

SparkLight

Enlightening Monthly Updates Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church June 2020

Illumination by the Spirit is the endless end of every virtue.
Saint Symeon the New Theologian

“Why do you seek the living among the dead?” Luke 24:5

This is the question posed by angels to the myrrh-bearing women very early on Great and Holy Pascha Morning. They had come in earnest to anoint the body of Jesus who died on the Cross before sundown on Friday. He was then embalmed with myrrh and aloes, wrapped in a clean linen cloth, and laid in a new tomb by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (Matthew 27:57-66; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42). These were the same women that had followed Jesus during His earthly ministry in Galilee. They provided for Him and His disciples out of their own means (Mark 15:41). They remained faithful to Jesus even during the most dangerous time of His arrest, trial and crucifixion. They not only stood by the cross, but accompanied him to his burial, noticing where the tomb was located.

Because of the impending Sabbath, it was necessary for the burial preparations to be brief. Jewish custom at the time dictated that mourners return to the tomb every day for three days. Once the Sabbath (Saturday) had passed, the women returned at the earliest possible moment, bringing myrrh to anoint the body of Jesus according to custom (Luke 23:55-56).

The disciples had scattered and closed themselves off behind locked doors. Two of them were travelling to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, talking about all the things that had transpired. (Luke 24:13-14). The women however remained steadfast in faith, prepared themselves, and went to continue to minister to Jesus. They were undeterred in their action; they felt the need to continue to care for Christ. There were many difficulties - they were worried about the large stone that was placed before the door of the tomb; it wasn't the only obstacle. The tomb had been sealed (Matthew 27:62-66) with the official seal of the governor of Rome. Breaking the seal would incur the Empire's wrath. There were also the guards - sent by Pilate to guard the tomb - at the behest of the chief priests and Pharisees. And yet - they went; and arrived at the tomb, very early on the first day of the week (Sunday) with the spices that they had assembled (Luke 24:1).

They were not prepared for what they found. When they approached the Tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away they were perplexed (Luke 24:4). Then they came upon two men (angels) in shining garments who asked them “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” (Luke 24:4-5)

The question – startled them – opening their eyes to Glory they could not understand. One of the many beautiful Resurrectional hymns of the Church (Αί μυρροφόροι γυναῖκες...)¹ references this extraordinary moment and follows the first question with another: “Why do you mourn the incorruptible One amidst corruption?”

“He is not here, but is risen!” (Luke 24:6)

“See the place where they laid Him.” (Mark 16:6)

The myrrh-bearing women were resolute in their action. They unflinchingly came to the tomb – but... they came to anoint the Body of the Crucified Christ – expecting His Body to be subject to the same decay as our sinful bodies. The faith of the women, while stronger than that of the hiding disciples, was still imperfect in that they prepared for the corruption of Christ’s body.² It was made perfect through Christ. They offered themselves as servants seeking to attend to what was needed at the moment. What they encountered changed the world forever!

These women are the first witnesses of the supreme event in all history: The Resurrection of Christ and the destruction of death. The faithfulness of the women shows that, in Christ, divine order is being restored to the fallen world.³ Christ’s death reconciles humanity to God by causing every aspect of our corrupt human nature to be transformed, for whatever divinity touches is healed. Christ accepts human nature in order to sanctify human nature; He accepts our weakness in order to make us strong; He takes on our sin in order to free us from sin; He suffers in order to transfigure suffering; and He enters death in order to destroy it.⁴

The eyes of the women were opened to see the glory of God! They carried this message to the Apostles, who emboldened by the Grace of the Holy Spirit (Feast of Pentecost) spread the Good News to all the world. They were following our Lord’s final commandment given on earth: “to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20).

Our hearts have also experienced this great victory. Our ears have heard the same proclamation of the angels that “He is Risen!” Our eyes have been opened to recognize that we too, stand in the presence of God!

Like the myrrh-bearing women we may be confronted with our own obstacles that seem too great to overcome. We are being called to follow their courageous example – to be resolute in our actions and boldly offer ourselves in service to Christ. Our humble, imperfect offerings will be made perfect through God’s Grace. He will transform our actions so that they may fulfill what is truly needed at the moment.

We are the recipients and ambassadors of the victory that dawned from the Tomb. We are the messengers that have been commissioned to go into the world and ‘make disciples of all nations.’ This is not done by our own strength but only in the power of God.

The minds of all have been illumined by the Divine Resurrection. May our lives be transformed to see the True Light and recognize that we stand in the presence of God. May we be granted the boldness to utter in true faith: “I believe Lord” and fall down and worship Him. In kindness, love, and His Truth, may we persevere.

