

The Arena

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*"All who love the martyrs, raise up a
divine and worthy hymn, honoring the
most wise Katherine, for she
preached Christ in the arena"*

Kontakion to Saint Katherine

The Newsletter of
SAINT KATHERINE THE GREAT
MARTYR MISSION
ORTHODOX CHURCH OF
AMERICA

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PASTOR'S COLUMN

In his celebrated essay on the sacraments of initiation into the Orthodox Church, Father Alexander Schmemmann brought special attention to the person of the Holy Spirit. His words provide us with much to reflect on as we prepare, with all the saints, to celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the new life we have received through the sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation. The following excerpt is from *Of Water and the Spirit*, 103-104.

Theology defines the Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Trinity; in the Creed we confess Him as proceeding from the Father; from the Gospel we learn that He is sent by Christ to be the Comforter, to "guide us into all Truth" (John 16:13) and to unite us with Christ and the Father. We begin each liturgical service with a prayer to the Holy Spirit, invoking Him as "the Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who is everywhere and fills all things, the treasury of Blessings and the Giver of Life." St. Seraphim of Sarov describes the whole of Christian life as "acquisition of the Holy Spirit." St. Paul defines the Kingdom of God as "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17). We call the Saints the bearers of the Holy Spirit, and we want our life to be spiritual.

Truly the Holy Spirit is at the very heart of Divine Revelation and of Christian life. Yet in speaking of Him it is extremely difficult to find proper words—so difficult indeed that for many Christians the Church's teaching about Him as person has lost all concrete, existential significance, and they see Him as divine power, not as He or

Thou, but rather as a divine *It*. Even theology, while maintaining of course the classical doctrine of the Three Divine Persons when speaking of God, prefers—when dealing with the Church and Christian life—to speak of *grace*, and not of a personal knowledge and experience of the Holy Spirit.

But in the sacrament of anointment we receive the Holy Spirit Himself, and not merely “grace”: such has always been the teaching of the Church. It is the Holy Spirit, and not some divine power, that descended on the apostles on the day of Pentecost. It is He and not “grace” that we invoke in prayer and acquire through spiritual effort. Thus, obviously, the ultimate mystery of the Church consists in knowing the Holy Spirit, in receiving Him, in being in communion with *Him*. And the fulfillment of Baptism in the holy anointment is the personal *coming* and revelation to man and the abiding in him, of the Holy Spirit Himself.

Significantly, Schmemann does not end his reflection here, but immediately asks a sequence of challenging questions that we all, in the face of the glorious feast we now celebrate, would do well to try to answer:

But then the real question is: what does it mean to *know* the Holy Spirit, to *have* Him, and to be *in* Him? . . .

1 PARISH AND LOCAL EVENTS

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS:

June 4: Bible Study @ 7pm

June 6: Eve of Pentecost, Festal Vigil @6pm

June 7: Holy Pentecost, Divine Liturgy @ 9:30am
Coffee Hour: Cutshall, Knowlton, Kvasnikoff, Lekanof
Vespers with Kneeling Prayers following brunch fellowship

June 8: Day of the Holy Spirit
Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity in Wilkeson @ 10am

June 11: Studies in Orthodoxy @ 7pm

June 13: Resurrectional Vigil @ 6pm

June 14: Sunday of All Saints, Divine Liturgy @ 9:30am
Coffee Hour: Potluck

June 15-28: Apostles' Fast

June 17: Parish Council meeting @ 7pm

June 18: Confessions 3-6pm
Bible Study @ 7pm

June 20: Catechesis @ 10am
Resurrectional Vigil @ 6pm

June 21: Sunday of All Saints of North America, Divine Liturgy @ 9:30am
Coffee Hour: Hezel, Huehnergath, Mount, Stchur

June 25: Confessions 3-6pm

Studies in Orthodoxy @ 7pm

June 27: Catechesis @ 10am
Great Vespers @ 6pm

June 28: Divine Liturgy @ 9:30am
Coffee Hour: Ahrens, Grambush, Hayman, Simmons, Wilson
Festal Vigil @ 6pm

June 29: Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, Divine Liturgy @ 7am
Vespers at Holy Apostles Greek Church in Shoreline

June 30: Synaxis of the Twelve Apostles
Matins and Divine Liturgy at Holy Apostles in Shoreline

CATECHETICAL CHALLENGES (Our Catechumens can answer them. Can you?)

