

St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Christian Church

108 East Main Street

PO Box 134

Clinton, CT 06413

Scripture Readings

2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1

Luke 6:31-36

Commemorations

The Protection (Pokrov) of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary . Apostle of the Seventy Ananias (1st c.). Ven. Romanus the Melodist ("Sweet-singer"—5th c.). Ven. Savva (Sabbas), Abbot of Vishera (Novgorod—1461). Martyr Dominus of Thessalonica (4th c.). Martyr Michael, Abbot in Armenia, and 36 Fathers with him (780-790). Commemoration of the Appearance of the Pillar with the Robe of the Lord under it at Mtskhet in Georgia (4th c.). Ven. John (Koukouzelis) the Hymnographer of Mt. Athos (Albanian—12th c.). Ven. Gregory of Lavra (Mt. Athos—12th c.).

Information

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Welcome to our Guests

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy and services. While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to participate in our prayers and hymns and to join us in venerating the Cross and receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Liturgy. Please sign our guest card and join us for refreshments and fellowship after the services.

Feel free to ask questions before or after the services. Any member of our Council or Congregation are glad to assist you. Literature about the Orthodox faith and this parish can be found in the narthex (back of the Church).

Our Parish Council Representatives are:

President - Susan Hayes
 Vice President - Deborah Bray (Memory Eternal)
 Secretary - SubDeacon Joseph Brubaker
 Treasurer - Susan Egan
 Member at Large - James Pepitone
 Member at Large - Demetra Tolis

On Sunday, October 1, during the All Night Vigil, when the church was overflowing with those at prayer, the Fool-for-Christ Saint Andrew (October 2), at the fourth hour, lifted up his eyes towards the heavens and beheld our most Holy Lady Theotokos coming through the air, resplendent with heavenly light and surrounded by an assembly of the Saints. Saint John the Baptist and the holy Apostle John the Theologian accompanied the Queen of Heaven. On bended knees the Most Holy Virgin tearfully prayed for Christians for a long time. Then, coming near the Bishop's Throne, she continued her prayer.

After completing her prayer she took her veil and spread it over the people praying in church, protecting them from enemies both visible and invisible. The Most Holy Lady Theotokos was resplendent with heavenly glory, and the protecting veil in her hands gleamed "more than the rays of the sun." Saint Andrew gazed trembling at the miraculous vision and he asked his disciple, the blessed Epiphanius standing beside him, "Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?" Epiphanius answered, "I do see, holy Father, and I am in awe."

The Ever-Blessed Mother of God implored the Lord Jesus Christ to accept the prayers of all the people calling on His Most Holy Name, and to respond speedily to her intercession, "O Heavenly King, accept all those who pray to You and call on my name for help. Do not let them go away from my icon unheard."

Saints Andrew and Epiphanius were worthy to see the Mother of God at prayer, and "for a long time observed the Protecting Veil spread over the people and shining with flashes of glory. As long as the Most Holy Theotokos was there, the Protecting Veil was also visible, but with her departure it also became invisible. After taking it with her, she left behind the grace of her visitation."

At the Blachernae church, the memory of the miraculous appearance of the Mother of God was remembered. In the fourteenth century, the Russian pilgrim and clerk Alexander, saw in the church an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos praying for the world, depicting Saint Andrew in contemplation of her.

Saint Romanus the Melodist was born in the fifth century in the Syrian city of Emesa of Jewish parents. After moving to Constantinople, he became a church sacristan in the temple of Hagia Sophia. The monk spent his nights alone at prayer in a field or in the Blachernae church beyond the city. Saint Romanus was not a talented reader or singer. Once, on the eve of the Nativity of Christ, he read the kathisma verses. He read so poorly that another reader had to take his place. The clergy ridiculed Romanus, which devastated him. On the day of the Nativity, the Mother of God appeared to the grief-stricken youth in a vision while he was praying before her Kyriotissa icon. She gave him a scroll and commanded him to eat it. Thus was he given the gift of understanding, composition, and hymnography. That evening at the all-night Vigil Saint Romanus sang, in a wondrous voice, his first Kontakion: "Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One..." All the hymns of Saint Romanus became known as kontakia, in reference to the Virgin's scroll. Saint Romanus was also the first to write in the form of the Oikos, which he incorporated into the all-night Vigil at his places of residence (In Greek, "oikos"). For his zealous service Saint Romanus was ordained as a deacon and became a teacher of song. Until his death, which occurred about the year 556, the hierodeacon Romanus the Melodist composed nearly a thousand hymns, many of which are still used by Christians to glorify the Lord. About eighty survive.



