



**ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY GREEK
ORTHODOX CHURCH**
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Gregory Painter-Vice Pres.
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The Epistle

Celebrating the 110th Year Anniversary

Father's Message:

"The Spirit Gives Life: The Birth and Growth of the Church"

Dear faithful,

Sunday, June 8th, we gather in awe and thanksgiving to celebrate the Feast of Holy Pentecost, the fiftieth day after the glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This day is often called the "birthday of the Church," but it is far more than a mere anniversary—it is the day when the promise of the Lord was fulfilled, when the Holy Spirit descended in power, and the life of the Church truly began to burn with divine fire.

We read in Acts of the Apostles, on the day of Pentecost, the disciples were gathered together in one accord, in prayer and expectation. And suddenly, like the sound of a mighty, rushing wind, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and tongues of fire rested upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This moment is not just a miracle of speech—it is the miracle of transformation. The frightened, uncertain followers of Christ became bold proclaimers of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit did not simply give them words; He gave them courage, unity, wisdom, and divine grace. The same Peter who denied Christ three times now stands before thousands and preaches with authority, and about 3,000 souls were added to the Church in a single day.

The Church is born not from human effort, but from divine grace. She is not built on eloquence, strategy, or even unity alone, but on the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

The descent of the Holy Spirit was not a one-time event—it is the continual life-breath of the Church. In the Orthodox Church, we do not speak of the Holy Spirit as merely past tense, but as



ever-present. Every sacrament, every prayer, every breath of the Church is animated by the Spirit. That is why at every Divine Liturgy, we pray: "O Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things..." This is not poetry—it is reality.

The Holy Spirit did not come so the disciples could remain in the upper room in spiritual ecstasy. He came so that they would go out, to every nation, to every tongue, to every heart. From Jerusalem to Antioch, from Asia Minor to Greece, from Rome to Ethiopia, the early Church spread with a holy fire that no empire could extinguish.

And what was the message they preached? Not political revolution, not moral reform, but the crucified and risen Christ. And they lived that message—bearing witness not just in word but in life, in love, in martyrdom. The Church grew not because of the brilliance of its arguments, but because of the truth of its life. In the early Church, we see a model for our own lives:

They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:42). They shared what they had, they bore one another's burdens, and they rejoiced in the Lord even in the face of suffering. The Spirit continues to call each of us.

Each of us received the same Spirit at our Chrismation. Each of us was
Continued page 2

Father's Message Continued...

sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is not a distant event—it is a personal calling. The Spirit calls us to repent, to love, to serve, to become true icons of Christ in this world. The Church began with fire and continues in fire—not the fire of destruction, but the fire of divine love. The early Church did not grow because it adapted to the world, but because it was set ablaze by something greater than the world.

So, let us rekindle that flame within us. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to renew in us the same power that fell upon the apostles. Let us remember that Pentecost is not the end of the story—it is the beginning.

Come, O Holy Spirit, and make our hearts burn with Your love.

In Our Heavenly Lord,

Father Constantine

DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday, June 1st- Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Synod in Nicaea
Orthros & Epistle Reader: Gregory Painter
Ushers: Tressa Rockwood, Kade Schmalz
Prophoron, (Holy Bread): Sophie McCurry
Fellowship: Nate & Samantha Mountain

Sunday, June 8th- HOLY PENTECOST
THE READERS SERVICE 10:00am
Readers: Olenda & Greg Painter, Jacob Denton, John Speck, Andrew Hearne
Ushers: Vicky Fullmer, Ron Sims
Agape Fellowship: Fred Bradford, Andrew Hearne, Jacob Denton, Christopher Mulkey

Sunday, June 15th, Sunday of All Saints
DIVINE LITURGY ONLY 10:00am
Epistle Reader: John Speck
Ushers: Goldie Homan, Sophie McCurry
Prophoron, (Holy Bread) : Hala Dib
Agape Fellowship: Tressa & Scott Rockwood

Sunday, June 22nd 2nd Sunday of Matthew
Orthros Reader: Steven Swanson
Epistle Reader: Alex Tarasau
Ushers: Tressa: Rockwood, Tom Hugie
Prophoron, (Holy Bread) : Terri Pliley Owen
Agape Fellowship: Braden & Melissa Black

Sunday, June 29, Apostles Peter and Paul
Orthros & Epistle Reader: Jacob Denton
Ushers: Vicky Fullmer, Tony Hoskin
Prophoron, (Holy Bread): Hala Dib
Agape Fellowship: Filio Paloukos and Family

PARISH MINISTRY SCHEDULE

PARISH COUNCIL: Meeting will take place following Fellowship in the Conference Room, Sunday, June 1st.

