



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ March 16th, 2025 + Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas + Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves + 2nd Sunday of Great Lent +



Hymns for Today

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation, O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians, O wonderworking Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace, always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved!

Holy and divine instrument of wisdom, joyful trumpet of theology, together we sing thy praises, O God-inspired Gregory. Since thou now standest before the Original Mind, guide our minds to Him, O Father, so that we may sing to thee: "Rejoice, preacher of grace!"

Now is the time for action! Judgment is at the doors! So let us rise and fast, offering alms with tears of compunction and crying: "Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea; but forgive us, O Master of all, so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!"

Please Sing Along!

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

Epistle Reading: Hebrews 1:10-2:3

And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail." But to which of the angels has He ever said: "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool"? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

Gospel Reading: Mark 2:1-12

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached

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!

the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"



This Week's Schedule Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

THIS WEEKEND- Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

Saturday, March 15th

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Orthodoxy 101 @ 3:30 PM
Great Vespers @ 5 PM
Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, March 16th

Resurrectional Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour, Church School,
Lenten Presentation on the Divine Liturgy @ 11:30 AM

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THIS WEEK - 3rd Week of Great Lent

Tues @ 4:00 PM: Small Compline

Wed @ 11-1:30: Open Church

Wed @ 6:00 PM: Presanctified Divine Liturgy
w/ Lenten Potluck @ **St. Mary's Antiochian Church**

Note above: Presanctified is at St. Mary's this week

Thurs @ 11:00 AM: Bible Study

Fri @ 6:30 PM: Akathist Hymn w/ Lity for departed

Sat @ 9 AM: Divine Liturgy

NEXT WEEKEND - Sunday of the Precious Cross

Saturday, March 22nd

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Orthodoxy 101 @ 3:30 PM
Great Vespers @ 5 PM
Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, March 23rd

Resurrectional Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour, Church School
Lenten Presentation on the Divine Liturgy @ 11:30 AM

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March 23rd Mission Vespers @ 4 PM

Holy Annunciation Orthodox Church, Berwick, PA



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 March 30th (Lenten Food).

Friends of the Poor is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be SAT, April 12th after Liturgy

Holy Trinity Parish Council is usually the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is SUN, April 6th @ 11:30 AM -
NOTE: This month's meeting is the first Sunday of April.

TODAY - Lenten Presentation on Divine Liturgy:

Sundays, March 16th & 23rd @ 11:30 AM PDn Sergei Kapral will offer a 2-part presentation on the Divine Liturgy. PDn Sergei will walk us through each part of the Liturgy to help us gain a better understanding and deepen our experience of the Divine Liturgy. Questions and discussions to follow.

THIS WEEK - Presanctified Liturgy @ St. Mary's

Antiochian Church: Join us as we celebrate Presanctified Divine Liturgy w/ the St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Community at their parish. Bring a dish for the potluck

afterwards! Location Address: 905 S Main St, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

Potato Pancake Sales: Potato Pancake Sales every Friday during Great Lent. March 21, 28 & April 11, 20. 11 AM - 5 PM.

COLLECTION FOR UKRAINE: St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Allentown is collecting items to ship to Ukraine. Please donate soap, hygiene items, clothes, toys. Cash donations will also be accepted. The collection will run from Sunday, March 9 through Sunday, March 16. See Paula Holoziak for details.

2024 Giving Statements: Anyone who wishes to receive a formal statement of giving for the year 2024 please provide your name on the signup sheet in the Church vestibule.

Great Lent Mission Vespers Schedule:

Sunday of the Cross (March 23 @ 4 PM)

- Holy Annunciation Orthodox Church, Berwick, PA

Sunday of Mary of Egypt (April 6 @ 4 PM)

- All Saints Orthodox Church, Olyphant, PA

The Blessing of Homes continues for those who have rescheduled or by appointment. Check in with Fr. Innocent as to when there is availability for your visit.



LENTEN & PASCHAL FLOWER DONATIONS

Donations towards adorning the church this Lenten season and Pascha are being accepted so that our parish will be beautifully adorned for all of the feasts. General Donations for Palm Sunday may be given to Deborah Mills or left at the Candle stand. Please write "Flowers for Lent" in the memo. If you would like to honor a loved one by making a donation for Holy Pascha flowers "In Memory of" or "For the Health of" a loved one, please sign up in the Church Vestibule/Narthex. Please leave donations at the candle stand, mail them to the Church, OR drop it off in the rectory mailbox attention Deborah Mills. The names of your loved ones will be listed in the Holy Pascha Church Bulletin and remembered in prayer. If you wish to have your offering listed in the Holy Pascha Bulletin, your loved ones name(s) and donation must be received by Palm Sunday.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

March Birthdays: Alex Reznik (3/2), Emma Lynn DiBatista (3/3), Abby Harvey (3/4), Lisa Marie Harvey (3/7), Isabela Sofrenovic (3/9), Dara Soljaga (3/11), Vera Kraynanski (3/11), Michael Polk (3/12) Nadine Breisch (3/13), Vera Hoats (3/13), Sergei Kapral Jr. (3/17), Rdr. Gregory Kurtz (3/17), Mat. Victoria Kapral (3/21), Joshua Leonori (3/22), Jacob Zbegner (3/27) Gerry Stankiewicz (3/27), Jean Ann Hutz (3/31) Delores Voda (3/31)

