

St. Demetrius Orthodox Church

June 2026

The Icon of Pentecost

Pentecost means the "fiftieth day." It is on the day of Pentecost that the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire, fifty days after the resurrection of Christ. Let us recall the account of Pentecost in Chapter 2 of the Acts of the Apostles. While the Apostles were all assembled in one place, a rush of wind came into the house and the Holy Spirit filled each of them, giving them the power to speak in all languages and to be understood by all men.

Let us compare this account with the Icon we venerate at this feast, which shows the twelve Apostles receiving tongues of fire. There is a great difference between the text in the Acts and the Icon. On the Icon we see the Apostles arranged in two rows, seated calmly as if preparing to judge the twelve tribes of Israel, according to Christ's work (St. Mt. 19:28). The image shows only twelve men, while the text tells us that there were many assembled, about 120 persons, including several women and Mary, the mother of Jesus. The calm of the Apostles is in sharp contrast with the account's description of an agitation so great that it was mistaken for drunkenness.

The twelve Apostles we see on the Icon form the Apostolic College. The Apostolic College is the foundation of the Church, the twelve columns upon which the building rests built over the cornerstone, which is Christ. The Icon of Pentecost is not the illustration of an historical event, but the symbol of the Church. (It is certainly not the account found in Acts which is presented on the Icon, for we see even St. Paul sitting beside St. Peter. According to the texts, in no way could Paul have been present in the upper chamber that day, as he was still a committed enemy of the Church).

The presence of the Holy Spirit is indicated by the flames, which come from heaven and rest upon each Apostle. The absence of Christ, necessary for the Holy Spirit to come (St. Jn 16.7) is indicated by an empty place. In fact, we notice that the arc of the circle is not closed at the top of the horseshoe formed by the Apostles, leaving an empty space. This is the place Christ will occupy at the Second Coming.

In the Icon of Pentecost the composition is not closed, but open at the top and the bottom. It is elongated toward the top, toward its pinnacle, or more exactly toward the absence of an earthly, visible pinnacle. The assembly of Apostles remains open to what is indicated by the symbol of the sky, of the divine world whose rays descend on them.

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The rows of Apostles are not closed below either; they are open to all. The Church is not limited to the circle of the Apostles, nor to the apostolate in general, nor to the hierarchy.

Question: What does the person we see standing at the bottom of the Icon, holding a length of cloth, mean?

Answer: What the Apostles received on that day of Pentecost is not reserved only for the Apostolic College. The Holy Spirit is destined for all peoples. This crowned person represents the cosmos, the entire universe. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles is a cosmic event and the luminous rays will penetrate all creation, the divine energies that God communicates. The length of cloth represents the expectation of the world, ready to receive the gifts of the Spirit. It is from the Church, the center of the world, that comes from the fire which will consume the whole universe. Christ and the Spirit are sent by the Father from heaven to transfigure the world.

The crowned king holding the cloth represents all the nations, ready to receive the Christian teaching. The tongues of Pentecost give rise to comprehension among the members of the Church, even if they are of different races, countries and epochs. For all share the "Good News" of the resurrected Christ, the "Good News" proclaimed and transmitted from century to century, from the time of the Apostles down to our own day.

The calm and ordered appearance of the Apostles, who form a harmonious circle, represented the Communion of the Saints, which makes the Church into one body, the Body of Christ animated by the Holy Spirit. "For where two or three are gathered in My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (St. Mt 18:20).

In the Holy Spirit, the Apostles are united, but not confused, for each keeps his own identity and diversity. They are the image of God, Trinity-Unity, the three Persons always united, but never confused. In the same way the Apostles are united, but they are all different. The miracle of tongues received personally by each Apostle, each speaking a different language, is the miracle of perfect unity in variety. It is like an orchestra playing a symphony, the most diverse instruments are attuned to produce a single sound.

Out of this vision of the twelve Apostles united in the Holy Spirit through the fire of Pentecost flows the entire history of the Church, with its councils always and everywhere proclaiming the same catholic and apostolic Faith. The unity of the Apostles with the Holy Spirit is perpetuated in the whole Church, beginning with the Bishops, who are the successor of the Apostles. This concord allows the Fathers of the Church to say, at every council the formula pronounced by the Apostles in Jerusalem. "It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts, 15:28).+

Our 2026 Graduates

George McQuillan graduated from Marquette University High School. George received his high school diploma. George plans to attend University of Wisconsin in Madison, WI. George has been accepted into the school of Engineering, studying Mechanical Engineering. George is the son of Kelly and Greg McQuillan, grandson to Diane and Ray McQuillan.

Katherine Rogers graduated high school with her G.E.D. Katherine's interests include early childhood education and quantum physics. Katherine is the daughter of Subdeacon James (Jason) Rogers and Lauren Rogers.

Dustin Ruiz graduated from NALC (Lineman) in McCuwen, Tennessee. Dustin is the son of Nick and Krystal Caldwell and grandson to Deb Cummings, BABA.

Zoe Ruiz graduated from Western High School. Zoe received her high school diploma. Zoe plans to attend Jackson College and study Pediatric Nursing. Zoe is the daughter of Nick and Krystal Caldwell and granddaughter to Deb Cummings/BABA.

May God Bless each one as they begin their new phase of life's journey!

Annual Spring/Summer Clean Up

Our annual inside/outside clean up is scheduled for Saturday, June 6. Your welcome to bring your garden tools and gloves.

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Services

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	1	2	3	4	5	6 Sisterhood Meeting 9:30 am. Church cleaning No Vespers
7 Liturgy 9:30 am Honoring graduates	8	9	10	11	12 Fr. Dusan Vacation	13 No Vespers
14 Liturgy 9:30 am	15	16	17	18	19	20 No Vespers
Fr. Dusan Vacation						
21 Liturgy 9:30 am	22	23	24	25	26	27 No Vespers
Fr. Dusan Vacation						
28 Liturgy 9:30 am	29 Sts. Peter & Paul Liturgy 5:30 pm	30				