



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

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Fr Steven Hosking

Rector

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Services Schedule

Please see our [online calendar](#) for dates and times of Feast Day services.

Bulletin for Sunday, June 23, 2019

Welcome



Jesus Christ taught us to love and serve all people, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. To understand that, we need to look no further than to the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-

37). Every time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, it is offered "*on behalf of all, and for all.*" As Orthodox Christians we stand against racism and bigotry. All human beings share one common identity as children of God.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatian 3:28)

Weekly Services

Tuesdays at 8:30a - Daily Matins

Wednesdays at 6:00p - Daily Vespers (The Church is open at 4:30p for "Open Doors" - confession, meditation and reflection).

Thursday at 8:30a - Daily Matins

Saturday at 5:30p - Great Vespers

Sunday at 9:30a - Divine Liturgy

Members of our Parish Council are:

Greg Jankura - Council President

Michael Kuziak - Council Vice President

Natalie Kucharski - Council Treasurer

Glenn PenkoffLidbeck - Council Secretary

Kyle Hollis - Member at Large

Roderick Seurattan - Member at Large

Pastoral Care - General Information

- *Emergency Sick Calls* can be made at any time. Please call Fr Steven at (860) 866-5802, when a family member is admitted to the hospital.
- *Anointing in Sickness*: The Sacrament of Unction is available in Church, the hospital, or your home, for anyone who is sick and suffering, however severe.
- *Marriages and Baptisms* require early planning, scheduling and selections of sponsors (crown bearers or godparents). See Father before booking dates and reception halls!
- *Funerals* are celebrated for practicing Orthodox Christians. Please see Father for details. The Church opposes cremation; we cannot celebrate funerals for cremations.

Announcements

On Sunday, June 30th, Anastasia Elliott and Malcolm Littlefield will be joined in marriage through the sacrament of matrimony. As is the practice of the Church, this announcement is made three weeks before the date of the service.

Reminder: please remember to keep up with your pledges over the course of the summer. If you are going to miss consecutive Sundays, please consider mailing in your pledge. It is important that we maintain a fluid cash flow.

The visitation to Holy Ghost Church, in Bridgeport, on Saturday, July 13th, has been canceled due to a lack of response/interest.

We are asking, once again, for donations of port wine for the oblation, and votive candles. Please see Fr Steven for details if you would like to participate in this stewardship opportunity.

There is apparently no interest in the creation of a new photo directory in commemoration of the 25th anniversary.

Feast of All Saints of America Pilgrimage with the Holy Relics - Hosted by All Saints of America Orthodox Christian Church in Salisbury, CT

Sunday, June 30, 2019 at 3 PM
All Saints of America Orthodox Christian Church in Salisbury, CT
313 Twin Lakes Rd, PO Box 45, Salisbury, Connecticut 06068

With Humility and Thanksgiving to God, you are invited to join us in celebration of the Feast of All Saints of America!

3:00pm Small Paraklesis to the Most Holy Theotokos

Prayer seeking the consolation of the Theotokos for the ill, those in sorrow or distress, and for our Bishop, Clergy, and all the faithful

4:00pm Akathist to the Saints of North America with the veneration of the Holy Relics of the Saints of North America:

The relics present are: St. Herman,

St. Innocent, St. Alexis, St. Raphael, St. Sebastian, St. Tikhon, St. Vasili, St. Nicholai, St. Madarije, St. John

Saints and Feasts



June 23

The Sunday of All Saints

Honouring the friends of God with much reverence, the Prophet-King David says, "But to me, exceedingly honourable are Thy friends, O Lord"

(Ps. 138:16). And the divine Apostle, recounting the achievements of the Saints, and setting forth their memorial as an example that we might turn away from earthly things and from sin, and emulate their patience and courage in the struggles for virtue, says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every burden, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).

This commemoration began as the Sunday (Synaxis) of All Martyrs; to them were added all the ranks of Saints who bore witness (the meaning of "Martyr" in Greek) to Christ in manifold ways, even if occasion did not require the shedding of their blood.

Therefore, guided by the teaching of the Divine Scriptures and Apostolic Tradition, we the pious honour all the Saints, the friends of God, for they are keepers of God's

commandments, shining examples of virtue, and benefactors of mankind. Of course, we honour the known Saints especially on their own day of the year, as is evident in the Menologion. But since many Saints are unknown, and their number has increased with time, and will continue to increase until the end of time, the Church has appointed that once a year a common commemoration be made of all the Saints. This is the feast that we celebrate today. It is the harvest of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world; it is the "much fruit" brought forth by that "Grain of wheat that fell into the earth and died" (John 12:24); it is the glorification of the Saints as "the foundation of the Church, the perfection of the Gospel, they who fulfilled in deed the sayings of the Saviour" (Sunday of All Saints, Doxasticon of Vespers).

