



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ March 24th, 2024 + First Sunday of Great Lent + The Sunday of Orthodoxy + The Forefeast of the Annunciation



Hymns for Today

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: "Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou Who lovest mankind!"

We venerate Thy most pure image, O Good One; and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God. Of Thine own will Thou wast pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and deliver Thy creatures from bondage to the Enemy. Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to Thee: "Thou hast filled all with joy, O our Savior, by coming to save the world."

Today is the prelude of joy for the universe! Let us anticipate the feast and celebrate with exultation: Gabriel is on his way to announce the glad tidings to the Virgin;

he is ready to cry out in fear and wonder: "Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee!"

No one could describe the Word of the Father; but when He took flesh from thee, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described, and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty. We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and images.

Thou art the beginning of salvation for all of us on earth, Virgin Mother of God. For the great Archangel Gabriel, God's minister, was sent from heaven to stand before thee to bring thee joy: Therefore, we all cry to thee: "Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!"

Please Sing Along!

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

Epistle Reading - Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute,

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!

afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Gospel Reading - John 1:43-51

The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."



This Week's Schedule

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

THIS WEEKEND - Sunday of Orthodoxy

Saturday, March 23rd

8 AM: Divine Liturgy / St. Theodore w/ Koliva

10 AM: Funeral for Michael Yeosock

5 PM: 9th Hour (4:50), Great Vespers,

Confession (*before or after Vespers*)

6 PM: "The Chosen" w/ Popcorn Viewing Downstairs

Sunday, March 24th

8 AM: Resurrectional Matins w/ Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Children's Procession w/ Icons, Swearing in New Parish Council, Church School, Coffee Hour, Adult Ed (Tour of new icons)

4 PM: Mission Vespers for Feast of Annunciation at St. Michael's in Jermyn, PA.

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THIS WEEK - 2nd Week of Great Lent

Mon, @ 6 PM: Vespersal Liturgy for the Annunciation

Tues, 4 PM: Great Compline

Wed, 11 AM: Church open for prayer

Wed, 6 PM: Presanctified Divine Liturgy w/ Potluck

Thurs, 11 AM: Bible Study

Fri @ 6:30 PM: Canon w/ Akathist to Mother of God w/ Litya for the Departed

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NEXT WEEKEND - Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

Saturday, March 30th

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Parastas

5 PM: 9th Hour (4:50), Great Vespers, Confession (*before or after Vespers*)

6 PM: "The Chosen" w/ Popcorn Viewing Downstairs

Sunday, March 31st

8:10 AM: Resurrectional Matins w/ Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Church School, Coffee Hour



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

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Parish Council is the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is SUN, April 14th.

Friends of the Poor is the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be SAT, April 13th.

Parish Potlucks are usually the last Sunday of each month. Our next potluck is April 28th, Palm Sunday.

Lenten Adult Ed: Sunday's throughout Great Lent during Coffee hour we will have a short Lenten Adult

Education presentation w/ discussion. We will focus on a variety of topics that relate to Great Lent. As we journey towards Holy Week and Pascha we will seek to deepen our Lenten experience through focusing on topics like fasting, the sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion, the meaning of our Lenten services & prayers, Our Lord's Passion, Death and Resurrection. Bring the questions you've always wanted to ask and a desire to grow closer to Our Lord! **THIS WEEK: A presentation of our new Iconography in the church.**

THIS WEEK: PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY w/ LENTEN POTLUCK: Beginning Wed March 27th, we will have Presanctified Liturgy followed by a Lenten Potluck (No meat or dairy) on Wednesday nights throughout the fast. Make this Liturgy and Community Meal a part of your Lenten Journey. Presanctified begins at 6 PM.

Watch "The Chosen" Saturday Nights During Lent: The Chosen is a critically acclaimed television series that tells the story of the gospels, Our Lord and His disciples. Join us Saturday evenings following Great Vespers @ 6 PM during Lent to watch episodes from Season 1. This is an excellent and thought provoking show that is sure to inspire your Lenten journey. Popcorn and drinks will be provided!

Bring in your Pussywillows: Anyone willing to harvest pussywillows from your yard or area for our Paschal celebration can now bring them to the church. Spring weather is upon us and they will soon begin to flower. Thanks so much for your help!