Faithfully,

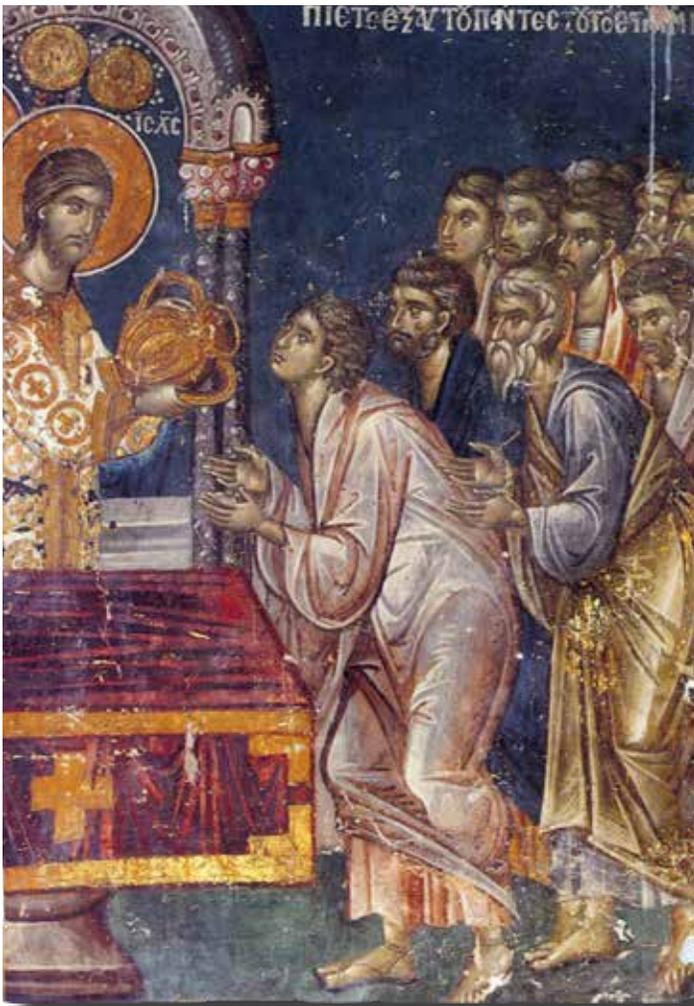
Father Peter

¹ Attending the Life-giver’s tomb at daybreak, the myrrh-bearing women found an angel seated on the rock; and he spoke to them, saying, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? Why do you mourn the incorruptible One amidst corruption? Go, announce it to His disciples.”

² Orthodox Study Bible, page 1414.

³ Orthodox Study Bible, page 1356.

⁴ Orthodox Study Bible, page 1414.



A Note on the Common Communion Spoon

By: Rev. Alkiviadis C. Calivas

Liturgical spoons existed from at least the sixth-seventh century.¹ But it does not mean that they were used for Communion. In fact, canon 101 of the Penthekte Synod (691-692) prohibits the use of any receptacle for the reception of the consecrated Bread other than the human hand.² The canon reads: "So that if anyone should wish to partake of the pure Body during the time of the synaxis...let him form his hands into the shape of a cross, and thus approaching, let him receive the communion of grace...For we nowise welcome those men who make certain receptacles out of gold or any other material to serve instead of their hands for the reception of the divine gift."³

Before the eleventh/twelfth century everyone, clergy and people alike, received the Holy Gifts separately, in the manner the clergy do to this day.

When the people approached, they extended their hands, right over left with palms open, on which the priest placed a portion of the holy Bread. After consuming the Bread, the communicants were offered the Cup by the deacon.⁴

The first clear evidence for the use of communion spoons appeared in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. As we learn from the noted canonist Theodore Balsamon (+ca. 1195), the common spoon had become the established norm in many places by the mid-twelfth century. Commenting on canon 101 of the Penthekte Synod, he complained that the traditional way of distributing Communion was being abandoned in some areas.⁵

Centuries later, in a comment on the same canon, St. Nikodemos (+1809) suggests that the introduction of the communion spoon came about as a result of the scarcity of deacons. By the late twelfth century many churches were served by a single priest, which made the administration of the eucharistic elements separately both awkward and difficult. The problem was solved with the introduction of the spoon. The priest was now able to offer the eucharistic elements together in a spoon. In addition, St. Nikodemos tells us that the placement of the holy Gifts directly into the mouth of communicants helped to curb abuses and avoid spillage when drinking from the Cup. Evidently, some people were careless and dropped particles of the Holy Bread. Others hid it and "used it for wicked purposes."⁶

¹ On the history of the communion spoon see Robert F. Taft, "Byzantine Communion Spoons: A Review of the Evidence," in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* (DOP), vol. 50 (1996), 209-238; and Taft, *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, vol. VI, *The Communion, Thanksgiving, and Concluding Rites*, (Rome 2008), 266-306. The early communion spoons (λαβίς or κοχλιαριον) were larger and deeper than those we use today.

² On the Penthekte Synod and liturgical reforms see Calivas, *Aspects of Orthodox Worship* (Brookline, MA), 227-234.

