



THE MONASTERY OF SAINT TIKHON OF ZADONSK

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Pentecost 2024

Beloved of God,

The Lenten journey, which we began a few months ago, is now made complete on this Day of Pentecost, on which the Holy Spirit is sent forth. While Adam closed Paradise by his Fall, Christ not only opens Paradise again and makes a concrete way for us to return there, but, even more, He sends the Holy Spirit to us as the pledge of our redemption. In this event, a deposit has been made to our account, but it is up to us to accrue interest through prayer, confession, communion, and the Christian pursuit of virtue. God has given us Himself, but we, in turn, through a lifetime of struggle, must continue to try to offer ourselves to Him in return.

If we wish to save our life, our Lord tells us, we must lose our life. How is this done? By choosing to focus our time and energy on that “better part:” church attendance, daily prayer, works of charity, and keeping the commandments, especially the command to love God and neighbor before ourselves. The Holy Spirit is not given automatically, but rather His presence is something we must strive to rekindle within ourselves daily, even moment by moment; “Come and abide in us!”

Life in Christ is dynamic and, if we are not moving toward Christ, we will be pulled away from Him by the tide of the world’s allure. Let us turn to Christ every day and strive with all our heart to put Him in the center of our day through prayers to Him in every time and place. Saint Ambrose of Optina once said, “Throughout the day, try to remember God more often. If you feel bad, turn to Him, ‘Lord, I feel bad, help me’. If you feel good, ‘Lord, glory to Thee, thank you for this joy’. If you are worried about someone, ‘Lord, I am worried about him, help him’. Whatever happens, turn it into prayer.”

May the Lord who sent His Holy Spirit, renew Himself within us today, that Spirit which we received at baptism, and inspire us to pray again, to hope again, to start again, and to have faith in Him and His love and care for us. Praying that all of you may be blessed with a peaceful and Christ-centered summer.

With much love in Christ,

Fr. Archimandrite Sergius
Abbot of St. Tikhon’s Monastery