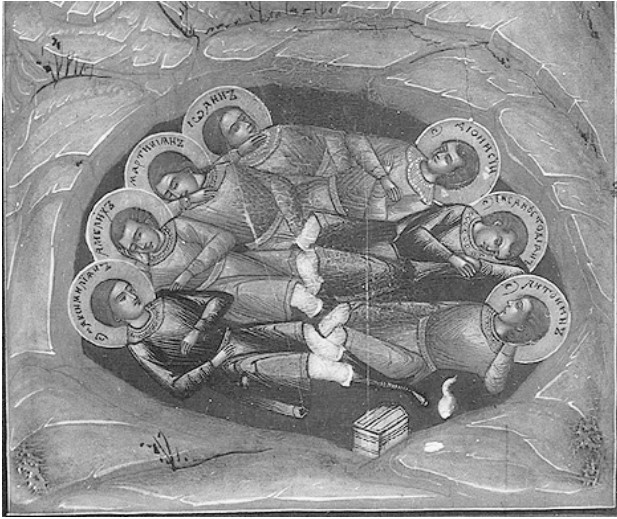




# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

August 4th, 2024 + 6th Sunday after Holy Pentecost + Holy Seven Youths ("Seven Sleepers") of Ephesus



## Hymns for This Week

(Tone 5) 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.

(Tone 4) Thy seven holy martyrs, O Lord, / through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns from Thee, our God. / For having Thy strength, they laid low their adversaries, / and shattered the powerless boldness of demons. // Through their intercession, save our souls!

(Tone 5) Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior, / shattering its gates as Almighty, / resurrecting the dead as Creator, / and destroying the sting of death. / Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man, // and we cry to Thee: "O Lord, save us!"

(Tone 4) The Seven Holy Youths renounced the perishing comforts of this world, / preferring the eternal things of Heaven. / They were incorrupt after death and rose from the dead / and buried the snares of the devils! // O faithful, let us then honor them, singing a hymn of praise to Christ!

## Please Sing Along!

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

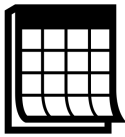
## Epistle Reading - Romans 12:6-14

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

## Gospel - Matthew 9:1-8

So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

**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!



## This Week's Schedule

### Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

#### THIS WEEKEND - Holy Seven Youths ("Seven Sleepers") of Ephesus

Saturday, August 3rd

Orthodoxy 101 @ 3:30 PM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM

*Confession available before or after Vespers*

Sunday, August 4th

Resurrectional Matins @ 8:00 AM

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM

Followed by Coffee Hour

Adult Ed w/ Dn Nicholas Johnson

"Saint Alexis: The Father of American Orthodoxy"

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#### THIS WEEK: Dormition Fast thru Aug 15

##### The Great Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord

Monday, August 5th

Festal Vigil @ 6:30 PM

Tuesday, August 6th

Hours @ 8:40 AM

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM

Followed by Blessing of Fruit and Festal Coffee Hour

*Bring a bowl of fresh fruit to be blessed and share!*

WED 11 AM - 1:30 PM: Church open for prayer

WED 6:30 PM: Akathist to the Mother of God

THURS 11 AM: Bible Study

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#### NEXT WEEKEND - Holy Martyr and Archdeacon

##### Euplus of Catania

Saturday, August 10th

Friends of the Poor @ 9 AM

Orthodoxy 101 @ 3:30 PM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM

*Confession available before or after Vespers*

Sunday, August 11th

Resurrectional Matins @ 8:00 AM

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM

Followed by Coffee Hour & Part II of

"Saint Alexis: The Father of American Orthodoxy"



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### & Upcoming Parish Events

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#### +++ Weekly / Monthly +++

**Bible Study** Thursdays at 11 AM. Everyone is welcome. We are reading through the Gospel of St. Luke with discussions.

**Orthodoxy 101** Saturdays @ 3:30 PM 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 July 28th.

**Friends of the Poor** is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be SAT, August 10th @ 9 AM

**Holy Trinity Parish Council** is usually the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is SUN, Aug 18th @ 11:30 AM

**Holy Resurrection Parish Council** Meeting will be the 4th Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is SUN, Aug 25th @ 11:30 AM

#### +++ Upcoming Events +++

##### "St Alexis: The Father of American Orthodoxy"

During coffee hour on the Sundays of Aug 4th and 11th, Dn Nicholas, our Intern, will be introducing us to Saint Alexis Toth of Wilkes-Barre, by whose efforts the parishes of Holy Resurrection and Holy Trinity (and many others) were established.