1. What four marks of the Christian way of life from the day of Pentecost forward are identified in Acts 2:42?
2. Whom does the Church commemorate on Monday the day after Pentecost?
3. What icon appears on the silver cover of the Gospel Book which we venerate after hearing the proclamation of the Resurrection of Christ at Sunday Matins?

READINGS AND RAMBLINGS

****This is a new column designed to present your contributions. As the title suggests, this column will contain everything from suggested reading and book reviews to topics of personal and communal interest. In short, this column is what we, the parishioners of St. Katherine Mission, want it to be. Please email submissions to Emily Lorelli – ekslorelli@gmail.com.****

Dear parishioners,

We have embarked on a serious effort to acquire property for use as a holy place of worship for our parish, perhaps permanently and certainly for many years. We, as members of the parish, can contribute to this task in no better way than to fervently pray to our Lord Jesus Christ that He bestow his favor and guidance upon us, and to ask the Lady Theotokos and all the Saints to intercede for us that we may succeed in doing the will of God.

Fr. Mancantelli of Billings, Montana was kind enough to recommend this prayer rule. If possible, please add it to your daily rule of prayer and bring it to the attention of others who might be willing to support us in this manner. Regardless of the outcome of the property search, this prayer will help us all fulfill our primary mission of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in love to the world, beginning here on the East Side.

Glenn Rebne (Property Search Committee)

Prayer for Repentance and Church Growth

Please offer this prayer each morning at 10 AM (or as close to that hour as you can):

Lord Jesus Christ our God, Thou didst promise that when two or three are gathered together in Thy name, Thou Thyself wouldst be in their midst. We call out to Thee with one voice, one mind and one heart, asking for the communion of Thy Most Holy Spirit, a converted heart which burns with love for God and our neighbor, and the growth of our parish.

Give us the grace to help our parish grow to establish Thy peace and righteousness upon the earth. Show us when and how to speak to, to pray, and to love Thy lost sheep, and bring them into the safety of Thy fold. We ask this through the prayers of our Most Pure Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and the Holy Great-martyr Katherine, patroness and protector of our holy parish.

For Thou, O Christ our God, art worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing; and we praise Thee, together with Thy Father, Who is from everlasting, and Thy Most Holy, Good, and Life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Synaxis of All Saints: June 14

The Sunday following Pentecost is dedicated to All Saints, both those who are known to us, and those who are known only to God. There have been saints at all times, and they have come from every corner of the earth. They were Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, Monastics, and Righteous, yet all were perfected by the same Holy Spirit.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to rise above our fallen state and to attain sainthood, thereby fulfilling God's directive to "be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44, 1 Peter 1:16, etc.). Therefore, it is

fitting to commemorate All Saints on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

This feast may have originated at an early date, perhaps as a celebration of all martyrs, then it was broadened to include all men and women who had borne witness to Christ by their virtuous lives, even if they did not shed their blood for Him.

St Peter of Damascus, in his "Fourth Stage of Contemplation," mentions five categories of saints: Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, and Monastic Saints (PHILOKALIA [in English] Vol. 3, p.131). He is actually quoting from the OCTOECHOS, Tone 2 for Saturday Matins, kathisma after the first stichology.

St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (July 14) adds the Righteous to St Peter's five categories. The list of St Nicodemus is found in his book THE FOURTEEN EPISTLES OF ST PAUL (Venice, 1819, p. 384) in his discussion of I Corinthians 12:28.

The hymnology for the feast of All Saints also lists six categories: "Rejoice, assembly of the Apostles, Prophets of the Lord, loyal choirs of the Martyrs, divine Hierarchs, Monastic Fathers, and the Righteous...."

Some of the saints are described as Confessors, a category which does not appear in the above lists. Since they are similar in spirit to the martyrs, they are regarded as belonging to the category of Martyrs. They were not put to death as

the Martyrs were, but they boldly confessed Christ and came close to being executed for their faith. St Maximus the Confessor (January 21) is such a saint.

The order of these six types of saints seems to be based on their importance to the Church. The Apostles are listed first, because they were the first to spread the Gospel throughout the world.

The Martyrs come next because of their example of courage in professing their faith before the enemies and persecutors of the Church, which encouraged other Christians to remain faithful to Christ even unto death.

Although they come first chronologically, the Prophets are listed after the Apostles and Martyrs. This is because the Old Testament Prophets saw only the shadows of things to come, whereas the Apostles and Martyrs experienced them firsthand. The New Testament also takes precedence over the Old Testament.

The holy Hierarchs comprise the fourth category. They are the leaders of their flocks, teaching them by their word and their example.

