



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

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Attached

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Services Schedule

Please see our [online calendar](#) for dates and times of Feast Day services.

Bulletin for Sunday, March 31, 2024

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

Information about the use and specifications of the two AEDs is now available in our shared folder.

AED Information

https://stalexischurch-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/schosk_stalex_e=5LtoV2

There is a guided tour in how to use the AED, which I recommend that you all view. Please contact me directly if you have any further questions.

Living the Mission

We will be returning to our 'book study' on Tuesday, April 2nd. The reading material can be found at [this link, on our shared folder](#). We will be going over Fr Thomas Hopko's article

on the Orthodox Parish in America. I also encourage you to read Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37.

The following is a brief synopsis of the last Parish Council meeting held on 26 March 2024.

Financial Report for February: While for the month of February we had a deficit of \$1,096, mostly due to purchasing 472 gallons at \$3.59/gallon (\$1,694), due to our strong January and several parishioners paying their pledge in full, we continue to be in the black by approximately \$7,700.

Choir: The choir continues preparing for Pascha by holding rehearsals. All interested singers are invited and welcome to attend.

Outreach: We are again conducting the Zoe for Life campaign which will run until May 12th. It was noted that coins/change are not the only things that could be used to fill up the baby bottles, checks and paper money may also be used.

Soup Kitchen - our next date is April 10th. Please see Susan Eagan or Luba Martins if you are willing to donate your time, purchase food or help in any way.

Spring Clean-Up Date: Saturday April 20th. Please save the date as we prepare both the inside and the outside of the church for our Paschal celebration.

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Please pray for Sarah, Aaron, Evelyn, Victor and Blanche 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:
- Clergy and their families: Dn Timothy & Maureen
- Catechumen: Robert, Abbie,

- Matthew, Joseph, Mary, Kevin and Lynn
- Individuals and Families: Susan, Luba, Suzanne, Gail Galina, Evelyn, Rosemary, John, Karen, Oleg, Lucia, Victor, Melissa, Christine, Sebastian, Olga, Daniel & Dayna
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: Zachary and Michael Neiss, Kyra Elliot, Matthew Kuziak
- Anniversaries this Month:
- Expecting and Newborn: Malcolm, Anastasia and their unborn child
- Traveling: Maria Christine
- Sick and those in distress:

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 2. St. Gregory Palamas. Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra. Repose of St. Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow, Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to the Americas (1879). St. Hypatius the Wonderworker, Bishop of Gangra (ca. 336). Repose of St. Jonah, Metropolitan of Moscow and All Russia (1461). Ven. Hypatius the Healer, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—14th c.). Ven. Apollonius, Ascetic, of Egypt (4th c.). Hieromartyr Avdas, Bishop of Persia, and Martyr Benjamin the Deacon (418-424). Ven. Hypatius, Abbot of Rufinus in Chalcedon (ca. 446). Appearance of the "Ivêron" (Iberian) Icon of the Mother of God.

- 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

March 31 to April 8, 2024

Sunday, March 31

☪ Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas
 Repose of St Innocent
 9:30AM Divine Liturgy
 4:00PM Deanery Lenten Vespers

Monday, April 1

Jack Jankura
 ☪ Mary of Egypt

Tuesday, April 2

☪ Titus the Wonderworker
 8:30AM Lenten Matins
 7:00PM Book Study

Wednesday, April 3

☪ Nicetas, Abbot of the Monastery of Medicium
 4:30PM Open Doors
 6:00PM Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts

Thursday, April 4

☪ George the Righteous of Maleon
 Maureen Skuby
 8:30AM Lenten Matins

Friday, April 5

☪ Monk-Martyrs Claudius, Diodore, Victor, Victorinus, Pappias, Nicephorus, and Serapion

Saturday, April 6

☪ Third Saturday of Lent
 5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, April 7

☪ Sunday of the Holy Cross
 St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow, Apostle to America
 9:30AM Divine Liturgy
 4:00PM Deanery Lenten Vespers

Monday, April 8

☪ The Holy Apostles of the Seventy
 Herodion, Agabus, Rufus, Asyncritus, Phlegon, and Hermes

Saints and Feasts

March 31

Innocent, Enlightener of Siberia & Alaska

March 31

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

This divine Father, who was from Asia Minor, was from childhood reared in the royal court of Constantinople, where he was instructed in both religious and secular wisdom. Later, while still a youth, he left the imperial court and struggled in asceticism on Mount Athos, and in the Skete at Beroea.