In this celebration, then, we reverently honour and call blessed all the Righteous, the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Shepherds, Teachers, and Holy Monastics, both men and women alike, known and unknown, who have been added to the choirs of the Saints and shall be added, from the time of Adam until the end of the world, who have been perfected in piety and have glorified God by their holy lives. All these, as well as the orders of the Angels, and especially our most holy Lady and Queen, the Ever-virgin Theotokos Mary, do we honour today, setting their life before us as an example of virtue, and entreating them to intercede in our behalf with God, Whose grace and boundless mercy be with us all. Amen.



June 24

Nativity of the Forerunner John the Baptist

He that was greater than all who are born of women, the Prophet who received God's testimony that he

surpassed all the Prophets, was born of the aged and barren Elizabeth (Luke 1: 7) and filled all his kinsmen, and those that lived round about, with gladness and wonder. But even more wondrous was that which followed on the eighth day when he was circumcised, that is, the day on which a male child receives his name. Those present called him Zacharias, the name of his father. But the mother said, "Not so, but he shall be called John." Since the child's father was unable to speak, he was asked, by means of a sign, to indicate the child's name. He then asked for a tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And immediately Zacharias' mouth was opened, his tongue was loosed from its silence of nine months, and filled with the Holy Spirit, he blessed the God of Israel, Who had fulfilled the promises made to their fathers, and had visited them that were sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, and had sent to them the light of salvation. Zacharias prophesied concerning the child also, saying that he would be a Prophet of the Most High and Forerunner of Jesus Christ. And the child John, who was filled with grace, grew and waxed strong in the Spirit; and he was in the wilderness until the day of his showing to Israel (Luke 1:57-80). His name is a variation of the Hebrew "Johanan," which means "Yah is gracious."

Parish Calendar

Service and Events

June 23 to July 1, 2019

Sunday, June 23

The Sunday of All Saints

Luke Hosking

Tina Roman

John Krawchuk

Buildings and Grounds Ministry Meeting

9:15AM Reading of the 3rd Hour

9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, June 24

Nativity of the Forerunner John the Baptist

Nativity of St John the Baptist

Tuesday, June 25

Leavetaking of the Nativity of the

Forerunner John the Baptist

Olga Kucharski

8:30AM Daily Matins

6:30PM Parish Council

Wednesday, June 26

David the Righteous of Thessalonika

4:30PM Open Doors

6:00PM Evening Prayers

Thursday, June 27

Beth Veneri

Samson the Hospitable

St. Joanna the Myrrhbearer

8:30AM Daily Matins

Friday, June 28

Finding of the Relics of Cyrus and John the Unmercenary

Saturday, June 29

Akathist to Sts Peter & Paul
Peter and Paul, the Holy Apostles
Sts Peter and Paul
6:00PM Great Vespers

Sunday, June 30

Synaxis of the Twelve Holy Apostles
9:15AM Reading of the 3rd Hour
9:30AM Divine Liturgy
2:00PM Wedding of Anastasia Elliott and
Malcolm Littlefield

Monday, July 1

Cosmas & Damian the Holy Unmercenaries

Prayers, Intersessions and Commemorations



William, Sophia, Robert,
Ann, Evelyn, Nina, John,
Alex, Vincent, James,
Luke, Aaron, Kathryn,
Anastasia, Malcolm,
Veronica, Richard,
Darlyne, Irene, Nancy,
Susanne

All of our College

Students: Alex, Sam, Nadia, Isaac and
Matthew.

—
Many years! John Krawchuk, Luke Hosking
and Tina Roman on the occasion of their
birthdays; and John Skrobat on the occasion of
his Name's Day.

—
Pray for: All those confined to hospitals,

nursing homes, and their own homes due to
illness; for all those who serve in the armed
forces; widows, orphans, prisoners, victims of
violence, and refugees;

All those suffering chronic illness, financial
hardship, loneliness, addictions, abuse,
abandonment and despair; those who are
homeless, those who are institutionalized, those
who have no one to pray for them;

All Orthodox seminarians & families; all
Orthodox monks and nuns, and all those
considering monastic life; all Orthodox
missionaries and their families.

All those who have perished due to hatred and
intolerance and all those departed this life in
the hope of the Resurrection.

—
Today we commemorate:

All Saints. Martyr Agrippina of Rome (253-
260). Righteous Artemii of Verkol'sk (1545).
Translation of the Relics of St. Herman,
Archbishop of Kazan' (1567). Martyrs
Eustochius, Gaius, Probus, Lollius, and Urban,
of Ancyra (4th c.). Synaxis of the Saints of
Vladimir.

