



Feasts of Ascension and Pentecost

On Thursday, June 9th we will celebrate the Feast of the Ascension of our Lord. A footnote in *The Orthodox Study Bible* says the following: “Christ’s Ascension is His enthronement in the fullness of divine authority and glory. Icons of the Ascension represent Christ in such a way that one cannot tell whether He is going to heaven or coming again to earth. This captures the profound truth that we are already living under His reign while awaiting His return. Thus, the icon shows Christ being taken up, coming again in like manner, and yet continually present. Believers are not to stand idly gazing up into heaven, but rather are called to virtuous faith and action in this world until Christ’s return.

On Sunday, June 19th, we will celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. Originally the feast of Pentecost took place fifty days after Passover and offerings were made to the Lord from the firstfruits of the

harvest at the tabernacle. However, in the Christian era, the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles transcends the Old Testament feast of Pentecost (or Tabernacles). All those who received the Holy Spirit have become the firstfruits of Christ's Church. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples also fulfills the prophecies of Ezekiel 36:24-28 "I shall put My Spirit within you...You will be My people and I shall be your God..." and Joel 3:1-5 "...and in those days, I will pour out My Spirit upon my servants and on My handmaids..."