He spent some time in Thessalonica being treated for an illness that came from his harsh manner of life. He was present in Constantinople at the Council that was convened in 1341 against Barlaam of Calabria, and at the Council of 1347 against Acindynus, who was of like mind with Barlaam; Barlaam and Acindynus claimed that the grace of God is created. At both these Councils, the Saint contended courageously for the true dogmas of the Church of Christ, teaching in particular that divine grace is not created, but is the uncreated energies of God which are poured forth throughout creation: otherwise it would be impossible, if grace were created, for man to have genuine communion with the uncreated God. In 1347 he was appointed Metropolitan of Thessalonica. He tended his flock in an apostolic manner for some twelve years, and wrote many books and treatises on the most exalted doctrines of our Faith; and having lived for a total of sixty-three years, he reposed in the Lord in 1359.

His holy relics are kept in the Cathedral of Thessalonica. A full service was composed for his feast day by the Patriarch Philotheus in 1368, when it was established that his feast be celebrated on this day. Since works without right faith avail nothing, we set Orthodoxy of faith as the foundation of all that we accomplish during the Fast, by celebrating the Triumph of Orthodoxy the Sunday before, and the great defender of the teachings of the holy Fathers today.

April 01

Mary of Egypt

When Mary was only twelve years old, she left her parents and departed to Alexandria, where she lived a depraved life for seventeen years. Then, moved by curiosity, she went with many pilgrims to Jerusalem, that she might see the Exaltation of the venerable Cross. Even in the Holy City she gave herself over to every kind of licentiousness and drew many into the depth of perdition. Desiring to go into the church on the day of the Exaltation of the Cross, time and again she perceived a certain invisible power preventing her entrance, whereas the multitude of people about her entered unhindered. Therefore, wounded in heart by this, she decided to change her way of life and reconcile herself to God by means of repentance. Invoking our Lady the Theotokos as her protectress, she asked her to open the way for her to worship the Cross, and vowed that she would renounce the world. And thus, returning once again to the church, she entered easily. When she had worshipped the precious Wood, she departed that same day from Jerusalem and passed over the Jordan. She went into the inner wilderness and for forty-seven years lived a most harsh manner of life, surpassing human strength; alone, she prayed to God alone. Toward the end of her life, she met a certain hermit named Zosimas, and she related to him her life from the beginning. She requested of him to bring her the immaculate Mysteries that she might partake of them. According to her request, he did this the following

year on Holy and Great Thursday. One year after this, Zosimas again went thither and found her dead, laid upon the ground, and letters written in the sand near her which said: "Abba Zosimas, bury here the body of wretched Mary. I died on the very day I partook of the immaculate Mysteries. Pray for me." Her death is reckoned by some to have taken place in 378, by some, in 437, and by others, in 522. She is commemorated also on the Fifth Sunday of Great Lent. Her life was recorded by Saint Sophronius of Jerusalem.

April 03

Joseph the Hymnographer

Saint Joseph was from Sicily, the son of Plotinus and Agatha. Because Sicily had been subjugated by the Moslems, he departed thence and, passing from place to place, came with Saint Gregory of Decapolis (see NOV. 20) to Constantinople, where he endured bitter afflictions because of his pious zeal. Travelling to Rome, he was captured by Arab pirates and taken to Crete, whence he later returned to Constantinople. He became an excellent hymnographer and reposed in holiness shortly after 886 (according to some, it was in 883). The melismatic canons of the Menaion are primarily the work of this Joseph; they bear his name in the acrostic of the Ninth Ode. He also composed most of the sacred book known as the Paracletike, which complements the Octoechos For this reason, Joseph is called par excellence the Hymnographer.