Hymns of the Day

Tone 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!
You accepted the three day burial to free us
from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to
You!

Tone 4 Troparion (from the Pentecostarion)

As with fine porphyry and royal purple,
Your Church has been adorned with Your
martyr's blood shed through-out all the world.
She cries to You, O Christ God:
"Send down Your bounties on Your people, //
grant peace to Your habitation and great
mercy to our souls!"

Tone 8 Kontakion (from the Pentecostarion)

The universe offers You the God-bearing
Martyrs
as the first fruits of creation, O Lord and
Creator.
By their prayers keep Your Church, Your
habitation, in abiding peace //
through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One!

Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him
in the highest! Rejoice in the Lord, O you
righteous; praise befits the just! Alleluia,
Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 4th Tone. Psalm 67.35,26.

God is wonderful among his saints.

Verse: Bless God in the congregations.

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to
the Hebrews 11:33-40; 12:1-2.**

Brethren, all the saints through faith
conquered kingdoms, enforced justice,
received promises, stopped the mouths of
lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge
of the sword, won strength out of weakness,
became mighty in war, put foreign armies to
flight. Women received their dead by
resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to
accept release, that they might rise again to a
better life. Others suffered mocking and
scourging, and even chains and imprisonment.
They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they
were tempted, they were killed with the
sword; they went about in skins of sheep and
goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom
the world was not worthy - wandering over
deserts and mountains and in dens and caves
of the earth. And all these, though well
attested by their faith, did not receive what
was promised, since God had foreseen
something better for us, that apart from us
they should not be made perfect. Therefore,
since we are surrounded by so great a cloud
of witnesses, let us also lay aside every
weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let
us run with perseverance the race that is set
before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and
perfecter of our faith.

Gospel Reading

The Sunday of All Saints

**The Reading is from Matthew 10:32-33;
37-38; 19:27-30**

The Lord said to his disciples, "Every one who
acknowledges me before men, I also will
acknowledge before my Father who is in
heaven; but whoever denies me before men,

I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." Then Peter said in reply, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you. What then shall we have?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

Wisdom of the Fathers

For in a contest there is much labor needed--and after the contest victory falls to some, to others disgrace. Is the palm ever given or the crown granted before the course is finished? ... Therefore no one can receive a reward, unless he has striven lawfully; nor is the victory a glorious one, unless the contest also has been toilsome.

St. Ambrose of Milan

Chapter 15, Three Books on the Duties of the Clergy, 4th century

AT all times indeed, but especially then when

I reflect upon the achievements of the saints, it comes over me to feel despondency concerning my own condition, because we have not even in dreams experienced the things among which those men spent their whole lives, not paying the penalty of sins, but always doing rightly and yet always afflicted...For "God" (he says) "has provided some better thing for us." In order that they might not seem to have the advantage of us from being crowned before us, He appointed one time of crowning for all; and he that gained the victory so many years before, receives his crown with thee. Seest thou His tender carefulness?

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 28 on Hebrews 11, 4th Century

Reflection



Everyday
Holiness: Homily
for the Sunday of
All Saints in the
Orthodox Church

June 3, 2018 · Fr.

Philip LeMasters



Hebrews 11:33-12:2; Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38; 19:27-30

If you are like me, sometimes when you read the lives of the saints you shake your head and think, "I could never do anything like that." Many endured horrible tortures to the point of death because they refused to deny Christ. Others denied themselves food, clothing, and shelter in ways that seem beyond the strength of human beings. Some accepted insult and abuse while forgiving their tormentors and turning the other cheek in a fashion that seems not of this world. As today's epistle reading reminds us, the Old Testament saints endured such trials purely in anticipation of the coming of the Savior. Most of us, who have received the fullness of the promise in Christ, cannot fathom how we could be nearly as faithful as was this cloud of witnesses who point us by their examples and prayers to commend our lives to Christ.

On this Sunday of All Saints, we commemorate all those who have united themselves to the Lord to the point that they have become radiant with His holiness by the power of the Holy Spirit, including those whose are not formally canonized as saints

by the Church. The canonized saints are like the members of the hall of fame who stand as shining examples of obedience to the Lord. We celebrate them because their lives are such vivid icons of what it means for a human being to become a partaker of the divine nature by grace. We do not know the names of all the saints, of course. Not all who are illumined with the divine glory are known publically as such; of course, the point of holiness is never simply to draw attention to oneself. It is, instead, to be faithful in offering our lives to Christ. Only He knows the names and number of those Who have done that, for He alone knows our hearts.

