

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH
605 Washington Ave., Manville, NJ 08835-1856
Voice: 908-685-1452 / fax: 908-685-1074
Email: frjames@ssppoc.org
Website: www.ssppoc.org

BULLETIN OF APRIL 29, 2007

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

SUNDAY/APRIL 29th
4th Sunday of Pascha: The Paralytic
(Tone 3); St. Basil of Ostrog
9:10a.m. 3rd and 6th Hours
9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy; Coffee Hour;
Church School & Question/Answer Period

TUESDAY/MAY 1st
7:00p.m. Vespers
7:45p.m. Lesser Blessing of Waters

WEDNESDAY/MAY 2nd
Mid-Pentecost Feast: The 25th Day of the
50 Days of Pentecost
9:10a.m. 3rd and 6th Hours
9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

SATURDAY/MAY 5th
Icon of the "Inexhaustible Cup"
9:30a.m. Akathist to Icon, "Inexhaustible Cup"
Confessions
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/MAY 6th
5th Sunday of Pascha: The Samaritan
Woman (Tone 4); Righteous Job the Long-
Suffering
9:10a.m. 3rd and 6th Hours
9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy; Coffee Hour
Book-for-the-Month of Spiritual Reading from
the Parish Library
7:00p.m. Compline with Akathist to
St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre (May 7th)

Fasting Days
Wednesday, May 2nd – Fish, wine & oil permitted
Friday, May 4th – Wine & oil permitted



Icon of Mid-Pentecost

Contemplate the Resurrected Lord Jesus

How for 40 days after the Resurrection He remained on earth, showing Himself to the faithful and strengthening them in the Faith;

How by His 40 day manifestation, He demonstrated that He did not resurrect for His own sake, but for the sake of mankind;

How His Resurrection brought unspeakable joy to those who loved Him;

How His Resurrection brought unspeakable bitterness to those who hated Him;

How His final coming into the world, in glory and power, will evoke different feelings among different people – either joy or bitterness.

How by His Resurrection, He justified the faith and hope of mankind in immortality;

How by His Resurrection, He destroyed the fear of death in the faithful.

The Paschal Season of the 50 Days

- The hymn "Christ is Risen" is sung or said at the beginning and ending of all services and prayers.
- There is no kneeling or making of prostrations either in our homes or at church services until the divine Pentecost (May 27th).
- Wednesday and Fridays remain fasting days, but wine and oil are permitted.
- The prayer "O Heavenly King..." is omitted until Pentecost.
- The scriptural cycle for this paschal period is the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of John.
- Orthodox Christians greet each other for the 40 days until Ascension Thursday with the expression: "Christ is Risen!" and the response, "Indeed he is Risen!"

Offerings for the week of April 29th

Olive Oil – in memory of Emilia; for the health of Kalyn (birthday); in memory of Joan; in memory of Michael; for the health and salvation of Gabriela-Antoaneta.

Wine – for the health of Barbara (birthday); in memory of Peter and Nicolae.

Flowers – in memory of Joseph; in memory of Deacon Gregory.

The Sunday Bulletin

May be picked up Saturday evening. Ask one of the men to get it for you from the sacristy. As a courtesy, the Sunday Bulletin is mailed out to those that are home-bound and to those the rector notices who were absent from church on a given Sunday. If you do not want to receive the Bulletin in the mail- or if you can read it on the parish website – please let Father James know, so the mailings may be cut down. Thanks!

The Parish Library

A good number of books and videos are overdue. Please check what you have at home and return them to the library. Thanks!

The Parish Synodicon

April 29, 1949 Joseph Bulat
April 29, 1964 Infant Body
May 01, 1986 Mary Julio
May 02, 1989 Deacon Gregory Lapchuk
May 02, 1998 Rose Lorenick
May 03, 1926 John Petrovich
May 03, 1984 Olga Saffron
May 03, 1985 Helen Kudelko
May 04, 1973 John Holovach
May 05, 1961 John Ivaniec
May 05, 1970 Katherine Nebozinsky



12th Annual Church Run – Sat. June 2nd

Last year our parish joined other local parishes in this Run. Reserve the date more information will be forth-coming.