Hymns of the Day



Tone 2 Troparion (Resurrection)

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal, You slew hell with the splendor of Your Godhead.

And when from the depths You raised the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out://
"O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!"

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Innocent)

O Holy Father Innocent, in obedience to the will of God, you accepted dangers and tribulations, bringing many peoples to the knowledge of truth.

You showed us the way; now by your prayers help lead us// into the Kingdom of Heaven!

Tone 2 Kontakion (Resurrection)

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Your Resurrection from the tomb!
The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with You,//
and the world, my Savior, praises You forever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

Tone 2 Kontakion (St. Innocent)

Your life, O holy Father Innocent, apostle to our land,
proclaims the dispensation and grace of God!
For, laboring in dangers and hardships for the Gospel of Christ,
you were kept unharmed and exalted in humility.//
Pray that He may guide our steps in the way we should go!

now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

☐Tone 4 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

Now is the time for action!
Judgment is at the doors!
So let us rise and fast,
offering alms with tears of compunction and crying:
“Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea;
but forgive us, O Master of all,//
so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!”

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

Hymn to the Theotokos

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

and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens.
All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace.
Glory to you!

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance! He shall not fear evil tidings! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 1st Tone. Psalm 48.3,1.

My mouth shall speak wisdom and the meditation of my heart shall bring forth understanding.

Verse: Hear this all you nations.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 7:26-28; 8:1-2.

Brethren, it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself. Indeed, the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect for ever. Now the point in what

we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set up not by man but by the Lord.

Gospel Reading

The Reading is from John 10:9-16

The Lord said, "I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd."

Wisdom of the Fathers

We know that when Christ comes from heaven to resurrect all those who have died during the present age, He will divide them into two groups (Matt. 15:31-33). Those

who bear His sign, which is the seal of the Holy Spirit, He will set at His right hand, saying: 'My sheep, when they hear My voice, recognize me' (cf. John 10:14). Then He will envelop their bodies with the divine glory that, through their good works and the Spirit, their souls have already received in the present life. Thus glorified by the divine light and caught up into heaven to meet the Lord, they will always be with Him (cf. I Thess. 4:17-18).

St. Makarios the Great

Homilies, IV: The Raising of the Intellect, Philokalia Vol. 3 edited by Palmer, Sherrard and Ware; Faber and Faber pgs. 312-313, 4th century

The Faith We Hold



Metropolitan Anthony of
Sourozh
SAINT GREGORY
PALAMAS SUNDAY
11 March 1990

In the Name of the
Father, the Son, and the
Holy Ghost.

In one of the Psalms we can read the following words: Those who have sown with tears will reap with joy... If in the course of weeks of preparation we have seen all that is ugly and unworthy in us mirrored in the parables, if we have stood before the judgement of our conscience and of

our God, then we have truly sown in tears our own salvation. And yet, there is still time because even when we enter into the time of the harvest, God gives us a respite; as we progress towards the Kingdom of God, towards the Day of the Resurrection, we still can, at every moment, against the background of salvation, in the face of the victory of God, turn to Him with gratitude and yet, brokenheartedness, and say, 'No, Lord! I am perhaps the worker of the eleventh hour, but receive me as Thou promised to do!'

