



## 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.

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Bulletin for Sunday, September 22, 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  
Position Vacant- 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) 322-2906, 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**

**On this day we bid "good-bye" to Loydd and Susan Davis.** God grant them many years!

## **Diocean Assembly**

The Assembly this year occurs on Oct 25th & 26th, and will be held in Cumberland, RI. Jim Ifkovic will be our delegate this year.

## **Stewardship**

Stewardship forms were emailed out to everyone on our mailing list. They are also available in the back of the candle desk. Please be sure to return them to me before the end of the month as we will be using the pledges to generate our budget for the following year. We will also be putting

our ministries together as well.

## **Parish on Cross Road**

The "study guide" to be filled out by parishioners, at the request of His Beatitude, are also located at the candle desk.

Please return the Stewardship forms and the Study Guide questions to me by the end of the month, at the latest. We need the stewardship forms so that we can complete the budget for next year at our next council meeting in October. I need the Metropolitan's survey forms so that I can review them and prepare a final report for the All-American Council.

## **Traveling**

With the blessing of His Grace, Benedict, I will be traveling down to Florida to be with my parents on this week of the first anniversary of my sister's repose. I will be leaving right after church on Sunday, and will return on Thursday. No scheduled services will be missed. If anyone has any needs while I'm away, please contact Dn Timothy. Please do not reach out to any other clergy without contacting Dn Timothy first.

## Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Many Years! To John Skrobat on the occasion of his Name's Day.

Memory Eternal to Kelley Billings-Hosking on the anniversary of her repose.

*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: Galina, Olga, Mat Lillian,

- Dorothy, Archbishop Nikon (9/1), Deborah Brey (9/10), Kelley Hosking-Billings (9/27)
- Clergy and their families: Fr Sergei, Fr Ceriphim, Fr David, Fr Patrick
- Catechumen: Robert, Abbie, Matthew, Joseph, Mary, Kevin and Sarah
- Individuals and Families: Luba, Suzanne, Gail Galina, Evelyn, Rosemary, John, Daniel & Dayna, Kristen, Charles, Victor, Susan
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: Zachariah Niess (9/5), Michael Niess (9/6), David Miller (9/11), Kathryn Jankura (9/12), Melissa Josefiak (9/16), Sophia Brubaker, Luba Martins, Nadia PenkofLedbeck (9/17)
- Anniversaries this Month: Lloyd and Susan Davis
- Expecting and Newborn: Lynn, David and their unborn child, Keree, Steve and their unborn child
- Traveling: Michael, Jason, Marlene and Vincent Melesko
- Sick and those in distress: Thomas, Sheri, Joanna, Joshua, Remy, Stormy, Scott, Anne, Noah, Nancy, Cathy, Joe

## Today's commemorated feasts and saints

### 13th SUNDAY AFTER

**PENTECOST — Tone 4.** Hieromartyr Phocas, Bishop of Sinopè (117). Prophet Jonah (8th c. B.C.). St. Jonah the Presbyter (9th c.), father of Ss. Theophanes the Hymnographer and Theodore Graptus. Ven. Jonah, Abbot of Yashezérsk (1589-92). Martyr Phokas the Gardener, of Sinopè (ca. 320). St. Peter the Tax-collector (6th c.).

- 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

### St Alexis Parish

September 22 to September 30, 2024

#### Sunday, September 22

1st Sunday of Luke  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

#### Monday, September 23

The Conception of St. John the Baptist

#### Tuesday, September 24

The Commemoration of the Miracle of the Theotokos Myrtidiotissis in Kythyra  
New Martyrs of Alaska, Hieromonk Juvenaly & Peter the Aleut  
8:30AM Matins

#### Wednesday, September 25

Euphrosyne of Alexandria

#### Thursday, September 26

The Falling Asleep of St. John the Evangelist and Theologian  
8:30AM Matins

#### Friday, September 27

Callistratus the Martyr & his 49 Companions

#### Saturday, September 28

Chariton the Confessor  
5:30PM Great Vespers

#### Sunday, September 29

2nd Sunday of Luke  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

#### Monday, September 30

Gregory the Illuminator, Bishop of Armenia  
Davis - A  
Matushka Cindy - B

## Saints and Feasts

### September 22

#### Phocas the Martyr, Bishop of Sinope

This saint was known for the many miracles he worked and for his apostolic zeal in shepherding the flock of Sinope. He contested for the Faith during the reign of the Emperor Trajan, in the year 102, when he was burned to death in a bath-house. A homily in his honour was composed by Saint John Chrysostom. The translation of his holy relics is celebrated on July 23.