CATECHISM CLASSES: Those interested in learning more about the Orthodox Faith and becoming Catechumens are asked to attend in-person or on Zoom. Class is on **Tuesdays, June 17th and 24th at 6:00pm.**

ZOOM ADDRESS CATECHISM CLASS
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525594697?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525594697?pwd=TLIKV2pkcmFTdStza0RLMXkvNC9ydz09)
[pwd=TLIKV2pkcmFTdStza0RLMXkvNC9ydz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525594697?pwd=TLIKV2pkcmFTdStza0RLMXkvNC9ydz09)

Meeting ID: 875 2559 4697
Passcode: 477296

Please Note: Father Constantine will be recovering from surgery. Therefore on Sunday June 8th only a Readers Service will be celebrated at 10:00am.

GREEK FESTIVAL **SATURDAY, AUGUST 23RD**

FESTIVAL WORKSHOPS

- **SAT., JUNE 7TH SPANAKOPITA 10:00AM**
 - **SAT., JUNE 28TH 10:00AM**
SKEWERING SOUVLAKIA (KABABS)
- **SAT., AUGUST 9TH KOULORAKIA 10:00AM**
- **SAT, AUGUST 16TH, TYROPITA, 10:00AM**
 - **WEDNESDAY, AUG. 20TH,**
PREP SALAD DRESSING, 10:00AM
- **THURSDAY & FRIDAY, AUG 21ST –22ND**
SALAD PREPARATION 10:00AM



FRIDAY, AUG 22ND
PACKAGING PASTRY 10:00AM

2025 GREEK FESTIVAL FOOD AND PASTRY WORKSHOPS **PLEASE VOLUNTEER!**

We need everyone to **PLEASE** offer their time to assemble these food items.

VOLUNTEER at a Festival Workshop
Let's make this the **BEST FESTIVAL EVER!**

ALL WORKSHOPS WILL BEGIN AT 10:00AM.

We need everyone to **PLEASE** offer their time to assemble these food items.
Most of the workshops are held on Saturday, and a few on Sunday after Fellowship so that more people can attend.

NOTE: We will need over 150 parishioners and friends to do the following:
Food Servers Cash Registers, Runners, Greek Tavern, Baklava Sundae & Frappe Booth, T-Shirt/Cook Book Booth.

We will be asking individuals to be coordinators for each of these tasks. So when asked please volunteer.

Please join your fellow parishioners and become a supporting member of our beloved church. Your Stewardship is valued because it is made out of your love for God and His Church. We are grateful and blessed that you are a part of the Assumption Church family.

*Father Constantine Zozos
John & Candice Apostle
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Arvas
Naglaa & Chris Bargelski
Brandon and Melissa Black
Afton and Jamie Carlson
John N. Christ
Clarence and Vivian Close
Mary Frances Cozakos
Jacob Denton
Hala and Ghassan Dib
Chris Drakos +
Kenny and Kristina Dudunakis
Scott and Rebecca Eames
Angela Fullmer
Rocky and Vicky Fullmer
Nicholas and Stella Gdontakis
Lisa Gentry
Ted Georges
Frank Grant
Botros and Monika Hanna
David and Jeanne Harmer
Dean and Kathy Harris
Seth and Brooke Harris
Goldie Homan
Philip Homan
Anthony & Svitlana Hoskin
Thomas and Tracey Hugie
Nathan Jamison
Maria Katsilometes
Betty and George Katsilometes
John Katsilometes
Angela & Dan Kimball
James and Cora Ligor
Tony and Georgia Ligor
Randall Lillie
Heidi Linehan*

*Scott & Elly MacDonald
Dina Manolis
Andrea Marks
Melissa Mosbrucker
Brian and Nicolette Maw
Sophie and Mitch McCurry
John and Stephanie Mermigas
Nate and Samantha Mountain
Gregory and Olenda Painter
Konstantenos Paloukos
Sam and Filio Paloukos
Terri Pliley Owen
Les and Helene Poulos-Edmo
Sergey & Catherine Rashkeev
Trisha and Colby Reddin
Yolanda Riech
Corrinthia Riedel
Scott and Tressa Rockwood
Kade and Devyn Schmalz
Ian & Chayla Schoenrock
Anne Marie Schulze
Annie Semons
Ron and Kim Sims
Karen Solomon
Phil and Luann Spain
John and Lorre Speck
Nathan and Sophia Speck
Pamela & Gary Swan
Steven and Jacque Swanson
Katie Swore & Ryan Pope
Travis & Ryan Swore
Tim and Maria Swore
Alex and Ashley Tarasau
Nick and Tasia Tsakrios
Pauline Thiros
Scott and Rebecca Tysor
Vadym Ustianskyi*

Our Parish sustains itself through Annual Pledges from its parishioners. All Budgetary needs are paid through individual and family pledges. We would like to encourage everyone to please consider Pledging according to their ability. Pledge Cards are available at the Candle Stand or call Tressa Rockwood for a Card.

