



Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

Sun, March 8, 2020 - Triumph of Orthodoxy

1st Sunday of Great Lent — Tone 5

St. Theophylactus of Nicomedia (842-845). Ven. Lazarus (1391) and Athanasius (15th c.), of Múrom.



Hymns for Today's Service

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.

We venerate Thy most pure image, O Good One; and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God. Of Thy good 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, // for Thou alone hast come to save the world."

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.

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 ...

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."

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from Holy Trinity Orthodox Church. 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.*

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

TODAY: 9:00 AM - 3rd/6th Hours (8:40AM), Divine Liturgy, Church School, Adult Ed, Coffee Hour, Parish Council Meeting

2ND WEEK OF GREAT LENT - MARCH 8-14

Sun @ 4PM - Mission Vespers @ Holy Resurrection
Wed @ 6PM - Presanctified Liturgy w/ Lenten Meal
Fri @ 6:30PM - Akathist w/ Litya for the Departed
Sat @ 9AM - Divine Liturgy

SAT: March 14, 5:00 PM - Great Vespers / Movie Night

SUN: March 15, 9:00 AM - 3rd/6th Hours (8:40AM), Divine Liturgy, Church School, Adult Ed, Coffee Hour
4:00 PM Mission Vespers @ St. Michael's in Old Forge

Note: Saturday Vespers Time Change Vespers will begin at 5:00 PM!

Daylight Savings starts today. Beginning this coming Saturday we will change the time of Saturday Night Vespers. Because we are also having our Lenten Movie Series we will change the time for Vespers to **5:00 PM** (instead of 6:00 PM as in prior years). If those who attend Vespers like this time we may leave it. Suggestions are welcomed.

++ Thomas Kay Memorial ++

The following donations were offered in loving memory of Thomas Kay. May His Memory Be Eternal!
Rose & Barry Rosen - \$100

++ Stephen Havrilak Memorial ++

The following donations were offered in loving memory of Stephen Havrilak. May His Memory Be Eternal!
Janet & Alan Saravitz - \$10, Beth Bittel - \$50

Attendance & Donations - 3/1/20

Attendance: 80 | Regular: \$1087
Improvements: \$375 | Candles: \$159

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Josie Bisset, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Nancy Valletta & Family, Nadine Breisch, Luke Austin, Susan Goobic Howell, Rosalie Bagenski, Connie Padrezas, Denise Meck, Sonja & Leighann Kay, Stephen &

Mary Krill, John Roman, Ann-Marie Roma, Anna Hutz Lahr, Brian Cawley, Asher Diction **Departed:** Thomas Kay, Lexi Marie Tessitore, Joseph Mahan, Stephen Havrilak Sr.

++ PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS ++

CONFESSIONS: Confession is available 30 minutes before the Wed, Sat, and Sun Liturgies and after Sat night Vespers - or by appointment. See Fr. Innocent.

LENTEN ADULT EDUCATION STARTS TODAY: We will take a short break from our study on the Divine Liturgy to focus on practical ways to live a Christian life during Great Lent. Our study is titled "How to live a Christian Life - 55 Maxims of Fr. Thomas Hopko". The class will be held Sundays throughout Great Lent following Divine Liturgy. Presented by SubDeacon Greg Polk.

LENTEN WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDY STARTS THIS THURSDAY: Journey through the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ Thursday Mornings @ 10 AM beginning March 12th for 5 weeks - Lead by Fr. Innocent.

LENTEN MOVIE PRESENTATIONS AFTER VESPERS: Christian themed movies for inspiring your Lenten Journey. Most Saturday nights after vespers. Popcorn and drinks provided. Hosted by Sherry Huntzinger.

SAT: March 14 - *I can Only Imagine*

SAT: March 21 - TBD

SAT March 28 - *Prince of Egypt* (Family Night Movie)

BAZAAR MEETING: A Bazaar Committee meeting will be held on March 15 following Lenten Class.

PIEROGIE PROJECT THIS WEEK: REMEMBER: Pierogies are being made on Monday and Tuesday March 9 and 10. Help is needed AND appreciated both days anytime after 7:00 AM. Hope to see you then!

SCHEDULE FOR WEEK 3 OF GREAT LENT:

Sun @ 9AM - Divine Liturgy, 4 PM Mission Vespers

Wed @ 6PM - Presanctified Liturgy w/ Lenten Meal

Fri @ 6:30PM - Akathist w/ Litya for the Departed

Sat @ 9AM - Divine Liturgy

LENTEN FOOD SALE every Friday in Great Lent 11-5. This Friday is Ziti, Clam Chowder, and Veggie Soup.

If We Confess Our Sins

From The Lenten Spring by Fr. Thomas Hopko

It is not enough for us to know our sins and to hate them. We must also confess them before God and man. We must acknowledge them before heaven and earth. We must expose them to the whole of creation in order to be rid of them from within our secret hearts. Confession is part of the spiritual life. Indeed, it is of life itself. There is no authentic existence for human beings without it. And there is certainly no authentic repentance.

“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. (1 Jn. 1:8-10)

Some say that there is no need to confess sins openly and publicly. They say that people can confess directly to God. Such an idea is total nonsense. Confession to God in secret is no confession at all. It is simply the acknowledgment before the Lord that we know what He knows! Confession by definition is open and public. If it is not, it is simply not confession.

When the people were repenting in preparation for Jesus at the preaching of John the Baptist, it is written that they were baptized "confessing their sins" (Mk. 1:5). This does not mean that they were telling God in the privacy of their hearts what He already knew. It means that they were proclaiming the evils that they had done for all to hear. And when St. James commands Christians: "Confess your sins to one another!" he is not advising them to be aware of their transgressions in the secrecy of their souls. He is ordering them to reveal their wickedness to each other so that they might be healed (Jas. 5:16).

