



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ April 14th, 2024 + Fourth Sunday of Great Lent + The Sunday of St. John Climacus + St. Martin, Pope of Rome



The Lord truly set thee on the heights of abstinence, to be a guiding star, showing the way to the universe, O our father and teacher John.

Please Sing Along!

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

Epistle Reading - Hebrews 6:13-20

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Gospel Reading - Mark 9:17-31

Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not." He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father,

Hymns for Today's Service

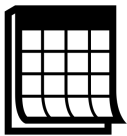
When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: "Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!"

O dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body, thou wast a wonderworker, O our God-bearing Father John. Thou didst receive heavenly gifts through fasting, vigil, and prayer, healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to thee by faith. Glory to Him Who gave thee strength! Glory to Him Who granted thee a crown! Glory to Him Who grants healing to all!

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!

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!

“How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: “Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!” Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, “He is dead.” But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” So He said to them, “This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.” Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. For He taught His disciples and said to them, “The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day.”



This Week's Schedule

DOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

NEXT WEEKEND - Sunday of St. John Climacus

Saturday, April 13th

8 AM: Divine Liturgy (*note time change*)

9:30 AM: Friends of the Poor

3:30 PM: Orthodoxy 101 Class

5 PM: 9th Hour (4:50), Great Vespers,
Confession (*before or after Vespers*)

6 PM: “*The Chosen*” w/ Popcorn Viewing Downstairs

Sunday, April 14th

8:00 AM: Resurrectional Matins w/ Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Church School, Coffee Hr
Parish Council Meeting @ 11:30 AM

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THIS WEEK - 5th Week of Great Lent

Tues, 4 PM: Great Compline

Wed, 11 AM: Church open for prayer

THIS WEDNESDAY'S PRESANCTIFIED

St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Church

905 South Main Street, Wilkes-Barre PA 18702

Presanctified Liturgy @ 6 PM w/ Potluck

Please bring a Lenten dish to share

Thurs, 11 AM: Bible Study

Thurs, 6:30 PM: The Great Canon of St. Andrew

Fri @ 6:30 PM: Canon w/ Akathist to Mother of God
w/ Litya for the Departed

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NEXT WEEKEND - Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt

Saturday, April 20th

9 AM: Divine Liturgy

3:30 PM: Orthodoxy 101 Class

5 PM: 9th Hour (4:50), Great Vespers,
Confession (*before or after Vespers*)

6 PM: “*The Chosen*” w/ Popcorn Viewing Downstairs

Sunday, April 21st

8:00 AM: Resurrectional Matins w/ Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Church School, Coffee Hr, Adult Ed

4 PM: Mission Vespers @ St. Nicholas, Olyphant, PA



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

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Parish Council is the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is **TODAY**

Friends of the Poor is the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be **SAT, April 13th**.

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

Lenten Adult Ed: Sunday's throughout Great Lent during Coffee hour we will have a short Lenten Adult Education presentation w/ discussion. We will focus on a variety of topics that relate to Great Lent. ***No Adult Ed this Sunday due to Parish Council Meeting***

Orthodoxy 101 Class: Saturdays at 3:30 PM we will have a weekly “inquirers” class and discussion for anyone interested in learning more about the Orthodox Faith. Class materials will be provided.

Sat, April 27th - Church Cleanup for Pascha: All are encouraged to come help prepare the church for Pascha. Families and individuals, young and old - we need you

help to clean, dust, polish candlestands, bundle the pussywillows and palms, and prepare the church hall for our Paschal celebration. The day will begin with Divine Liturgy at 9 AM, followed by coffee, light snacks and cleaning.

THIS WEEK: PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY w/ LENTEN POTLUCK @ St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Church: Presanctified Liturgy followed by a Lenten Potluck (No meat or dairy) on Wednesday nights throughout the fast. Make this Liturgy and Community Meal a part of your Lenten Journey. Presanctified begins at 6 PM.

Watch “The Chosen” Saturday Nights During Lent: Join us Saturday evenings following Great Vespers @ 6 PM during Lent to watch episodes from Season 1. Popcorn and drinks will be provided!

Confession before Pascha: A friendly reminder to make a confession before Pascha to receive Holy Communion. Anyone wishing to receive should go to confession at least once during Great Lent. If you have been away from Holy Communion be sure to make a confession before receiving. Confession is available before and after services throughout Lent as time permits and also on Wednesdays during our time of silent prayer.

Our Cleaning Crew Needs Your Help: The Holy Trinity cleaning team is currently understaffed. With Great lent and the additional services the church receives much more traffic than usual. Every week both the upstairs and downstairs, including the bathrooms, are cleaned by two or three faithful workers to ensure the church is in pristine condition for the services we all attend. They will often come back during the week after midweek services to clean a second time. If you are available, please consider donating a few hours of your time during the week to help our crew. See Fr. Innocent, Leigh Storey or Deborah Mills – or come to the church Monday's at 9 AM. We would be so grateful!



LENTEN & PASCHAL FLOWER DONATIONS

Donations towards adorning the church this Lenten season and Pascha are being accepted so that our parish

will be beautifully adorned for all of the feasts. General Donations for Palm Sunday may be given to Deborah Mills. Please write “Flowers for Lent” in the memo. If you would like to honor a loved one by making a donation for Holy Pascha flowers “In Memory of” or “For the Health of” a loved one, please sign up in the Church Vestibule/Narthex. Please leave donations at the candle stand, mail them to the Church, OR drop it off in the rectory mailbox attention Deborah Mills. The names of your loved ones will be listed in the Holy Pascha Church Bulletin and remembered in prayer. If you wish to have your offering listed in the Holy Pascha Bulletin, your loved ones name(s) and donation must be received by Palm Sunday.

