

ANNIVERSARY OR OUR DEPARTED FOR THIS SUNDAY

<u>DAY</u>	<u>NAME OF THE DEPARTED</u>	<u>ANNIVERSARY</u>
1	Marhaba Hauraney	65
2	Richard Haick	23
2	Robert Qaqish	14
2	Lawrence Omrin	13
2	Ispiro Halabi	8
4	Ernest Younes	9
4	Adnan Qaqish	44
5	Ajiaya Aziz	53
5	Josephine Ellis	33
6	Amalia Thalia Gregoriou	6
6	Shafic Shuhaibar	23
6	Nawal Chahine	17

ETERNAL LIGHT

- **Please**, pray for the health of the following parishioners: Ellen, Robert, Alex, Sam, Elias, Isabelle, Nassar, Valentine, Lucy, Nina, Sonia, Samer, George and Elizabeth. If you have any names of people who need prayers, email them to father.
- **A call to all graduate from Universities and high schools : if your son/daughter are graduating this June, please send their names and the name of the degree and the school they are graduating from to Fr. George directly, to frdahdouh@sbcglobal.net.**
- **Check our new website www.stgeorgeto.org**



Persons in Communion with God and One Another: Homily for the Feast of Pentecost in the Orthodox Church [Fr. Philip LeMasters](#)

On today's great feast of Pentecost, we celebrate the Holy Spirit coming upon the followers of the Risen Jesus, which is the birthday of His Body, the Church. After the Savior's resurrection, He ascended into heaven and sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples so that they would not be cut off from the new life that He has brought to the world. The

Holy Spirit is, of course, the third Person of the Holy Trinity, fully divine and eternal as are the Father and the Son. By being filled with the Holy Spirit, the Lord's followers participate personally and communally in the unity, power, and blessing of the very life of God by grace.

Unlike the period before Christ's Passion, the disciples now no longer think of themselves as students of a mere teacher, prophet, or king. They no longer struggle to accept the good news of His resurrection. Instead, they experience the new life of the Kingdom as "rivers of living water" flowing from their hearts. By the Spirit, they participate by grace in the life of the Holy Trinity. God is not remote, distant, or removed from them, but present in their souls. By God's presence in their hearts, they become truly who He created them to be in the divine image and likeness.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes upon the apostles as a group who were gathered together in obedience to the Lord's command. The divine breath which first gave life to humanity comes upon them as a mighty wind. The divine glory beheld by Moses in the burning bush now rests upon each of them personally as flames of fire. The divided speech of the tower of Babel is now overcome by the miracle of speaking in different languages so that everyone can hear and understand the praise of the Lord. Not the possession of any nation or group, this great feast manifests the fulfillment of God's promises for the entire world and every human being.

God creates us all in His image with the calling to grow in His likeness, actually to become like Him in holiness. As those corrupted by sin and death, however, fulfilling that vocation is beyond our ability. Only God is God, and our only hope is to share by grace in His eternal life. This glorious participation in the divine life is made possible to us at Pentecost. Human distinctions of every kind become irrelevant here, for all that matters is that we respond with faith, humility, love, and repentance as we receive the Spirit poured out on the whole world and on every generation.

With the Holy Spirit present in our hearts, linking us together organically as one, our fallen, divided humanity is restored. Just as Father, Son, and Spirit share a common life of love, unity, and holiness, we share a common life in Christ's Body, the Church. As particular people, we have the responsibility to believe, repent, and obey the Lord as we participate in the ministries of the Church and live faithfully each day. As members of Christ's Body, we are nurtured by worship, the sacraments, and spiritual instruction in

our common life. The holy Tradition of the Church is the presence of the Holy Spirit, guiding the Body into ever greater knowledge of and participation in the life of the Holy Trinity.

For we receive the Holy Spirit not as isolated individuals, but as persons in communion, in loving relationship with Christ and with one another in His Body, the Church. The only proper way to celebrate Pentecost is to open ourselves as fully as possible to God's healing, transforming power in all areas of our lives. That is how we may become radiant with the divine glory as we celebrate this great feast of our salvation as living temples of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA

June 2, 2020

Beloved Faithful in Christ,

Greetings and blessings to you and your families as we prepare for our celebration of Holy Pentecost!

As we stand between these two great feasts of the Ascension of our Lord and Holy Pentecost, our festal joy is intermingled with profound sadness and grief. We witnessed the brutal murder of a defenseless man, George Floyd, by men entrusted by our society to uphold peace and justice. As Orthodox Christians, we are appalled by this act of unjust violence, and we fervently entreat the Lord to grant repose to George's soul and comfort and peace to his grieving family and loved ones.

We are also witnessing protests that speak to the wider issues of racial prejudice and injustice in our society. We do not condone chaos and violence as a means of protest, as they only serve to fan the flames of anger and hatred and harm the very communities the peaceful protestors are working to improve. As Antiochian Orthodox, we can offer our broken-hearted empathy, as many of our faithful have come from countries where they have experienced injustice, and we must forcefully proclaim the equal dignity of every human person as created in the image and likeness of God.

As we see the images of so many places set aflame, let us contemplate the images of fire that the Church will offer us this weekend. On Sunday morning, we will chant a festal hymn: "All the nations in the city of David beheld wonders, when the Holy Spirit descended in fiery tongues." This hymn and many others speak to the teaching that the feast of Pentecost healed the division of humanity into competing nations as a result of the Tower of Babel. In the Old Covenant, God fashioned for Himself a people to receive the Law. In the New Covenant, God brings *all* the nations into unity through the Gift of the Holy Spirit – as Christ foretold to the Samaritan Woman a few short weeks ago that all would worship God "in spirit and truth."

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26)

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We live in a time when events provoke us to burn with the passions of anger and divisiveness. This weekend, the Church will call us to burn with love and reconciliation towards all. I would like to pose the question: Which fire will we welcome into our hearts?

There is an instructive note placed before the Prayers of Preparation for Holy Communion that reads: “If thou desirest, O man, to eat the Body of the Master, approach with fear, lest thou be scorched; for it is fire. And, before drinking the divine Blood unto communion, reconcile thyself to them that have wronged thee. Then dare to eat the Mystical Food.” To receive the fire that is communing with our Creator, we must put out the flames of our anger and judgments of others and seek reconciliation – even with those who have wronged us.

As we celebrate Pentecost in the midst of these tumultuous days, let us as Orthodox Christians quench the flames of our hatred and passions that we be set afire with the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Let us cultivate the fruits of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control – and work towards the love and reconciliation of all.

With fervent prayers for healing and peace, I remain,

Your Father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Metropolitan Joseph" with a stylized flourish at the end.

+JOSEPH

Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

cc. Our Hierarchs

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