

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

We Venerate Thy Most Pure Icon, O Good One



On the first Sunday of Lent we commemorate the restoration of icons in 843 by the Empress Irene and the Patriarch Methodius following a period known as the "iconoclasm."

Concerning the Cross and Faith

A Homily by St. John of Damascus (+749)

The word 'Cross' is foolishness to those that perish, but to us who are saved it is the power of God. For he that is spiritual judgeth all things, but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. For it is foolishness to those who do not receive in faith and who do not consider God's goodness and omnipotence, but search out divine things with human and natural reasonings. For all the things that are of God are above nature and reason and conception. For should any one consider how and for what purpose God brought all things out of nothing into being, and aim at arriving at that by natural reasonings, he fails to comprehend it. For knowledge of this kind belongs to spirits and demons. But if anyone, under the guidance of faith, should consider the divine goodness and omnipotence and truth and wisdom and justice, he will

find all things smooth and even, and the way straight. But without faith it is impossible to be saved. For it is by faith that all things, both human and spiritual, are sustained. For without faith neither does the farmer cut his furrow, nor does the merchant commit his life to the raging waves of the sea on a small piece of wood, nor are marriages contracted nor any other step in life taken. By faith we consider that all things are brought out of nothing into being by God's power. And we direct all things, both divine and human, by faith. Further, faith is assent free from all meddlesome inquisitiveness.

Every action, therefore, and performance of miracles by Christ are most great and divine and marvelous: but the most marvelous of all is His precious Cross. For no other thing has subdued death, expiated

(continued, see THE CROSS, following page)

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

| | COFFEE HOUR | GREETERS | TELLERS |
|----------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| March 5 | A. Ashmore & C. Pellod* | D. Swisher & Mka. K Oleynik | M. Fiori & H. Torbic |
| March 12 | Russian Ladies* | J. Houser & A. Stickle | M. Fedkin & M. Stickle |
| March 19 | Souper Sunday* | D. Swisher & Mka. K Oleynik | K. Cattell & B. Haupt |
| March 26 | C. Swisher & Mka. S. Hunter* | M. Fedkin & K. Bazilevskaya | G. Cattell & H. Torbic |
| April 2 | L. Georgiou & Mka. K. Oleynik* | J. Houser & A. Stickle | M. Fiori & M. Fedkin |
| April 9 | Poluck* | Mka. K. Oleynik & J. Johnson | M. Stickle & B. Haupt |

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

The Cross (con't)

the sin of the first parent, despoiled Hades, bestowed the resurrection, granted the power to us of contemning the present and even death itself, prepared the return to our former blessedness, opened the gates of Paradise, given our nature a seat at the right hand of God, and made us the children and heirs of God, save the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. For by the Cross all things have been made right. So many of us, the apostle says, as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into His death, and as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Further, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Lo! The death of Christ, that is, the Cross, clothed us with the en-hypostatic wisdom and power of God. And the power of God is the Word of the Cross, either because God's might, that is, the victory over death, has been revealed to us by it, or because just as the four extremities of the Cross are held fast and bound together by the bolt in the middle, so also by God's power the height and the depth, the length and the breadth, that is, every creature visible and invisible, is maintained.

This was given to us as a sign on our forehead [at chrismation], just as the circumcision was given to Israel: for by it we believers are separated and distinguished from unbelievers. This is the shield and weapon against, and trophy over, the devil. This is the



seal that the destroyer may not touch you, as saith the Scripture. This is the resurrection of those lying in death, the support of the standing, the staff of the weak, the rod of the flock, the safe conduct of the earnest, the perfection of those that press forwards, the salvation of soul and body, the aversion of all things evil, the patron of all things good, the taking away of sin, the plant of resurrection, the tree of eternal life.

So, then, this same truly precious and august tree, on which Christ hath offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sakes, is to be venerated as sanctified by contact with His holy body and blood; likewise the nails, the spear, the clothes, His sacred tabernacles which are the manger, the cave, Golgotha, which bringeth salvation, the tomb which giveth life, Sion, the chief stronghold of the churches and the like, are to be venerated. In the words of David, the father of God, Let us enter into His tabernacles, let us do reverence to the place where His feet stood. And that is the Cross that is made clear by what follows, Arise, O Lord, into Thy Rest. For the resurrection comes after the Cross. For if of those things which we love, house and couch and garment, are to be longed after, how much the rather should we long after that which belonged to God, our Savior, by means of which we are in truth saved.

