



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, April 18, 2021

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)

Members of our Parish Council are:

Joseph Barbera - Council Member at Large
Dori Kuziak - Council Secretary
Carolyn Neiss - Vice President
Marlene Melesko - Council Member at Large
Kyle Hollis - President
Roderick Seurattan - Treasurer

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

So here's the schedule for Holy Week and the "type" of service that I'm expecting.... HYBRID is both online and in person, VIRTUAL is just online.

Saturday, April 24 - Lazarus Saturday
Liturgy - 9am (Hybrid)
Vespers - 5:30pm (Hybrid)

Sunday, April 25 - Palm Sunday
Liturgy - 9:30am (Hybrid)
Bridegroom Matins of Monday - 5:30pm (Virtual)

Monday, April 26
Bridegroom Matins of Tuesday - 6:30pm (Virtual)

Tuesday, April 27
Bridegroom Matins of Wednesday - 6:30pm (Hybrid)

Wednesday, April 28
Matins of Great and Holy Thursday - 6:30pm (Virtual)

Thursday, April 29
Vespers - 8:30am (Hybrid)
Matins of Great and Holy Friday (Gospels) - 6:30p (Virtual)

Friday, April 30
Royal Hours - 8:30am (Virtual)
Great Vespers (Entombment) - 4pm (Hybrid)
Matins of Great and Holy Saturday (Lamentations) - 6:30p (Hybrid)

Saturday, May 1st
Vespers - 8:30am (Hybrid)
Paschal Nocturns and Matins - 9:30p (Hybrid)

Sunday, May 2nd
Divine Liturgy - 9:30a (Hybrid)
Paschal Vespers - 5:30p (Virtual)

Texts for the services will be posted in the parish shared folder.

Paschal baskets will be blessed on Sunday after Liturgy.

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Archpriest Dennis,
Archpriest Michael,
Deacon Timothy, Evelyn,
Katheryn, Anne, Aaron,
Veronica, Richard,
Nancy, Susanne, Carol,
Alexander, Gail, Vincent,
Nina, Ellen, Maureen,
Elizabeth, Christopher,
Joshua, Jennifer, Petra,
Olivia, Jessica, Sean,
Sarah, Justin, Arnold,
Carol-Anne, Anthony,

Natasha, Gene, John, John, Michael, Kelley,
Krisha, Alix, Natalie, Edward, Nathan, Caila,
Julianna, Paul, John, Jacob, Lynn, Anna,
Richard, Robert, Dorothy, Elaina

Many years to Christine Jankura on the occasion of her birthday!

Memory Eternal for Alla Hamisevich.

- 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, intolerance and pestilence; all those departed this life in the hope of the Resurrection.

St Mary of Egypt. Ven. John, disciple of Ven. Gregory of Decapolis (9th c.). Martyrs Victor, Zoticus, Zeno, Acindynus, and Severian, of Nicomedia (303). St. Cosmas, Bishop of Chalcedon, and his fellow ascetic, St. Auxentius (815-820). New Martyr John the New of Epirus (1526). Ven. Evfimii (Euthymius), Enlightener of Karelia; and the Righteous Anthony and Felix.

Parish Calendar

Parish Calendar

April 18 to April 26, 2021

Sunday, April 18

Repose of Alla Hamisevich
Christine Jankura
Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt
9:15AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, April 19

The Holy Hieromartyr Paphnutius

Tuesday, April 20

Theodore the Trichinas
8:30AM Daily Matins followed by Lenten

Reflection

6:30PM Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday, April 21

The Holy Hieromartyr Januarius and Those With Him

6:00PM Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts

Thursday, April 22

Theodore of Sykeon

8:30AM Daily Matins

6:30PM Evening Prayers followed by Lenten Reflection

Friday, April 23

George the Great Martyr and Triumphant

6:30PM Vespers of Lazarus Saturday

Saturday, April 24

Nicholas Chobor

Lazarus Saturday

9:00AM Divine Liturgy

5:30PM Vigil for Entrance to Jerusalem

Sunday, April 25

Daria Davis

Palm Sunday

9:30AM Divine Liturgy

5:30PM Bridegroom Matins for Monday

Monday, April 26

Holy Monday

Saints and Feasts

April 18

Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt

The memory of this Saint is celebrated on April 1, where her life is recorded. Since the end of the holy Forty Days is drawing nigh,

it has been appointed for this day also, so that if we think it hard to practice a little abstinence forty days, we might be roused by the heroism of her who fasted in the wilderness forty-seven years; and also that the great loving-kindness of God, and His readiness to receive the repentant, might be demonstrated in very deed.

