

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

June, 2013 - Volume XVIII, Issue 6

St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church - A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese

From a treatise of St. Basil the Great on the Holy Spirit

*died 379AD
Feast Day ~ June 14*

Inside:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>St. Sophia</i> | 2 |
| <i>Parish News</i> | 6 |
| <i>Living the Trinity</i> | 4 |
| <i>Calendar</i> | 5 |

Like the Father and the Son, the Spirit is incomprehensible, since He partakes of the same nature. We can learn about the loftiness of the Spirit's nature not only because He shares the same titles and works as the Father and the Son, but also because He, like them, cannot be grasped by our thoughts. The Lord says that the Father is beyond human conception, and that the same is true of Himself, the Son. Concerning the Father He says: "O righteous Father, the world has not known Thee." [John 17:25] By the world He does not mean the whole complex of heaven and earth, but this life of ours, subject to death and endless troubles. Concerning Himself he says: "Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me." [John 14:19] Again, by "world" He means those who are tied down by a material and carnal life, and restrict truth to what is seen by their eyes. They refuse to believe in the resurrection, and become unable to see the Lord with the eyes of their hearts. So neither the Father nor the Son may be seen by the "world," but notice that He uses the same language concerning the Spirit: "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." [John 14:17]

A carnal man's mind is not trained in contemplation, but remains buried in the mud of fleshly lusts, powerless to look up and see the spiritual light of the truth. So the "world" - life enslaved by carnal passions - can no more receive the grace of the Spirit than a weak eye can look at the light of a sunbeam. First the Lord cleansed his disciples' lives through His teaching, and then He gave them the ability to both see and contemplate the Spirit. He says, "You are already made clean by the word which I have spoken to you." [John 15:3] Therefore, "the world cannot receive Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; you know Him for He dwells with you." Isaiah says, "Thus saith the Lord God,...who settled the

earth and the things in it; and gives breath to the people on it, and Spirit to those who tread on it:' [Is. 42:5] from this we can learn that those who trample earthly things and rise above them become worthy to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. What should we think about Him? The world cannot receive Him, and only holy men can contemplate him through purity of heart. Is there any limit to the honor He deserves?

St. Sophia *Feast Day ~ June 2*



When we hear the name St. Sophia, we usually think of the 2nd century mother of daughters Faith, Hope, and Charity, who saw her children tortured and murdered for being Christians in the persecutions of the Emperor Hadrian. We also think of the term “*Hagia Sophia*” - Holy Wisdom - which has been used for church names since the time of the great Hagia Sophia church in Constantinople.

But there is another, less well known St. Sophia whom we honor on June 2. Sophia had everything that a young woman could ask for: enough wealth to live comfortably, a loving husband, and six beautiful children. Sophia made certain that her children were brought up in the Christian faith. But with the cruel suddenness of worldly disasters, Sophia’s happy life came to an end during a plague epidemic. She watched helplessly as her husband and all six children were stricken with the illness and died.

After a period of mourning, Sophia realized that she could not continue to harbor her grief, nor could she waste her life asking the foolish question, was God punishing her for some wrong she had done? She knew that, having been spared from the pestilence, God now expected her to live the remainder of her precious life in his service.

Sophia consulted her parish priest, who helped her distribute much of her wealth to the needy, and then she opened her spacious home as a place of refuge for the many children who had been orphaned by the plague. She is said to have adopted more than a hundred children, and she loved, cared for, and taught each of them as she had her own biological children. Sophia became known as the “Mother of orphans”.

A story is told of St. Sophia's hospitality which is reminiscent of the Old Testament story of Elijah and the self-replenishing cruse of oil given to the widow of Zarephath [I Kings 17:8ff]. Whenever anyone would come to St. Sophia's house to ask for help or inquire about any of the children, she would always offer them a cup of wine. Strangely, the Greek urn in which she kept the wine never emptied no matter how many cups of wine she served. After many years, Sophia told this to her parish priest who assured her that she had been witnessing a miracle. This same priest urged her to take vows as a monastic and she continued her service and ended her life as a nun.

The Psalmist said, weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." [Ps. 30:5]. St. Sophia shows us how this applies to the life of one who has experienced great sorrow, but who, through caring for others, received the joy of having served Christ faithfully. May we follow her example and may she pray for us at the heavenly throne.

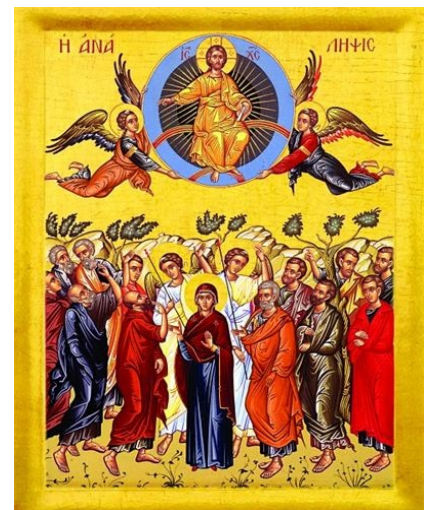
Parish News

We will celebrate several of the great feast days in the liturgical year in the month of June. On June 9, the Fifth Sunday after Easter, we anticipate the Rogation days (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the following week) by ending the service outside (weather permitting) to offer prayers for God's creation and bless the gardens.

