

## **SERMON on Pentecost, June 16, 2019**

The Holy Trinity is indivisible in its unity; one in essence and of one substance. As such, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit share a common will, common thought and common actions. What the Father desires, the Son and the Holy Spirit also desire. What the Son loves, so do the Father and the Holy Spirit. The three persons of the Holy Trinity always act in common, in conjunction and in accord.

Humans also have one substance and one nature. However, we are constantly in disagreement in our desires, wishes and opinions. There is always conflict, division and quarreling between us, as individuals and as nations. Before the Fall, Adam and Eve were in full accord and shared a common spirit with each other at all times. This makes sense, because man and woman were created in the image and likeness of God. However, this God-like relationship with our fellow human beings collapsed after Adam and Eve disobeyed God, followed their own self-will, and sinned. Sin continues to divide mankind. How can we regain that God-like unity which we were created for? The closer we approach God, the closer we approach each other. In the coming Kingdom of God there will be unity, mutual love and harmony.

How do we approach God and become closer to God? St. Seraphim of Sarov reveals this to us in his famous conversation with Nikolai Motovilov when the saint says that the purpose of life is to acquire the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit cleanses people of their sins, enlightens souls and sanctifies bodies. The Holy Spirit also ordains priests, consecrates churches and purifies altars. The Holy Spirit abides with the godly, refines the righteous and guides the pious with divine wisdom and knowledge.

Today, brothers and sisters, we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. The Lord said to Nicodemus, "Unless people are born of water and the Spirit, they cannot enter into the kingdom of God." St. Paul reminds us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. St. John Chrysostom reminds us that we should strive to keep our bodies undefiled. The gift of the Holy Spirit cannot thrive within us unless we struggle to repent of our sins and live the life in Christ. In Scripture our Savior says that after His ascension we will not remain alone as orphans. "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, so that He may abide with you forever." The Comforter is the Holy Spirit, who comforts our hearts and makes them steadfast in divine patience and trust in Christ. Having been baptized into Christ, having received the Holy Spirit, let us strive to keep our souls and our bodies undefiled as we glorify the Most Holy and consubstantial and life-giving Trinity, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.