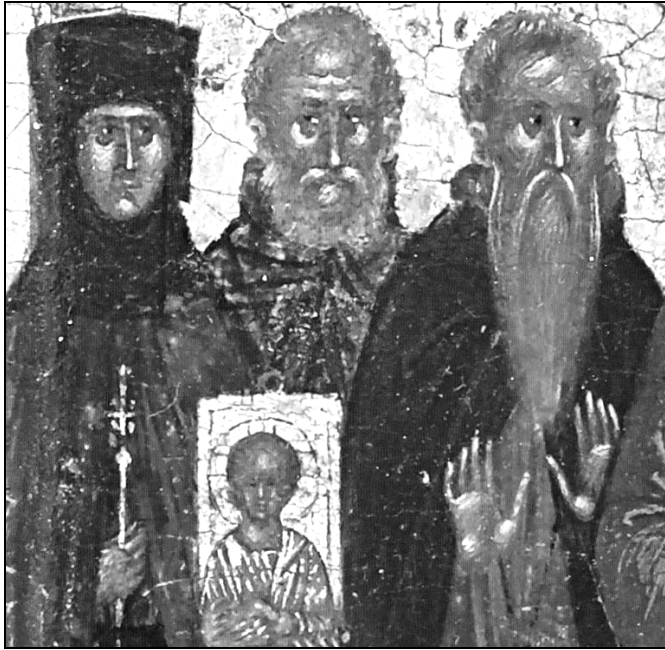




# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

The Sunday of Orthodoxy + March 1st, 2026 + The 1st Sunday of Great Lent



## Hymns for Today

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

We venerate Thy most pure image, O Good One; and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God. Of Thine own will Thou wast pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and deliver Thy creatures from bondage to the Enemy. Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to Thee: "Thou hast filled all with joy, O our Savior, by coming to save the world."

No one could describe the Word of the Father; but when He took flesh from thee, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described, and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty. We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and images.

## Please Sing Along!

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

## Epistle Reading - Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**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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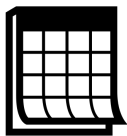
## Gospel Reading - John 1:43-51

The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

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**+ SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT +**  
Fern Knoll Cemetery is now open!

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## This Week's Schedule Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

### THIS WEEKEND

#### Saturday, February 28th

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM w/ Blessing of Koliva  
Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

#### Sunday, March 1st - Sunday of Orthodoxy

Resurrectional Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,  
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Procession w/ Icons, Swearing in of  
Parish Council, Coffee Hour, Church School  
Hospitality Committee Meeting @ Coffee Hour

#### Orthodoxy 101 @ Noon

Upstairs in the Church (Nave)  
New Day & Time - Weekly on Sundays

#### Wilkes-Barre Deanery Mission Vespers - March 1st

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Stroudsburg, PA  
Vespers @ 4 PM, followed by a Lenten Meal

### THIS WEEK

#### THIS WEEK - 2nd Week of Great Lent

**Tues @ 4:00 PM:** Small Compline

**Wed @ 10:00 AM:** Bible Study

**Wed @ 11-1:00:** Open Church

**Wed @ 6:00 PM:** Presanctified Divine Liturgy  
w/ Lenten Potluck

**Fri @ 6:30 PM:** Akathist Hymn w/ Lity for departed

**Sat @ 8 AM:** Divine Liturgy

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#### NEXT WEEKEND - Parish Lenten Retreat

##### Saturday, March 7th

Divine Liturgy @ 8 AM (Note time change for this week)

Brunch & Lenten Retreat @ 9:30 AM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

##### Sunday, March 8th - Sunday of Gregory Palamas

Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Church School, Coffee Hour

##### Orthodoxy 101 @ Noon

Upstairs in the Church (Nave)  
Note New Day & Time

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*We are all living icons, and this lays upon us a great responsibility because an icon may be defaced, an icon may be turned into a caricature and into a blasphemy. And we must think of ourselves and ask ourselves: are we worthy, are we capable of being called "icons", images of God?*

Met. Anthony Bloom

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#### Parish Special Meeting March 15th

A Parish Special Meeting is being called for Sunday, March 15th. The meeting will be held immediately following Divine Liturgy. The purpose of the meeting is to vote to accept / approve a newly submitted nominee for the

position of Treasurer. We currently have one nominee. Additional nominations will be considered thru Sat, March 14th. See Andy Kondratick or Fr. Innocent. Our current Treasurer is retiring from the position. We are so grateful to Paula for her hard work and dedication to the church!

