



# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ 16th Sun after Pentecost + Sun, September 24th, 2023 + Holy New Martyrs of Alaska, Juvenaly & Peter the Aleut



## Hymns for Today's Service

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.

Today Alaska rejoices and America celebrates, for the New World has been sanctified by martyrdom. Kodiak echoes with songs of thanksgiving, Iliamna and Kenai observe the festival of faith. The apostle and martyr Juvenaly is glorified, and Peter the Aleut is exalted by his voluntary sacrifice. In their devotion and love for the Lord they willingly endured persecution and death for the truth. // Now in the kingdom of heaven they intercede for 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!”

Today Valaam joins Alaska in celebrating this joyous feast, as her spiritual son Juvenaly embraces the New-Martyr Peter with love. Together they suffered for the Lord in America and united the Old World with the New by their voluntary sacrifice. // Now forever they stand before the King of glory and intercede for our souls.

### 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 6:1-10

We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard You, and in the day of salvation I have helped You.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

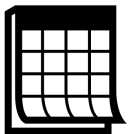
**DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS:** A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive the Holy Sacrament through prayer and fasting. If you have questions please let us know!

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## Gospel Reading – Luke 5:1-11

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

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## This Week's Schedule

### Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

#### THIS WEEKEND

Saturday, September 23rd

5 PM: Great Vespers, Confessions

Sunday, September 24th

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours, 9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Special Parish Meeting, Parish Potluck

### Special Parish Meeting – Sept 24th

**All Members are requested to attend**

**Approval of changes to the Bylaws** (enclosed)

Immediately following Divine Liturgy

PLUS, Parish Potluck – Please bring a dish to share

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#### THIS WEEK

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

WED 6:30 PM: Akathist: *Mother of God, Healer of Cancer*

THURS 11 AM: Bible Study

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#### NEXT WEEKEND – Protection of the Theotokos

Saturday, September 30th

5 PM: Great Vespers, Confessions

Sunday, October 1st

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

Oct 1st, Parastas for William & Julia Talpash

*Offered by Marie Talpash & Family*

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

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### 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

**September Birthdays:** Eva Nealon, (9/1), Jason King (9/1), Marianne Haugh (9/3), William Gurka (9/8), Vladimir Dutko (9/13), Kaleb Dutko (9/19), Tom Michalski (9/19), Brittany Marie Willis (9/20), Irene Kazmierowicz (9/27), Stephen Hutz (9/29), Alekzandria Dutko (9/30) **September Anniversaries:** Jason & Coleen King (9/5), Dave & Diane Welgus (9/6), Martha & Paul Tumavitch (9/17)

**This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries:** Irene Kazmierowicz (9/27), Stephen Hutz (9/29), Alekzandria Dutko (9/30)

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## Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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### The Sacraments *What is Marriage in the Orthodox Church?*

*By Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko*

Marriage was not invented or instituted by Christ. The Lord, however, gave a very specific meaning and significance to human marriage. Following the Old Testament Law, but going beyond its formal precepts in His messianic perfection, Jesus taught the uniqueness of human marriage as the most perfect natural expression of God's love for men, and of his own love for the Church.

According to Christ, in order for the love of a man and woman to be that which God has: perfectly created it to be, it must be unique, indestructible, unending and divine. The Lord himself has not only given this teaching, but he also gives the power to fulfill it in the sacrament of Christian marriage in the Church.

In the sacrament of marriage, a man and a woman are given the possibility to become one spirit and one flesh in a way which no human love can provide by itself. In Christian marriage the Holy Spirit is given so that what is begun on earth does not "part in death" but is fulfilled and continues most perfectly in the Kingdom of God.

For centuries there was no particular ritual for marriage in the Church. The two Christians expressed their mutual love in the Church and received the blessing of God upon their union which was sealed in the holy eucharist of Christ. Through the Church's formal recognition of the couple's unity, and its incorporation into the Body of Christ, the marriage became Christian; that is, it became the created image of the divine love of God which is eternal, unique, indivisible and unending.

When a special ritual was developed in the Church for the sacrament of marriage, it was patterned after the sacrament of baptism-chrismation. The couple is addressed in a way similar to that of the individual in baptism. They confess their faith and their love of God. They are led into the Church in procession.

They are prayed over and blessed. They listen to God's Word. They are crowned with the crowns of God's glory to be his children and witnesses (martyrs) in this world, and heirs of the everlasting life of his Kingdom. They fulfill their marriage, as all sacraments are fulfilled, by their reception together of holy communion in the Church.

