



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

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Services Schedule

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

Bulletin for Sunday, October 04, 2020

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

During this COVID era, services dates and times are subject to change. Please read the schedule provided withing the bulletin itself for the dates and times of services, and whether they will be held "in person" or streamed via Zoom.

Members of our Parish Council are:

Joseph Barbera - Council Member at Large
Dori Kuziak - Council Secretary
Natalie Kucharski - Council Treasurer
Glenn PenkoffLidbeck - Council President
Kyle Hollis - Member at Large
Roderick Seurattan - Council Vice President

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

Saturday Great Vespers

This evening service is now open to the community to attend in person. COVID restrictions are still in effect; face masks, hand-washing and temperature checks are required. You do not, however, have to let me know in advance if you wish to attend - simply sign in upon entering the church.

Book Study

We continue our study of the work of St. Innocent: Indication of the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven. This is a brief read, and full of interesting discussion points. There is a copy of this work, as well as "points of reflection" in our parish shared folder. I encourage you to join our discussions every Wednesday evening (after Evening Prayers @ 6:30p) or Thursday morning (after Daily Matins @ 8:30a) as they are very open ended.

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Metropolitan Theodosius, Archpriest Dennis, Deacon Timothy, Evelyn, Katheryn, Anne, Veronica, Richard, Nancy, Susann, Carol, Luke, Aaron, Alexander, Gail, Vincent, Nina, Ellen, Maureen Elizabeth, Christopher, Joshua, Jennifer Petra, Olivia, Jessica ,Sean, Sarah, Justin, Arnold, Michael, Kirk, Carol-Anne, Anthony, Natasha, Janice, Gene, John

The newly departed and ever memorable Nina and the 40th day of the departure of Robert;

Many Years! to Vincent Melesko and Loyd Davis on the occasion of their birthdays.

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- 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:

Hieromartyr Hierotheus, Bishop of Athens (1st c.). Uncovering of the Relics of St. Gurias, first Archbishop of Kazan, and St. Varsonóphy (Barsanuphius), Bishop of Tver' (1595). Synaxis of the Hierarchs of Kazan' (1976). Rt. Blv. Prince Vladimir Yaroslavich, Prince of Novgorod (1052). Ven. Helladius and Onesimus of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—12th-13th c.). Ven. Ammon, Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—13th c.). Martyrs Gaius, Faustus, Eusebius, and Chæremon, of Alexandria (3rd c.). Martyr Peter of Capetolis (3rd-4th c.). Martyrs Domnina and her daughters Berenice

and Prosope of Syria (305-306). Ven. Ammon (ca. 350) and Paul the Simple (4th c.), of Egypt. St. Stephen Stiljianovich of Serbia (1515).

Parish Calendar

Services and Events

October 4 to October 12, 2020

Sunday, October 4

2nd Sunday of Luke
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, October 5

Charitina the Martyr

Tuesday, October 6

The Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas
Glorification of St. Innocent, Apostle to America
8:30AM Daily Matins

Wednesday, October 7

Sergius & Bacchus the Great Martyrs of Syria
Gail Ferris - B
6:30PM General Confession

Thursday, October 8

Pelagia the Righteous
Vincent Melesko - B
8:30AM Daily Matins followed by Book Study

Friday, October 9

Archbishop Nikon - B
James the Apostle, son of Alphaeus
Glorification of St. Tikhon of Moscow

Saturday, October 10

Eulampius & Eulampia the Martyrs
Loyd Davis - B
5:00PM "40 Day" Memorial for Robert Pavlik
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, October 11

Three Holy Unmercenary Female Physicians
Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, October 12

Probus, Andronicus, & Tarachus, Martyrs of Tarsus
Marlene Melesko - B
Ed & Susan Hayes - A

