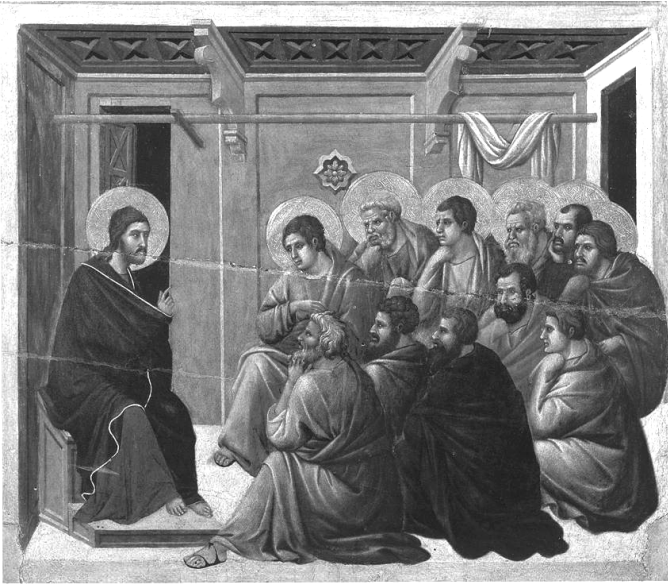




The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ January 12th, 2025 + Eve of Theophany + 29th Sunday after Pentecost + Afterfeast of the Theophany



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!"

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, and called Thee His beloved Son; and the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truthfulness of His word. O Christ our God, Who hast revealed Thyself and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. He has shattered the gates of hell, and as Master, He has risen on the third day!

In thy sufferings thou didst shine brightly in the royal purple of thy blood, and like a beautiful dove thou didst

fly to heaven, passion-bearer Tatiana. Therefore, always pray for those who honor thee!

Today Thou hast shone forth to the world, O Lord, and the light of Thy countenance has been marked on us. Knowing Thee, we sing Thy praises: "Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, O unapproachable Light."

Epistle Reading - Ephesians 4:7-13

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

Gospel Reading - Matthew 4:12-17

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

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 Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

THIS WEEKEND

Saturday, January 11th

Friends of the Poor - 9 AM

Orthodoxy 101 - 3:30 PM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM

Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, January 12th

NO MATINS, Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM,

Church School, Coffee Hour

Parish Council Meeting @ 11:30 AM

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THIS WEEK

House Blessings Continue *(see schedule below)*

MON @ 11 AM - Funeral for Evelyn Kosmiski

WED @ 11 AM-1:30 PM - Church open for prayer

WED @ 6:30 PM - Akathist to St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre

THURS @ 11 AM - Bible Study

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NEXT WEEKEND

Saturday, January 18th

Orthodoxy 101 - 3:30 PM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM

Confession available before or after Vespers

Sunday, January 19th

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

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Church School, Coffee Hour

Meeting - Visitation / Homebound Ministry Team

@ Coffee Hour



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.

Parish Potlucks are usually the last Sunday of each month. Our next potluck is January 26th.

Friends of the Poor is usually the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be SAT, January 11th @ 9 AM

Holy Trinity Parish Council is usually the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is SUN, Jan 12th @ 11:30 AM

Annual Parish Council Meeting/ Nominations for Office

- Sunday, January 26th, 2024 following Divine Liturgy, all members are asked to attend our annual parish meeting. **Election for parish council officers will be conducted.** Qualification for election into office per HTOC bylaws requires that one be at least 21 years of age; a voting member of the parish for at least one year for trustees and two years for officers (*NOTE: New members from the Cathedral will be eligible to become a trustee this year*); an active communicant of the sacraments (confession / communion); meet all canonical requirements of the faith; and a person of the church in conduct and speech. HTOC officers at trustees serve for a maximum of 6 yrs at a time. If you would like to serve on the Parish Council please contact one of the members of this year's nominating committee - Andy Kondratick, Donna Stankeiwicz, Christ Yanovich, or Fr. Innocent.

GIVING ENVELOPES: The 2025 Giving Envelopes are available in the back of the church. If you would like envelopes and there is not a box in the back for you, OR if you received envelopes and would no longer like to receive them, please see Paula Holoiviak or Deborah Mills.

2025 HOME BLESSINGS

PLEASE READ FOR INSTRUCTIONS

The Blessing of Homes continues this week. You can prepare for our visit by having an icon, candle, bowl for holy water, and list for living & departed. If you do not want your home blessed this year (but normally do) please indicate so on the signup sheet in the vestibule.

NEW PARISH MEMBERS OR NEW TO THE COMMUNITY

, please signup in the vestibule and indicate if the scheduled day for your area works and if you have any time restrictions when you're not available. If you live outside the area see Fr. Innocent. It would be wonderful to bless all of your homes. Fr. Innocent and the boys look forward to this joyful time with each one of you!

We will continue blessing homes up until Great Lent.

Home Blessing Schedule

Tues & Wed, Jan 14/15th: Wilkes Barre City & Township, Kingston & Westside, homes missed earlier (2- 5 PM)

Wed, Jan 15th: Rescheduled & Homes Missed

By Appointment: Back Mountain, Outside of Area

Birthdays & Anniversaries

January Birthdays: Coleen King (1/1), Mary Krill (1/1), Greg Polk (1/4), Melissa Donlick (1/5), Sonja Kay (1/5), Margaret Krout (1/7), Jerry Stankiewicz (1/8), David Welgus (1/11), Amanda Benczkowski (1/17), Stephen Odin Rivera (1/18), Matthias Haugh (1/22), Josie Bisset (1/31), Amanda Benczkowski, Matthias Haugh **Anniversaries:** N/A

This Week's Birthdays: Amanda Benczkowski (1/17), Stephen Odin Rivera (1/18)

“True repentance is not merely sorrow for sins but the renewal of the mind, the turning of the heart toward God, and the beginning of a new life.”

