

# St Michael's Orthodox Church

A parish of the Orthodox Church in America, Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

305 Walnut Street, Jermyn, Pennsylvania 18433

<https://stmichaeljermyn.org/>

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February 11, 2024: 36<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Hieromartyr Blaise, Bishop of Sebaste. Righteous Theodora, Empress and Restorer of Orthodoxy.

## Schedule of Services

Saturday, Feb 10, 4:00 p.m. – Great Vespers & Confessions.

Sunday, Feb 11, 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy. *SOUPer Bowl of Caring Potluck & Food Drive.*

Saturday, Feb 17, 4:00 p.m. – Great Vespers & Confessions.

Sunday, Feb 18, 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship.

Thursday, Feb 22, 6:00 p.m. – Choir Rehearsal.

Saturday, Feb 24, 4:00 p.m. – Great Vespers & Confessions.

Sunday, Feb 25, 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship.

Saturday, March 2 – Women's Retreat, Stroudsburg

## Announcements

**TODAY** we will be collecting canned goods and other sturdy nonperishables for the International Orthodox Christian Charities' *SOUPer Bowl of Caring*. These will be delivered to a local food bank. We will also have a special collection for IOCC's work around the world.

Our **Annual Parish Meeting** has been rescheduled to **Sunday March 3**. This is the first notice of this new date. The Annual Meeting is our opportunity to gather *in council* to discuss the various temporal needs of the Church in this place. It is a *sacred task*, and the duty of everyone who calls St Michael's their home.

On **Saturday, March 2**, the Diocese will host a **Women's Retreat** at Holy Trinity in Stroudsburg: "*Compassion: From God to us; from us to others*". The guest speaker will be Presbytera Kerry Pappas, a licensed marriage & family therapist and a counselor to many Orthodox lay, clergy, and seminarian families. *This is an opportunity for the women (of all ages!) of our parishes to come together for fellowship and a bit of spiritual rest from the world.* Mat. Alexandra will be going and can drive 5 or 6 additional people. Please RSVP to Sara Rusk at rusksara21@gmail.com by February 24, or let me or Mat. Alexandra know.

## Today's Scripture

1 Timothy 1:15-17

Brethren, This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Matthew 15:21-28 (Gospel)

At that time, Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

## Hymns of the Day

Sunday Troparion (Tone 3)

Let the heavens rejoice! / Let the earth be glad! / For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. / He has trampled down death by death. / He has become the first born of the dead. / He has delivered us from the depths of hell, / and has granted to the world great mercy.

St Michael the Archangel (Tone 4)

O Commander of the heavenly hosts, / we who are unworthy beseech you ceaselessly / that you would encompass us with the shelter of your prayers, / and cover us beneath the wings of your immaterial glory. / We fall down before you, crying out: / "Protect us all from harm, // O Michael, Prince of the powers on high!"

Hieromartyr Blaise (Tone 4)

By sharing in the ways of the Apostles, / thou didst become a successor to their throne. / Through the practice of virtue, thou didst find the way to divine contemplation, O inspired one of God; / by teaching the word of truth without error, thou didst defend the Faith, even to the shedding of thy blood. // O Hieromartyr Blaise, entreat Christ God to save our souls!

Sunday Kontakion (Tone 3)

On this day, Thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One, / leading us from the gates of death. / On this day, Adam exults as Eve rejoices. / With the prophets and patriarchs // they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power.

Hieromartyr Blaise (Tone 2)

Godly shoot, unfading flower, / most fruitful branch of Christ the Vine, / God-bearing Blaise, fill with joy those who in faith honor thy memory // as thou unceasingly intercedest for us all.

For the Mother of God (Tone 6)

Steadfast protectress of Christians, / constant advocate before the Creator; / despise not the entreating cries of us sinners, / but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. / Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, // for you always protect those who honor you!

In your prayers...

The Newly-Departed: Archpriest Moses Berry (Jan 12), Archpriest Ivan Moody (Jan 18).

We offer prayers for:

- The Troutman family (Doreen & Harry, along with John Meholic) who lost their home to fire.
- Fr Gregory White, of Holy Resurrection in Wilkes-Barre, recovering from a heart attack.

*Those who are ill or recovering from illness or injury:* Fr Michael Evans, Fr Joseph Chupek, Fr Peter Telencio, Pdn. Gabriel Petorak, Edward & Karen Hojnicky, Gregory Hansen, Olga Krutz, Maryanne Krisa, Michael Krisa, Barbara Mosley, Mary Ann Serafini.