Saints and Feasts

October 04

Hierotheus, Bishop of Athens

According to some, Hierotheus, like Saint Dionysius, was a member of the court of Mars Hill. Having first been instructed in the Faith of Christ by Paul, he became Bishop of Athens. He, in turn, initiated the divine Dionysius more perfectly into the mysteries of Christ; the latter, on his part, elaborated more clearly and distinctly Hierotheus' concise and summary teachings concerning the Faith. He too was brought miraculously by the power of the Holy Spirit to be present at the Dormition of the Theotokos, when, together with the sacred Apostles, he became a leader of the divine hymnody. "He was wholly transported,

wholly outside himself and was so deeply absorbed in communion with the sacred things he celebrated in hymnology, that to all who heard him and saw him and knew him, and yet knew him not, he seemed to be inspired of God, a divine hymnographer," as Dionysius says (On the Divine Names, 3:2). Having lived in a manner pleasing to God, he reposed in the Lord.

October 05

Peter, Alexis, Jonah, Hermogenes & Tikhon, Metropolitans of Moscow

The feast of the Hierarchs of Moscow was established during the reign of Tsar Theodore Ioannovich and Patriarch Job in the year 1596. Their individual feasts are: Saint Peter (+1326), December 21, and August 24, translation of holy relics; Saint Alexis (+14th cent.), February 12, and May 20, recovery of holy relics; Saint Jonah (+1461), March 31 and June 15, with the recovery of his holy relics celebrated on May 27. In 1875, at the proposal of Metropolitan Innocent of Moscow, to this feast was joined the commemoration of Saint Philip of Moscow (+1569), whose feast is kept on January 9, and the recovery of his holy relics on July 3. In more recent times, the holy Patriarchs Hermogenes (+1612) and Tikhon (+1925) have been added to the Synaxis. Saint Hermogenes, who was starved to death by the Poles, is also celebrated on February 17 and May 12, and Saint Tikhon, a confessor under the atheist yoke, on March 25. the Menaion service itself makes reference only to Saints Peter, Alexis, Jonah, and Philip.

October 06

The Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas

The name Thomas means, "twin." He was one of the Twelve, a Galilean by birth. Sophroneus (not the famous Patriarch of Jerusalem [7th Century, celebrated March 11], but a friend of Jerome's), quoted also by Jerome, says that Saint Thomas preached to the Parthians, Pesians, Medes, Hyrcanians, Bactrians, and neighbouring nations. According to Heracleon, the Apostle died a natural death; according to other accounts, he was martyred at Meliapur. His tomb was known by Saint John Chrysostom to be at Edessa in Syria, to which city his holy relics may have been translated from India in the fourth century.

October 08

Pelagia the Righteous

This Saint was a prominent actress of the city of Antioch, and a pagan, who lived a life of unrestrained prodigality and led many to perdition. Instructed and baptized by a certain bishop named Nonnus (Saint Nonnus is commemorated Nov. 10), she departed for the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem, where she lived as a recluse, feigning to be a eunuch called Pelagia. She lived in such holiness and repentance that within three or four years she was deemed worthy to repose in an odour of sanctity, in the middle of the fifth century. Her tomb on the Mount of Olives has been a place of pilgrimage ever since.

October 09

James the Apostle, son of Alphaeus

The holy Apostle James was one of the Twelve, and preached Christ to many nations, and finally suffered death by crucifixion.

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 1 Troparion (Hieromartyr Hierotheus)

We the faithful all praise Hierótheus, the disciple of Paul, Hierarch of ^Athens, the world's teacher and a preacher of the Faith,
who revealed to us Christ's Mysteries and poured forth streams of godly ^doctrine.//
His life was well-pleasing to God, Who is greatly merciful.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

Tone 8 Kontakion (Resurrection)

By rising from the tomb, You raised the dead
and resurrected Adam.
Eve exults in Your Resurrection,/
and the world celebrates Your rising from the
dead, O greatly Merciful One!

now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 8 Kontakion (Hieromartyr Hierotheus)

Hierarch of Athens, we praise you for you have
instructed us in awesome and ineffable things,
and you were revealed to be a divinely-
inspired writer of hymns.
Pray that we be delivered from every kind of
sin, so that we may cry to you://
Rejoice, divinely-wise Father Hierotheus!