Birthdays & ANNIVERSARIES

April Birthdays: Miriam Clark (4/6), Marie Dutko (4/6), Pearl Tutko (4/8), Andy Dutko (4/9), Alec Breisch (4/9), Alex Holoviak (4/9), Leigh Storey (4/17), Vladimir Holoviak (4/19), Eli King (4/21), Jordan Dutko (4/23), Debbie Greenward **Anniversaries:** Fr. Innocent & Mat. Melanie Neal (4/22), Eva & Stephen Nealon (4/29)

This Week's Birthdays: Leigh Storey (4/17), Vladimir Holoviak (4/19)

Sunday of St. John of the Ladder

from antiochian.org.au

This Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Great Lent, also known as the Sunday of Saint John of the Ladder (in reference to his most well-known work “The Ladder of Divine Ascent”). The Holy Church has allocated the fourth and fifth Sundays of lent to the Saints John Climacus and Mary of Egypt; two shining examples of the pillars of this holy season: fasting, prayer, and repentance.

The celebration of St John on this day arose from the custom prevalent in the honorable monasteries of starting Great Lent with the reading of his book. St John likens the method of elevating the soul to God to ascending a ladder. He teaches those who seek salvation how to lay a firm foundation for struggles, how to detect and fight every passion, how to avoid demonic snares,

PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Evelyn Kosmiski, Mat. Elizabeth, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Vladimir & Marie Dutko, Tom & Joan Austin, Joan Lello, Barbara Pascoe, Elizabeth Hutz, Delores Voda, David Goobic, David Lezinsky, Fr. Gregory White, Mary Gurka, Mary Ann Kudey, Tom Youngblood, Catherine Gates, John Boyle, Rose Marie, Patricia Yeosock, Lucille Dragan, Mark **Departed:** Ben Dragan, Michael Yeosock, Shirley Gingo, Edward Hojnicki

and how to rise from the rudimental virtues to the heights of Godlike love and humility.

The biblical reading on this Sunday is from Mark 9:17-31, and begins with a man approaching Jesus, prostrating and asking Him to heal his son, who has a “dumb spirit” within him. This father describes the symptoms that have plagued his son as the same of being possessed by Satan. To us, reading of these specific symptoms like “falling unconscious, foaming and grinding of teeth, and becoming stiff” it would be completely plausible to assume the boy was suffering from epilepsy or the results of a mental illness such as insanity. But according to Christ, there was no doubt that the son was possessed by an “unclean spirit”. He was not in control of his body and its movements, but was subjected to external power, the power of the “evil one”. This “dumb and deaf spirit”, the enemy of “all that is good”, was hurting the boy, “as it often threw him in the fire, and in the water to perish him.”

This incident was evidence of Satan’s existence. Satan or “evil spirit” are not just illusions or mere symbolic ideas, but a true being in existence. The Lord Jesus himself declared to the disciples: “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” (Luke 10:18). Jesus rebuked the “unclean spirit” within the boy, saying: “I command you to get out of him and not to interfere with him,” proving His dominion over evil spirits, which was one of the signs of the approaching Kingdom of Heaven.

The Gospel says that when Jesus asked his disciples to bring the boy to him, and when he saw Him “immediately the spirit overcame him, and he fell on the ground, wallowing and frothing”. At that moment, the “wicked spirit” realised that he stood before the Lord of the Hosts with His glory and took to flopping; he realised that his end was close, and he acted as a predatory monster with a fatal injury, and by flopping about, he tried one final attempt to attack and hurt the boy.

It seems clear that lack of faith was the reason why the Disciples were unable to cast out this “unclean spirit.” For this reason, the Lord Jesus tells the father of the boy, “If you can believe, everything is possible for the believer”. The attitude of the father is one of the most beautiful examples of humility and faith. He answered Christ with warm tears: “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief”. With another word, he said: I believe, O Lord, but perhaps my faith has been shaken on some occasions

by the horror of the trials and their difficulty, but thou strengthen my faith and shore it on the rock of confessing Thee. The Disciples asked their Master, “why couldn’t we get him out?” He said, “This kind can only come out with prayer and fasting.” It appears from this teaching that prayer and fasting are necessary conditions for overcoming the war against Satan, they are essential in spiritual life and faith and not as superfluous or added value to our spiritual struggles. Fasting and praying are not exclusive to monks and nuns, but to everyone, even though the way and level of practice differ between laypeople and monks. The Lord Jesus Himself fasted forty days before His trials and it is stated in the Gospels that He was always parting from the Apostles to pray (Luke 22:39) and (Mark 1:35). Amen! + Met Basilios



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

<p>Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305 Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840 Collections last Sunday (4/7): \$3,171</p>
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Wilkes-Barre Bright Saturday Cookout & Picnic

When: Saturday, May 11th, following Paschal Divine Liturgy at 9 AM. Picnic will begin at approx 11 AM.
Hot grill will be provided. Bring Food/Drinks!
Vespers @ 2 PM

Where: Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

Who: All are welcome to attend and bring a friend.

All Local Orthodox Parishes have been invited!

*“The table is full-laden; feast ye all sumptuously.
The calf is fatted; let no one go away hungry.”*

+ St. John Chrysostom
