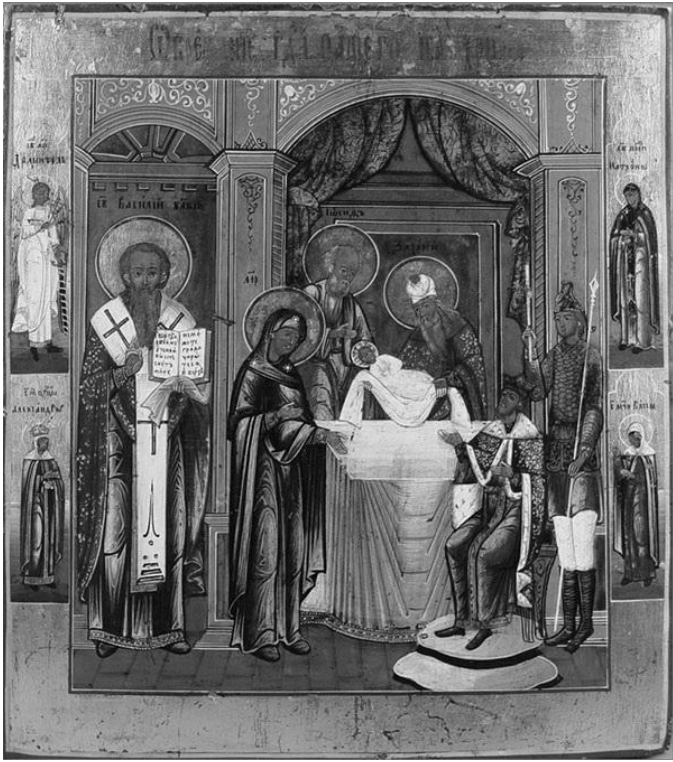




The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

29th Sunday after Pentecost + Sun, Jan 1st, 2023 + The Circumcision of Our Lord Jesus Christ / St. Basil the Great



manners of men. O venerable Father of royal priesthood, entreat Christ God that our souls may be saved!

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!

Thou wast revealed as the sure foundation of the Church, granting all mankind a lordship which cannot be taken away, sealing it with thy precepts, O venerable Basil, revealer of heaven.

The Lord of all accepts to be circumcised, thus, as He is good, He excises the sins of mortal men. Today He grants the world salvation, while light-bearing Basil, high priest of our Creator, rejoices in heaven as a divine initiate of Christ.

Please Sing Along!

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

Hymns for Today

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!"

Enthroned on high with the Eternal Father and Thy divine Spirit, O Jesus, Thou didst will to be born on earth of the unwedded handmaid, Thy Mother. Therefore Thou wast circumcised as an eight-day-old Child. Glory to Thy most gracious counsel; glory to Thy dispensation; glory to Thy condescension, O only Lover of man!

Thy proclamation has gone out into all the earth, which was divinely taught by hearing thy voice. Thou didst expound the nature of creatures and didst ennoble the

Epistle Reading (Circumcision) - Colossians 2:8-12

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

Epistle Reading (St. Basil) - Hebrews 7:26-8:2

For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need

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!

daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

Gospel Reading (Circumcision) - Luke 2:20-21,40-52

Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Gospel Reading (St. Basil) - Luke 6:17-23

And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be

healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all. Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.



This Week's Schedule
Doly TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

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THIS WEEKEND

The Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord
& St. Basil the Great

Saturday, December 31st

5 PM: Great Vespers, Confessions

Sunday, January 1st

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours, 9 AM: Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour, Church School, Orthodoxy 101

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THIS WEEK

Wed, 11 AM-1:30 PM: Private Prayer in Church

Wed, 6:30 PM - Akathist: Glory to God for All Things

The Great Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord

Thurs, January 5th @ 6:30 PM: Compline w/ Litya @
Great Blessing of the Waters

Fri, January 6th @ 9 AM: Divine Liturgy

Home Blessings begin @ 1 PM

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NEXT WEEKEND

Saturday, January 7th

5 PM: Great Vespers, Confession

Sunday, January 8th

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours, 9 AM: Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour, Church School, Orthodoxy 101,
Parish Council Meeting

Parish Calendar

DEC 31st – Great Vespers: Circumcision of Christ @ 5 PM
JAN 1st – Feast of the Circumcision of Christ / St. Basil
Jan 5th – Great Vespers w/ Litya – Theophany @ 6:30 PM
Jan 6th – Divine Liturgy for Theophany @ 9 AM
Jan 8th – Parish Council Meeting @ 11:30 AM



ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

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ORTHODOXY 101: A weekly class for visitors, inquirers, catechumens, or anyone wanting to refresh on the basics of the Orthodox faith. Sundays following Divine Liturgy (starts back TODAY, January 1st).

