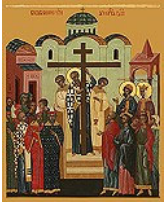


✠Bulletin✠

Week of May 31st to June 6th



Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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8th SUNDAY OF PASCHA - Tone 7

Holy Pentecost: Feast of the Holy Trinity

St. Apollonios (Apollo) of the Egyptian Thebaid (395). Apostle Hermas of the Seventy (1st c.). Martyr Hermias at Comana (160). Martyr Philosophus at Alexandria (252). Metropolitan Philotheus of Tobolsk, the Enlightener of Siberia (1727).

Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

Sunday May 31st - PENTECOST

9:15 am - Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Kneeling Prayers

Weekly Schedule

Sunday May 31st

➤ Inquirers & Catechism classes

The Grace of the Holy Spirit Can Change Us!
Excerpts Homily on the Day of the Holy Trinity
Archimandrite John (Krestiankin)

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit!
Beloved in Christ, my friends!

The grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered people today in all Orthodox Churches all over the world, so that their common prayer might remind us of the great event that took place a long time ago in Jerusalem.

Our Holy Church now celebrates this great day—the Day of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, about Whom Jesus Christ spoke with His disciples at their parting, came down to earth.

History does not know a more amazing event than the one that took place fifty days after the Most Glorious Resurrection from the dead of Christ the Savior. It is beyond our intellectual understanding.

Remember, that ordinary Galileans entered the upper room in Sion; these were the closest disciples of Christ and His Most Pure Mother. They were very timid men, not yet having a firm, specific understanding of recent events. But they left as convinced heralds of universal truth, ready to go anywhere and teach all nations. It is bold to say that the crucified Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ.

Having received “Power from on high”, the apostles as if became different men—renewed, strengthened, capable of taking the great work of serving Christ and His Church upon their shoulders.

The apostles and the Mother of God were in Jerusalem after the Lord’s Ascension into heaven. Through increased, unified, fiery prayer and fasting they prepared themselves to meet the Comforting Spirit, Which Christ had promised to send from the Father.

And thus did a divine miracle take place!

The Holy Spirit came down upon them. With His all-powerful breath He inspired them, and with fiery tongues He enlightened their minds and ignited their hearts. The Holy Spirit rested upon each of them and upon the Mother of God in the form of fiery tongues.

And only then did all the disciples finally understand the redemptive significance of the Lord’s appearance in the world, and now unwaveringly believed in Him as the Savior of the world and Son of God.

From that moment the apostles received a conscious and precise understanding of God the Father, Who out of love for mankind sent His Son to earth; about the Son, Who came down to earth and suffered for the whole human race; and about the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, Who shines upon all who prepare themselves to receive Him and His grace.

They came to know the Holy Trinity!

Having received the grace of the Holy Spirit, they received also the gifts of wisdom, prophecy, preaching of glad tidings, and working miracles.

They were given the ability to speak in different tongues that they never knew before—each in the language that they would need to preach in the foreign country to which God’s Providence would send them.

From that time on the name of God and the teaching of Christ the Savior has been preached far beyond the borders of Jerusalem.

“Their sound has gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto all the ends of the world”. Thus says the Holy Church about this in its divine services (Romans 10:18; Psalms 18:5).

And the preaching of the Galilean fishermen had great power, because they were filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit, which gave them wisdom and inspired them for the lofty apostolic service.

The Book of the Acts of the Apostles tells us how the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles occurred in Jerusalem on the day of Old Testament Pentecost.

The world in those times was made up of pagan peoples and tribes who all spoke different languages and did not understand each other. In order to successfully preach the word of God, they needed to be given, besides the power of grace that strengthened the apostles, also the knowledge of other nations’ languages. And in order for the pagans to be brought to reason, they needed to know that this teaching was divine and not just human invention; that divine heavenly powers participated in it.

Therefore, did the Holy Spirit descend upon the apostles with a great noise (a fierce breath of wind) in the form of fiery tongues resting on their heads, visible to every person present. The earthly elements shuddered from the noise at which the holy apostles were mystically illumined before they began their preaching.

