The Sunday Messenger

+ Holy Trinity, Wilkes-Barre + Aug 16th, 2026 + Leavetaking of the Dormition of the Mother of God + 11th Sunday after Pentecost +

Hymns & Readings

For Today's Divine Liturgy

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead. And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: "O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!"

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."

In giving birth thou didst preserve thy virginity. In falling asleep thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos. Thou wast translated to life, O Mother of Life, and by thy prayers thou dost deliver our souls from death.

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb! The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with Thee, and the world, my Savior, praises Thee forever.

Uncircumscribed Word of the Father, as we behold the victorious image of Thy true incarnation, not made by hands, but divinely wrought in Thine ineffable and divine dispensation towards us, we honor it with veneration.

Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos, who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions. For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life by the One Who dwelt in her virginal womb.

Please Sing Along!

Singing throughout the Divine Liturgy is encouraged!

Epistle Reading - 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. My defense to those who examine me is this: Do we have no right to eat and drink? Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt,

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 is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.

Gospel Reading -Matthew 18:23-35

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

THIS WEEKEND
SAT, Aug 15th
Divine Liturgy for Dormition @ 9 AM
followed by blessing of herbs & flowers
Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

SUN, Aug 16th
Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour

Parastas for Elizabeth Serafin Garofano
Offered by Liz Garofano Following Divine Liturgy

Sun Aug 16th Coffee Hour/Hospitality Meeting 11:45 AM
Everyone who is currently involved in providing coffee hour and/or considering helping with this critical ministry is encouraged to attend. We will discuss upcoming hospitality events after our coffee hour discussion.

THIS WEEK
Bible Study is on Summer Break - Stay tuned!
WED @ 11 AM - 1 PM - Church Open for Prayer
WED @ 6 PM - Akathist to the Mother of God

NEXT WEEKEND
SAT, Aug 22nd
Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions
SUN, Aug 23rd
Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour,

8/23 - Friends of the Poor Ministry Meeting following Divine Liturgy

Bible Study is currently on summer break
ORTHODOXY 101 Orthodoxy 101 is for visitors, inquirers, catechumens or anyone interested in learning more about our faith. We just completed our summer session but will have more classes coming soon. Classes on Wednesdays and/or Sundays.
Parish Potlucks are usually the last Sunday of each month. Our next potluck is Sun, August 30th.
Friends of the Poor is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next FOP is Saturday, August 8th
Holy Trinity Parish Council is usually the second Sunday of each month. The next Parish Council is TBD

Upcoming Ministry Committee Meetings
Aug 16th - Hospitality / Coffee Hour Meeting
Aug 23rd - Friends of the Poor Meeting
Aug 30th - Annual Church School Planning Meeting

If you serve in one of the above ministries, would like to serve, or would like to learn more, please join us! As our parish grows, all of our ministries need more volunteers to keep up and be effective. If you have any questions please see Fr. Innocent.

Annual Shrimp Boil* – Aug 21 - Noon to 5PM - $18
A hearty meal consisting of a generous portion of extra-large shrimp, smoky pork sausage, locally harvested new potatoes and freshly picked corn on the cob. All ingredients prepared in a broth of old bay, herbs and other seasonings. *** A fasting meatless version of this meal (no kielbasa, w/ extra shrimp) is also available.** Pre-orders may be placed August 17 - 20 (Monday - Thursday) / 9AM – 5 PM. Reservations by phone (570-825-6540) Walk-in orders are also welcome. Eat in or take out available.

Request help for prep on August 20 – 2PM to 4PM. Request help during sale and afterwards for clean-up. 10 AM to 6 PM. Any help during those times will be greatly appreciated. Sign up sheets for volunteer workers or for pre-ordering meals are in the vestibule. Thanks in advance for your help and participation.

August Birthdays: Joan Lello (8/1), Ruby Redfield (8/2), Sophia Leonori (8/5), Jonathan Sims (8/5), Radu Spinghel (8/6), Liam Reznak (8/9), Joe Lello (8/14), Lisa Talpash (8/16), Greg Kurtz Jr. (8/16), William Talpash (8/19), Olivia Dutko (8/22), Carl Zbegner (8/22), Denise Meck (8/23), Ephraim Neal (8/25), Sylvia Dreater (8/29) Lindsey Rivera (8/31)
August Anniversaries: Paul & Sylvia Dreater (8/3), Greg & Laura Polk (8/17), George & Rita Krill (8/29)

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries: Lisa Talpash (8/16), Greg Kurtz Jr. (8/16), William Talpash (8/19), Olivia Dutko (8/22), Carl Zbegner (8/22), Greg & Laura Polk (8/17)

