



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

Sun, March 14, 2021 : Expulsion of Adam from Paradise (Forgiveness Sunday) • Saint for the day : St. Benedict of Nursia



Hymns for Today

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy, and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy.

O Master, Teacher of wisdom, Bestower of virtue, Who teachest the thoughtless and protectest the poor, strengthen and enlighten my heart! O Word of the Father, let me not restrain my mouth from crying to Thee: "Have mercy on me, a transgressor, O merciful Lord!"

Epistle Reading - Romans 13:11-14:4

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to

fulfill its lusts. Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 6:14-21

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

This Week's Schedule

This Weekend

SAT, March 13: 5 PM Great Vespers, Confessions
SUN, March 14: 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy,
Forgiveness Vespers

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

Clean Week – 1st Week of Great Lent

MON, 15th – THURS, 18th 6:30 PM: Canon of St. Andrew

WED, 17th Personal Prayer 11 AM – 1:30 PM ONLY

Fri, 19th @ 6:30 PM: Akathist w/ Lity for Departed

Sat, 20th @ 9 AM: Divine Liturgy – St. Theodore

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Next Weekend

SAT, March 20: 5 PM Great Vespers

SUN, March 21: 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Triumph of
Orthodoxy /Divine Liturgy

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4:00 PM: Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers

Holy Resurrection Cathedral

Confession

Confession is available before and after services throughout Lent as time permits and also on Wednesdays during our time of silent prayer. Please come or set up an appointment for a specific time with Fr. Innocent.

Confession and Great Lent

Great Lent is a time for increased self-examination and reflection on the sins and shortcomings that come between us, God, and our neighbor. Most of us know and readily admit that our love and devotion to God is not as it should or could be. Thank God our beautiful church gives us the tools and remedies to help us engage, struggle and make progress towards improvement.

As an Orthodox Christian, this time of self-examination naturally draws us towards a desire to fix the problem, to repent and realize true progress. For us, one of the tools we use in this spiritual work is Holy Confession.

As you engage in this very personal and rewarding process of growing closer to God, I would like to encourage each of you to use Holy Confession – along with increased prayer and practicing the virtues – as a means to help you achieve progress. In doing so we challenge the false notion that confession is merely a religious obligation, and we begin to use it as a tool for spiritual improvement. May God help us all to make a good effort in this work and may all of us have a fruitful and transformative Lenten season.

- with love in Christ, Fr. Innocent

Announcements & Meetings

Lenten Food Sale Dates: March 26. 11AM to 5PM. Pls note that there will be **no food sale on March 19** as this is our first week of Great Lent with services each evening. Anyone wishing to make a monetary donation towards the purchase of a box of potato pancake batter (\$40) or clam chowder ingredients (any amount) may do so by contacting Sandy Serafin or Diane Welgus.

March 26th Food Sale Menu: Halushki, Potato Pancakes, and Clam Chowder (*cold*).

Another Food Sale Success: Thank you to all who contributed to another successful Friday Food Sale whether by working or supporting it through purchasing the delicious food. Glory to God!

Submit your departed names: Please submit any new names to be added to your existing list of departed loved ones for our Friday Evening Lity service during great lent. If your list has not changed from last year there is no need to submit.

First Annual Holy Trinity Golf Tournament: We are looking to put together a small committee for an annual golf tournament. This tournament will help supplement annual operating expenses for the parish. If you would like to help please contact Jason King for more information.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

March Birthdays: Emma Lynn DiBatista (3/3), Abby Harvey (3/4), Lisa Marie Harvey (3/7), Michael Polk (3/12), Nadine Breisch (3/13), Joshua Leonori (3/22), Gerry Stankiewicz (3/27), Jean Ann Hutz (3/31)

This Week's Birthdays:

Altar Server Schedule

Sunday, March 14: Vladimir H, Alex H, Andrew N

Sunday, March 21: Alec B, Tommy D, Ephraim N

Sunday, March 28: Vladimir H, Christopher D, Andrew C

Sunday, April 4: Alec B, Kaleb D, Symeon C

Sat, 27th @ 5 PM: Great Vespers

Sun, 28th @ 9 AM: St Gregory Palamas / Divine Liturgy
Archbishop Mark Presiding

Wed 31st @ 6 PM: Presanctified Liturgy

Today's Theme: The Expulsion of Adam from Paradise

As we begin the Great Fast, the Church reminds us of Adam's expulsion from Paradise. God commanded Adam to fast (Gen. 2:16), but he did not obey. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and lost the life of blessedness, knowledge of God, and communion with Him, for which they were created. Both they and their descendents became heirs of death and corruption.

Let us consider the benefits of fasting, the consequences of disobedience, and recall our fallen state. Today we are invited to cleanse ourselves of evil through fasting and obedience to God. Our fasting should not be a negative thing, a mere abstention from certain foods. It is an opportunity to free ourselves from the sinful desires and urges of our fallen nature, and to nourish our souls with prayer, repentance, to participate in church services, and partake of the life-giving Mysteries of Christ.

