

The Sunday of the Last Judgement

Today's Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live (Ezek. 33:11). This same idea is expressed in the prayer read by the priest after the penitent has confessed his or her sins (Slavic practice). The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous Judge, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. 2:6). Then the time for entreating God's mercy and forgiveness will have passed. Today is the last day for eating meat and meat products until Pascha, though eggs and dairy products are permitted every day during the coming week. This limited fasting prepares us gradually for the more intense fasting of Great Lent.

St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church

Orthodox Church in America, Diocese of the West

1407 30th Street, Port Townsend, WA 98368

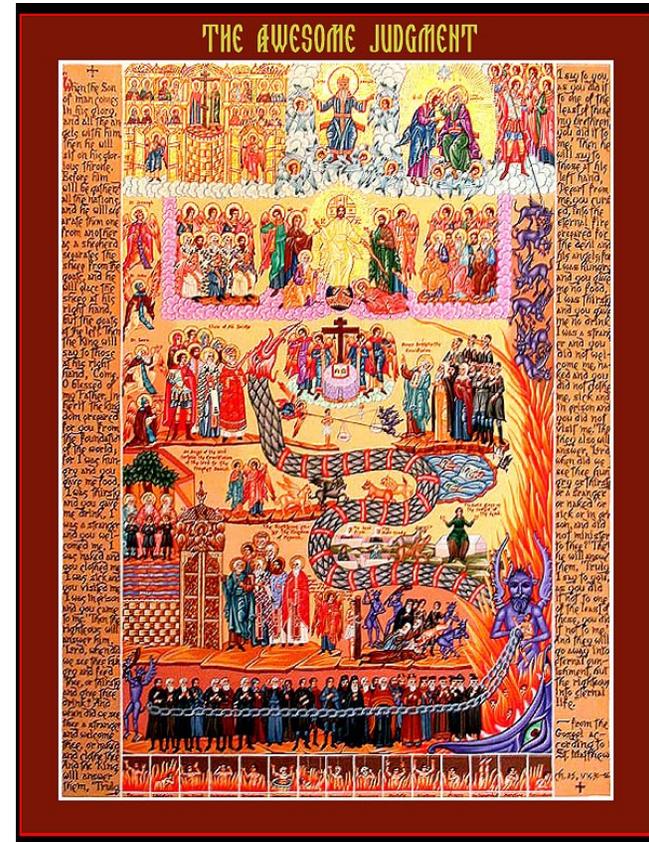
Fr. Daniel Lattier, Acting Rector

425-443-7136

www.OrthodoxPortTownsend.com

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Readings

Epistle 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2
Gospel Matthew 25:31-46

Tone 3 Troparion (Resurrection)

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.

Tone 1 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

When Thou, O God, shalt come to earth with glory, all things shall tremble, and the river of fire shall flow before Thy judgment seat; the books shall be opened, and the hidden things disclosed; then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, // and make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand, O Righteous Judge!



This Week at St. Herman's

Sunday, February 23rd - *Sunday of the Last Judgement*

- 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy
- Coffee Hour in the parish hall

Tuesday, February 25th - *St. Tarasius*

- 5:30 PM - New Testament Greek Class

Wednesday, February 26th - *St. Porphyrius*

- 6:45 AM - Coffee and books
- 6:30 PM - Great Vespers for St. Raphael of Brooklyn

Saturday, February 29th - *Ven John Cassian*

- 6:00 PM - Jesus Prayer
- 6:30 PM - Great Vespers