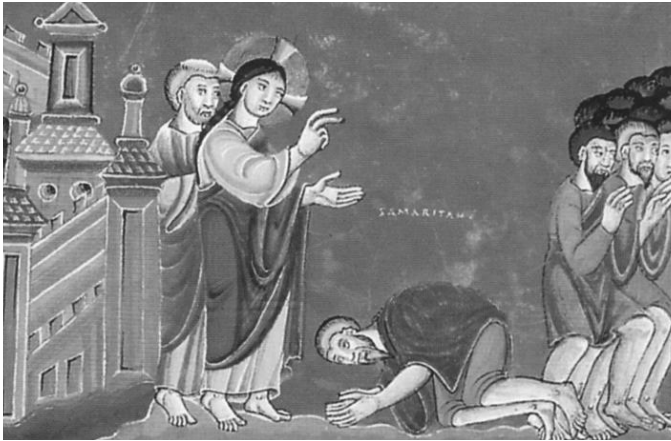




The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

December 8th, 2024 + 24th Sunday after Pentecost + 362 Martyrs of Africa, Ven. Patapius of Thebes



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.

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Father, for thou didst take up the Cross and follow Christ. By so doing, thou taughtest us to disregard the flesh for it passes away; but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal. Therefore thy spirit, venerable Patapius, rejoices with the angels.

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!"

Thy temple is found to be a source of healing, and the people flock to it eagerly, O saint. They seek the healing of their diseases and the forgiveness of their sins, for thou art a protector for all those in need, ven'erable Patapius.

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 17:12-19

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner? And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

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!



This Week's Schedule

DOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

THIS WEEKEND

Saturday, December 7th

Orthodoxy 101 @ 3:30 PM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM

Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, December 8th

Hours @ 8:20 AM, Prayers before Baptism @ 8:45 AM

Baptismal Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM

The baptism of Judah Nealon, son of Steve & Eva Nealon

Parastas following Divine Liturgy

+ In Memory of John Yudin on his 40th day +

Offered by Jason and Colleen King

Coffee Hour, Church School, Parish Council Meeting

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THIS WEEK

WED 11 AM-1:30 PM - Church Open for Prayer

WED 6:30 PM - **Akathist to St. Herman of Alaska**

THURS 11 AM - Bible Study / The Book of Acts

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NEXT WEEKEND

Saturday, December 14th

Orthodoxy 101 @ 3:30 PM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM

Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, December 15th

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM

Coffee Hour, Church School

Parish Potlucks are usually the last Sunday of each month. Our next potluck is December 29th.

Friends of the Poor is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be SAT, December 14th @ 9 AM

Holy Trinity Parish Council is usually the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is SUN, Dec 8th @ 11:30 AM

Dec 14th - Divine Liturgy at Holy Resurrection

Chapel: Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in the St. Alexis Chapel at Holy Resurrection Cathedral December 14th at 9 AM. This first Divine Liturgy is restricted to members of Holy Resurrection Cathedral who have transferred to Holy Trinity. There will be a signup list in the vestibule. Because of limited space we can only accommodate 25 people. Our hope is to continue celebrating Divine Liturgies in the chapel to give more people an opportunity to attend. The next Divine Liturgy is scheduled to be held January 4th.

Sunday School Christmas Cookie Sale: The Sunday School will hold a Christmas cookie sale on Sunday, December 22. All proceeds will benefit the Good Samaritan Food Pantry in Philadelphia. The annual Christmas Play / Yolka will also take place on Sunday, December 22 immediately following Divine Liturgy. This year's play is entitled "The Little Christmas Shepherd". Expect a visit from St. Nicholas as well.

Opportunity for Giving during the Nativity Fast:

Donate loose change (and paper bills too) in the water jug in the vestibule which will be distributed to a local charitable organization for those in need. The collection will continue through the remainder of the Nativity Fast.

NATIVITY POINSETTIA DONATIONS - \$20:

As customary, our Nativity Poinsettia Donations will purchase flowers to adorn the Church for the Feast of the Nativity. Your donations may be made in remembrance of, or for the health of, your family and loved ones. The names you provide at the time of your donation will appear in the Church Bulletin for the Feast of the Nativity. Please see the signup sheet in the vestibule and give your donation to Mary Ann Kudey or Deborah Mills. You may also leave your donation at the candle stand with your list of names marked "Nativity Poinsettias". Many thanks and may God bless you for your donation!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

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+++ Weekly / Monthly +++

Bible Study Thursdays at 11 AM. Everyone is welcome. We are reading through the Acts of the Apostles with discussions.

ORTHODOXY 101 Saturdays @ 3:30 PM: Orthodoxy 101 is for visitors, inquirers, catechumens or anyone interested in learning more about the foundations of our faith. 1 hour followed by Great Vespers.

“In point of fact, thanksgiving adds nothing to Him, but it brings us closer to Him. For if, when we recall the benefactions of men, we are the more warmed by affection for them; much more, when we continually bring to mind the benefits of the Master towards us, shall we be more earnest with regard to His commandments.”

