



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

Sun, August 22, 2021: 9th Sunday after Holy Pentecost, Afterfeast of the Dormition of the Mother of God



Hymns for Today's Service

You descended from on high, O Merciful One! You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

In giving birth you preserved your virginity. In falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Theotokos. You were translated to life O Mother of Life, and by your prayers you deliver our souls from death.

By rising from the tomb, You raised the dead and resurrected Adam. Eve exults in Your Resurrection, and the world celebrates Your rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

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.

Epistle Reading 1 Corinthians 3:9-17

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 14:22-34

Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the

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!

waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God." When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret.

This Week's Schedule

THIS WEEKEND

SAT, Aug 21th: Great Vespers @ 5 PM
Confessions @ 5:45 PM

SUN, Aug. 22th: Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy,
Coffee Hour, Orthodox Etiquette Presentation,
Parish Council & Maintenance Committee Meetings

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THIS WEEK

WED: Church Open for Private Prayer 11AM-1:30 PM

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NEXT WEEKEND

SAT, Aug 28th: Great Vespers w/ Litya @ 5 PM
Confessions @ 5:45 PM

SUN, Aug. 29th: Hours @ 8:40 AM,
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour

Upcoming Parish Events & Announcements

TODAY: Cake for Josie Bisset: Please join us today at Coffee Hour as we wish our dear friend and fellow parishioner Josie all the best as she departs the Wilkes-Barre area this week. Our love and gratitude for her presence in this community cannot be overstated. We will have a special meal for Josie when she visits in the

coming weeks but couldn't let her go without a little cake and coffee in her honor! Many blessed years Josie!

TODAY: Orthodox Etiquette Presentation: Paul (Garret) Hamner, our parish's summer intern from St. Tikhon's, will offer his final presentation on what and why we do the things we do in church and during our worship services. Each presentation will give us insight into the meaning behind Orthodox worship practices with time for questions and answers. Join us during coffee hour on Aug 8, 15 and 22 to gain a deeper understanding of our faith and worship.

TODAY: Parish Council Meeting @ 11:30 AM followed by a brief Maintenance Committee meeting to assess the placement of our new church sign on E. Main Street.

Special Collection for the Hamners: We are so thankful to our seminarian intern family, the Hamners, and all they have contributed to Holy Trinity this summer! After August 29, Paul and the family will begin their final year at St. Tikhon's Seminary before going back to California. We hope we will continue to see them this year, but their official internship will be over. If you would like to express your gratitude to the Hamners, please consider making a special donation as a thank you in support of their last year in seminary. To make a donation simply put "Hamner Family" on the donation envelope and leave it at the candle stand. May God bless the Hamners and their ministry!

AUG 29 - HTOC Shrimp Boil Feast: Sunday August 29 from 11:30 AM – 4 PM. 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. There will also be a Lenten version that excludes sausage for the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. Those who would like the Lenten version should place their orders TODAY following Divine Liturgy. \$18 per serving.

Pre-orders may be placed August 23–27 (Monday – Friday) / 9AM – 5 PM, **online** (wbholytrinity.org) or by **phone** (570-825-6540). **Walk-in orders** are welcome. Eat in & take out.

YOUTH & FAMILY LABOR DAY WEEKEND COOKOUT & CAMP



Sunday, September 5th

Cookout and Games begin at 4 PM

Ping Pong, Foosball, Outdoor Games

Followed by Campfire & Music

Camping w/ late night movie begins at 10 PM

Morning breakfast & departing at 9AM

++ Camping is optional - come enjoy the fun ++

Birthdays & Anniversaries

August Birthdays: Joan Lello (8/1), David Voda (8/2), Sophia Leonori (8/5), Joe Lello (8/14), William Talpash (8/19), Olivia Dutko (8/22), Carl Zbegner (8/22), Denise Meck (8/23), Ephraim Neal (8/25), Lindsey Rivera (8/31), Pat Bankos (8/?). **August Anniversaries:** Greg & Laura Polk (8/17), George & Rita Krill (8/?), Catie & Dan Decarlo (8/22)

