



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, January 09, 2022

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
Susan Davis- Council Member at Large
Carolyn Neiss - President
Marlene Melesko - Vice President
Susan Egan - Treasurer
Dn Timothy Skuby - Secretary

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

St. Alexis Parish Council Meeting December 16, 2021

-- The Council, along with Father Steven, decided on the following positions for the existing and new Council members for next year.

President: Carolyn Neiss Vice President: Marlene Melesko Secretary: Father Deacon Timothy Treasurer: Susan Egan Members at Large: Susan Davis & Joseph Barbera

-- Father and Carolyn thanked the outgoing Council members Kyle Hollis, Roderick Seurattan and Dori Kuziak for their hard work and stewardship while serving on the Council as well as Roderick, Natalie Kucharski and Sue Egan for putting together the budget for 2022.

-- Father informed the Council that

the poinsettias decorating the Church for Christmas were donated by Art Navarro in memory of his wife, Joan.

-- Outreach Committee will get together at the beginning of the new year to discuss where our focus should be in 2022.

-- Father Steven informed the Council that only 14 pledge forms (representing 20 parishioners) have been submitted. Father will again put a request in the bulletin for parishioners to return their pledge forms so the treasurer can see what our income will be for 2022 as well as the Stewardship forms to be able to identify the committee members.

-- Christmas Eve Service will begin at 3:00 pm. Christmas morning Liturgy will begin at 8:30 am.

-- Father informed the Council that he monitors the COVID positivity rate for CT and Clinton daily and if it gets to 10%, he will likely close the church.

-- Father Deacon Timothy thanked Greg Hawkins for fixing the Royal Doors. They now open and close as intended.

Kuziak's

The Kuziak family has now made their residence in Florida. While they are no longer members of our parish, we will see them again, most assuredly! There contact information is

Kuziak's
315 Estuary Dr
Vero Beach Fl, 32963

His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon has designated Sunday, January 16, 2022 as Sanctity of Life Sunday to be observed in parishes of the OCA

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Archpriest Dennis,
Archpriest Michael,
Deacon Timothy, Evelyn,
Katheryn, Anne, Aaron,
Veronica, Richard,
Nancy, Susanne, Carol,
Alexander, Gail, Kelley,
Nina, Ellen, Maureen,
Elizabeth, Christopher,
Joshua, Jennifer, Petra,
Olivia, Jessica, Sean,
Sarah, Justin, Dayna and
Maria.

Please pray for our catecumens: Daniel,
Gregory and David.

Many Years! to Natalie Kurcharski on the
occasion of her Name's Day (Tatiana) and Gail
Kuziak on the occasion of her birthday.

- 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.

Afterfeast of the Theophany. Sunday after Theophany. Martyr Polyeuktos of Melitēné in Armenia (259). Hieromartyr Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow and All Russia (1570). Prophet Shemaiah (Samaia, Semeias—3[4] Kings 12:22—10th c. B.C.). St. Peter, Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia (4th c.). St. Eustratius the Wonderworker (9th c.).

Parish Calendar

Schedule of Services and Events

January 9 to January 17, 2022

Sunday, January 9

Sunday after Epiphany

9:30AM Divine Liturgy with Blessing of LIS

Monday, January 10

Afterfeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

8:30AM Akathist to St Theophan

Tuesday, January 11

Afterfeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
8:30AM Daily Matins

Wednesday, January 12

St. Tatiana
Afterfeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
4:30PM Open Doors

Thursday, January 13

Afterfeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
Ellen Page - B
8:30AM Daily Matins
6:00PM Standing Meeting w/ CN&MM

Friday, January 14

Leavetaking of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
Gail Kuziak
Stephen Wexell

Saturday, January 15

Paul of Thebes
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, January 16

12th Sunday of Luke
Sanctity of Life
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, January 17

Anthony the Great

Saints and Feasts

January 09

Polyeuctus the Martyr of Melitene in Armenia

Saint Polyeuctus, a soldier in rank, contested during the reign of Valerian, in the year 255. He was from Melitene, a city in Armenia.

January 09

Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow

Our Father among the Saints Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow, was born in 1507 of noble family, and served for a time in the royal court. While still a young man, he secretly left Moscow and entered Solovki Monastery in the north, about the year 1538, a little over a hundred years after its founding. Because of his spiritual stature he was chosen against his will to succeed Abbot Alexis in 1548. As abbot, Philip was a great builder and beautifier of Solovki Monastery. He laid the foundations for the Cathedral of the Transfiguration, constructed cells, hermitages, and a hospital for the monks and for pilgrims, established a cattle yard on one of the islands, drained swamps and connected waterways by a series of canals and dams, built a mill and various workshops, and even invented ingenious machines and implements to help the monks in their work. His fame spread, and in 1566, by the will of Tsar Ivan IV, he was raised to the rank of Metropolitan of Moscow.