April 18

Holy Father John the Righteous, disciple of St. Gregory of Decapolis

This Saint took up the monastic life from his youth and became a disciple of Saint Gregory of Decapolis (see Nov. 20). After his elder, Saint Gregory, reposed (in the first half of the ninth century), he came to Jerusalem and finally reposed in peace in the Monastery of Saint Chariton.

April 20

Zacchaeus the Apostle of Caesaria

The conversion of the publican Zacchaeus, and our Saviour's compassion for him, is narrated in the Holy Gospel (Luke 19:1-10). Afterwards he laboured as a companion of the Holy Apostles, and became first Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine.

April 23

George the Great Martyr and Triumphant

George, this truly great and glorious Martyr of Christ, was born of a father from Cappadocia and a mother from Palestine. Being a military tribune, or chiliarch (that is, a commander of a thousand troops), he was illustrious in battle and highly honoured for his courage. When he learned that the Emperor Diocletian was preparing a persecution of the Christians, Saint George presented himself publicly before the Emperor and denounced him. When threats and promises could not move him from his steadfast confession, he was put to unheard-of tortures, which he endured with great bravery, overcoming them by his faith and love towards Christ. By the wondrous signs that took place in his contest, he guided many to the knowledge of the truth, including Queen Alexandra, wife of Diocletian, and was finally beheaded in 296 in Nicomedia.

His sacred remains were taken by his servant from Nicomedia to Palestine, to a town called Lydda, the homeland of his mother, and then were finally transferred to the church which was raised up in his name. (The translation of the Saint's holy relics to the church in Lydda is commemorated on November 3; Saint Alexandra the Queen, on April 21.)

If April 23 falls on or before Great and Holy Pascha, the Feast of St. George is translated to Bright Monday.

Hymns of the Day



Tone 4 Troparion (Resurrection)

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Your Resurrection, they cast away the

ancestral curse
and elatedly told the apostles:
"Death is overthrown!
Christ God is risen, //
granting the world great mercy!"

Tone 8 Troparion (St. Mary of Egypt)

The image of God was truly preserved in you,
O Mother,
for you took up the Cross and followed Christ.
By so doing, you taught us to disregard the
flesh for it passes away;
but to care instead for the soul, for it is
immortal. //
Therefore your spirit, O holy Mother Mary,
rejoices with the angels.

Tone 4 Kontakion (Resurrection)

My Savior and Redeemer
as God rose from the tomb and delivered the
earth-born from their chains.
He has shattered the gates of hell,
and as Master, //
He has risen on the third day!

Tone 3 Kontakion (St. Mary of Egypt)

Having been a sinful woman,

you became through repentance a bride of Christ.
Having attained angelic life,
you defeated demons with the weapon of the Cross.//
Therefore, O most glorious Mary, you are a bride of the Kingdom.

(Instead of "It is truly meet...", we sing the following)

Hymn to the Theotokos

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace:
the assembly of angels and the race of men.
O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise,
the glory of virgins,
from whom God was incarnate and became a Child -
our God before the ages.
He made your body into a throne,
and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens.
All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace.
Glory to you!

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him
in the highest! (Ps. 148:1)
The righteous shall be in everlasting
remembrance! He shall not fear evil
tidings! (Ps. 111:6)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 4th Tone. Psalm 103.24,1.

O Lord, how manifold are your works. You
have made all things in wisdom.

Verse: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:11-14.

BRETHREN, when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Gospel Reading

Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt The Reading is from Mark 10:32-45

At that time, Jesus took his twelve disciples, and he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him,

and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise." And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant of James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Wisdom of the Fathers

But let no man be troubled at the apostles being in such an imperfect state. For not yet was the cross accomplished, not yet the grace of the Spirit given. But if thou

wouldest learn their virtue, notice them after these things, and thou wilt see them superior to every passion.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 65 on Matthew 20, 2,3,4,6. B#54, pp.399-401,403., 4th Century

For with this object He reveals their deficiencies, that after these things thou mightest know what manner of men they became by grace. ... No one shall sit on His right hand nor on His left.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 65 on Matthew 20, 2,3,4,6. B#54, pp.399-401,403., 4th Century

