



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

Sun, July 25, 2021: 5th Sunday after Holy Pentecost, Dormition of the Righteous Anna, Mother of the Most Holy Theotokos



Hymns for Today's Service

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

Divinely-wise Anna, you carried in your womb the pure Mother of God who gave life to our Life. Therefore, you are now carried joyfully to the inheritance of heaven, to the abode of those who rejoice in glory, where you seek

forgiveness of sins for those who faithfully honor you, O ever-blessed one.

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!

We celebrate the memory of the progenitors of Christ, and with faith we ask their help, that deliverance from every affliction be granted to those who cry out: "Be with us, O God, Who in Your good pleasure glorified them!"

Epistle Reading - Romans 10:1-10

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 8:28-9:1

When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed

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!

men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region. So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

This Week's Schedule

THIS WEEKEND

SAT, July 24th: Vespers @ 2 PM

SUN, July 25th: Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, No Coffee Hour

Olivia & Jacob (Tyler) Zawatski Wedding @ 2:30 PM

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THIS WEEK

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

WED: "What is the Orthodox Church" Inquirer Presentation, 6:30-7:30 PM - ALL WELCOME

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NEXT WEEKEND

SAT, July 30th: Vespers @ 5 PM, Parastas for

SUN, Aug. 1st: Hour @ 8:50 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour

**A HUGE THANK YOU
To all who helped make our
2021 Parish Food Festival
A Great Success!**

**Upcoming Parish Events
& Announcements**

"What is the Orthodox Church?" Presentation

July 28 @ 6:30 PM: Join us this Wednesday night at 6:30 PM for a presentation by Fr. Innocent on the nature and purpose of our Orthodox Church. We will be welcoming visitors from our Foodfest's Church Tour with coffee, cake and fellowship. Join us!

Orthodox Etiquette Presentation Aug 8, 15, 22:

Paul (Garret) Hamner, our parish's summer intern from St. Tikhon's, will offer 3 brief presentations on what and why we do the things we do in church and during our worship services. Each presentation will give us insight into the meaning behind Orthodox worship practices with time for questions and answers. Join us during coffee hour on Aug 8, 15 and 22 to gain a deeper understanding of our faith and worship.

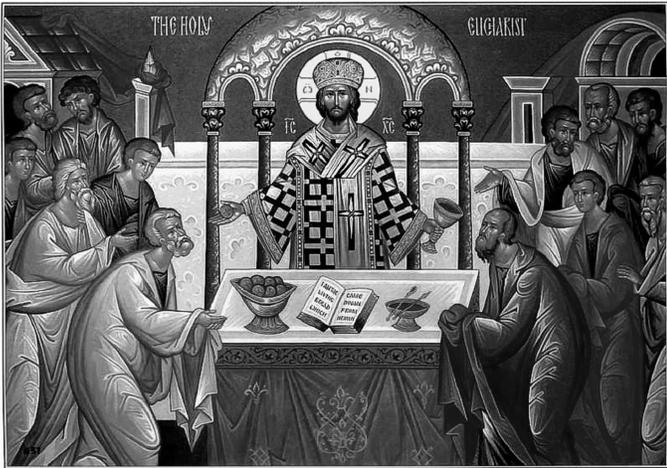
Parish Council Meeting - Sun, Aug 8 @ 11:30 AM

Birthdays & Anniversaries

July Birthdays: Christina Cherkis (7/2), Betty Serafin (7/9), Marley Willis (7/10), Xenia Clark (7/11), Luke Ausin (7/15), Lisa & Scott Harvey (7/15), Diane Welgus (7/18), Rachael Talpash (7/24), Katrina Zbegner (7/26), Donna Stankiewkz (7/27), Christopher Dutko (7/28), Shannon Bisset (7/28), Samuel Hamner (7/30), Rowan Hamner (7/31), Deborah Mills (7/31) **Anniversaries:** , Marianne & Jeremy Haugh (7/18), Tom & Alexanne Conklin (7/27)

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PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Nadine Breisch, Rosalie Bagenski, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Josie Bissett, Lisa & Scott Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Delores Karas, Antonette Terry, Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Violet Filipi, Catherine, Danny Gobish, Lorraine Pace, Camden Thomas, Peter Holoviak & Family, Marni Bachman & Family, Rose Marie, Helen Gudaitis, Mahaffey Family, George Scott, Evelyn Kosmiski, Joe Sloan, Louis Gianuzzi, Betty Serafin, Matushka Elizabeth, Karen Maier, John and Mary Metz



What is the purpose of Orthodox Christian Sacraments?

By Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko

The sacraments in the Orthodox Church are officially called the “holy mysteries.” Usually seven sacraments are counted: baptism, chrismation (or confirmation), holy eucharist, penance, matrimony, holy orders and the unction of the sick.