## **September 23**

### **The Conception of St. John the Baptist**

This came to pass fifteen months before the birth of Christ, after the vision of the Angel that Zacharias, the father of the Forerunner, saw in the Temple while he executed the priest's office in the order of his course during the feast of the Tabernacles, as tradition bears witness. In this vision, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias and said to him, "Thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John" (Luke 1:13). Knowing that Elizabeth was barren, and that both he and she were elderly, Zacharias did not believe what the Angel told him, although he had before him the example of Abraham and Sarah, of Hannah, mother of the Prophet Samuel, and of other barren women in Israel who gave birth by the power of God. Hence, he was condemned by the Archangel to remain speechless until the fulfilment of these words in their season, which also came to pass (Luke 1:7-24).

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## **September 24**

### **Thekla the Protomartyr & Equal-to-the-Apostles**

This saint was from the city of Iconium. When she was eighteen years of age, she was instructed in the Faith of Christ and the hope of the resurrection by the Apostle Paul, whom also she followed, forsaking her betrothed and espousing a life of virginity

for the sake of the Heavenly Bridegroom. Having preached Christ in various cities and suffered many things, she reposed in Seleucia of Cilicia at the age of 90.

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## **September 24**

### **Silouan of Athos**

## **September 25**

### **Our Righteous Father Sergius of Radonezh**

Our righteous Father Sergius was born in Rostov, north of Moscow, about the year 1314. Named Bartholomew in Baptism, he was brought up in Radonezh, and at the death of his parents he withdrew to the wilderness to become a monk. It is notable that without having been trained in a monastery, he was of such a spiritual stature as to be able to take up the perilous eremitical life from the beginning, without falling into delusion or despondency. When he had endured with courage the deprivations of the solitary life, other monks began to come to him, for whom he was made abbot against his will. On the counsel of Philotheus, Patriarch of Constantinople, he organized his monks according to the cenobitic life, appointing duties to each. While Anthony and Theodosius of Kiev, and the other righteous Fathers before Sergius, had established their monasteries near to cities, Sergius was the leader and light of those who went far into the wilderness, and after his example the untrodden forests

of northern Russia were settled with monks. When Grand Duke Demetrius Donskoy was about to go to battle against the invading Tartars, he first sought the blessing of Saint Sergius, through whose prayers he was triumphant. Saint Sergius was adorned with the highest virtues of Christ-like humility and burning love for God and neighbour, and received the gift of working wonders, of casting out demons, and of discretion for leading souls to salvation. When he served the Divine Liturgy, an Angel served with him visibly; he was also vouchsafed the visitation of the most holy Theotokos with the Apostles Peter and John. He was gathered to his Fathers on September 25, 1392. At the recovery of his holy relics on July 5, 1422, his body and garments were found fragrant and incorrupt. His life was written by the monks of Epiphanius, who knew him.

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## **September 25**

### **Euphrosyne of Alexandria**

Our righteous Mother Euphrosyne, who lived during the reign of Saint Theodosius the Younger (408-450), was the daughter of Paphnutius of Egypt. Forsaking her father and his wealth, she renamed herself Smaragdus, and pretending to be a eunuch of the imperial palace, she dressed herself as a man and entered a monastery of men where her identity remained unknown until her repose thirty-eight years later.

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## **September 26**

### **The Falling Asleep of St. John the Evangelist and Theologian**

This Apostle was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and the brother of James the elder. First a fisherman by trade, he became an Apostle and the beloved Disciple of Christ. Only he of all the Disciples followed Him even to the Cross, and was entrusted with the care of our Saviour's Mother, as it were another son to her, and a brother of Christ the Teacher. After this, he preached throughout Asia Minor, especially in Ephesus. When the second persecution against the Christians began in the year 96 during the reign of Domitian, he was taken in bonds to Rome, and there was cast into a vat filled to the brim with boiling oil. Coming forth therefrom unharmed, he was exiled to the island of Patmos, where he wrote the Book of Revelation. Returning again to Ephesus after the death of the tyrant, he wrote his Gospel (after the other Evangelists had already written theirs) and his three Catholic Epistles. In all, he lived ninety-five years and fell asleep in the Lord during the reign of Trajan in the year 100. He was called Theologian because he loftily expounded in his Gospel the theology of the inexpressible and eternal birth of the Son and Word of God the Father. It is for this cause that an eagle—a symbol of the Holy Spirit, as Saint Irenaeus says—is depicted in his icon, for this was one of the four symbolic living creatures that the Prophet Ezekiel saw (Ezek. 1:10).

