

# The Heavenly Judge Draws Near



# The Two Advents of Christ

A Homily by St. Ignatius Brianchininov (+1867)

Beloved brethren! Not long ago, we beheld our Lord Jesus Christ born in the manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes, placed in the cradle, having taken upon Himself with His humanity all human weakness other than sin. Not long ago, we beheld Him persecuted by Herod, fleeing from the murderer’s sword to Egypt, returning to Judea, not daring to remain there, moving to Nazareth—a poor and unimportant town in inglorious Galilee, receiving baptism on the level of those who needed baptism, preaching repentance and the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. We beheld this not long ago, and we are preparing ourselves for a new, utterly astounding sight. In order to become worthy of this sight to the extent possible for humans, we intend to pre-purify our spiritual eyes—our mind and heart—through the *podvig* [labor] of fasting....And a terrifying,

most formidable sight also awaits us: the second coming to earth of our Lord Jesus Christ. We can behold the first coming in pious remembrance, while the second coming has been represented to us by the Word of God in a picture of graphic eloquence and power. This picture can salvifically shake our souls with fear of God, arouse us from our deep negligence over our eternal lot, as from a lethargic sleep brought upon us by our fleshly life. *The Son of man shall come in His glory.*

Filled with deep and constant humility was the first coming of our Lord to earth and His time on earth. The Lord paid no attention to all that is respected and valued highly by the world. He did not deign to appear in the flash and thunder of earthly glory; He did not deign to appear surrounded by pompousness and magnificence; He did not deign to appear amidst shouts

(continued, see ADVENTS, following page)

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# Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS
February 5	H. Torbic & A.T. Pelikan	M. Fedkin & K. Bazilevskaya	H. Torbic & M. Stickles
February 12	A. Stickles & M. Leathers	J. Houser & D. Swisher	K. Cattell & M. Fedkin
February 19	Habtemichael Benefit Meal	M. Fedkin & K. Bazilevskaya	G. Cattell & M. Fiori
February 26	Cheesefare Pancakes/Potluck	J. Johnson & A. Stickles	K. Cattell & M. Stickles
March 5	A. Ashmore & C. Pellock*	D. Swisher & Mka. K Oleynik	M. Fiori & H. Torbic
March 12	Russian Ladies*	J. Houser & A. Stickles	M. Fedkin & M. Stickles

## ■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

# Advents (con't)

of festivity and triumph. He came to earth as to the land where the transgressors of God's commandments were banished. He resided in it and acted upon it as in a land of sorrows, to which those who once lived in paradise were cast down for transgressing God's commandment in paradise; He abided there and acted upon it as the Redeemer of the lost, becoming a participant in all the misfortunes that befell iniquitous mankind. He was as one of the impoverished and rejected of men. He was a stranger, with no place to lay His head. He was persecuted, covered about with dishonor, and He constantly rewarded evil with good: *For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them* (Lk. 9:56). He ended His earthly pilgrimage with the torturous and shameful death of a criminal, the death of a slave, for whom even the very manner of death is not equal by right to that of the citizens of the world. Such was the first coming on earth of the Son of God. In time, there will also be His second coming to us: *The son of man shall come, who is also the Son of God, in His glory*. His first coming was that of the Redeemer, Who submitted Himself to all the human weaknesses, taking them upon Himself in order to destroy them by Himself. The second coming will be the coming of the Judge, to receive mankind's account of its behavior in relation to the redemption God gave it. *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall He sit upon the throne of his glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations* (Mt. 25:31–32), in order to present their deeds to Him for judgment, and receive either reward or punishment from Him according to their deeds.