³ Pedalion/Rudder, 408

⁴ See, for example, the description in Cyril of Jerusalem, *Mystagogical Catechesis*, V: 21, 22.

⁵ See Rallis and Potlis, *Οι Θείοι και Ιεροί Κανόνες*, (Athens 1853), vol. 2, 548.



The use of the communion spoon was not enacted by a synod, ecumenical or local. Its use came about gradually. Initially, the spoon may have been used to commune the sick and the dying. At first, as one would expect, its use in the Liturgy met with some resistance, as any significant liturgical innovation would. Replacing the centuries old manner of receiving the consecrated Gifts separately, based on the biblical model, was not easy. However, new pastoral needs made the use of the spoon inevitable. In the final analysis, the spoon was accepted, even reluctantly, because it did not violate, contradict, or compromise any doctrinal teachings.

The method by which Communion is administered is purely functional. It serves a practical purpose. Thus, as warranted by needs and circumstances, a local Church in its collective wisdom and authority is free to adapt, modify, and manage the method by which Holy Communion is distributed. Whatever method a Church chooses, the single most important concern is that it does not violate any dogmas and that it is appropriate; that it upholds and maintains the dignity of the sacred act of communing.

We learn from St. Nikodemos that during plagues priests were known to use arbitrary methods to administer communion to the sick and dying.⁷

In a comment on canon 28 of the Penthekte Synod, he chides the clergy for using unsuitable methods to deliver Communion to the sick. He recommends a more appropriate method. He writes: "Hence, both priests and prelates must employ some shift in time of a plague to enable them to administer communion to the sick without violating this canon; not, however, by placing the holy Bread in currants, but in some sacred vessel, so that the dying and the sick may take it thence with tongs or the like. The vessel and the tongs are to be placed in vinegar, and the vinegar is to be poured into a funnel, or in any other manner that they can that is safer and canonical."⁸

⁶ Pedalion/Rudder, 410.

⁷ To my knowledge, no one has yet undertaken a thorough examination of the historical record to ascertain how the Church handled various pastoral needs—especially the distribution of Communion—in times of major epidemics and other crises which effected societal and ecclesial norms. In such instances, did the long-standing custom of infrequent Communion play a role? Was it a mitigating factor? We know, for example, that in Constantinople and other large cities during the mid-seventeenth century the lengthy burial services enshrined in the Great Euchologion were being abbreviated in order to manage the inordinate number of funerals due to epidemics and the casualties they produced. See Ioannis M. Fountoulis, *Τελετουργικά Θέματα* (Athens 2002), 157-160. What other changes and concessions has the Church made in times of crises?

⁸ Pedalion/Rudder, 322 (note).

St. Nikodemos' brief note is significant in two ways. First, he insists the vessels used for Communion be sterilized with vinegar, a popular disinfectant from ancient times. This is an acknowledgment that the vessels or instruments used for communing could be contaminated by dangerous parasitic microbes. Second, he insists that the instrument be fitting for the purpose.

In the past forty years several worldwide deadly epidemics, AIDS, SARS, Ebola, and MERS provoked fear among the people. Presently, the world is experiencing another more frightening global threat: the pandemic coronavirus or COVID-19, a contagion with lethal force which has upended all social, economic, political, cultural, and religious norms. People are justly apprehensive and frightened. The disease has already infected millions of people and claimed the lives of thousands globally. As with the preceding epidemics, the highly contagious coronavirus has many people wondering and questioning the continued use of a common spoon for Communion.

The real fears, reservations, and apprehensions of the people should not be dismissed with an air of superiority or a call to greater faith, as if the act of communing is void of human considerations and the limitations of the created order. People want to feel safe, listened to, and protected by their Church. They do not want to be exposed to unnecessary risks, nor should they be.

Statements like, "the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ, and the medicine of immortality," or "the Eucharist is a divine remedy, a divine medicine," may be true. But they are not sufficient to calm the fears and concerns of the faithful. People are not questioning the sacred character and identity of the Holy Gifts but the reliability of the instrument by which the Gifts are offered to them.

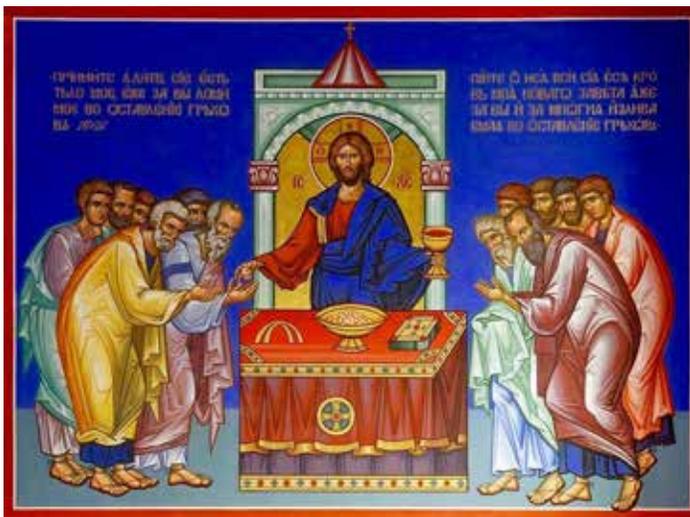
In my sixty-four years in the priesthood, I have consumed the chalice thousands of times after countless Divine Liturgies without fear or hesitation, as every priest does. I am not certain, however, that every faithful parishioner would do the same, if they were asked. My point is this. Holy Communion

