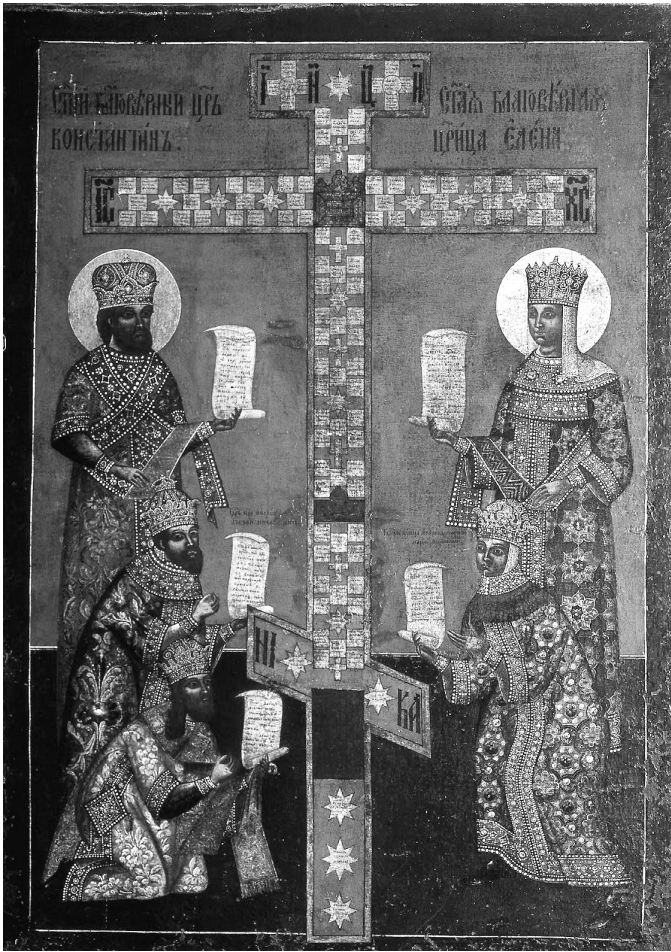




The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

The Sunday of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross + March 15th, 2026 + The 3rd Sunday of Great Lent



Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross. The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for Thou, O my Savior, hast come and cried to those in hell: "Enter again into Paradise!"

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection we glorify.

Please Sing Along!

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

Epistle Reading: Hebrews 4:14-5:6

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek";

Gospel Reading: Mark 8:34-9:1

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it,

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.

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance! Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation!

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient tradition 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. Speak w/ Fr. Innocent if you would like to learn more!

but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."



This Week's Schedule

DOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

THIS WEEKEND - Saturday, March 14th

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Friends of the Poor
Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

Sunday, March 15th - Sunday of the Precious Cross

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Church School, Coffee Hour

TODAY - PARISH SPECIAL MEETING

immediately following Divine Liturgy

TODAY - PARASTAS/MEMORIAL SERVICE

In Memory of Michael Yeosock on the anniv. of his repose
Offered by Patricia and David Yeosock
In Memory of Nancy Valletta, Charles & Elizabeth Rovinski
Offered by Clement Valletta
All are welcome to bring names of your departed loved ones to the service for remembrance.

TODAY - Lenten Adult Ed Series @ 11:30 AM

Join us at Coffee Hour for a 3-part series beginning March 15th on Saints & Icons w/ Iconographer Susan Shiposky.
Presentations will last approx. 30-mins

TODAY Orthodoxy 101 @ Noon

Upstairs in the Church (Nave)
Note New Day & Time

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Mission Vespers @ 4 PM, St. Michael's in Jermyn, PA

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THIS WEEK

THIS WEEK - 4th Week of Great Lent

Tues @ 4:00 PM: Small Compline
Wed @ 10:00 AM: Bible Study (Study of Passion Week)

Wed @ 11-1:00: Open Church

Wed @ 6:00 PM: Presanctified Divine Liturgy

w/ Lenten Potluck - Welcome

St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Church

Fri @ 6:30 PM: Akathist Hymn w/ Lity for departed

Sat @ 9 AM: Divine Liturgy

NEXT WEEKEND - Saturday, March 21st

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM
Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

Sunday, March 22nd - St. John of the Ladder

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Church School, Coffee Hour

Lenten Adult Ed Series @ 11:30 AM

Join us at Coffee Hour for a 3-part series beginning March 15th on Saints & Icons w/ Iconographer Susan Shiposky.
Presentations will last approx. 30-mins

