6 19 16   "THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK"

" ***When the day of Pentecost had come, the Disciples were all together in one place.”***

          As we come together to celebrate this greatest feast of the Church, let us reflect (theology is practical!) on how we gather together. Where the text above says “all together” the word in Greek is *omothimadón* which means one mind or one accord. It is only if we are of one mind-unified in our faith and in our love for one another- that the Holy Spirit can act in us with power. Holy Pentecost would never have occurred if the disciples were arguing and divided. Acts 1:14 that tells us exactly what the spiritual atmosphere was in the upper room… ***These all continued with one accord*** *(omothimadón)* ***in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. (Act 1:14 NKJ)***

     Beloved, if we are not to receive the Holy Spirit in vain, if we are to receive holy communion “worthily” we must strive to be of one mind and one heart with all of the faithful. We must reject divisions over nonessential things- at any cost to us- for the greatest catastrophe is if we are divided. Imagine if the disciples were arguing over personality differences, music, language, or culture! These are matters of pride. The very nature of Pentecost is unity in humility. It does not matter if we are Parthians or Medes….Cretans or Arabs (rich, poor, educated or not, Slavs, Greeks, German or Anglo-Saxons)- if we are unified, the Holy Spirit will come to us with power. If we are divided we cannot have the Spirit. If we participate in these kinds of divisions, in any way, we cannot have the spirit. St. Jude writes ***“ These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.”***

     Therefore my dear ones in Christ Jesus, as we celebrate this glorious feast, let us receive the grace of the Holy Spirit with power. Flee divisions at all cost. Let us remain in prayer and supplication together with the Theotokos. This is the prayer in the upper room and, truly, the only effective prayer.

     Finally, let us listen carefully and follow our beloved Paul’s instruction to us; ***“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. (Eph 4:1-7 NKJ)***