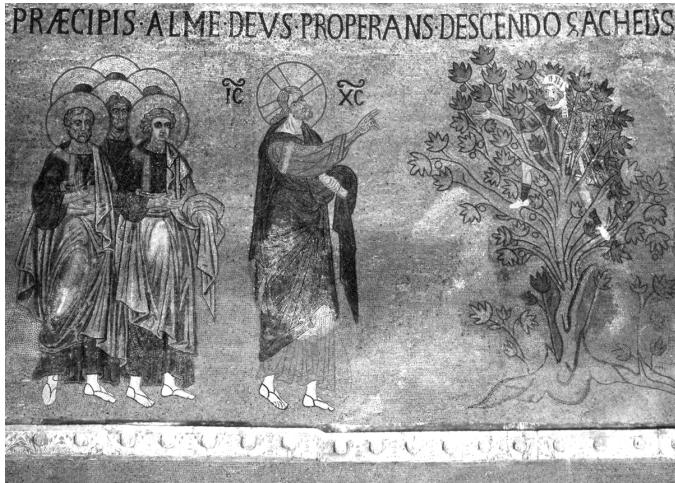




The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ The 37th Sunday after Pentecost + February 18th, 2024 + The Sunday of Zacchaeus, St. Leo the Great, Pope of Rome



Hymns for Today

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: "Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!"

Thou wast the Church's instrument in strengthening the teaching of true doctrine; thou didst shine forth from the West like a sun dispelling the errors of heretics. Righteous Leo, entreat Christ God to grant us His great mercy!

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. He has shattered the gates of hell, and as Master, He has risen on the third day!

Seated upon the throne of the priesthood, glorious Leo, thou didst shut the mouths of the spiritual lions. With divinely inspired teachings of the honored Trinity, thou didst shed the light of the knowledge of God upon thy flock. Therefore, thou art glorified as a divine initiate of the grace of God.

Please Sing Along!

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

Gospel Reading - 1 Timothy 4:9-15

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. These things command and teach. Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

Gospel Reading - Luke 19:1-10

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

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

Saturday, February 17th

5 PM: 9th Hour (4:50), Great Vespers, Confession

Sunday, February 18th

8:10 AM: Resurrectional Matins w/ Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour, Church School,

Parastas following Divine Liturgy in Memory of:

Archpriest John Udics,

Frank Theodore Polk, Stanley Cramton

offered by SD Greg Polk

Stephen & Marilyn Havrilak, Betty Serafin

Offered by Sandy Havrilak

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THIS WEEK

WED 11 AM – 1:30 PM: Private Prayer in Church

6:30 PM: Akathist: “Glory to God for all Things”

THURS 11 AM: Bible Study

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NEXT WEEKEND

Saturday, February 24th

5 PM: 9th Hour (4:50), Great Vespers, Confession

Sunday, February 25th

8:10 AM: Resurrectional Matins w/ Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour, Church School,

Coffee Hour / Monthly Parish Potluck



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

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Parish Council is the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is **TODAY, SUN, March 10th.**

Friends of the Poor is the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be **SAT, March 9th.**

Parish Potlucks are usually the last Sunday of each month. Our next potluck is **SUN, Feb 25th.**

Welcome Holy Resurrection Cathedral: We are blessed to have the faithful of Holy Resurrection Cathedral with us while Fr. Gregory is recovering. Please make yourself completely at home and join us for coffee hour! There will be a basket at the candlestand marked Holy Resurrection for your tithes and donations. May our Lord continue to strengthen Fr. Gregory for a speedy and complete recovery!

2023 Giving Summaries: Please pick up your 2023 giving summaries in the church vestibule/narthex. These giving summaries are intended to provide an accounting of monetary donations given directly to the Church during 2023 without qualification as to tax exemption status. Summaries that are not picked up will be distributed by regular mail. Please contact Deborah Mills by phone or text 570-239-4406, or by email dmilz9@ptd.net with questions. Thank you for your contributions during 2023!

Potato Pancake Fridays fundraiser every Friday through March 15. Please come for lunch or take home for dinner. A sign up sheet and schedule is in the vestibule/narthex for those who can come to help. We appreciate any time you can offer.

