



Pastor:

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He dealeth with us according to His mercy, and according to the multitude of His righteousness. And He said, "Are you not my people? They are My children and they will not set me at nought." And He became for them salvation out of all their affliction. Not an ambassador nor an agnel, but the Lord Himself saved them, because He loved them and spared them; He Himself redeemed them and took them up, and lifted them up for all the days of eternity.

—The Reading From Isaiah 63 for Ascension

Ascension: the First of Two Major Feasts of the Lord This Month

Ascension (Thursday, May 13th) is that feast that celebrates our Savior's ascending into Heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father, bearing our human nature and flesh along with His divinity. In this action, Christ completed the reuniting of the natures of God and man, reestablishing this communion for all who accept His gift. In this, He is sealing for all eternity that access to the heavenly realm, to life eternal, and to adoption into the most royal of royal families—that of the King of kings, Lord of lords and God of gods.

Of this majestic feast, St. Leo the Great said, "Above the dignity of all heavenly creatures, the nature of mankind went up, to pass above the angels' and archangels' ranks ... the Ascension of Christ is our uplifting ... for where the glory of our Head shall go, there also the hope of our Body is called."

St. John Chrysostom gives us this stunning image of Jesus Christ, both true God and true man, bearing our humanity into the highest: "... this nature of ours, because of which the Cherubim guarded the gate of Paradise, this day sits high above the Cherubim ... This day the angels and archangels behold our nature upon the royal throne, shining in immortal beauty and glory ... yet they rejoice at the good that comes to us."

Holy Pentecost

Pentecost (Sunday, May 23rd) reminds us that we have immeasurable possibility of spiritual potential, in that we have been given, in baptism and chrismation, the "seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit." When the Apostles received the fullness of the Spirit in the upper room, all the earthly barriers to salvation for all the people of Earth were broken, as the Apostles proclaimed the truth in every language on earth.

St. Gregory of Nyssa, in his Commentary on the Song of Songs, stated the following of the gift of the Holy Spirit:

"When love has entirely cast out fear, and fear has been transformed into love, then the unity brought us by our Savior will be fully realized, for all men will be united with one another through their union with the one supreme Good. They will possess the perfection ascribed to the dove, according to our interpretation of the text (from the Song of Songs): "One alone is my dove, my perfect one. She is the only child of her mother, her chosen one."

"Our Lord's words in the gospel bring out the meaning of this text more clearly. After having conferred all power on his disciples by his blessing, he obtained many other gifts for them by his prayer to the Father. Among these was included the greatest gift of all, which was that they were no longer to be divided in their judgment of what was right and good, for they were all to be united to the

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*Corner of Jamestown Rd.
& Robinwood Ln.
(2 blocks north of
Racetrack Rd.)

one supreme Good. As the Apostle says, they were to be bound together with the bonds of peace in the unity that comes from the Holy Spirit. They were to be made one body and one spirit by the one hope to which they were all called. We shall do better, however, to quote the sacred words of the gospel itself. “I pray,” the Lord says, “that they all may be one; that as you, Father, are in me and I am in you, so they also may be one in us.”

Just so, as God unites in spirit all those on Earth who truly choose to be united with Him, let us call upon Him to help us manifest more fully the truth of the Holy Spirit within ourselves, so that we may more fully join in this union of love—which for us is a glimpse of the heavenly glory.

A New St. Susanna Mission Tradition

On Pentecost Sunday (May 23), following the Divine Liturgy and the Vespers of Pentecost that follow Divine Liturgy, we will gather at Hurst Ranch for the blessing of Leslie Hurst’s newly developed vineyard. This is an important time for the vineyard, as the vines have recently achieved “bud burst,” when the buds open and the first leaves appear. By Pentecost, the vines’ growing cycle will be well set for a blessing, as the grapes will develop over the summer—so let’s give them a good start! Leslie has said that she will invite her fellow ranchers and other friends. The blessing of crops is a long-standing tradition all over the world, and this gathering at Hurst Ranch to uphold this honorable tradition—for which our holy Church has services and prayers—can only add to our fellowship, and to the goodwill that we share with our community.