Orthodoxy 101 @ Noon

Upstairs in the Church (Nave)
Note New Day & Time

Today - Parish Special Meeting

A Parish Special Meeting is being called for Sunday, March 15th. The meeting will be held immediately following Divine Liturgy. The purpose of the meeting is to vote to accept / approve a newly submitted nominee for the position of Treasurer. We currently have one nominee. Additional nominations will be considered thru Sat, March 14th. See Andy Kondratick or Fr. Innocent. Our current Treasurer is retiring from the position. We are so grateful to Paula for her hard work and dedication to the church!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS

+++ Weekly / Monthly +++

Bible Study Wednesdays at 10 AM. We are reading through the Epistle to the Romans with discussions.

NEW DAY & TIME - ORTHODOXY 101 Sundays @ Noon. Orthodoxy 101 is for visitors, inquirers, catechumens or anyone interested in learning more about the foundations of our faith.

Parish Potlucks are usually the last Sunday of each month. Our next potluck is **Sun, March 29th**

Friends of the Poor is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next FOP is **Saturday, March 14th**

Holy Trinity Parish Council is usually the second Sunday of each month. The next Parish Council is **Sunday, March 8th**

Great Lent Mission Vespers Schedule:

Sunday of the Cross (March 15 @ 4 PM)

- St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Jermyn PA

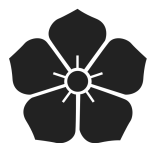
Sunday of Mary of Egypt (March 29 @ 4 PM)

- St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Olyphant PA

Palm Sunday Willow Watch! Please be on watch for Pussy Willows in preparation for Palm Sunday! Anyone willing to harvest Pussy Willows from your yard or community area, when they are ready to be cut, can bring them to the church before Palm Sunday. Thanks so much in advance for sharing your willow harvest to enhance our Lenten journey to Palm Sunday and Great and Holy Pascha!

April 4th, Lazarus Saturday: Parish Clean up, Willow and Palm Bundling for Palm Sunday!

Calling the HTOC Community! Lazarus Saturday we will conduct our annual Holy Week & Pascha Parish Cleanup detail immediately following Divine Liturgy. Please come and offer whatever amount of time you have! We'll also be bundling palms and pussy willows which will be blessed Palm Sunday morning before the start of Divine Liturgy. It's a beautiful offering - The blessed bundles you create will be given to all to hold during Liturgy, reaffirming our union with Christ and readiness to follow him. These blessed bundles are traditionally brought home and placed in our icon corners, often lasting for years! To our "bundlers": Please bring garden clippers if you have them. Contact Alexanne Conklin with any questions and thank you everyone for your help!



LENTEN & PASCHAL FLOWER DONATIONS

Donations towards adorning the church this Lenten season and Pascha are being collected so that our parish will be beautifully adorned for all of the feasts. General donations for flowers during lent are being accepted and will be used for the Feast of the Cross (flowers will adorn the cross), Palm Sunday and Holy Week icons. Donations may be left at the candle stand, attention Deborah Mills. Please write

"Flowers for Lent" in the memo. We will also continue our tradition of **Paschal Flower Donations** in memory and for the health of loved ones. We will adorn the grave of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on Good Friday with fresh Spring flowers as a reflection of our love. These flowers will also adorn the Church on Holy Pascha and throughout Bright Week. On Saint Thomas Sunday, those who donated flowers will be welcome to bring these flowers home to loved ones and shut-ins to brighten their day. If you would like to honor a loved one by making a donation for Holy Pascha flowers "In Memory of" or "For the Health of" a loved one, please sign up in the Church Vestibule/Narthex. Please leave donations at the candle stand or mail them to the Church. The names of your loved ones will be listed in the Holy Pascha Church Bulletin and remembered in prayer. If you wish to have your offering listed in the Holy Pascha Bulletin, your loved ones name(s) and donation must be received by Palm Sunday.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

March Birthdays: Alex Reznec (3/2), Emma Lynn DiBatista (3/3), Abby Harvey (3/4), Lisa Marie Harvey (3/7), Isabela Sofrenovic (3/9), Dara Soljaga (3/11), Vera Kraynanski (3/11), Michael Polk (3/12) Nadine Breisch (3/13), Vera Hoats (3/13), Sergei Kapral Jr. (3/17), Rdr. Gregory Kurtz (3/17), Mat. Victoria Kapral (3/21), Joshua Leonori (3/22), Nina Soto (3/25), Jacob Zbegner (3/27) Gerry Stankiewicz (3/27), Jean Ann Hutz (3/31) Delores Voda (3/31)