St. Symeon the New Theologian

“The Kingdom of Heaven begins here on earth, in the heart of those who repent and align their lives with the will of God.”

St. Theophylact of Ohrid

“Wherever Christ is, darkness cannot abide. His light reveals the truth and draws all to Himself.”

St. Gregory of Nyssa



Words of Wisdom **From the Saints & Teachers**

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Today's Saint **Martyr Tatiana of Rome**

The Holy Virgin Martyr Tatiana was born into an illustrious Roman family, and her father was elected consul three times. He was secretly a Christian and raised his daughter to be devoted to God and the Church. When she reached the age of maturity, Tatiana decided to remain a virgin, betrothing herself to Christ. Disdaining earthly riches, she sought instead the imperishable wealth of Heaven. She was made a deaconess in one of the Roman churches and served God in fasting and prayer, tending the sick and helping the needy.

When Rome was ruled by the sixteen-year-old Alexander Severus (222-235), all power was concentrated in the hands of the regent Ulpian, an evil enemy and persecutor of Christians. Christian blood flowed like water. Tatiana was also arrested, and they brought her into the temple of Apollo to force her to offer sacrifice to the idol. The saint began praying, and suddenly there was an earthquake. The idol was smashed into pieces, and part of the temple collapsed and fell down on the pagan priests and many pagans. The demon inhabiting the idol fled screeching from that place. Those present saw its shadow flying through the air.

Then they tore the holy virgin's eyes out with hooks, but she bravely endured everything, praying for her tormentors that the Lord would open their spiritual eyes. And the Lord heard the prayer of His servant. The executioners saw four angels encircle the saint and beat her tormentors. A voice was heard from the heavens speaking to the holy virgin. Eight men believed in Christ and fell on their knees before Saint Tatiana, begging them to forgive them their sin against her. For confessing themselves Christians they were tortured and executed, receiving Baptism by blood.

The next day Saint Tatiana was brought before the wicked judge. Seeing her completely healed of all her wounds, they stripped her and beat her, and slashed her body with razors. A wondrous fragrance then filled the air. Then she was stretched out on the ground and beaten

for so long that the servants had to be replaced several times. The torturers became exhausted and said that an invisible power was beating them with iron rods. Indeed, the angels warded off the blows directed at her and turned them upon the tormentors, causing nine of them to fall dead. They then threw the saint in prison, where she prayed all night and sang praises to the Lord with the angels.

A new morning began, and they took Saint Tatiana to the tribunal once more. The torturers beheld with astonishment that after such terrible torments she appeared completely healthy and even more radiant and beautiful than before. They began to urge her to offer sacrifice to the goddess Diana. The saint seemed agreeable, and they took her to the heathen temple. Saint Tatiana made the Sign of the Cross and began to pray. Suddenly, there was a crash of deafening thunder, and lightning struck the idol, the sacrificial offerings and the pagan priests.

Once again, the martyr was fiercely tortured. She was hung up and scraped with iron claws, and her breasts were cut off. That night, angels appeared to her in prison and healed her wounds as before. On the following day, they took Saint Tatiana to the circus and loosed a hungry lion on her. The beast did not harm the saint, but meekly licked her feet.

As they were taking the lion back to its cage, it killed one of the torturers. They threw Tatiana into a fire, but the fire did not harm the martyr. The pagans, thinking that she was a sorceress, cut her hair to take away her magical powers, then locked her up in the temple of Zeus.

On the third day, pagan priests came to the temple intending to offer sacrifice to Zeus. They beheld the idol on the floor, shattered to pieces, and the holy martyr Tatiana joyously praising the Lord Jesus Christ. The judge then condemned the valiant sufferer to be beheaded with a sword. Her father was also executed with her, because he had raised her to love Christ.



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 (1/5/25) : \$2,548

PROPORTIONAL GIVING

Assessing our personal giving for the new year.

Proportional giving is the practice of returning to the Lord a portion of the financial treasure He has blessed us with in this life. We offer our gifts in gratitude for His. This principle is found in both the Old and New Testament scriptures. Because it is proportional, what is returned to Him is different for each family and household. The giving chart below offers a starting point for giving based on a range of weekly incomes along with a range of giving levels beginning at 10%, the ideal for a Christian tithe if one is capable, down to 2%. Our goal as we journey through life is to offer increasingly more of what God has given us back to Him, just as we give more of our heart. *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also* (Matt 6:21). This, of course, is done freely and out of love for God and His Church, not in response to an outward rule (*Freely you have received, freely give* - Matt 10:8). May this chart be helpful for you in prayerfully determining your level of giving this coming new year, challenging yourself to return to God the good portion of His financial blessings.

Weekly Income	10%	5%	4%	2%
\$200	\$20	\$10	\$8	\$4
\$500	\$50	\$25	\$20	\$10
\$750	\$75	\$37	\$30	\$15
\$1000	\$100	\$50	\$40	\$20
\$1500	\$150	\$75	\$60	\$30
\$2000	\$200	\$100	\$80	\$40