



## 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.

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Bulletin for Sunday, January 21, 2024

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### 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- President

Sharon Hanson - Member at Large

Luba Martins - 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**

It has been brought to my attention that I've not been printing enough bulletins. Since most people receive the electronic copy, I was refraining from printing. However, I will be printing more. In addition, I will print out the variable parts of the Liturgy separately for those who like the text with which to follow along.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE: The Outreach Committee will be holding a meeting on Sunday, January 28, downstairs following Liturgy. This is the first meeting of the

New Year so we'll be discussing projects and new ideas for the year. All are welcome to attend. Please see Marlene Melesko with any questions.

## **Sanctity of Life**

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

My Beloved Children in the Lord,

As we mark Sanctity of Life Sunday this year, there will be much discussion of the "right to life." Of course, we Orthodox Christians believe that certain rights, the right to life among them, should be respected, enshrined in law, and protected by civil authority. But human life is something even more precious than a mere right: it is a divine gift.

"Lo, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward," as the Psalmist says (Ps. 126:3). We are called to recognize every human life, from conception to natural death, as a gift of the Lord. This means protecting the unborn, but in a broader sense this means helping our broken society and broken world to view our fellow human beings not as mere mouths to feed or potential threats or problems to be solved or subjects to be controlled, but as blessings from above. The unborn are a blessing; children are a blessing; the elderly are a blessing; the difficult people in our lives are a blessing; even our enemies—perhaps especially our enemies—are a blessing.

Moreover, we speak of the sanctity of life for two reasons: because life comes from the Lord, and because it should be offered back to the Lord through service to him and to others, resulting in sanctity. If we understand that we are merely servants, doing as we have been bidden (Lk. 17:10), and if we recognize that the greatest and holiest is the one who became a servant of all through his Incarnation, his ministry, and his Passion and Rising (Mt. 23:11), then we are in the best position of all to treat each human being as a blessing, not in an abstract sense, but in the sense of someone whom we are privileged to serve.

Living in this way, we also better understand our own life as a blessing, a blessing because it is an opportunity to attain to holiness. If we truly live according to our belief in the profound sanctity of life, then we will naturally “commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God,” sending up thanksgiving and blessing his holy Name on account of the incalculably precious gift of human life and for every man who comes into the world (Jn. 1:9).

On this Sanctity of Life Sunday, we pray that all people of North America and throughout the world would come to recognize the good and perfect gift (Jam. 1:17) that is human life and learn to cherish that gift and render glory unto the Giver, the benevolent Creator of all things, one God in Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, unto the never-ending ages.

Yours in Christ,

+Tikhon Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

## Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Please pray for Sarah, Evelyn Leake and Victor Hoehnebart who are in need of God's mercy and healing.

• 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.

Please let Fr. Steven know via email if you have more names for which to pray.

- Departed: Fr Anthony, Mat Elizabeth, Kenneth, Fr Michael
- Clergy and their families: Mat. Ann, Fr Sergei, and Mat Nancy
- Catechumen: Robert, Abbie, Matthew, Joseph, Mary, Kevin and Lynn
- Individuals and Families: Susan, Luba, Suzanne, Gail Galina Evelyn, Rosemary, John, Lucille, Karen, Oleg, Lucia, Victor, Melissa, Christine, Sebastian, Olga, Daniel & Dayna, Branislava, Alton, Richard, Kristen
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: Aaron Hosking, Natalie Kurcharski (ND), Gail Kuziak, Dn Timothy (ND),
- Anniversaries this Month:
- Expecting and Newborn: Anastasia and her unborn child
- Traveling:
- Sick and those in distress: Maria, Brian, Fr Vasily, Katy, Fr Sergei

Ven. Maximus the Confessor (662). Martyr Neophytus of Nicæa (303-305). Martyrs Eugene, Candidus, Valerian, and Aquila, at Trebizond (3rd c.). Virgin Martyr Agnes of Rome (ca. 304). Martyr Anastasius, disciple of Ven. Maximus the Confessor (662). Venerable Neóphytos of Vatopaidi (Mt. Athos). Ven. Maxim the Greek (1556).