Ascension Day will be celebrated on the Eve, Wednesday, June 12, with Vespers at 7:00, Liturgy at 7:30 and a pot-luck supper following. The Feast of Pentecost is on June 23 when we hear of the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles and the establishing of the Church. As is our custom at St. Gregory's, we will read the story of that first Pentecost in as many languages as we can manage, recalling that the Apostles were able to miraculously be heard in the many languages represented in first-century Jerusalem. June 30 is Trinity Sunday, when we affirm our belief in the Triune God.

On June 9, we will also commemorate the one-year memorial for Carol Lackman with prayers for the departed at the end of Liturgy (new humeral veils to be used at Solemn Mass, which have been given in Carol's memory, will be blessed at this time).

A most joyous event will take place on Thursday, June 27, at 7:30PM in the church when Paul Higgins and Allyson Soulé will be joined in marriage. A reception will be held in the parish



hall following the service. St. Gregory's members are all invited to join in this celebration.

Looking ahead, the Eastern Dioceses Parish Life Conference will be held near Allentown, PA, July 3-7. Please speak with Fr. Nicholas for more information.

Living the Trinity

by Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia

A genuine confession of faith in the Triune God can be made only by those who, after the likeness of the Trinity, show love mutually towards each other. There is an integral connection between our love for one another and our faith in the Trinity: the first is a precondition for the second, and in its turn the second gives full strength and meaning to the first.



So far from being pushed into the corner and treated as a piece of abstruse theologizing of interest only to specialists, the doctrine of the Trinity ought to have upon our daily life an effect that is nothing less than revolutionary. Made after the image of God the Trinity, human beings are called to reproduce on earth the mystery of mutual love that the Trinity lives in heaven.

Each social unit - the family, the school, the workshop, the parish, the Church universal - is to be made an ikon of the *Tri-unity*. Because we know that God is three in one, each of us is committed to living sacrificially in and for the other; each is committed irrevocably to a life of practical service, of active compassion.

Our faith in the Trinity puts us under an obligation to struggle at every level, from the strictly personal to the highly organized, against all forms of oppression, injustice and exploitation. In our combat for social righteousness and "human rights", we are acting specifically in the name of the Holy Trinity.

The most perfect rule of Christianity, its exact definition, its highest summit, is this: to seek what is for the benefit of all, states St. John Chrysostom. ...I cannot believe that it is possible for someone to be saved if he does not labor for the salvation of his neighbor. Such are the practical implications of the dogma of the Trinity. That is what is meant to live in the Trinity.

Reprinted from a pamphlet published by International Orthodox Christian Charities.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| <h1>June 2013</h1> | | | | | <i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i> | 1 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i> |
| 2 Fourth Sunday after Easter; Ss. Marcellinus, Peter and Erasmus, Mm, 304 <i>W</i> | 3 St. Kevin of Glendalough Ab, c. 618 | 4 St. Petroc, C, 564 | 5 St. Boniface, BM, 754 | 6 | 7 | 8 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i> |
| 9 Fifth Sunday after Easter; St. Columba of Iona, Ab, 597 <i>W</i> | 10 Rogation Monday; St. Margaret of Scotland, QW, 1092 | 11 St. Barnabas, Apostle, 1st c.; Rogation Tuesday | 12 Vigil of the Ascension; Ss. Basilides, late 3 rd c., Cyrinus, Nabor & Nazarius, c. 303, Mm <i>Mass at 7:30pm</i> <i>W</i> | 13 Ascension Day | 14 St. Basil the Great, BCD, 379; of the Octave of Ascension | 15 of the Octave of Ascension; Ss. Vitus, Modestus & Crescentia, Mm, c. 303 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i> |
| 16 Sunday after the Ascension <i>W</i> | 17 of the Octave of Ascension | 18 St. Ephrem the Syrian, DnCD, 373; of the Octave of Ascension | 19 of the Octave of Ascension; Ss. Gervase & Protase, Mm, 2nd. C | 20 Octave Day of the Ascension; St. Silverius, PM, 538; Translation of St. Edward, KM, 980 | 21 | 22 Vigil of Pentecost (omit St. Alban, Proto-martyr of England, 209 and St. Paulinus, BC, 431) <i>Vespers at 6pm</i> |
| 23 Pentecost (omit St. Etheldreda, QV, 679) <i>R</i> | 24 Monday after Pentecost | 25 Tuesday after Pentecost | 26 Ember Wednesday in the Octave of Pentecost; Ss. John & Paul, Mm, c. 362 | 27 Thursday after Pentecost | 28 Ember Friday in the Octave of Pentecost St. Irenaeus of Lyons, BM, 202 | 29 Ember Saturday in the Octave of Pentecost <i>Vespers at 6pm</i> |
| 30 Trinity Sunday; First Sunday after Pentecost <i>W</i> | 1 Nativity of St. John the Baptist (<i>transferred</i>) | 2 Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary; St. John Maximovitch BC, 1966 | 3 Ss. Peter & Paul, Apostles, 1st c. (<i>transferred</i>); St. Leo II, PC, 683 | 4 Corpus Christi; comm. of St. Paul the Apostle; of the Oct. of Ss. Peter & Paul (<i>Independence Day</i>) | 5 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul | 6 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul <i>Vespers at 6pm</i> |

Confessions are heard following Vespers, during the Psalms at Matins, and by appointment.

Coffee Hour follows Sunday Liturgy. Sunday School for children is held during Coffee Hour.