



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

September 7th, 2025 + 13th Sunday after Holy Pentecost + Forefeast of the Nativity of the Most-holy Theotokos



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!”

Today from the stem of Jesse and from the loins of David, the handmaid of God Mary is being born for us. Therefore all creation is renewed and rejoices. Heaven and earth rejoice together. Praise her, you families of nations, for Joachim rejoices and Anna celebrates crying out: “The barren one gives birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our life!”

Thy holy martyr Sozón, O Lord, through his sufferings has received an incorruptible crown from Thee, our God. For having Thy strength, he laid low his adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons. Through his intercession, save our souls!

Let us gather today and together sing to Sozón, the true and divinely wise martyr, an expert fighter for the faith, the mystical seer of divine grace, a generous provider of healing, who prays to Christ God for us all.

Today the Virgin Theotokos Mary, the bridal chamber of the Heavenly Bridegroom, by the will of the God is born of a barren woman, being prepared as the chariot of God the Word. She was foreordained for this, since she is the divine gate and the true Mother of Life.

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 16:13-24

Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all that you do be done with love. I urge you, brethren – you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints – that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us. I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied. For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men. The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. The salutation with my own hand – Paul’s. If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 21:33-42

Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than

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!

the first, and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"



This Week's Schedule

DOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

THIS WEEKEND - 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Saturday, Sep 6th
Great Vespers @ 5 PM
Sunday, Sep 7th
Matins @ 8 AM, Hours @ 8:40 AM,
Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM
Coffee Hour
Parish Council Meeting @ 11:30 AM

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THIS WEEK

The Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos

Mon @ 9 AM - Divine Liturgy for the Feast

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Wed @ 10 AM - Bible Study - Epistle to the Romans

Wed @ 11 AM to 1 PM - Open Church

Wed @ 6 PM - Akathist to the Mother of Our Lord

Wed @ 6:40 PM - Orthodoxy 101

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NEXT WEEKEND

Saturday, Sep 13th

Friends of the Poor @ 9 AM

Great Vespers @ 5 PM

Sunday, Sep 14th

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

Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour

Church School Begins after Divine Liturgy



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

+++ Weekly / Monthly +++

Bible Study Wednesdays at 10 AM. Everyone is welcome. 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 **Sunday, August 31st.**

Friends of the Poor is usually the second Saturday of each month. **Saturday, September 13th.**

Holy Trinity Parish Council is usually the second Sunday of each month. The next Parish Council is **Sunday, September 7th.**

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

September 20 / 21st - Archbishop Mark's Annual

Visit: Archbishop Mark will be making his annual visit on September 20th & 21st for Great Vespers & Divine Liturgy. Please plan to be in church to welcome him! We will have a special parish potluck on that day. Bring your favorite "special" dish to share. A sign-up sheet for dishes will be posted in the Vestibule.

NEW YOUNG ADULT GROUP "Orthodoxy on Tap":

Holy Trinity, in conjunction with St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Church, will be hosting a monthly Orthodox Young Adult (ages 18-28 or so) gathering the third Friday of each month. Our first meeting will be here at Holy Trinity on Friday, September 19th @ 7 PM. The first meeting will be an organizational meeting to plan and discuss group possibilities. Young adults from other Parishes in the area are also invited. Plan to attend and meet other Orthodox Young Adults.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

September Birthdays: Eva Nealon (9/1), Jason King (9/1), Marianne Haugh (9/3), Pd. Sergei Kapral (9/5), William Gurka (9/8), Vladimir Dutko (9/13), Gregory Krevko (9/14), Jalen Buchinski (9/19), Kaleb Dutko (9/19), Tom Michalski (9/19), Brittany Marie Willis (9/20), Brian Hutz (9/21), Irene Kazmierowicz (9/27), Stephen Hutz (9/29), Alekzandria

Dutko (9/30), Paul (Brett) Edwards (9/30) **September Anniversaries:** Jason & Coleen King (9/5), Dave & Diane Welgus (9/6), Brian & Beth Hutz (9/7) Steve & Joann Dutko (9/14), Martha & Paul Tumavitch (9/17)