When we receive word that some earthly authority and judge is coming, we take all measures to put our affairs in order and thus be found deserving of approval. Even more so should the Judgment of Christ concern us, for by it will the eternal lot be determined for each one of us. The judge is terrifying, unspeakably terrifying...Every human being will tremble when he appears before the Judge—not only sinners, but even the righteous. Sinners will tremble in despair at the

expectation of their impending torment, and from the extraordinary fear that will produce an upheaval in them capable of changing the universe. They will cry to the hills and crevasses: *And [they] said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand* (Rev. 6:16–17)? They will tremble and sing His praises, albeit belated. The Creator hid His unapproachable and unbearable glory in a cloak of humility— only then could the creation freely possess thoughts and feelings, freely pronounce a word, and freely win favor through its acts. When the Creator appears in His glory, the creation's freedom will wither before the magnitude of His glory, just as when this



freedom, which remains our own possession even under extraordinary circumstances, is as if destroyed by the force of circumstance. The most hardened enemies of the Lord, the very Sanhedrin who crucified Him and swore their hatred for Him, will cry out with praise when they meet the Judge, as the Lord foretold to them: *Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven* (Mt. 26:64). *For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord* (Mt. 23:39).

The righteous will tremble from the measureless glory of the appearing Judge; they will look

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(continued, see ADVENTS, following page)

## ■ NEWS & NOTES

### Ready? Set? Lent!

On Saturday February 18th, all students in grades K-5 are invited to a retreat just for them: **Ready-Set-Lent!** The retreat is intended to help younger children prepare and spiritually grow during their "journey" this season by learning about the various disciplines of Great Lent: fasting, prayer, charity, reconciliation/confession, and going to Church (more often). The retreat will be from 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM and will conclude with lunch.

### Adult Ed: – An Orthodox Cemetery

As a final prelude to forming a property research committee, our parish has recently been exploring the subject of funerals and cemeteries. On Monday, February 13th, Fr. Timothy Hojnicky (and perhaps some parishioners!) from Holy Apostles, Mechanicsburg, will be joining us to discuss his parish's recent experience in establishing an intentional and countercultural Orthodox Christian cemetery. Among other things, he will tell his parish's story and discuss their theological motivations, spiritual and practical objectives, funding structure, and the process they went through to make their dream a reality. As this presentation has great bearing on the future development of our own community, all parishioners are strongly encouraged to attend!

### Sunday School Prosfhora Baking

Sunday School students, please join us on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at 4:30PM to bake prosfhora for use during Lent. If you've never made bread before, this is a great way to start; if you know how to bake, come learn the intricate symbolism of the bread that will be used on the Holy Altar. Please RSVP with Pdn. Mark at [dnmark@holytrinity-oca.org](mailto:dnmark@holytrinity-oca.org)

### Pilgrimage to St. Nina's

College students are invited to join the OCF (and Fr. Ignatius and family!) at St. Nina's Monastery from Fri, Feb 10<sup>th</sup>- Sun, Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>. If you've never visited a monastery before or are relatively new to Orthodoxy, this is a great opportunity to visit a friendly, English-speaking monastery. Please contact Nate Kovsack at [nak5437@psu.edu](mailto:nak5437@psu.edu) with questions or for more details.

### Adult Ed: Contemporary Miracles

Third time's the charm! After being delayed by a sudden emergency in November and weather in January, Fr. Theodore Petrides joins us once again on Wednesday, February 15th, at 7 pm to regale us with tales of miracles from our own day and time and to edify us with the lessons the Lord seeks to teach us in these events. As Fr. Theodore likes to say, "every miracle has a purpose."

### Irish Open House at the Oleyniks'

Pdn. Mark and Matushka Kelly invite you to join them for their house blessing along with fellowship featuring traditional Irish fare on Sunday February 5th from 2 PM to 5 PM. Please RSVP to Matushka Kelly at 814-360-8425 or [kellyoleynik@gmail.com](mailto:kellyoleynik@gmail.com). Wear your green!

### January 2023 Furnace Appeal

Thank you to all of those who donated to the furnace appeal last month. In total we raised \$10,800, \$9410 of which was actually raised on the first day of the appeal! On January 26th, a new 18k BTU mini-split unit was installed in the narthex, replacing the broken unit that was there. This should help us stave off the cold while we await the appropriate permits to replace our broken oil furnace with a new, cost-efficient natural gas unit. We also extend a special "thank you" to DSR Properties for subsidizing the cost of the new gas furnace, as well as to Fenush Heating and Cooling for providing sound advice and doing the installation work on these projects.