The Holy Church sings, “All the nations saw in the City of David...”, how in a fierce breath of wind the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles in the form of fiery tongues... “All saw” how the simple fishermen from Galilee opened

their mouths and began to speak in foreign tongues... “All saw...” what great preachers the only recently timid and frightened disciples of Christ became, and through whom the Lord drew the whole universe into His fatherly embrace...

As we know, Apostle Peter right then and there pronounced his first apostolic sermon, his first “testimony” about Christ. And this multi-lingual crowd listened with great feeling to the apostle’s words, received them, and were baptized.

And there were around three thousand of them! My friends!

We should experience all our Church feasts in our souls not as distant events, but as if we were direct participants in those events; for the work of our salvation did not simply happen sometime. It is wrought all the time over each of us and with our own participation.

Thus, on Pentecost, the memory of which we are now solemnly celebrating, Christ’s work with regard to His bodily life on earth was finished, and the work of the Holy Spirit began.

The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles is not only a miracle that glorified the apostolic Church, but also an event bound up with the work of our personal salvation.

The Holy Spirit creates our spiritual rebirth. He reveals to us the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

The Lord Himself, in His parting talk with His disciples, said, “I will pray to the Father, and He will send you the Comforter... In that day you will know that I am in My Father.” It was precisely on Pentecost that the mystery of the Holy Trinity was revealed to the apostles, and this mystery has been preserved over the course of almost two thousand years. The Holy Church calls the Trinity Life-creating—and this is because for the Church itself the Trinity is the creator of life. All in the Church lives and breathes the Trinity. All is driven toward Him—the teaching of the faith, the Sacraments, divine services, prayer, repentance, and ascetic labors.

Pentecost does not end with that one and only solemn day, which happened in Jerusalem and was described in the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

No! The day of the fiery tongues was only the beginning of an unceasing descent of the Spirit of God to mankind. This is the day of the Church's Baptism of fire, by which the Church of Christ was founded on the earth.

Pentecost continues, and over the years and up to our days it happens with each of us if only we would truly strive with all our souls for God and seek Him.

Now we do not hear the noise that once filled Jerusalem, because our hearing is not subtle enough to perceive heavenly movements. But it is heard by our inner, spiritual ear.

The mystical union of the Creator with the creation—the descent of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the faithful—happens directly in Christ's Church.

The grace of the Spirit of the Live-creating God, Who fills all things with Himself, the "Treasury of good gifts and Giver of Life", penetrates into human souls, making them capable of illumination.

The descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles is an extraordinary event, which reveals a new era in the work of man's salvation. With the coming of the Holy Spirit, the opportunity for the knowledge of God was opened to people.

Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit a person is cleansed from sins, perfected, and can restore the lost image of God in himself. The qualities of Christ are gradually restored in the inner man.

"When the Spirit of God comes to a person," taught St. Seraphim, "and overshadows him with the fullness of His inspiration, then that person's soul is filled with unspeakable joy, for the Spirit of God makes glad everything that He touches."

Thus, we see that from the day of that event in the upper room in Zion, a new power has entered the world. It is a power that founds the Kingdom of God in human hearts.

By the pouring out of the Holy Spirit a person is transfigured, made a new creature, and partakes of divine life. This miracle of God's mercy occurs uninterruptedly throughout the history of the Church and should bring the world and man to complete theosis.

O my friends! That we would only receive today into our hearts and souls this grace of the Holy Spirit!

It would change us also. And from timid people who are not always steadfast in the faith it would create firmly convinced bearers of the true faith.

From my whole heart I wish for each of us to have in our consciousness the words of our Church hymn, filled with exaltation:

"We have seen the True Light, we have received the Heavenly Spirit, we have found the True Faith, worshipping the undivided Trinity, for He has saved us." Amen.

God Grant You Many Years!

