



## 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, March 15, 2026

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### Welcome



Jesus Christ teaches us to love and serve all people, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. To understand this, 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:

- Marlene Melesko - President
- Sarah Senetcen - Member at Large
- Boris Doph - Treasurer
- Dierdre Cottergarfield - Vice President

- Luba Martins - 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**

### **Parish Hosting**

We will be hosting the Deanery Vespers next Sunday, beginning at 4pm. Choir rehearsal begins at 3pm. Please sign-up and help us host the deanery faithful.

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

Greetings from The Sisterhood of St. Elizabeth and Barbara of the Holy New Martyrs Church! We will be sponsoring our second "Orthodox Women's Tea" to be held on Saturday, May 2, from 2:00 - 4:00 pm. The essence of our gathering is to bring us together for a relaxing afternoon of conversation and sharing.

Last year there were four men in attendance so we are not excluding them from our afternoon tea. Last year's tea was enjoyed by everyone attending. As we get closer to the event date, a poster and formal invitation will be sent to the parish.

We look forward to meeting your church ladies.

The Holy New Martyrs website address is: "holynewmartyrs.org." Our Rector, Fr. Stephen Kaznica, just celebrated his 2nd anniversary at our church and we are very fortunate to have him with us.

My Cell no. - 860-884-7143 - my email: camillatar@att.net my landline: 860-887-3145.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours In Christ,

Camilla Tarryk, President and Senior Sister

**LENTEN OUTREACH PROJECT:** We will be collecting supplies for our local Birthright Agency who provides support for women before and after the birth of their baby. The following is a list of needed items. They request that the items be new and only purchase the brands listed. There are also "shopping list" on the candle desk for your convenience. Contact Marlene Melesko or Maureen Skuby with any questions.

**BIRTHRIGHT SHOPPING LIST:** Diapers:

Pampers Sizes 1, 2 & 3

Wipes: Pampers or Honest brands

Diaper Bags

Baby Washcloths & Towels

Baby Bath Products

Onesies or Baby Outfits: Sizes

Newborn or 0-3 months

## Yourth Rally

We hope you are all having a blessed Great Lent. Due to some technical difficulties, diocesan youth rally camper registration for 2026 has been delayed till late March. Please keep an eye on your emails, the diocesan website, and diocesan facebook page for further updates. For those interested in applying to be on staff, that process should be unaffected and will go live on the diocesan website in the next week or so.

We look forward to another exciting and fun year of Youth Rally!

Yours in Christ,  
The Youth Rally Team

## To Our Guests

Throughout our services, we use the more formal "*thy*" and "*thou*" or what is commonly referred to as *King Jamesean English*.

The Lord's Prayer is recited as follows:

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be  
done, as on earth as it is in heaven,  
Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our **debts**, as we

forgive our **debtors**,

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the Evil One.

Please join us after Liturgy for refreshments and hospitality.

## Filesharing

<https://sites.google.com/stalexischurch.net/parish/home>

If you are asked to enter a username and password, please contact Fr Steven via email.

## Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



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 and dispossessed, 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, prejudice; pestilence and natural disaster; 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: Fr Sergei B, Fr Vladimir, Fr Vladimir, Fr John, Fr Alexander, Fr David, Fr Sergius
- Catechumen: Jordan, Christiana
- Individuals and Families: Luba, Suzanne, Rosemary, Daniel & Dayna, Kristen, Victor, Susan, Gregory
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: Michael & Zachary Neiss (3/3), Matthew Kuziak (3/18)
- Anniversaries this Month:
- Expecting and Newborn: Lynn and her unborn child.
- Traveling:
- Sick and those in distress: Nancy, Boris, Glenn, John, Joan, Sharon, William, Alexander

Today's commemorated feasts and saints

### **THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone**

**7. Veneration of the Cross.** Martyrs Agapius, Publius (Pausis), Timolaus, Romulus, two named Dionysius, and two named Alexander, at Cæsarea in Palestine (303). Hieromartyr Alexander of Sídē, in Pamphylia (270-275). Martyr Nicander of Egypt (ca. 302).

