

**Week of
May 28th
2017**

You can reach Fr. Luke at
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or at
(613) 925-3004

Please leave a clear
message and include your
phone number

Next Services

**Saturday, June 3rd
Eve of Pentecost
Vespers at 5:00 pm**

**Sunday, June 4th
Pentecost
Divine Liturgy at 10:00am**

**St. Olympia Chapel
123 Main Street
Potsdam, NY**

All welcome!

Sayings from the Desert Fathers

Abba Arsenius was born in Rome around the year 360. He was well-educated and had senatorial rank. He tutored the sons of Emperor Theodosius I. In 394, he fled palace life, went to Alexandria and then to the desert where he was a disciple of Abba John the Dwarf. He died in 449.

One day Abba Arsenius consulted an old Egyptian monk about his own thoughts. Someone noticed this and said to him, "Abba Arsenius, how is it that you with such a good Latin and Greek education, ask this peasant about your thoughts?" He replied, "I have indeed been taught Latin and Greek, but I do not know even the alphabet of this peasant."

Abba Arsenius said, "If we seek God, he will show himself to us, and if we keep him, he will remain close to us."

It was said of Abba Arsenius that once when he was ill at Scetis, the priest came to take him to church and put him on a bed with a small pillow under his head. Now behold an old man who was coming to see him, saw him lying on a bed with a little pillow under his head and he was shocked and said, "Is this really Abba Arsenius, this man lying down like this?" Then the priest took him aside and said to him, "In the village where you lived, what was your trade?" "I was a shepherd," he replied. And how did you live?" "I had a very hard life." Then the priest said, "And how do you like in your cell now?" The other replied, "I am more comfortable." Then the priest said to him, "Do you see this Abba Arsenius? While he was in the world he was the friend of the emperor, surrounded by thousands of slaves with golden girdles, all wearing collars of gold and garments of silk. Beneath him were spread rich coverings. While you were in the world as a shepherd you did not enjoy even the comforts you now have but he no longer enjoys the delicate life he led in the world. So you are comforted while he is afflicted." At these words the old man was filled with compunction and prostrated himself saying, "Father, forgive me, for I have sinned. Truly the way this man follows is the way of truth, for it leads to humility, while mine leads to comfort." So the old man withdrew, edified.

Planning Ahead

**Parish Rummage Sale
to benefit our building fund
Saturday, August 26, 2017**
Please keep this in mind as you
do your spring cleaning!

**Archbishop Michael's next
visit to Potsdam will be:**

**Saturday-Sunday,
September 9-10, 2017**



ST OLYMPIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

POTSDAM, NEW YORK 13676

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growing community of worshippers.**

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and are primarily in English.**

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**We are pleased to announce
that we will now have Vespers on Saturday evenings at 5:00 pm.**

Fr. Luke will be available to hear confessions after the service.

The Feast of Pentecost

The great feast of Pentecost is both an end and a beginning. It is the end of the Paschal period and the fulfillment of Christ's final command for the apostles: to await for the descent of the Holy Spirit. As a Kathisma hymn from the matins service proclaims:

*In this post-Paschal season,
Let us celebrate with joy the final feast, which is Pentecost.
It is the fulfillment of the Promise and of time.
On this day, the Fire of the Holy Spirit, as tongues of flame,
Descended to earth.
It enlightened the disciples,
Proving them to be initiates of the Heavenly Mysteries.
The Light of the Spirit has come and given light to the world.*

And thus, this descent is also the beginning of the Church through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament readings for Vespers are taken from Numbers, Joel, and Ezekiel. These pericopes include prophecies that this would indeed happen: "After this it shall come to pass that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh... (Joel 3:1); "I shall put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My requirements, and you will keep My judgments and do them" (Ezekiel 37:27).

The Church's celebration of Pentecost is the coming to fruition in Christ of the Jewish Pentecost (the Greek word for fifty), the *Shavuot* or Feast of Weeks which falls fifty days after the Passover (*Pascha* in Greek). Christ, crucified at Passover, is our new Passover. Just as the people of Israel were freed from enslavement at Passover, we are freed from the enslavement of sin and death by Christ's resurrection. At Shavuot the people of Israel received the Torah on Mount Sinai and became a people dedicated to God. As the many disciples gathered to celebrate the feast of *Shavuot*/Pentecost following Christ's ascension, on this day the Church was given the gift of the Holy Spirit whereby the Word was given to all people, each in their own tongues (cf. Acts 2, 1-11). Thus, Pentecost is often considered the birthday of the Church incarnate. The Jewish Pentecost was celebrated by offering the first fruits of the harvest (Exod. 23:16, Lev. 23 15:21, Num. 28: 26-31 and Deut. 16:9-16). In the new Pentecost, the first fruits are those who believe in Christ and will proclaim His truth. They (and we!) are the apostles, which means those who are sent forth.

*Come, O people, let us worship the Godhead
of three Persons [Hypostases],
The Son in the Father, with the Holy Spirit,
For the Father timelessly begot the Son,
Who is co-eternal and of one throne,
And the Holy Spirit was in the Father, glorified with the Son,
One Might, one Essence, one Godhead, which we all worship saying:
Holy God, who created all things through the Son,
With the cooperation of the Holy Spirit.
Holy Mighty, through whom we have known the Father,
And through Whom the Holy Spirit came to the world.
Holy Immortal, the comforting Spirit,
Who proceeds from the Father and rests in the Son.
O Holy Trinity, glory to You.*

The icon of Pentecost below (as with all icons) depicts a spiritual truth. Here, twelve apostles are shown receiving the Holy Spirit as a tongue of flame. They represent all who were present that day (cf. Acts 1). The icon includes St. Paul among the twelve (although, historically, he would not have been present) as well as the four Evangelists (holding scrolls, although the Gospels were not yet written down). Below, still in darkness, is a kingly figure representing the cosmos. He is holding a cloth with twelve scrolls, representing the twelve tribes of Israel. It is to the entire world that the Word is to be proclaimed, to bring all those in darkness to the Light.



Icon from the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, Vologda region of northern Russia, c.1497