St. John Chrysostom

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!

December 22nd after Divine Liturgy

The Annual Church School Christmas Play (Yolka)

Birthdays & Anniversaries

December Birthdays: David Clark (12/1), Stephen Dutko (12/8), Nina Grymko (12/10), Andrew Kondratick (12/11), Lydia Dutko (12/12), Andrew Conklin (12/13), Renee Spinghel (12/17), Joan Austin (12/18), Christa Talpash (12/19), Dcn Lawrence Worlinsky (12/19), Patrick Tutella (12/19), Susan Goobic Howell (12/19), Jeri Basarab (12/21), Mary Ann Kudey (12/21) Dolores Rilko (12/21), Anessa Cardoni (12/28), Peter Holoviak (12/30), Daniel Bisset Jr. (12/31) **Anniversaries: N/A**

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries: Stephen Dutko (12/8), Nina Grymko (12/10), Andrew Kondratick (12/11), Lydia Dutko (12/12), Andrew Conklin (12/13)



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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On the Virtue of Gratitude

From the book *The Orthodox Faith: Volume IV*

The spiritual person is the one who is grateful for everything. He is the one who receives everything with thanksgiving, and who knows that he has nothing except what he has received from God (cf. Jn 3.27).

And from His fullness have we all received, grace upon grace (Jn 1.16).

In the Old Testament, thanksgiving was central in the life of God's people. The temple liturgy offered sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise, and psalms sang continually of thanksgiving to God.

Sing praises to the Lord, O you His saints, and give thanks to His Holy Name.

Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving. Let us enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name!

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High; to declare Thy steadfast love in the morning, and Thy faithfulness by night.

PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Homebound - Evelyn, Vladimir, Jeri, Marsha, David, Paul, Archpriest Theodore, Archpriest Michael Evans, Mat. Elizabeth, Mary, Patricia, Barbara, Jeri, Evelyn, Joan, Irene, Sonja **Sick & Suffering** - Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Tom & Joan Austin, Elizabeth Hutz, Mary Hutz, Delores Voda, David Lezinsky, June, Myra, Bob Lutzick, Leann, Matthew Gingo, Madison & Millie Nicholas, Gregory Krevko, Steve Rilkowski, Tom Vaskalis, David, Alice Liskowski **Departed:** Archpriest Michael Evans, Archpriest Peter Telencio, Michael Kondratick, Monk Michael Juk, Mary Ann Klapatch

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious, for His mercy endures forever! (Pss 30.4, 95.2, 92.1, 107.1).

In the New Testament, thanksgiving is the very essence of the Church's life. The word eucharist means thanksgiving, and the very center of the Church's liturgical worship of God is when, in remembrance of all His saving acts in Christ, the faithful "lift up their hearts" and "give thanks unto the Lord."

The apostolic scriptures and the lives of the saints abound with thanksgiving to God for all things.

Let there be no filthiness, nor silly talk, nor levity, which are not fitting; but instead let there be thanksgiving ... always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father (Eph 5.4, 20).

Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (1 Thess 5.16–18).

Rejoice always in the Lord; again I say, Rejoice! Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Phil 4.4–7).

The spiritual person has thanksgiving and gratitude in all circumstances, in everything and for everything. This thanksgiving is rooted in the firm conviction of God's merciful providence and care in all things, in the steadfast faith that "God works in everything for good with those who love Him" or, as the passage may also be rendered, "everything works together for good with those who love God" (Rom 8.28).

The spiritual teachers, especially Saint John Chrysostom (4th c), are very strict in this teaching. The spiritual man does not thank God only for what he considers to be good. Rather, he thanks God for everything, even for what appears to be bad, knowing that God's tender care is over all, and that the evil in this world—which is always present and inevitable (cf. Jn 17)—can itself be the vehicle for spiritual growth and salvation if rightly understood and overcome by the grace of God.

The opposite of gratitude is bitterness and complaining; it is bemoaning one's lot in life because of pride and covetousness. It is caused by the absence of humble trust in the Lord. It is rooted in an attitude of life which does not allow the person to exclaim with the righteous Job:

Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord (Job 1.21).

To thank God in everything and for everything is the result of faith and faithfulness in God. It is the result of absolute trust in the Lord who knows best what we need for our salvation and does all that He can within the evil conditions of the world to bring us to eternal life, to peace and to joy. It is the product of believing, with Isaiah, the Word of the Redeemer who says:

For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you. In overflowing wrath for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love will I have compassion on you. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts ...

And you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing ... Keep justice and do righteousness, for soon my salvation will come ... (Is 54.7–8, 55.8–9, 56.1).

A person is grateful to the extent that he trusts in the Lord and has love for God and man.



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

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Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305
Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840
Last Week's Collection (12/1/24) : \$2,751.79
Pierogies: \$3,882