



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 29, 2023

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:

Greg Jankura - Vice President

Susan Davis- Council Member at Large

Carolyn Neiss - President

Marlene Melesko - Council Member at Large

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

No Open Doors on Wednesday the 24th

Because of my absence

Souper Bowl Sunday

Sunday of the 12th, we will hold our annual Chili/Chowder Cook off and fundraiser. Make and bring in your favorite chili or chowder and "compete" for the Souper Bowl Sunday trophy! We "vote" for the best dish with your dollars: contributions will be going to the IOCC in support of Ukraine. Of course you don't have to "vote" you may also just contribute to IOCC. If you aren't into cooking chilis or chowders, please consider bring a salad, desert or bread.

For further clarification about this fundraiser, please talk directly to a council member.

Lenten Book Study

For our Lenten Reflection this year, I have chosen the book "Arise O God" by Fr Andrew Stephen Damick. It is available as a paperback, on Kindle or audiobook. I have ordered 20 copies should you need one for yourself or to give to someone. Please consider ordering a copy (Amazon, or Ancient Faith Press) for yourself if you have the means.

Below is a description of the book:

The gospel of Jesus Christ is not about what Jesus can do for your life. It is not even the answer to the question, "How can I be saved?" It is the declaration of a victory. In His coming to earth, His suffering, and His Resurrection, Christ conquered demons, sin, and death. In Arise, O God, author and podcaster Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick introduces us to the spiritual war that Christ won by His victory, how we are caught in that war's cosmic crossfire, what the true content of the gospel is - and how we are to respond.

The book study will be held via Zoom, and included two sessions a week: one in the morning and one in the evening. The schedule of meetings will be posted once I return to Connecticut.

House Blessings

House Blessings will resume next week. Please email Fr Steven if you would like to have your home blessed before the start

of the Lenten Season.

Paish Calendar

The parish calendar for February is being updated as soon as is possible. Thank you for your patience.

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Please continue to pray for our catechumens, David, James and Anthony (and his family).

Please pray for Evelyn Leake who is in need of God's mercy and healing; and for Kelley Hosking-Billings.

- 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.

Sunday of Zacchaeus. Translation of the Relics of Hieromartyr Ignatius the Godbearer, Bishop of Antioch (107). St. Lavrentii (Lawrence), Recluse, of the Kiev Caves, Bishop of Turov (Near Caves—12th c.). Ss. Gerásim (1441-1467), Pitirím (1445) and Jonah (1470), Bishops of Perm. Martyrs Romanus, Jacob (James), Philotheus, Hyperechius, Abibus, Julian, and Paregonius, at Samosata (297).

Parish Calendar

Schedule of Services and Events

January 29 to February 6, 2023

Sunday, January 29

Mary Ella Luft - B
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, January 30

Synaxis of The Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, & John Chrysostom
8:30AM Akathist to Three Holy Hierarchs

Tuesday, January 31

Cyrus & John the Unmercenarys
8:30AM Daily Matins

Wednesday, February 1

Trypho the Martyr
4:30PM Open Doors
6:00PM Great Vespers w/ Litya followed by Blessing of Candles

Thursday, February 2

Meeting of Our Lord
The Presentation of Our Lord and Savior in
the Temple
Blessing of Candles
8:30AM Divine Liturgy

Friday, February 3

Afterfeast of the Presentation of Our Lord
and Savior in the Temple

Saturday, February 4

Isidore of Pelusium
5:30PM Great Vespers
6:00PM General Confession

Sunday, February 5

Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee:
Triodion Begins Today

Monday, February 6

Photius the Great, Patriarch of
Constantinople

Saints and Feasts

January 29

Removal of the Relics of Ignatius the God-bearer

Saint Ignatius was a disciple of Saint John the Theologian, and a successor of the Apostles, and he became the second Bishop of Antioch, after Evodus. He wrote many epistles to the faithful, strengthening them in their confession, and preserving for us the teachings of the holy Apostles. Brought to Rome under Trajan, he was surrendered to lions to be eaten, and so finished the course of martyrdom about the year 107. The remnants of his bones were carefully

gathered by the faithful and brought to Antioch. He is called God-bearer, as one who bare God within himself and was aflame in heart with love for Him. Therefore, in his Epistle to the Romans (ch. 4), imploring their love not to attempt to deliver him from his longed-for martyrdom, he said, "I am the wheat of God, and am ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found to be the pure bread of God."

Saint John Chrysostom has a homily in honour of the translation of the Saint's relics (PG 50:587).