This Week: Birthdays - William Gurka (9/8), Vladimir Dutko (9/13) **Anniversaries** - N/A



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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The Parable of the Vineyard

By Met. Anthony Bloom

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Today's Gospel, interrupting, so to speak, a series of joyful readings, is a very terrifying one: the story of the workers in the vineyard who turned out to be traitors. And indeed this parable reflects the whole history of the human race, but in the context of all the readings that have gone before, it tells us also of the terrible, in the full sense of that word, ingratitude of mankind, including all of us, to God. In the face of all His love, all His miracles, in the face of everything that He has accomplished, we remain unmoved and self-centered; we think of ourselves, we do not think of our neighbours, still less do we think of God; ingratitude, self love, concentration on ourselves, on what we want, what appeals to us, what seems necessary to us.

Today's Gospel reading tells us that God created a whole beautiful wonderful world, fenced it with His might and His providence, prepared everything in it so that it could be the place of God's Kingdom, that is the Kingdom of mutual love, the Kingdom of joy. But we know what we, people, have made of this world: a place where men are afraid to live, where there is bloodshed, where inhuman, cruel acts are committed, and not only on a world-wide scale, but on a family scale, a parish scale, and among the closest friends.

From generation to generation the Lord has sent His messengers: patriarchs, prophets, angels, preachers, the Forerunner; and finally He came Himself to remind us that the world was created for love. And as in the parable the workers led the son out of the vineyard and killed him, so

mankind treated the incarnate Son of God. And when I say 'mankind', I am speaking not of others, but of us ourselves, because life is entrusted to us to make of it a triumph of love, brotherhood, harmony, faith and joy, and we do not do so, because we think only of ourselves. In response to everything that God has done for us, created us, revealing Himself to us, pouring out all His love on us and finally giving us the life and death of His Son, we produce hardly anything but a brief 'Thank you' and instantly forget.

Turn back to everything you heard during Lent, to what you saw on the night of Christ's Resurrection, to what was said in all the subsequent weeks by the saints, the saints of Russia, the saints of these islands, by the Gospel of love and humanity. Consider all this and ask yourselves, 'am I not a worker in the vineyard, and am I not one of those who pushes Christ away every time He enters my life? Do I not say: get off my path, get out of my life — I want to be the God, the master, I want to manage everything.' Thus speaks each one of us, not so rudely, not so blasphemously, but in actions, in rotten words.

We must come to our senses. I have said many times that we are saved because God loves us; yet not by the love of God only, but by our response to this love. If our wish is merely to reap the fruits of the Cross, of the crucifixion, of the days of the passion, and return nothing to God, and give nothing to our neighbour for whom God died, except a momentary thought, we are alien to everything that God accomplished for us.

Let us therefore stand before the warning, the reminder in today's Gospel and face the question, 'where is my gratitude? Do I embody it not only in words, which are rare enough but in deeds?' Let us pass judgement on ourselves and start a new life. Gratitude to God consists in being a joy to Him, and to our neighbour a support, a saviour and a joy. Let us begin today to bear the fruits of what we have just learned from God through Christ.

Amen.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary

Celebrated September 8th

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary: The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that it seemed altogether impossible to restore them. People often said that God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind.

The Son of God chose to take on human nature for the salvation of mankind, and chose as His Mother the All-Pure Virgin Mary, who alone was worthy to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since Saint Anna was barren.

Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Saints Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them, to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin, and therefore the righteous Saints Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feastdays at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

Saint Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. Saint Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and of them would be born a most blessed daughter Mary, through Whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God, so the Church sings in its festal hymns: "the East Gate... bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls" (2nd Stikhera on "Lord, I Have Cried", Tone 6).

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks the change of the times when the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of the human race from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled. This event has brought to earth the grace of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of Truth, piety, virtue and everlasting life. The Theotokos is revealed to all of us by grace as a merciful Intercessor and Mother, to Whom we have recourse with filial devotion.



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 (8/31/25) : \$1,650
