



# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ 24th Sun after Pentecost + Sun, November 19th, 2023 + Prophet Obadiah. Martyr Barlaam of Caesarea.



## Hymns for Today's Service

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy, and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy.

Armed with youthful fervor, thou didst endure martyrdom in old age and didst glorify Christ. Thou didst offer Him thy right hand as a whole burnt offering and thy holy soul as a blameless sacrifice. Intercede that all that be granted forgiveness, Great-martyr Barlaam.

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers. Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry: "The Savior has come to those in faith; enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!"

Though weak with old age thou didst vanquish the Evil One in thy mighty contest, O Barlaam. Thou didst endure the rack like one without a body, and didst steadfastly endure the burning of thy hand. Therefore, God the Word has crowned thee with a crown of glory.

## Please Sing Along!

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

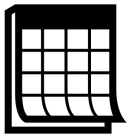
## Epistle Reading - Ephesians 2:14-22

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

## Gospel Reading - Luke 12:16-21

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 'And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

**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!



## This Week's Schedule

### Doly TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

#### **THIS WEEKEND**

Saturday, November 18th

**5 PM: NO Great Vespers this Week**

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Sunday, November 19th

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours, 9 AM: Divine Liturgy,  
Coffee Hour, Church School

Please welcome Fr. Mikel Hill, Director of Operations at  
St. Tikhon's Bookstore & Press.

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#### **THIS WEEK**

**Nativity Fast continues thru December 25th**

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### **Great Feast of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple**

MON: 6:30 PM Great Vespers with Litya

TUES: 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

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**WED MORNING** - There will be a funeral for Mary Ann  
Lepa. May her memory be eternal. The time for the  
funeral was not set when this bulletin was printed. The  
church will not be open for private prayer due to the  
funeral service.

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WED 6:30 PM - Akathist to the Mother of God

THURS 11 AM: Bible Study

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#### **NEXT WEEKEND**

Saturday, November 25th

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

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Sunday, November 26th

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours, 9 AM: Divine Liturgy,  
Parish Potluck (Lenten), Church School, Parastas

**Parastas, Nov 26th in Memory of Nancy Valletta**

*Offered by Clement and Nicholai Valletta*



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### & Upcoming Parish Events

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**Parish Council** is the second Sunday of each month. Our  
next meeting is one week early - **SUN, Dec 10th**.

**Friends of the Poor** is the second Saturday of each  
month. The next gathering will be **SAT, Dec 9th**.

**Parish Potlucks** are **usually** the last Sunday of each  
month. Our next potluck is **November 26th**. This  
potluck falls in the Nativity (Advent) Fast. Please bring  
a Lenten dish to share.

### **Confession During the Nativity Fast**

Dear Parish Family - A reminder for those who regularly  
receive Holy Communion, and those receiving for Our  
Lord's Nativity that we go to confession **at least** once  
during each fasting period (and as needed). Preparation  
for Our Lord's Nativity is a spiritual work that is greatly  
supported by examining ourselves and confessing our sins  
and shortcomings. Don't miss out on this beautiful work  
that strengthens us and bring us closer to God. Receiving  
Holy Communion unites us to Jesus Christ who then  
remains present in us and brings us spiritual Joy.  
Everyone is invited and encouraged to engage and receive  
Christ - **Born in us** on Christmas Day!

### **Dec 2, Wilkes-Barre Deanery Retreat at All Saints Orthodox Church, Olyphant, PA:**

**Saturday, December 2nd** the parishes of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery will gather  
together for a time of worship and retreat at All Saints  
Orthodox Church in Olyphant, PA. The event will begin at  
9AM with Divine Liturgy, followed by a light Lenten  
brunch and lecture from the OCMC's longest serving field  
missionary, Nathan Hoppe. Mr. Hoppe will talk about the  
importance of the mission mindset in the parish, and  
reflect on his international missionary labors over the  
years. The lecture will begin at noon, followed by Q&A,  
and ending by 2 PM. All Deanery Clergy are invited to  
serve. Choir members from the Deanery are also invited  
to participate. Please sign up at your parish by November  
26th so our hosts at All Saints can plan for the day. We  
look forward to gathering once again with our brothers  
and sisters throughout the Wilkes-Barre Deanery.

**Nativity Fast Adult Education – Topics on Spiritual**

**Life:** Fr. Innocent will offer brief presentations during coffee hour Sundays – Nov 26th, Dec 3rd and Dec 10th, during the Nativity (Advent) Fast. The goal of each presentation will be to enrich our understanding in areas of Orthodox spiritual life and strengthen our faith. Presentations will last 30 minutes followed by discussion and Q&A. Everyone is invited. **Our first class will be on The Lord’s Prayer (Our Father).**

**Nativity Fast Text Message Series:**

As we did last year during the Nativity Fast, Fr. Innocent will send a series of encouraging text messages to help keep you engaged in the spirit of the season. The messages are sent through our group on the Signal App for your smartphone. Signup in the vestibule to request access to the group. Visit the app store on your smartphone and download the “Signal” app. If you were a part of this group during Great Lent you should be receiving messages and there is nothing for you to do. See Fr. Innocent for questions or for help getting your phone setup.

