



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, July 04, 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

At the conclusion of Sunday's Liturgy, we will celebrate a Molieben (Service of Thanksgiving) for Independence day. I will provide the text separately.

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

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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 institutionalize, 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.

All Saints of America (All Saints of Russia). St. Andrew, Archbishop of Crete (712). Ven. Andrei Rublev (14th-15th c.). Ven. Martha, mother of Ven. Simeon the Stylite (the Younger—554). Burial of St. Andrei Bogoliubsky (1174). Uncovering of the Relics of Ven. Evfimii (Euthymius), Archimandrite, of Suzdal' (1507). Martyrs Theodotus and Theodotia at Cæsarea in Cappadocia (108). Hieromartyr Theodore, Bishop of Cyrene in Libya and with him Martyrs Cyprilla, Aroa, and Lucia (310). Ven. Tikhon, Vasily and Nikon, Monks, of Solovétsky Monastery (16th c.).

Parish Calendar

Parish Calendar

July 4 to July 19, 2021

Sunday, July 4

Christine Brubaker
2nd Sunday of Matthew
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, July 5

Athanasius of Mount Athos

Tuesday, July 6

Sisoës the Great

Wednesday, July 7

Kyriake the Great Martyr
6:30PM General Confession

Thursday, July 8

Sitka Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos
The Holy Great Martyr Procopius
8:30AM Akathist to the Sitka Theotokos
7:00PM Faith Study

Friday, July 9

The Holy Hieromartyr Pancratius, Bishop of Tauromenium in Sicily

Saturday, July 10

45 Holy Martyrs of Nikopolis, Armenia
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, July 11

3rd Sunday of Matthew
St. Olga, Princess of Russia
9:15AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, July 12

Proclus & Hilary the Martyrs of Ancyra
John Skrobat - B
8:30AM Akathist to Venerable Fr Paisios

Tuesday, July 13

Synaxis of Archangel Gabriel
6:30PM Catechism

Wednesday, July 14

Aquila the Apostle among the 70
4:30PM Open Doors

Thursday, July 15

St. Vladimir Equal to the Apostles
The Holy Martyrs Cyricus and His Mother Julitta
Skip & Deborah Bray - A
8:30AM Akathist to St Vladimir
7:00PM Faith Study

Friday, July 16

Athenogenes the Holy Martyr of Heracleopolis

Saturday, July 17

The Holy Great Martyr Marina (Margaret)
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, July 18

New Martyr Elizabeth
Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the 4th
Ecumenical Council
9:15AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, July 19

Repose of Olga Kurcharski
Macrina the Righteous, sister of St. Basil

Saints and Feasts

July 04

Andrew of Crete Author of the Great Canon

Saint Andrew was from Damascus; his parents' names were George and Gregoria. He became a cleric and secretary of Theodore and Patriarch of Jerusalem; from this, he is called "the Jerusalemite." He was present at the Sixth Ecumenical Council in Constantinople, which was convoked in 680 during the reign of Emperor Constantine IV (668-685). He became deacon of the Great Church in Constantinople, that is, the Church of the Holy Wisdom of God, then Archbishop of Crete. He reposed in 720 or 723. Beside his other sacred writings, he also composed various hymns, among which is the famous Great Canon, which is chanted during Great Lent (see the Thursday of the Fifth Week of the Fast).

July 05

Athanasius of Mount Athos

Saint Athanasius had Trebizond for his homeland. He first entered the monastic life on the mountain called Kymaeos or Kyminas, which is in Mysia of Bithynia, then he went to Mount Athos and founded a large monastery, which is known as the Great Lavra. He became so renowned for his virtue that from Rome, Calabria, Georgia, and elsewhere, rulers, men of wealth and nobility, abbots, and even bishops came to him and were subject to him. When the time for his departure was at hand, God revealed to him how it would take place, so that he was able to instruct his spiritual children not to be troubled when it should come to pass. A new church was being built for the sake of the many who came to him, and only the dome had not been finished. Together with six of the brethren, the Saint went to the top of the church to help the workmen. The dome collapsed, and they fell. Five were killed at once, and the Saint died three hours later. His holy body remained incorrupt and he worked many miracles after his death. He reposed about the end of the tenth century.

July 08

The Holy Great Martyr Procopius

The holy Martyr Procopius was born of a pious father named Christopher, but his mother Theodosia was an idolater. After Christopher's death, she presented Neanias

- for this was the Saint's name before - to Diocletian, who was at Antioch in Syria. Diocletian made him Duke of Alexandria, and sent him there to punish the Christians. On the way to Alexandria, our Lord spoke to Neanias as once He had to Saul, and turned this new persecutor to faith in Him. Neanias turned back to Scythopolis, and preached Christ. He was betrayed by his own mother, and was arrested and tormented in Caesarea of Palestine. While he was in prison, the Lord appeared to him again and gave him the new name of Procopius (which is derived from the Greek word meaning "progress, advancement"). He was brought out of prison and taken to worship the idols, but at his prayer, the idols fell; many then believed in Christ and suffered martyrdom, among them certain soldiers, twelve women of senatorial rank, and the Saint's own mother, Theodosia. Saint Procopius, after further torments and imprisonment, was beheaded about the year 290.

