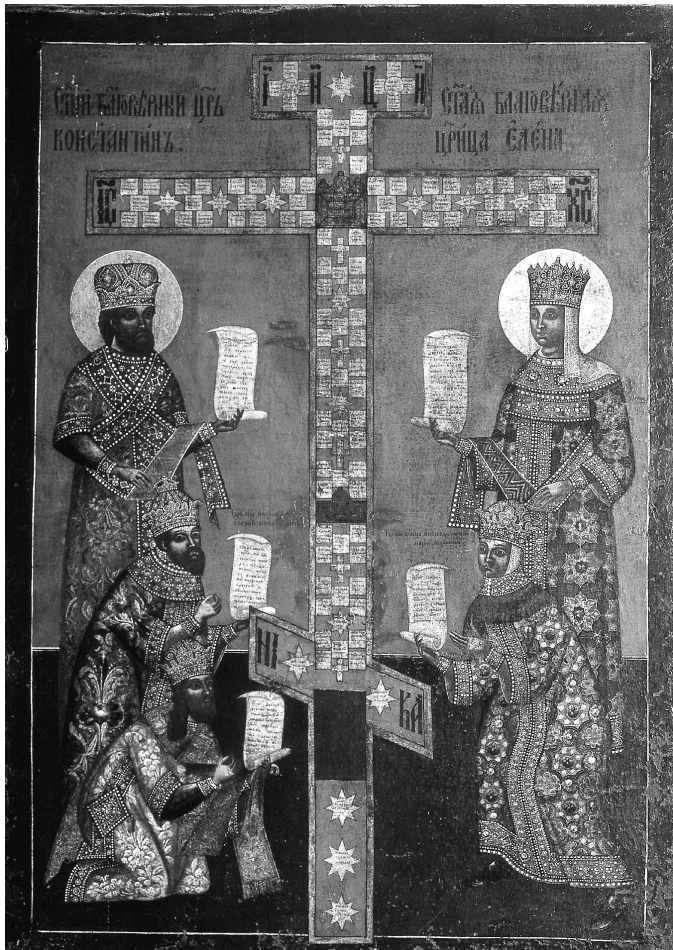




The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ March 23rd, 2025 + Sunday of the Veneration of the Precious & Life-Giving Cross + 3rd Sunday of Great Lent +



Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross. The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for Thou, O my Savior, hast come and cried to those in hell: "Enter again into Paradise!"

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection we glorify.

Please Sing Along!

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

Epistle Reading: Hebrews 4:14-5:6

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek";

Gospel Reading: Mark 8:34-9:1

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and

Hymns for Today's Service

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.

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance! Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation!

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!

follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."



This Week's Schedule

DOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

THIS 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

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THIS WEEK - 4th Week of Great Lent

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Feast of the Annunciation of the Mother of God

Mon @ 6:30 PM: Compline w/ Litya for Annunciation

Tues @ 9 AM: Vesperal Divine Liturgy

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Tues: NO Small Compline

Wed @ 11-1:30: Open Church

Wed @ 6:00 PM: Presanctified Divine Liturgy

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 St. John Climacus

Saturday, March 29th

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

Sunday, March 30th

Resurrectional Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Church School
Lenten Potluck (*Fasting food only*)



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.

Potato Pancake Sales: Potato Pancake Sales every Friday during Great Lent. March 28 & April 4, 11. 11 AM - 5 PM.

On Friday, April 11th at the Potato Pancake sale Carl Liskowski will be selling his **Pysanky Eggs** for \$10 each to support our Education fund. Show your support by buying Pysanky eggs. They make great Pascha gifts!

Upcoming Parsh Work Days 3/29 & 4/12: Attention all worker bees! We have two upcoming work days to help us prepare for Holy Pascha. Both work days we will work following our Saturday Divine Liturgy (*beginning around 10:30 am*). On **3/29** we will work inside the church and, beginning at Noon, we will remove branches from the fallen tree outside the rectory. On **4/12** we will clean, polish brass, and finish preparing the Church for Holy Week and Pascha. Many hands make light work and any amount of time offered is appreciated. Come offer your time and talent to help make your parish home beautiful for our Lord's resurrection.

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.

Please, No Parking or Driving on the Grass: Please refrain from parking or driving on the grass on the property. The ground is very soft and easily damaged. We also do not want anyone to get stuck. Thank you for your help with this.

 **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: Jacob Zbegner (3/27) Gerry Stankiewicz (3/27)



Words of Wisdom
From the Saints & Teachers

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Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross

from goarch.org



On the Third Sunday of Great and Holy Lent, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Services include a special veneration of the Cross, which prepares the faithful for the commemoration of the Crucifixion during Holy Week.

The commemoration and ceremonies of the Third Sunday of Lent are closely parallel to the feasts of the Veneration of the Cross (September 14) and the Procession of the Cross (August 1). Not only does the Sunday of the Holy Cross prepare us for commemoration of the Crucifixion, but it also reminds us that the whole of Lent is a period when we are crucified with Christ.

As we have “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Galatians 5:24), and will have mortified ourselves during these forty days of the Fast, the precious and life-giving Cross is now placed before us to refresh our souls and encourage us who may be filled with a sense of bitterness, resentment, and depression. The Cross reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and by presenting to us His example, it encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice, being refreshed, assured, and comforted. In other words, we must experience what the Lord experienced during His Passion - being humiliated in a shameful manner. The Cross teaches us that through pain and suffering we shall see the fulfillment of our hopes: the heavenly inheritance and eternal glory.

As they who walk on a long and hard way and are bowed down by fatigue find great relief and strengthening under the cool shade of a leafy tree, so do we find comfort, refreshment, and rejuvenation under the Life-giving Cross, which our Fathers “planted” on this Sunday. Thus, we are fortified and enabled to continue our Lenten journey with a light step, rested and encouraged.

Or, as before the arrival of the king, his royal standards, trophies, and emblems of victory come in procession and then the king himself appears in a triumphant parade, jubilant and rejoicing in his victory and filling those under him with joy, so does the Feast of the Cross precede the coming of our King, Jesus Christ. It warns us that He is about to proclaim His victory over death and appear to us in the glory of the Resurrection. His Life-Giving Cross is His royal scepter, and by venerating it we are filled with joy, rendering Him glory. Therefore, we become ready to welcome our King, who shall manifestly triumph over the powers of darkness.

The present feast has been placed in the middle of Great Lent for another reason. The Fast can be likened to the spring of Marah whose waters the children of Israel encountered in the wilderness. This water was undrinkable due to its bitterness but became sweet when the Holy Prophet Moses dipped the wood into its depth. Likewise, the wood of the Cross sweetens the days of the Fast, which are bitter and often grievous because of our tears. Yet Christ comforts us during our course through the desert of the Fast, guiding and leading us by His hand to the spiritual Jerusalem on high by the power of His Resurrection. Moreover, as the Holy Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is placed in the middle of the Fast, as the ancient tree of life was placed in the middle of the garden of Eden. By this, our Holy Fathers wished to remind us of Adam’s gluttony as well as the fact that through this Tree has condemnation been abolished. Therefore, if we bind ourselves to the Holy Cross, we shall never encounter death but shall inherit life eternal.

“We do not reach the Kingdom of God from victory to victory; more often from defeat to defeat. But, it is those people - who after each defeat, instead of sitting down to bewail their misery, stand up and walk - that arrive. “

Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk



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 (3/16/25) : \$4,183
