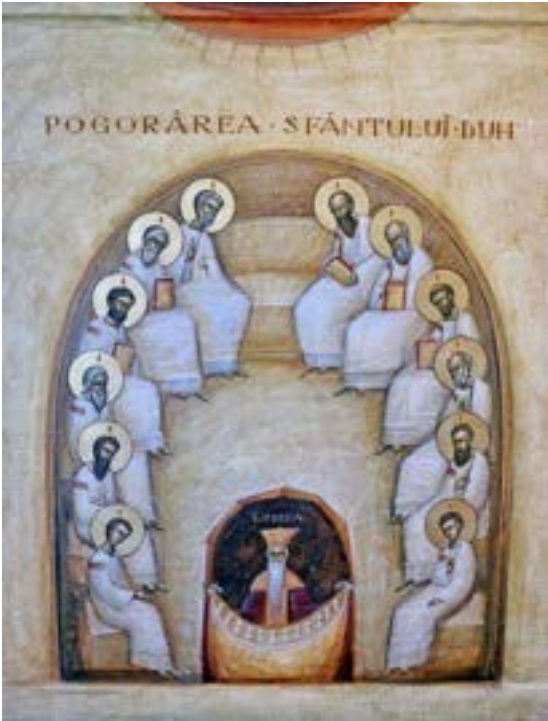


Holy Pentecost



We ask Him to come and abide in us and He brings us all unto Himself,

We pray to Him, scattered and hidden within the chambers of the earth, and He brings us forth to the rich banquet where the abundance of light dwells.

We are tired of death but the life that is in Him gives birth in us to the spirit of his salvation.

We mourn the loss of Him because of our many sins and He encounters us into the depths of our abyss,

We are alone and forgotten and He alone gifts communion to every weary soul.

We cry our poverty and our amputated spirit, and He sanctifies the body as He enriches the soul.

We are harmed by the lies that hurt the heaviness of our being and He enlightens us with the truth of his mercy.

We sneak into the silence at day as we run away from the noisiness of the night and He, like a rushing wind, gives voice to the Word and quiets the darkness so we can listen to the movement of the heart.

He alone knows communion and yet desires the one who is most lonely.

He is the Spirit of God and yet He manifests Himself through the loneliness of our body where He found a home.

He is perfect freedom that binds Himself to our human nature.

He cannot be touched by sin and yet He is cleansing all the impurities of our body.

We are the old skin afraid of new wine, and He, the new drink, brings renewal of life to any broken vessel.

He brings unity and yet the brokenness He does not despise.

He knows how we were lied and deceived and yet He speaks to us in truth.

There is no communion without Him and even to the absent one He is present.

He makes the poverty dignifying and the hunger longing for God.

He comes to the one who is thirsty to make him living water for others.

He transforms "the humiliation in humility" and the bread in the body of Christ.

He is from above and yet he is teaching us how to walk on earth.

We are orphans and He adopts us to the Father.

He does not force us to walk so we can approach him within the fear of our soul.

He is no stranger to any human heart because forgiveness walks ahead of Him.

We ask for the gift of prayer and He becomes the gift for us.

We are poor in knowledge and despised by all and He teaches us the simple truth of the human heart.

He never calls but comes when everyone is present.

We pray for his presence within the solitude of our soul and yet He never embraces us alone but together with the Father and the Son.

He moves all things and yet He teaches us to stay still and know that He is God.

The Gospel According to John 7:37-52; 8:12

“ On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.



Matthew came to the mission around noon on Thursday. We were going to find out his name just before he departed. He seemed to be in really bad shape. He was bare foot and had open wounds on his hands and feet. He had difficulty walking and He would not even look you in the eyes, as if having no expectation of something good to happen. Maybe he was ashamed or just tired of his own condition or maybe his neck was hurting together with his head.

However, he seemed resigned with his situation having no complaints.

Matthew was young and his hands and feet were swollen. He tried to keep his face hidden ...

He needed new clothes, as well as shoes since he had none. The clothes he was wearing were falling to pieces. He did not say much but he agreed he needed shoes. He was willing to accept any size between 10 and 12. He looked as if he had escaped from a place from which people never get out, not even for a walk. In spite of all that distress and suffering that came from Matthew, there was some something that made people gravitate around him outside. We saw that before, a certain type of grace that invites people to be present to another human person who is in real need, who would most certainly be avoided under different circumstances. The sight that would usually inspire rejection, was now inviting within the church.