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries: Sergei Kapral Jr. (3/17), Rdr. Gregory Kurtz (3/17), Mat. Victoria Kapral (3/21)



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross

from goarch.org

On the Third Sunday of Great and Holy Lent, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Services include a special veneration of the Cross, which prepares the faithful

PARISH PRAYER LIST // Homebound: Evelyn, Vladimir, Jeri, David, Paul, Archpriest Theodore, Mat. Elizabeth, Mary, Patricia, Barbara, Jeri, Joan, Irene, Alice, Sylvia, Paul // **Sick & Suffering:** Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Elizabeth Hutz, Mary Hutz, David Lezinsky, Tom Vaskalis, Tom O'Brian, David, Delores Tressa, Pearl Tutko, Marie Dutko, Elaine & Forrest Hanson, Alexandra, Jody, Michael Noice, Paul Loftus, Santo, Susan Shuposki, Dn Jerimiah, William, Alan, Tim, Ann, Paul, Ruth, Bill, Linda, Betty, Jim, George, Ali, Athansios // **Recently Departed:** Eva, Jonathon // **Pray for our Catechumens:** Tom, Gail, Jaqueline, DeJare, Eric, John, Adrienne, Michelle, Jesse, Katie, Lisa, // **Inquirers:** Aaric, Tyler, Dom, David, Steve, Ashley, Jessica

for the commemoration of the Crucifixion during Holy Week.

The commemoration and ceremonies of the Third Sunday of Lent are closely parallel to the feasts of the Veneration of the Cross (September 14) and the Procession of the Cross (August 1). Not only does the Sunday of the Holy Cross prepare us for commemoration of the Crucifixion, but it also reminds us that the whole of Lent is a period when we are crucified with Christ.

As we have “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Galatians 5:24), and will have mortified ourselves during these forty days of the Fast, the precious and life-giving Cross is now placed before us to refresh our souls and encourage us who may be filled with a sense of bitterness, resentment, and depression. The Cross reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and by presenting to us His example, it encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice, being refreshed, assured, and comforted. In other words, we must experience what the Lord experienced during His Passion - being humiliated in a shameful manner. The Cross teaches us that through pain and suffering we shall see the fulfillment of our hopes: the heavenly inheritance and eternal glory.

As they who walk on a long and hard way and are bowed down by fatigue find great relief and strengthening under the cool shade of a leafy tree, so do we find comfort, refreshment, and rejuvenation under the Life-giving Cross, which our Fathers “planted” on this Sunday. Thus, we are fortified and enabled to continue our Lenten journey with a light step, rested and encouraged.

Or, as before the arrival of the king, his royal standards, trophies, and emblems of victory come in procession and then the king himself appears in a triumphant parade, jubilant and rejoicing in his victory and filling those under him with joy, so does the Feast of the Cross precede the coming of our King, Jesus Christ. It warns us that He is about to proclaim His victory over death and appear to us in the glory of the Resurrection. His Life-Giving Cross is His royal scepter, and by venerating it we are filled with joy, rendering Him glory. Therefore, we become ready to welcome our King, who shall manifestly triumph over the powers of darkness.

The present feast has been placed in the middle of Great Lent for another reason. The Fast can be likened to the spring of Marah whose waters the children of Israel

encountered in the wilderness. This water was undrinkable due to its bitterness but became sweet when the Holy Prophet Moses dipped the wood into its depth. Likewise, the wood of the Cross sweetens the days of the Fast, which are bitter and often grievous because of our tears. Yet Christ comforts us during our course through the desert of the Fast, guiding and leading us by His hand to the spiritual Jerusalem on high by the power of His Resurrection. Moreover, as the Holy Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is placed in the middle of the Fast, as the ancient tree of life was placed in the middle of the garden of Eden. By this, our Holy Fathers wished to remind us of Adam’s gluttony as well as the fact that through this Tree has condemnation been abolished. Therefore, if we bind ourselves to the Holy Cross, we shall never encounter death but shall inherit life eternal.

The Cross reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and by presenting to us His example, it encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice, being refreshed, assured, and comforted.



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

<p>Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305 Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840 Last Week’s Collection (3/8/26) : \$6,535 Potato Pancake Sale: \$2,000</p>

ATTENTION: Please, No Parking or Driving on the Grass: It’s that time of year again when the ground is especially soft. Our maintenance and grounds team asks that we all please refrain from parking or driving on the grass as it is easily damaged. We also do not want anyone to get stuck. Thank you!