Birthdays

Scott Peatross 6/02

Gregory Tomlinson 6/05

Ryvan (Joseph) Anderson 6/07

Rodney Fitts 6/10

Matushka Lorraine Palceski 6/12

Sylvia Canko 6/16

Halyna Sharapaniuk 6/24

Anniversaries

Anatoli & Tetyana Grubii 6/09

Prayer Requests

Agape Brill

Walter Kallaur – brother of the Constantine & Arlene Kallaur

Anne and Scott Peatross

Nicholas Kowalski

Robert Kozera

Megan – David & Phyllis Bartos' daughter

Rosemary – Friend of David & Phyllis Bartos

Please pray for our families in Ukraine

Leonid, Nadiia, Andrii, Halyna,
Volodymyr, Maryna, Dmytro, Bohdan,
Nadiia, Oleksandr, Tetiana,
Roman, Mykola
Anatoly, Olga, Maria, Andrei

Please let us know of anyone you would like to add to the Prayer Lists.

2026 Monthly Donations for Church Votive Candles

The church uses 12-hour 51% Beeswax votives, which are a cleaner burning candle and protect the church walls from soot. The approximate monthly cost of these votives for weekend Vespers & Divine Liturgy is \$100.00 per month. If you would like to donate (as a memorial, thanksgiving, or just to donate), please see Tanya Grubii. Thank you!

June

July

August

August Feast Days

September

October

November

December

December Feast Days

Inquirers & Catechism Class

Classes will be on Sundays following Divine Liturgy. For those new to understanding Orthodoxy or for those who want to expand your foundation, please join us for our classes. Please check the schedule for changes.

The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Variable Hymns and Readings

The First Antiphon

The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims His handiwork. *(Ps. 18:1)*

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!

Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

(Ps. 18:2) (Refrain)

Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the universe. *(Ps. 18:4) (Refrain)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. *(Refrain)*

The Second Antiphon

The Lord answer thee in the day of trouble; the Name of the God of Jacob protect thee! *(Ps. 19:1)*

Refrain: O Gracious Comforter, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

May He send thee help from the sanctuary and give thee support from Zion!

(Ps. 19:2) (Refrain)

May He remember all thine offerings, and fulfill all thy plans!

(Ps. 19:3) (Refrain)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

("Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God...")

The Third Antiphon

In Thy strength the king rejoices, O Lord, and exults greatly in Thy salvation.

(Ps. 20:1)

Refrain: Troparion of the Feast

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God,

Who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise

by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit,

and through them Thou didst draw the world into Thy net.//

O Lover of Man, glory to Thee!

Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withheld the request of his lips. *(Ps. 20:2) Troparion of the Feast*
For Thou dost meet him with goodly blessings; Thou dost set a crown of fine gold upon his head. *(Ps. 20:3) Troparion of the Feast*

Priest Entrance Verse

Be Thou exalted, O Lord, in Thy strength! We will sing and praise Thy power! *(Ps. 20:13) Troparion of the Feast*

Tone 8 Troparion

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God,
Who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise
by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit,
and through them Thou didst draw the world into Thy net.//
O Lover of Man, glory to Thee!

Tone 8 Kontakion

When the Most High came down and confused the tongues,
He divided the nations;
but when He distributed the tongues of fire, He called all to unity.//
Therefore, with one voice we glorify the All-holy Spirit.

Instead of the Trisagion, we sing:

As many as have been baptized into Christ,
have put on Christ. Alleluia.

Tone 8 Prokeimenon *(Pentecostarion)*

Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, / and their words to the ends of the universe. *(Ps. 18:4)*

V. The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork. (Ps. 18:1)

Acts 2:1-11 (Epistle)

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because

everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs – we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

Tone 1

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made; and all their host by the Spirit of His mouth. (Ps. 32:6)

V. The Lord looked down from heaven, and saw all the sons of men. (Ps. 32:13)

John 7:37-52, 8:12 (Gospel)

On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" So there was a division among the people because of Him. Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him. Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?" The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!" Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed." Nikodemos (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?" They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee." Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Explanation of Today's Gospel Reading