This Week's Birthday: Olivia Dutko (8/22), Carl Zbegner (8/22), Denise Meck (8/23), Ephraim Neal (8/25), Lindsey Rivera. **Anniversary:** Catie & Dan Decarlo (8/22)

PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Nadine Breisch, Rosalie Bagenski, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Josie Bissett, Lisa & Scott Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Delores Karas, Antonette Terry, Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Violet Filipi, Catherine, Danny Gobish, Lorraine Pace, Camden Thomas, Peter Holoziak & Family, Marni Bachman & Family, Rose Marie, Helen Gudaitis, Mahaffey Family, George Scott, Evelyn Kosmiski, Joe Sloan, Louis Gianuzzi, Betty Serafin, Matushka Elizabeth, Karen Maier, John and Mary Metz, Bill & Chris, Leigh Remp



What is the Kingdom of God?

By Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko, oca.org

God's gift of eternal life in Christ and the Holy Spirit is the Kingdom of God. Jesus has brought the Kingdom of God to the world through the Spirit in the Church. Spiritual life is life—already now—in the Kingdom of God.

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give alms; provide yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also (Lk 12.32-34).

To live already now in the Kingdom of God is to live in freedom from sin and death in the gracious life of Christ and the Church. A person who has died to sin with Christ in baptism and has been sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit in chrismation and who participates in Christ's Body and Blood in the Eucharist is already a member of the Kingdom of God.

... for through Christ we have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the

whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit (Eph 2.18–22).

The Church is called the Kingdom of God on earth; and the presence and power of the Kingdom is identified with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who abides in the faithful bringing to them the presence and power of God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ.

Thus the Apostle Paul has said, “The Kingdom of God is . . . righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit; he who thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men” (Rom 14.17–18). And Saint Gregory of Nyssa (4th c.) citing the earlier tradition of Christians said simply: “The Kingdom of God is the Holy Spirit. . . . The Kingdom of the Father and the Unction of the Son.” It has always been understood in the spiritual tradition of the Orthodox Church that to the measure with which one is filled with the Spirit of God, to that same measure he is united with Christ and is in communion with the Father, becoming His child and a member of His Kingdom. Thus it is the teaching that the “acquisition of the Holy Spirit” in “seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Mt 6.33) is the sole purpose and content of man’s spiritual life. It is for this, and this alone, that man has been created by God.

Walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other. . . . Now the works of the flesh are plain: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, murder, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. . . . those who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God (Gal 5.16–21).

Why are Orthodox Christian clergy “adorned” in fancy vestments at worship services? Doesn’t this stand in conflict with Christ’s teachings on humility?

The idea of those who preside at public worship services is not unknown in Scripture—read Exodus 28 and 29, for example. As such, in virtually every Christian tradition—Orthodox Christian, Roman Catholic, and much of Protestantism—presiding clergy wear vestments of some type, albeit not of the same “style,” when engaged in leading the faithful in worship. [Sometimes such garb is academic in origin, rather than strictly liturgical; nevertheless, the preacher wearing a doctoral robe does not do so out of pride or self aggrandizement.] So, those who lead public worship are “set apart” by wearing “formal” robes specific to their calling, and not for the purpose of exalting themselves above the so-called “rank and file.”

The purpose here is not to “personally adorn” the clergy or to elevate them “above the common people,” any more than judges who wear black robes or physicians who wear a white jacket are being aggrandized because of their vocations. When discharging their “official duties,” judges and physicians vest themselves accordingly, indicating their “functions,” so to speak. So too clergy, when officiating at liturgical services, wear vestments.

Vestments, obviously, do not resemble “secular” garb, in line with the fact that Orthodox Christian liturgical celebrations are not “secular” gatherings, nor are they designed to resemble them. Liturgy is our experience of and participation in the very Kingdom of God, yet to be fully revealed but already fully present in the life of the Church, her worship, and her sacraments. (*from oca.org*)