should be a source of joy, hope and strength for everyone and not a test or measure of one's faith in God's providential care (Matt. 4:5-7). St. Paul reminds us that the love of Christ requires that we care for all persons, whatever their situation and be sensitive and responsive to their just needs and concerns for the sake of the Gospel (1 Cor. 9: 19-23).

Orthodox sacramental theology, distinguishes between what is mystical and what is physical. The divine realities in each sacrament are distinct from the material elements by which they are mediated. We believe and confess that the eucharistic Gifts—the bread and wine—are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ through the prayer of the Church and the power and operation of the Holy Spirit. The change, however, is mystical and

⁹This is in keeping with the dogmatic definition of the Fourth Ecumenical Synod of Chalcedon: "Therefore, following the holy fathers, all of us teach unanimously that everyone must confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is one single and same Son, who is perfect according to divinity and perfect according to humanity, truly God and truly man... consubstantial with the Father according to divinity and consubstantial with us according to humanity, completely like us except for sin; He was begotten by then Father before all ages according to his divinity and, in these latter days, He was born for us and our salvation of Mary the Virgin, the Theotokos according to His humanity; one single and same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, known in two natures, without confusion, without change, without, division, without separation (ασυγχυτως, ατρεπτως, αδιαιρετως, αχωριστως); the difference of nature is in no way suppressed by their union, but rather the properties of each are retained and united in one single person (προσωπον) and single hypostasis (υποσταση)...". In Archbishop Peter L'Huillier, *The Church of the Ancient Councils* (Crestwood, NY 1996), 194.

Two examples will illustrate that the natural properties of the bread and wine are retained. Persons who suffer from a severe form of celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder, react badly when they ingest gluten, a protein in wheat, barley, rye and other grains, from which most prosphora are made. These persons often request that they be give the tiniest morsel of the consecrated Bread for fear of a bad reaction. Newly ordained clergy, who are not used to drinking alcoholic beverages, often have difficulty consuming and purifying the Chalice after the Liturgy on an empty stomach. Even more to the point, the reserved sacrament which is traditionally prepared and consecrated every Holy Thursday is handled in a special way. After it has dried thoroughly, it is separated into small pieces and placed under or over fire (heat). This is done to help preserve it.



not physical. The bread and wine preserve their natural properties and qualities and are bound to the natural laws of their kind.⁹ The mode by which the transformation of the Gifts takes place remains a profound mystery. But we know by faith that the change occurs, so that Christ may become our food in order to impart his life to us (John 6:56).

The communion spoon is an imperfect material object. It does not share in the incorruptibility of the risen and deified Body of Christ which is really present to us through the eucharistic elements. On its own, the spoon is simply a spoon, a utensil. Its dignity is derived from its use as the instrument by which the Body and Blood of Christ is offered to his people. Long ago, it replaced an older venerable form of communing. The use of a spoon to commune the people was an innovation.

Today, the very thought of replacing the common spoon has caused great anxiety in some circles. There are those among the clergy and the laity who see the replacement of the common spoon or any other kind of departure from the current practice as a repudiation of the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Of course, this is not true.

In response to the present deadly pandemic, three local Churches have already instituted changes in the manner by which Holy Communion is distributed.¹⁰ Circumstances require that every local Church study the issue carefully taking into consideration the cultural and hygienic sensibilities of the people and the sanitary measures and

protocols of their respective countries.

The Church of Russia has introduced a small but significant change in the traditional manner of administering Communion, which appears to be based on the model suggested by St. Nikodemos. The common communion spoon is dipped in alcohol and wiped clean after each communicant. The Church of Romania allows the people to bring their own spoon from home. In Ukraine Communion is distributed via intinction—a portion of the Bread is dipped in the chalice and placed by the priest in the hand of the communicant.

In addition to these, several other models have been proposed. Some who wish to retain the common spoon believe it is sufficient to teach the communicants to tilt their head back and open their mouth wide, so that the priest may drop or pour the sacred elements into the mouth of the recipient. The aim of this method is to avoid touching the communicant's mouth and lips. However, this model is not fail-safe; it does not guarantee the desired outcome. Another suggestion, close to the Romanian model, allows each family to bring its own "family communion spoon" which will be used to commune family members only. This model, however, runs counter to the spirit of canon 101 of the Penthekte Synod which prohibits the use of private vessels for fear that they would lead to social distinctions and the like. Communion, as is well known, is both a personal and a communal act. "Unite us all to one another who become partakers of the one Bread and the Cup" (Anaphora of St. Basil). The Ukrainian model, Communion by intinction, has found support in some quarters. It is a version of the ancient practice. However, it is difficult to manage on several counts, the most obvious being communing the elderly, persons with disabilities, and children.