SEND YOUR STWARDSHIP CARD TO
ASSUMPTION GOC
PO BOX 4567, POCATELLO, ID 83205

Information

NAME _____

NAME OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED) _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP CODE _____

HOME PHONE _____

MOBILE PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED) _____

Dependent Children's names and birthdates:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Planned Giving

☐ "____ I would like to speak with someone about how to remember the church in my will, trust, or estate plan."

*Your Own
From
Your Own*



We enter our spiritual home not to be entertained, but to be a part of a community of believers. We receive Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. As we pray, worship, and serve together, we become His Body. To be truly a member of the Church as Body of Christ requires our presence and our engagement with one another -- in worship, study, and service to others. We grow spiritually as a family. We give sacrificially as we acknowledge that all we have comes from God.

Treasure

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/We commit to Christ and His Church the following total amount for 2025:

\$_____ **Total for 2025**

We PREFER to make payments each:

☐ week ☐ Month ☐ Quarterly

☐ Semi-annually

☐ Pay in full for the year



Use your phone to scan this QR Code to visit the on-line giving site, or visit:
<https://assumptionpocatello.churchtrac.com/give>

*We Offer
To You*

COMMITMENT CARD 2025

Over these past six years, our parish has had an influx of families and individuals migrating from the Northwest and California. We have also been blessed with many who have come seeking the Historic Christian Church, and thus found themselves here in Southeastern Idaho and the parish of the Assumption. Once a month, The Epistle will feature a family or individual who has embraced the Faith and how they came to Orthodoxy.

JOURNEY TO ORTHODOXY: EVAN MYERS

I was born in December of 1999 in Monroe, Washington, to a non-religious family. We never really talked about religion growing up, although my mother was into tarot cards, astrology, and that variety of “spirituality.”

When I was 7 years old, my mother got hooked on prescription drugs. As a result of this, my father left and was unable to gain custody of me and my older brother. Things quickly deteriorated, we lost our home and moved into my maternal grandmother’s house in Index, Washington. We ended up bouncing around various houses on Whidbey Island.

I don’t want to go into details, but my childhood ended up being quite rough, and a lot of bad things happened. As a result of these experiences, I hated God and became a militant atheist at a very young age. Getting introduced to marijuana and alcohol at age 12 didn’t help. It gave me a coping mechanism that ended up taking a grip over my life for years. I was overwhelmed by feelings of hatred for everyone and ended up becoming quite reclusive and antisocial: it felt as though I could not relate to anyone.

At age 15, my brother and I moved in with our dad, (at the time) stepmom and the revolving tribe of people who lived with them in Arlington, Washington. I finally started to open up a bit more and became more social in high school and made quite a few friends. While working on the apple orchards in Mattawa (Central Washington) over the Summer, I was forced by the orchard owner to attend his evangelical Protestant church. This was my first time ever entering a Christian church of any kind, and I was not convinced. Later, I started regularly attending another evangelical “non-denominational” church in Arlington in order to spend more time with a girl that I liked. Again, I was not moved at all and was still firmly atheist.

In 2018, upon graduating from high school, I was accepted into the University of Washington in Seattle, where my intention was to major in Physics or Neurobiology; however, I made the mistake of joining a fraternity. Instead of going to class and doing my homework, I preferred to day drink, skip class, and then continue drinking well into the night. This is also where I began to use nicotine far more frequently.

Once finals season rolled around, I knew I had irreparably damaged my academic performance (or so I thought), and therefore I decided to drop out. I was so disgusted with myself, I felt like such a failure, so I just wanted to disappear. Shortly thereafter, I contacted a Marine Corps recruiter and signed a contract to become an 06xx (the general designator for communications/radio), as I desired to become a Field Radio Operator (0621). I had read on the internet that radio operators had a very short life expectancy in combat, which was desirable for me at the time.



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In basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, I started reading the New Testament regularly and attended the non-denominational services on Sundays. Funny how we usually only seek God once we're in a bad spot. At this time, I took a test called the Defense Language Aptitude Battery, which tests one's ability to acquire a new language. I received a high score and so was asked if I wanted to become a Cryptologic Language Analyst (linguist). They didn't tell me what this really entailed, but it sounded interesting, so I agreed.