January 30

Synaxis of The Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, & John Chrysostom

This common feast of these three teachers was instituted a little before the year 1100, during the reign of the Emperor Alexis I Comnenus, because of a dispute and strife that arose among the notable and virtuous men of that time. Some of them preferred Basil, while others preferred Gregory, and yet others preferred John Chrysostom, quarreling among themselves over which of the three was the greatest. Furthermore, each party, in order to distinguish itself from the others, assumed the name of its preferred Saint; hence, they called themselves Basilians, Gregorians, or Johannites. Desiring to bring an end to the contention, the three Saints appeared together to the saintly John Mavropous, a monk who had been ordained Bishop

of Euchaita, a city of Asia Minor, they revealed to him that the glory they have at the throne of God is equal, and told him to compose a common service for the three of them, which he did with great skill and beauty. Saint John of Euchaita (celebrated Oct. 5) is also the composer of the Canon to the Guardian Angel, the Protector of a Man's Life. In his old age, he retired from his episcopal see and again took up the monastic life in a monastery in Constantinople. He reposed during the reign of the aforementioned Emperor Alexis Comnenus (1081-1118).

February 01

Bridget of Ireland

When Ireland was newly converted to the Christian Faith, the Holy Abbess Bridget devoted herself to the establishment of the monastic life among the women of her country, and founded the renowned convent of Kildare-Kil "Cell (or Church)" Dara "of the Oak." She was especially renowned for her great mercifulness, manifested in her lavish almsgiving and in miracles wrought for those in need. The Book of Armaugh, an ancient Irish chronicle, calls Saint Patrick and Saint Bridget "the pillars of the Irish" and says that through them both, "Christ performed many miracles." She reposed in peace about the year 525.

February 02

The Presentation of Our Lord and Savior in the Temple

When the most pure Mother and Ever-Virgin Mary's forty days of purification had been fulfilled, she took her first-born Son to Jerusalem on this, the fortieth day after His birth, that she might present Him in the temple according to the Law of Moses, which teaches that every first-born male child be dedicated to God, and also that she might offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons, as required by the Law (Luke 2:22-24; Exod. 13:2; Lev. 12:6-8). On this same day, a just and devout man, the greatly aged Symeon, was also present in the temple, being guided by the Holy Spirit. For a long time, this man had been awaiting the salvation of God, and he had been informed by divine revelation that he would not die until he beheld the Lord's Christ. Thus, when he beheld Him at that time and took Him up into his aged arms, he gave glory to God, singing: "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master. . ." And he confessed that he would close his eyes joyfully, since he had seen the Light of revelation for the nations and the Glory of Israel (Luke 2:25-32). From ancient times, the Holy Church has retained this tradition of the churching of the mother and new-born child on the fortieth day and of the reading of prayers of purification.

The Apodosis of the Feast of the Meeting in the Temple is usually on the 9th of February. This, however, may vary if the Feast falls within the period of the Triodion. Should this occur, the Typicon should be consulted for specific information concerning the Apodosis of the Feast.

February 03

Symeon the God-Receiver, Anna the Prophetess

Yesterday we celebrated the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple; today we honor the righteous Elder Symeon and Prophetess Anna, who prophesied concerning Him by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and were the first in Jerusalem to receive Him as the Messiah.

February 05

Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Triodion Begins Today

The Pharisees were an ancient and outstanding sect among the Jews known for their diligent observance of the outward matters of the Law. Although, according to the word of our Lord, they "did all their works to be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5), and were hypocrites (ibid. 23: 13, 14, 15, etc.), because of the apparent holiness of their lives they were thought by all to be righteous, and separate from others, which is what the name Pharisee means. On the other hand, Publicans, collectors of the royal taxes, committed many injustices and extortions for filthy lucre's sake, and all held them to be sinners and unjust. It was therefore according to common opinion that the Lord Jesus in His parable signified a virtuous person by a Pharisee, and a sinner by a Publican, to teach His disciples the harm of pride and the profit of humble-mindedness.

Since the chief weapon for virtue is humility, and the greatest hindrance to it

is pride, the divine Fathers have set these three weeks before the Forty-day Fast as a preparation for the spiritual struggles of virtue. This present week they have called Harbinger, since it declares that the Fast is approaching; and they set humility as the foundation for all our spiritual labors by appointing that the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee be read today, even before the Fast begins, to teach, through the vaunting of the Pharisee, that the foul smoke of self-esteem and the stench of boasting drives away the grace of the Spirit, strips man of all his virtue, and casts him into the pits of Hades; and, through the repentance and contrite prayer of the Publican, that humility confers upon the sinner forgiveness of all his wicked deeds and raises him up to the greatest heights.

All foods are allowed the week that follows this Sunday.

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 (St. Ignatius)

By sharing in the ways of the Apostles, you became a successor to their throne.

Through the practice of virtue, you found the way to divine contemplation, O inspired one of God;

by teaching the word of truth without error, you defended the Faith, even to the shedding of your blood.//

O Hieromartyr Ignatius, entreat Christ God to save our souls!

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!

Tone 4 Kontakion (St. Ignatius)

Today you rose from the east, enlightening all of creation with your teachings,// and you are crowned with martyrdom, Godbearing Ignatius.

Tone 8 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God! (Ps. 75:10a)

V. In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel. (Ps. 75:1)

Communion Hymn

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

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 7th Tone. Psalm 28.11,1.