### Benefit for a Housefire Victim

At the end of December, Afomia Habtemichael's brother, Sahalah, who lives in Eritrea, suffered a catastrophic house fire, resulting in the total loss of his earthly possessions. As there is no equivalent of homeowners insurance in Eritrea, he is destitute and is presently dependent on the mercy of others. To supplement the support already given by Holy Trinity's Matthew 25 ministry, the coffee hour team has graciously allowed Afomia the opportunity to put on a benefit dinner in place of the usual coffee hour of February 19th. Traditional Eritrean fare! Come hungry, give generously, and may God bless you for your mercy!

## ■ CATECHESIS

# Pre-Lenten Sundays

*The following is excerpted from Fr. Thomas Hokpo’s The Orthodox Faith, Volume II, The Church Year*

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is itself preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about Zacchaeus the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man and how his life was greatly changed simply because he “sought to see who Jesus was” (Lk 19.3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through Lent towards [Pascha]. It is the first movement of salvation.

The following Sunday is that of the Publican and the Pharisee. The focus here is on the two men who went to the Temple to pray—one a pharisee who was a very decent and righteous man of religion, the other a publican who was a truly sinful tax-collector who was cheating the people. The first, although genuinely righteous, boasted before God and was condemned, according to Christ. The second, although genuinely sinful, begged for mercy, received it, and was justified by God (Lk 18.9). The meditation here is that we have neither the religious piety of the pharisee nor the repentance of the publican by which alone we can be saved. We are called to see ourselves as we really are in the light of Christ’s teaching, and to beg for mercy.

The next Sunday in the preparation for Great Lent is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. Hearing the parable of Christ about God’s loving forgiveness, we are called to “come to ourselves” as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves as being “in a far country” far from the Father’s house, and to make the movement of return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that the Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only “arise and go,” confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that “home” where we truly belong (Lk 15.11–24).

The next Sunday is called Meatfare Sunday since it is officially the last day before [Pascha] for eating meat. It commemorates Christ’s parable of the Last Judgment (Mt 25.31–46). We are reminded this day that it is not enough for us to see Jesus, to see ourselves as we are, and to come home to God as his prodigal sons. We must also be his sons by following Christ, his only-begotten divine Son, and by seeing Christ in every man and by serving Christ through them. Our salvation and final judgment will depend upon our deeds, not merely on our intentions or even on the mercies of God devoid of our own personal cooperation and obedience.

*. . . for I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink, I was a stranger and you took Me in, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and in prison and you visited Me. For truly I say to you, if you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to Me (Mt 25).*

We are saved not merely by prayer and fasting, not by “religious exercises” alone. We are saved by serving Christ through his people, the goal toward which all piety and prayer is ultimately directed.

Finally, on the eve of Great Lent, the day called Cheesefare Sunday and Forgiveness Sunday, we sing of Adam’s exile from paradise. We identify ourselves with Adam, lamenting our loss of the beauty, dignity and delight of our original creation, mourning our corruption in sin. We also hear on this day the Lord’s teaching about fasting and forgiveness, and we enter the season of the fast forgiving one another so that God will forgive us.

*If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses (Mt 6.14–18).* ♦

## ■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

# Advents (con’t)

at their own righteousness, and in the light of Higher Truth, their righteousness will appear to them as the ragged garment of a beggar. They will not see any surety of mercy for them in their righteousness. They will await mercy only from God's boundless mercy. The very Angels of God will come in fear and shame because of the revealed greatness of their God (cf. Lk. 21:27), *Who hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father* (Jn. 5:22–23). Insensible, material nature will not be able to withstand the gaze of the Son of God: *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places* (Rev. 6:14).