Last week we have kept the day of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, the day when the Church proclaimed that it was legitimate and right to paint icons of Christ; it was not a declaration about art, it was a deeply theological proclamation of the Incarnation. The Old Testament said to us that God cannot be represented by any image because He was unbottomed mystery; He had even no Name except the mysterious name which only the High Priest know. But in the New Testament we have learned, and we know from experience that God has become Man, that the fullness of the Godhead has abided and is still abiding forever in the flesh; and therefore God has a human name: Jesus, and He has got a human face that can be represented in icons. An icon is therefore a proclamation of our certainty that God has become man; and He has become man to achieve ultimate, tragic and glorious solidarity with us, to be one of us that we may be one of the children of God. He has become man that we may become gods, as the Scripture tells us. And so, we could last week already rejoice; and this is why, a week before, when we were already preparing to meet

this miracle, this wonder of the Incarnation, softly, in an almost inaudible way, the Church was singing the canon of Easter: Christ is risen from the dead! - because it is not a promise for the future, it is a certainty of the present, open to us like a door for us to enter through Christ, the Door as He calls Himself, into eternity.

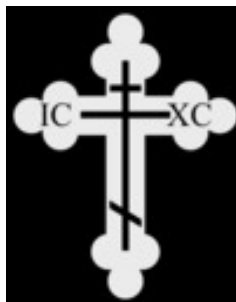
And today we remember the name of Saint Gregory Palamas, one of the great Saints of Orthodoxy, who against heresy and doubt, proclaimed, from within the experience of the ascetics and of all believers, proclaimed that the grace of God is not a created Gift - it is God Himself, communicating Himself to us so that we are pervaded by His presence, that we gradually, if we only receive Him, open ourselves to Him, become transparent or at least translucent to His light, that we become incipiently and ever increasingly partakers of the Divine nature.

This is not simply a promise; this is a certainty which we have because this has happened to thousands and thousands of those men and women whom we venerate as the Saints of God: they have become partakers of the Divine nature, they are to us a revelation and certainty of what we are called to be and become.

And today one step more brings us into the joy, the glory of Easter. In a week's time we will sing the Cross - the Cross which was a terror for the criminals, and has become now a sign of victory and salvation, because it is to us the sign that God's love has no measure, no limits, is as deep as God is deep, all-embracing as God is all-embracing, and indeed, as tragically victorious as God is both tragic and victorious, awe-inspiring, and shining the quiet, joyful light which we sing in Vespers.

Let us then make ourselves ready to meet this event, the vision of the Cross, look at it, and see in it the sign of the Divine love, a new certainty of our possible salvation; and when the choir sings this time more loudly the canon of the Resurrection, let us realise that step by step God leads us into a victory which He has won, and which He wants to share with us. And then we will move on; we will listen to the Saint who teaches us how to receive the grace which God is offering, how to become worthy of Him; and a step more - and we will see the victory of God in Saint Mary of Egypt and come to the threshold of Holy Week. But let us remember that we are now in the time of newness, a time when God's victory is being revealed to us, that we are called to be enfolded by it, to respond to it by gratitude, a gratitude that will make us into new people - and also with joy! And joy full of tears in response to the love of God, and a joy which is a responsible answer to the Divine love. Amen!

The Back Page



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

The QR Code here may be used as well.

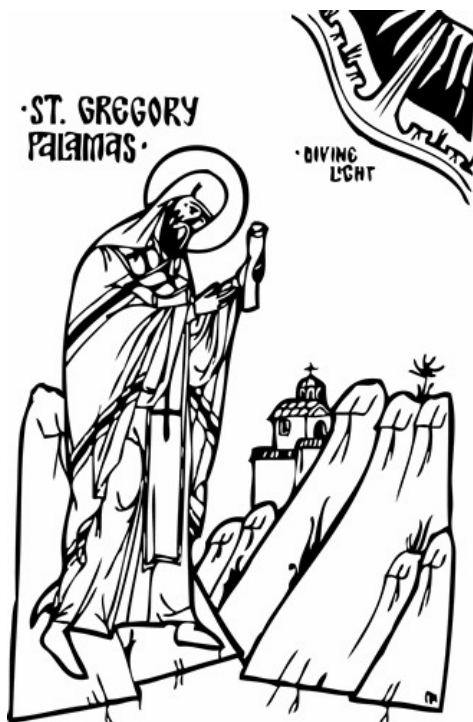


Parish Web Site -
<http://www.stalexischurch.org> ; [calendar](#)
(<https://bit.ly/StA-Calendar>)