If we want to join their number, then we must attend carefully to Christ's teachings today in the gospel reading. "Everyone who acknowledges Me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father Who is in heaven; but whoever denies Me before men, I also will deny before My Father Who is in heaven." No doubt, these words concern the importance of remaining faithful to the Lord even in the face of fierce persecution. Martyrs and confessors continue to refuse to deny Him, regardless of the physical abuse they suffer in many countries around the world. But we would let ourselves off the hook by thinking that this teaching refers only to those who lives are literally at risk for being faithful Christians. We must also ask whether we acknowledge Him before our neighbors every day of our lives in what we say and do. It is only our pride that makes us think that true faithfulness must be dramatic and spectacular. Most of us struggle to be faithful even in our routine trials and temptations. We will fail to unite ourselves to Christ in holiness if we fail to see that the most common challenges that we face are our opportunities to acknowledge that

we belong to Him, and not simply to ourselves.

The Savior said, “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.” There is nothing wrong, of course with loving our parents or our children, but if we are to become radiant with the holiness of God, we must keep even our strongest loves in proper order. We must remember that our parents, children, and spouses are gifts of God to us. His love is obviously the ground of all love worthy of the name. Our calling is not to worship people or make them ends in themselves, but to relate to them in a way that fulfills God’s gracious purposes for them and us. If we make false gods out of others, we will make them miserable and probably drive them away. And since God created us in His image and likeness, we will learn the hard way that we will never find fulfillment in anyone but Him.

“People pleasing” is quite dangerous because it is ultimately a self-centered form of idolatry in which we crave the approval of others to the point that we will sacrifice anything for it. Instead of offering even our most prized and intimate relationships to the Lord for His healing and blessing, we end up offering ourselves to others, willing to compromise our faithfulness for the sake of giving whomever we want to impress what we think they want. That is not taking up our crosses, but sacrificing our obedience to the Savior in order to serve lesser gods. And since what drives this attitude is our self-centered desire for the approval of others, it is ultimately a way of worshiping ourselves.

The Lord said that, “everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My Name’s sake, will receive a hundred fold, and inherit eternal life.” That is not only a promise for those who have physically given up their families and possessions, but also for those who have made the less dramatic sacrifice of putting Christ first in how they treat and speak to their spouse, children, family members, and friends. It is a promise for those who have denied themselves in order to have more time, energy, and resources to share with the poor, sick, and lonely. It is a promise for those who turn away from self-centeredness by offering themselves to the Lord in daily prayer, regular worship, and conscientious fasting. Too often we think that holiness occurs only within the context of the four walls of the Church. If we are to take up our crosses and follow Christ, we must also learn to see the infinite opportunities of dying to self out of love for Him and our neighbors in our daily lives. That means we must take a painfully honest look at ourselves. For example, we may enjoy filling our minds with entertainment—such as news, social media, video games, film, etc.—that only inflames passions of worry, fear, hate, envy, and lust. If so, we need to turn away from it as we focus on the words of the Jesus Prayer or at least something else that does not inflame our passions. If we cannot learn to make such small sacrifices, we will never have the strength to make larger ones.

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Regardless of our age, we likely are close to people whose values and way of life are apparently not consistent with obedience to Christ. Even as we must not condemn them personally, we must resist the subtle temptation to compromise our faithfulness to the Lord in what we say and do in order to gain their approval. It is one thing to show everyone Christ's love as best we can, but another to fail to acknowledge Him by engaging in conduct and conversation that

contradict our primary loyalty to Him. That would be a form of putting other people, and ultimately ourselves, before God, which is a path only to greater weakness for them and us. We must all discern mindfully and prayerfully whether we are acknowledging Christ in situations where it is much easier to act and speak as though He were not our Lord. We must all be willing to take up the cross of obedience to Him even if it means that we will be met with disapproval.

“Many that are first will be last, and the last first.” The Savior's statement applies to all who have put Him first in their lives, for doing so requires sacrificing much that the world worships. It is obviously the case for martyrs and confessors to this very day, but also applies to everyone who sacrifices, even in small ways, in order to seek first the Kingdom of God. When we direct our time, energy, and attention to serve Christ, His Church, and our neighbors in whom He is present, we take a lower place in the estimation of the world. When we refuse to sacrifice ourselves on the altars of conventional accounts of success and happiness, we embrace the humility of Christ. Even when we do so in seemingly ordinary ways, we take step in running “with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfection of our faith.” That is how, we too, may join that great cloud of witnesses who have become radiant with the holiness of our Lord. Nothing dramatic or spectacular is required, but only true faithfulness.