Upon graduating basic training, I dropped the whole Christianity thing. Through combat training at Camp Pendleton, and language training in Monterey (where I learned Pashto), I didn't go to a single church service of any kind. During Signals Intelligence and Electronic Warfare training in San Angelo, Texas, however, I decided that the logical thing to do was to start practicing Germanic Paganism. This was the beginning of 2021, so the social and political climate was quite tense, and I identified Abrahamic religions as being problematic.

After nearly two-and-a-half years of training, I finally reached the Fleet Marine Force (the real Marine Corps) and was assigned to 2nd Radio Battalion in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Only a couple of months after getting to the Fleet, we started the evacuation from Afghanistan. I worked continuous language operations for two weeks (from the States), providing Indications and Warning support for troops on the ground. Then, suddenly, the war was over. My language was now useless, so I joined the Light Armored Vehicle - Electronic Warfare Platoon (LAV-EW); essentially, we operated these terrible eight-wheeled vehicles from the early 1980s outfitted with a bunch of expensive intelligence and radio gear.

It was here that my friend Nathaniel Bourque introduced me to Orthodox Christianity. I had known Bourque since language school, as he was a Spanish linguist. He had recently become a catechumen, and asked if I would like to join him at Divine Liturgy at the Orthodox Chapel on base (Saint Nicholas Orthodox Chapel in Camp Lejeune). It was unlike anything I had ever experienced. I wasn't immediately convinced, of course, but I was definitely interested. The more I researched, the more I realized that this was the original Church, no question. I found out later that the original priest I met there was a Nestorian, but soon after he was replaced with a new priest (Father Ambrose, or Jeffrey A. Perry, a Navy Chaplain).

On Christmas night of 2021, while Bourque, a Mormon friend named Lucas and I were all on barracks duty, it finally clicked. I decided to embrace the Orthodox faith, and a couple months later officially became a catechumen. In Divine Liturgy, I felt a sense of peace that I had never experienced. It drove me to tears on quite a few occasions and still does out of nowhere.

By this time, Russia had invaded Ukraine, and in early May of 2022 I was sent to Europe to assist Task Force Dragon, headed by the Army's 18th Airborne Corps. Being so far from my home church, it made being a catechumen exceedingly difficult. I attended one Liturgy at a Greek church in Wiesbaden, Germany, during my 7 months in Europe, but that was it. I did far too much drinking and fighting, as was usual for me, and began to experience intense spiritual warfare: shadowy figures that would appear as I attempted to sleep. These plagued me until I moved out here to Pocatello, and placed icons of the Theotokos, Saint Paisios of Mount Athos, and Saint Gabriel Urgebadze in my bedroom.

After returning home, I continued to attend Catechesis and was baptized by Father Ambrose on Lazarus Saturday of 2023. This did not stop my poor behavior, as I continued drinking quite heavily every night. In August of that year, I decided that enough was enough and prayed that God would give me the strength to overcome my addictions to alcohol and tobacco. Through the grace of the All-Holy Trinity, it has been almost two years since I last had either of these things, no doubt keeping me out of trouble that I would have gotten into otherwise. The lesson

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I've learned is that God will allow you to fall as many times as is necessary for your salvation.

In late November of 2023, I was honorably discharged, having served my five-year contract. Washington State had banned most of my guns, so I decided to move to Idaho. At that time, my intention was to become a CNC Machinist, and Idaho State University was the only university in Idaho offering such a program; additionally, I wanted to live somewhere with an Orthodox church, and thankfully Pocatello was home to our lovely parish. Even though I ended up in the Mechanical Engineering program instead, I am still happy to be here.

I am truly blessed to have this community and have attempted to make it the cornerstone of my life here in Pocatello. All of you make this my home.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30).

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please offer names (first name only) to Father Constantine of those who are suffering from illnesses or challenges in life so they can be included in our prayers.



PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Heavenly Father, physician of our souls and bodies, who sent Your only begotten Son and Lord Jesus Christ to heal every sickness and infirmity, visit and heal also your servants: ***Maria, Larisa, Gus, Stella, Venetia, Larisa, Rebecca, Jon, Gary, Ahmad, Jason, Tommy, John, Natalia, Svitlana, Ivanna, James, Pam, Christoforos, Hosea, Richard, Jeanne, Sotirios, Fr. Achilles, Kathy, Mary Frances, Lavada, Steven, Alicia, Christopher, Barbara, Georgia, Vlasios, Vivian, Thomas, Sienna, James, Casi, Jim, Scarlett, Zachary, Sara, Martha, Anna, Kieran, Valentin, Valentina, Rose Mary, Patricia, Sotirios, Anthony, Maria, Michael, Krista, John, Bobby, Eric, George, Martin, Gayle, Alicia, Dianna, Chelsea, Dell, Gregory, Dimitri, Oleg, Tania, Ocey, Ethel, Carol, Robert, Casi, Jack, Carol, Roger, Anna, Steve, Christopher, Freda, Larry, Maria, Judy, Ignatius, Elaine, George, Barbara, Nicholas, Matthew, Jeff, Jacqueline, Dianna, Alton, Anna, Larry, Paula, Stacey, Orestes, Helen, Catherine, Andrew, Mary, Steve, Nicholas, Scarlett, Marie, Demetrios, George, Melissa, Galina, Sofia, Cheryl, Christ, Carolyn, Paul, Mary, Nick, John, Elaine, Nicholas*** from all physical and spiritual ailments through the grace of Your Christ. Grant them patience in this sickness, strength of body and spirit and recovery of health. Lord You have taught us through Your Word to pray for each other that we may be healed. I pray that You heal these Your servants and grant to them the gift of complete health. For You are the source of healing and to You I give the Glory, to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE CHURCHING OF A MOTHER AND NEW BORN AFTER FORTY DAYS

Based on the feast day of Christ being presented by the Virgin Mary and Joseph to the Temple.

Blessing of the Mother: The churching ceremony includes prayers for the mother, thanking God for the new life and for preserving her during pregnancy and delivery

O Lord God Almighty, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who by Your word has made every rational and irrational creature, that brought all things out of nothingness into being: we pray to You and implore You, cleanse this Your servant Chayla (Martha), whom by Your Will You have preserved, and who now comes into Your Holy Church, from every transgression, so that she may be accounted worthy to partake of Your holy Mysteries without condemnation.

Presentation of the Child: The baby is brought into the church sanctuary, signifying their introduction to the church family, and then into the Altar where the baby is blessed.

Bless also this child which has been born of her; increase it sanctify it, give it understanding and a prudent and virtuous' mind; for You alone have brought it into being, and have shown him the light which bodily sense perceives, so that he might be accounted worthy also of the ideal light and be numbered with Your holy Flock; through Your Only; Begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your All; Holy, Good and Life; creating Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The Churching of the servant of God Mark with parents Chayla and Ian Schoenrock



THE ORTHODOX FAITH

SAINT KOSMAS THE AITOLOS AS A MODEL FOR OUR LIVES

By Protopresbyter Fr. George Papavarnavas



We know the Old Testament story of the Tower of Babel, as well as the confusion and misunderstanding that prevailed due to arrogance and haughtiness.

The opposite of this incident happened in the New Testament, namely the day of Pentecost.

There with the partitioning of tongues of fire on each of the disciples there disappeared confusion, fear and any dissent, and there was exemplary unity and agreement.

The sacred hymnographer, juxtaposing the two incidents, set side by side...tells us: "When the Most High came down and confounded the tongues, He divided the nations. When He dispensed the tongues of fire, He called all to unity, and with one voice we glorify the Most Holy Spirit" (Kontakion of Pentecost).

In other words, when the Tower of Babel was being constructed, God brought confusion in the languages and divided people into nations, and now with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, He calls all to unity. Arrogance divides and separates people, while humility attracts the Holy Spirit, and unites people from different nations into a brotherhood. Unity without divine Grace will always remain a dream unfulfilled.

Father Kosmas experienced, like all the saints, his own personal Pentecost, which is why he was a unified and integrated man and therefore able to minister and heal people and lead them into unity, to the true "unity of faith and communion of the Holy Spirit." When uncreated divine Grace enters the heart, then it burns with love for others.

Hieromonk Kosmas learned one single language, that of love, and he wanted others to also come to know it, to be able to understand each other and not tear away from each other and kill one another with slander, injustice and lies. True love, as a fruit of communion with God, offers people inner fulfillment and thus becomes a means of attraction and source of unity.

Conversely the passions, such as envy, arrogance and so forth, create problems and anyone who possesses them becomes a source of abnormalities. They disrupt unity, tearing the seamless tunic of Christ, creating factions and a climate of polarization.

No matter how many languages one speaks, if one does not know the language of love, according to the Apostle Paul, they are as a "clanging symbol", just making

noise. The bright and holy figure of Saint Kosmas the Aitolos distributed peace and created a climate of unity. There are three points that characterize this modest but also explosive and majestic personality, proving the truth of what is mentioned above.

First, he had an ecclesiastical spirit. He did not despise those above him, but respected them and sought their opinion and blessing. His missionary career began after he received the blessings of his great Elders in Mount Athos, then he received the blessing and approval of the Patriarch of Constantinople, as well as the Bishops of the places he passed through. He did not work as an individual, nor divide, instead he paved the way for proper communication.