##### Upcoming Holy Resurrection Cathedral Meeting:

There will be a meeting for members of Holy Resurrection Cathedral on Saturday Aug 10, at 10 AM downstairs in the parish hall here at Holy Trinity. Our Chancellor Fr. Martin Browne will be in attendance to discuss the cathedral and answer any questions.

**Foodfest Meeting** Mon, Aug 19 at 6:30 PM at the Pavillion. Everyone is invited to attend. This is a major fundraiser for the parish so we can use all the help we can get.

**St. Tikhon's Southern BBQ Night:** We have all been invited, along with the entire Wilkes-Barre Deanery, to a free Southern BBQ Night at St. Tikhon's Seminary on August 22 at 6 PM. To attend RSVP at [events.stots.edu](http://events.stots.edu) or via email at [info@stots.edu](mailto:info@stots.edu). If you are unable to RSVP by either of those methods let Fr. Innocent know, and he

will do it for you. Need a ride or want to carpool? Let Fr. Innocent know and we will make arrangements.

**Holy Resurrection Coffee Hour:** Holy Resurrection Community will be providing our Coffee Hour meal every second Sunday of the month. We are very grateful and blessed to have you with us! See Cookie if you have any questions or would like to contribute.

**Aug 29, Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist:** The Holy Trinity & Holy Resurrection Communities are invited to celebrate the Patronal Feast Day of St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Edwardsville. Join us Thursday, August 29 at 9:00 AM for a Divine Liturgy commemorating the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. All attending are invited to share a potluck brunch in Repella Hall immediately following the service.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

**August Birthdays:** Jonathan Sims (8/6), Liam Reznak (8/9), Dn Michael McCartney (8/13), Joe Lello (8/14), William Talpash (8/19), Lisa Talpash (8/16), Greg Kurtz Jr. (8/16), Olivia Dutko (8/22), Carl Zbegner (8/22), Denise Meck (8/23), Ephraim Neal (8/25), Sylvia Dreater (8/29) Lindsey Rivera (8/31) **Anniversaries:** Paul & Sylvia Dreater (8/3), Greg & Laura Polk (8/17), George & Rita Krill (8/29)

**This Week: Birthdays & Anniversaries** - Jonathan Sims (8/6), Liam Reznak (8/9)



## Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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### Holy Seven Youths (“Seven Sleepers”) of Ephesus

The Seven Youths of Ephesus: Maximilian, Iamblicus, Martinian, John, Dionysius, Exacustodianus (Constantine) and Antoninus, lived in the third century. Saint Maximilian was the son of the Ephesus city

administrator, and the other six youths were sons of illustrious citizens of Ephesus. The youths were friends from childhood, and all were in military service together.

When the emperor Decius (249-251) arrived in Ephesus, he commanded all the citizens to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods. Torture and death awaited anyone who disobeyed. The seven youths were denounced by informants, and were summoned to reply to the charges. Appearing before the emperor, the young men confessed their faith in Christ.

Their military belts and insignia were quickly taken from them. Decius permitted them to go free, however, hoping that they would change their minds while he was off on a military campaign. The youths fled from the city and hid in a cave on Mount Ochlon, where they passed their time in prayer, preparing for martyrdom.

The youngest of them, Saint Iamblicus, dressed as a beggar and went into the city to buy bread. On one of his excursions into the city, he heard that the emperor had returned and was looking for them. Saint Maximilian urged his companions to come out of the cave and present themselves for trial.