*Those who are alone or confined:*

- Eileen Dance, Carbondale Nursing & Rehabilitation #202, 10 Hart Place, Carbondale, PA 18407
- John Drutarosky, Carbondale Nursing & Rehabilitation #307, 10 Hart Place, Carbondale, PA 18407
- Theresa Krenitsky, Carbondale Nursing & Rehabilitation #307, 10 Hart Place, Carbondale, 18407
- Nicholas Mattise, Personal Care at Allied Terrace, #218, 100 Terrace Lane, Scranton, PA 18508
- Barbara Palubniak, 629 Hill St, Mayfield, PA 19433
- Peggy Petrilak, 127 Petrilak Lane, Greenfield Twp, PA 18407
- Peter Senio, The Gardens of Green Ridge, 2751 Boulevard Ave, Scranton, PA 18509
- Jerry & Marilyn Soroka, Glenmaura Senior Living, 11 Glenmaura National Blvd, Moosic, PA 18507
- Paul Kostiak, along with Dolores Brophy, 631 Jefferson Ave, Jermyn, PA 18433
- Paul & Barbara Mosley, 623 Cemetery St, Mayfield, PA 18433
- Bill Hummer, c/o Oakwood Terrace, 400 Gleason Dr, Moosic, PA 18507
- Adam & Mary Ann Serafini, 509 Jefferson Ave, Jermyn, PA 18433

Donations & Memorials

- \$500 in memory of Irene Gurka, by Pat Rogers. *May Irene's memory be eternal!*

Coffee Hour is offered by:

- Feb 18: Ruthie Lasichak & Roxanne Neutts
- Feb 25: Vickie Kravitsky & Charette Radionoff
- March 3: Maryann Dube & Susan Schlasta
- March 10: Millie Telep & Mat. Alexandra

Psalms for Special Needs (these are the Hebrew numbering)

When Afraid: Psalms 27 & 56	When Needing Prayer: Psalms 4, 6, 20, 22, 25, 42, 51
When Anxious: Psalm 46	When Sick: Psalms 32, 38, 91
When Disaster Threatens: Psalms 34, 91, 121	When We Sin: Psalms 6, 51, 139
When Discouraged: Psalms 23, 37, 42, 55, 90	When Sorrowing: Psalms 40, 42, 43, 51
When Facing a Crisis: Psalms 34, 46, 118, 121	When Tempted: Psalms 1, 73, 101, 110, 139
When Friends Fail: Psalms 27 & 35	When Thankful: Psalms 65, 84, 92, 95, 100, 103, 116, 136, 147
When Leaving Home: Psalms 27 & 121	When In Trouble: Psalms 2, 16, 31, 34, 37, 38, 40, 139
When Needing God's Protection: Psalms 27, 62, 91, 139	When Weary: Psalms 6, 27, 55, 60, 90
When Needing Inward Peace: Psalms 37 & 85	

*"No sin has there been in life, no evil deed, no wickedness, that I have not committed, O Savior. I have sinned as no one ever before, in mind, word, and intent, in disposition, thought, and act" (Ode 4, ¶ 13). "More than all men have I sinned (Ode 2, ¶ 3)."*

This lamentation resounds throughout the whole length of the Great Canon; indeed throughout the Byzantine liturgy in general. **"Thou didst come into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief,"** as is said just before receiving Communion. This is no mere figure of speech—such a thing would be intolerable—but rather **the expression of a fundamental grace** given to assist us as we progress on the path to repentance, the grace of being able to perceive the ontological **unity of the entire human race**. Each one of us ... **is Adam**, from whom we inherit, not a personal culpability but an existence unto death. "What then," asks St John Chrysostom, "does the word 'sinners' mean? To me it seems to mean ... condemned to death." In becoming aware of one's condition-of one's own sins, certainly, but at a profounder level of a "sorrow ... that produces death" (2 Cor 7.10)—one discovers that there is a deviance, a failure that is that of humanity as a whole. **The history of the species becomes one's own history...**

Then, once he enters a state of *metanoia* [repentance; a change of heart], **man begins to chant the lamentation of the "total Adam,"** exiled as he is from paradise and vainly seeking in the passions a means of staving off his nostalgia. He recapitulates in himself the history of the fall.... Only this panhuman **experience of lamentation** will enable us to understand **what it is that we are saved from**. Only our ontological solidarity with the first Adam will give us an even stronger solidarity with Christ, the definitive Adam. **Only the mysterious communion of sinners will open a way for us to the communion of saints.**

– Olivier Clément, *The Song of Tears: An Essay on Repentance Based on the Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete* (Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2021), 35-36.

Christ doesn't coerce or hurry anyone. He doesn't come to improve us, or criticize us, but to embrace us and in this eternal embrace we are given the freedom to become who we are. Jesus suffers and dies for us protecting our freedom to say "No" in order that our "Yes!" can be freely offered in response to His toward us. The Cross is not just making up for our sins, but indicative of the willingness of God to consciously suffer all that is necessary to support our creation and growth from nothingness into real persons capable of loving as God loves us. This is an extraordinary thing. None of us will love as purely and totally as the Holy Spirit or give ourselves as fully as Christ on the Cross. But we will all participate to some extent in the suffering, forgiveness, and forbearance that occurs in and through Christ over the course of our lives. His Life becomes ours and part of how we discover this is through a relationship with our children that involves our life-long repentance.

– Stephen Muse, *Parenting in Repentance: Growing Together in Love, Gratefulness and Joy* (Alhambra, CA: Sebastian Press, 2021), 22-23.