Another model calls for the replacement of the common spoon with multiple individual spoons;

¹⁰ See the important article by Nicholas Denysenko, "Do Sacraments Prevent Illness?" in *Public Orthodoxy*, the online publication of the Orthodox Christian Studies Center of Fordham University.

spoons made from common material and are of equal value, which each local parish provides. According to this model, each parish will obtain (perhaps from a common source) a sufficient number of disposable spoons made of plastic or wood. Once used, each spoon would be collected and properly discarded (burned or buried) after each Liturgy.

Or, each parish procures a sufficient number of reusable metal spoons, all of the same type and material. The used spoons are collected and properly sterilized after each Liturgy and are reused multiple times.

Each of these methods shares a common goal: to administer Communion in the safest, most practical, and most dignified way possible. Whatever the model, the fundamental intent is the same: to mitigate the transmission of dangerous parasitic microbes.

Of the several methods, the use of multiple metal reusable spoons seems to be the safest and most practical, and the one closest to the received tradition. The people are used to the spoon.

Also of concern is the common communion cloth, which many people use to wipe their mouth after communing. This practice is problematic and must end. The common cloth should serve only one purpose, to catch any accidental spillage when administering Communion. A group of people, altar servers and/or regular church goers, should be trained to hold the cloth properly as each communicant approaches. The use of personal disposable paper napkins has also been suggested.



The napkin is placed in a special basket after each use. To avoid difficulties, the people must be taught on the proper use of the personal napkin.

A change in the manner by which Communion is distributed to the people is unavoidable. It is already happening. The question is whether all the Churches will reach an agreement within the foreseeable future or, will local variations apply until the use of multiple individual metal spoons or some other form becomes the standard? In any event, the change is coming. It is important, therefore, that everyone – clergy and people alike – are properly prepared.

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Helping In Times of Need Saint Barbara Philoptochos Sponsored Red Cross Blood Drive

YOU make a difference!

The American Red Cross expressed their gratefulness to the Saint Barbara Philoptochos Society for their continued support during the evolution of the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). Hundreds of thousands of donors and blood drive hosts have responded to the call to support the lifesaving mission and we can't thank you enough!

Our parish recently hosted a successful blood drive on May 13, 2020 that registered 42 total donors. We were able to collect 31 pints of blood and recruit 11 first-time donors. Our efforts help boost the community blood supply and ensure hospital patients have the lifesaving blood they need.

The next blood drive is scheduled for Thursday, June 25th, in the Saint Barbara Grand Ballroom, from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

If you are healthy and able to donate blood, please contact the Red Cross to make an appointment.

The Icon of Pentecost

By: V. Rev. Archimandrite Maximos Constas

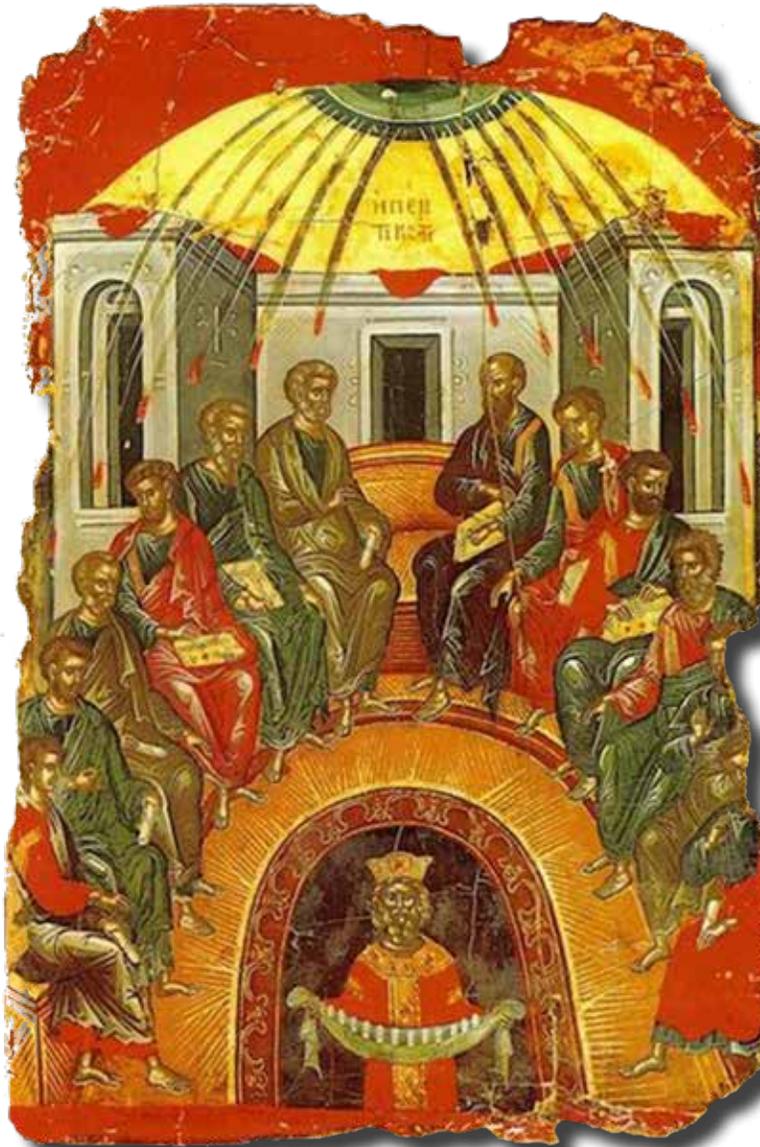
The Pentecostarion, which comprises the fifty days between Pascha and Pentecost, is the most beautiful period in the life of the Church. Just as Great Lent and Holy Week prepared us for the Resurrection, so too the Pentecostarion prepares us to receive the Holy Spirit.

