



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ January 26th, 2025 + 31st Sunday after Pentecost + Synaxis of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia +



Hymns for This Week

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

Today the Church of Russia forms a chorus in joy, praising her new martyrs and confessors; hierarchs and priests, royal passion-bearers, right-believing princes and princesses, venerable men and women, and all Orthodox Christians. Having laid down their life for faith in Christ during the days of godless persecution, they preserved the truth by the shedding of blood. By their protection, O long-suffering Lord, preserve our land in Orthodoxy till the end of the age.

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Today the new martyrs of Rus' stand in white robes before the Lamb of God, and with the angels they sing to God the hymn of victory: "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and praise, and honor, and power, and strength be to our God unto the ages of ages. Amen."

Please Sing Along!

Singing the hymns and responses to the litanies along with the choir throughout the Divine Liturgy is encouraged!

Epistle Reading - 1 Timothy 1:15-17

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 15:21-28

Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive the Holy Sacrament through prayer and fasting. If you have questions please let us know!



This Week's Schedule Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

THIS WEEKEND

Saturday, January 25th

Orthodoxy 101 - 3:30 PM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM

Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, January 26th

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, No Church School

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING & POTLUCK

All Members please plan to attend!

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THIS WEEK

House Blessings Continue

WED @ 11 AM-1:30 PM - Church open for prayer

WED @ 6:30 PM - Akathist to Our Sweetest

Lord Jesus Christ

THURS @ 11 AM - Bible Study

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NEXT WEEKEND

Saturday, February 1st

Orthodoxy 101 - 3:30 PM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM

Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, February 2nd

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Church School, Coffee Hour

Wedding of Santo Cerminaro & Mikayla Brown @ 2 PM



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

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+++ Weekly / Monthly +++

Bible Study Thursdays at 11 AM. Everyone is welcome. We are reading through the Acts of the Apostles with discussions.

ORTHODOXY 101 Saturdays @ 3:30 PM: Orthodoxy 101 is for visitors, inquirers, catechumens or anyone interested in

learning more about the foundations of our faith. 1 hour followed by Great Vespers.

Parish Potlucks are usually the last Sunday of each month. Our next potluck is January 26th.

Friends of the Poor is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be SAT, February 8th @ 9 AM

Holy Trinity Parish Council is usually the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is SUN, February 9th @ 11:30 AM

TODAY - Parish Annual Meeting: TODAY, Sunday, January 26th, 2025 following Divine Liturgy, all members are asked to attend our annual parish meeting. At the meeting we will take a look back at 2024, talk about all of the wonderful things our parish does and will do in the coming year, and hold elections for new parish council nominees. Please come and enjoy the parish potluck with us!

Wedding of Santo Cerminaro & Mikayla Brown

Sunday, Feb 2nd at 2 PM the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony will be performed for Santo Cerminaro & Makayla Brown. The Holy Trinity community is invited to attend and bear witness to this most sacred union between Santo, Mikayla and Our Lord.

Super Bowl Piggie Sale will be on Saturday 8 February. Pre-order sheet in the vestibule. Prices are: 2 for \$7 or 4 for \$13. A volunteer sign up sheet for making and selling piggies is also in the vestibule. Please consider giving a few hours to help in making and selling or in ordering piggies. If you have any questions or suggestions contact Sandy @ 571-274-5846

The Blessing of Homes continues this week for those who have rescheduled or by appointment. You can prepare for our visit by having an icon, candle, bowl for holy water, and list for living & departed. Check in with Fr. Innocent as to when there is availability for your visit. We will continue blessing homes up until Great Lent.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

January Birthdays: Colleen King (1/1), Mary Krill (1/1), Greg Polk (1/4), Melissa Donlick (1/5), Susan Shiposki (1/6), Sonja Kay (1/6), Margaret Krout (1/7), Jerry Stankiewicz (1/8), Gabrielle Kenzakoski (1/10), David Welgus (1/11), Amanda Benczkowski (1/17), Margaret Pregman (1/17), Stephen Odin Rivera (1/18), Deborah Zbegner (1/21), Ray Sofrenovic (1/21), Matthias Haugh (1/22), Josie Bisset (1/31) **Anniversaries:** Warren & Nadine Breisch (1/13)

This Week's Birthdays: Josie Bisset (1/31), Mary Gurka (2/1)

“This encounter reminds us that the Church is called to manifest God’s love for all humanity. There is no boundary to the love of Christ, for in Him all are made one.”

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

“[The Canaanite woman’s] faith was not simply belief in a doctrine but a complete surrender to the person of Christ. She knew she could not go elsewhere, for in Him alone was life.”

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom

“Sometimes God delays granting our requests so that our desire for Him may grow and our faith be strengthened.”

St. Gregory the Great



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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The Prayers of Those Who Love Us **Met. Anthony Bloom**

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

I am asked very often how to outgrow the struggle which is ours so often when we try to read the prayers which the saints have coined, which were born in their experience of life.

