

# St. George the Trophy Bearer

## Sunday School Bulletin

JUNE 2021

### Did You Know

At Pentecost, the apostles were all sitting together when suddenly a great wind began to blow, and it made a terrific loud sound. Then a fire came down from heaven and landed with different flames on the head of each apostle. It was not the regular fire that can burn or hurt someone, it was the light of God that was as bright and lively as a flame. It was the same fire that Moses saw in the burning bush and the same fire that we learned about at Pascha, the Holy Light that comes to the Holy Sepulchre every year and dances around without burning anyone. When the fire came to each apostle, they began speaking in different languages—languages that they had never learned before!

### Liturgical colours

Green is the symbol of life, rebirth and growth and this is why it is associated with the Holy Spirit. We call the Holy Spirit The Giver of life because he is the One that vivifies, sustains and sanctifies our life. During the Mystery of Baptism the priest invokes the Holy Spirit to descend and sanctify the water and then those being baptized receive the Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit through the Anointing with the Holy Chrism.

### Apostle

This is a person sent by our savior Jesus Christ, to spread the Good News (Gospel). The Good News is that Jesus is the Messiah, risen from dead, and our Redeemer through whom we are being saved. The word apostle comes from the Greek word ah-POH-stoh-lohs, which means 'one who is sent out.' Christ is the corner stone and the apostles were the first bricks that were laid down to build the church.



## About the Feasts



In June we commemorate both the Ascension and Pentecost. The two feasts are greatly connected. We can think about the two feasts as being like a parachute that rises high up into the sky and then comes back down to earth. Christ went UP and the Holy Spirit came DOWN. The Ascension is the UP part. After Christ's Resurrection, the time comes when He must leave this world and return to God the Father. Christ explains to His apostles that everything that happened has all been part of God's plan. Before He leaves the apostles, He blesses them with peace and makes a promise that the power from God will come to them. This is the down part of the parachute that happens at Pentecost. Ten days after the Ascension, Christ's promise is fulfilled. When Christ returns to God the Father and leaves this world, God

the Father sends the Holy Spirit down to us to continue to help us return to Him. Christ could be *with* his apostles when he was on earth, but the Holy Spirit could *enter into* the heart of each apostle, unifying them, helping them, strengthening and enlightening each one from the inside so that they could go forth not as individuals, but as a church and teach the Gospel.



### The troparion for the feast is:

“Blessed are You, O Christ our God!

You have revealed the fishermen as most wise

By sending down upon them the Holy Spirit;  
Through them You drew the world into Your Net

O Lover of Man, glory to You!”



**Father's Day** This month on June 20th we honour the fathers in our lives. One of the most precious images we have of God is as our Heavenly Father. Jesus taught His followers to think of "the One who is and was and is to come, the Lord Almighty" as "Our Father" whenever we pray. We are not supposed to think of our All-Powerful Creator as a distant God, as someone that is separate and far from us. Jesus taught us to look to God as our loving Father! God is a compassionate, merciful, forgiving, grace-filled Father, One whose love for us is unconditional and unlimited. Do you remember the story of "The Prodigal Son"? This wonderful parable could also be called "The Loving Father". If you have a chance, you should read this parable in Luke 15:11-32. Let us embrace this image of God as we think about our own fathers on Father's Day. Let us thank God for the blessing they are in our lives and pray for our fathers, grandfathers, priests, and all the father figures that love us.

**Prayer for Your Father (Parents)** Lord and Savior, You have taught us to honor our fathers and mothers, and to show love and obedience toward them. From the depth of my heart, I fervently pray to You, Jesus, my God: hear my prayer. Bless my parents who have raised me up with the help of Your grace. Protect them from evil, harm and sickness. Grant them faith, health and joy. Bless all their works that they may give You honor and glory all the days of their lives. Amen.

**JUNE BIRTHDAYS** In June, four of our Sunday School children are celebrating their birthdays:

**GOD GRANT YOU MANY YEARS!**



**Mercy Ghebrab**  
**June 5th**



**Edom Ghebreab**  
**June 7th**



**Ryan Peters**  
**June 18th**



**Luke Sudom**  
**June 24th**



## Jesus' Ascension Craft

In the book of Acts Chapter 1 (Acts 1:1-11) one can read the story of how, 40 days after Jesus' resurrection, he was taken up into Heaven. Forty days after Pascha is known as Ascension. Here is a fun craft to celebrate this special day. All you need are scissors, glue, some white and blue construction paper, about a foot and a half of ribbon or yarn, a paper cup, and a printout of Jesus (if your child is artistic, they may enjoy drawing Jesus).

First cut a small slit for the ribbon into the bottom of a cup, flip the cup upside down, then glue blue paper on the outside of the cup. Cut out cloud shapes from white construction paper, and glue them around the cup to represent the sky with clouds.

Then print out a picture of Jesus that will fit inside the cup. You may need to reduce or enlarge it to fit your cup.