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Next Sunday, January 8th at 11:30 AM. If you are on the Parish Council please plan to attend. All parish members are welcome.

THE RETURN OF BOARD GAME NIGHT: Before the pandemic, we had a monthly board game night on Saturdays after Vespers and it was quite successful. We are looking for the optimal time for anyone interested in coming together again for some board game fun, fellowship, and snacks. If you would be interested in joining us, please see Fr. Innocent about what days/times would be optimal for you and/or your family. Possibilities include Friday nights, Saturday afternoons/evenings, and Sunday afternoons/evenings. This event is for everyone regardless of age and not only for families with kids.

2023 HOME BLESSINGS

PLEASE READ FOR INSTRUCTIONS

The Blessing of Homes will begin on Theophany, **Friday, January 6th**. The order in which homes are blessed will follow the normal pattern. Please see the schedule below. Fr. Innocent and his helpers will arrive to bless either the outside OR inside depending on your preference for this year. If you would like the inside of your home blessed remember to have an icon, candle, bowl for holy water, and list for living & departed. For blessing the outside of your home no special preparations are needed other than the list of names. If you do not want your home blessed

please indicate so on the signup sheet in the vestibule. If you have not had your home blessed in past years (or in recent years), but would like to this year, let Fr. Innocent know so he can add you to the schedule. Fr. Innocent and the boys look forward to this joyful time with each one of you!

Home Blessing Schedule

Fri, Jan 6th: Miners Mill & Parsons (1:00 PM – 5 PM)
Tues, Jan 10th: Hudson, Plains, Laflin, Pittston, Moosic Area, Bald Mountain (11 AM – 5 PM)
Wed, Jan 11th: Mountaintop, Hanover Twp, Nanticoke Area (11 AM – 5 PM)
Thurs, Jan 12th: Wilkes Barre City & Township, Kingston, Dallas, Edwardsville, (11 AM – 5 PM)
By Appointment: Back Mountain, Outside of Area

Birthdays & Anniversaries

January Birthdays: Coleen King (1/1), Mary Krill (1/1), Greg Polk (1/4), Melissa Donlick (1/5), Mark Sovyrda (1/5), Margaret Krout (1/7), Jerry Stankiewicz (1/8), David Welgus (1/11), Amanda Benczkowski (1/17), Bernard Bolubiewski (1/20), Matthias Haugh (1/22) Eleanor Sovyrda (1/27), Josie Bisset (1/31), Amanda Benczkowski, Matthias Haugh **Anniversaries:** N/A

This Week's Birthdays: Coleen King (1/1), Mary Krill (1/1), Greg Polk (1/4), Melissa Donlick (1/5), Mark Sovyrda (1/5), Margaret Krout (1/7)

Ask Fr. Innocent: Do you have questions about the Orthodox faith? Submit your questions anonymously in the vestibule in the small black "Ask Fr. Innocent?" box. Questions will be answered during coffee hour and/or in the bulletin.

PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Nadine Breisch, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Josie Bissett, Lisa & Scott Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Holoviak Family, Evelyn Kosmiski, Mat. Elizabeth, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Mary Ann Lepa, Mat. Delores Donlick, Vladimir & Marie Dutko, Alan, Cathy & Paul, Archpriest Vladimir, Tom Austin, Paul Berdy, Jami Cochran, Patricia, Subdeacon Nicholas, Deacon Vasilios, Patrick Tutella, Shane Fitzgerald **Departed:** Lydia Homick



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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THIS FRIDAY, Jan 6th

Feast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ



Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord (Mt.3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by Saint John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove. From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine “those who sat in darkness,” and “in the region of the shadow of death” (Mt.4:16), and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace.

In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind.

The origin of the Feast of Theophany goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions (Book V:13). From the second century we have the testimony of Saint Clement of Alexandria concerning the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast.

There is a third-century dialogue about the services for Theophany between the holy martyr Hippolytus and

Saint Gregory the Wonderworker. In the following centuries, from the fourth to ninth century, all the great Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, John of Damascus, commented on the Feast of Theophany.

The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. Saint John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but “to bury human sin by water,” to fulfill the Law, to reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and finally, to sanctify “the nature of water” and to offer us the form and example of Baptism.

On the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church proclaims our faith in the most sublime mystery, incomprehensible to human intellect, of one God in three Persons. It teaches us to confess and glorify the Holy Trinity, one in Essence and Undivided. It exposes and overthrows the errors of ancient teachings which attempted to explain the Creator of the world by reason, and in human terms.

The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires us with a sense of deep gratitude for the illumination and purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism, keeping clean this priceless garb, for “As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ” (Gal 3:27).

On the day of Theophany, all foods are permitted, even if the Feast falls on a Wednesday or Friday.



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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Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305
Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840
Last Week's Collection (12/25/22) : \$4,161