Second, he knew very well, as a true theologian, which means he was a God-seer, that the diversity of languages is a transient phenomenon based on the passions. The passions prevent mutual understanding.

Many times people can communicate with people who are foreigners with a different language and culture, while others who seemingly speak the same language are not able to.

It is obvious that what prevents the communication are the passions, which create a different way of thinking. For example, how can two people communicate, when one speaks the language of reason and the other only the language of interest?

When the Saint asked the Greeks to stop speaking Arvanite and learn Greek, and if they did so then he would take upon himself all their sins, he did not do this because he was a racist or nationalist, but to give them the opportunity to study Holy Scripture and learn the language of love.

Third, wherever he passed through, he set up a Cross and a small pedestal. Then he would climb up to this and preach in the shadow of the Cross. And this was not just a habit without a deeper meaning. The Cross is the symbol of the victory of life against death, as well as of the mystery of love.

The great missionary was crucified and resurrected and therefore did not hesitate to confront injustice, exploitation, ignorance and falsehood, even though he knew this path would lead to martyrdom. The Cross he raised up was a symbol of his personal Cross that he experienced which is why he was not afraid to die. Death did not frighten him, since he defeated it within the limits of his personal life. Only one who has died and risen can experience and preach true love which leads to communion with God, unity and mutual respect for others.

Our society, this modern Babel, requires great holy patristic figures like Father Kosmas, who experienced and expressed daily in his life the mystery of Pentecost and "spoke" the unique language of love.

In next months Epistle St Kosmas Speaks about God, on Love, on Humility, on Confession, on Fasting, on Keeping Sunday, on the Jesus Prayer, and on Life After Death.

Worry as a Distraction from the Spiritual Life

From an Orthodox Christian perspective, worrying is generally seen as a spiritual issue—one that reflects a lack of trust in God's providence and love. The teachings of the Church, rooted in Scripture and the writings of the Fathers, encourage believers to combat worry through faith, prayer, humility, and watchfulness.

Jesus Christ directly addresses worry in the Sermon on the Mount:

"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ... But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

—Matthew 6:31–33

Here, Christ teaches that worry distracts the soul from what is truly essential: union with God. Trust in God replaces anxiety.

The Church Fathers often speak of worry (or *logismoi*, anxious thoughts) as distractions that weaken the soul's focus on God. St. John Climacus, in *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, sees anxiety and excessive concern about material needs as temptations that can enslave the heart.

Metropolitan Athanasios of Lemmesou, Cyprus, tells us that worrying is a terrible thing for the spiritual life. It is a great poison that kills people, not only the spiritual life but also worldly life and human relationships. Do you see how families fall apart? But why? The father is pre-occupied with thousands of things, and the mother is overwhelmed with thousands of other concerns.

How do these people communicate with each other? You constantly hear, I can't right now, I have work to do. The child comes to speak with the mother. Mom, I want to tell you something. Go away. I'm busy with something right now. And when will you not be busy? One wonders, when will you not be busy?

Worries, constant worries, they kill a person. And in the end you are left with nothing. A spiritual person must know balance. Set a limit for yourself. Say, that's enough. Enough for today. Don't continue. Stop, hold back. When you

get home, turn off the phones, leave other worries aside. Now you are home.

Spend time with your family, with yourself, and with God.



Orthodoxy distinguishes between responsible care and spiritual anxiety. Being diligent and providing for one's family is a virtue (see 1 Timothy 5:8), but worry—especially when it becomes chronic fear or distrust—pulls a person away from prayer and peace in God. Instead, the Church encourages *nepsis* (watchfulness): a state of sober, prayerful awareness that keeps the heart grounded in God's presence.

Prayer is the Orthodox antidote to worry. The Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner") is especially recommended for calming the heart and focusing it on God. The more one practices prayer, the more worry gives way to trust and peace.

Many saints endured incredible hardships without falling into anxiety, because they trusted fully in God's will. Their peace under trial is held up as a model of how faith can overcome worry.

From an Orthodox perspective, worrying stems from a heart that is not yet fully surrendered to God. Through prayer, the sacraments, trust in divine providence, and the guidance of spiritual elders, the faithful are invited to "cast all their cares upon Him" (1 Peter 5:7), knowing that "He cares for you."

In Philippians 4:6-8, St. Paul writes, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things."

WHAT HAPPENED



AT PENTECOST?

THE HOLY SPIRIT DESCENDED ON THE APOSTLES, NOT SYMBOLICALLY, BUT ACTUALLY

It was NOT a feeling and NOT a metaphor. It was the **real and personal descent** of the Holy Spirit, as “tongues of fire” upon each Apostle (Acts 2:3-4). This was not merely a personal spiritual awakening; it was the **birth of Christ’s Church**.