At the judgment of Christ, a justification for mercy will be demanded as an active expression of love, and only mercy will deserve mercy, as a manifest proof of love. *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice* (Mt. 9:13), announced the coming terrible and impartial Judge. Mercy will bring justification for those who love mercy, while those who rejected it will be condemned. Mercy will stand boldly before the Lord, and present all its children to Him. It will present those who showed it materially, who fed their hungry brothers, received strangers into their homes, clothed the naked, visited the sick and imprisoned. Mercy will present to Christ those who wrought it secretly in their souls, who had mercy upon their neighbor by refraining from judging him when he stumbled, forgiving him any insults and offences, rendering him blessings for his curses, and good deeds for his evil ones. Mercy will present to Christ the pastors of the Church, who gave their brethren incorruptible food—the Word of God; who clothed those naked in sin with the garments of virtue, supplied spiritual medicine to those sick of soul, and patiently visited with edification those imprisoned by their unbelief or the darkness of error. It will present to Christ the humble monks [and nuns], who sought the mysterious and essential knowledge of Christ dwelling within them, who thirsted with a blessed thirst for the

Gospel truths, taking all care to clothe themselves in the likeness [of God] and holiness, who purified themselves of the subtlest human infirmities—the passions of life, and thus attained the Gospel freedom. Mercy will present to Christ also those who were only able to show mercy to themselves, who visited themselves with self-criticism and freed themselves from the poverty, sickness, and prison of sin through repentance. Repentance is impossible for the hardened heart: the heart must be softened, filled with sympathy and mercy toward its catastrophic state of sinfulness. Only when the heart is embraced and filled by mercy can it become capable of repentance. Only when it has abandoned its condemnation of others can it turn and look at itself; and, salvifically condemning itself, apply the cure of its wounds by repentance.








Christ Himself redeemed all people and every person. The person who turns out to be capable only of mercy toward himself, and showed this mercy by nourishing his hungry soul with the Word of God, by giving it to drink of those feelings which proceed from the Holy Spirit, by turning it from its destructive wandering in all manner of sin to the house of piety and virtue, by clothing it in good deeds, healing its former sins by confessing them and by acting in ways that oppose them, by leading himself from the prison of his carnal mind and state into reason and a spiritual state—will be considered as having done all of this for the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Mercy will present to Christ all those who practiced it, and will intercede with Him for mercy and eternal blessedness. *Come*, He will say to them, *ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me* (Mt. 25:34–36, 40). ♦



