



# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ 19th Sun after Pentecost + Sun, October 15th, 2023 + Ven. Euthymius the New, of Thessalonica, Monk of Mt. Athos



## Hymns for Today's Service

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!"

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Father, for thou didst take up the Cross and follow Christ. By so doing, thou taughtest us to disregard the flesh for it passes away; but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal. Therefore thy spirit, venerable Euthymius, rejoices with the angels.

Thy holy martyr Lucian, O Lord, through his sufferings has received an incorruptible crown from Thee, our God. For having Thy strength, he laid low his adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons. Through his intercession, save our souls!

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.

Crossing dry-shod through the storms of life, venerable and divinely wise Euthymius, thou didst mightily drown the bodiless foe in the streams of thy tears; thou didst receive the gift of miracles to heal all sufferings. Unceasingly pray for us all!

We honor thee with hymns of glory, Lucian, the radiant star. First, thou didst become radiant by detachment from the things of this world, then thou wast raised up by thy struggle. Unceasingly pray for us all!

### Please Sing Along!

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

## Epistle Reading - 2 Corinthians 11:31-12:9

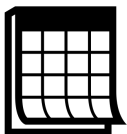
The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands. It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago – whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows – such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows – how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me. And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be

**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!

exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

### **Gospel Reading - Luke 8:5-15**

"A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" Then His disciples asked Him, saying, "What does this parable mean?" And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.' Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.



### **This Week's Schedule** **Doly Trinity Orthodox Church**

#### **THIS WEEKEND**

Saturday, October 14th

10 AM: Friends of the Poor

5 PM: Great Vespers, Confessions

**October 14th, following Great Vespers**

**Parastas for Steven Hutz Jr.**

*Offered by Steven and Jeanne Anne Hutz*

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Sunday, October 15th

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours, 9 AM: Divine Liturgy,  
Coffee Hour, Church School

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#### **THIS WEEK (Oct 18-19)**

*Fr. Innocent will be at the National Clergy Retreat*  
**WED: No Open Church or Akathist this Week**  
**THURS 11 AM: NO BIBLE STUDY - FALL BREAK**

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#### **NEXT WEEKEND**

Saturday, October 21st

5 PM: Great Vespers, Confessions

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Sunday, October 22nd

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours, 9 AM: Divine Liturgy,  
Coffee Hour, Church School

**Parastas for Eva Lisowski**

*Offered by Joann Beck*



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**& Upcoming Parish Events**

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**Parish Council is the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is one week early, November 5th.**

**WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY - FALL BREAK:** We will not have our weekly Thursday Bible Study for the next 3 weeks. The Bible Study will resume on October 26th at 11 AM. Enjoy the break. We will miss our time together!

**CEMETERY CLEAN-UP DAY October 28:** There will be a clean-up day for the Holy Resurrection Cemetery on William St in Plains, scheduled for Saturday October 28 2023, (rain date November 4 2023). The goal is to remove small trees along the fence line, trim back overgrown brush and to generally tidy up the Cemetery grounds. Start time is scheduled for 9:00am to 1:00pm. Items such as pruning shears, chainsaws, weed whackers, hedge trimmers, and rakes would be helpful. Light refreshments will be provided.

**ORTHODOX YOUTH OF NEPA** will host a bonfire and games at the Holy Trinity Pavillion on Sunday, October,

29th from 4-8 PM. We will do a potluck meal. Please RSVP on the signup sheet in the vestibule and comment with what you can bring! We'll need food, drinks, paper goods (plates, forks, spoons, napkins), dessert (maybe s'mores?), and drinks. And if you have any ideas for games or can bring supplies, please let us know. We are also looking for a few volunteers to help with setup and the bonfire. Sign up in the Vestibule.

**Fr. Innocent** will be out of town for a few days this week for the OCA National Clergy Retreat. Please keep me in your prayers and call Paul Tumavitch, our Parish Chair, if anything comes up or you have a need – 570-687-0552.

## HAS GOD BLESSED YOU WITH A GOOD SINGING VOICE?

**THE HOLY TRINITY CHOIR** is seeking new members. If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please call or text Greg Polk at (570)362-2642. Previous choral experience is helpful but not required. All ages are welcome.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

**OCTOBER Birthdays:** Paula Holoviak (10/2), Barry Benczkowski (10/2), Tommy Donlick Jr. (10/5), Brian Benczkowski (10/5), Paul Andrew Tumavitch (10/6), Irene Zimich (10/6), John Zimich (10/11), Jason Stankiewicz (10/18), Amber King (10/20), Sarah Benczkowski (10/22), Rebecca Leonori (10/23), Mary Anya Haugh (10/27), Walter Shedlock (10/28), Marie Talpash (10/28) **Anniversaries:** William & Mary Gurka (10/15), Rebecca & Steve Leonori (10/23)