“Confession springs from an awareness of what is holy, it means dying to sin and coming alive again to sanctity.”

Fr. Alexander Elchaninov

If confession is by definition the open and public acknowledgment of sins, why then do the Orthodox confess privately to the priests? It is not because the priests have some special power which others do not have. To think this way is to be highly mistaken, although many Christians have such an understanding.

Priests have no power personally to forgive sins. Only Jesus Christ has such power. But the pastors do have the ministry of witnessing the confession and repentance of God's people, and of officially sealing that confession and repentance with the assurance of divine forgiveness through the prayer of absolution.

The reason why people now confess to their pastors in private is because of the weakness of the body of Christians as a whole. Confession used to be public. It was done openly in the presence of all of the members of the Church. Anyone willing to confess in this manner today is welcome to do so. But it would most likely serve only to lead others into temptation rather than to inspire prayerful compassion and sympathetic collaboration in fulfilling the Lord's commandments. When confession is done to the priest alone, it should be understood that it is to him as if it were to all. Or, to put it another way, it is to all - God and man and the whole of creation - in the priest's person, as the head of the church community and the sacramental presence within it of the Lord Jesus Himself.

Great Lent is a time for confession. All Christians should make their confession during this holy season. A person who fails to do so is hardly a Christian. He is certainly not Orthodox.

In his spiritual diary, Fr. Alexander Elchaninov gives advice about confession. Advice is also found in the writings of Fr. John of Kronstadt, and in such books as *Unseen Warfare* and *The Way of the Pilgrim*. Christians should read writings of this sort to help them with their confession. Theophan the Recluse advised those preparing for confession to study the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5-7) and the first letter of John, together with 1 Corinthians 13 and Romans 12 to 14. These, and other sections of the scriptures, focus sharply on what is expected of Christians in their daily behavior. Fr. Elchaninov writes that confession "springs from an awareness of what is holy, it means dying to sin and coming alive again to sanctity." It begins with a searching of the heart." It moves to a sincere "contrition

of the heart." It expresses itself in the "oral confession of sins," accomplished with precision, without veiling the ugliness of sin by vague expressions." It is fulfilled in the resolution never to sin again, although realizing that we will fall because we are not God. It is scaled by our subsequent sufferings to remain steadfast in our struggle against sin. Such confession is at the heart of our spiritual efforts, especially during the lenten spring.

Behold, my child, Christ stands here invisibly and receives your confession. Wherefore be not ashamed nor afraid and conceal nothing from me, but tell without hesitation all things which you have done, and so you shall have pardon from our Lord Jesus Christ. Lo, His holy image is before us, and I am but a witness, bearing testimony before Him of the things which you have to say. But if you shall conceal anything you shall have the greater sin. Take heed, therefore, lest having come to the physician, you depart unhealed.

55 Maxims of the Christian Life by Fr Thomas Hopko

Bring this list of 55 maxims to this week's class after Divine Liturgy for our discussion.

1. Be always with Christ and trust God in everything.
2. Pray as you can, not as you think you must.
3. Have a keepable rule of prayer done by discipline.
4. Say the Lord's Prayer several times each day.
5. Repeat a short prayer when your mind is not occupied.
6. Make some prostrations when you pray.
7. Eat good foods in moderation and fast on fasting days.
8. Practice silence, inner and outer.
9. Sit in silence 20 to 30 minutes each day.
10. Do acts of mercy in secret.
11. Go to liturgical services regularly.
12. Go to confession and holy communion regularly.
13. Do not engage intrusive thoughts and feelings.
14. Reveal all your thoughts and feelings to a trusted person regularly.
15. Read the scriptures regularly.
16. Read good books, a little at a time.
17. Cultivate communion with the saints.

18. Be an ordinary person, one of the human race.
19. Be polite with everyone, first of all family members.
20. Maintain cleanliness and order in your home.
21. Have a healthy, wholesome hobby.
22. Exercise regularly.
23. Live a day, even a part of a day, at a time.
24. Be totally honest, first of all with yourself.
25. Be faithful in little things.
26. Do your work, then forget it.
27. Do the most difficult and painful things first.
28. Face reality.
29. Be grateful.
30. Be cheerful.
31. Be simple, hidden, quiet and small.
32. Never bring attention to yourself.
33. Listen when people talk to you.
34. Be awake and attentive, fully present where you are.
35. Think and talk about things no more than necessary.
36. Speak simply, clearly, firmly, directly.
37. Flee imagination, fantasy, analysis, figuring things out.
38. Flee carnal, sexual things at their first appearance.
39. Don't complain, grumble, murmur or whine.
40. Don't seek or expect pity or praise.
41. Don't compare yourself with anyone.
42. Don't judge anyone for anything.
43. Don't try to convince anyone of anything.
44. Don't defend or justify yourself.
45. Be defined and bound by God, not people.
46. Accept criticism gracefully and test it carefully.
47. Give advice only when asked or when it is your duty.
48. Do nothing for people that they can and should do for themselves.
49. Have a daily schedule of activities, avoiding whim and caprice.
50. Be merciful with yourself and others.
51. Have no expectations except to be fiercely tempted to your last breath.
52. Focus exclusively on God and light, and never on darkness, temptation and sin.
53. Endure the trial of yourself and your faults serenely, under God's mercy.
54. When you fall, get up immediately and start over.
55. Get help when you need it, without fear or shame.