# Holy Trinity Calendar

LIVE

Please note that at this time, all services at Holy Trinity are being live-streamed. To watch them online, please visit [holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube](https://www.holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div>29</div> <div>Zacchaeus Sunday</div> <div>Sunday School, 9am</div> <div>Divine Liturgy, 10am</div> <div>(Hours, 9:40am)</div>	<div>30</div>	<div>31</div>	<div> February 1</div> <div>Confessions, 4pm</div> <div>Vigil of Meeting, 6pm</div>	<div>2</div> <div>Meeting of the Lord in the Temple</div> <div>Divine Liturgy, 8am</div>	<div> 3</div>	<div>4</div> <div>Choir Rehearsal, 4pm</div> <div>Great Vespers, 6pm</div> <div>Confessions, following</div>
<div>5</div> <div>Publican and Pharisee</div> <div>Sunday School, 9am</div> <div>Divine Liturgy, 10am</div> <div>(Hours, 9:40am)</div>	<div>6</div>	<div>7</div>	<div>8</div> <div>Confessions, 4pm</div> <div>Vespers, 6pm</div> <div>Parish Council Meeting, 7pm</div>	<div>9</div>	<div>10</div>	<div>11</div> <div>Choir rehearsal, 4pm</div> <div>Great Vespers, 6pm</div>
<div>12</div> <div>Prodigal Son</div> <div>Sunday School, 9am</div> <div>Divine Liturgy, 10am</div> <div>(Hours, 9:40am)</div>	<div>13</div> <div>Adult Ed: “Creating an Orthodox Cemetery,” 7pm</div>	<div>14</div>	<div> 15</div> <div>Confessions, 4pm</div> <div>Vespers, 6pm</div> <div>Adult Ed: “Contemporary Miracles, Part II” 7pm</div>	<div>16</div>	<div> 17</div>	<div>18</div> <div>K-5 Lenten Retreat: “Ready? Set? Lent!” 9:30am-12pm</div> <div>Choir rehearsal, 4pm</div> <div>Sunday School Prospophora baking, 4:30</div> <div>Great Vespers, 6pm</div> <div>Confessions, following</div>
<div>19</div> <div>Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare)</div> <div>Sunday School, 9am</div> <div>Divine Liturgy, 10am</div> <div>(Hours, 9:40am)</div> <div>Habtemichael Benefit meal, 12pm</div>	<div> 20</div>	<div> 21</div> <div>Vespers, 6pm</div>	<div> 22</div> <div>Confessions, 4pm</div> <div>Vespers, 6pm</div>	<div> 23</div> <div>Vespers, 6pm</div>	<div> 24</div>	<div> 25</div> <div>Great Vespers, 6pm</div> <div>Confessions, following</div>
<div> 26</div> <div>Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare)</div> <div>Sunday School, 9am</div> <div>Divine Liturgy, 10am</div> <div>(Hours, 9:40am)</div> <div>Forgiveness Vespers, 6pm</div>	<div> 27</div> <div>Great Canon of St. Andrew, 6pm</div>	<div> 28</div>	<div> March 1</div> <div>Confessions, 4pm</div> <div>Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm</div> <div>Lenten potluck, 7:30</div>	<div> 2</div>	<div> 3</div> <div>Confessions, 5pm</div> <div>Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm</div>	<div> 4</div> <div>Great Vespers, 6pm</div> <div>Confessions, following</div>
<div> 5</div> <div>Sunday School, 9am</div> <div>Divine Liturgy, 10am</div> <div>(Hours, 9:40am)</div> <div>Icon Procession, 11:45am</div>	<div> 6</div>	<div> 7</div> <div>Parish Council Meeting, 7pm</div>	<div> 8</div> <div>Confessions, 4pm</div> <div>Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm</div> <div>Lenten potluck, 7:30</div>	<div> 9</div>	<div>10</div> <div>Confessions, 5pm</div> <div>Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm</div>	<div> 11</div> <div>Great Vespers, 6pm</div> <div>Confessions, following</div>

# Chapel Calendar

All events take place at 145 North Kern Street in Beavertown, unless where noted.

+ PRE-LENT +

- 2/1/23

6:00 p.m.

Meeting of the Lord in the Temple

Vesperal Divine Liturgy
- 2/4/23

6:00 p.m.

Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 2/5/23

10:00 a.m.

Publican and Pharisee Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis @ 1:30 p.m.
- 2/7/23

6:00 p.m.

Choir rehearsal
- 2/11/23

6:00 p.m.

Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 2/12/23

10:00 a.m.

Prodigal Son Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis @ 1:30 p.m.
- 2/14/23

6:00 p.m.

Choir rehearsal
- 2/18/23

10:00 a.m.

Memorial Saturday Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.
- 2/18/23

6:00 p.m.

Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 2/19/23

10:00 a.m.

Last Judgment (Meatfare) Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis @ 1:30 p.m.
- 2/20/23

6:30 p.m.

Knitting/crocheting “Hats and Blankets for Babies” (NOTE: week change due to Clean Week beginning on 2/27)
- 2/21/23

6:00 p.m.

Choir rehearsal
- 2/25/23

6:00 p.m.

Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 2/26/23

10:00 a.m.

Cheesefare (Forgiveness Sunday) Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following
- 2/26/23

6:00 p.m.

Forgiveness Vespers
- + FAST OF GREAT AND HOLY LENT BEGINS +
- 2/28/23

6:00 p.m.

Choir rehearsal
- 3/1/23

6:00 p.m.

Presanctified Liturgy; Soup and Bread afterwards
- 3/4/23

6:00 p.m.

Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 3/5/23

10:00 a.m.

Sunday of Orthodoxy Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis @ 1:30 p.m. (NOTE: bring an icon for the procession)
- 3/7/23

6:00 p.m.

Choir rehearsal

All events take place at 119 South Sparks Street in State College, unless where noted.  
Events listed at **Trinity House** take place at 123 South Sparks Street, in State College.

February 2023