July 07

Kyriake the Great Martyr

Saint Kyriake was the daughter of Christian parents, Dorotheus and Eusebia. She was given her name because she was born on Sunday, the day of the Lord (in Greek, Kyriake). She contested in Nicomedia during the reign of Diocletian, in the year 300. After many bitter torments she was condemned to suffer beheading, but being granted time to pray first, she made her prayer and gave up her holy soul in peace.

Hymns of the Day



Tone 1 Troparion (Resurrection)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure body,
You rose on the third

day, O Savior,
granting life to the world.
The powers of heaven therefore cried to You,
O Giver of Life:
"Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ!
Glory to Your Kingdom!//
Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of mankind!"

Tone 8 Troparion (All Saints of America)

As the bountiful harvest of Your sowing of salvation,
the lands of North America offer to You, O Lord, all the saints who have shone in them.
By their prayers keep the Church and our land in abiding peace
through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One!

Tone 1 Kontakion (Resurrection)

As God, You rose from the tomb in glory,
raising the world with Yourself.
Human nature praises You as God, for death has vanished.
Adam exults, O Master!
Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage
and cries to You://

“You are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!”

Tone 3 Kontakion (All Saints of America)

Today the choir of Saints who were pleasing to God in the lands of North America now stands before us in the Church and invisibly prays to God for us. With them the Angels glorify Him, and all the Saints of the Church of Christ keep festival with them;// and together they all pray for us to the Pre-eternal God.

Tone 1 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us /as we have set our hope on You! (Ps. 32:22)

V. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just! (Ps. 32:1)

Tone 7 Prokeimenon (All Saints of America)

Precious in the sight of the Lord / is the death of His saints. (Ps. 115:6)

Tone 1

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

V. God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me. (Ps. 17:48)

V. He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David, His anointed, and his seed forever. (Ps. 17:51)

Tone 1

V. Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, O you

righteous! (Ps. 31:11a)

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1)

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! (Ps. 32:1)

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 1st Tone. Psalm 32.22,1.

Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us.

Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 2:10-16.

Brethren, glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps

excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

Gospel Reading

2nd Sunday of Matthew

The Reading is from Matthew 4:18-23

At that time, as Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left their boat and their father, and followed him. And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

Wisdom of the Fathers

But mark both their faith, and their obedience. For though they were in the midst of their work (and you know how greedy a thing fishing is), when they heard His command, they delayed not, ... but "they forsook all and followed," ... Because such is the obedience which Christ seeks of us, as that we delay not even a moment of time.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 14 on Matthew 4, 4th Century

Prayer, fasting, vigil and all other Christian practices, however good they may be in themselves, do not constitute the aim of our Christian life, although they serve as the indispensable means of reaching this end. The true aim of our Christian life consists in the acquisition of the Holy Spirit of God.

St. Seraphim of Sarov

The Acquisition of the Holy Spirit: Chapter 3, The Little Russian Philokalia Vol. 1; Saint Herman of Alaska Brotherhood pg. 79, 19th century

Beyond the Sermon



Hymnography of the Church as Prayer

Come, let us praise the saints of North America, holy hierarchs, venerable monastics, and glorious martyrs, pious men, women, and children, both known

and unknown!

Through their words and deeds, in various walks of life,

by the grace of the Spirit they achieved true holiness.

Now as they stand in the presence of Christ Who glorified them, //

they pray for us, who celebrate their memory
with love.

Come, let us assemble today
and glorify the luminaries of the North
American lands,
the glorious martyrs and holy bishops who
confirmed our faith,
the righteous dwellers in the wilderness and
guides of the spiritual life!
Let us cry out to them in joy://
"All Saints of North America, known and
unknown, pray to God for us!"

As the brightest sun,
as the brilliance of the Morning Star,
the precious feast of the saints of North
America has dawned for us,
to illumine us and to set our hearts on fire,
to imitate their godly lives,//
and to follow their example of zeal for God.

Come, let us assemble today
and let us praise the elect of North America!
Having fought the good fight, you have
persevered in the faith,
receiving your crowns of victory from God.
Beseech Him to deliver from every calamity
and sorrow//
all who keep your holy memory in faith and in
love!

The earth rejoices and the heavens are glad,
O venerable Saints of America,
praising your labors and lives, your spiritual
fortitude and purity of heart.
By driving away a multitude of demons
and enlightening many people with the light of
the Orthodox Faith,//
you have confirmed our land.

Rejoice, O mountains of Pennsylvania;
leap for joy, O waters of the Great Lakes;
rise up, O fertile plains of Canada;
for the elect of Christ who dwelt in you are
glorified,
men and women who left their homes for a
new land!
With faith, hope, and patience as their armor,
they courageously fought the good fight.
Comforted by the beauty of the Orthodox
Faith,
they labored in mines and mills, they tilled the
land,
they braved the challenges of the great cities,
enduring many hardships and sufferings.
Never failing to worship God in spirit and
truth
and unyielding in devotion to His most pure
Mother,
they erected many temples to His glory.
Come, O assembly of the Orthodox,
and with love let us praise the holy men,
women, and children,
those known to us and those known only to
God,
and let us cry out to them://
"Rejoice, all Saints of North America and pray
to God for us!"

