



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen! + Sunday of THE PARALYTIC + Sun, May 7th, 2023 + Repose of St. Alex Toth



Hymns for Today's Service

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. He has trampled down death by death. He has become the first born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy.

O righteous Father Alexis, our heavenly intercessor and teacher, divine adornment of the Church of Christ, entreat the Master of All to strengthen the Orthodox Faith in America, to grant peace to the world and to our souls great mercy!

Let us, the faithful, praise the Priest Alexis, a bright beacon of Orthodoxy in America, a model of patience and humility, a worthy shepherd of the flock of Christ! He called back sheep who had been led astray and brought them by his preaching to the Heavenly Kingdom.

By Thy divine intercession, O Lord, as Thou didst raise up the Paralytic of old, so raise up my soul, paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts; so that being saved I may sing to Thee: "Glory to Thy power, O compassionate Christ!"

Please Sing Along!

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

Epistle Reading - Acts 9:32-42

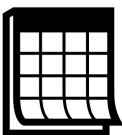
Now it came to pass, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed." Then he arose immediately. So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord. At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes,

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!

and when she saw Peter she sat up. Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

Gospel Reading - John 5:1-15

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.



This Week's Schedule Doly TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

+++

THIS WEEKEND - Sunday of the Paralytic

Saturday, May 6th

5 PM: Great Vespers & Confessions

Sunday, May 7th

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours, 9 AM: Divine Liturgy

Parastas for Michael Polk, offered by SD Greg Polk

Coffee Hour, Church School, Bazaar Meeting

+++

THIS WEEK

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

6:30 PM: Akathist Service

+++

NEXT WEEKEND - Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

Saturday, May 13th

5 PM: Great Vespers & Confessions

Sunday, May 14th

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours, 9 AM: Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour, Church School



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

+++

TODAY - BAZAAR COMMITTEE MEETING: Anyone on the Bazaar Committee and/or anyone interested in helping with the Bazaar please come to today's meeting during coffee hour.

NEXT WEEKEND - PARISH GROUNDS MAINTENANCE DAY, MAY 13

- Dear Parish Members. Please plan to come to our spring parish maintenance day, this coming Saturday, May 13th, 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM. Bring lawn tools, gloves, rakes, shovels, and wheel barrows (if you have one) etc. We will be cleaning up around the church and on the hill. Any questions please see Steve Dutko or Paul Tumavitch. Please offer whatever time you can to help keep up YOUR church property.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - May 21st @ 11:30 AM

ELECTION DAY FOOD DAY: May 16; 9AM - 6PM or until food is gone. Soups - Cabbage & Kielbasa Soup or Piggie Soup. Bowl (12oz) - \$6; Quart (32oz) - \$13. Porchetta Sandwiches- \$8 each. **Volunteer sign-up sheets in the vestibule**

NEXT PEROGIE PROJECT MAY 19/20:

May 19 & 20, Fri & Sat: Work Sch: Fri (1 pm-4 pm), Sat (8 am-3 pm). Volunteer sign-up sheet and perogie order sheets are in the vestibule. Volunteers are needed to make the project a success. Perogies: \$13 a dz., 5dz. Limit. Preorder call 570-822-5975, May 15 - 18, (10:am-4:00 pm). Pick up date: May 20 (Sat) (1:pm-3:00 pm)

+ MAY COMMUNITY DAY + Board Games, Snacks, Fun



Saturday, May 20th, 1 PM-5 PM

Join us monthly downstairs in the Church Hall for games, snacks, fellowship and fun followed by Great Vespers at 5 PM. Bring a snack!

EVERYONE is Welcome

Birthdays & Anniversaries

May Birthdays: Joann Salazar (5/3), Alexandria Rubino (5/7), Jeremy Haugh (5/18), Paul Meck (5/18), Becky Leonori (5/20), Zach Harvey (5/24), Jack Willis (5/24), Elaine Benczkowski (5/26), Eva King (5/30), Martha Tumavitch (5/30) **Anniversaries:** Matthew & Aimee Austin (5/15)

This Week's Birthdays: Alexandria Rubino (5/7)



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

+++

Sunday of the Paralytic

Many miracles in the Old Testament involve water. To name but a few, the water of the Nile turned to blood after Moses lifted his rod and struck the water before Pharaoh and His servants (Exodus 7:20). Not only was the Nile turned to blood, but also "their rivers, their canals, their ponds, and all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone" (Exodus 7:19).

In chapter 14 of Exodus, Moses divided the waters of the Red Sea, and the Hebrews passed over as if on dry land. When they were safely across, the waters came together, and their Egyptian pursuers were drowned.

On their forty year journey to the Promised Land, the Hebrews camped at Rephidem, but there was no water for them to drink. The people murmured against Moses, asking him why he had led them out of Egypt. God told Moses to strike the rock at Horeb. Then water came out of it so that everyone could drink (Exodus 17:6).

In Judges 6:36-40 we read about Gideon and the dew on the fleece. When Gideon squeezed the fleece, there was enough to fill a bowl with water.