Cut out the picture, put the picture on top of the blue construction paper and cut around the picture shape so you have a backing paper for Jesus' picture. Next, cut out a cloud for the top piece as shown in the picture, and a slightly larger copy of the cloud in blue construction paper. Using a glue stick, spread glue on the blue paper that fits Jesus' picture, then lay the bottom end of the ribbon or yarn on the blue paper, and then glue the picture of Jesus on top of the blue paper, sandwiching the ribbon in between the two papers.

Thread the ribbon through the hole in the bottom of the cup, so that by pulling the ribbon you can pull Jesus up into the cup.

At the top of the ribbon, sandwich the ribbon between the white and blue cloud shapes so that the ribbon will not fall back through, and so you have something to hold to pull Jesus up into the cup. Write on the cloud – Christ is Risen!



## Ways to Celebrate The Ascension as a Family

1. Attend Divine Liturgy and Sing the Troparion. Ascension is unique among the feasts in that it never falls on a weekend. Because it is 40 days after Pascha, the feast of the Ascension is always celebrated on a Thursday. If you can, however, make an effort to attend either the Vespers for Ascension or the Liturgy itself.
2. Wear White to Church. White is the liturgical color for the day, and wearing white to church reminds children that Jesus ascended up into the clouds. You can also find some white flowers to place in front of the festal icon and make a display.
3. Go on a Family Picnic. Celebrate the feast as a family by taking a hike and bringing a picnic along. Walk with your family, talking about how Jesus and his disciples climbed Mount Olivet before the Ascension. Then, when you reach the top of a hill, lay out a picnic lunch or supper, look at the clouds in the sky, and tell the story of Christ's ascension to Heaven.
4. Say, "Christ Has Ascended! From Earth to Heaven!" Teach your children the call and response of, "Christ Has Ascended! From Earth to Heaven!" Then listen to them use it all day long!
5. Go Cloud Watching. Lay a blanket down on the grass and look up at the clouds for a while. You can try to find pictures in the clouds and speak about the Ascension. It is also a fitting time to mention that the angels told the Apostles that Christ would return the same way he went to Heaven. This may lead to a discussion of Christ's second coming.
6. Map Activity. Before ascending, Jesus told his disciples that they would be his witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Most older children will understand the significance and general location of Jerusalem, but many will be confused about the other places. Bring out a map of the Middle East (preferably one that includes parts of Asia and Europe as well), and show the children where Judea and Samaria were.

You can point out that Jerusalem was an area that the Apostles were familiar with. This was a holy place for the people of Israel. The region of Judea was also home, but it didn't have the same spiritual prestige that Jerusalem did. Samaria was even worse. It was the home of the Samaritans, people that the Jews looked down upon and viewed as having a faulty religion. When the disciples received the Holy Spirit, they would first preach the Gospel in Jerusalem and establish the Church there. They wouldn't stay there, however. They would begin moving farther and farther out from what they knew and into the very ends of the earth, spreading the Good News of Christ.

## Ways to Celebrate Pentecost

1. Attend Divine Liturgy and Learn the Troparion. The service is a particularly joyful one where we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is also the first time that we kneel after the Paschal period. Many churches include the prayers known as the Kneeling Prayers in the Divine Liturgy. Other churches may have a separate Vespers service. If possible, try to participate in the Kneeling prayers and enter into the spirit of repentance, forgiveness, and strength for our journey.

2. Wear Green to Liturgy The liturgical color of Pentecost is green. You can dress your family in green to help your children notice this change, and point out the new life found when the Holy Spirit comes upon us.

3. Decorate the House with Greenery These may include potted herbs that you can later plant in an herb garden. We had a lovely bouquet of fresh basil, parsley, and rosemary that we placed in a vase before our festal icon last year. The fragrance filled the house and reminded us of the birth of the Church all week.

4. Learn to Say “Hello” in Different Languages. The story of Pentecost is filled with many interesting and exciting things (tongues of fire, a rushing wind—how cool is that to a child?!). One of these is the fact that the Apostles were able to speak in languages they hadn’t learned before. The Holy Spirit gave them a gift so that they could preach the Gospel to people of all languages visiting Jerusalem at the time. Parents can help children understand this concept of different languages by teaching children how to say “hello” in multiple languages. Look online to find out how to greet others in Spanish, Russian, Greek, Arabic, and Japanese. You can teach them to say “hello” in languages that people in their area might use. Have fun learning new languages!

5. Fill the House with Candles and Tell the Story In remembrance of the tongues of fire that descended upon the apostles, fill your house with candles. Then, tell, read, or listen to the story of Pentecost.

6. Orthodoxy Around the World Activity Help children appreciate the diversity of the Church by learning about churches around the world. See if you can find websites for churches on all seven continents. Or, look for and print out pictures of churches from every continent. You can make a collage by pasting the pictures, church names, and locations on a posterboard.

On the Feast of Pentecost, let us rejoice because God Himself is with us in his Church!