Tsar Ivan the Terrible revered Philip, even as Herod had revered Saint John the Baptist, and he had been a generous benefactor of Solovki Monastery. But because the Tsar had established the oprichnina, a state within a state, giving

power to the oprichniki, who used it to oppress and rob the innocent, Philip told him the he could not be Metropolitan if the Tsar suffered the oprichniki to continue in power. This angered the Tsar, he told Philip that it was not for him to interfere in matters of state, and many hierarchs prevailed upon Philip to accept the Metropolitan's throne. But as the horrors committed by the oprichniki grew worse-thefts, false accusations, murders, and all manner of injustice and rapacity, with the knowledge of the Sovereign- Saint Philip could not remain silent. He rebuked the Tsar once and again for the reign of terror that he had brought upon his own people. The Tsar warned him to hold his peace and bless him to do as he wished. The Metropolitan answered that his silence brought sin upon the Sovereign. The Tsar threatened him with his wrath, and told him to resign his throne if he were not willing to comply. Saint Philip answered that he had not sought the Metropolitan's throne, and it was the Tsar who had deprived him of his hermitage on Solovki; but now the pastoral burden was upon him, he would not remain silent when the canons of the Church were broken.

The more the Tsar threatened Philip with his wrath, the more the holy hierarch stood fast and threatened the Tsar with judgment of God; Philip alone had the courage to rebuke the Tsar openly and oppose his iniquity. Finally the Tsar, finding false witnesses against Philip in his own monastery on Solovki, held a council against him in early November, 1568; the Saint had to endure the persecution of the Tsar who had torn him from his beloved monastery,

the betrayal of his fellow hierarchs, and the slanders of his own spiritual children. He was imprisoned in Moscow, but because of the love of the people for him the Tsar feared him even in prison, and he was transferred to a monastery in Tver, where he spent a year in great hardships and continual prayer. On December 23, 1569, a royal messenger came, asking the Metropolitan's blessing for the Tsar's expedition to Novgorod. Saint Philip told him to do that which he came to do, then raised his hands in prayer to God. The Tsar's messenger fell upon him and suffocated the holy hierarch with a pillow. In 1591 his relics were transferred to Solovki, and in 1652 to the Dormition Cathedral in Moscow; many miracles were wrought through his holy relics (See also Oct. 5 and July 3).

January 12

Tatiana the Martyr of Rome

Saint Tatiana was the daughter of a most distinguished consul of Rome. She became a deaconess of the Church, and for her confession of the Faith of Christ, she endured many torments. As she was suffering, angels punished her tormentors with the same torments they inflicted on her, until they cried out that they could no longer endure the scourges invisibly brought upon them. She was beheaded during the reign of Alexander Severus (111-135).

January 14

Sabbas (Sava), Archbishop of Serbia

Saint Sabbas (Sava), the first Archbishop and teacher of the Serbs, and the most beloved of all the Saints of Serbia, was born in 1169, and was named Rastko by his parents. He was the son of Stephen Nemanja, the ruler of Serbia, who is better known as Saint Symeon the Myrrh-streamer (see Feb. 13). As a young man, Rastko fled secretly to the Holy Mountain, Athos, to the Monastery of Saint Panteleimon. When his father learned of his flight, he sent soldiers after him. Before they could seize him, he was tonsured a monk with the name of Sabbas, after Saint Sabbas the Sanctified (celebrated Dec. 5). Soon after, he entered the Monastery of Vatopedi, where his father joined him in 1197. Together they rebuilt the Monastery of Hilandar and made it a great spiritual center for their countrymen. In 1200 Saint Symeon reposed, and his body became a source of holy myrrh; in 1204 Saint Sabbas was compelled to return to Serbia with his father's relics, that he might restore peace between his two brothers, who were struggling over the rule of the kingdom. The grace of Saint Symeon's relics, and the mediations of Saint Sabbas, healed the division between his brethren. After persuading the Emperor in Constantinople and the Ecumenical Patriarch to grant autocephaly to the Serbian Church, the Saint against his will was ordained first Archbishop of his native

land in 1219, where he labored diligently to establish the Orthodox Faith. In 1221 he crowned his brother Stephen first King of Serbia (the memory of Saint Stephen, First Crowned King of Serbia, is kept on September 24). In 1234, foreseeing by divine grace his coming departure to the Lord, he resigned the archiepiscopal throne, named his disciple Arsenius as his successor, and made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Mount Sinai; while returning through Bulgaria, he fell asleep in peace in 1236. Because he has been ever since the national hero of Serbia and an invincible bulwark strengthening the Orthodox Faith, the Moslem Turks burned his incorrupt relics in the year 1594. See also June 28.