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS & Upcoming Parish Events

+++ Weekly / Monthly +++

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

**NEW DAY & TIME – ORTHODOXY 101 Sundays @ Noon.** 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, March 29th**

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

**Holy Trinity Parish Council** is usually the second Sunday of each month. The next Parish Council is **Sunday, March 8th**

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**2025 Giving Statements:** Anyone who wishes to receive a formal statement of giving for the year 2024 please provide your name on the signup sheet in the Church vestibule.

### **Great Lent Mission Vespers Schedule:**

#### **Sunday of Orthodoxy (March 1 @ 4 PM):**

- Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Stroudsburg, PA

#### **Sunday of the Cross (March 15 @ 4 PM)**

- St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Jermy PA

#### **Sunday of Mary of Egypt (March 29 @ 4 PM)**

- St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Olyphant PA

**Palm Sunday Willow Watch!** Please be on watch for Pussy Willows in preparation for Palm Sunday! Anyone willing to harvest Pussy Willows from your yard or community area, when they are ready to be cut, can bring them to the church before Palm Sunday. Thanks so much in advance for sharing your willow harvest to enhance our Lenten journey to Palm Sunday and Great and Holy Pascha!

**Upcoming Parastas March 15:** A Parastas will be offered Sunday March 15th. Please bring names of your departed loved ones to the service and give them to Fr. Innocent.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

**March Birthdays:** Alex Reznek (3/2), Emma Lynn DiBatista (3/3), Abby Harvey (3/4), Lisa Marie Harvey (3/7), Isabela Sofrenovic (3/9), Dara Soljaga (3/11), Vera Kraynanski (3/11), Michael Polk (3/12) Nadine Breisch (3/13), Vera Hoats (3/13), Sergei Kapral Jr. (3/17), Rdr. Gregory Kurtz (3/17), Mat. Victoria Kapral (3/21), Joshua Leonori (3/22), Nina Soto (3/25), Jacob Zbegner (3/27) Gerry Stankiewicz (3/27), Jean Ann Hutz (3/31) Delores Voda (3/31)

**This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries:** Alex Reznek (3/2), Emma Lynn DiBatista (3/3), Abby Harvey (3/4), Lisa Marie Harvey (3/7)

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## Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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### On the Sunday of Orthodoxy

*Met. Anthony Bloom*

We are keeping today, as every year at the end of the first week of Lent, the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. And every year we must give thought to what is meant, not only as a historical event, but also in our personal lives. First of all, we must remember that the Triumph of Orthodoxy is not the Triumph of the Orthodox over other people. It is the Triumph of the Truth Divine in the hearts of those who belong to the Orthodox Church and who proclaim the Truth revealed by God in its integrity and directness.

Today we must thank God with all our hearts that He has revealed Himself to us, that He has dispelled darkness in the minds and hearts of thousands and thousands of people, that He who is the Truth has shared the knowledge of the perfect Truth Divine with us.