THEY PREACHED WITH AUTHORITY-NOT OPINION

The Apostles courageously went out boldly proclaiming the Gospel to all nations. Their words cut to the heart (Acts 2:37) because they spoke with the power and authority of the Spirit, not human wisdom. They proclaimed, “We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

THEY WERE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT-NOT WITH THEORIES

The Apostles did not guess at doctrine, nor did they vote Truth. They were illumined with the fullness of understanding of Christ’s Teachings. The Holy Spirit “taught all things” and brought to remembrance all” Christ had said (John 14:26).

THEY UNDERSTOOD THE SCRIPTURES AS FULFILLED IN CHRIST

The veil over the Old Testament was lifted. The Apostles, now illumined, rightly interpreted the Law, Prophets, and as fulfilled in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This illumination came from the Spirit, not from seminaries or study groups.

THEY BECAME THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH

The Holy Spirit did not descend on random people to launch personal ministries. He descended upon the Apostles together, establishing the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. From Pentecost forward, the Church became the pillar and ground of Truth (1 Timothy 3:15).

THEY RECEIVED AND PRESERVED THE FULLNESS OF THE FAITH

The Apostles did not invent Christianity-they received it whole from Christ and passed it down unaltered. The Holy Spirit guaranteed the purity and unity of Apostolic teaching, which lives in the Orthodox Church. “The faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3) is preserved without addition or subtraction.

THEY BECAME THEOLOGIANs, NOT THROUGH STUDY, BUT THROUGH THE INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT.”





HONORING OUR HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE GRADUATES

On Sunday, May 19th the following graduates were honored at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. The graduates were presented a beautiful diptych icon for home or travel.

JONNY THIENES: *He graduates from Watersprings High School in Idaho Falls. He is a member of the National Honor Society with a 3.9 official GPA. Jonny plans to attend Idaho State University this fall and will pursue an Honors Business Degree while majoring in Marketing. He will also be pursuing a certificate in Sports Media.*

SOPHIA APOSTLE: *She graduated from Highland High School, Pocatello with Highest Honors. Throughout her high school years she was a dedicated student athlete. She was a member of the National Honors Society and was a part of the National Society of High School Scholars since her sophomore year. She graduates with a 4.3 GPA. She plans on playing collegiate volleyball in the fall at Ottawa University, Arizona, while majoring in either medical administration or business administration*

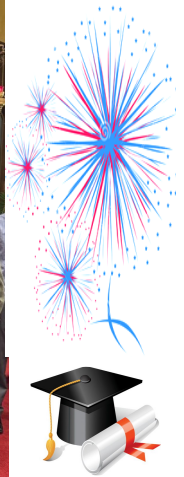
MICHAEL HOSKIN: *Michael attended the school of Gem Prep Pocatello, maintaining a GPA of ~3.7. He achieved two awards from the Veterans of Foreign Wars organization for writing patriotic essays. Meanwhile, he successfully wrote and self-published a mini book series and participated in the Early College Program with Idaho State University. Michael plans to attend ISU for a History/Spanish double major and work in retail during that time.*

NATHAN JOHN SPECK: *Nathan graduated from Idaho State University with a Bachelor's degree in Marketing and Finance with a 3.4 GPA. In December 2024, he and Sofia Milovanovic were married in the Sacrament of Marriage. He is in the process of applying for an Officer's commission with the U.S. Army and will have a six-year obligation. For the future, he hopes to deepen his faith and build a long-lasting career serving our country.*

SAMANTHA SLATER: *Samantha will be graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Music and a minor in Psychology from (BYU-I) Brigham Young University-Idaho with a GPA of 3.50. She has participated in multiple musical ensembles on campus. These groups include the Symphony Orchestra, Baroque Ensemble, and Sinfonietta/String Chamber groups. To finish off her degree, she will be having a solo recital mid-July. Samantha will be exploring her career options after graduating. She will either pursue a Master's in String Performance or a Master's in Psychology.*

JACOB HUEBSCH: *Jacob graduated from Idaho State University in Business. While attending ISU he fell in love with Lillian Wilcox (who is a Catechumen) and they were engaged. His college career has allowed him to make his professional career a reality with a position with Amazon. His future means moving to Spokane, WA., and getting married in 2026.*

HONORING OUR GRADUATES



**Congratulations
Graduates**

**High School
Sophia Apostle
Michael Hoskin
Jonny Thienes**

**College
Jacob Huebsch
Samantha Slatter
Nathan Speck**

ONLINE GIVING**(Questions contact Tressa Rockwood 208-251-8105)**

The Assumption Greek Orthodox Church has an electronic option for making your stewardship payments and other regular and special offerings. Contributions can now be: Debited automatically from your checking or savings account. (click ACH) .25cents fee. Or processed using your Credit or Debit card. (click Credit) 2.9% fee. If you use Credit/debit would you be so kind as to pay the fee. Just check the box.