January 14

Nina of Georgia

The holy virgin Nina was from Cappadocia. According to some, her father Zabulon was a friend of the holy Great Martyr George, whose father was a Cappadocian. The conversion of Georgia by Saint Nina is reported in the Church histories of Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret: Rufinus, writing less than a hundred years after Saint Nina, said that he heard the history in Jerusalem from a Georgian Prince named Bacurius. Saint Nina was taken captive by the Georgians (whom the Greek accounts call Iberians), and while in captivity she lived a very devout life of sobriety and virtue, praying unceasingly night and day; this drew the attention of the Georgians,

and to all who asked her about her way of life, she preached the dispensation of Christ. When she healed by her prayer a certain woman's sick child, whom no one else had been able to help, the report of her came to the ears of the Queen of Georgia, who was herself gravely afflicted with an incurable malady. She asked that the captive women be brought to her, but Saint Nina declined out of modesty, so the Queen commanded them to carry her to Nina. Saint Nina healed her immediately, and the Queen returned home in joy. When she extolled Nina and her faith to the king, he gave her no heed, although she mentioned it to him often. But while hunting in the forest, he was shrouded with an impenetrable darkness in which he lost his way, became separated from his men, and fell into despair; he made a vow that if Christ should deliver him, he would worship him alone. The light of day straightway shone again, and the king fulfilled his vow. He and the Queen were instructed in the Faith by Saint Nina, and they with the whole Georgian nation became Christ's. The King also sent an embassy to Saint Constantine the Great, informing him of their conversion, and requesting that priests be sent to Georgia. Saint Nina reposed in peace in about the year 335. The above-mentioned Church historians speak of her without calling her Nina. She is celebrated in the Roman Martyrology on December 15 under the name Christina.

Because of the Apodosis of the Feast of Holy Theophany also on the 14th of January, the liturgical services to Saint Nina are transferred to January 13th.

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 1 Troparion (Feast)

When You, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan,
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.
For the voice of the Father bore witness to You,
and called You His beloved Son;
and the Spirit in the form of a dove
confirmed the truthfulness of His word.
O Christ our God, You have revealed Yourself //
and have enlightened the world, glory to You.

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Polyeuctus)

Your holy martyr Polyeuctus, O Lord,
through his sufferings has received an incorruptible crown from You, our God.
For having Your strength, he laid low his adversaries,
and shattered the powerless boldness

of demons.//
Through his intercession, save our souls!

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 4 Kontakion (St. Polyeuctus)

When the Savior bowed His head in the
Jordan,
the heads of the dragons were crushed;//
when Polyeuctus was beheaded, the deceiver
was put to shame.

Tone 4 Kontakion (Feast)

Today You have shone forth to the world, O
Lord,
and the light of Your countenance has been
marked on us.
Knowing You, we sing Your praises:
"You have come and revealed Yourself,//
O unapproachable Light."

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

Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin
Theotokos,
more honorable than the heavenly hosts!
No tongue knows how to praise you worthily,
O Theotokos;
even angels are overcome with awe praising
you.
But since you are good, accept our faith;

for you know our love inspired by God!
You are the defender of Christians, and we
magnify you.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him
in the highest! (Ps. 148:1)
The grace of God has appeared for the
salvation of all men. (Titus 2:11)
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 Ephesians 4:7-13.

BRETHREN, grace was given to each of us
according to the measure of Christ's gift.
Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on
high he led a host of captives, and he gave
gifts to men." (in saying, "He ascended," what
does it mean but that he had also descended
into the lower parts of the earth? He who
descended is he who also ascended far above
all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)
And his gifts were that some should be
apostles, some prophets, some evangelists,
some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints
for the work of ministry, for building up the
body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity
of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of
God, to mature manhood, to the measure of
the stature

of the fullness of Christ.

Gospel Reading

Sunday after Epiphany

The Reading is from Matthew 4:12-17

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Wisdom of the Fathers

For as persons not even knowing where to put a step forward, so they sat, overtaken by the darkness.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 14 on Matthew 4, 4th Century

Take heed, then, often to come together to give thanks to God, and show forth

His praise. For when ye assemble frequently in the same place, the powers of Satan are destroyed, and the destruction at which he aims is prevented by the unity of your faith.