The practice of counting the sacraments was adopted in the Orthodox Church from the Roman Catholics. It is not an ancient practice of the Church and, in many ways, it tends to be misleading since it appears that there are just seven specific rites which are “sacraments” and that all other aspects of the life of the Church are essentially different from these particular actions. The more ancient and traditional practice of the Orthodox Church is to consider everything which is in and of the Church as sacramental or mystical.

The Church may be defined as the new life in Christ. It is man’s life lived by the Holy Spirit in union with God. All aspects of the new life of the Church participate in the mystery of salvation. In Christ and the Holy Spirit everything which is sinful and dead becomes holy and alive by the power of God the Father. And so in Christ and the Holy Spirit everything in the Church becomes a sacrament, an element of the mystery of the Kingdom of God as it is already being experienced in the life of this world.

Viewing the Church as the new and eternal life of the Kingdom of God given to man by God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit, we understand first of all that for life to exist there must be birth. The birth into the eternal life of God is the mystery of baptism. But birth is not enough for living; there must be the ongoing possibility of life: its power, energy and force. Thus, the mystery of chrismation is the gift of the power to live the life of Christ which is born in man by baptism. It is the gift of the “all-holy and good and life-creating Spirit” to man.

Life also must be sustained. This is normally done by eating and drinking. Food is the nourishment which keeps us alive. It is man’s communion with creation which keeps him existing. But, naturally speaking, our normal eating and drinking does not keep us alive forever. Our natural communion with the world is a communion to death. We need eating and drinking of a special food which nourishes us for eternal life. This food is the “mystical supper of the Son of God,” the body and blood of Christ, the mystery of the holy eucharist—the communion to Life Itself.

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For life to be truly perfect, holy and good, there must also be a particular mystery about marriage and the bearing of children. In this world all who are born are born to die, and even the most perfect of human love stands under the condemnation: “... until death do you part.” The mystery of Christian marriage transforms human love, childbearing, and family communities into realities of eternal proportion and significance. In marriage we are blessed by God for unending friendship and love. We are blessed so that the fruit of our love, the begetting of our

children and the life of our families will be not “unto death” but unto life everlasting.

Until the final establishment of the Kingdom of God, our life remains under the attack of its demonic enemies: sin, sickness, suffering, sorrow and death. The mystery of penance is the remedy for spiritual sickness. It allows us to turn again to God, to be taken back, to be forgiven and to be received once more into the life of God from which our sins have separated us. And the mystery of holy unction is the remedy for our physical sickness which is the power of sin over our bodies, our inevitable union with suffering and death. Holy unction allows us to be healed; to suffer, not “unto death” but, once more, unto life everlasting. It is the incorporation of our wounds into the life-creating cross of Christ.

The mystery, finally, which allows the perfection of divine life to be ours in all of its fullness and power in this world is the mystery of the Church itself. And most specifically within the Church, we have the mystery of holy orders: the sacrament of priesthood, ministry, teaching and pastoral care. The clergy of the church—bishops, priests, and deacons—exist for no other purpose than to make manifest, present and powerful in the Church the divine life of the Kingdom of God to all men while still living in this world.

Thus, from birth to death, in good times and bad, in every aspect of worldly existence, real life—life as God has created and saved and sanctified it to be—is given to us in the Church. This is Christ’s express purpose and wish, the very object of his coming to the world: “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (Jn 10.10).

The Church as the gift of life eternal is by its very nature, in its fullness and entirety, a mystical and sacramental reality. It is the life of the Kingdom of God given already to those who believe. And thus, within the Church, everything we do—our prayers, blessings, good works, thoughts, actions—everything participates in the life which has no end. In this sense everything which is in the Church and of the Church is a sacrament of the Kingdom of God.



Dormition of the Righteous Anna, the Mother of the Most Holy Theotokos

Saint Anna was the daughter of the priest Matthan and his wife Mary. She was of the tribe of Levi and the lineage of Aaron. According to Tradition, she died peacefully in Jerusalem at age 79, before the Annunciation to the Most Holy Theotokos.

During the reign of Saint Justinian the Emperor (527-565), a church was built in her honor at Deutera. Emperor Justinian II (685-695; 705-711) restored her church, since Saint Anna had appeared to his pregnant wife. It was at this time that her body and maphorion (veil) were transferred to Constantinople.

Portions of Saint Anna’s holy relics may be found on Mount Athos: Stavronikita Monastery (part of her left hand), Saint Anna’s Skete (part of her incorrupt left foot), Koutloumousiou Monastery (part of her incorrupt right foot). Fragments of her relics may also be found in her Monastery at Lygaria, Lamia, and in the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian at Sourota. Part of the saint’s incorrupt flesh is in the collection of Saints’ relics of the International Catholic Crusaders. The church of Saint Paul Outside the Walls in Rome has one of the saint’s wrists.

Saint Anna is also commemorated on September 9.