

New Hampshire. Many adults from our parish serve as Rally Staff, and parish youth have been blessed over the years by the experience. Rally volunteers Tim Tassmer, Elias and Ephraim Mosher would be glad to answer questions.

**Our parish Charity Fund offers financial aid to help children attend Youth Rally.** We strongly believe this is an excellent opportunity to build up our children's faith and especially to enable them to make Orthodox friends across the diocese. If you would like to support participation in Youth Rally, please contribute to our Charity Fund.

**Another way to support Youth Rally is to participate in ONE Stewards,** which directly funds valuable outreach like Youth Rally. For details, visit the diocesan website: <https://dneoca.org>

On Saturday, June 10, **we will travel to All Saints Church, 205 Scarborough Street, Hartford, to celebrate the eve of their parish feast of All Saints.** After Vespers in Hartford, we are invited to a supper.

**On the following Saturday, June 17, we again will not have Vespers in Meriden,** as Fr. Joshua and M. Jenny will serve as godparents at the Baptism of Miroslav Leivas at Christ the Savior Church, Southbury. All are encouraged to attend the Baptism at 4:30 PM and Vespers which follows at 6 PM.

On the Sunday of All Saints of North America, June 18, at 4 PM we are invited to an **Akathist Service at All Saints of America Church, Salisbury.**

# Rector's Letter, June, 2023

Dear brothers and sisters:

We have now come to "a season of saints": on Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended and enlightened the apostles to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ; All Saints a week later celebrates the tradition of the martyrs who showed their confidence in that Good News by giving up their lives rather than their faith; All Saints of America is celebrated a week after that; and at the end of the month, we come to our parish feast of the Apostles Peter & Paul! We are truly "surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses," who all encourage us to run the same race without losing hope.

The problem is that for us life does not seem much like a holy race, some glorious marathon where the prize is given to every runner who at last crosses the finish line, but more like a marshy thicket that we got lost in. We can lose sight of the path of life. We start off pleasantly enough, delighting in God's creation, and then we come across the attractive scent of what the saints call "worldly pleasures": anything that pleases ourselves without thought of those around us, anything that makes us forget to care first about God, anything that promises us good things but leaves us as empty as when we started.

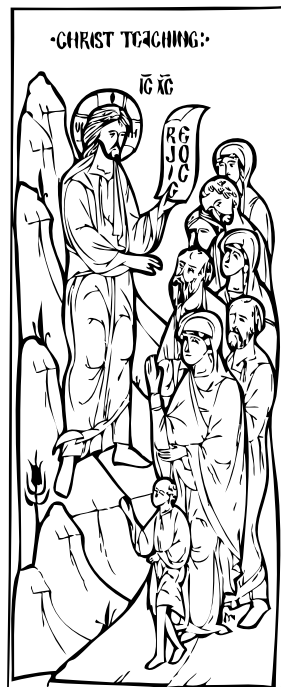
We say, "we're not saints — we can't live like them!" And we think to ourselves, "We don't want to be like

the saints! Their lives are hard and we wouldn't be free to do what we want." So we allow ourselves to be drawn off the path. We get tangled up in the thorns of our own desires, long after they cease giving us any happiness, and we are trapped. We start out doing what we want and find ourselves enslaved to the demands of those wants.

The truth is, we are meant to be saints, all of us in our many different ways. The Lord made each of us in his image, so that we would be free to love him and live with him. But as soon as we stop acting according to God's image, we lose our freedom. We find ourselves addicted to drink, to sugar, to television, to pornography, to prestige or approval — you name it! The saints are the ones who have found the way back to true freedom, and not only that, but true joy as well. Those who pursue happiness for its own sake will never find it. Try God's way instead: ask him what his will is, and find real, lasting joy in the company of the saints.

Yours in Christ,

*Fr. Julius S. Mosher*



## Around the Parish

**The Feast of Pentecost** follows ten days later, on Sunday, June 4. On that day, we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, when the apostles began their public preaching and the Church was revealed to all. Until that day, we honor our Lord's rising from the grave by remaining standing in prayer, but at Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost (immediately after the Divine Liturgy that Sunday), we kneel for the first time. We will pray for the departed and for ourselves, that the Holy Spirit would give us the power to live holy lives, in the pattern of the Apostles.

Eight days after Pentecost, we begin the **Apostles' Fast**, a time to reflect on what has passed since Pascha, to seek the gift of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and to prepare for the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul on June 29. Let's use the days well!

**June 29 is our Parish Feast: the Holy Leaders of the Apostles Peter and Paul**, and we will celebrate Divine Liturgy that day at 9:30. We are planning to make the eve of the feast extra beautiful, with an abbreviated vigil service: Wednesday, June 28, at 6 PM. After that evening service, **we plan to celebrate the feast with a parish supper.**

## Beyond Our Parish

**Diocesan Youth Rally** is set for Aug. 7-12, 2023. Children aged 9-17 are encouraged to attend this high-quality camp run by the Diocese of New England at the St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Center,