**This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries:** Jason Stankiewicz (10/18), Amber King (10/20), William & Mary Gurka (10/15)



## Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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### The Sower

*A Homily by Met Anthony Bloom*

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

How familiar, and how simple it seems to us, appears to us today's parable of the seed and of the sower; and yet, how relevant it is to us, and how much more thought we should give to it. We forget the setting itself of the parable, the imagery of the sower and the seed, and we don't see in it an image of Christ, walking along the roads and the paths of Galilee and Judea; and everywhere He went, people came to the roadside because they have heard, as the Blind Man have heard of whom Saint Marc reports, that He was a Teacher, that His words were true, that they had in them a power of life.

And people came, and lined the roads, and lined the streets, and listened. Some were prepared for the message; some have been in an agony of mind, have been asking themselves questions which hitherto no one have been able to answer. But others came, as so many people come now to a preacher, to an evangelist, to a leader of any side, came to see a man of whom one spoke, and to listen to what he had to say. He was not answering any of their questions, He was not meeting any of their needs, except perhaps the desire to see someone that was outstanding, someone unique in his time. They heard the word, but it fell at their ears, they find it beautiful, lovely, true – but it did not go beyond this. They were listening to words, they were not listening to the cry of their own soul that was hungry for words of truth.

And so, when He had passed, they all returned to what was their ordinary, their normal life. They might have gone home and repeated these words, saying, Wasn't it lovely? Did He speak well? – and then they went back to what was life, ordinary life, day-to-day life...

Others, who had come to the roadside, received the message with emotion, it stirred something in their hearts, something in their minds, it answered something in them. And they received it and hugged it to themselves, and returned home; but the moment they

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were no longer by the road, at home, the concerns of home overwhelmed them: there was so much to do, so much to think about, there was so much in life, there was no time to reflect again and again on the words heard, there was no time to sit quietly and to look in imagination at the face they had seen, to rehearse the voice they have heard.

We have another parable about those who have been called to the Bridal Feast of the King: they heard a call, they knew they were called personally – but could they go? The one had bought a field, he was rooted in it, tied to it, a prisoner of it; others have bought five pairs of oxen – they had to try them, they had something to do in life, a vocation, a job, something great – or something simply that matters supremely in a personal way, as the last one: he had taken a bride – how could he spend time for anyone else?

Those are the people who receive the word, who receive it truly, in their heart, but there are so many things that matter – tomorrow will do, or, if we only could reduce the message to something liveable, simple, not to the absoluteness of it!

And then, those who receive the message, like the rich soil that could receive the message, receive a seed and bear fruit. Those people were not simply better people, they probably were not better people; they were people who had a question in their mind and heart, people who had a longing, people for whom their daily life was too narrow, too small, people who were aware that their soul was deep, and vast and could not be filled with the trivialities – or even the noble, the good things of life: they received the message, they took it to heart, deep into them, and they bore fruit because it was answering a need.

Now, we can apply it to ourselves: how many of us listen to the words of the Gospel, listen to the words of preaching, read books that are full of interest and depth, and they store it in their memory, they enjoy it – but that is the end; they can quote it, they can pass it on to others, – but that is all.

And there are so many of us who have received the message with enthusiasm, with passion, knowing that this message is an answer to all there is in us of longing, of hunger, of greatness, indeed; but then, life is so complex, there is so much to do! And in all this doing, in

all this complexity the words is left aside – for another time, for another day, when I will be old enough not to have any concerns: then I can turn back to this glorious moment when life unfolded itself in all its splendour – I keep it in my memory!

What about us, receiving the message and bearing fruit?

But how does this message reach us? I remember a Russian priest saying to me, *вѣѣ* I read the Gospel daily, and I respond to it very seldom. But I read it daily because I never know whether today, or tomorrow, or on another day I will be the barren roadside, or the weeds by the way, or, of a sudden, whether this word will not fall on a small patch in me which is capable of receiving it and bearing fruit.

Isn't that simple, isn't that encouraging? We all are the three things described in the parable of the Gospel; but if we give a chance to God Who speaks, to God, Who passes through our life, to God Who knocks at our heart – from time to time we will receive the message with joy and let go of it; but from time to time it will reach a depth in our heart, a core of our life and be the answer that will change it.

Let us therefore listen, listen to the words of the Gospel day in and day out; listen to the voice of our conscience, listen to what the deepest self says to us about life, about truth, about reality; and from time to time we will have been the good ground that can bear fruit.

This parable, so simple, so clear, if we only apply it, can be a beginning of a new life. Amen.

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## 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.”*

<p><b>Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305</b> <b>Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840</b> <b>Collections last Sunday (10/1): \$2,642</b></p>
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