



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ March 2nd, 2025 + Forgiveness Sunday + The Expulsion of Adam from Paradise + Cheesefare Sunday +



Hymns for Today

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. He has trampled down death by death. He has become the first born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to 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!"

Please Sing Along!

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

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

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!

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

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

NEXT WEEKEND - Forgiveness Sunday

Saturday, March 1st

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM - Holy Resurrection Chapel
Orthodoxy 101 @ 3:30 PM
Great Vespers @ 5 PM
Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, March 2nd - Cheesefare Sunday

Resurrectional Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Forgiveness Sunday Vespers,
Cheesefare Potluck, NO Church School

+++

THIS WEEK

THIS WEEK - 1st Week of Great Lent

Sun @ 10:30 AM: Forgiveness Sunday Vespers
Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs @ 6:30 PM: Great Compline w/
the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Wed, 9 AM-10:30 AM: Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Fri @ 6:30 PM: Canon to St. Theodore
w/ Memorial Service for the Departed (*bring names*)
Sat @ 9 AM: St. Theodore Saturday Divine Liturgy
w/ Blessing of Koliva

+++

NEXT WEEKEND - Sunday of Orthodoxy

Saturday, March 8th

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Friends of the Poor @ 10:30 AM
Orthodoxy 101 @ 3:30 PM
Great Vespers @ 5 PM
Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, March 9th

Parents: Bring your family icons for the kids to make our annual Sunday of Orthodoxy procession in the church!
Resurrectional Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour, Church School,
Parish Council Meeting @ 11:30 AM

Deanery Mission Vespers @ HTOC @ 4 PM
If you are able to help with hospitality see Deborah Mills



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

+++

+++ 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 Cheesefare Sunday March 2nd.

Friends of the Poor is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be SAT, March 8th after Liturgy

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

March 1st - Divine Liturgy @ Holy Resurrection

Cathedral: Divine Liturgy will be served at Holy Resurrection Cathedral in St. Alexis Chapel at 9 AM, Saturday, March 1st. All are invited.

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.

Sunday of Orthodoxy Mission Vespers: Sunday March 9th @ 4 PM Holy Trinity will host the deanery Mission Vespers for Sunday of Orthodoxy. Following Vespers we will host a Lenten meal for all the faithful attending. Anyone able to **volunteer to help** with the meal and hospitality would be greatly appreciated. Please see Deborah Mills or Fr. Innocent.

Great Lent Mission Vespers Schedule:

Sunday of Orthodoxy (March 2 @ 4 PM):

- Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Wilkes Barre, PA

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
-

Volunteers Needed: A work project is slated for Friday 14 March – 4PM – 6PM & Saturday 15 March – 11AM – 3PM. On Friday we will load up all old metal chairs and shelves from our pavilion in preparation for Saturday's work. Following Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning (11AM) we will stop by Allan recycling center in Wilkes Barre for a drop off and then head over to Holy Resurrection. There we will pick up a variety of chairs, shelves, kitchen equipment, etc and bring those items to the pavilion. Many hands make light work so please try and contribute a few hours of your time and energy towards this project. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Father Innocent or Sandy Serafin (571-274-5846) A sign up sheet is posted in the vestibule.

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.

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.

Appalachia Service Project: Last summer Ephraim Neal served the poor in West Virginia through the Appalachia Service Project mission trip. This year the trip will be held the last week of July and is open to all ages (teen-adult) who would be interested. These types of mission trips serving the poor have a great impact on the lives of those who participate, both young and old. **If you are interested in being a part of the team please speak with Fr. Innocent or Ephraim ASAP to learn more.** There is also a need for adult team leaders who are familiar with construction and can bring a truck.

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) Joshua Leonori (3/22), Sergei Kapral Jr. (3/17), Rdr. Gregory Kurtz (3/17), Mat. Victoria

Kapral (3/21), Jacob Zbegner (3/27) Gerry Stankiewicz (3/27), Jean Ann Hutz (3/31) Delores Voda (3/31)

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries: Alex Reznik (3/2), Emma Lynn DiBatista (3/3), Abby Harvey (3/4), Lisa Marie Harvey (3/7)



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

+++

Sunday of Cheesefare: 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.

“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...”

