my ego. I am powerless to make myself joyful on my own terms. But there is One that has all power, all love, all joy. OK. Thy will be done—and it is being done. Get with the program, Philip. “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” today! Sometimes I’ve got to give myself a good talking to. —*Fr. Philip McCaffery*

- LIFE’S EMERGENCIES WORKSHOP:

We often remark that life is very complicated. When an emergency hits us, wild-fire evacuation, death of a family member, severe illness, loss of a job, etc. many complications ensue, especially for those who help us navigate the complexities in the midst of that crisis. To address all this, our parish will host a two-hour workshop, led by Jacquelynne Ocana, a professional in the field, on how to deal with such an emergency (see the flyer). Sign up today. Contact Bobbi Griovski at 707-477-8418 or [protectionoffice@sbcglobal.net](mailto:protectionoffice@sbcglobal.net)

- REMINDER:

Those of us who receive Communion each week and at feasts are taught by our Hierarchs to make a sacramental confession at least monthly (see this [Encyclical](#) from the OCA website). For those who commune infrequently, a confession in the days prior is expected. While confessions are heard on any day (except Sundays and Mondays) the best times are at the regularly scheduled Friday “lunch-time confession break” (11:30 AM–1 PM) or Saturday at Vespers. We are on the honor system here, so no one is going to interrogate or check up on you. —*Fr L*

# ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

## PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



**June 4, 2023**

**PENTECOST - The Descent of the Holy Spirit**



- 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

**Gospel:** John 7:37–52, 8:12

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## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, June 2: 11:30–1 PM, Confessions in St. Seraphim (Fr Nicholas)  
Noon, Funeral for Maaza Sibhatu (former parishioner) at *Santa Rosa Memorial Cemetery*.  
Repast here following burial
- Saturday, June 3: 9 AM, Memorial Divine Liturgy (Protection Church)  
5 PM, VIGIL for the Feast
- Sunday, June 4: 9:15 AM, Chrismation of Vickie Swing  
10 AM, Divine Liturgy, followed by *Kneeling Vespers*  
Pot-Luck Agape Meal to follow  
4 PM, *Cantiamo Concert in the Cathedral*
- Monday, June 5: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy for Holy Spirit Day
- Wednesday, June 7: 6 PM, Vespers
- Thursday, June 8: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy (Feast of St. Theodore)  
7 PM, Online Bible Study with Fr James
- Friday, June 9: *No Friday Confessions this week*

• 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 ordination 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.

- Pentecost: Today the New Israel—the Church—celebrates the Great Feast of Pentecost the world over. As a prefiguration of what was to come the Old Israel also kept the feast of Pentecost, which took place 50 days after Passover. Here are the names which the Jews used for this day:

- “The Feast of Weeks”—*Shavuot*—since a week of weeks (7 weeks of 7 days + 1) divides *Pesach*—Passover—from *Shavuot*. 7 weeks of 7 days, + 1 day, is an image of the Eighth Day, the Eternal Day of God's Kingdom, the day beyond the time of this world, represented by the number 7.

- “The Feast of First-Fruits”—*Hag ha-Bikkurim*—on which the first fruits of the early harvest were brought to be offered in the Temple. The seven weeks from *Pesach* to Pentecost are just enough for a new crop of wheat to be planted, nurtured, tended and harvested in time to be offered. An ancient Christian prayer sees the grain gathered together and transformed into bread as a symbol of the Church, gathered into unity from all the nations.

- “The Feast of the Giving of the Law”—*Hag Matan Torah*—celebrating the giving of the Law—not the receiving of the Law. The Law was given to Moses on a particular day in a particular year, and Pentecost celebrates that unique event, but, as the Jewish teachers point out, the receiving of the Law is something that should happen every day. The Christian Pentecost celebrates the giving of the Spirit, poured out on the Disciples as tongues of fire descending from above. No longer do we have the Jewish Law, we live under Grace, as St Paul so clearly explains in his epistles.

- A FEW DAYS REST:

I will be away Thursday afternoon, June 7, back Saturday afternoon. —*Fr L*

- BAPTISM HERE:

Fr Niphont and the community of All Saints Antiochian Mission in RP will be using our adult baptismal font on Saturday, June 10, at 1 PM.