Again we pray for those who have lost their lives because of the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East: that the Lord our God may look upon them with mercy, and give them rest where there is neither sickness, or sorrow, but life everlasting.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, for those who are suffering,

wounded, grieving, or displaced because of the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East. Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities against Ukraine and the Middle East, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish there, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

## Parish Calendar

### Schedule of Services and Events

January 21 to January 29, 2024

#### Sunday, January 21

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

#### Monday, January 22

Timothy the Apostle of the 70

#### Tuesday, January 23

Hieromartyr Clement, Bishop of Ancyra  
8:30AM Daily Matins  
7:00PM Catechumens

#### Wednesday, January 24

✠ Xenia, Deaconess of Rome  
8:30AM Akathist to St Xenia of Petersburg  
4:30PM Open Doors

#### Thursday, January 25

Gregory the Theologian, Archbishop of Constantinople  
8:30AM Daily Matins

#### Friday, January 26

✠ Xenophon & his Companions  
Fr. Steven Voytovich - B

## **Saturday, January 27**

Removal of the Relics of John Chrysostom,  
Archbishop of Constantinople  
5:30PM Great Vespers

## **Sunday, January 28**

15th Sunday of Luke  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

## **Monday, January 29**

Removal of the Relics of Ignatius the God-  
bearer

## **Saints and Feasts**

### **January 21**

#### **Maximos the Confessor**

The divine Maximus, who was from Constantinople, sprang from an illustrious family. He was a lover of wisdom and an eminent theologian. At first, he was the chief private secretary of the Emperor Heraclius and his grandson Constans. When the Monothelite heresy became predominant in the royal court, out of hatred for this error the Saint departed for the Monastery at Chrysopolis (Scutari), of which he later became the abbot. When Constans tried to constrain him either to accept the Monothelite teaching, or to stop speaking and writing against it - neither of which the Saint accepted to do - his tongue was uprooted and his right hand was cut off, and he was sent into exile where he reposed in 662. At the time only he and his few disciples were Orthodox in the East (See also August 13).

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### **January 22**

#### **Timothy the Apostle of the 70**

The Apostle Timothy, who was from Lystra of Lycaonia, was born of a Greek (that is, pagan) father and a Jewish mother. His mother's name was Eunice, and his grandmother's name was Lois (II Tim. 1:5). He became the disciple of the Apostle Paul when the latter first preached there, and he followed St. Paul during the whole period of the Apostle's preaching. Afterwards, Timothy was consecrated by him as first Bishop of the church in Ephesus. Under the supervision of John the Evangelist, who governed all the churches in Asia, he completed his life as a martyr in the year 97. He was stoned to death by the heathens, because, as some surmise, he opposed the festival held in honor of Artemis (Diana). The Apostle Paul's First and Second Epistles to Timothy were written to him.

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### **January 24**

#### **Xenia, Deaconess of Rome**

Our righteous Mother Xenia of Rome was of a distinguished family. While her parents were preparing to wed her, she stole away secretly, taking two handmaids with her, and departed for Mylasa of Karia in Asia Minor, and there she completed her life in asceticism. She was ordained deaconess by Paul, her spiritual father, who became Bishop of Mylasa. Although she was originally named Eusebia, to conceal her identity, she took the name Xenia - which

means "stranger" in Greek - because of her estrangement from her country.

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## January 24

### **Xenia of St. Petersburg, Fool-for-Christ**

Our righteous Mother Xenia of Petersburg was born about the year 1730. She was married to a Colonel named Andrew; when she was twenty-six years old, her husband died suddenly, having been drinking with his friends. Left a childless widow, Xenia gave away all that she had, and vanished from Saint Petersburg for eight years; it is believed that she spent this time in a hermitage, learning the spiritual life. When she returned to Saint Petersburg, she wore her husband's military clothing, and would answer only to the name Andrew, that is, the name of her late husband. She took up the life of a homeless wanderer, and was abused by many as insane; she bore this with great patience, crucifying the carnal mind through the mockery she endured, and praying for her husband's soul. She was given great gifts of prayer and prophecy, and often foretold things to come; in 1796 she foretold the death of Empress Catherine II. Having lived forty-five years after her husband's death, she reposed in peace at the age of seventy-one, about the year 1800. Her grave became such a source of miracles, and so many came to take soil from it as a blessing, that it was often necessary to replace the soil; when a stone slab was placed over her grave, this too disappeared over time, piece by piece. Saint Xenia is especially invoked for help

in finding employment, lodging, or a spouse.