At the feast of the Ascension we sang: "The Lord ascended into the heavens so that He might send forth the Holy Spirit into the world." The divine economy of salvation, which began with the Annunciation, now reaches its conclusion. At His conception, the Word of God clothed Himself in our human nature, and now, at Pentecost, human beings are "clothed with the Spirit" (cf. Luke 24:29), who makes them members of Christ's body, for "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5), and "all who have been baptized into Christ, have been clothed with Christ"

(Gal 3:27). In this way, the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost constitutes the birth of the Church, which is Christ's body. The disciples had previously been in communion with Christ, but now, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, they become members of His body and temples of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 12:27; 1 Cor 6:19).

Consistent with the witness of Scripture (Acts 1:14), many of the earliest surviving images of Pentecost include the Mother of God. In these images, she appears in the midst of the twelve disciples, all of whom are standing on level ground with tongues of fire resting above their heads. After the defeat of Iconoclasm in 843, a new image was developed

in which the disciples – without the Mother of God – are shown seated on a semi-circular bench (known as a synthronon), found in the apse of the sanctuary and reserved for the higher clergy. If the earlier iconography was a simple illustration of the biblical event, the new image was a symbolic depiction of the Church embodied in its hierarchy gathered together in a council. The image shown here (above), which is based on a much older Byzantine prototype, represents the classic form that the iconography of Pentecost was given after the end of Iconoclasm.



The Icon of Pentecost by Theophanes the Cretan, 1546.
Tempera on board, 57x39 cm. Monastery of Stavronikita, Mt. Athos

Here we see twelve figures seated in two groups of six, arranged in strict hierarchical order, beginning with the two chiefs of the Apostles: Peter, on our left and Paul, on our right. Those next to them holding Gospel books are the Evangelists Matthew and Luke (to the left), and John and Mark (to the right). Paul, Luke and Mark were not among the original twelve disciples (cf. Acts 1:13), but the iconographer has placed them here in keeping with

the icon's aim, which is not to depict a historical event, but to present us with a symbolic image of the Church, and of the Spirit's abiding presence in the Church through the Apostles and their canonically ordained successors.

At the center of the synthronon, between Peter and Paul, a space has been reserved, framed by an open door or window rising up behind it. This space is for Christ the High Priest (Hebrews 4:14), who has ascended into the heavens but who continues to be invisibly present as the head of the Church.

From a dome-like hemisphere descend twelve tongues of fire in gently curving trajectories. These can be understood as descending toward the heads of the Apostles (which in this icon, unusually, lack halos), or perhaps as resting there (in place of halos) and pointing toward their divine source, St. John Chrysostom associates these fiery "tongues" with the Word of God, because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the incarnate Word. The work of the Spirit is not different from the work of Christ, but continues His work and actualizes His presence, just as warm breath (pneuma) is the condition for the possibility of speech (logos). The form of the tongue, Chrysostom says, also indicates that the Apostles are called to teach, and "the teacher of truth needs a tongue of fire filled with grace."

Standing in the space that opens up before the apostolic throne is an old man dressed in royal clothing, often identified by an inscription as a personification of "the World." He appears projected against (or emerging from) a dark void. His age indicates that the world is subject to corruption, that it has "grown old like a garment" (Hebrews 1:11), and is "sitting in the shadow and darkness of death" (Luke 1:79). Yet he holds a cloth containing twelve scrolls symbolizing the universal preaching of the Apostles, some of whom appear to be speaking to him and blessing him. Neither the Church nor the world can live without the Holy Spirit. We who are members of the Church need the Church's unceasing invocation of the Holy Spirit, for wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is the Church, and wherever the Church is, there is the Holy Spirit.