At Forgiveness Vespers we sing: "Let us begin the time of fasting in light, preparing ourselves for spiritual efforts. Let us purify our soul, let us purify our body. As we abstain from food, let us abstain from all passion and enjoy the virtues of the spirit...."

On the Sacrament of Penance (Confession) *Fr. Thomas Hopko, oca.org*

The sacrament of penance is our formal act of reconciliation with God in the Church when sin has severed us from the Church's life. Because penance is the way to communion with God when that communion has been broken by sin, it is often referred to in Church Tradition as the renewal of baptism, or as the reestablishment of that condition of life with God which

PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Nadine Breisch, Rosalie Bagenski, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Josie Bissett, Lisa & Scott Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Delores Karas, Antonette Terry, Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Mat Delores Donlick & Fr. Daniel Donlick, Violet Filipi, Catherine, Danny Gobish, Lorraine Pace, Camden Thomas, Peter Holoviak & Family, Marni Bachman & Family, Rose Marie, Elaine Benczkowski, Helen Gudaitis, Mahaffey Family, George Scott, Evelyn Kosmiski, Joe Sloan, Dustin & Nina, Louis Gianuzzi, Betty Serafin, Donald Tumavitch

Newly Departed: Mitred Archpriest Daniel Ressetar

On the Church Calendar

Month of MARCH

Beginning of GREAT LENT 2021 (Clean Week)

Sun, 14th @ 9 AM: Forgiveness Sunday / Divine Liturgy

Mon, 15th - Thurs, 18th @ 6:30 PM: Canon of St. Andrew

Fri, 19th @ 6:30 PM: Akathist w/ Lity for Departed

Sat, 20th @ 9 AM: Divine Liturgy - St. Theodore

Week 2 of Great Lent

Sat, 20th @ 5 PM: Great Vespers

Sun, 21st @ 9 AM: Triumph of Orthodoxy / Divine Liturgy

Wed, 24th @ 6 PM: Presanctified Liturgy

THURS, 25th @ 6 PM: Annunciation Vesperal Liturgy

Fri, 26th @ 11 AM - 5 PM: Parish Food Sale

Fri, 26th @ 6:30 PM: Akathist w/ Lity for the Departed

Sat, 27th @ 9 AM: Divine Liturgy

Week 3 of Great Lent

was given to men in the basic sacraments of inauguration into the Christian life.

Not every sin requires the necessity of formal penance through sacramental ritual. This is obvious because Christians are never completely without sin. Certain grave sins or the prolonged separation from Holy Communion, however, do call for the act of sacramental penance. Also, Christians living in communion with Christ are expected to make use of this sacrament periodically in order to humble themselves consciously before God and to receive guidance in the Christian life from their pastor in the Church. It is the teaching of the Orthodox Church that sacramental penance is necessary for those receiving Holy Communion when they have committed grave sins or when they have been separated from the eucharistic meal for a long time.

The sacrament of penance exists in the Church to allow for the repentance and reconversion of Christians who have fallen away from the life of faith. There are three main elements to the act of formal penance. The first is a sincere sorrow for sins and for the breaking of communion with God. The second is an open and heartfelt confession of sins. At one time this confession was done publicly before all men in the midst of the Church, but in recent times it is usually done only in the presence of the pastor of the Church who stands in behalf of all. The third element of penance is the formal prayer of absolution through which the forgiveness of God through Christ is sacramentally bestowed upon the repentant sinner.

The fulfillment of penance consists in the reception of Holy Communion and the genuine reconciliation of the repentant sinner with God and all men according to the commandments of Christ. From this there obviously follows the necessity of a sincere attempt by the penitent to refrain from sin and to remain in faithful obedience to God and in uprightness of life before Him and all people.

The sacrament of penance, like all sacraments, is an element of the life of the Church which presupposes a firm belief and conviction that Christ himself is present in the Church through his Holy Spirit. A person without the experience of Christ in the Church will not understand the meaning of sacramental penance and the need for the open and public confession of sins. When the Church is experienced as the new life in Christ and as the genuine communion with God in his kingdom already

present with men in sacrament and mystery, then not only will sacramental penance and the confession of sins be understood, but it will be cherished as the great mystery of God which it is: the unique possibility for reunion with God through the forgiveness of Christ who has come to save sinners who confess their sins and who sincerely desire to change their lives according to the ways which he himself has given.

In a word, the Orthodox Church strictly adheres to the teaching of the Bible that only God can forgive sins, that he does so through Christ in the Church, that his conditions are genuine repentance and the promise of change which are witnessed by confession; and that confession, by definition, is the open and public acknowledgment of sin before God and all mankind.

Why do we - Light Candles?



The candles we light in church represent the light of Christ. He is the light towards whom we direct our lives along with all of our desires, joy, sadness, successes and failures. Our entire Christian life is a movement towards that light. The candles we pay for and light in church for others is a sacrificial offering we make for them to that "Light" we follow. These small sacrifices made to Our Lord, accompanied by our heartfelt prayer, are a concrete and meaningful way for us to ask our loving God for his mercy and care towards our loved ones.