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## Hymns of the Day



### **Tone 4 Troparion (Resurrection)**

Let the heavens rejoice!  
Let the earth be glad!  
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.  
He has trampled down death by death.

He has become the first born of the dead.  
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,  
and has granted to the world//  
great mercy.

### **Tone 4 Troparion (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.

### **Tone 3 Troparion (St. Quadratus)**

Holy Apostle Quadratus,  
entreat the merciful God//  
to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions!

### **Tone 4 Troparion (St. Phocas)**

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 Phocas, entreat Christ

God to save our souls!

### **Tone 4 Kontakion (Resurrection)**

On this day You rose from the tomb, O Merciful One,  
leading us from the gates of death.  
On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices;  
with the Prophets and Patriarchs//  
they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Your power.

### **Tone 5 Kontakion (St. Alexis)**

Let us, the faithful praise the Priest Alexis, a bright beacon of Orthodoxy in America, a model of patience and humility, a worthy shepherd of the Flock of Christ.  
He called back the sheep who had been led astray  
and brought them by his preaching to the Heavenly Kingdom.

### **Tone 8 Kontakion (St. Quadratus)**

The universe offers You, O Lord, the Apostle Quadratus  
as a most honored hierarch and athlete of great strength;  
with hymns it honors his all-venerable memory//  
and asks that through him You grant forgiveness of transgressions to those who sing his praise.

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

### **Tone 2 Kontakion (St. Phocas)**

The Master established you as a brilliant sun shining on all the faithful, glorious Hieromartyr Phocas.  
He has accepted you life, faith and contest as myrrh,//

for He is rich in mercy.

*now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

### **Tone 6 Kontakion (Steadfast Protectress)**

Steadfast Protectress of Christians,  
□Constant Advocate before the Creator;  
despise not the entreating cries of us  
sinners, □but in your goodness come speedily  
to help us who call on you in faith. □Hasten  
to hear our petition and to intercede for us,  
□O Theotokos, for you always protect those  
who honor you!

### **COMMUNION HYMN**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him  
in the highest!  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

### **Gospel and Epistle Readings**

#### **Epistle Reading**

#### **Prokeimenon. 4th Tone. Psalm 103.24,1.**

O Lord, how manifold are your works. You  
have made all things in wisdom.  
Verse: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

#### **The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 16:13-24.**

Brethren, be watchful, stand firm in your  
faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that  
you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you  
know that the household of Stephanas were  
the first converts in Achaia, and they have  
devoted themselves to the service of the  
saints; I urge you to be subject to such

men and to every fellow worker and laborer.  
I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and  
Fortunatus and Achaicos, because they have  
made up for your absence; for they refreshed  
my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition  
to such men. The churches of Asia send  
greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with  
the church in their house, send you hearty  
greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send  
greetings. Greet one another with a holy  
kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own  
hand. If any one has no love for the Lord, let  
him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace  
of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be  
with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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#### **Gospel Reading**

#### **1st Sunday of Luke**

#### **The Reading is from Luke 5:1-11**

At that time, as Jesus was standing by the  
lake of Gennesaret, he saw two boats by the  
lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them  
and were washing their nets. Getting into  
one of the boats, which was Simon's, he  
asked him to put out a little from the land.  
And he sat down and taught the people from  
the boat. And when he had ceased speaking,  
he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and  
let down your nets for a catch." And Simon  
answered, "Master, we toiled all night and  
took nothing! But at your word I will let  
down the nets." And when they had done  
this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and  
as their nets were breaking, they beckoned  
to their partners in the other boat to come  
and help them.



And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he was astonished, and all who were with him, at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

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### Wisdom of the Fathers

For now they were well instructed beforehand...But mark both their faith and their obedience. For though they were in the midst of their work when they heard His command, they delayed not, they procrastinated not, they said not, "let us return home, and converse with our kinsfolk," but "they forsook all and followed."

### St. John Chrysostom

*Homily 14 on Matthew 4, 4th Century*

Because such is the obedience which Christ seeks of us, as that we delay not even a moment of time, though something absolutely most needful should vehemently press on us.

### St. John Chrysostom

*Homily 14 on Matthew 4, 4th Century*

### Beyond the Sermon



When Jesus starts His earthly ministry, after voluntarily going to the desert to defeat His spiritual enemies, He begins preaching in the region of Galilee. This is the present-day region of northern Israel, where the Sea of Galilee is, back then called Lake Gennesaret, and where many of the events of

the Gospel take place.