St. Ignatius of Antioch

Epistle to the Ephesians Ch. 13, 2nd century

Beyond the Sermon



Archpastoral Message of
His Beatitude
Metropolitan Tikhon

Sunday, January 16,
2022

To the Clergy,
Monastics, and Faithful
of the Orthodox Church

in America,

Dear Beloved Children in the Lord,

As we witness our society becoming increasingly polarized and divided, we approach the anniversary of one of the most bitter of these divisions: the legalization of abortion in the United States of America. We grieve on this anniversary for the many lives cut short, the emotional and psychological devastation done to so many women, the numerous wounded families, and the persistent hostility embittering our society.

The Orthodox Church continues to hold fast to its ancient belief that all human life, from

conception in the womb to our very last moment, is sacred to God. For the Holy Scripture tells us that “God did not make death, and He does not delight in the death of the living. For He created all things that they might exist” (Wis 1:13-14). So we say, humbly but firmly, that the willful destruction of a person in the womb is an evil act and a rejection of a gift of God.

For Orthodox Christians, the darkness of abortion transcends the political. It extends even beyond morality and ethics. It cuts to the heart of our faith in the Resurrection. On that bright morning of Great and Holy Pascha, Christ forever destroyed death, the last enemy of mankind (cf. 1 Cor 15:26). The empty tomb ennoble humanity and transforms us into a people forever dedicated to life, utterly opposed to death in all its forms. All people, even those still unborn, are created for eternity with God, and it is our unshakable conviction in the Risen Christ which makes the thought of the termination of a child unimaginable.

We also know that the unequivocal message of the New Testament is that followers of Christ are to “love one another” with the same self-sacrifice with which Christ loved us (cf. Jn 13:34). I encourage all Orthodox Christians to show that Christ-like, self-sacrificial love in the face of this darkness. I ask that we assist mothers in every way possible to relieve them of the temptation to abortion. Likewise, support the fathers as they step up to embrace their new and blessed family responsibility.

As we “speak the truth in love” (Eph 4:15) we must not condemn others but leave judgment to the Lord. Our call is a call

to repentance, beginning with ourselves, so that we might restore the likeness of God and become bright mirrors reflecting the light of Christ to a wounded, confused, and anxious people. Let the only thing that our society sees in us be overflowing love, piety, and forgiveness to all. We remember with gratitude that the Lord always gives us, personally and as a nation, a path out of our sin through repentance—even sin as devastating and horrific as abortion. Let our parishes and communities become beacons of that divine love and forgiveness, where all human life is valued as deeply as Christ values it, as we forever speak with a Paschal voice: “Christ is risen and life reigns.”

May the Holy Spirit, whom we confess in the Creed as “the Lord, the Giver of life,” ever inspire us with love, humility, and conviction as we speak to this issue.

Yours in Christ,
+Tikhon
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

The Bible and the Liturgy (Part II)



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>.

We can look at several verses from Saint Paul's Letter to the Ephesians to see how the prayers of the Divine Liturgy are based on the Bible.

In 4: 30 Paul entreats the Ephesians not to "grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." In 3: 16 he has prayed that God "may grant you to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man."

This Biblical idea of the Holy Spirit dwelling and working in us is reflected in the priest's prayer that "the communion of the Holy Spirit [may] be with all of you." The congregation asks the same for the priest by responding, "And with your spirit." Near the end of the Liturgy, we acknowledge this gift and sing, "We have seen the true Light! We have received the heavenly Spirit!"

As we prepare to sing the Lord's Prayer, the priest prays that we may do so "with boldness." We ask God to allow us to do this very bold thing: to approach Him "as Father" and to address Him with the words of the prayer which Christ

taught us. This plea has a basis in the Letter to the Ephesians. Near the end of the letter, Paul asks the Ephesians to make supplication for him, that "utterance may be given me in opening my mouth boldly, to proclaim the mystery of the Gospel" (6:19).

In other verses, the source of our boldness is revealed. Paul writes that we have "boldness and confidence of access through our faith" in Jesus Christ (3:12). It is this faith that enables us to "dare"—a strong word—to call on God as "Our Father." The only way we can dare to do such a thing "without condemnation" is to ask Him to "make us worthy," and to "commend our whole life and hope" to Him.

In the Prayer Before the Ambo, the priest asks God to "preserve the fulness of Your Church." This too has a basis in Ephesians. Paul writes that God intends His plan for our salvation to happen through the Church: "...that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known..." (3: 13).

But it is not only that the Church has a vital role in God's saving work. Ephesians also includes, in the fifth chapter, the well-known comparison of marriage to the relationship between Christ and the Church. The Church is precious to God; He loves it as a bridegroom loves his bride. So the Prayer Before the Ambo asks God to "sanctify those who love the beauty of Your house." These words ask a blessing on those who share God's love for His Church by honoring and respecting her.

Paul ends his letter to the Ephesians with a similar blessing: "Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love undying."