Please continue to pray for...

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Subdeacon Joseph, Sophia, Robert, Ann, Daria, Dori, John, Evelyn, June, Nina, Joan, John, Alex, Alan, Luke, Kathryn, Anastasia, Glenn, Veronica, Darlyne, Irene, Nancy, Dionysian, Elena, Jevon, Ivan and Joscean. And for... John, Jennifer, Nicholas, Isabel, Elizabeth, John, Jordan, Michael, Lee, Eva, Neil, Gina, Joey, Michael, Madelyn, Sofie, Katrina, Olena, Valeriy, Olga, Tatiana, Dimitri, Alexander and Maxim.

Deborah Bray, may her memory be eternal!

Anniversary of the repose of Nadine Faro.

This week we celebrate:

Luba and Alex Martins on the occasion of their anniversary.

This week's services and events

Tuesday, October 3, 2017

8:30a - Daily Matins

7:00p - Deanery Meeting

Wednesday, October 4, 2017

4:30p - Open Doors

6:00p - General Confession

Thursday, October 5, 2017

8:30a - Daily Matins

6:00p - Great Vespers (St Innocent)

Friday, October 6, 2017

8:30a - Akathist for St Innocent

Saturday, October 7, 2017

5:30p - Great Vespers

Sunday, October 8, 2017

9:30a - Divine Liturgy

Church School to follow

Fellowship and Stewardship Ministry

Announcements

We are in need of replacing three positions on the Parish Council for next year. Demetra Tolis' and Deborah Bray's terms each conclude, and we will need to fill the remainder of Bill Brubaker's term (1 year) as he will not be able to complete the work he started.

Story for Body and Soul

Storytelling is a characteristic feature of our Orthodox Tradition. It is an ancient and effective means of sharing high ideals, universal truths, with the common man through images and examples relative to his experience in daily life. Not only is our history replete with books full of stories about holy desert dwellers, repentant sinners, sayings and anecdotes of anchorites and hermits, but the Gospel itself, Christ's own teachings, are dispensed in the form of story, in parables.

The parables Christ describes in the Gospels contain profound depths of spiritual insight and wisdom, only discernible to those who wish to seek the truth. Parables are straightforward enough that the carnal man (i.e., the non-spiritual person) would believe he understands Christ's teaching because, on the surface, he does. However, in reality the mystery of their depth remains hidden from him.

And the disciples came, and said unto him, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" He answered and said unto them, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." (Matt. 13:10-11)

Every aspect of the spiritual life requires effort. And so, it should not surprise us that even grasping the deeper meaning of parables obliges humble-mindedness and spiritual insight. To him who makes the effort to dig deeper, Christ reveals hidden, divine truths: "He that has ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 11:15).

In a similar fashion, stories of Orthodox life, mindset, and spiritual realities provide two layers of insight. The first is the basic level of understanding: "That's a nice story," is perhaps (at best) the impression a non-spiritual person has. The second layer, however, is capable of penetrating the heart. The content of the story first enters the intellectual mind and then, for those well-disposed, proceeds to have an effect (whether or not the person is cognizant of it) on the inner man.

Like all spiritual things, there is the exterior and the interior. Like Christ's parables, stories of spiritual depth offer both.

When asked which was more important for salvation, bodily asceticism or interior vigilance, Saint Agathon said, "Man is like a tree. Bodily asceticism is the foliage, but interior vigilance is the fruit. Holy Scripture says that 'every tree which does not bring forth good fruit shall be cut down and thrown into the fire' (Mt. 3:10). Therefore, we should focus our attention on the fruit. But a tree also needs the protection of its foliage, which is bodily asceticism."

Obviously, Abba Agathon is speaking here of external good works and internal spiritual works, but the idea is the same. Man is of two natures: bodily and spiritual. Stories and parables that provide two layers speak to man as consisting of both body and soul.