Helping In Times of Need Community Dining Room

by: Michele Papadimitriou

During the past several months our parish's continuing mission at the C.D.R. has become quite different due to COVID-19. While we are still preparing and serving food, the dining room is closed, and our meals are being served curbside like all restaurants throughout Connecticut. Coronavirus precautions have limited the number of volunteers that are permitted inside the kitchen, and in an effort to limit exposure, my immediate family has been kind enough to assist me with the preparation, packaging and serving of the meals. As we are all from one household, this helped with safety at this time.

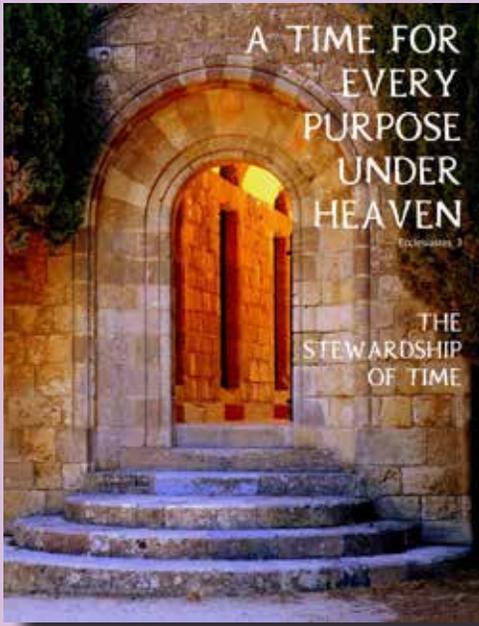
All of us have been hearing and experiencing the challenges that this pandemic has caused to the health and well-being of too many of our brothers and sisters throughout the United States and World. We lift up our prayers to ask God to bring comfort to all of the families that have suffered the death of a loved one and we ask that God remember their souls where the righteous repose.

C.D.R. exists to assist people in their time of need – which has grown exponentially because of the Health and Economic Crisis which has gripped society. We are seeing many new faces visit the C.D.R. as the numbers that we serve continue to increase. Additionally, many of the regular guests

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Above: Elias, Michele, Andrianna and George Papadimitriou.



STEWARDSHIP 2020

Our Stewardship contributions are necessary to help maintain the ministries and programs of our parish. All of us have been mailed the 2020 Stewardship brochure that explains the importance of our lifelong participation.

We are thankful to the following individuals who have pledged \$253,165 towards our 2020 stewardship goal of \$390,000.

If you have not yet made your stewardship pledge, we ask that you please call the Church Office or simply send in your Stewardship donation. Remember to give dedicated and sacrificial attention to your Stewardship donation, keeping an eye toward helping your church reach its Stewardship goal.

In preparation for the great opportunities that lie ahead in the life of this community, the Stewardship Committee is asking everyone to continue that trend and pitch in by increasing your pledge from last year at least 10% or \$50, whichever is greater. As always, we are grateful for your love and support of our parish. Thank you for your continued support.

Mr. John Agapiou
 Mrs. Bessie Agapiou
 Mr. Anthony Alessio
 Mrs. Pamela Alessio
 Mr. Alexander Alexiades
 Miss Alexandra Alexiades
 Mr. Elias Alexiades
 Mr. Nicholas Amoratis & Stacey Cascone
 Mrs. Cynthia Anasson
 Miss Nina Waskiewicz
 Miss Eleni Waskiewicz
 Mr. Charles Waskiewicz
 Mr. Gregory Anastasiou
 Mrs. Aikaterini Anastasiou
 Miss Christina Andriotis
 Ms. Sophia Andriotis-Pampoukidis
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Angeletti
 Mrs. Maryann Angelopoulos
 Mrs. Irene Anthis
 Mr. Nick Anthis
 Mr. James Antippas
 Mrs. Claire Antippas
 Ms. Vasiliki (Valerie) Anton
 Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Antonakis
 Mr. & Mrs. John Antonakis
 Ms. Diamanto Antonellis
 Mr. George Antonellis
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 Mrs. Cleo Apotria
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Mr. Steven Baklas
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 Mrs. Despoina Bakousis
 Mr. James Ballas
 Mrs. Demetra Ballas
 Mrs. Lisa Ballas
 Mr. Paul Ballas
 Mrs. Mary Ballas
 Mrs. Florence Barakis
 Dr. & Mrs. Gregory Baron
 Miss Claudia Basel
 Mr. Edward Basel
 Mrs. Lillian Basel
 Miss Babette Basil
 Dr. Helen Bass
 Mr. Theodore Belales
 Mrs. Angela Belales
 Mr. James Benas
 Mrs. Marina Benas
 Mr. Christopher Benas
 Mr. & Mrs. John Benham
 Mr & Mrs Arkadiusz Bielesz
 Mr. James Bitzonis
 Mrs. Kirsten Bitzonis
 Mrs. Margaret Bratsenis
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 Mrs. Chrisanne Burr
 Kristen Burr
 Mr. Bruce Buzelle