There is no "legalism" in the Orthodox sacrament of marriage. It is not a juridical contract. It contains no vows or oaths. It is, in essence, the "baptizing and confirming" of human love in God by Christ in the Holy Spirit. It is the deification of human love in the divine perfection and unity of the eternal Kingdom of God as revealed and given to man in the Church.

The Christian sacrament of marriage is obviously available only to those who belong to the Church; that is, only for baptized communicants. This remains the strict teaching and practice of the Orthodox Church today. Because of the tragedy of Christian disunity, however, an Orthodox may be married in the Church with a baptized non-Orthodox Christian on the condition that both members of the marriage sincerely work and pray for their full unity in Christ, without any coercion or forceful domination by either one over the other. An Orthodox Christian who enters the married state with a non-Orthodox Christian must have the sacramental prayers and blessings of the Church in order to remain a member of the Orthodox Church and a participant in the sacrament of holy communion.

According to the Orthodox teaching, only one marriage can contain the perfect meaning and significance which Christ has given to this reality. Thus, the Orthodox Christian tradition encourages widows and widowers to remain faithful to their spouses who are dead to this world but alive in Christ. The Orthodox tradition also, by the same principle, considers temporary "living together," casual sexual relations, sexual relations with many different people, sexual relations between members of the same sex, and the breakdown of marriages in separation and divorce, all as contrary to the human perfection revealed by God in Christ. Through penance, however, and with the sincere confession of sins and the genuine promise of a good life together, the Orthodox Church does have a service of second marriage for those who have not been able to fulfill the ideal conditions of marriage as taught by Christ. It is the practice of the Church as well not to exclude members of

second marriages from the sacrament of holy communion if they desire sincerely to be in eucharistic fellowship with God, and if they fulfill all other conditions for participation in the life of the Church.

Because of the realization of the need for Christ in every aspect of human life, and because, as well, it is the firm Christian conviction that nothing should, or even can, be done perfectly without Christ or without his presence and power in the Church by the Holy Spirit, two Christians cannot begin to live together and to share each other's life in total unity—spiritually, physically, intellectually, socially, economically—without first placing that unity into the eternity of the Kingdom of God through the sacrament of marriage in the Church.

According to the Orthodox teaching as expressed in the sacramental rite of marriage, the creation of children, and the care and love for them within the context of the family, is the normal fulfillment of the love of a man and woman in Christ. In this way, marriage is the human expression of the creative and caring love of God, the perfect Love of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity which overflows in the creation and care for the world.

This conviction that human love, imitative of divine love, should overflow itself in the creation and care for others does not mean that the procreation of children is in itself the sole purpose of marriage and the unique and exclusive justification and legitimization of its existence. Neither does it mean that a childless couple cannot live a truly Christian life together. It does mean, however, that the conscious choice by a married couple not to have a family for reasons of personal comfort and accommodation, the desire for luxury and freedom, the fear of responsibility, the refusal of sharing material possessions, the hatred of children, etc., is not Christian, and can in no way be considered as consonant with the biblical, moral and sacramental teachings and experience of the Orthodox Church about the meaning of life, love and marriage.

In light of the perspective offered above, the control of the conception of children in marriage is a very delicate matter, discouraged in principle and considered as perhaps possible only with the most careful examination of conscience, prayer and pastoral guidance.

The abortion of a child already conceived is strictly forbidden in the Orthodox Church, and cannot be

justified in any way, except perhaps with the greatest moral risk and with the most serious penitence in the most extreme cases such as that of irreparable damage to the mother or her probable death in the act of childbirth. In such extreme situations, the mother alone must take upon herself the decision, and all must be prepared to stand before God for the action, asking His divine mercy.

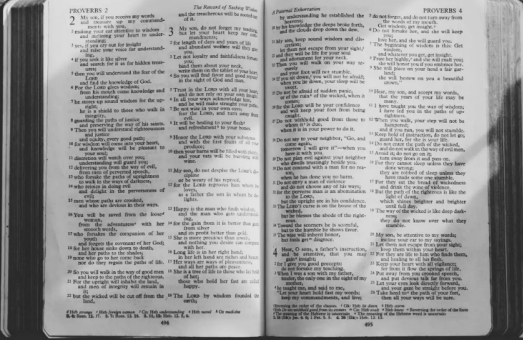
# The Treasury

*"... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."*

**Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305**  
**Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840**  
**Collections last Sunday (9/17): \$1,491**

Please join us for our weekly

# BIBLE STUDY



**Thursdays, 11 AM - Noon**  
**Bring a Bible. Everyone is Welcome.**  
Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, 401 East Main Street - Downstairs in the Church