The Monastic Saints are those who withdrew from this world to live in monasteries, or in seclusion. They did not do this out of hatred for the world, but in order to devote themselves to unceasing prayer, and to do battle against the power of the demons. Although some people erroneously believe that monks and nuns are useless and unproductive, St John Climacus had a high regard for them: "Angels are a light for monks, and the monastic life is a light for all men" (LADDER, Step 26:31).

The last category, the Righteous, are those who attained holiness of life while living "in the world." Examples include Abraham and his wife Sarah, Job, Sts Joachim and Anna, St Joseph the Betrothed, St Juliana of Lazarevo, and others.

The feast of All Saints achieved great prominence in the ninth century, in the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI the Wise (886-911). His wife, the Holy Empress Theophano (December 16) lived in the world, but was not attached to worldly things. She was a great benefactor to the poor, and was generous to the monasteries. She was a true mother to her subjects, caring for widows and orphans, and consoling the sorrowful.

Even before the death of StTheophano in 893 or 894, her husband started to build a church, intending to dedicate it to Theophano, but she forbade him to do so. It was this emperor who decreed that the Sunday after Pentecost be dedicated to All Saints. Believing that his wife was one of the righteous, he knew that she would also be honored whenever the Feast of All Saints was celebrated.



WISDOM OF THE FATHERS

In the Old Testament **Pentecost** was the feast which occurred fifty days after Passover. As the passover feast celebrated the exodus of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt, so Pentecost celebrated 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 as the celebration of Christ's death and resurrection, the "exodus" of men from this sinful world to the Kingdom of God. And in the New Testament as well, the

pentecostal feast is fulfilled and made new by the coming of the "new law," **the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Christ.**

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 ... (Acts 2:1-4).

The Holy Spirit that Christ had promised to his disciples came on the day of Pentecost (*Jn 14:26, 15:26; Lk 24:49; Acts 1:5*). The apostles received "the power from on high," and they began to preach and bear witness to Jesus as the risen Christ, the King and the Lord. This moment has traditionally been called the birthday of the Church.

In the liturgical services of the feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit is celebrated together with the full revelation of the divine Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The fulness of the Godhead is manifested with the Spirit's coming to man, and the Church 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 is also called **Trinity Day** in the Orthodox tradition. Often 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 - is placed in the center of the church. This icon is used with the traditional **pentecostal icon** which shows the tongues of fire hovering over Mary and the Twelve Apostles, the original prototype of the Church, who are themselves sitting 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 **fiftieth day** stands as the beginning of the era which is beyond the limitations of this world, fifty being that number which stands for eternal and heavenly fulfillment in Jewish and 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 the day of the **final and perfect end** (in Greek *eschaton* means the end). For when the Messiah comes and the Lord's Day 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 which was preached on the first Sunday of Pentecost (*Acts 2: 1-7; Joel 2: 28-32*).

Once again it must be noted that the feast of Pentecost is not simply the celebration of an event which took place centuries ago. It is the celebration of what must happen and does happen to us in the Church today. We all have died and risen with the Messiah-King, and we all have received his Most Holy Spirit. We are the "temples of the Holy Spirit." God's Spirit dwells in us (*Rom 8; 1 Cor 2-3, 12; 2 Cor 3; Gal 5; Eph 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.

The **Divine Liturgy of Pentecost** recalls our baptism into Christ with the verse from Galatians again replacing the Thrice-Holy Hymn. Special verses from the psalms also replace the usual antiphonal psalms of the liturgy. The epistle and gospel readings tell of the Spirit's coming to men. The kontakion sings of the reversal of Babel as God unites the nations into the unity of his Spirit. The troparion proclaims the gathering of the whole universe into God's net through the work of the inspired apostles. The hymns *O Heavenly King* and *We have seen the True Light* are sung for the first time since Easter, calling the Holy Spirit to "come and abide in us", and proclaiming that "we have received the heavenly Spirit." The church building is decorated with flowers and the green leaves of the summer to show that God's divine Breath comes to renew all creation as the "life-creating Spirit." In Hebrew the word for spirit, breath and wind is the same word, **ruah**.

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit: through them Thou didst draw the world into Thy net. O Lover of Man, Glory to Thee (Troparion).

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! (Kontakion)

The **Great Vespers of Pentecost evening** features three long prayers at which the faithful kneel for the first time since Easter. The Monday after Pentecost is the **feast of the Holy Spirit** in the Orthodox Church, and 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 men by their becoming saints, and this is 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" (*Lev 11:44-45, 1 Pet 1:15-16*).