The Lord will give strength to his people.
Verse: Bring to the Lord, O sons of God, bring to the Lord honor and glory.

The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy 4:9-15.

Timothy, my son, the saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. For to this end we toil and suffer reproach, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. Command and teach these things. Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Till I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you. Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress.

Gospel Reading

The Reading is from Luke 19:1-10

At that time, Jesus was passing through Jericho. And there was a man named Zacchaios; he was a chief collector, and rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way.

And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaios, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it they all murmured, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." And Zacchaios stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost."

Wisdom of the Fathers

We should not pursue a godly and virtuous way of life in order to win human praise, but we should choose it for the sake of our soul's salvation; for death is daily before our eyes, and human affairs are unpredictable.

St Anthony the Great

What is it that people seek in life? They seek health, riches, success, acquaintances, friends, prestige, various worldly pleasures, vain knowledge. Only a few seek Christ the Saviour. Some may even think it strange to seek Christ. They say, "we call ourselves Christians after Christ, we see His holy image both in our homes and at church; we pronounce His sweetest name and hear it in God's temple." It appears we have no need

to seek Christ. People seek that which they don't have, that which they need. But we seem to have Christ; at least that is what we think. St. What is it that people seek in life? They seek health, riches, success, acquaintances, friends, prestige, various worldly pleasures, vain knowledge. Only a few seek Christ the Saviour. Some may even think it strange to seek Christ. They say, "we call ourselves Christians after Christ, we see His holy image both in our homes and at church; we pronounce His sweetest name and hear it in God's temple." It appears we have no need to seek Christ. People seek that which they don't have, that which they need. But we seem to have Christ; at least that is what we think.

St John of Kronstadt

Beyond the Sermon



Metropolitan Anthony
Sourozh
ZACCHAEUS
20 JANUARY 1991

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. In these weeks of preparation for Lent, we were faced last Sunday with the story of Barthimaeus to attract our attention on our own blindness; our spiritual blindness of which we are not aware while physical blindness is so clearly perceived; but also

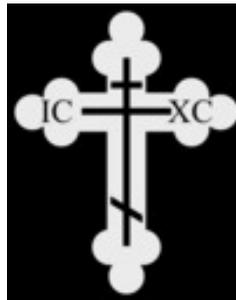
on the fact that if we want to recover our sight, our spiritual vision, our understanding of self, of God, of our neighbour, of life, there is only one person to whom we can turn - it is God, our Lord Jesus Christ. Bartimaeus have tried all means to recover his sight, but it is only when he turned to Christ that he did recover it.

Whether we have taken advantage of the past week to reflect deeply on our own blindness, and in the darkness to begin to see some light, I do not know; each of us will have to answer for his eagerness or his laziness.

But today we are confronted with a new parable, or rather, a new story of the life of Christ: the story of Zacchaeus. This story speaks to us again directly and the question which is been asked from us is this: What matters to me more? The good opinion of people around me, that people should not jeer at you, laugh at you because you are seeking to see God, to meet Him, or the necessity, the inner call to discover everything provided you can see Christ face to face? Is vanity stronger in us or the hunger for God? And Saint John of the Ladder says clearly that vanity is contempt of God and cowardice before men. What is our attitude: are we prepared to discard everything, provided we can meet God - or not? And in our circumstances it is not so much people who will prevent us, people will not jeer at us, they will not laugh at us: they will be totally indifferent; but this does not mean that we like beggars not turn to them, hoping for their approval, and in order to receive this approval, turn away from our search, from the only thing that can heal us and give us new life.

Also, we will find within ourselves conflicting voices, saying, Don't! Don't make yourself ridiculous! Don't single yourself out by a search which is not necessary; you have got everything... Zacchaeus was rich, Zacchaeus was known as an honorable citizen - so are we! We possess so much, we are respected - are we going to start on a road that will make us into what Paul calls 'the scum of the earth', debase us? This is the question which today's story of Zacchaeus says to us: is vanity, that is the search of things which are vain, empty, and the fear of other people's opinion that will prevail, or the hunger each of us has, at times, acute for a meeting with the living God? Amen.

The Back Page



Parish Web Site -

Useful Resources and References

Parish Shared Folder
(for all documents, bulletins etc) -
<http://bit.ly/St-Alexis>

The QR Code here may be used as well.



<http://www.stalexischurch.org> ; calendar (

<https://bit.ly/StA-Calendar>)

Facebook - @stalexisorthodox

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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.

Troparion to St Alexis

O righteous Father Alexis, / our heavenly intercessor and teacher, / divine adornment of the Church of Christ! / Entreat the Master of All / to strengthen the Orthodox Faith in America, / to grant peace to the world / and to our souls, great mercy!

Troparion to St Herman

O blessed Father Herman of Alaska, / north star of Christ's holy Church, / the light of your holy life and great deeds / guides those who follow the Orthodox way. / Together we lift high the Holy Cross / you planted firmly in America. / Let all behold and glorify Jesus Christ, / singing his holy Resurrection.

Troparion to St Elizabeth