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 Miss Anastacia Coclin
 Miss Alexandra Coclin
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 Miss Marianthe Corradino
 Mr. Joseph Corradino
 Miss Magdalene Corradino
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 Mrs. Sharon Cox
 Mrs. Cathy Dabakis
 Ms. Nicki Dakis
 Mr. A. Paul Dalakas
 Dr. Estell Pappas
 Miss Dorothy Daniel
 Miss Jeannie Daniel

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 Mrs. Pinelopi Daoutis
 Mr. John Daoutis
 Mrs. Mary Daoutis
 Mr. Elias Daskalakis
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 Mrs. Tony Delos
 Mrs. Stacey Ferrence
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 Mrs. Antigoni Diamantes
 Mr. Ilias Diamantis
 Mrs. Maria Diamantis
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 Mr. & Mrs. Al DiGrazia
 Mrs. Melissa Dinar
 Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Dolan
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 Mr. Dan Drago
 Mrs. Monica Drago
 Dr. Andreas Drakonakis
 Mrs. Jane Drakonakis
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 Mrs. Chrysanthi Gavagan
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 Ms. Alexandra Ginieres
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 Mrs. Ioanna Kakaletiris
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 Mr. Dimitrios Groumouzas
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 Mrs. Lisa Stamos Heerdt
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 Mrs. Stacey Shelley
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter G. Simos
 Dr. & Mrs. Derek Smith
 Mrs. Peggy Sofokleous
 Dr. Paris Spanolios
 Mrs. Eugenia Spanolios
 Ms. Alexis Stamos

Ms. Angelika Stamos
 Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Stamos
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Stamos
 Mr. Peter Stamos
 Mrs. Paris Stamos Heath
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 Ms. Angela Stavrianos
 Mr. Andrew Stavrides
 Mrs. Joanna Stavrides
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 Mr. & Mrs. Carl Testo
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 Mrs. Olympia Togridis
 Miss Chrisana Togridis
 Mr. Frank Tomaszek
 Mrs. Laurie Tomaszek
 Ms. Andriana Triantis
 Mr. Dimitrios Triantis
 Mrs. Alexandra Triantis
 Mr. Mihalis Tsoukatos
 Mrs. Evangelia Tsoukatos

Mrs. Evridiki Tzortzatou
 Mrs. Olympia Tzovolos
 Mr. George Vagenas
 Mrs. Vicky Vagenas
 Mr. & Mrs. James Van Allen
 Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Van Dusen
 Mr. & Mrs. John Vartelas
 Mr. Ignatios Vasilellis
 Mrs. Meni Vasilellis
 Mr. & Mrs. Gregg Vautrin
 Mrs. Catherine Vincelette
 Mr. Eleas Vlahos
 Mrs. Efthymia Vlahos
 Mr. Gregory Wachter
 Mrs. Tracy Wachter
 Mr. Herbert Wachter
 Mrs. Helen F. Wachter
 Mr. Michael Wachter
 Mrs. Helen S. Wachter
 Mr. Joseph Welsh
 Mrs. Eleni Welsh
 Mr. Roger Wheeler
 Mrs. Marika Wheway
 Mr. & Mrs. James Winkel
 Mr. Peter Xenakis
 Mr. Steven Yates
 Mrs. Helene Yates
 Mr. Alexander Yates

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Community Dining Room

are not venturing out of their homes, due to fear, and are now dealing with the additional stress that comes from feeling lonely and being isolated. It is heartbreaking to see the guests line up six feet apart in the parking lot, not being able to connect with others. They take their meal 'to go' with no fellowship; we are relegated to enthusiastically wave to them from the window.

The C.D.R. employees and guests constantly thank us for continuing to volunteer. They voiced concerned that we would stop assisting due to the crisis. The truth is that we are needed now more than ever to provide much needed nourishment to people in need. It can seem overwhelming - but there are so many blessings! I'd like to share with you some recent experiences:

We have a regular guest that enjoys engaging everyone in conversation. He was lingering in his car until the end of our 'service' when he finally approached the 'pick-up' table. I realized that he had been waiting because he wanted 'to talk' and didn't want to be hurried away because of others who might have been standing in line behind him. He shared with us his 'mask woes' and the anxiety that

he was experiencing by the 'stay at home' orders. Even though our discussion lasted for just a few minutes – it resonated – and I was so thankful for the opportunity that we had to connect.

On another occasion - I received a beautiful note (pictured below). It brought tears to my eyes as I read it! A guest is thanking us and praising our mission. He even offered us a donation 'for the cause.'

"See a need – fill a need." Everyone has a unique reason for needing the C.D.R. What a powerful reminder to look beyond ourselves and become a bearer of God's mercy, comfort and grace.