THE ORTHODOX FAITH

An excerpt from Fr. Hopko's *The Orthodox Faith: Doctrine, Volume II*

The Symbol of Faith: Creation

... Maker of Heaven and Earth ...

The Orthodox Church believes that God the Father is the "Creator of Heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible."

To **create** means to make out of nothing; to bring into existence that which before did not exist; or, to quote the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom once more: "to bring from non-existence into being."

The Orthodox doctrine of **creation** is that God has brought everything and everyone which exists from non-existence into being. The Scriptural description of creation is given primarily in the first chapter of **Genesis**. The main doctrinal point about creation is that God alone is uncreated and ever-existing. Everything which exists besides God was created by Him. God, however, did not create everything individually and all at once, so to speak. He created the first foundations of existence, and then over periods of time (perhaps millions of years, see *2 Pet 3:8*) this first foundation of existence-by the power which God had given to it -- brought forth the other creatures of God:

Let the earth put forth vegetation ... let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures ... let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds ..." (Gen 1:19, 20, 24)

Thus, although God is certainly the creator of everything, He acts gradually in time and by means of things previously made by Him to which He has given life-producing potencies and powers.

According to the Orthodox Faith, everything that God makes is "very good": the heavens, the earth, the plants, the animals, and finally man himself (Gen 1:31). God is pleased with creation and has made it for no other purpose than to participate in His own divine, uncreated existence and to live by His own divine "breath of life" (Gen 1:30; 2:7).

*By the Word of the Lord
the heavens were made,
and all their host by the
breath [or Spirit] of His mouth.*

*He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle;
He put the deeps in storehouses.*

*Let all the earth fear the Lord,
let all the inhabitants of the world
stand in awe of Him!
For He spoke, and it came to be
He commanded, and it was made!
(Ps 33:6-9)*

In the above-quoted verses as well as in the account of Genesis we must notice the presence and action of God's Word and God's Spirit. God the Father makes all that exists by means of His Divine Word -- "for He spoke and it came to be" -- and by His Divine Spirit who "moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen 1:2). We see already a glimpse of the Holy Trinity to be fully revealed in the New Testament when the Word becomes flesh and when the Holy Spirit comes personally to the disciples of Jesus on the day of Pentecost.

We must make special notice as well of the goodness of the created physical world. There is no dualism in Orthodox Christianity. There is no teaching that "spirit" is good and "matter" is bad, that "heaven" is good and the "earth" is evil. God loves His entire material creation with His eternal love and, as we shall see, when the physical creation is mined by sin He does everything in His power to save it.

Loving the whole of His good creation, God the Father dwells within the world that He has made because of His goodness and love for man. The omnipresence of God is one of the divine attributes of the Creator particularly stressed in Orthodox Christian teaching. This fact is directly affirmed in the prayer to the Spirit of God which is used as the opening prayer of Orthodox worship:

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life! Come and abide in us. And cleanse us from every impurity. And save our souls, O Good One!

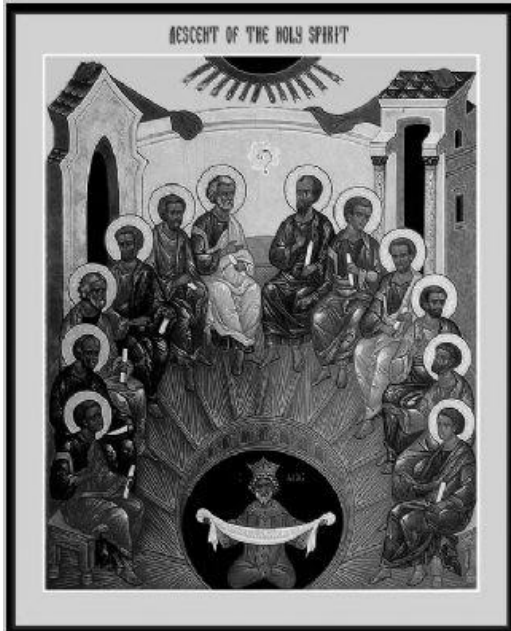
The fact that Christians pray: Our Father who art in heaven ... (or, literally, "in the heavens") is also an affirmation of the fact that God is present everywhere, for wherever men move on the face of the earth, over the seas or in the air, the heavens surround them with the presence of God. The Lord Jesus Christ, in order to have men realize that the true God, His Father, is not bound to one or another particular place, as were the pagan gods, teaches men to pray to the Father "in the heavens." For the one true and living God is present to all, over all, embracing and encompassing all with His heavenly care and protection. The God who is "over all" is also "through all and in all" (Eph 4:5). By His Word and His Holy Spirit, God "fills all in all" (Eph 1:10, 23).