There was a time when I read with great faithfulness all the prayers which the Church offers us in the morning, in the evening and on other occasions. But I could not always identify with them. They were prayers which were strange to me. I had not grown to that measure of faith or to that measure of love for my neighbour. There were passages in the prayers which I could say sincerely; but there were passages which I could not say; partly because they went against my experience, my feeling, partly because I had not grown to that measure of faith and spiritual experience.

My spiritual father gave me advice on that. He said to me: ‘For a year I forbid you to use any of the prayers of the books of prayer. Before you go to bed, make the sign of the Cross and then lie down and say, “Lord, at the prayers of those who love me, save me,” and begin to ask yourself who are those who love you — who love you so much, so deeply, so truly, that you don’t need even to pray, because their prayers are your shield and your way?’

I tried it. One name after the other came. And every time a name floated up, I stopped one moment and said, ‘How wonderful! He loves me, she loves me! Oh God, bless him, bless her, for the love she can give me as a present.’ And then another name came, and another name, and so many came to my mind: people whom I had forgotten and whose love supported me, carried me. It was so wonderful to be loved. First I thought of the nearest, the dearest: my father, my mother, my grandmother, my friends. And then names came which I did not expect: people whom I had met a long time before, and forgotten, and who had been faithful friends.

And then I remembered my angel guardian. I remembered Christ, who had loved me in such a way that He gave His life for me. I remembered the Mother of God. I remembered our Father who is in Heaven. And all the world became so wonderful because it was a world, a sea of love, that carried me like a little ship.

I learnt something from this; and I wish you could try and learn. But there is another side to it. It was not I alone who needed the love and prayers of others. Others need them; and I began to ask myself, is there anyone

whom I love who could say the same words as I have said: at the prayers of those who love me, save me? And then names came, faces came, people first whom I loved, people for whom I had affection; then people to whom I was indifferent, about whom I could not care. And I thought, how terrible! They may need the love of one person and I am not that person. And I turned to God and said, 'Lord, I don't know how to love this person. But you have given your life for him, for her, as You have given it for me. Lord, bless, save, guide, be the way, be the door that opens into eternity for this person.'

And then the world became so vast, so deep, so beautiful. It became a world in which we all are saved by one another's love and by the love of God. Think of that. And may the blessing of the Lord be upon you, by His grace and love towards mankind, always, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

+Today's Saints + New Martyrs & Confessors of Russia

On the Sunday closest to January 25, the Church commemorates the Synaxis of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, remembering all those Orthodox Christians who suffered for Christ at the hands of the godless Soviets during the years of persecution. These include the royal Passion Bearers Tsar Nicholas II and his family, and the Grand Duchess Elizabeth. Countless thousands of martyrs, both clergy and laity also suffered, some of whose names are known, as well as millions of simple believers whose names have been lost to history.

It is estimated that the number of the New Martyrs of Russia, who were glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church at the Jubilee Council of 2000, far exceeds that of all the martyrs who died for Christ during the first three centuries of Christianity. The Russian Church lost millions of its sons and daughters, not only at the hands of external enemies, but also those of their own country. Among those who were murdered and tortured in the years of persecution were countless Orthodox: laity, monks, priests, and bishops, whose only "crime" was their unshakable faith in God.

In the long history of the world, never have so many new heavenly intercessors been glorified by the Church in such a way (more than one thousand New Martyrs were numbered among the saints). Among those who suffered

for their faith were some who labored in America before the Russian Revolution: St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia (April 7); St. Alexander Hotovitzky (Dec. 4); St. John Kochurov (Oct. 31).



The Treasury

"... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. + Jesus Christ

Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305
Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840
Last Week's Collection (1/19/25) : \$5,997

Proportional Giving

Proportional giving is the practice of returning to the Lord a portion of the financial treasure He has blessed us with in this life. We offer our gifts in gratitude for His. This principle is found in both the Old and New Testament scriptures. Because it is proportional, what is returned to Him is different for each family and household. The giving chart below offers a starting point for giving based on a range of weekly incomes along with a range of giving levels beginning at 10%, the ideal for a Christian tithe if one is capable, down to 2%. Our goal as we journey through life is to offer increasingly more of what God has given us back to Him, just as we give more of our heart. *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also* (Matt 6:21). This, of course, is done freely and out of love for God and His Church, not in response to an outward rule (*Freely you have received, freely give* - Matt 10:8). May this chart be helpful for you in prayerfully determining your level of giving this coming new year, challenging yourself to return to God the good portion of His financial blessings.

Weekly Income	10%	5%	4%	2%
\$200	\$20	\$10	\$8	\$4
\$500	\$50	\$25	\$20	\$10
\$750	\$75	\$37	\$30	\$15
\$1000	\$100	\$50	\$40	\$20
\$1500	\$150	\$75	\$60	\$30
\$2000	\$200	\$100	\$80	\$40