The occasion of this feast was the recognition of the legitimacy of venerating icons. By doing this we proclaim

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**PARISH PRAYER LIST // Homebound:** Evelyn, Vladimir, Jeri, David, Paul, Archpriest Theodore, Mat. Elizabeth, Mary, Patricia, Barbara, Jeri, Joan, Irene, Alice, Sylvia, Paul // **Sick & Suffering:** Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Elizabeth Hutz, Mary Hutz, David Lezinsky, Tom Vaskalis, Tom O'Brian, David, Delores Tressa, Pearl Tutko, Marie Dutko, Elaine & Forrest Hanson, Alexandra, Jody, Michael Noice, Paul Loftus, Santo, Susan Shuposki, Dn Jerimiah, William, Alan, Tim, Ann, Paul, Ruth, Bill, Linda, Betty, Jim, George, Ali, Athansios // **Recently Departed:** Eva, Jonathon // **Pray for our Catechumens:** Tom, Gail, Jaqueline, Dejure, Eric, John, Adrienne, Michelle, Jesse, Katie, Lisa, // **Inquirers:** Aaric, Tyler, Dom, Steve, Ashley

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that God - invisible, ineffable, the God whom we cannot comprehend, has truly become man, that God has taken flesh, that He has lived in our midst full of humility, of simplicity, but of glory also. And proclaiming this we venerate the icons not as idols, but as a declaration of the Truth of the Incarnation.

By doing this we must not forget that it is not the icons of wood and of paint, but God who reveals Himself in the world. Each of us, all men, were created in the image of God. We are all living icons, and this lays upon us a great responsibility because an icon may be defaced, an icon may be turned into a caricature and into a blasphemy. And we must think of ourselves and ask ourselves: are we worthy, are we capable of being called "icons", images of God? A western writer has said that meeting a Christian, those who surround him should see him as a vision, a revelation of something they have never perceived before, that the difference between a non-Christian and a Christian is as great, as radical, as striking, as the difference there is between a statue and a living person. A statue may be beautiful, but it is made of stone or of wood, and it is dead. A human being may not at first appear as possessed of such a beauty, but those who meet him should be able, as those who venerate an icon - blessed, consecrated by the Church - should see in him the shining of the presence of the Holy Spirit, see God revealing Himself in the humble form of a human being. As long as we are not capable of being such a vision to those who surround us, we fail in our duty, we do not proclaim the Triumph of Orthodoxy through our life, we give a lie to what we proclaim. And therefore each of us, and all of us collectively, bear every responsibility for the fact that the world meeting Christians by the million is not converted by the vision of God's presence in their midst, carried indeed in earthen vessels, but glorious, saintly, transfiguring the world.

What is true about us, simply, personally, is as true about our churches. Our churches were called by Christ as a family, a community of Christians to be a body of people who are united with one another by total love, by sacrificial love, a love that is God's love to us. The Church was called, and is still called, to be a body of people whose characteristic is to be the incarnate love of God. Alas, in all our churches what we see is not the miracle of love divine.



## 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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|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <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 (2/15/25):</b> \$2,165      |
| <b>Potato Pancake &amp; Soup Sale:</b> \$1,985        |

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### NEXT WEEKEND

## Holy Trinity Lenten Retreat

**The Middle Way® Workshop**

**Saturday, March 7th**

Divine Liturgy @ 8 AM

Lenten Brunch & Retreat @ 9:30 AM

The Middle Way workshop is a reflection of the teachings of the Church on how to develop individual virtue and ultimately build strong parish cultures. Through a series of exercises, we will collectively articulate the attributes that make great leaders and growing Orthodox Christians. We will take a deep dive into our personal values and family of origin dynamics, and how these factors fit into a growing parish with many different personalities and backgrounds. We will then unveil the Middle Way paradigm initially described by Aristotle as "virtue" - "the place where human beings are happiest." These principles were further developed by the Church to help parishioners grow in their faith as articulated by St Gregory the Great in his book, "The Book of Pastoral Rule," as well as by St Basil the Great when he stated, "The upright in heart have thoughts that are inclined neither to excess nor to deficiency, but are directed towards the mean of virtue" (On the Seventh Psalm, PG 29b.244d). We will uncover the practical applications to happy and healthy parish life. The Middle Way is a Church-based, on-the-ground approach to developing emotional intelligence, for those who study the more modern paradigms of virtuous behavior. You won't want to miss this workshop experience as it will lay a strong foundation not only for church life, but also for life at home and in everyday relationships. See you there.