... of the Saints, Fathers & Teachers

Forgive Everyone for Everything *(excerpt)*
By Fr. Stephen Freeman

'Mama,' he replied to her, 'do not weep, life is paradise, and we are all in paradise, but we don't want to realize it, and if we did care to realize it, paradise would be established in all the world tomorrow.' And we all wondered at his words, so strangely and so resolutely did he say this; we felt tender emotion and we wept....'Dear mother, droplet of my blood,' he said (at that time he had begun to use endearments of this kind, unexpected ones), 'beloved droplet of my blood, joyful one, you must learn that of a truth each of us is guilty before all for everyone and everything. I do not know how to explain this to you, but I feel that it is so, to the point of torment. And how could we have lived all this time being angry with one another and knowing nothing of this?' [He spoke even of being guilty before the birds and all creation] ...'Yes, he said, 'all around me there has been such divine glory: birds, trees, meadows, sky, and I alone have lived in disgrace, I alone have dishonored it all, completely ignoring its beauty and glory.' 'You take too many sins upon yourself,' dear mother would say, weeping. 'But dear mother, joy of my life. I am crying from joy, and not from grief; why, I myself want to be guilty before them, only I cannot explain it to you, for I do not know how to love them. Let me be culpable before all, and then all will forgive me, and that will be paradise. Am I not in paradise now?'

As difficult as it may sound, the reality described by Dostoevsky can be summed up very simply: forgive everyone for everything. Stated in such a blunt fashion, such a goal is overwhelming. How can I forgive everyone for everything? This life of forgiveness, which is nothing other than the life of Christ within us, is our inheritance in the faith. The life of blame, recrimination, bitterness, anger, revenge and the like are not the life of Christ, but simply the ragings of our own egos, the false self which we exalt over our true life which is "hid with Christ in God."

PARISH PRAYER LIST // Homebound: Evelyn, Vladimir, Marie, Pearl, Jeri, David, Paul, Archpriest Theodore, Mat. Elizabeth, Mary, Patricia, Barbara, Jeri, Joan, Irene, Alice, Sylvia, Paul **// Sick & Suffering:** Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Elizabeth Hutz, Mary Hutz, David Lezinsky, Tom Vaskalis, Tom O'Brian, David, Delores Tressa, Elaine & Forrest Hanson, Alexandra, Jody, Michael Noice, Paul Loftus, Santo, Susan Shiposki, Dn Jerimiah, William, Alan, Tim, Ann, Paul, Bill, Linda, Betty, Jim, George, Ali, Athansios, Hanna, Don Redmond, Alijah, John **// Recently Departed:** Clement, Ernie, Elizabeth, Margaret, Barbara **// Pray for our Catechumens:** Tom, Gail, Jaqueline, John, Adrienne, Michelle, Jesse, Katie, Lisa, Aaric, Tyler, Dom, David, Ashley, Audrey, Jessica, Nicholas, Nicholas // **Inquirers:** Steve, Nicholas, Matt, April

The rightness of a cause, or the correctness of our judgment do not justify nor change the nature of our ragings. For none of us can stand before God and be justified – except as we give ourselves to the life of Christ, who is our only righteousness.

The question of forgiveness is not a moral issue. We do not forgive because it is the "correct" thing to do. We forgive because it is the true nature of the life in Christ. As Dostoevsky describes it: it is Paradise. In the same manner, the refusal to forgive, the continuation of blame, recrimination, bitterness, etc., are not moral failings. They are existential crises – drawing us away from the life of Christ and Paradise, and ever deeper into an abyss of non-being.

I have lately spent some of my prayer-time each day with a modified form of the 'Jesus Prayer.' It runs, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner, and forgive all those who hate me or do me harm. Forgive them freely without reproach and grant me true repentance." I offer no great authority for this prayer – indeed, as I pray it, I find that it changes from time to time. But it is a way of offering prayer for my enemies – of teaching my heart to "forgive everyone for everything."

There is a further thought that is of great importance. Forgiveness and unforgiveness are not private matters. As Christ taught the Apostles, "Whosoever sins you loose are loosed, and whosoever sins you retain are retained." This, of course, has a particular meaning for the Apostolic ministry given to the Church. But it also alludes to another reality. My refusal to forgive is a force for evil in this world – binding both myself and others around me. It may not be an intentional binding – but bind it will. In the same manner, forgiveness is the introduction of Paradise into this world – both for myself and for others around me. Whether I intend it or not, Paradise comes as a fruit of such love.

Forgive everyone for everything. Will we not be in Paradise?

"... 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 (8/9) : $1,916

Scan to make an online donation.

Thank you to **Mat. Vicki Kapral & Diane Welgus** for today's coffee hour and to those who helped clean up! Next Sunday Sherry Huntsinger & Jen Rusnok will offer coffee hour. Please see them if you'd like to help.

Would you sponsor a coffee hour with a friend?
See Fr. Innocent, Mat. Melanie or Joanne Dutko.