



# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

November 23rd, 2025 + 24th Sunday after Pentecost + Afterfeast of the Entry Into the Temple. Great Prince Alexander Nevsky.



Holy thunder, spiritual trumpet, nurse of the faithful and axe striking down heresy, O hierarch Amphilochius, great and well-pleasing servant of the Trinity, as thou standest forever with the Angels, unceasingly pray for us all!

The most pure Temple of the Savior; the precious Chamber and Virgin; the sacred Treasure of the glory of God, is presented today to the house of the Lord. She brings with her the grace of the Spirit, therefore, the angels of God praise her: "Truly this woman is the abode of Heaven!"

## Please Sing Along!

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

## Hymns for This Week

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 is the prelude of the good will of God, of the preaching of the salvation of mankind. The Virgin appears in the Temple of God, in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all. Let us rejoice and sing to her: "Rejoice, O Fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation!"

O God of our Fathers, always act with kindness towards us; take not Thy mercy from us, but guide our lives in peace through the prayers of the hierarchs Gregory and Amphilochius!

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!"

## Epistle Reading - Ephesians 2:14-22

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

## Gospel Reading - Luke 12:16-21

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to

**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!

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store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.'

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## This Week's Schedule

### Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

#### **The Church's Nativity Fast is**

#### **November 15th-December 25th after Liturgy**

*The Nativity Fast calls for abstinence from meat & dairy on all days of the fast w/ wine, fish, and oil allowed on certain days (Thanksgiving is blessed to break the fast). See the Orthodox Church Calendar for specific guidance. Each person should fast according to their strength without judging or comparing themselves to others. Those with medical conditions or dietary restrictions should take care not to fast at the expense of their well-being. See Fr. Innocent if you have questions concerning the fast or to discuss your particular circumstance.*

#### **THIS WEEKEND**

#### **Saturday, Nov 22nd**

**Wilkes-Barre PARADE** meet at the corner of South Main and South St. @ 2:30 PM

Readers Vespers @ 5 PM

#### **Sunday, Nov 23rd**

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM.

Coffee Hour, Church School Yolka Meeting (Kids & Parents)

Outreach & Evangelism Meeting at 11:45 AM

**Youth Hike & Ice Cream after Coffee Hour**

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#### **THIS WEEK**

### **Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family**

Join us to sing our traditional Thanksgiving Service

#### **Glory to God for All Things**

Wed @ 6 PM

(Bible Study, Open Church and Orthodoxy 101 are cancelled this week)

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#### **NEXT WEEKEND**

#### **Saturday, Nov 29th**

Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

#### **Sunday, Nov 30th**

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM,  
Parish Potluck, Church School, Hospitality Committee

#### **Nov. 30th Parastas**

In Memory of David Voda

Offered by Delores Voda

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If you would like to submit names for the Parastas, please give them to Fr. Innocent or bring them to the service.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### & Upcoming Parish Events

+++ Weekly / Monthly +++

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

ORTHODOXY 101 Wednesdays @ 6:40 PM following the Akathist Service (6 PM): 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 **Sunday, November 30th**

Friends of the Poor is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next FOP is **Saturday, December 13th**

Holy Trinity Parish Council is usually the second Sunday of each month. The next Parish Council is **Sunday, December 14th**.

**WANTED: Coffee Hour Teams** - Sponsor a Sunday Coffee Hour with a friend. Speak with Joanne Dutko to learn more and sign up.

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### **TODAY Attention Families!**

#### **November Kid's Hike**

Attention Families! On **Sunday Nov 23rd** following Church School & Coffee Hour the HTOC Youth will embark on a Nature Hike led by Steve Nealon w/ Ice Cream @ Hillside Dairy to follow - weather permitting. If the weather is not cooperating we will stay at church, play games and have an ice cream party. Save the date and invite friends!

#### **TODAY - Church School Christmas Play (Yolka)**

**Meeting:** Our annual Church School Christmas play is scheduled for Sunday, December 21st. On Sunday, Nov 23rd parents and children will convene after Divine Liturgy (during Church School) to discuss and plan this year's production led by Paula Holoviak. Anyone who would like

to assist with the play is invited to attend the meeting! We will also have our annual Christmas Cookie Sale for parishioners at this year's Yolka.

**Parastas/Memorial Service Nov. 30th** - Submit names for Nov 30th Parastas/Memorial Service. Bring names to the service or send them to Fr. Innocent before hand to be put in the bulletin.

### **December 6th, St. Nicholas Day Deanery**

**Retreat:** The Wilkes-Barre Deanery and the community of **St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Olyphant PA** invites the faithful of our region to join together for a one day Pre-Nativity retreat on Saturday, December the 6th, the Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. The day will begin at 9:30am with Divine Liturgy concelebrated by the gathered local clergy. Following will be a light, but festive meal in the parish hall. After which we will have a guest speaker, Gary Cattell, to discuss his experience as an Orthodox evangelist in modern America. Gary is often referred to as "The Willard Preacher" and has spent over four decades evangelizing to the college students on the campus of The Pennsylvania State University. St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Olyphant is honored to host this event that coincides with their Patronal Feast Day.

