



# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

Sunday, February 20th, 2022 - The Sunday of the Prodigal Son - St. Leo, Bishop of Catania in Sicily



## Hymns for Today

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!"

I have recklessly forgotten Thy glory, O Father; and among sinners I have scattered the riches which Thou gavest me. And now I cry to Thee as the Prodigal: "I have sinned before Thee, O merciful Father; receive me as a penitent, and make me as one of Thy hired servants!"

## Gospel Reading - 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

## Gospel Reading - Luke 15:11-32

Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say

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**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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to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry. Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'"

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## *This Week's Schedule*

### **THIS WEEKEND**

**SAT, Feb 19th:** Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions  
**SUN, Feb 20th:** Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour, Church School

### **THIS WEEK**

**WED, Feb 23rd:** Private Prayer 11:00 AM-1:30 PM

### **NEXT WEEKEND**

**SAT, Feb 26th:** Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions  
**SUN, Feb 27th:** Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, **Pancake Breakfast**

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## MEMORIAL DONATIONS

### **In Memory of Betty Serafin**

Judith Lendacky - \$40  
Sherry Huntzinger / Louie Gianuzzi - \$100  
Billy & Mary Gurka - \$15  
Stephen & Jeanie - \$20  
Anna Cardoni - \$50  
Mary Ann Kudey - \$25  
Mary Krill - \$50  
David & Deborah - \$50

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## Parish Events & Announcements

**NEXT WEEK - YOUTH PANCAKE BREAKFAST:** Join us next week - MEATFARE SUNDAY - in support of the Holy Trinity Youth for our annual Pancake Breakfast. Cost is \$10 per meal and includes pancakes, sausage and fruit. See you then!

**ENVELOPES:** If you have not received your box of giving envelopes for 2022 or would like a box, please contact Colleen King or Fr. Innocent.

**2021 GIVING SUMMARIES:** Pick up your 2021 giving summaries in the vestibule. Those that are not picked up will be sent by mail. If you have any questions see Colleen King.

**2022 FUNDRAISING PROJECTS:** Attached to this week's bulletin is a tentative schedule of fundraising activities for this year. As we all know proceeds from these projects help tremendously in supporting many of the maintenance and improvement projects underway throughout the church. Volunteer sign up sheets for a few of the upcoming projects are in the vestibule. Please sign up as soon as possible so that we are able to determine if there will be enough support for these events. Any assistance you can provide will always be appreciated.

**LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH IN OUR COMMUNITY:** Holy Trinity is planning a community service experience for our Wilkes-Barre area youth with **YES**, an Orthodox ministry that focuses on developing young Orthodox leaders. It will take place on a Saturday during Lent. **YES** creates formative opportunities that

equip participants to serve each person as the image of Christ. **YES** offers leadership opportunities for high school and college-aged youth. [Contact Catie DeCarlo for more information.](#)

**MAN OF GOD SHOWING AT CINEMARK MOOSIC MARCH 21ST @ 7 PM:** “Exiled unjustly, convicted without trial, slandered without cause. Man of God depicts the trials and tribulations of Saint Nektarios of Aegina, as he bears the unjust hatred of his enemies while preaching the Word of God.” Join us for this excellent film about one of our own saints. Tickets can be purchased in advance online. More details to come.

**ORTHODOXY 101:** Beginning Saturday March 5th @ 3:30 PM we will begin a course on Orthodox fundamentals for those who are new to the faith, interested in the faith, or would like to renew their interest and learning about the faith. Join us weekly on Saturday’s at 3:30 PM for one hour of learning and discussion beginning March 5th.

**2022 HOME BLESSINGS:** If you would like your home to be blessed and have not yet scheduled a time see Fr. Innocent.

**WEEKLY GIVING UPDATE:** We need your help! Holy Trinity is not currently meeting its monthly expenses. In addition to your much-needed prayers, please consider giving a little extra each week or making an additional donation. Below are our current numbers.

**Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open** - \$ 3,260

**Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open** - \$14,127

**Collections last Sunday (in person & online)** - \$3,388.91

**CHURCH PAINTING LOAN:** If you have not paid your annual 2022 Church Painting Loan Commitment of \$80 please remember to do so. This is the 3rd of 5 annual payments towards paying off the loan.

**2022 COMMITMENT FORM:** If you have not submitted your annual commitment form you may pick-up a form at the candle stand. Submitting your best estimate enables the parish to budget for the year. You will not be held to this number. So far we have only received commitments from 25 of the nearly 100 members.

## *Birthdays & Anniversaries*

**February Birthdays:** Mary Gurka (2/1), Cassandra Mahaffey (2/2), Subdeacon Thomas Donlick (2/2), Sebastian Neal (2/6), 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)

**This Week’s Birthdays:** Jeremiah Haugh (2/21), Sandy Serafin (2/23), Alexanne Conklin (2/24)

**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, Peter Holoviak & Family, Evelyn Kosmiski, Joe Sloan, Matushka Elizabeth, Karen Maier, John Metz, Tim, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Bernie Elko, Delores Voda, Mary Ann Lepa, Eric, Mat. Delores Donlick, Archpriest Vladimir Fetchko, Dorothy Sysak, James Clark, Vasilli (Bill) Talpash **Departed:** Lynn Bankos, Betty Serafin

**It is time at last to recognize the enemy’s deceit and to come to our senses.**

From *The Spiritual Psalter*, by St. Ephraim the Syrian

Take an interest, at last, in your salvation, O sinner. Seclude yourself, collect your thoughts and say to yourself: how much time have you spent feeding the lusts of your flesh and imagination, and what benefit has it brought you; what have you attained by doing this? Alas, my soul, what a state we have reached, what disorder!

Look—everyone around me is adorned with virtues and truly fears God; but I alone walk in darkness. Early in the morning do I repent of my deeds, yet a short while later I commit even worse errors. The Lord has given me strength and health and lo! I take this for granted and incur the wrath of my Creator.



Why art thou so apathetic, O my soul? Why art thou so careless? After all, thou canst not stay here forever. When the end comes, the Lord will send His angel to get thee and thou wilt have to leave this place whether thou so want or not. What then?

Acknowledge at last your extreme wretchedness, O man, and stop contradicting Him Who created you and opposing His commands. Boldly say to the enemy who seduces you:

You, O devil, made me an object of shame for angels and men when I took your irreverent advice. You inspired me to think: for once I will satisfy my craving and lo! this small act became for me a great abyss and I gave myself up to your shameful desires. The water found a small crack and made of it a big crevice.

You have clouded my mind with impure thoughts and hurled me from sin to sin. You have annihilated my restraint on the pretext of bodily infirmity. You have alienated me from prayer and vigilance. You have implanted in me love for money, excusing this with the approaching long years of old age. You have dried up my tears. You have hardened my heart. You have made me stray from obedience to Christ. You have multiplied my distractions. You have made me insubordinate. I have reached the point where I fail to labor over needful things and occupy myself with vain endeavors instead. You have

taught me envy and slander. You have made me haughty, irritable and wrathful. You have taught me gluttony, drunkenness and sensuality. You have trained my thoughts to scatter while I read and sing psalms; thus I pray and do not know for what; I read psalms and meanwhile I surrender my thoughts to unrestrained wanderings.

Having thus exposed the wiles of the enemy, tell him with conviction: I have had enough of you, O devil. And leave the evil one and join yourself to the man-befriending God. Are you wounded? Despair not. Have you fallen? Get up and say bravely: now I have begun. Fall down before your merciful Master and confess your sins.

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*Why art thou so apathetic, O my soul? Why art thou so careless? After all, thou canst not stay here forever. When the end comes, the Lord will send His angel to get thee and thou wilt have to leave this place whether thou so want or not. What then?*

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But before you say anything He will already know what you intend to say. Before you open your lips, He will see what is in your heart. You will not be able to say, "I have sinned," before you see Him stretch forth His hands to receive and embrace you.

Approach with faith and He will cleanse you straightway as He cleansed the leper, lift you from your bed as He lifted the paralytic, and raise you from the dead as He raised Lazarus.