**Birthdays & Anniversaries**

**NOVEMBER Birthdays:** Scott Harvey (11/4), Matushka Melanie Neal (11/4), Irene Dutko (11/5), Anya Nealon (11/8), Steve Nealon (11/10), Joli Dutko (11/12), Matt Austin (11/16), Douglas Cardoni (11/16), John Goobic III (11/19), Andrew Neal (11/24), Candice Dutko (11/30)  
**Anniversaries:** Steve & Jean Hutz (11/19), Michael & Lisa Talpash (11/22)

**This Week’s Birthdays & Anniversaries:** John Goobic III (11/19), Andrew Neal (11/24), Steve & Jean Hutz (11/19)



**Words of Wisdom  
From the Saints & Teachers**

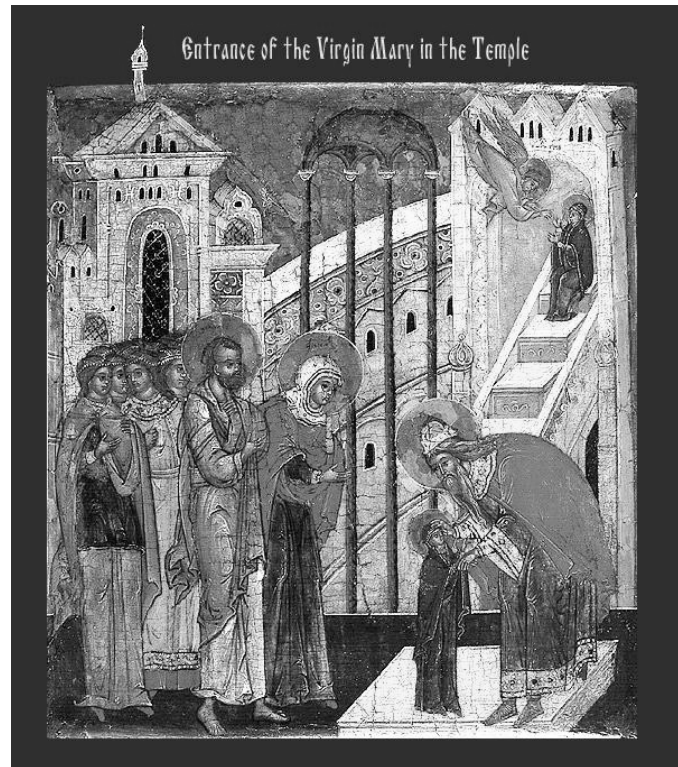
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**The Entry of the Most Holy Mother of  
God into the Temple**

**Commemorated on November 21 (This Tuesday)**

According to Holy Tradition, the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple took place in the following

manner. The parents of the Virgin Mary, Saints Joachim and Anna, praying for an end to their childlessness, vowed that if a child were born to them, they would dedicate it to the service of God.



When the Most Holy Virgin reached the age of three, the holy parents decided to fulfill their vow. They gathered together their relatives and acquaintances, and dressed the All-Pure Virgin in Her finest clothes. Singing sacred songs and with lighted candles in their hands, virgins escorted Her to the Temple (Ps. 44/45:14-15). There the High Priest and several priests met the handmaiden of God. In the Temple, fifteen high steps led to the sanctuary, which only the priests and High Priest could enter. (Because they recited a Psalm on each step, Psalms 119/120-133/134 are called “Psalms of Ascent.”) The child Mary, so it seemed, could not make it up this stairway. But just as they placed Her on the first step, strengthened by the power of God, She quickly went up the remaining steps and ascended to the highest one. Then the High Priest, through inspiration from above, led the Most Holy Virgin into the Holy of Holies, where only the High Priest entered once a year to offer a purifying sacrifice of blood. Therefore, all those present in the Temple were astonished at this most unusual occurrence.

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After entrusting their child to the Heavenly Father, Joachim and Anna returned home. The All-Holy Virgin remained in the quarters for virgins near the Temple. According to the testimony of Holy Scripture (Exodus 38; 1 Kings 1: 28; Luke 2: 37), and also the historian Josephus Flavius, there were many living quarters around the Temple, in which those who were dedicated to the service of God dwelt.

The earthly life of the Most Holy Theotokos from Her infancy until She was taken up to Heaven is shrouded in deep mystery. Her life at the Jerusalem Temple was also a secret. "If anyone were to ask me," said Saint Jerome, "how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth, I would answer that that is known to God Himself and the Archangel Gabriel, Her constant guardian."

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*Today is the prelude of the good will of God, of the preaching of the salvation of mankind. The Virgin appears in the temple of God, in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all. Let us rejoice and sing to her: "Rejoice, O Fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation."*

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But there are accounts in Church Tradition, that during the All-Pure Virgin's stay at the Temple, She grew up in a community of pious virgins, diligently read the Holy Scripture, occupied Herself with handicrafts, prayed constantly, and grew in love for God. From ancient times, the Church has celebrated the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. Indications that the Feast was observed in the first centuries of Christianity are found in the traditions of Palestinian Christians, which say that the holy Empress Helen (May 21) built a church in honor of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa, in the fourth century, also mentions this Feast. In the eighth century Saints Germanus and Tarasius, Patriarchs of Constantinople, delivered sermons on the Feast of the Entry.

The Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple foretells God's blessing for the human race, the preaching of salvation, the promise of the coming of Christ.

"God is born of the spotless and Holy Virgin, or better to say, of the Most Pure and All-Holy Virgin. She is above every fleshly defilement, and even above every impure thought. Her conceiving resulted not from fleshly lust, but by the overshadowing of the Most Holy Spirit. Such desire being utterly alien to Her, it is through prayer and spiritual readiness that She declared to the angel: "Behold the handmaiden of the Lord; be it unto Me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38), and that She conceived and gave birth. So, in order to render the Virgin worthy of this sublime purpose, God marked this ever-virgin Daughter now praised by us, from before the ages, and from eternity, choosing Her from out of His elect."

- St. Gregory Palamas

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## 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."*

<b>Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305</b>
<b>Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840</b>
<b>Collections last Sunday (11/12): \$1,777</b>
<b>Election Day Food Sale: \$1,928</b>