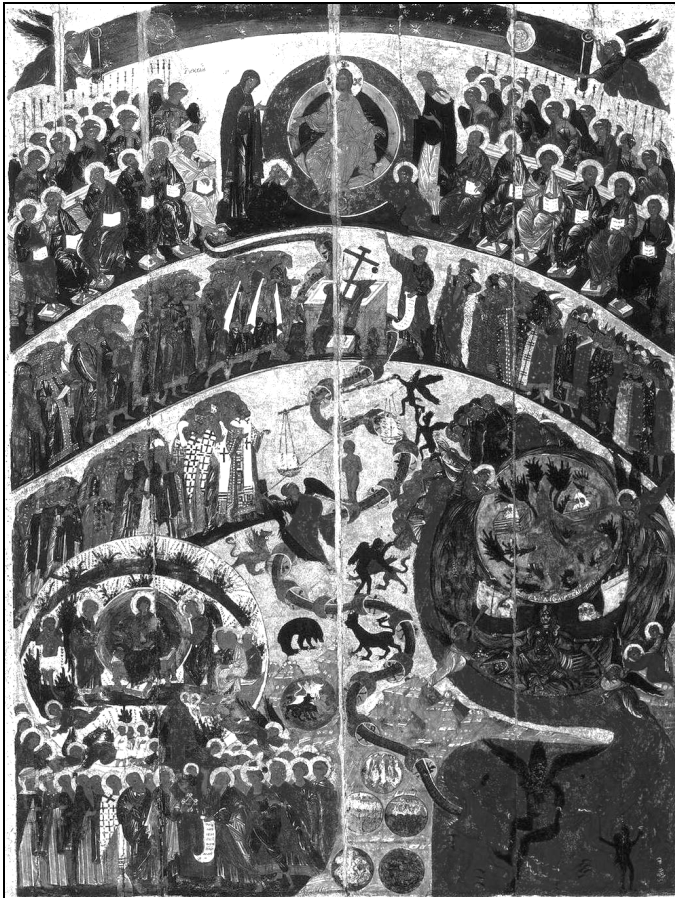




# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ The 36th Sunday after Pentecost + February 15, 2026 + The Last Judgement + Sunday of Meatfare +



## Hymns for Today

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. He has trampled down death by death. He has become the first born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy.

When Thou, O God, shalt come to earth with glory, all things shall tremble, and the river of fire shall flow before Thy judgment seat; the books shall be opened, and the hidden things disclosed; then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, and make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand, O Righteous Judge!

## Please Sing Along!

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

## Epistle Reading - 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2

But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble. Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

## Gospel Reading - Matthew 25:31-46

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take

**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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You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

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## This Week's Schedule DOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

### **THIS WEEKEND**

#### **Saturday, February 14th**

Friends of the Poor @ 9 AM

Parish Game Day @ 1 PM - 5 PM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

#### **Sunday, February 15th - The Last Judgement/Meatfare**

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM

**Meatfare Potluck**, Church School, Parish Council

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### **THIS WEEK**

#### ***House Blessings Continue***

WED @ 10 AM - Bible Study

WED @ 11 AM - Church Open for Prayer

WED @ 6 PM - Akathist Service

WED @ 6:45 PM - Orthodoxy 101

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### **NEXT WEEKEND**

#### **Saturday, February 21st**

Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

#### **Sunday, February 22nd - Forgiveness Sunday/Cheesefare**

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Forgiveness Vespers @ 10:30 AM

**Cheesefare Potluck**, Church School



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### & Upcoming Parish Events

+++ Weekly / Monthly +++

**Bible Study Wednesdays at 10 AM.** 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 **Sun, Feb 15 (Meatfare) / Sun, Feb 22nd (Cheesefare)**

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

**Holy Trinity Parish Council** is usually the second Sunday of each month. The next Parish Council is **Sunday, February 15th**

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

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**Meatfare & Cheesefare Potlucks:** Sign up in the vestibule to bring a dish for these two special Sunday potlucks just before Great Lent.

**GIVING ENVELOPES:** The 2026 Giving Envelopes are available in the vestibule. 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 let them know today in the vestibule.

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## Birthdays & Anniversaries

**February Birthdays:** Mary Gurka (2/1), Cassandra Mahaffey (2/2), Amelia Stankiewicz (2/3), Subdeacon Thomas Donlick (2/5), Sebastian Neal (2/6), Emma Sofrenovic (2/7), Paul Tumavitch (2/9), Mitchell Rivera (2/14), David Mills (2/19), Jeremiah Haugh (2/21), Sandy Serafin (2/23), Alexanne Conklin (2/24), Andrew Rivera (2/28) **Anniversaries:** Brian & Kristi Benczkowski

**This Week: Birthdays:** David Mills (2/19), Jeremiah Haugh (2/21) **Anniversaries:** N/A

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## Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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### Sunday of the Last Judgement

From oca.org

Today's Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live (Ezek. 33:11). This same idea is expressed in the prayer read by the priest after the penitent has confessed his or her sins (Slavic practice).

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*“When Christ comes to judge the world, His criterion for judgment will be love. Christian love entails seeing Christ in other people, our family, our friends, and everyone else we may encounter in our lives. We shall be judged on whether we have loved, or not loved, our neighbor.”*

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The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous Judge, “Who will render to every man according to his deeds” (Rom. 2:6). Then the time for entreating God's mercy and forgiveness will have passed.



As Father Alexander Schmemmann reminds us in his book GREAT LENT (Ch. 1:4), sin is the absence of love, it is separation and isolation. When Christ comes to judge the world, His criterion for judgment will be love. Christian love entails seeing Christ in other people, our family, our friends, and everyone else we may encounter in our lives. We shall be judged on whether we have loved, or not loved, our neighbor. We show Christian love when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those who are sick or in prison. If we did such things for the least of Christ's brethren, then we also did them for Christ (Mt.25:40). If we did not do such things for the least of the brethren, neither did we do them for Christ (Mt.25:45).

Today is the last day for eating meat and meat products until Pascha, though eggs and dairy products are permitted every day during the coming week. This limited fasting prepares us gradually for the more intense fasting of Great Lent.

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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, Ann // **Recently Departed:** Ray, Kyra, Marie, John, Marlene // **Pray for our Catechumens:** Tom, Gail, Jaqueline, Dejure, Eric, John, Adrienne, Michelle, Jesse, Katie, Lisa // **Inquirers:** James, Raven, Aaric, Tyler, Dom, Steve



## 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 (2/1/25) :** \$1,258

### PROPORTIONAL GIVING

*Assessing our personal giving for the coming 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

## Treasures for Our Lenten Journey

Themes from the Preparatory  
Sundays of Great Lent

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*The Sunday of Zacchaeus*

### Longing and love for God

Longing and love for God are the foundations of any spiritual journey. As we begin Great Lent, do those things that help you to increase your desire to know and love God.

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*The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee*

### Humility and Poverty of Spirit

Embarking on the spiritual journey requires humility and the heart's acknowledgment before God that He is the source of all goodness and spiritual progress.

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*The Sunday of the Prodigal Son*

### A Vision of Knowing God's Goodness

Our journey back to God is strengthened by maintaining a vision, purpose, and goal of knowing Him and experiencing the goodness of Him in our daily lives.

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*The Sunday of the Last Judgement*

### Acts of Mercy and Love

To know God means that we imitate Him by following His commandments. Performing acts of mercy and love is the evidence we belong to Him.

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*Forgiveness Sunday*

### Forgiveness for Everyone

To know the God of love and forgiveness we begin by forgiving everyone that has offended us. Forgiveness brings freedom, peace and joy into our lives.