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him
in the highest! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 8th Tone. Psalm 75.11,1.

Make your vows to the Lord our God and
perform them.

Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is
great in Israel.

The reading is from St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 6:16-18; 7:1.

Brethren, you are the temple of the living

God; as God said, "I will live in them and move
among them, and I will be their God, and they
shall be my people. Therefore come out from
them, and be separate from them, says the
Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will
welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and
you shall be my sons and daughters, says the
Lord Almighty."

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us
cleanse ourselves from every defilement of
body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in
the fear of God.

Gospel Reading

2nd Sunday of Luke

The Reading is from Luke 6:31-36

The Lord said, "As you wish that men would do
to you, do so to them. If you love those who
love you, what credit is that to you? For even
sinners love those who love them. And if you
do good to those who do good to you, what
credit is that to you? For even sinners do the
same. And if you lend to those from whom you
hope to receive, what credit is that to you?
Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as
much again. But love your enemies, and do
good, and lend, expecting nothing in return;
and your reward will be great, and you will be
sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the
ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even
as your Father is merciful."

Wisdom of the Fathers

The sign that thou lovest God, is this, that thou lovest thy fellow; and if thou hatest thy fellow, thy hatred is towards God. For it is blasphemy if thou prayest before God while thou art wroth. For thy heart also convicts thee, that in vain thou multipliest words: thy conscience rightly judges that in thy prayers thou profitest nought.

St. Ephraim the Syrian

ON ADMONITION AND REPENTANCE.

Let us then, bearing in mind all the things which have been said, show forth great love even towards our enemies; and let us ease away that ridiculous custom, to which many of the more thoughtless give way, waiting for those that meet them to address them first.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 18 on Matthew 5, 4th Century

Beyond the Sermon



Is a Christian obligated to face any danger openly and always be ready for death? Is dodging danger always betrayal of the faith?

With the outbreak of the epidemic, many realized that prayer is almost the main thing that is needed and that can really help. But in reality, churches were closed for parishioners, the Sacraments became difficult to access - in the time they seemed to be most needed... Many had a heavy heart: what is it, the fear of the virus turned out to be stronger than our trust in God? Doesn't it smell like apostasy from Christ? Doesn't the Gospel promise that even a hair from a person's head shall not fall on the ground without the will of the Heavenly Father (Cf. Mt. 10: 29-30.)? Doesn't the Revelation of John the Theologian say that the fearful shall have their part with the unbelievers in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone (Cf. Rev. 21: 8)?

The choice between "holy fearlessness" and "reasonable caution" is not new. It had to be made by the apostles, and then by their successors. But first of all, let's look at the example of Jesus Christ Himself. An example that every Christian, by definition, must follow.

Let's open the New Testament: The Gospel of John says that after another dispute with the Jews, Jesus walked

in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him (John 7: 1). He pretended that he would not even go to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. Go ye up unto this feast, – said Jesus to His named brothers, – I go not up yet unto this feast: for my time is not yet full come (John 7: 8).

We find another episode in the Gospel of Luke. Jesus comes to the synagogue in Nazareth, reads a fragment from the book of the prophet Isaiah and draws the attention of the audience to one extremely unpleasant for them moment: God often leaves the Israelites, confident in their righteousness and chosenness, and blesses the pagans – people who apparently are far from the true faith , but sincere and do seek God.

And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way (Luke 4:28-30).

What does it mean – passing through the midst of them? Alexander Lopukhin, Professor of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy assumed that the Lord used His divine power and, “with one imperious glance, He forced the people who were pressing Him to step back, and calmly walked them by.” Boris Gladkov, another well-known interpreter of the Gospel, expressed a similar opinion.

All this may puzzle us:

We remember that in Gethsemane, when Judas brought armed men there, the Lord did not resist them. The Apostle Peter tried to intercede for the Teacher, but He ordered him to put up again the sword into his place: Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? (Matthew 26:53-54)

Why, then, in Nazareth, the Savior, one might say, fled from the angry crowd?