By Blessed Theophylact
Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

37-38. On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." The first day and *the last day* (the seventh day) of the feast were both called *great*, because the law refers to them as especially holy [see Lev. 23:35-36].¹ In keeping with the law, the Evangelist also calls the last day *great*. It was fitting that Christ preached to the multitude on the final day, as if providing food for thought on their journey home. The middle days of the feast, when the people celebrated by eating and drinking, would not have been the right time to address them, for they would have paid little attention. Jesus *cried* out, first, to make Himself heard, and second, to show that He feared no one. His words should be punctuated as follows: *He who believes in Me as the Scripture has said* (punctuate here, and begin again), *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*. Because many people believed solely because of the miracles, the Lord states that one should believe because of the testimony of the Scriptures, not on account of miracles, and that right belief stems from knowledge of the Scriptures. This is why He says, "*He who believes in Me as the Scripture has said*, that is, as the Scripture has testified concerning Me: that I am the Son of God, the Creator, the Lord of all, and Savior of the world." Many thought they believed, but they did so in accordance with their own opinions, not with Scripture. This is typical of all heretics. Christ promised that rivers would flow from the belly of him who believed *as the Scripture has said*. In Hebrew, the belly is used as a figurative expression for the heart. For example, David wrote, *Thy law is in the midst of my bowels* [Ps. 39:11], meaning, "in my heart." The Lord says that there *shall flow*, not a single river, but *rivers of living water*, indicating the abundance of the grace of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit acts in this manner: He enters the soul of a man and establishes Himself there, causing the soul to gush forth more abundantly than any spring. The eloquence of Peter, the fervor of Paul, and the wisdom of Stephen prove that rivers of divine grace indeed flow from the heart of the man who believes in accordance with the Scriptures. When these men spoke, no one could withstand them. Their preaching swept everyone along, like a mighty river in torrent.

¹ Note that Theophylact refers to the last day of the feast as the seventh day; but in Leviticus it is clearly stated that the last day is the eighth day.

39. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Here the Evangelist explains what are these rivers of living water: *this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given*. One might well ask, "How can the Evangelist say that the Spirit was not yet given? Did not the prophets prophesy and the Evangelists heal by the Spirit? If not by the Spirit, how did they do these things?" We answer that the prophets most assuredly gave utterance by the Spirit, but God held in check the power of that grace, which then departed from the earth. As a result, although the Spirit was active during the time of the prophets, when Christ walked the earth in the flesh, prophecy was no longer operative because of the unworthiness of the people. Grace no longer overshadowed their temple and holy things. Since the divine energy of the Spirit was absent at this time but was soon to be given [in full measure], the Evangelist says that *the Holy Spirit was not yet given*, meaning, was not active at that time among the Jews. Indeed, [before Pentecost] the apostles did not perform miracles by the Spirit, but by the power of the Lord. Note that the Evangelists state that the Lord gave His disciples authority and power before sending them out. But the Evangelists make no mention of the Spirit [see Mt. 10:1; Mk. 3:15; Lk.10:19]. This indicates that at that time the disciples worked miracles, not by the Spirit, but by the authority and the name of the Lord. Only after rising from the tomb did Christ say to them, *receive ye the Holy Spirit* [Jn. 20:22]; and on Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon them [see Acts 2]. In another sense, even though the power of the Spirit had been present in the prophets, and in the apostles before the cross, yet was not in the same manner as after the ascension, when the Spirit was poured out superabundantly. Rightly does the Evangelist say, *The Holy Spirit was not yet*, meaning in this sense, *was not yet* poured out as plentifully as would later be the case. The power of the Holy Spirit was present before the cross, but not in such abundance. *Because Jesus was not yet glorified*. Here the Evangelist refers to the cross as "glory." By the cross the Lord cast down the tyrant and gained dominion over him. Before the cross was fixed in the earth, neither had sin been annulled, nor had our nature - in Christ- conquered the world, nor had it been reconciled to God; therefore, the grace of the Spirit was not yet given in full abundance. Before a man can hope for a gift from an earthly king, he must first become the king's friend. It was necessary that we first become God's friends through the cross; then we could receive His gift. Thanks be to God Who has bestowed grace upon us in greater abundance than He did upon the prophets! The prophets possessed the grace of the Spirit but could not bestow it on others. The apostles multiplied that grace ten thousandfold.

