



# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

Sunday, December 5th, 2021 - 24th Sunday after Holy Pentecost, Ven. Savva the Sanctified



## Hymns for Today

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy, and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy.

By a flood of tears thou didst make the desert fertile, and thy longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance. By the radiance of miracles thou didst illumine the whole universe. Our Father Sabbas, pray to Christ God to save our souls!

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers. Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry: "The Savior has come to those in faith; enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!"

From thy youth thou didst offer thyself to God as a blameless sacrifice, having been dedicated to Him before thy birth, O blessed Sabbas. Thou wast an adornment of the righteous and a praiseworthy citizen of the desert. Therefore, we cry to thee: "Rejoice, O ever-glorious Father!"

## Epistle Reading - Ephesians 2:14-22

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

## Gospel Reading - Luke 17:12-19

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner? And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

**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!

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## *This Week's Schedule*

### **THIS WEEKEND**

**SAT, Dec 4th:** Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions  
**SUN, Dec 5th:** Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM,  
Coffee Hour, Yolka Practice, Parastas, Vespers for St.  
Nicholas Following Coffee Hour

### **SUN December 5th -Parastas**

**In Memory of William & Julia Talpash**

*Offered by Marie Talpash*

**In Memory of the Conklin/ Kennedy Family**

Adam, Bert, Demetrius, Demetrius Jr., Mary, Alexander,  
June, Helen, Irene, Robert, Raymond, Sean

*Offered by Alexanne Conklin*

### **THIS WEEK**

**Nativity Fast Continues**

**MON, Dec 6th:** Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy for  
St. Nicholas the Wonderworker @ 9 AM

**WED, Dec 8th:** Private Prayer 11 AM-1:30 PM

**WED, Dec 8th:** Daily Vespers @ 6 PM, Study @ 6:30 PM

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### **NEXT WEEKEND**

**SAT, Dec 11th:** Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

**SUN, Dec 12th:** Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9  
AM, Coffee Hour, Yolka Practice, Parish Council Meeting  
@ 11:30 AM

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## **Upcoming Parish Events & Announcements**

**DEC 8, THIS WEEK: Vespers & Study Continues -**  
Our Wednesday Night Vespers and Study from  
6:00PM-7:30PM will continue this week. The evening  
will begin with a Daily Vespers that will last about 25  
minutes followed by a 1-hour study on the topic of  
**Freedom & Sin**. What kind of freedom does our faith offer  
us vs. the freedom of the world? This question is  
foundational to our understanding of both the purpose of  
the church and our purpose as humans. Come and  
explore with us!

**2021-2022 Stewardship / Pledge Forms:** The HTOC  
Finance Committee recently sent letters to parish  
members concerning an annual financial pledge /  
commitment for the 2021-2022 Church year. If you have  
not yet done so, please review the materials therein and  
prayerfully discern a pledge to the Parish. The form can  
be completed and left in an envelope at the candle stand  
or returned via mail. If you have not yet received this  
letter you can pick one up at the candle stand.

**Dec. Parish Council Meeting** - Sun, December 12th

**ENDS THIS WEEKEND: Food and Winter Clothing  
Drive for Kutztown University Students:** We are  
beginning our annual drive to help Kutztown University  
Students in need. They need Hats, gloves, coats (new or  
used) / Personal care items such as soap, bodywash,  
toothpaste / canned soups, mac and cheese, cereals,  
granola bars, pasta and sauce. Anything that college kids  
eat. Items can be left in the Narthex (Vestibule). Last date  
to donate will be Sunday, December 5.

**BRING A SOCCER BALL COLLECTION:** Help in a local  
collection to give soccer balls to refugee children recently  
brought to the US through the war in Afghanistan. A  
soccer ball from each family in the Parish would make a  
big difference. The deadline is December 12th. See Paula  
Holoviak if you have any questions.

**NATIVITY POINSETTIA DONATIONS - \$15:** As  
customary, our Nativity Poinsettia Donations will  
purchase flowers to adorn the Church for the Feast of the  
Nativity. Your donations may be made in remembrance  
of, or for the health of, your family and loved ones. The  
names you provide at the time of your donation will  
appear in the Church Bulletin for the Feast of the  
Nativity. Please see the signup sheet in the vestibule and  
give your donation to Mary Ann Kudey. Many thanks and  
may God Bless You for your donation!

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## *Birthdays & Anniversaries*

**December Birthdays:** David Clark (12/1), Helen Gudaitus  
(12/5), Stephen Dutko (12/8), Nina Grymko (12/10),  
Andrew Kondratick (12/11), Lydia Dutko (12/12), Andrew  
Conklin (12/13), Joan Austin (12/18), Christa Talpash  
(12/19), Dcn Lawrence Worlinsky (12/19), Jeri Basarab  
(12/21), Mary Ann Kudey (12/21) Dolores Rilko (12/21),

Kellie Ann DiBattista (12/27), Anessa Cardoni (12/28), Daniel Bisset Jr. (12/31)

**This Week's Birthdays:** Helen Gudaitis (Reposed) (12/5), Stephen Dutko (12/8), Nina Grymko (12/10), Andrew Kondratick (12/11)

