

Message from Fr. Michael....

Dear Beloved Faithful:

Thank you for attending today and coming to Holy Trinity Church to celebrate Orthros and the Divine Liturgy while our Annunciation is undergoing some renovation projects. There will be a memorial service to follow:

- 3-year memorial service for Bessie Kermides
- 5-year memorial service for Dimitrios Mpintos
- 7-year memorial service for Niki Tshulos and also memory for her husband William Tshulos.

May their memory be eternal. There will be a free dinner to follow in the church fellowship hall. All are invited!

In the gospel reading for today, we heard that the Lord was greeted by a demoniac. The demoniac viewed the Lord, Jesus, as the Son of God and worried what Jesus might do to him. The man who approached the Lord was possessed by a multitude of demons rather than just one. We recognize that sinners are really slaves of Satan, as Scripture teaches. Such individuals are led down a path leading to spiritual doom. If we stop and contemplate what it means to be demon possessed, we recognize that his man was deprived of reason. The man did not know who he was, where he was, or what he was doing. Unfortunately, unbelievers are committed to being oblivious or in denial of their own reason. This leads to persistent stubborn denial of God's truth. These poor lost souls are compelled to adhere to contradictions and even attempt to rationalize irrational views. In the gospel reading, the demoniac was deprived of his own will. This unbelieving demoniac was deprived of fellowship and cast out of his community. Once we become demonically possessed, and become a non-believer, we become separated from the covenants of promise. As we witnessed, through listening to the gospel reading, the demoniac was deprived of his dignity. He remained naked for a long period of time. The non-believer lives in a primitive and animal-like state, seeking to satisfy basic needs for survival now and nothing more. Such individuals have no concern for everlasting life... no concern for salvation. The demoniac was deprived of being himself. We recognize the symbolism when we hear the story of this demoniac living amongst the tombs. This non-believing demoniac was dead in sin. He was dead due to his trespasses.

We must realize that there is no more hope for those that simply live apart from Christ and those who are fully demonically possessed. However, there is hope for such individuals. In verse 35, we read: "And they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out sitting down at the feet of Jesus clothed and in his right mind; and they became frightened." When we live apart from the Lord, we suffer from deprivations. Such individuals are on the path leading to Hell. That is the plan Satan desires for such individuals. They may be restored by Christ as we heard of the demons had gone out of the young man. He was then found sitting at the feet of our Lord, clothed and in his right mind. When we come to the Lord, after being away from Him, we are no longer naked or deprived. We are only then in our right mind since it is irrational to be away from Him.

May we now come back to the Lord, if we have drifted away. May we regain our rationality by coming back to the Author of Life who promises everlasting life! May His blessing be upon us so that we may return back on track and give God the glory!

Prayerfully in His service,

+Fr. Michael

Saints and Feasts Commemorated

6th Sunday of Luke

Averkios, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Wonderworker, Bishop of Hierapolis



Saint Abercius, Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia in the times of Marcus Aurelius, was adorned with the grace of wonderworking and with apostolic zeal. During a festival in honour of Apollo, the chief deity of Hierapolis, the holy bishop was instructed in a revelation to destroy the idols. He went to the temple by night and overturned the statues of Apollo and the others. When this was discovered, the Saint boldly cried out that the gods, becoming drunk from the wine of the libations offered them, had struck one against another in their confusion. A multitude of furious pagans came to avenge the insult to their gods, but when the Saint cast the demons out of three afflicted young men, fear fell upon the idolaters and they with the whole city became Christian. After many labours, and afflictions, Saint Abercius reposed in peace about the year 167 (or, according to some, 186).

Seven Holy Martyred Youths of Ephesus

The Seven Youths hid themselves in a certain cave near Ephesus in the year 250, to escape the persecution of Decius. By divine grace, a sleep came upon them and they slept for 184 years, until the reign of Saint Theodosius the Younger, when the doctrine of the resurrection was being assailed by heretics. They then awoke, that is, were resurrected, confirming in the sight of all the bodily resurrection; and again after a short time, by divine command, they reposed in the Lord in the year 434.

FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Demetrios Pappastratis (father of George Pappastratis), Angelo Romas Persa Nizamis, Mitry Ganim, Ted Simon, and Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

ATTENTION ALL YOUTH WORKERS

Whether it be teaching our youth to Greek dance or conducting Sunday School or Greek lessons or working with our Youth of our Parish IN ANY CAPACITY, The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit have mandated that everyone working with the Youth must complete a background check and online Youth Safety training through Sterling. Please contact the Metropolis of Detroit and speak with the Metropolis Youth Director about details at (248) 823-2411. Please go on the YouthSafetyPlatform.goarch.org website and register.

CHURCH RENOVATIONS (installation of the new wall to wall carpet, painting/staining of the walls, etc.) WILL BE UNDERWAY SOON.

CHURCH SERVICES WILL BE HELD AT HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

214 Court Street in Binghamton SUNDAY, October 22, 2023 and October 29, 2023. Orthros 9 am and Divine Liturgy 10 am with coffee hour fellowship to follow in the downstairs social hall at Holy Trinity. We kindly ask that everyone attend as all are invited! In the spirit of Christian Unity of all our Orthodox faithful we expect ALL to attend services there.

DUE TO CHURCH RENOVATIONS AT THE ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, THERE WILL BE NO SERVICES AT ANNUNCIATION CHURCH ON OCTOBER 22nd AND OCTOBER 29th. THIS INCLUDES ALL FUNERALS FOR THOSE TWO WEEKS. ALL SERVICES WILL BE PERFORMED BY FR. MICHAEL AT HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX 214 COURT STREET, BINGHAMTON.

WE WILL BE RETURNING TO ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH FOR SERVICES ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2023. Orthros 9 am and Divine Liturgy 10 am. A General Assembly Meeting will be held in the fellowship hall during the coffee hour at the conclusion of Divine services. We will have nominations for the Parish Council for the 2024-2026 term at that time. All parishioners are invited and expected to attend this very important meeting.

Wisdom of the Fathers

For if we, going about on the earth which is familiar and well known to us, being encompassed with a body, when we are journeying in a strange road, know not which way to go unless we have someone to lead us; how should the soul, being rent away from the body, and having gone out from all her accustomed region, know where to walk without one to show her the way?

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 28 on Matthew 8, 4th Century

Some say, 'Why do they [demons] possess people?' I answer those who wish to have this explained that the reason of these things is very deep. Somewhere one of His saints addressed God by saying, 'Your judgments are a vast abyss.' As long as we bear this in mind, we will perhaps not miss the mark.

St. Cyril of Alexandria

Commentary on Luke, Homily 44. (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture; vol 3: Luke, Intervarsity Press)

St. John of Damascus

The Orthodox Faith, 4.16. Catholic University of America Press in Washington D.C. Translated by Frederic H. Chase, Jr. volume 37, page 370., 8th Century

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us.