A Final Note

As the eve of Ascension is the Leavetaking of Pascha, let us continue to say to one another, right up to Ascension: “Christ is Risen!”

In His Magnificent Name,
Fr. Andrew

**St. Susanna Cleaning Team
Schedule**

*Blessed are those who love the beauty
of God’s house*

Team 1—May 15th; 9:00 a.m.

Prayer List

PLEASE JOIN US IN GIVING THANKS TO GOD:

- For the skill and devotion of those beautifying our temple and gardens.
- For the beauty of the Mother Lode, and for the privilege we have been given to live here.
- That the Holy Mother of Jesus continues to care for the unborn.
- That many of our petitions are being answered.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR GOD’S HELP:

- “St. John, please intercede for us before God for the membership growth of St. Susanna.”
- That St. Susanna Mission may receive a Church Planting Grant.
- For repose of the souls of our service men and women who have given their lives for the people of foreign lands.
- To safeguard all the troops who remain in heathen lands.
- To help us forgive the heathen fanatics who continue to murder our soldiers and their own citizens and children.
- That many may come to Orthodoxy through our witness and example.
- To bless our monasteries and the men and women who dwell in them.
- For the healing of Matushka Anna.
- For health for Shay.
- For the healing of Bishop Nikolai.
- For health and strength for Ron and Judy.
- For health and strength for Athena.
- For Memory Eternal for Chris.

To ask us to pray for you, your family or friends, please call Alex Teshin at 209-536-9999.

MANY YEARS

Birthdays:

Sasha Worth	May 14
Mark Sevick	May 17
Catherine Weightman	May 31

Anniversaries:

Nicolas & Rebecca Teshin	May 26
Leslie & Joe Hurst	May 28

Liturgical Schedule for May, 2010

- Saturday, May 1** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **The Sunday of the Samaritan Woman**
- Sunday, May 2** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **The Sunday of the Samaritan Woman**
Scripture Readings—Acts 11:19–30 and John 4:5–42
Note: There will be a Parish Council Meeting following Divine Liturgy.
- Saturday, May 8** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers **The Sunday of the Blind Man**
- Sunday, May 9** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy **The Sunday of the Blind Man**
Scripture Readings—Acts 16:16–34 and John 9:1–38
Note: A potluck luncheon will take place after Divine Liturgy.
- Wednesday, May 12** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers w/ Litya for **The Ascension** (Leavetaking of Pascha)
- Thursday, May 13** 6:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **The Ascension**
Scripture Readings—Acts 1:1–12 and Luke 24:36–53
- Saturday, May 15** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for the **Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council**
- Sunday, May 16** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for the **Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council**
Scripture Readings—Acts 20:16–18, 28–36 and John 17:1–13
- Saturday, May 22** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers with Litya for **Holy Pentecost**
- Pentecost Sunday, May 23** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **Holy Pentecost**
Scripture Readings—Acts 2:1–11 and John 7:37–52, 8:12
Note: Vespers of Pentecost will follow Divine Liturgy; AND, a potluck luncheon and the blessing of Leslie's vineyard will take place after Vespers of Pentecost.
- Saturday, May 29** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **All Saints** (Leavetaking of Pentecost)
- Sunday, May 30** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **All Saints**
Scripture Readings—Hebrews 11:33–12:2 and Matthew 10:32–38, 19:27–30
- Monday, May 31** **Beginning of the Apostles' Fast (May 31-June 28, followed by the Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul on June 29)**
- Saturday, June 5** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **All Saints of America and Russia**
- Sunday, June 6** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **All Saints of America and Russia**
Scripture Readings—Romans 2:10–16 and Matthew 4:18–23
Note: There will be a Parish Council Meeting following Divine Liturgy.