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## January 25

### **Gregory the Theologian, Archbishop of Constantinople**

This great Father and Teacher of the Church was born in 329 in Arianzus, a village of the second district of Cappadocia, not far from Nazianzus. His father, who later became Bishop of Nazianzus, was named Gregory (commemorated Jan. 1), and his mother was named Nonna (Aug. 5); both are among the Saints, and so are his brother Caesarius (Mar. 9) and his sister Gorgona (Feb. 23). At first he studied in Caesarea of Palestine, then in Alexandria, and finally in Athens. As he was sailing from Alexandria to Athens, a violent sea storm put in peril not only his life but also his salvation, since he had not yet been baptized. With tears and fervour he besought God to spare him, vowing to dedicate his whole self to Him, and the tempest gave way to calm. At Athens Saint Gregory was later joined by Saint Basil the Great, whom he already knew; but now their acquaintanceship grew into a lifelong brotherly love. Another fellow student of theirs in Athens was the young Prince Julian, who later as Emperor was called the Apostate because he denied Christ and did all in his power to restore paganism. Even in Athens, before Julian had thrown off the mask of piety; Saint Gregory saw what an unsettled mind he had, and said, "What an evil the Roman State is nourishing" (Orat. V, 24, PG 35:693).

After their studies at Athens, Gregory became Basil's fellow ascetic, living the monastic life together with him for a time in the hermitages of Pontus. His father ordained him presbyter of the Church of Nazianzus, and Saint Basil consecrated him Bishop of Sasima (or Zansima), which was in the archdiocese of Caesarea. This consecration was a source of great sorrow to Gregory, and a cause of misunderstanding between him and Basil; but his love for Basil remained unchanged, as can be plainly seen from his Funeral Oration on Saint Basil (Orat. XLIII).

About the Year 379, Saint Gregory came to the assistance of the Church of Constantinople, which had already been troubled for forty years by the Arians; by his supremely wise words and many labours he freed it from the corruption of heresy, and was elected Archbishop of that city by the Second Ecumenical Council, which assembled there in 381, and condemned Macedonius, Archbishop of Constantinople, the enemy of the Holy Spirit. When Saint Gregory came to Constantinople, the Arians had taken all the churches and he was forced to serve in a house chapel dedicated to Saint Anastasia the Martyr. From there he began to preach his famous five sermons on the Trinity, called the Triadica. When he left Constantinople two years later, the Arians did not have one church left to them in the city. Saint Meletius of Antioch (see Feb. 12), who was presiding over the Second Ecumenical Council, died in the course of it, and Saint Gregory was chosen in his stead; there he distinguished himself in his expositions of dogmatic theology.

Having governed the Church until 382, he delivered his farewell speech - the Syntacterion, in which he demonstrated the Divinity of the Son - before 150 bishops and the Emperor Theodosius the Great; in this speech he requested, and received from all, permission to retire from the see of Constantinople. He returned to Nazianzus, where he lived to the end of his life, and reposed in the Lord in 391, having lived some sixty-two years.

His extant writings, both prose and poems in every type of metre, demonstrate his lofty eloquence and his wondrous breadth of learning. In the beauty of his writings, he is considered to have surpassed the Greek writers of antiquity, and because of his God-inspired theological thought, he received the surname "Theologian." Although he is sometimes called Gregory of Nazianzus, this title belongs properly to his father; he himself is known by the Church only as Gregory the Theologian. He is especially called "Trinitarian Theologian," since in virtually every homily he refers to the Trinity and the one essence and nature of the Godhead. Hence, Alexius Anthonus dedicated the following verses to him:

Like an unwandering star beaming with splendour,  
Thou bringest us by mystic teachings, O Father,  
To the Trinity's sunlike illumination,  
O mouth breathing with fire, Gregory most mighty.