Woman's Retreat March 2nd - The Gift of Compassion: *From God to Us —Through Us, to Others.* Topics include: Extending and Receiving Compassion ~Compassion vs. Empathy ~Compassion in Scripture ~The Many “Faces” of Compassion. The retreat is Saturday, March 2nd – 10am-3pm at Holy Trinity Church, 1501 Trinity Ct, Stroudsburg, PA. The featured speaker is Presbyteria Kerry Pappas. Kerry is a priest wife and licensed marriage and family therapist. She works extensively with seminarian and clergy families, primarily through the Center for Family Care Team of the GOA. Kerry's work of over 40 years takes her around the country leading women and couples in interactive exercises and dialogue. This event is open to all women of our diocese and beyond. There is no charge and lunch and snacks will be provided. Please bring a friend and enjoy a day of reflection and fellowship. Please RSVP to Sara Rusk at rusksara21@gmail.com by February 24. Contact Matushka Melanie about carpooling from the church to Stroudsburg.404-308-3275 or melania.neal@gmail.com

2024 HOME BLESSINGS

If you would like to have your house blessed there is still plenty of time! See Fr. Innocent to make an appointment. Fr. Innocent and the family look forward to this joyful time with each one of you! You can prepare for our visit by having an icon, candle, bowl for holy water, and list for living & departed.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

February Birthdays: Mary Gurka (2/1), Cassandra Mahaffey (2/2), Amelia Stankiewicz (2/3), Subdeacon Thomas Donlick (2/5), Sebastian Neal (2/6), Emma Sofrenovic (2/7), Paul Tumavitch (2/9), Mitchell Rivera (2/14), David Mills (2/19), Jeremiah Haugh (2/21), Sandy Serafin (2/23), Alexanne Conklin (2/24), Andrew Rivera (2/28) **Anniversaries:** Brian & Kristi Benczkowski

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries: David Mills (2/19), Jeremiah Haugh (2/21), Sandy Serafin (2/23), Alexanne Conklin (2/24)



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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The Pre-Lenten Season

By Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is itself preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about Zacchaeus the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man and how his life was greatly changed simply because he “sought to see who Jesus was” (Lk 19.3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through lent towards Easter. It is the first movement of salvation.

The following Sunday is that of the Publican and the Pharisee. The focus here is on the two men who went to the Temple to pray—one a pharisee who was a very

decent and righteous man of religion, the other a publican who was a truly sinful tax-collector who was cheating the people. The first, although genuinely righteous, boasted before God and was condemned, according to Christ. The second, although genuinely sinful, begged for mercy, received it, and was justified by God (Lk 18.9). The meditation here is that we have neither the religious piety of the Pharisee nor the repentance of the publican by which alone we can be saved. We are called to see ourselves as we really are in the light of Christ's teaching, and to beg for mercy.

*In the Orthodox Church, Great
Lent is not a season of
morbidity and gloominess. On
the contrary, it is a time of
joyfulness and purification.*

The next Sunday in the preparation for Great Lent is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. Hearing the parable of Christ about God's loving forgiveness, we are called to “come to ourselves” as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves as being “in a far country” far from the Father's house, and to make the movement of return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that the Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only “arise and go,” confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that “home” where we truly belong (Lk 15.11–24).

The next Sunday is called Meatfare Sunday since it is officially the last day before Easter for eating meat. It commemorates Christ's parable of the Last Judgment (Mt 25.31–46). We are reminded this day that it is not enough for us to see Jesus, to see ourselves as we are, and to come home to God as his prodigal sons. We must also be his sons by following Christ, his only-begotten divine Son, and by seeing Christ in every man and by serving Christ through them. Our salvation and final judgment will depend upon our deeds, not merely on our intentions or even on the mercies of God devoid of our own personal cooperation and obedience.

PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Evelyn Kosmiski, Mat. Elizabeth, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Vladimir & Marie Dutko, Tom & Joan Austin, Joan Lello, Barbara Pascoe, Elizabeth Hutz, Melanie Bishop, Delores Voda, David Goobic, David Lezinsky, Michael Yeosock, Fr. Gregory White, Mary Gurka, Mary Ann Kudey, Tom Youngblood, Catherine Gates, John Boyle
Departed: Archpriest Moses Berry, Barbara Kulick, Norman Frank



... for I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink, I was a stranger and you took Me in, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and in prison and you visited Me. For truly I say to you, if you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to Me (Mt 25).

We are saved not merely by prayer and fasting, not by “religious exercises” alone. We are saved by serving Christ through his people, the goal toward which all piety and prayer is ultimately directed.

Finally, on the eve of Great Lent, the day called Cheesefare Sunday and Forgiveness Sunday, we sing of Adam’s exile from paradise. We identify ourselves with Adam, lamenting our loss of the beauty, dignity and delight of our original creation, mourning our corruption in sin. We also hear on this day the Lord’s teaching about fasting and forgiveness, and we enter the season of the fast forgiving one another so that God will forgive us.

If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their

trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses (Mt 6.14–18).



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

Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305
Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840
Collections last Sunday (2/11): \$4,483

**IF YOU BELIEVE WHAT YOU LIKE
 IN THE GOSPEL AND REJECT
 WHAT YOU DO NOT LIKE, IT IS
 NOT THE GOSPEL YOU BELIEVE,
 BUT YOURSELF.**

ST. AUGUSTINE

spirituallygrounded.wordpress.com