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, Tom & Joan Austin, Elizabeth Hutz, Mary Hutz, Delores Voda, David Lezinsky, June, Myra, Bob Lutzick, Leann, Madison & Millie Nicholas, Gregory Krevko, Tom Vaskalis, David, Delores Tressa, Sandra Condon, Hieromonk Gabriel, Sylvia Dreater **Departed:** Mat. Suzanne Senyo, Rachael Snopeck, Aleksandra, Olivia, Veronica, Evelyn Kozminksi, Mat. Eugenia

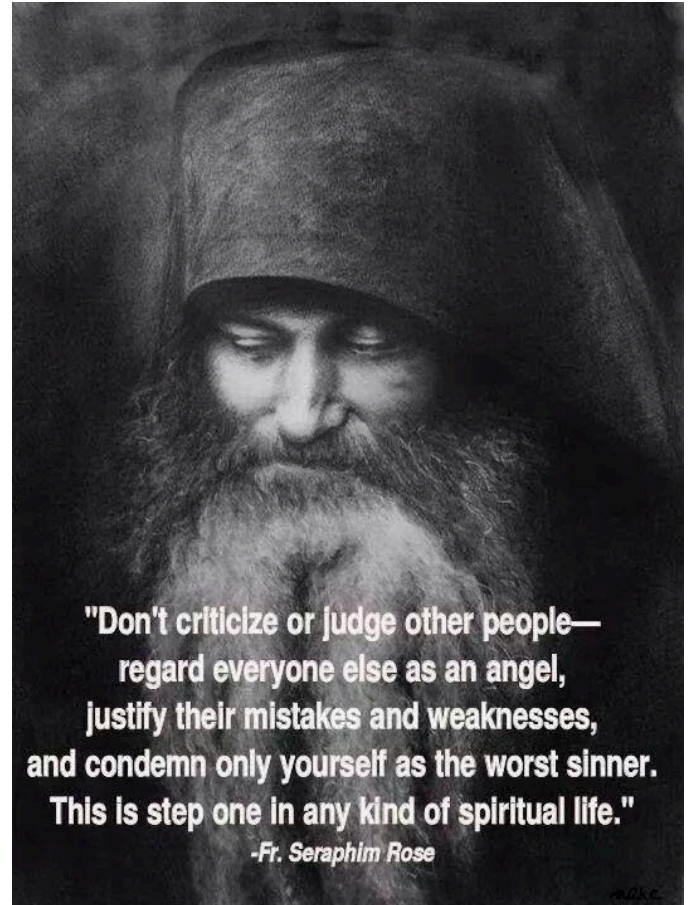
FORGIVENESS SUNDAY VESPERS: WHY?

By Protobresbyter Alexander Schmemmann

What is the meaning of this rite? Why is it that the Church wants us to begin the Lenten season with forgiveness and reconciliation? These questions are in order because for too many people, Lent means primarily, and almost exclusively, a change of diet, the compliance with ecclesiastical regulations concerning fasting. They understand fasting as an end in itself, as a “good deed” required by God and carrying in itself its merit and its reward. But, the Church spares no effort in revealing to us that fasting is but a means, one among many, towards a higher goal: the spiritual renewal of man, his return to God, true repentance and, therefore, true reconciliation. The Church spares no effort in warning us against a hypocritical and pharisaic fasting, against the reduction of religion to mere external obligations. As a Lenten hymn says: “In vain do you rejoice in no eating, O soul! For you abstain from food, but from passions you are not purified. If you persevere in sin, you will perform a useless fast.”

Now, forgiveness stands at the very center of Christian faith and of Christian life because Christianity itself is, above all, the religion of forgiveness. God forgives us, and His forgiveness is in Christ, His Son, Whom He sends to us, so that by sharing in His humanity we may share in His love and be truly reconciled with God. Indeed, Christianity has no other content but love. And it is primarily the renewal of that love, a return to it, a growth in it, that we seek in Great Lent, in fasting and prayer, in the entire spirit and the entire effort of that season. Thus, truly forgiveness is both the beginning of, and the proper condition for the Lenten season.

*O Paradise, garden of delight and beauty,
dwelling—place made perfect by God,
unending gladness and eternal joy,
the hope of the prophets and the
home of the saints, by the music of thy rustling
leaves beseech the Creator of all
to open the gates which my sins have closed,
that I may partake of the Tree of Life and Grace
which was given to me in the beginning!*



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 (2/23/25) : \$2,176</p>
--