Moreover we venerate even the image of the precious and life-giving Cross, although made of another tree, not honoring the tree (God forbid) but the image as a symbol of Christ. For He said to His disciples, admonishing them, Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, meaning the Cross. And so also the angel of the resurrection said to the woman, Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth which was crucified. And the Apostle said, We preach Christ crucified. For there are many Christs and many Jesuses, but One crucified. He does not say 'speared' but 'crucified.' It behooves us, then, to venerate the sign of Christ. For wherever the sign may be, there also will He be. But it does not behoove us to venerate the material of which the image of the Cross is composed even though it be gold or precious stones, after it is destroyed, if that should happen. Everything,

(continued, see THE CROSS, following page)

■ NEWS & NOTES

Adult Ed: Intro to Genesis

Throughout the holy season of Great Lent, the Orthodox Church prescribes weekday readings from "first book of Moses," called Genesis. This first book of the Old Testament is a seminal text for Christians, Rabbinic Jews, and members of other religions as well. On Tuesday, March 21 at 6 pm, Fr. Ignatius will discuss what can be said about the origins of the work, give an overview of its contents, and discuss various important theological themes that the book brings forth. Then, after Pascha, on Wednesday, April 26 at 7 pm, Father will continue his discussion of Genesis, this time focusing on ways that Orthodox Christians view it as an intensely prophetic text, revealing Christ and His teaching in advance of His coming in a multitude of ways. Come join us as we study this fascinating and inspiring book!

Sunday of Orthodoxy

At 5 pm on Sunday, March 5, parishioners from Holy Trinity are cordially invited to attend pan-Orthodox "Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers" at St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Church (111 Alberta Ave, Johnstown, PA 15905). This event will feature guest homilists from Antiochian Village and Camp Nazareth. Fellowship will follow after the service.

Fundraising for Summer Camp

Do you have fond memories of summer camp? Help send Sunday school children to summer church camp! The parish children are selling Gardner's Candies specifically for Easter/Pascha baskets in order to raise funds to attend church camps this summer. The sale is March 1-18, in order to be delivered by Easter. This means you can order for your Western friends, too! The orders can be placed on a standard form with any of the students or you can make your order online. Questions? Reach out to Corene Swisher, 814-644-9469.

Matthew 25 Lenten Drive

Our Lenten charitable beneficiary this year is the Lion's Pantry, a student-founded, student-run charity that distributes food, toiletries, and household items exclusively to the students of Penn State University Park. While often invisible to the broader community, many Penn State students struggle to keep up with the challenging financial demands that being in school puts on them, with some even lapsing into homelessness at various points in their college careers. It is our aim to help alleviate some of the pressure on our students by raising \$6000 this Lent to directly aid them through the Lion's Pantry. Donations can be made online on the website using the reference "Matthew 25 Donations." A basket for cash/check donations will be available after the Sunday services of Lent. For those who would prefer to offer tangible support in the form of food, toiletries, or household cleaning items, donation boxes will be available in the narthex and the parish hall. Please give generously!

SOUPer Sunday

On Sunday, March 19th the Sunday School students will be hosting a Lenten luncheon for the benefit of Lions Pantry. The luncheon will consist of soups, salads, and bread prepared and served by our students. There will be a free-will offering. Please plan to stay and enjoy the hospitality of our children and support their efforts for our beneficiary.

Workday & Cleanup for Pascha

Please come join us at 9am on Saturday, April 1st for an indoor/outdoor work day and clean up for Pascha. For those who prefer to be outside, there is weeding, planting, and raking to be done. For those who would rather help out indoors, there's sweeping, polishing, and de-waxing to be done. Many hands make light work!

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

On the Passion

This metrical poetic text, written in the early 4th century by St. Ephrem the Syrian, is a classic Lenten text. It is significantly abbreviated here.

I am afraid to speak
and touch with my tongue
this fearful narrative
concerning the Savior.
For truly it is fearful
to narrate all this.