Beyond the Sermon



Reflections on Praying the Psalter

A rule of prayer is characterized above all by *rhythm*, the experience of a rule is that of submitting to the *rhythm* of it. You pray at certain times and in certain words; in these times and words begin fairly soon to give a definite pattern to one's days. When a rule of prayer is first begun, there is usually an ecstatic

period in which the prayers are resonant, profound, and extremely moving. It is exactly like falling in love: an extraordinary sweetness gives one's days vividness, depth, and perfection. You wake up into joy - not merely into happiness but into genuine joy, into something richer, sharper, and more actual than any happiness ever can be. Happiness is feeling, but joy is something greater in the same order of magnitude that a child's happiness at play is something far greater than the stuffed teddy bear he plays with. And just as a child's happiness at play may be expressed by only the tiniest outward signs, so a person experiencing the first joy of prayer may in fact be quite subdued. For the first work of spiritual joy is often very largely inward. So it was for me.

But our loving cannot remain ecstatic, nor our children play happily forever, so a rule of prayer soon moves us beyond this first joy. For the experience of prayer that follows that first joy is experience of failure, and experience in which one's own prayer is a very poor thing, with nothing to recommend it. Prayer becomes a place of struggle, not triumph, a place where you just barely keep your head above water. And most of the time you sink and are engulfed again and again by the world you have so badly made and keep on making: your world of work and family and friends and enemies. This disastrous failure also is entirely undramatic and thoroughly un-spectacular. Where it once was vast, gathered, and profound, prayer now becomes mean, scattered, and flat.

There is no way out of this. It is what the early Orthodox Fathers called *the desert*

. You cannot survive in this merciless place unless you submit to the first conditions of it: that is, unless you meet its implacable demand for an ever deeper spiritual poverty. For what the rule is drawing you toward is what Mother Maria [Lydia Gysi] calls the End-Point, that point wherein - as at your bath - you are stripped of absolutely all you possess - "except your sins, and the cry for mercy." With a slowly growing awareness - or else with a sudden shock of insight - you see that the desert is, in fact, the place where you live now - and will live for the rest of your life. Where is joy? In the *rhythm*.

Into this desert comes the voices of the great Orthodox Masters of prayer, the saints, fathers, mothers, monks, and nuns of the holy tradition. St. Innocent of Alaska says in *The Art of Prayer*: "the whole Holy Spirit teaches true prayer....A man with the Holy Spirit dwelling in him knows God and sees that He is his Father. He knows how to approach Him, how to ask and what to ask for. His thoughts in prayer are orderly, pure, and directed to the one object alone - God; and by his prayer he is truly able to do everything."

If we feel something like despair in hearing such a voice (for our thoughts and prayer are anything but quote orderly, pure, and directed"), we are also instructed. I haven't the slightest idea what sustains one in a rule of prayer. Certainly, it isn't pleasure of easily recognizable variety, for desert life is scarcely anyone's formula for personal happiness. Yet what St. Innocent here says - "by prayer he is truly able to do everything" - is illumined by a joy so profound,

so strong, and vivid that all our notions of pleasure simply vanish in the way flickers of candlelight vanished in the glaring immensity of the desert sun. You die into joy.

All the time rhythm of the rule keeps on working.

The Shield of Psalmic Prayer, by Donald Sheehan



DIocese OF NEW ENGLAND – ORTHODOX
CHURCH IN AMERICA

The Most Blessed TIKHON

*Archbishop on Washington, Metropolitan of All
America and Canada*

Locum Tenens of The Diocese of New England

Archpriest John Kreta
Chancellor

April 9, 2021

To the Clergy of the Diocese of New England,
Christ is in our midst!

As I previously indicated, I am issuing the following general directives for our parishes and institutions as we approach Holy Week and Pascha.

Over the past year, all of you have been working very diligently with your parish leadership in navigating the various synodal, diocesan, and civil guidelines. I am grateful for your careful attention to the many complexities of this process and I am confident that you will maintain this vigilance as we enter Holy Week and the Paschal season. Please continue to monitor the local civil directives as you have and observe the following basic safety measures in church:

1. Maintain 6 foot distancing between individuals or family groups;
2. Maintain the wearing of masks; clergy may choose to not wear a mask in the altar but should wear one if there is an increased number of servers;
3. If anyone is sick or presenting symptoms, they must stay home.

As you know, my directives last year were particularly restrictive and most of you did not have in-person services for Holy Week and Pascha. Our year-long experience of navigating the pandemic, your faithful application of safety measures during that time, and the increasing availability of vaccines have brought us to a point where it is possible for us to anticipate a more traditional cycle of