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## Gospel and Epistle Readings

## Epistle Reading

### **The Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 1:12-18**

Brethren, we give thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities - all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

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## Gospel Reading

### **The Reading is from Matthew 22:2-14**

The Lord said this parable, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a marriage feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the marriage feast; but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, Behold, I have made ready my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves are killed, and everything is ready; come to the marriage feast.' But they made light of it and went off, one to his farm,

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another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the thoroughfares, and invite to the marriage feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment; and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

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## Wisdom of the Fathers

Many scripture writers will tell you that the divinity is not only invisible (Col. 1:15 et. al.) and incomprehensible, but also 'unsearchable and inscrutable' (Rom. 11:13), since there is not a trace for anyone who would reach through into the hidden depths of this infinity. And yet, on the other hand, the Good is not absolutely incommunicable to everything. By itself it generously reveals a firm, transcendent beam, granting enlightenments



proportionate to each being, and thereby draws sacred minds upward to its permitted contemplation, to participation and to the state of becoming like it. What happens to those who rightly and properly make this effort is this. They do not venture toward an impossibly daring sight of God, one beyond what is duly granted them. Nor do they go tumbling downward where their own natural inclinations would take them. No. Instead they are raised firmly and unswervingly upward in the direction of the ray which enlightens them. With a love matching the illuminations granted them, they take flight, reverently, wisely, in all holiness.

### ***St. Dionysius the Areopagite***

*The Divine Names, Chapter One para. 2, Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works; Paulist Press pg. 50, 5th Century*

It is only when in the darkness of this world we discern that Christ has already "filled all things with Himself" that these things, whatever they may be, are revealed and given to us full of meaning and beauty. A Christian is one who, wherever he looks, finds Christ and rejoices in Him.

### ***Fr. Alexander Schmemmann***

*For the Life of the World, p. 113, 20th century*

## **The Faith We Hold**



Published 12/8/00  
Father George C.  
Massouras  
"Let There Be No  
Excuses"

Inspired by God, and led by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Fathers of the Church placed the reading of the Parable of the Great Banquet in the

Season of Advent, two Sundays before the Feast of the Holy Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Like a gleaming multifaceted diamond of inestimable worth, it casts many pertinent images upon the reader and the doer of God's Holy Word.

One who was in the company of followers of Christ, having been touched by the solemn teaching of our Lord, meaning well, but having not fully comprehended His teachings, makes the remark, "Blessed is everyone who shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God". Seeing that this individual, and the Pharisees who were with him, were implying that to be invited to enter God's Kingdom is the same as to be in it, our Lord begins His parable. His intent is to teach the Jews, and through them to teach us, that those who would pride themselves as being near the Kingdom, may, it they are not obedient to God, fall far short of it..., and be excluded from it. "A certain man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many."

In times of old, when one prepared a feast in the land of Palestine, the event was announced long beforehand. The invitations were sent out and acknowledged as accepted. When the day finally came and all things were in readiness, servants were sent to summon again the already invited guests. To have accepted the invitation beforehand and then to refuse it when the day arrived was considered as a very grave insult.

In the parable, the master is God, the originally invited guests are the Jews, who throughout their history had awaited the day when God would summon them. But when God did, they tragically refused His invitation. The poor who are gathered from the streets and lands of the city, those who are crippled and blind and lame, are the tax-collectors and the sinners who came forth and welcomed our Lord in a manner in which the Jews never had.

Those who were gathered from the highways and along the hedges are the Gentiles, for whom there was still room at God's Feast. It was only when the Jews had refused God's invitation and had left His Banquet Table empty, that the invitation then went out to the Gentiles.

The command in the parable which at times is badly misunderstood, "...compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.", only bespeaks of the great love that God has for all of us, and that He is willing to do everything to save His creation. To this we must add the words of Saint Paul, "The love

of Christ controls us" (2 Corinthians 5:14). In the Kingdom of God there is only one compulsion and that is the compulsion of His unceasing Love for us.

The parable spoke of the threat to the Jew's who had refused God's invitation, and it brought undreamed of glorious joy to sinners, and outcasts, and to the Gentiles, who had never imagined receiving such a gift. But it also reveals the great truths which are forever without change and yet always new and vital for the today. In the parable the invited guests made their excuses, and the excuses of mankind lamentably continue to be made with little difference even today.

"But they all alike began to make excuses". The servant saw each separately and received their answers individually. There is no reason to believe that they had ever met to frame a plan to collectively insult their host. While not in concert, they had acted in the same fashion. They were of one kind, and although they answered the servant separately, they answered similarly. The Greek text states ( *apomias gnomis*). While spoken by different individuals and molded by different circumstances, they were all the same type.