Parish Council Meeting

May 10th, Thursday at 7:00p.m.

The Feast of Mid-Pentecost

Is celebrated in the middle of this period of the 50 Days (Pascha-Pentecost). This moveable feast falls this year on May 2nd and is celebrated for one week to the leave-taking on May 9th. The following tropar and kontakion are sung/said during this time and are added to our evening and morning prayers:

Tropar Tone 8

In the middle of the Feast, O Saviour,
Fill my thirsting soul with the waters of godliness,
As Thou didst cry to all:
If anyone thirst, let him come to me and drink!
O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee!

Kontakion Tone 4

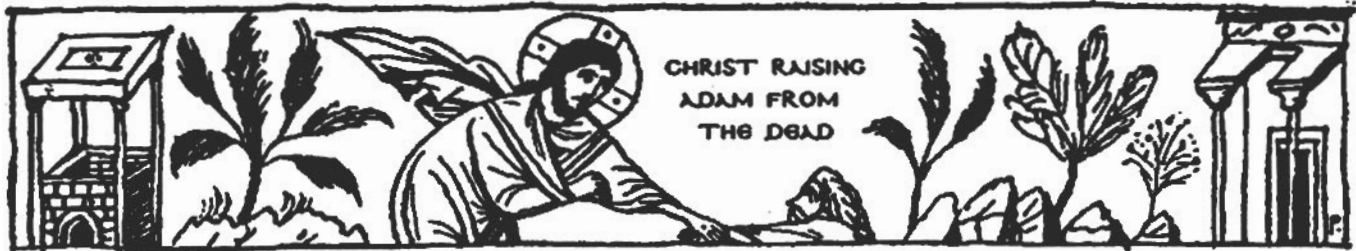
Christ God, the Creator and Master of all,
Cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law:
Come and draw the water of immortality!
We fall before Thee and faithfully cry:
Grant us Thy bounties, for Thou art the Fountain of
Our life.

Parish Offering Envelopes for May & June

Have been mailed out. All parishioners receive them. If you are not receiving envelopes, you are probably not registered as a parishioner. Please speak with Father James.

ON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos



In the texts of Holy Scripture eleven appearances of the Risen Christ are presented, of which ten took place during the time between the Resurrection and the Ascension and one after Pentecost. Some of them are described analytically and others are simply listed. Not all described by the Evangelists, that is to say that all eleven are not mentioned in each Gospel separately, some are mentioned by one Evangelist and some by another.

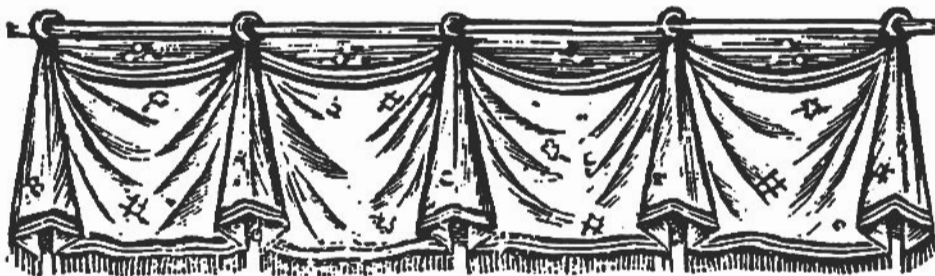
Obviously there were other appearances of the Risen Christ. What St. Luke says in the Acts of the Apostles is characteristic: "to whom he also presented himself alive after his suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1,3). It is natural that this should have been so because He wanted, on the one hand to comfort them, and on the other hand to prepare them for His Ascension, as well as for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

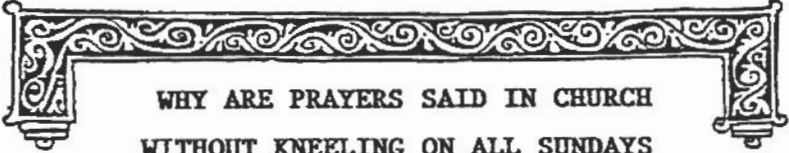
The following are the eleven appearances of the Risen Christ:

1. To Simon Peter (1 Cor. 15, 5, Lk. 24, 35).
2. To Mary Magdalene (Mark 16, 9-11, Jn. 20, 11-18)
3. To the Myrrh-bearing women (Matt. 28, 9-10).
4. To the two Disciples who were traveling to Emmaus (Mk. 16, 12-13, Lk. 24, 13-15).