We brought him a small bottle of hydrogen peroxide and bandages to clean his wounds. A pair of shoes sized between 10 and 12, socks and clothes. He asked for other things like a toothbrush and soap. A young volunteer, who just a half an hour before was asking us to pray for him for a court date, helped him to put on the socks. Matthew could not do that himself. The volunteer also spent time with him, bringing him food and other things. “Do you have some sauce? Matthew asked. I don’t want to waste food, if you bring me some sauce I can eat it.” It was understandable, it was just before lunch, and all we had to offer was a pasta salad from the day before which, coming out of fridge, was not very inspiring. Even though people loved it on Wednesday, as it replaced the traditional soup we had during the colder months.

Matthew spent some time outside with the food and with the clothes, being given support and attention by different people. "You guys are perfect", he said. He was not dramatic, not even thankful. I think that the simple fact of connecting and seeing that he was understood and attended to and cared for was the perfect thing for him and that took him by surprise. I thought we did poorly, the shoes were not his size, the clothes were not very good, and the food was cold. But something else seemed to matter for him.

It is through Christ that the Holy Spirit is coming today upon us. He is glorified and He ascends at the right hand of the Father so we can receive within us the communion of the hearts in the embracing of forgiveness. The spirit unites the community around the truth and opens its doors wide open. We know from within the community the flowing living waters that touch every soul with mercy. As Christ reveals himself in the body of the poor, the sick, the lame and the oppressed, it is also through them that the spirit brings life in the communion of the saints. Through the wounds of the poor who are not yet healed Christ pours his grace upon the community who welcomes the stranger. And the grace is received and the life renewed.

Matthew gathered around him people from the community because Christ is glorified in him. The suffering of the poor makes known to us the love of God. It was not a sense of duty or moral responsibility that made people be around Matthew. It was the right place to be at that moment and there was grace and love that did not come either from us or from Matthew but from the One who unites all things and brings all to Himself.

We also know the sweetness of the Holy Spirit from communion with God. It is what every human soul is longing for. That's why He granted unto us the gift of prayer. And through prayer, at times we taste this sweetness of his presence. The touch of grace. Especially when we give up on pride and other unnecessary things. It is true that God is a perfect gift, and we have the experience of his sweetness through his generosity. Even despite our sins.

However, we lose this often, as St Silouan says. And then we are longing for him from a deeper pit than the one where we lived before. However, the experience of grace and the love of God that manifests within the heart makes us to be thirsty for the one who is most marginalized. Because of the communion we experienced, our humble intuition looks for the marginalized one, because we cannot comprehend anybody outside of the communion with God that the soul has experienced. Because in communion with God we experience the desire for the unity which asks for the one who is the most marginalized. And even after having lost the grace, the desire remains the same and moves us out from ourselves towards the one that is at the margins. The taste of communion makes us look for the one that is lost.

The surprise that comes when the one who is at the very margins is encountered, is that real grace is pouring out of it. The same grace that touches us through the Spirit, out of the love and generosity of God. We can either lose or stay more within this grace, according to our own struggles with our own sins, together with our humble prayer. But the grace that comes through

the wounds of the poor is everlasting because it is the grace of the community, of the church who cares for them. It is the way in which the community life is regenerated through the Holy Spirit. And it is given in abundance to the community that practices hospitality to the poor, the same way that it would be practising hospitality to God.

We can partake of this new life every day. And this is the way in which we also learn to give up more on our sins and give more fresh air to the soul in prayer.



“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered”

Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11

No man is a stranger to God. That’s what we see today. The apostles, through the Holy Spirit, are witnessing what people knew already in their heart: forgiveness and the love they knew but doubted. They needed a witness. And today they learn that not only God loves and not only God forgives, but so do all those who follow Him. Today, the church is born because the community becomes like Christ, embracing all. And speaking the universal language that all know and desire: forgiveness and the love of your neighbour. We say that the Holy Spirit gathers the community around the Truth. It is the truth of the cross. The cross of Christ, but also the cross of the one who repents and the one who blasphemes. The community gathers around the cross caring for all. The cross makes the community because the church does not rebuke now those who are on it but gathers around them. Speaking to them the universal language of forgiveness and love for your neighbour. This is the new life, the community who does not crucify but cares for those who are on the cross. The church is the community who does not crucify because only the Holy Spirit can teach how to approach the suffering of the innocent, how to receive the confession of repentance, and how to forgive the one who is accusing God.

The cross is the truth of the community, and through it the grace is overflowing to all who thirst for communion and unity in Christ.

Please pray for Gloria (she slipped and fell), Sana (kidney problem) and Niel (not seen for two to three weeks since he felt sick while at Good Neighbours)



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We are an apostolate of the ecumenical patriarchate "Mother Church of Christ's poor" under
the Omophorion of Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa

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