As birds of the same species will build nests from the same material and in the same forms, without deliberation or concert, so the mind, which in its own nature has enmity against God, will produce where-ever it operates, substantially the same fruits. In an alienated heart there is intense unwillingness to be, or to abide near God.

Consequently, there is the conception and production of walls which will shield one's conscience from the sight of God's Holiness.

When the poor were invited to the banquet they hastened to come. When we are invited to the divine banquet we begin to make our excuses. The first said, "I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it". Saint Gregory the Great writes that, "By the farm is meant earthly substance. So he goes out to it who for the purpose of gain thinks only of worldly things". He allowed the claims of business to usurp the claims of God. Indeed how many of us are so immersed in matters of this world that we have little time for worship or for prayer. In seeking to worship Mammon, we have forgotten the Triune God. We have wandered from the narrow path of righteousness.

The second said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out". Saint Augustine writes, "The five yoke of oxen means the five senses of the body. It is through these bodily senses that earthly things are sought for". He had allowed the claims of novelty to usurp the claims of our Lord. This is so often the case when we enter into new possessions. We become so taken up by them that the claims of worship and of God are crowded out of our lives. We acquire a recreational vehicle, a boat, or perhaps a cabin in some remote place. Then we begin to excuse ourselves, "We would love to attend Divine Liturgy, but...". It is so perilously easy for a new game, a new hobby, or even a new friendship to utterly possess us and to keep us away from God.

The third said, with even more finality than the others, "I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come". One of the merciful laws of the Old Testament states: "When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, to be happy with his wife whom he has taken" (Deuteronomy 24:5).

Without doubt, this very law may well have been in this man's mind. It is one of life's great tragedies that we allow "good things" to crowd out the claims of God. There is no lovelier thing than a home. And yet, a home was never meant to be used selfishly. They live best together who live with God in their hearts. They serve each other best, who would also serve their fellow-men. The atmosphere of a home is most holy when those who dwell within it live as members of the great family and household of God.

Our Lord used symbols to more precisely convey His meaning when it appeared too profound for the people to comprehend. The symbol of the Feast presents us with two distinct avenues. It is to be regarded as the Heavenly Banquet which awaits all who are summoned and admitted into the Kingdom of God. And it is also to be seen as the Mystical Supper which is offered to us through Holy communion. Christ's followers knew that God's full coming through the "Messiah" had long been portrayed as a "Feast" for His people at which they would proclaim, "Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; Let us

rejoice and be glad in His salvation" (Isaiah 25:9).

Dear Friends, we are now in the midst of the Holy Season of Advent. It is a time of great anticipation and preparation. It is a time when God offers us all the joyful opportunity to become renewed. But it is also a time during which we are all too prone to make excuses. Our Lord will be born anew within us and we will be "summoned" to follow the star with the Wisemen, to offer shelter to the Virgin Mary and the Christ-child, to take our place with the shepherds and the animals, and to partake of His Mystical Supper. He will invite us, but we must acknowledge and accept the invitation. There must be no excuses. We cannot truly worship Him unless our adoration finds expression in something more than words. There is an essential truth to an inscription found on the walls of a Medieval Church:

God the Lord speaks to you:

You call me eternal - but you seek me not;  
You call me almighty - but you fear me not;  
You call me merciful - but you honour me not;  
You call me the Light - but you seek me not;  
You call me the Way - but you walk me not;  
You call me the Truth - but you believe me not;  
You call me the Life - but you desire me not;  
You call me lovely - but you love me not;  
You call me Master - but you serve me not;  
If I condemn you, reprove me not.

It is so very often true - And yet is it not a terrible thing that it should be true?

How can there be such a hideous gap between the words that come so easily from our lips and the actions of our life-? "Please consider me excused." If we truly worship then we must answer the call to serve. Otherwise we will hear the sorrowful, yet condemning voice, "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46)

Let there be no excuses - Let us all come forth.

"Whosoever is a devout lover of God, let him enjoy this beautiful bright Festival. And whosoever is a grateful servant, let him rejoice and enter into the joy of his Lord" (From the Easter Catechetical Sermon of Saint John Chrysostom).

Let there be no excuses!