### **NATIVITY FAST SEASON GIVING OPPORTUNITIES:**

**B&B Food Pantry** operating out of Noxen Health Center provides food for residents of Wyoming county. This year we will be collecting food for them throughout the Nativity fast until Sunday, December 28th. Please bring the following and place them in the boxes on the Narthex / Vestibule: Canned veggies, cereal, pasta, pasta sauce, instant potatoes, ramen, stuffing, mac and cheese, toiletries such as toothpaste, deodorant, denture cleaner, shampoo. No extra large containers please. If you have any questions please see Joanne Dutko.

**Donations for Friends of the Poor:** Each year during the Nativity Fast our own Friends of the Poor ministry makes an appeal for monetary donations to help sustain the program throughout the next year. If you would like to make a donation please leave it at the candlestand marked for Friends of the Poor through Sunday, Dec. 28th. Checks can be made out directly to "Friends of the Poor".

## Parish Nativity Fast Retreat

### The Book of **REVELATION**

AN ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVE

BY FR. MICHAEL AZAR

Professor of Biblical Studies Scranton University

Saturday, December 20th

Divine Liturgy at 9 AM

Followed by Lenten Meal &  
Presentation on the Book of Revelation

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## Birthdays & Anniversaries

**NOVEMBER Birthdays:** Scott Harvey (11/4), Matushka Melanie Neal (11/4), Myra Tarantini (11/4), Irene Dutko (11/5), Anya Nealon (11/8), Steve Nealon (11/10), Joli Dutko (11/12), Matt Austin (11/16), Douglas Cardoni (11/16), John Goobic III (11/19), Michael Talpash (11/22), Gloria Neribecki (11/23), Andrew Neal (11/24), Olivia Kamboch Spinghel (11/27), Olga Layton (11/29), Candice Dutko (11/30) **Anniversaries:** Rdr Gregory & Kathy Kurtz (11/8), Steve & Jean Hutz (11/19)

**This Week: Birthdays** – Gloria Neribecki (11/23), Andrew Neal (11/24), Olivia Kamboch Spinghel (11/27), Olga Layton (11/29)

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## Words of Wisdom

From the Saints & Teachers

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## THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

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**PARISH PRAYER LIST // Homebound:** Evelyn, Vladimir, Jeri, David, Paul, Archpriest Theodore, Mat. Elizabeth, Mary, Patricia, Barbara, Jeri, Joan, Irene, Alice // **Sick & Suffering:** Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Elizabeth Hutz, Mary Hutz, David Lezinsky, Tom Vaskalis, Tom O'Brian, David, Delores Tressa, Sylvia Dreater, Pearl Tutko, Marie Dutko, Elaine & Forrest Hanson, Alexandra, Jody, Michael Noice, Paul Loftus, Santo, Susan Shiposki // **Recently Departed:** Rosalie Romanuski // **Pray for our Catechumens:** Tom, Gail, Jaqueline, Dejure, Eric, John, Adrienne, Michelle // **Inquirers:** James, Raven, Tyler, Sammy, Lisa, Eric, Tyler, Jesse, Katie, Tonia

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The end of today's Gospel reading is a warning about something that we could all be aware of all the time, that is that death is at our elbow, that much, very much, of what we do will perish with us as unnecessary, mortal.

Does this mean that Christ's warning about the closeness of death should frighten us and deprive us of creative strength? No, on the contrary; the Fathers used to say, "keep a constant memory of death," not in the sense that we should be afraid of death and live under its constant shadow, but rather because nothing but the awareness of the fact that life is short, that it may end at any moment, can give to every moment its final meaning, and to the whole of life the feeling that we must hurry to do good, that we must hurry to live in such a way that at whatever moment death overtakes us, it will be a moment of triumphant life. We would live with such depth, so intensely, if only this awareness were with us constantly. If we were to know that the words that I am now speaking to you were the last, how differently would I say them, and how differently would you listen!

If we were to feel that the person we were talking to might be dead within a few minutes, how careful we should be that our words and actions in relation to him should be the culmination of all the love and care of which we are capable, that they should be the triumph of everything that is best and highest in our relationship.

The reason that we live so badly, utter so many empty words, rotten words, dead words, commit so many actions that afterwards burn in our soul like wounds, is that we live as though this life was merely a rough draft of the life we will one day be living, when we have had time to shape the draft into the final story. But that is not how things work; death comes and the draft remains rough, his life has not been lived, just blotted, and there remains regret for the person who could have been great, but turned out shallow and insignificant.

That is what today's Gospel is about, not that we should be afraid of death, but that, knowing that it can come at any moment, every moment must be perfect, every word must be a word of life, filled with the Spirit, fit to enter eternity. And every action of ours in relation to each one of us should be such as to give life and express the fullness and depth and strength of the love and reverence which we should feel for each other and for all. Let us consider this, and then if we can act upon it, every word and every action

will acquire the dimension of eternity and shine with its light. Amen.

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"The world is enslaved to money and material things. But when we detach from these and place our trust fully in God, we live in freedom and peace."

Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica

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## 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  
**Last Week's Collection (11/16/25) :** \$1,488

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## Confession During the Nativity Fast

Dear Parish Family - A reminder for those who regularly receive Holy Communion, and those receiving for Our Lord's Nativity that we go to confession at least once during each fasting period (and as needed). Preparation for Our Lord's Nativity is a spiritual work that is supported by examining ourselves and confessing our sins and shortcomings. Don't miss out on this beautiful work that strengthens us and bring us closer to God. All Orthodox Christians are invited and encouraged to engage and receive Christ - Born in us on Christmas Day!