

Pastoral Reflection June 2025: The Feast of Pentecost: At the Feast of the Theophany, Christ's Baptism, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove lighted on Christ to confirm that he is the Messiah, the one sent by God. On the day of Pentecost, Christ sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and disciples and those with them in the upper room, including the Theotokos and the women who were with Jesus during his life. Hardly incidental to the compassionate impetus of Christ's Incarnation, Pentecost is integral to that compassion. It validates the promise Christ made to the disciples not to forsake them and to be with them always, which is exactly the promise that God gives to the Israelites in the Old Testament as the expression of his compassion and mercy for them. Indeed, as Fr Bobrinskoy once observed, the sign of God the Father's compassionate forgiveness of human sinfulness is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Here is a wonderful hymn to keep in mind during your celebration of the Feast of Pentecost and throughout the year:

Speedy and constant consolation give us, Your servants, O Jesus, when our spirits become despondent. Do not part from our souls when we are in trouble, nor be far from our minds when we are in peril. But draw near to us, draw near, O You who are everywhere. And as You are always with Your Apostles, so also unite yourself to us who long for You the Compassionate One; so that united to You we may extol and glorify Your all-holy Spirit. (Pentecost, Matins, Kontakion GOARCH trans.)

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