5. To the ten Apostles, when Thomas was away (Mk. 16, 14, Lk. 24, 36-43, Jn. 20, 19-25).
6. To the eleven Disciples, when Thomas was also present (Jn. 20, 19-25).
7. To the seven Apostles at the Sea of Tiberias (Jn. 21, 1-23).
8. To the eleven at Galilee (Matt. 28, 16).
9. To the Apostles at Bethany, when He was ascended (Mk. 16, 19-20, Lk. 24, 50, Acts 1, 6-11, 1 Cor. 15, 7).
10. To James the brother of God (1 Cor. 15, 7).
11. To the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 15, 8-9).

These appearances of the Risen Christ are reported in the New Testament. However, there are also many other saints who have been granted to see the Risen Christ. Moreover, the Orthodox Church, which is the Risen Body of Christ, offers the experience of the Resurrection. St. Symeon the New Theologian, referring to the prayer "having seen the resurrection of Christ we worship holy Jesus, Lord, the only sinless one", teaches that we are not referring to the resurrection which the Disciples saw, that is to say it is not a question only of a historical reference, but of the Resurrection, or rather the Risen Christ, whom we see in the Church. We do not say "having believed the resurrection of Christ" but "having seen". Indeed there are many who believe in the Resurrection, but there are also others, be it even a few, who see every hour the Risen Christ brilliant and flashing forth the lightning of immortality and divinity". For truly the Resurrection of Christ "is our resurrection, who lie asleep below". Thus, some are witnesses of Christ's Resurrection "from hearing", and other witnesses "from vision". The latter are the true witnesses of Christ's Resurrection.





WHY ARE PRAYERS SAID IN CHURCH
WITHOUT KNEELING ON ALL SUNDAYS
AND FROM PASCHA UNTIL PENTECOST

As is evident from the Holy Scriptures, bows, kneeling and prostrations were employed during prayer even in the Old Testament. The holy Prophet King David refers to bowing down to God or to His temple in many of the psalms, for example: "Bow down to the Lord in His holy court" (Ps. 28:2); "I shall bow down toward Thy holy temple in fear of Thee" (Ps. 94:6); "Let us go forth into His tabernacles, let us bow down at the place where His feet have stood" (Ps. 131:7).

About kneeling, it is known that the holy Prophet Daniel, for example, thrice daily "knelt upon his knees, and prayed and gave thanks before his God" (Dan. 6:10). Full prostrations are also mentioned in the books of the Old Testament. For example: the Prophets Moses and Aaron besought God, "having fallen on their faces" (Numbers 16:22), to be merciful to the children of Israel who had grievously sinned.

In the New Testament also, the custom of performing kneelings, prostrations and of course bows, had been preserved and still had a place at the time of the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who sanctified this Old Testament custom by His own example, praying on bended knees and falling down upon His face. Thus, we know from the Holy Gospels that before His passion, in the Garden of Gethsemane, He "kneeled down, and prayed" (Matt. 26:39), "fell on the ground and prayed" (Mark 14:35). And after the Lord's Ascension, during the time of the Holy Apostles, this custom, of which the Holy Scriptures also speak, existed unchanged. For example, the holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen "knelt down," and prayed for his enemies who were stoning him (Acts 7:60); the Apostle Peter, before raising Tabitha from the dead, "knelt down and prayed" (Acts 9:40), etc.. It is an indisputable fact that, as under the first successors of the Apostles, so even in much later periods of the existence of the Church of Christ, kneelings, bows and prostrations upon the ground were always employed by true believers at prayers at home and at divine services.