Learning where the young men were hidden, the emperor ordered that the entrance of the cave be sealed with stones so that the saints would perish from hunger and thirst. Two of the dignitaries at the blocked entrance to the cave were secret Christians. Desiring to preserve the memory of the saints, they placed in the cave a sealed container containing two metal plaques. On them were inscribed the names of the seven youths and the details of their suffering and death.

The Lord placed the youths into a miraculous sleep lasting almost two centuries. In the meantime, the persecutions against Christians had ceased. During the reign of the holy emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450) there were heretics who denied that there would be a general resurrection of the dead at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of them said, “How can there be a resurrection of the dead when there will be neither soul nor body, since they are disintegrated?” Others affirmed, “The souls alone will have a restoration, since it would be impossible for bodies to arise and live after a thousand years, when even their dust would not remain.” Therefore, the Lord

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**PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Homebound** - Evelyn, Vladimir, Jeri, Marsha, David, Paul, Archpriest Theodore, Archpriest Michael Evans, Mit. Arch. Vladimir & Mat. Elizabeth, Mary, Patricia, Barbara, Jeri, Evelyn, Joan, Irene, Roberta **Sick & Suffering** - Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Tom & Joan Austin, Elizabeth Hutz, Mary Hutz, Delores Voda, David Lezinsky, June, Bob Lutzick, Leann, **Departed:** Rose Marie, Donald, Charles, Matushka Anise

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revealed the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead and of the future life through His seven saints.

The owner of the land, on which Mount Ochlon was situated, discovered the stone construction, and his workers opened up the entrance to the cave. The Lord had kept the youths alive, and they awoke from their sleep, unaware that almost two hundred years had passed. Their bodies and clothing were completely undecayed.

Preparing to accept torture, the youths once again asked Saint Iamblicus to buy bread for them in the city. Going toward the city, the youth was astonished to see a cross on the gates. Hearing the name of Jesus Christ freely spoken, he began to doubt that he was approaching his own city.

When he paid for the bread, Iamblicus gave the merchant coins with the image of the emperor Decius on it. He was detained, as someone who might be concealing a horde of old money. They took Saint Iamblicus to the city administrator, who also happened to be the Bishop of Ephesus. Hearing the bewildering answers of the young man, the bishop perceived that God was revealing some sort of mystery through him, and went with other people to the cave.

At the entrance to the cave the bishop found the sealed container and opened it. He read upon the metal plaques the names of the seven youths and the details of the sealing of the cave on the orders of the emperor Decius. Going into the cave and seeing the saints alive, everyone rejoiced and perceived that the Lord, by waking them from their long sleep, was demonstrating to the Church the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead.

Soon the emperor himself arrived in Ephesus and spoke with the young men in the cave. Then the holy youths, in sight of everyone, lay their heads upon the ground and fell asleep again, this time until the General Resurrection.

The emperor wanted to place each of the youths into a jeweled coffin, but they appeared to him in a dream and said that their bodies were to be left upon the ground in the cave. In the twelfth century the Russian pilgrim Igumen Daniel saw the holy relics of the seven youths in the cave.

There is a second commemoration of the seven youths on October 22. According to one tradition, which entered into the Russian Prologue (of Saints' Lives), the youths fell asleep for the second time on this day. The Greek Menaion of 1870 says that they first fell asleep on August 4, and woke up on October 22.

There is a prayer of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus in the Great Book of Needs (Trebnik) for those who are ill and cannot sleep. The Seven Sleepers are also mentioned in the service for the Church New Year, September 1.

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“When you want to receive true spiritual rest, then listen to the Lord who has commanded us: *learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall have rest unto your souls* (Matt. 11:29). See what the Lord especially commands us to learn - humility and meekness, which only can give us rest. But this science is mastered not all at once, and not in one day or one year, but with much time, forcing oneself and Divine help.”

St. Macarius



## 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

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<p><b>Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open:</b> \$12,305 <b>Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open:</b> \$2,840 <b>Last Week's Collection (7/28/24):</b> \$ TBA</p>
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