On the Fourth Sunday of Pascha, the Church remembers the man who lay paralyzed at the Sheep Pool in Jerusalem for thirty-eight years, waiting for someone to put him into the pool. The first person to enter the pool after an Angel troubled the water would be healed of his infirmities, but someone always entered the pool before him. Seeing the man, the Lord felt compassion for him and healed him.

The Lord healed the paralytic during the days of the Passover, when He had gone to Jerusalem for the Feast, and He remained there teaching and working miracles. According to Saint John the Theologian, this miracle took place on the Sabbath.

Like some Old Testament miracles, many of Christ's miracles also involved water, and they prefigure the Church's Baptism, which cleanses us of every sin. In the Sheep Pool, once a year, only one person was healed, but Christ saves endless multitudes by divine Baptism. Sometimes, as in the case of Saint Vladimir (July 15), Baptism can also heal our bodily infirmities.

In the Canon for the Paralytic, the Angel who stirred the water in the Sheep Pool is identified as the Archangel Michael. Some of the Troparia call him "Leader of the Angels," and "Supreme Commander" (Ode 1). In Ode 3 we ask him to "protect us from falling into the passions of life." In Ode 6, we ask Saint Michael to guide us on the paths of life." In Ode 8, we ask him to pray with all the Bodiless Hosts, that we may be granted deliverance from our offenses, correction of our life, and the enjoyment of eternal blessings.

PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Holoviak Family, Evelyn Kosmiski, Mat. Elizabeth, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Mary Ann Lepa, Mat. Delores Donlick, Vladimir & Marie Dutko, Alan, Cathy & Paul, Archpriest Vladimir, Tom & Joan Austin, Lilly, David, Elizabeth, George Krill, Lydia, Melanie Bishop, Hannah Selick, Naren Mansharamani, Dave Hamilton, Kathy & Michael Bufalino, John C. Metz **Departed:** John Zoranski

As we remember the paralytic, let us ask Christ to "raise up our souls, paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts" (Kontakion of the paralytic).

Life of St. Alexis Toth of Wilkes-Barre

Confessor and Defender of Orthodoxy



Alexis Toth was born into a poor Carpatho-Russian family on March 18, 1854, in Austro-Hungary. The Toth family was Eastern Rite Catholic in the Uniate Church. His father and brother were priests, and his uncle was the Bishop of Presov. Alexis received an excellent education and spoke several languages, including Russian, Greek, Latin, and German.

Alexis was ordained priest on April 18, 1878. Soon after, his wife Rosalie died, followed by their only child, an infant daughter. In May, 1879, Fr. Alexis was appointed secretary to the Bishop of Presov. He was placed in directorship of an orphanage there, as well as given teaching duties at Presov Seminary. In 1889, Fr. Alexis and seven other Uniate priests arrived in the USA for

mission work. He was assigned to St. Mary's Parish in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

When he presented himself to the local Roman Catholic authority, Archbishop John Ireland, he was greeted with hostility, and refused recognition. This was against the terms of agreement of the Unia. The American Catholic bishops wanted Rome to recall the ten Uniate priests then serving in American parishes, because they feared the Uniates would undermine the "Americanization" of European immigrants by fostering their ethnic parishes and non-Latin rites. Uniate Bishops in Europe did not respond to the priests' pleas for help.

CONFESSOR AND DEFENDER OF ORTHODOXY

Fr. Toth's parishioners urged him to contact the Russian Orthodox Bishop Vladimir (America at that time was under the Russian Bishop's omophor). Bishop Vladimir subsequently received Fr. Toth and 361 of his parishioners into the Orthodox Church, the Church of their ancestors. In 1892, the Holy Synod of Russia recognized and accepted the parish into the Diocese of Alaska and the Aleutians. However, there was much turmoil in the new parish, and Fr. Alexis went to work as a baker to sustain himself.

Eventually, Bishops Vladimir, Nicholas, St. Tikhon and Platon recognized Fr. Toth's special gifts, and sent him forth to preach and teach wherever there were people of Slavic heritage. Fr. Alexis visited many Uniate parishes, traveling by horse and buggy, explaining the differences between Orthodoxy, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, and Uniatism. He was instrumental in the return of 17 Carpatho-Russian and Galician Uniate parishes in America to Holy Orthodoxy, and also started 15-20 new parishes. Fr. Alexis' work extended beyond education in the faith. He also undertook the cause of miners' widows and orphans, since there was no welfare or insurance. He organized an insurance lodge in 1895, which is still headquartered in Wilkes-Barre.

Fr. Alexis received a jeweled miter from the Holy Synod, as well as the Order of St. Vladimir and the Order of Saint Anna from Czar Nicholas II. In 1907, he declined an episcopal office due to his deteriorating health. Fr. Alexis fell asleep in the Lord on May 7, 1909. He was canonized in 1994, and his holy relics rest at St. Tikhon's Seminary in South Canaan, Pennsylvania.