In the Early Church, among the other bodily activities, kneeling was considered the outward manifestation of prayer most pleasing to God. Thus, St. Ambrose of Milan (+ 397) says: "Beyond the rest of ascetic labors, kneeling has the power to assuage the wrath of God and to evoke His mercy." The canons concerning bows and kneelings now accepted by the Orthodox Church and set forth in the books of the divine services, and particularly in the Church Typikon, are observed most strictly in monasteries. But in general, Orthodox Christian laity who have zeal strive to observe the rules just as strictly. Devout desire to kneel must not be exercised on Sundays as well as on all the days between Pascha and Pentecost. According to the ancient tradition and a clear church law, kneeling must not be performed on these days. Why? The brilliant solemnity of the events which the Church commemorates throughout the period of Pentecost, and on Sundays, precludes, in and of itself, any external manifestation of sorrow or lamentation over one's sin: for ever since Jesus Christ "blotting out the handwriting of the ordinances that was against us.. nailing it to the Cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:14-15) - ever since then "there is, therefore, no condemnation to them who are in Jesus Christ" (Rom. 8:1).

For this reason, the practice was observed in the Church from the earliest times, beyond a doubt handed down by the Apostles, whereby on these days, in that they are consecrated to the commemoration of the glorious victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death, it was required to perform the public divine service brightly and with

solemnity, and in particular without kneeling, which is a sign of repentant grief for one's sins. The second century writer Tertullian gives testimony concerning this practice: "On the Lord's Day (i.e. Sunday) we consider it improper to fast or to kneel; and we also enjoy this freedom from Pascha until Pentecost." St. Peter of Alexandria (3rd century) and the "Apostolic Constitutions" also say the same thing.

Subsequently, the First Ecumenical Council (325 A.D.) found it necessary to make this legally binding by a special canon obligatory for the entire Church. The canon of the Council states: "Since there are some persons who kneel in church on Sundays and on the days of Pentecost, with a view to preserving uniformity in all parishes, it has seemed best to the holy council for prayers to be offered to God while standing" (Canon 20).

Pointing out this canon, St. Basil the Great (+ 379) explains the rationale and meaning of the practice established by it thus: "We stand up when praying on the first of the week, though not all of us know the reason. For it is not only that it serves to remind us that when we have risen from the dead together with Christ we ought to seek the things above, in the day of resurrection of the grace given us, by standing in prayer, but that it also seems to serve in a way as a picture of the expected age. Wherefore, being also the starting point of days, though not the first with Moses, yet it has been called the first. For it says: 'The evening and the morning were the first day' (Gen. 1:5), on the ground that it returns again and again. The eighth, therefore, is also the first, especially as respects that really first and true eighth day, which the Psalmist too has mentioned in some of the superscriptions of his psalms, serving to exhibit the state which is to succeed this period of time, the unceasing day, the day without a night that follows, the day without successor, the never-ending and unaging age. Of necessity, therefore, the Church teaches her children to fulfill their obligation to pray therein while standing up, in order by constantly reminding them of the deathless life to prevent them from neglecting the provisions for the journey thereto.

"And every Pentecost is a reminder of the expected resurrection in the age to come. For that one first day, being multiplied seven times over, constitutes the seven weeks of the Holy Pentecost. For by starting from the first day of the week, one arrives on the same day...The laws of the Church have taught us to prefer the upright posture at prayer, thus transporting our mind, to to speak, as a result of a vivid and clear suggestion, from the present age to the things to come in the future. And during each kneeling and standing up again we are in fact showing by our actions that it was through sin that we fell to the earth, and that through the kindness of the One Who created us we have been called back to Heaven." The three well-known kneeling prayers of Pentecost composed by this great Father of the Church are thus not read at the third hour (9:00a.m.) when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles, nor at the Liturgy on Pentecost, but at Vespers, which is already part of the following day, after the Entrance. The holy Father was determined not to break the ancient custom of the Church.

Finally Canon XC of the Council of Trullo, held in conjunction with the Sixth Ecumenical Council (680 A.D.) tells us "not to bend the knee on Sundays when honoring the resurrection of Christ. Thus upon entering the Church on Saturday evening for Vespers until after Vespers on Sunday evening we do not kneel or make prostrations.

