St. John The Baptist Orthodox Church

Orthodox Church in America

A Parish of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

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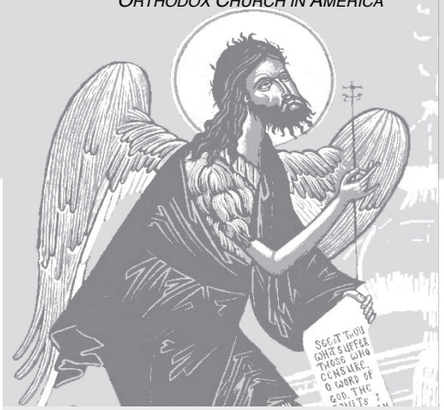

June 19, 2016

PENTECOST – FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY
Holy Apostle Jude,

- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy & Vespers with kneeling prayers
  Epistle: Acts 2:1-11
  Gospel: Jn. 7:37-52, 8:12
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.

Schedule of Services

Monday, June 20 - Day of the Holy Spirit
9:00am - Divine Liturgy

Thursday, June 23
6:00pm - Great Vespers with Litya

Friday, June 24 - Nativity of St. John
9:00am - Divine Liturgy

Saturday, June 25
6:00pm - Great Vespers

Sunday, June 26 - All Saints
9:00am - Divine Liturgy

Department of Christian Education Orthodox Church in America

The Trinity is not in THE SHACK

Pentecost is the decisive manifestation of the Holy Trinity. At Theophany the Father's voice is heard, telling us that Jesus Christ is His beloved Son who does His will. The Holy Spirit confirms the Father's Word. Now, at Pentecost, all the promises Jesus made are fulfilled. The apostles, armed with the Spirit, are ready to go forth to make Him known and to baptize in the name of the Trinity.

The Nicene Creed states fundamental truths about the Persons of the Trinity. It tells us that they are equal, yet there is a hierarchy because the Son is begotten of the Father and the Holy Spirit proceeds from Him. It describes something all three Persons share: they are worshipped and glorified. But it also describes things that are particular to each of the Persons: the Father is in heaven with the Son at His right hand; the Son became Man; the Holy Spirit spoke by the prophets.

"The Shack" is a fictional tale about a man called Mack who is angry and sad because his daughter was murdered. He meets the author's imagined version of the three Persons of the Trinity. During a weekend of intimate conversations with them, he gains comfort and a deeper understanding of God's ways.

The book's trinity bears no relation to the Triune God, or to the teachings of the Creed. God the Father (in the book a motherly Afro-American woman who is called "Papa") tells Mack, "We don't need power over the other...Hierarchy would make no sense among us." But Christ's obedience to His Father is not based on power, but on trust and love. To assert that hierarchy must be based on one person having power over another is simply wrong.

"The Shack" also muddles the distinctive acts of each Person of the Trinity. Papa's wrists bear scars, and Mack says to Papa, "I'm so sorry that you, that Jesus, had to die." But Scripture tells us that Jesus, not the Father or the Spirit, died on the cross. By diluting this truth, the book could undermine an uninformed reader's comprehension of the depth of Jesus' love for us. He willingly died shamefully, painfully and alone so that we could have eternal life! Some have praised this book for its down-to-earth way of depicting God and His purposes. But presenting the almighty Lord as a pal with whom we can be familiar and casual is dangerous. We are not God's equals; we are His creatures. Nor are we in a position to demand explanations from Him, as Mack does.

Readers also say the book comforted them in sorrow. But we have real stories of real people to inspire us in dark times. Mother Maria Skobtsova and Father Arseny are just two Orthodox believers who struggled with great loss, yet forgave their persecutors and persevered in trusting God.

Most of all, we have the Trinity, not an imagined one but the One shown to us through Jesus Christ, who as we remember today can even make simple fishermen "most wise."

Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in you prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Genevieve Bobenko, Mary Fechisin, Andrew Fabian, Edward Fedush, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

Birthday Greetings

Happy 3rd birthday to **Xenia Kary**, and happy birthday to **Fred Beckmann**, both celebrating today. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Floral Offerings

Flowers for the feast of Pentecost were given by Maryann Stagen in memory of her father John, on the Anniversary of his Birth. May his Memory be Eternal!

Announcements

✦ **Father's Day Greetings** to all fathers, grand-fathers, great grandfathers, godfathers and uncles of our Parish. Let us honor our fathers by praying for them and showing our love and respect. May God bless all fathers with good health, joy, peace for Many Years! Let us also not forget to pray for our departed fathers who have entered Eternal Life. May their Memory be Eternal!

✦ Please note: this week of Holy Pentecost is a **fast - free week**, so there is a general dispensation from fasting on Wednesday and Friday.

Welcome Visitors

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy. It is our joy to have you with us today. If this is your first visit to our parish, we welcome you and invite you to return as often as you are able.

While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to join us in venerating the Cross, receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, and for fellowship in our Church Hall after the service.