National Orthodox Baby Shower: St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Olyphant is participating in the Orthodox Christians for Life National Orthodox Baby Shower. It is held in conjunction with the Feast of the Annunciation. We will be collecting items through the end of the month, and will be delivered to Providence Pregnancy Resource Center in Scranton in early April. Items will be collected through March 31st. OCLife requires we give new and unused items, and the PRC said that they give needy families baby clothes from size 1 to 4t, with more need in the size 1 category. Diapers and wipes are always needed. You may bring items and leave them in the Narthex / Vestibule this week or next Sunday, March 31st.



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. 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: Emma Lynn DiBatista (3/3), Abby Harvey (3/4), Lisa Marie Harvey (3/7), Isabela Sofrenovic (3/9), Dara Soljaga (3/11), Michael Polk (3/12) Nadine Breisch (3/13), 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: Jacob Zbegner (3/27) Gerry Stankiewicz (3/27)



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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On the Sunday of Orthodoxy

Met. Anthony Bloom

We are keeping today, as every year at the end of the first week of Lent, the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. And every year we must give thought to what is meant, not only as a historical event, but also in our personal lives.

PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Evelyn Kosmiski, Mat. Elizabeth, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Vladimir & Marie Dutko, Tom & Joan Austin, Joan Lello, Barbara Pascoe, Elizabeth Hutz, Melanie Bishop, Delores Voda, David Goobic, David Lezinsky, Michael Yeosock, Fr. Gregory White, Mary Gurka, Mary Ann Kudey, Tom Youngblood, Catherine Gates, John Boyle, Rose Marie **Departed:** Michael Yeosock, Barbara Kulick, Daniel Fitzsimmons, Shirley Gingo

First of all, we must remember that the Triumph of Orthodoxy is not the Triumph of the Orthodox over other people. It is the Triumph of the Truth Divine in the hearts of those who belong to the Orthodox Church and who proclaim the Truth revealed by God in its integrity and directness.

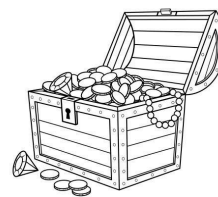
Today we must thank God with all our hearts that He has revealed Himself to us, that He has dispelled darkness in the minds and hearts of thousands and thousands of people, that He who is the Truth has shared the knowledge of the perfect Truth Divine with us.

The occasion of this feast was the recognition of the legitimacy of venerating icons. By doing this we proclaim that God – invisible, ineffable, the God whom we cannot comprehend, has truly become man, that God has taken flesh, that He has lived in our midst full of humility, of simplicity, but of glory also. And proclaiming this we venerate the icons not as idols, but as a declaration of the Truth of the Incarnation.

By doing this we must not forget that it is not the icons of wood and of paint, but God who reveals Himself in the world. Each of us, all men, were created in the image of God. We are all living icons, and this lays upon us a great responsibility because an icon may be defaced, an icon may be turned into a caricature and into a blasphemy. And we must think of ourselves and ask ourselves: are we worthy, are we capable of being called "icons", images of God? A western writer has said that meeting a Christian, those who surround him should see him as a vision, a revelation of something they have never perceived before, that the difference between a non-Christian and a Christian is as great, as radical, as striking, as the difference there is between a statue and a living person. A statue may be beautiful, but it is made of stone or of wood, and it is dead. A human being may not at first appear as possessed of such a beauty, but those who meet him should be able, as those who venerate an icon – blessed, consecrated by the Church – should see in him the shining of the presence of the Holy Spirit, see God revealing Himself in the humble form of a human being. As long as we are not capable of being such a vision to those who surround us, we fail in our duty, we do not proclaim the Triumph of Orthodoxy through our life, we give a lie to what we proclaim. And therefore each of us, and all of us collectively, bear every responsibility for the fact that the world meeting Christians by the million is not converted by the vision of God's presence in their

midst, carried indeed in earthen vessels, but glorious, saintly, transfiguring the world.

What is true about us, simply, personally, is as true about our churches. Our churches were called by Christ as a family, a community of Christians to be a body of people who are united with one another by total love, by sacrificial love, a love that is God's love to us. The Church was called, and is still called, to be a body of people whose characteristic is to be the incarnate love of God. Alas, in all our churches what we see is not the miracle of love divine.



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
Collections last Sunday (3/17): \$1,780
Potato Pancakes (3/15) - \$2,500

“What separates us from God and each other? Money, food, and drink — this dust, this dross, this corruption. Why? Because we have not lived Christian trust and faith in God. We do not know, or we forget, that man’s true life is love for God and his neighbor.”

+ St. John of Kronstadt