You will be able to **REGISTER AND CREATE AN ACCOUNT** which will also allow you access to your Church directory information and your giving history.
We hope you find this program helpful.

Access our on-line giving portal on the Church website at:
<https://www.assumptionpocatello.net>

Or directly at: <http://assumptionpocatello.churchtrac.com/give>

Or by Scanning the following QR code into your cell phone:



Having fun and enjoying each others company at the first Greek Festival Workshop.

Volunteers preparing **BAKLAVA** are
**Tressa Rockwood, Goldie Homan,
Sophie McCurry, Phil Homan, Filio
Paloukos, Betty Katsilometes, and
Teresa Lea.**



Jordan Roan volunteering & donating Pest Control for our Church facilities



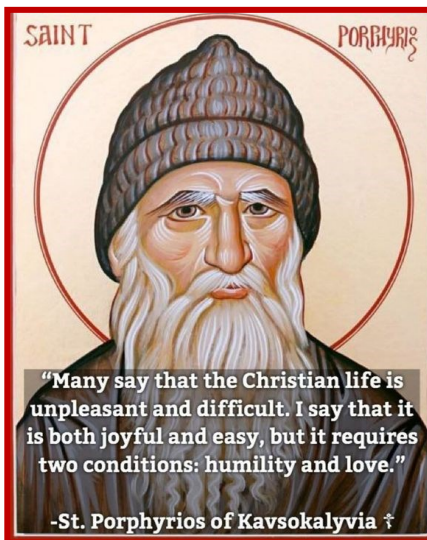
Getting things ready for the cement slab behind the new kitchen **Ron Sims** and his tractor, **Evan Myers**, **Jacob Denton**, **Jayce Bodily**, **Swayer Shaffer**, **Alex Tarasau**, **Derek Hyde**, **Brandon Black**, **Ethan Murdock**, and **John Speck**, **Dean Harris**.



Thank you and much appreciation to **Nate Mountain** for installing the tile in the front entrance of the Social Hall.



Ailaine Carroll donated & installed door for the new bookstore.



OUR STRENGTH IS FOUND IN GOD

Many of us have been in a situations where we feel like things are piling up on top of us, one after another. As one issue is resolved, another one comes up. Or maybe nothing is fixed, and we feel like problems are crashing down on us like huge waves to the shore.

In times like these, I have heard many say this common phrase, “God only gives you what you can handle.” And sometimes hearing this makes us want to yell and scream. This is so far from the truth we read in the Bible.

Scripture is clear that God wants us to lean on Him because we are not strong. We always fall short when we try to do things by using our own strength. St. Paul writes: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.

Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so

that Christ’s power may rest upon me.” (2 Corinthians 12:9)

In our weaknesses, when we lean on Jesus for our help, we glorify Him. If we could walk through trials and troubles and overcome them through our own strength, then why would we need Jesus? However, the Gospel is clear that we cannot do things alone and need Jesus to be our strength. I love that He always goes before us, and we can always rely on Him!

A Prayer for Strength

Let us pray to the Lord, Lord have mercy.

Dear Father, thank You for being my strength when I am weak. Thank You for providing a way for me, as I know I cannot do anything without You! In times of hardship, help me turn to You first for help. Guide me according to Your Holy Spirit and in Jesus’ name. Amen

Always Choose Gentleness

“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” Ephesians 4:1-6 In the Bible, the word for ‘gentle’ is sometimes translated as ‘meek’. Being meek is probably not something most people want to be known as. In our way of thinking, meekness sounds like weakness. But ‘gentle’ and ‘meek’ mean virtually the same thing. On the other hand, true gentleness resembles strength more than weakness.

People, unfortunately, have the potential to be rude or proud. Gentle people, though, have decided not to behave that way. They have chosen gentleness. This positive activity takes more strength than it does to treat others harshly. Releasing our anger is usually easier than restraining ourselves. So meekness is hardly weakness. A decision not to retaliate may look like inaction, but it’s actually humility at work. What appears to be a lack of forcefulness is active spiritual action.

Let us pray to the Lord, Lord have mercy.

Lord Jesus, thank you for being a gentle shepherd who tenderly cares for His sheep. Help us to follow Your example and to be gentle with others, just as You have been gentle with us. Amen