**PARISH PRAYER LIST Living:** Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Nadine Breisch, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Josie Bissett, Lisa & Scott Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Delores Karas, Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Violet Filipi, Catherine, Danny Gobish, Lorraine Pace, Camden Thomas, Peter Holoviak & Family, Rose Marie, George Scott, Evelyn Kosmiski, Joe Sloan, Betty Serafin, Matushka Elizabeth, Karen Maier, John Metz, Tim, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Bernie Elko, Delores Voda, Mary Ann Lepa, Melanie Bishop, Eric, Lynn Bankos, Mat. Delores Donlick, Archpriest Michael Lepa, Archpriest Vladimir Fetchko  
**Departed:** Antonette Terry, Rosalie Bagenski, Helen Gudaitis

### UPCOMING FEAST DAYS SERVICE SCHEDULE

#### **St. Nicholas the Wonderworker**

**SUN, Dec 5:** Great Vespers following Coffee hour  
**MON, Dec 6:** 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

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#### **Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

**FRI, Dec 24:** 6:30 PM Compline & Matins w/ Litya  
**SAT, Dec 25:** 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

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#### **Synaxis of the Most Holy Mother of God**

**SUN, Dec 26:** 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

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#### **St. Basil the Great / Circumcision of Our Lord**

**FRI, Dec 31:** 6:30 PM Great Vespers w/ Litya  
**SAT, Jan 1:** 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

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#### **Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

**WED, Jan 5:** 6:30 PM Great Vespers w/ Litya  
**THURS, Jan 6:** 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

## The Healing of the Ten Lepers

By Met. Anthony Bloom



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

The Gospel - all the Gospel is a gift of God to us, and although we are not continuously reminded of the need to be grateful, how can we not respond with gratitude to what the Gospel brings to us? God has so loved the world that He has given His only begotten Son that the world may be saved; and the Son has given Himself freely, in the sovereign freedom of His Divinity to us; no-one has taken His life from Him - these are His own words; He gave His life willingly, freely, that we may live.

And today we have in the Gospel a short example of the way in which we, most of the time, receive the gifts of God. Ten men came, covered with leprosy, condemned to a cruel death by illness, but also rejected ritually by their own people for the impurity of this infectious disease. They came to Him, stood at a distance, because they knew that according to the Jewish Law they had no right even to come near Him to touch Him. And they asked for mercy. And God send them to the priests to bring forth the sign of their gratitude for the healing which they had not received; and they believed, and they went, and they were healed before they reached their goal... We might have expected that they rushed back to fall to the feet of Christ, to touch Him in gratitude - no... Nine of them went their way; it was enough for them to have been healed: it's all they needed of God. One of them, however, turned round, and came to thank the Lord.

Isn't it an image of the way in which so often we also behave? We pray; we ask the Lord for something that matters to us: it may not be live and death, it may just be that we need so much, one thing or another; or that we

don't even need it so much, but that we long so much for it. And then it is given us; and we receive the gift, and we rush into life with this gift in our hearts, this gift in our hands, we rush to life because it is enough for us that our prayer was fulfilled. How seldom it is that we come back, leaving our gift to be used later, but first of all turning to God and saying: What wonder! What is Your love! How great, how compassionate, how humble - that You have responded to my prayer... One out of ten came back to the Lord Jesus Christ: how many of us have ever come immediately, before they took advantage of the gift, to turn to God with a smile, like a child turns and say 'Thank you!', even with a smile, without words, before taking advantage of what is given. And we loose so much at not being grateful; because if we learned to be grateful for the obvious gifts of God, we would gradually discover that we can be grateful for a great deal more, for everything that Providence puts in our way: not only things we rejoice in, not only the wanders of life, but even the challenges of life, the things that claims from us courage, greatness, nobility, the things which we are afraid of. And how often we could overcome vanity by gratitude! Because vanity consists in looking at ourselves, and think: how wonderful we are, forgetting that all that we are, all that we have is a gift of God. If we only, every time we have said the right thing, done the right thing, been worthy of our human quality, human greatness and nobility, and also of the name of the disciples of Christ - if every time we turned to God and said, 'Yes! How wonderful are the words I have spoken, how good is the action I have performed - and everything was of You: the occasion was given by You, o Lord! I was able to perceive the need because You whispered in my heart: Look!... I could understand because I had my mind enlightened by the Gospel! My heart responded because You touched it, and from the heart of stone which I carry in my bosom most of the time it became a heart of flesh full of compassion and of understanding! And You gave me the means of meeting the need, and the joy of meeting this need!..

If we could respond to everything this way, we would discover that life is made into an act of worship and of gratitude.

Let us reflect on this because we are coming within a few weeks, a few days now to a day when our heart should be aflame with gratitude: God has loved us so much as to become one of us; while we were strangers, alien to Him, often inimical to Him, He came, and He gave His life for

us that we may live!.. We must prepare for it: joy, gratitude, faith, openness to God does not happen of a sudden; we must prepare for it. Let us reflect on what is going to happen; the thing that happened nearly 2000 years ago that we shall remember as an actual event now, in a few weeks; and be ready, with a heart tilled, deeply furrowed by faith, by reflection, having thought out all our life, ready to receive the Lord like a shepherd, in the simplicity and purity of our hearts, or like the Wise Men in the deep understanding of wisdom. Amen!

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*That which a man loves, to  
which he turns, that he will  
find. If he loves earthly things,  
he will find earthly things,  
and these earthly things will  
abide in his heart, will  
communicate their earthliness  
to him and will find him; if he  
loves heavenly things, he will  
find heavenly things, and they  
will abide in his heart and  
give him life.*

Righteous John, Wonderworker of Kronstadt

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