

CHRIST TEACHING IN THE TEMPLE

‘IF ANYONE THIRSTS, LET HIM COME TO ME AND DRINK’

The Wednesday following the “Sunday of the Paralytic” is the exact midpoint between the celebration of Pascha and the Feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit. For centuries, our Holy Orthodox Church has emphasized the significance of this day, referring to it as MID-PENTECOST. The Feast of Mid-Pentecost is viewed as a “link” between these great Holy days of the Church, and is based upon the following words of St. John’s Gospel: “NOW ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF THE FEAST, JESUS WENT UP INTO THE TEMPLE AND TAUGHT.” (John 7:14)

What was it that Christ taught while in Jerusalem for the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles? He spoke of the “higher authority” that His words represented: ‘MY DOCTRINE IS NOT MINE, BUT HIS WHO SENT ME.’ (John 7:16). During the festivities of this important Jewish celebration, which commemorated the water flowing from the rock which Moses struck in the wilderness, Jesus boldly proclaimed: ‘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 WATERS.’ (John 7:37-38)

The Feast of Mid-Pentecost is designed to strengthen our faith in the Risen Lord. It reminds us to focus on the coming of the Holy Spirit, which we will commemorate 50 days after our Saviour’s glorious Resurrection.