Rejoice, O continent of North America,
illumined by the holy Gospel!
Rejoice, every province, state, city, and town,
which raised up citizens of the heavenly
Kingdom!
Rejoice, our venerable Father Herman, first
saint of our land!
Rejoice O Martyrs Juvenaly and Peter,
for your blood has watered the seed of faith

planted in Alaska!

Rejoice, O holy Hierarchs: Innocent, Tikhon,
Nicholas, Raphael, and John!

Rejoice, O holy Fathers Alexis, John, and all
you righteous priests!

Rejoice, all Saints of North America,
for your light has shone forth to the ends of
the earth!//

We beseech you to pray to Christ our God that
our souls may be saved!

Rejoice, O faithful Church in the North
American lands!

Rejoice, O venerable Father Herman of Alaska,
for you were the first to intercede in our land,
guiding our people to the True Faith!

Through your miracles and wonders,
the light of Christ has illumined all the ends of
our land.//

We beseech you to pray to Christ our God, to
grant our souls great mercy!

Rejoice, all Saints of North America,
precious adornments of our lands;
the unshakable pillars of our Church;
the glory of the Orthodox, the fountains of
wonders;
inexhaustible streams of love and virtue;
brilliant lights and humble instruments of the
Holy Spirit;
heavenly men and earthly angels;
the true friends of Christ!//
Fervently beseech Him to grant mercy to
those who honor you!

Most glorious saints and guardians of the
North American lands,
spiritual and heavenly City of Zion on high;
beacons for those who dwelt in the darkness
of despair;
sacred coals of repentance; precious pearls

of virtue;
defenders of widows and orphans and the
oppressed;
exemplary followers of the teachings of the
Church,
and joyful keepers of abstinence:
Pray without ceasing to Christ,
beseeching Him to grant unity and stability to
our Church,//
and peace and great mercy to our land!

Today, as we celebrate the memory of all the
Saints of North America,
let us praise them as is fitting,
for they lived all of Christ's beatitudes.
Deprived of material wealth, they became rich
in spirit;
meek, they inherited the earth;
mourning, they were comforted;
thirsting for righteousness, they were
satisfied;
merciful, they obtained mercy;
pure in heart, they beheld the image of God;
as peacemakers, they became God's children;
persecuted and tortured for righteousness'
sake, they now rejoice in heaven;//
and they pray fervently to the Lord that He
may have mercy on our souls.

The Outer Signs are Only to Remind Us of the Inner Things

Department of
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH in AMERICA

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.



"The outer signs are only to remind us of the inner things" are words written by the Nun Martyr and Grand Duchess Elizabeth, who was martyred with her companion, the Nun Barbara.

Because Saint Elizabeth was born into Western European royalty and raised as a Protestant, she struggled to explain her conversion to Orthodoxy to her relatives, among them Queen Victoria. Some of them believed that her Russian husband, the Grand Duke Sergei, had compelled her to convert. Others, apparently, thought that she had been dazzled by the splendor of Orthodox worship. It was to them that she wrote, according to Ludmila Koehler's book "Saint Elisabeth the New Martyr", these words: "You tell me that the outer brilliance of the church charmed me...in that you are mistaken—nothing in the outer signs attracted me. The outer signs are only to remind us of the inner things."

Many people do not understand why churches, vestments and sacred vessels should be beautiful. They consider these things to be unnecessary "trappings." Yet God Himself gave instructions for the building of a richly-furnished tabernacle, and vestments for the "glorious adornment" of the priests, in Exodus 25.

Jesus reproved the disciples when they questioned the "waste" of costly oil used by a woman to anoint Him. They complained that it could have been sold for a good deal of money which would help the poor. But He said, in Matthew 26:11, "For you will always have the poor with you, but you will not always have Me." The Church understands from this that when we have the privilege of being with the Lord in church, everything from the choir's singing to the well-polished candlestands should be as beautiful as we can make it. Near the end of every Liturgy we ask God to "sanctify those who love the beauty of Your house."

But beautiful things are not ends in themselves. They are there to "remind us of the inner things" as Saint Elizabeth wrote. We are not meant to get caught up in beautiful externals, but we are meant always to remember the glory of the Kingdom of God, toward which the beauty of those externals points us.

Saint Elizabeth understood that, and she also understood what Jesus meant by saying, "For you always have the poor with you." Creating beauty in the church doesn't exempt us from taking care of those in need; we are supposed to do both. The women's monastery founded by Saint Elizabeth served some of the most destitute people in Moscow while at the same time holding services in a beautifully-appointed chapel.

Troparion - Tone 4

Emulating the Lord's self-abasement on the earth,
You gave up royal mansions to serve the poor and disdained,
Overflowing with compassion for the suffering,
And taking up a martyr's cross,
In your meekness
You perfected the Saviour's image within yourself,
Therefore, with Barbara, entreat Him to save us all, O wise Elizabeth.

We should always be able to answer critics of the "fancy trappings" of Orthodox worship by truthfully saying that we do