Facebook - @stalexisorthodox

Youtube Channel - https://bit.ly/StA_Youtube

Join Zoom Meeting
- http://bit.ly/St_Alexis_Zoom



St. Innocent

Metropolitan of Moscow ·

Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to the Americas

Commemoration Dates: October 6th & March 31st

John Veniaminov was born on August 26, 1797 in a rural village of the Irkutsk province in Russia. His father was a church server and taught John to read the Epistle at a very young age. When he was six years old he was orphaned.

At the age of ten, John was assigned to the Irkutsk Theological Seminary. He was a very hard worker and an outstanding student. He was also very humble and kind. When he was 20, he was married and ordained to the diaconate. Following graduation from the seminary, he became a teacher at the parish school and was ordained to the priesthood.

He served as a parish priest for two years in Irkutsk and in 1824 he volunteered to do missionary work in Alaska. When he was 26 years old Father John and his family traveled over 2,000 miles on a fourteen-month journey to Unalaska, in the Aleutian Islands. There he lived in a hut with his wife, elderly mother, baby son Innocent, and brother. At Unalaska he taught the natives of the islands to be carpenters, blacksmiths, and bricklayers. In return, they helped him build a church, which they named Holy Ascension.

Father John continued to travel to remote areas throughout Alaska by canoe, dog sled, and even reindeer. In order to talk to the natives, he learned six different native languages. To help them learn about the church, he translated the Scriptures and other church books into their languages.

After spending fourteen years in Unalaska and Sitka, he returned to Russia to ask for more support and money for his work in Alaska. When he arrived there, he got the sad news that his wife had died. He made the decision to stay in Russia, and was tonsured a monk and given the name Innocent. On December 15, 1840, he was consecrated Bishop at Kazan Cathedral in St. Petersburg, Russia.

As Bishop he returned to Alaska and spent many years traveling throughout his diocese. He continued to build churches, guide the priests under his care, and bring the Gospel to the native Alaskan people.

After his appointment as Metropolitan of Moscow in 1867, he continued to raise money so priests would have a better life and a place to live after they got older.

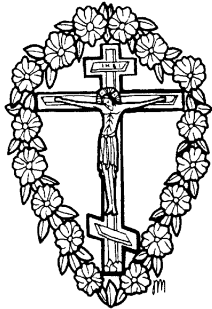
On March 31, 1879, Innocent died at the age of 82. He was canonized a saint on October 6, 1977.

CTD - OCAGB LENTEN VESPERS 2024



Sunday, March 24 , 1st Sunday of Lent
Sunday of Orthodoxy—Vespers 4:00 pm
St. Dimitrie, Easton

Sunday, March 31, 2nd Sunday of Lent
St. Gregory Palamas—Vespers 4:00 pm
OCAGB: Holy Trinity, Bridgeport
CT Deanery: Sts. Peter & Paul, Springfield, MA



Sunday, April 7, 3rd Sunday of Lent
Veneration of the Holy Cross
FORCC Sunday 4:00 pm
OCAGB: St. John the Baptist, Bridgeport
CT Deanery: St Nicholas, Pittsfield, MA
His Grace Bp. Benedict Presiding

Sunday, April 14, 4th Sunday of Lent
St. John Climacus—Vespers 4:00 pm
OCAGB: St. Nicholas, Bridgeport
CT Deanery: Holy Transfiguration, New Haven



Sunday, April 21, 5th Sunday of Lent
St. Mary of Egypt—Holy Unction
4:00pm Three Saints, Ansonia
His Grace Bp. Benedict Presiding

Sunday, April 28 Palm Sunday
Bridegroom Matins 4:00 pm
CT Deanery: All Saints, Hartford