40-43. many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" So there was a division among the people because of Him. Although the rulers, burning with envy, continued to oppose the Lord fiercely, *many of the people*, confounded by the power of His speech, were won over and confessed that *this is the prophet* long awaited. *Others* - the more ignorant-said, *This is the Christ*, not understanding that the Christ and the prophet whom the Jews awaited were one and the same. Still others, who understood more but whose hearts were hardened, said, "Surely Christ shall not *come out of Galilee ... but out of Bethlehem ... and of the seed of David.*" They spoke cunningly, not guilelessly, as had Nathanael. As a man learned in the law and careful in its interpretation, Nathanael had wondered, *Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth* [Jn. 1:46]? The Lord praised him for asking this question, which showed Nathanael's keen knowledge of the law, and the absence in him of any deceit. But these Pharisees spoke craftily, saying that the Christ would not come from Galilee. In all likelihood they knew that Jesus was from Bethlehem, although He had been raised in Galilee. Spite drove them to conceal His birth in Bethlehem and pronounce Him to be a Galilean. But suppose they were indeed ignorant that He was from Bethlehem. They still had no reason to doubt that He was *of the seed of David*. Was it not obvious that Mary was of the lineage of David? Thus, their deceit is unmistakable. *There was a division among the people*, but not among the rulers, who with one mind refused to accept Him as the Christ.

44-46. Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him. Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?" The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!" Some of the Pharisees were less evil-minded and only argued against Christ. Others, more shameless, wanted to lay hands on Him, but were invisibly restrained by a divine power. Yet even this miracle did not soften their hearts. David spoke truly of these men when he said, *They were rent asunder yet not pricked at heart* [Ps. 34:19]. How do the officers who were sent to arrest Jesus answer the Pharisees' question? Honestly and candidly. The Pharisees, who supposedly were wiser and more learned in the law and had witnessed the Lord's miracles, raged against Him. Like brigands they snarled, *Why have ye not brought Him?* But the goodhearted officers, having witnessed no miracles, were won over by the Lord's teaching alone. That it was Christ's teaching - which is greater than any miracle - that persuaded them is clear from their answer to the Pharisees. They did not say,

"Never did a man work wonders like this man," but rather, *No man ever spoke like this man*. How quick they were to grasp His words of salvation! One must admire not only their swift comprehension, but also their boldness. They neither cowered at the anger of the Pharisees, nor - being servants under orders - did they report what their rulers wanted to hear. Instead, they witnessed to the truth. Let all who are under authority imitate these men and not obey those who give unjust orders. Let them follow the example of Saul's servants who disobeyed him when he gave an unlawful order to slay the priests of God [see I Kings 22:16-17].

47-51. Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed." Nikodemos (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?" The Pharisees attempt to soothe the servants, asking meekly, *Are you also deceived?* They feared that these too in the end would break with them and follow Christ. So, they employ flattery: "Are even you deceived, who are wiser than the others and have always stood by us, the masters of the law?" How flimsy is the argument they use to make their case: *Have any of the rulers ... believed in Him?*² Here is one of their own who believed in Him - Nicodemus. What answer does Nicodemus make? *Does our law judge any man, before it hears him?* He shows that the Pharisees neither knew the law, nor did what it prescribed, although they claimed to hold it in high regard. The law commanded that no one condemn a man without first judging him. By doing just that, the Pharisees obviously transgressed the law. The words, *and know what he does*, show that the law requires, not a perfunctory hearing, but a careful and meticulous study to determine what ought to be done. It certainly forbids a verdict be reached without knowledge of the facts.

² In the Greek text, the phrasing of the Pharisees' question has the connotation: "Surely none of the rulers or the Pharisees have believed in Him, have they?"

Hymn to the Theotokos

(Instead of "It is truly meet...," we sing:)

Rejoice, O Queen, glory of mothers and virgins!

No tongue, however sweet or fluent, is eloquent enough to praise you worthily.

Every mind is overawed by your childbearing.

Therefore, with one voice, we glorify you.

Communion Hymn

Let Thy good Spirit lead me on a level path! *(Ps. 142:12a)*

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Beginning of Kneeling Prayers:

O heavenly King,

the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth,

Who art everywhere and fillest all things;

Treasury of blessings

and Giver of life,

come and abide in us,

and cleanse us from every impurity, //

and save our souls, O Good One!