



# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ The Sunday after the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ + December 28th, 2025 + Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord.



## Hymns for This Week

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: "Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!"

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it, those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to Thee!

Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, to David, the ancestor of God; thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; and thou didst give glory with the shepherds; thou didst worship with the Magi, and didst receive the news from the Angel. Pray to Christ God to save our souls!

Today godly David is filled with joy; Joseph and James offer praise. The glorious crown of their kinship with Christ fills them with great joy. They sing praises to the One ineffably born on earth, and they cry out: "O Compassionate One, save those who honor Thee!"

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One! Angels with shepherds glorify Him! The Wise Men journey with the star, since for our sake the eternal God was born as a little Child!

### Please Sing Along!

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

## Epistle Reading - Galatians 1:11-19

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

## Gospel Reading - Matthew 2:13-23

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was

**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!

there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son." Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more." Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."



## This Week's Schedule Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

### **THIS WEEKEND** **Saturday, Dec 27th**

Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

### **Sunday, Dec 28th**

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

**Special Parish Meeting, Parish Council Meeting**

### **THIS WEEK - Happy New Year!**

**Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord /  
Feast of St. Basil the Great**

### **Wednesday, December 31st**

**4 PM: Vespers Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great**

*NOTE: Prepare to receive communion for this evening Liturgy by fasting from food and drink from approx 10 AM (6 hours) - except for those with special dietary needs or who need to take medications. See Fr. Innocent if you have any questions.*

### **NEXT WEEKEND**

#### **Saturday, Jan 3rd**

Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

#### **Sunday, Jan 4th**

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



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### & Upcoming Parish Events

+++ Weekly / Monthly +++

**Bible Study Wednesdays at 10 AM.** We are reading through the Epistle to the Romans with discussions. **ON BREAK until 1/14**

**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. **ON BREAK until 1/14**

**Parish Potlucks** are usually the last Sunday of each month. Our next potluck is **Sunday, December 28th**

**Friends of the Poor** is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next FOP is **Saturday, January 10th**

**Holy Trinity Parish Council** is usually the second Sunday of each month. The next Parish Council is **Sunday, December 28th.**

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

**Bible Study & Orthodoxy 101 on Break** for the next 3 weeks to return on Wed, January 14th, God willing!

**TODAY - DEC 28 - SPECIAL PARISH MEETING:** HTOC Parish Council is seeking your approval to fund the expansion of the roofing project to include the Pavillion and Rectory in addition to the Church building. The project would be completed in the spring of 2026. A presentation of the plan followed by your vote will take place immediately following Divine Liturgy on December 28th, 2025.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

**January Birthdays:** Colleen King (1/1), Mary Krill (1/1), Greg Polk (1/4), Melissa Donlick (1/5), Susan Shiposki (1/5), Sonja Kay (1/6), Margaret Krout (1/7), Jerry Stankiewicz (1/8), Gabrielle Kenzakoski (1/10), David Welgus (1/11), Amanda

Benczkowski (1/17), Margaret Pregman (1/17), Stephen Odin Rivera (1/18), Deborah Zbegner (1/21), Ray Sofrenovic (1/21), Matthias Haugh (1/22), Josie Bisset (1/31) **Anniversaries:** Warren & Nadine Breisch (1/13)

**This Week: Birthdays:** Anessa Cardoni (12/28), Colleen King (1/1), Mary Krill (1/1) **Anniversaries:** N/A

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## Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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### The Prayers of Those Who Love Us Met. Anthony Bloom

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I am asked very often how to outgrow the struggle which is ours so often when we try to read the prayers which the saints have coined, which were born in their experience of life.

There was a time when I read with great faithfulness all the prayers which the Church offers us in the morning, in the evening and on other occasions. But I could not always identify with them. They were prayers which were strange to me. I had not grown to that measure of faith or to that measure of love for my neighbour. There were passages in the prayers which I could say sincerely; but there were passages which I could not say; partly because they went against my experience, my feeling, partly because I had not grown to that measure of faith and spiritual experience.

My spiritual father gave me advice on that. He said to me: 'For a year I forbid you to use any of the prayers of the books of prayer. Before you go to bed, make the sign of the Cross and then lie down and say, "Lord, at the prayers of those who love me, save me," and begin to ask yourself who are those who love you — who love you so much, so deeply, so truly, that you don't need even to pray, because their prayers are your shield and your way?'

I tried it. One name after the other came. And every time a name floated up, I stopped one moment and said, 'How

wonderful! He loves me, she loves me! Oh God, bless him, bless her, for the love she can give me as a present.' And then another name came, and another name, and so many came to my mind: people whom I had forgotten and whose love supported me, carried me. It was so wonderful to be loved. First I thought of the nearest, the dearest: my father, my mother, my grandmother, my friends. And then names came which I did not expect: people whom I had met a long time before, and forgotten, and who had been faithful friends.

And then I remembered my angel guardian. I remembered Christ, who had loved me in such a way that He gave His life for me. I remembered the Mother of God. I remembered our Father who is in Heaven. And all the world became so wonderful because it was a world, a sea of love, that carried me like a little ship.

I learnt something from this; and I wish you could try and learn. But there is another side to it. It was not I alone who needed the love and prayers of others. Others need them; and I began to ask myself, is there anyone whom I love who could say the same words as I have said: at the prayers of those who love me, save me? And then names came, faces came, people first whom I loved, people for whom I had affection; then people to whom I was indifferent, about whom I could not care. And I thought, how terrible! They may need the love of one person and I am not that person. And I turned to God and said, 'Lord, I don't know how to love this person. But you have given your life for him, for her, as You have given it for me. Lord, bless, save, guide, be the way, be the door that opens into eternity for this person.'

And then the world became so vast, so deep, so beautiful. It became a world in which we all are saved by one another's love and by the love of God.

Think of that. And may the blessing of the Lord be upon you, by His grace and love towards mankind, always, now and for ever and world without end. Amen.

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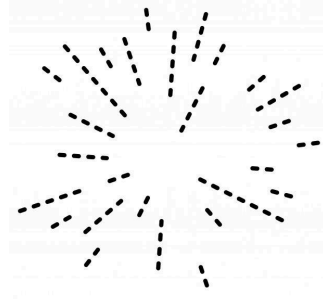
<b>Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open:</b> \$12,305
<b>Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open:</b> \$2,840
<b>Last Week's Collection (12/21/25):</b> \$4,334

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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, Chari Slater, Dn Jeremiah, William, Alan, Tim // **Recently Departed:** Ray, Kyra // **Pray for our Catechumens:** Tom, Gail, Jaqueline, Dejure, Eric, John, Adrienne, Michelle, Jesse, Katie, Lisa // **Inquirers:** James, Raven, Aaric, Tyler, Dom



*Christ is Born!  
Glorify Him!*



*Happy  
New Year!*

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