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries: Sergei Kapral Jr. (3/17), Rdr. Gregory Kurtz (3/17), Mat. Victoria Kapral (3/21), Joshua Leonori (3/22)



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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The Sunday St. Gregory Palamas

from ww1.antiocian.org

On this second Sunday of Great Lent, we commemorate St. Gregory of Palamas' successful defense of the Orthodox belief that humans can both know and experience God. He asserted that we can know with our minds that God exists, and we can also experience Him through His uncreated energies. This flew in the face of the teachings of Barlaam, a critic of St. Gregory's and of Hesychasm in general.

St. Gregory was born in 1296 to a prominent family in Constantinople. His father died when Gregory was still young. The youth was so bright and hardworking that the emperor himself took interest in Gregory, helping to raise and educate him in the hopes that he would one day hold a high government position.

But Gregory left all of the glamour of Constantinople's elite behind when he departed for Mount Athos at age 20 to become a monk. (And he was not the only member of his family to do this. Shortly thereafter, his mother and sisters also became monastics.) As a monk on Mt. Athos, Gregory learned about "Hesychasm," a very calm, still way to pray. He mastered this prayer of the heart, and thus we know him as a "hesychast."

PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Homebound - Evelyn, Vladimir, Jeri, Marsha, David, Paul, Archpriest Theodore, Mat. Elizabeth, Mary, Patricia, Barbara, Jeri, Joan, Irene, Alice **Sick & Suffering** - Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Elizabeth Hutz, Mary Hutz, David Lezinsky, Bob Lutzick, Leann, Gregory Krevko, Tom Vaskalis, David, Delores Tressa, Sandra Condon, Hieromonk Gabriel, Sylvia Dreater **Deported:**

In 1326, Gregory went to Thessalonica and was ordained to the priesthood. He lived the life of a hermit on weekdays, silently praying alone and away from the world. On the weekends, he would celebrate the holy services in his parish and he would preach so beautifully that his sermons brought his listeners to tears.

“He who is rich in virtues is richer than he who possesses the whole world, for the latter must leave his wealth behind, but the former carries his spiritual treasure into eternity.” - St. Gregory Palamas

When Barlaam, a bright and studious monk, came to Mt. Athos and heard about hesychasm, he proclaimed it to be heresy. He insisted that it is not possible for humans to know God’s essence or to experience His energies such as uncreated light. His dissent caused quite a stir, and Gregory was called to debate with Barlaam about this. Gregory’s studies in the world and his experience as a hesychast put him in the perfect position for this debate.

Gregory first tried to speak to Barlaam about all of this, but speaking did not seem to make any progress, so he began to write prolifically about the prayer of the heart and its validity. Although Gregory was writing a lot, they continued to meet and debate in person as well. One of these debates was before the 1341 Council of Constantinople, which took place in Hagia Sophia. This time, they were arguing about the Transfiguration. Gregory stood by the Orthodox belief that God revealed Himself to the disciples on Mt. Tabor, by using His Divine Energies. Barlaam said theirs was not an actual experience of God: just a helpful gift to the disciples, who couldn’t really experience God because they are humans.

The members of the Council upheld Gregory’s position as the truly Orthodox position. They agreed that God, Whose Essence we cannot approach, chooses to reveal Himself through His Energies. Humans can see those Energies, such as the light that the disciples could see on Mt. Tabor. After the Council ruled that Barlaam’s teachings were heresy, Barlaam fled to Calabria.

In spite of the ruling, some people still argued against Gregory, even locking him up in prison for 4 years at one point. However, the very next patriarch released him and made him Archbishop of Thessalonica. In his later years, God gave Gregory the gift to perform miracles, including healing the sick, and he was granted a vision of St. John Chrysostom on the night before he died. His last words were, “To the heights! To the heights!”

Thanks to St. Gregory Palamas, the Church has maintained the truth that we humans are able to experience God through His uncreated energies. St. Gregory’s life of dedication to God and His Church, as well as his willingness to stand for truth set him apart as a wonderful example to all of us. Sometimes people refer to the Sunday of St. Gregory of Palamas as “The Sunday of Orthodoxy Part Two,” since his defense saved the Orthodox Church when it was under a second major attack.

The Gospel reading for this second Sunday of Lent is the story of the paralytic whose four friends lowered him through the roof of the place where Christ was so that he could be healed by Him. Our Lord not only healed his legs, making him able to walk again, but also healed his sins, telling him, “Your sins are forgiven you.” How beautiful it is for us to be reminded, right here near the beginning of Great Lent, that the truth of our Faith is worth standing up for, as did St. Gregory; at the same time receiving the reassurance that Christ is waiting for us to come to Him so that He can heal both our soul and our body.



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

<p>Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305 Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840 Last Week’s Collection (3/9/25): \$4,648</p>
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