In the morning, Jesus stands by the shore and sees Peter, James, John, and Andrew, as well as their two boats. The fishermen are washing their nets after a night of work when they caught nothing. Many people are around, so Jesus gets into Peter and Andrew's boat and asks Peter to go out a little from the shore. As he does so, Jesus sits down, the customary position for teachers, and speaks the word of God to them. Jesus Himself is the Son of God and the Word of God, and so when He talks to people, He brings them the word of eternal life.

After Jesus teaches the multitude, He tells Peter to go back into the deep waters and let down the nets again for fishing. Peter responds that they toiled all night

and took nothing, but out of trust and obedience, he would again throw the nets. Peter is bewildered by the Lord's command, and we observe two important things. Firstly, we see here a fundamental principle to our lives: Peter does not quite understand why the Lord commands him to fish again, but he obeys the Lord all the same. He had spent all night fishing and has caught nothing. He is an experienced fisherman and knows that, humanly speaking, the conditions on that morning are not ideal for fishing. Yet, he trusts and obeys.

Secondly, we see that Peter's obedience (in Greek, ὑπακοή), like our obedience to the Lord, will always bear lasting results. Peter spends all night toiling and does it with his own strength. But now, as the morning dawns, with the Lord strengthening him and illuminating his life, fish are caught in abundance.

The remarkable result of Peter's obedience to Jesus' loving command is that there are so many fish that he has to shout for James and John to help him. They fill both boats, almost to the point of sinking. A whole evening of empty toil has turned into incredible abundance in an instant, by the Lord's Word and through His love and grace. The lasting result of Peter's obedience is that we learn about the Kingdom of God. The Lord teaches us that the fish symbolizes people, and the catch symbolizes the call to eternal life. The Lord tells Peter that from that moment on, he would be fishing the souls of people into the Kingdom of God. It points to the work of the Church to bring the Gospel to people of all tongues and nations, a great multitude who will

enter the Kingdom.

As boats filled with fish, the Church has been and will continue to be filled with the people of God. The Lord brings His people from across the world and throughout the ages to follow Him.

The Lord says through the Prophet Jeremiah, 600 years before Christ, that He would send many fishermen. Saint Ambrose of Milan says, "What is so deep, as the knowledge of the Son of God! But what are the nets of the Apostles which are ordered to be let down, but the interweaving of words which . . . bring up those that are tossing about in the waves from the depths below to the regions above."

On the Church's celebration of the Feast of Pentecost, we sing the Apolytikion (the Dismissal Hymn), which says, "Blessed are You, O Christ our God, who made fisherman all-wise, by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit, and through them, drawing all the world into Your net. O Loving One, glory be to You." Peter feels unworthy to be in the Lord's presence when this miracle occurs. A heart that God has touched is a heart that recognizes its own failures and trusts entirely in the love and grace of God. Jesus shows him and the three other disciples that everyone is special and that they can become fishermen of souls if they follow Him. They, too, can help save people.

Everyone who believes in Christ is called to be His disciple, and work on spreading the Gospel, which means the "Good News." This is the work of the Church, which is the work of every member of Christ's Body, that is, us. God is love, and He wants everyone to be saved. He gives us daily

opportunities to repent, follow Him and seek salvation. Peter, James, John, and Andrew are astonished when they see this miracle, so they leave everything and follow Jesus. Similarly, the Lord calls us to leave all earthly things behind, that is, to shift our hearts from worldly things to Him, and make Him our priority. He calls us to follow Him with hope in our hearts, going on the path of love and salvation.

Jesus says to Peter, James, John, and Andrew not to fear. He tells us the same. We spend much time and energy on the things of this life as we seek to provide for our loved ones and ourselves. We apply our talents, training, experience, and hope as we work for good things. There is nothing wrong with this, and in fact, this is a virtue. However, we are called to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these other things we strive for will be added to us.

If we become doers of God's Word, and if we trust Him enough to obey Him, even when we do not entirely understand the circumstances, we know that He is with us. We know He gives us the abundant grace we need and desire, for He loves us. Following Him without reservation is both the prerequisite and the result of having our nets full so that we, too, may inherit eternal life.

<https://www.goarch.org/documents/32058/665c4d-9654-8b36-072c904243ba>

## The Back Page



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- <http://bit.ly/St-Alexis>

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<http://www.stalexischurch.org> ; [calendar](#)  
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