Thus, the Apostle Paul also proclaimed to the Athenians, that whether men realize it or not, "in Him we live and move and have our being," for "He is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:27-28). It is this fact of God's omnipresence in His creation, and our own presence in and to Him, that is witnessed to so beautifully in Psalm 139:

*Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from Thy Presence?
If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there!
If I make my bed in Sheol, Thou art there*

If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Thy hand shall lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Let only darkness cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to Thee, the night is bright as the day; for darkness is as light with Thee! (Ps 139:7-12)

🎵 HYMNOGRAPHY: JUNE



June 7: Holy Pentecost

Troparion - Tone 8

Blessed art You O Christ Our God
You have revealed the fishermen as most wise
By sending down upon them the Holy Spirit
Through them You drew the world into Your net
O Lover of Man, Glory to You!

Kontakion - Tone 8

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!

June 14: Synaxis of All Saints

Troparion - Tone 4

As with fine porphyry and royal purple,
Your church has been adorned with Your martyrs' blood shed throughout all the
world.

She cries to You, O Christ God:
Send down Your bounties on Your people,
Grant peace to Your habitation, and great mercy to our souls!

Kontakion - Tone 8

The universe offers You the God-bearing martyrs,
As the first fruits of creation, O Lord and Creator.
Through the Theotokos, and their prayers establish Your Church in peace!

June 21: Synaxis of the Saints of North America

Troparion - Tone 8

As the bountiful harvest of Your sowing of salvation,
The lands of North America offer to You, O Lord, all the saints who have shone in
them.

By their prayers keep the Church and our land in abiding peace
Through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One.

Kontakion - Tone 3

Today the choir of Saints who were pleasing to God in the lands of North America
Now stands before us in the Church and invisibly prays to God for us.
With them the angels glorify Him,
And all the saints of the Church of Christ keep festival with them;
And together they all pray for us to the Pre-Eternal God.

June 28: Synaxis Veneration of Sts. Cyrus and John

Troparion - Tone 5

O Christ our God, You did grant us the miracles of Your holy martyrs
As a stronghold and protection.
Through their prayers, strengthen those in authority in every good deed,
For You alone are merciful and love mankind!

Kontakion - Tone 3

O holy ones, you received as a grace the power of miracles:
Do not cease to pour out your wonders on us.
By spiritual skill, cut out our passions, O two great physicians,
Divinely inspired Cyrus and Holy John!

June 29: Holy Apostles Peter and Paul

Troparion - Tone 4

First-enthroned of the apostles,
teachers of the universe:
Entreat the Master of all
to grant peace to the world,
and to our souls great mercy!

Kontakion - Tone 2

O Lord, You have taken up to eternal rest
and to the enjoyment of Your blessings
the two divinely-inspired preachers, the leaders of the Apostles,
for You have accepted their labors and deaths as a sweet-smelling sacrifice,
for You alone know what lies in the hearts of men.

Kontakion - Tone 2

Today Christ the Rock glorifies with highest honor
The rock of Faith and leader of the Apostles,
Together with Paul and the company of the twelve,
Whose memory we celebrate with eagerness of faith,
Giving glory to the one who gave glory to them!

PARISHIONERS' NAME DAYS – JUNE

June 4: Megan (Martha) Carlisle -- Righteous Martha the sister of Lazarus

June 11: Nathaniel Cutshall

June 27: Patty (Joanna) Rebne – St. Joanna the Myrrbearer

June 29: Brody (Peter) Rebne -- The Holy Glorious and All-Praised Leader of the Apostles, Peter

PRAYER REQUESTS

Note: If you wish to have someone included on our parish prayer list for remembrance during the divine services, please notify Fr. John before the end of the month. This list will in most cases be cleared at the beginning of each month.

Please include the following people, both Orthodox and non-Orthodox, in whatever prayers you can offer. Each of them is in special need this month for our common intercessions before God.

Living

Sarah

Patricia

Flore

Allan Simeon

Deborah Maria

Yelena and the child to be born of her

Sarah Maria and the child to be born of her

Peg

Janet

Elie

Departed

Catechetical Challenge Answers:

1. "Steadfast" adherence to (1) the Apostles' doctrine, (2) the fellowship, (3) the breaking of the bread, and (4) the prayers.
2. The Holy Spirit
3. The icon of the Resurrection