Our Lord
was given up today
into the hands of sinners!

For what reason then
was one who is holy
and without sin given up?

For having done no sin
he was given up today.

Come, let us examine closely
why Christ our Savior
was given up.

For us, the ungodly,
the Master was given up.

Who would not marvel?
Who would not give glory?

When the slaves had sinned
the Master was given up.

The sons of perdition
and the children of darkness
went out in the darkness
to arrest the sun
who had the power
to consume them in an instant.

But the Master, knowing
their effrontery
and the force of their anger,
with gentleness,
by his own authority,
gave himself up
into the hands of the ungodly.

And lawless men, having bound
the most pure Master,
mocked the one
who had bound the strong one
with unbreakable bonds,
and set us free
from the bonds of sins.

They plaited a crown
of their own thorns,
the fruit borne
by the vine of the Jews.

In mockery
they called him 'King'.
The lawless spat
in the face of the most pure,
at whose glance
all the Powers of heaven
and the ranks of Angels
quake with fear.

See, once again grief and tears
grip hold of my heart,
as I contemplate the Master
enduring outrage and insults,
scourgings, spitting
from slaves, and blows.

Come, observe well
the abundance of compassion,
the forbearance and mercy
of our sweet Master.

He had a useful slave
in the Paradise of delight,
and when he sinned
he was given to the torturers.

But when the Good One
saw his weakness of soul
he took compassion on the slave
and had mercy on him
and presented himself
to be scourged by him.

I wished to remain silent
because my mind
was utterly amazed;
but then again I was afraid
lest I reject
by my silence
my Savior's grace.
For my bones tremble
when I think of it.

The fashioner of all things,
our Lord himself,
was today arraigned
before Caiaphas,
like one of the condemned;
and one of the servants
struck him a blow.

My heart trembles
as I think on these things:
the slave is seated,
the Master stands,
and one full of iniquities
passes sentence
on the one who is sinless.

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

The Cross (con't)

therefore, that is dedicated to God we venerate,
conferring the adoration on Him.

The tree of life which was planted by God in Paradise pre-figured this precious Cross. For since death was by a tree, it was fitting that life and resurrection should be bestowed by a tree. Jacob, when He worshipped the top of Joseph's staff, was the first to image the Cross, and when he blessed his sons with crossed hands, he made most clearly the sign of the cross. Likewise also did Moses' rod, when he smote the sea in the figure of the cross and saved Israel, while it overwhelmed Pharaoh in the depths; likewise also the hands stretched out crosswise and routing Amalek; and



In this icon, Aaron and Hur hold Moses' arms in the form of a cross as the people of Israel do battle with the Amelikes in the wilderness.

the bitter water made sweet by a tree, and the rock rent and pouring forth streams of water, and the rod that meant for Aaron the dignity of the high priesthood: and the serpent lifted in triumph on a tree as though it were dead, the tree bringing salvation to those who in faith saw their enemy dead, just as Christ was nailed to the tree in the flesh of sin which yet knew no sin. The mighty Moses cried, You will see your life hanging on a tree before your eyes, and Isaiah likewise, I have spread out my hands all the day unto a faithless and rebellious people. But may we who worship this obtain a part in Christ the crucified. Amen. ■

■ CATECHESIS

What's a "Triodion?"

The word Triodion is a Greek word meaning three odes, that is, three stanzas. This period of Lenten fasting has been called "Triodion" because the normal matins canon of nine odes are replaced with matins canons of three odes, hence the name tri-odion (three-odes). Throughout Lent, one different ode is sung each weekday (Monday, ode 1; Tuesday, ode 2; Wednesday, ode 3; Thursday, ode 4; Friday, ode 5; Saturday, ode 6; Sunday, ode 7), and odes 8 and 9 are sung each day. This means three odes are sung at each Lenten matins. The odes are based on the nine songs found in the Scriptures, although the ninth ode is a combination of the two New Testament songs:

1. The Ode of Moses in Exodus (15:1-19)
2. The Ode of Moses in Deuteronomy (32:1-43)
3. The Prayer of Anna the mother of Samuel the prophet (1 Samuel 2:1-10)
4. The Prayer of Habakkuk the Prophet (3:2-19)
5. The Prayer of Isaiah the Prophet (26:9-20)
6. The Prayer of Jonah the Prophet (2:3-10)
7. The Prayer of Three Holy Children (Dan 3:26-56)
8. The Song of the Three Holy Children (Dan 3:57-88)
9. The Song of the Theotokos (Luke 1:46-55) and the Prayer of Zacharias the father of the Forerunner (Luke 1:68-79)

If you have never had an opportunity to become familiar with these odes, the Triodion period is a great time to read them – and the language used in things like the Canon of St. Andrew and Saturday evening vigil will make a lot more sense. (Please note: all Scriptural references above are per an Orthodox Bible). ■













































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

Chapel Calendar

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

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|--|
|  26 Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare) Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Forgiveness Vespers, 6pm |  27 Great Canon of St. Andrew, 6pm |  28 Great Canon of St. Andrew, 6pm |  March 1 Confessions, 4pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten potluck, 7:30 |  2 Great Canon of St. Andrew, 6pm |  3 Confessions, 5pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm |  4 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following |
|  5 Sunday of Orthodoxy Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Icon Procession, 11:45am Deanery Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers, 5pm (111 Alberta Ln., Johnstown, PA 15905) |  6 |  7 |  8 Confessions, 4pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten potluck, 7:30 |  9 Parish Council, 6pm |  10 Confessions, 5pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm |  11 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following |
|  12 St. Gregory Palamas Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> |  13 |  14 |  15 Confessions, 4pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten potluck, 7:30 |  16 |  17 Confessions, 5pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm |  18 Choir rehearsal, 4pm Sunday School "Souper Sunday" Prep, 4:30pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following |
|  19 Sunday of the Cross Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Souper Sunday, 12 noon |  20 |  21 Adult Ed: "Introduction to Genesis," 6pm |  22 Confessions, 4pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten potluck, 7:30 |  23 |  24 Confessions, 5pm Vigil for Annunciation, 6pm |  25 Annunciation to the Theotokos Divine Liturgy, 9am Great Vespers, 6pm |
|  26 St. John Climacus Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> |  27 |  28 |  29 Confessions, 4pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten potluck, 7:30 |  30 Confessions, 5pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Akathist to the Theotokos, 7:30pm |  31 |  April 1 Parish Workday, 9am Choir rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following |
|  2 St. Mary of Egypt Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> |  3 |  4 |  5 Confessions, 4pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten potluck, 7:30 |  6 Parish Council, 6pm |  7 Confessions, 5pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm |  8 Lazarus Saturday Divine Liturgy, 9am Pascha Preparation and Palm Cross Workshop, 4pm Vigil for Palm Sunday, 6pm |

+ FAST OF GREAT AND HOLY LENT BEGINS +

- 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
- 3/8/23 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy; Soup and Bread afterwards
- 3/11/23 10:00 a.m. Mystery of Holy Baptism (Solomae Anne Hoffman)
- 3/11/23 5:15 p.m. Akathist for the Repose of the Departed
- 3/11/23 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 3/12/23 10:00 a.m. St. Gregory Palamas Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis @ 1:30 p.m.
- 3/14/23 6:00 p.m. Choir rehearsal
- 3/15/23 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy; Soup and Bread afterwards
- 3/18/23 5:15 p.m. Akathist for the Repose of the Departed
- 3/18/23 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 3/19/23 10:00 a.m. Veneration of the Cross Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis @ 1:30 p.m.
- 3/21/23 6:00 p.m. Choir rehearsal
- 3/22/23 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy; Soup and Bread afterwards
- 3/25/23 10:00 a.m. Annunciation Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.
- 3/25/23 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 3/26/23 10:00 a.m. St. John Climacus Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following; catechesis @ 1:30 p.m.
- 3/27/23 6:30 p.m. Knitting/crocheting "Hats and Blankets for Babies"
- 3/28/23 6:00 p.m. Choir rehearsal
- 3/29/23 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy; Soup and Bread afterwards
- 4/1/23 10:00 a.m. Spring cleaning for Pascha
- 4/1/23 5:00 p.m. Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos
- 4/1/23 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions following
- 4/2/23 10:00 a.m. St. Mary of Egypt Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately following

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.

March 2023