Not because he “ran away from suffering” in general, but because he “waited for a certain time,” explained the interpreter of the New Testament, Blessed Theophylact Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria: “He came to suffer for us; and now, when His preaching was still [just] beginning, He should not have given Himself up to death. ”

If Christ had been thrown into a mountain abyss (or suffered some other death) at the beginning of His earthly ministry, He would not have performed that deed – the deed of saving us from sin and death – for the sake of which He came into the world. He would not have had time to gather the disciples who would become the foundation of the Church. He would not have taught them the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven (even until the very crucifixion of Christ, they did not understand what He meant talking to them about His unity with the Father and guessed when he would finally become king). And perhaps the most important thing is that it was Christ’s death on the cross outside the fence of Jerusalem that was supposed to atone for the sins of mankind; a painful and shameful death,

preceded by the betrayal of the disciple and the raging of the crowd. Why this is so is the mystery of God's Providence. But such a death of Christ was predicted by all the prophets.

Let's say Christ Himself had special reasons to avoid dying prematurely. But did He command us to flee from suffering?

The Lord warned the disciples against reckless courage. Sending them to preach in the cities of Palestine, He said: But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues<...> when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another (Mt 10:17, 23). Of course, Jesus did not teach them to be timid, "but taught them not to lightly expose themselves to danger, not to die, and not to harm those who were to benefit from preaching," - this is how St. Cyril of Alexandria explained these words in the 5th century.

Other important words Christ spoke to his disciples shortly before His death, announcing to them the impending destruction of

Jerusalem: And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled (Luke 21: 20-22).

In fact, the Lord told the disciples: flee Jerusalem at the first sign of its siege. The fate of the city is a foregone conclusion, and your faith will have to be expressed not in

heroic resistance to the enemy, but in leaving in time.

This is exactly what the Christians did during the First Jewish War, when, in response to the uprising of the Jews, the emperor Titus Vespasianus sent a punitive expedition to Judea led by his son Titus. Initially, the rebels were successful, but the Christians of Jerusalem remembered the words of Jesus and left the city in advance, while it was still possible. Then the Roman troops approached Jerusalem, stood under its walls for many months, and in August 70 they burst inside and destroyed everything in the city, including the Temple. According to the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius, during the months of the siege, more than a million Jerusalemites died - not only from hostilities, but also from hunger and diseases.

Christians, having fulfilled the will of the Lord, escaped destruction. They saved not only their lives, but also Christianity itself.

What is the conclusion from all this:

The Lord Himself has shown us an example of how to deal with danger. He never had any fear; remember how serenely He slept in the boat during the storm; how he constantly encouraged the apostles, telling them: "Do not be afraid!"; how courageously he stood before the priests and Pilate. And, nevertheless, in some situations, He clearly preferred to bypass the danger, and not overcome it heroically. Why?

Because Christ came to earth not to perform more or less petty feats and not to defeat more or less insignificant enemies.

He came to accomplish the only Feat – to give His human life for the eternal salvation of many. He came to defeat one enemy – Satan, who subjugated the entire human race to sin and death. And He was not going to waste it on trifles.

And Christ did not set the task before His disciples to ignore any danger. On the contrary, He called them to be vigilant and warned that in the “days of vengeance” prepared by God for incorrigible sinners, Christians should step aside and wait out this terrible time away.

Obviously, the Lord does not expect from us some kind of exorbitant courage (which is often associated with exorbitant pride) and does not want us to mindlessly risk, as if forcing Him to intervene in the situation and help us out when we foolishly get into trouble. Such actions would be very similar to the temptation offered to Christ by Satan in the wilderness: If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up. To this, as you remember, Jesus answered: It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God (Mt 4: 6, 7).

Translated by The Catalogue of Good Deeds
Source: <https://foma.ru/virusa-ispugalis-a-razve-hristos-hot-raz-ptalsja-izbezhat-gibeli-otvet-na-jetot-vopros-mnogih-udivit.html>