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**

#### **March 15 to March 23, 2026**

##### **Sunday, March 15**

Sunday of the Holy Cross  
9:15AM 3rd Hour  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy  
4:00PM CT Deanery Vespers

##### **Monday, March 16**

Sabine the Martyr of Egypt

##### **Tuesday, March 17**

Alexis the Man of God  
8:30AM Matins  
11:00AM Office Hours

##### **Wednesday, March 18**

Matthew Kuziak  
Cyril, Patriarch of Jerusalem  
3:00PM Office Hours  
6:00PM Presanctified Liturgy

### Thursday, March 19

The Holy Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria  
8:30AM Matins  
11:00AM Office Hours

### Saturday, March 21

4:00PM Office Hours  
5:30PM Great Vespers

### Sunday, March 22

9:15AM 3rd Hour  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy  
4:00PM CT Deanery Vespers  
4:00PM Lenten Vespers

### Monday, March 23

The Holy Righteous Martyr Nicon and His  
199 Disciples

## Saints and Feasts

### March 15

#### Sunday of the Holy Cross

With the help of God, we have almost reached the middle of the course of the Fast, where our strength has been worn down through abstinence, and the full difficulty of the labour set before us becomes apparent. Therefore our holy Mother, the Church of Christ, now brings to our help the all-holy Cross, the joy of the world, the strength of the faithful, the staff of the just, and the hope of sinners, so that by venerating it reverently, we might receive strength and grace to complete the divine struggle of the Fast.

### March 15

#### Agapius the Martyr & His Companions

The holy Martyrs contested for piety's sake during the reign of Diocletian (284-305), when Urban was Governor of Caesarea of Palestine. When Urban had commanded that together with a heathen festival, certain condemned Christians be publicly cast to wild beasts, Timolaus, a native of Pontus, Dionysius of Tripolis in Phoenicia, Romulus of Diospolis, Plesius (or Paisius) and Alexander from Egypt, and another Alexander from Gaza, tied their own hands and presented themselves to Urban when the exhibition was about to begin, professing their faith in Christ; they were immediately cast into prison. A few days later Agapios and Dionysius also presented themselves. All were beheaded together at Caesarea. Their martyrdom is recorded by Eusebius (Eccl. Hist., Book VIII, ch.3, called The Martyrs of Palestine).

### March 16

#### Christodoulos the Wonderworker of Patmos

Saint Christodulus, who was from the region of Nicaea of Bithynia, was the son of Theodore and Anna, and was given the name John. He assumed the monastic habit in his youth and was renamed Christodulus ("slave of Christ" in Greek). At first, he lived

the ascetical life in various places, then he received permission and monetary aid from the Emperor Alexis I Comnenus (reigned 1081-1118), and built on the island of Patmos a church and monastery named in honour of Saint John the Evangelist. These buildings stand to this day. However, when the Arabs attacked that place, he fled with his disciples and went to Euboea (Euripus), where also he completed the course of his life about the end of the eleventh century on the 16th of March. The disciples of this righteous man took his sacred incorrupt remains and transferred them to his own monastery, where they repose to this day for the sanctification of those who have recourse to them with faith.

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### **March 17**

#### **Alexios the Man of God**

Saint Alexis was born in old Rome of illustrious parents named Euphemianus and Aglais, and at their request was joined to a young woman in marriage. However, he did not remain with her even for one day, but fled to Edessa, where he lived for eighteen years. He returned to Rome in the guise of a beggar and sat at the gates of his father's house, unknown to all and mocked by his own servants. His identity was revealed only after his death by a paper that he had on his person, which he himself had written a little before his repose. The pious Emperor Honorius honoured him with a solemn burial. The title "Man of God" was given to him from heaven in a vision to the Bishop

of Rome on the day of the Saint's repose.

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### **March 17**

#### **Patrick the Enlightener of Ireland**

Saint Patrick, the Apostle of the Irish, was seized from his native Britain by Irish marauders when he was sixteen years old. Though the son of a deacon and a grandson of a priest, it was not until his captivity that he sought out the Lord with his whole heart. In his Confession, the testament he wrote towards the end of his life, he says, "After I came to Ireland - every day I had to tend sheep, and many times a day I prayed - the love of God and His fear came to me more and more, and my faith was strengthened. And my spirit was so moved that in a single day I would say as many as a hundred prayers, and almost as many at night, and this even when I was staying in the woods and on the mountain; and I would rise for prayer before daylight, through snow, through frost, through rain, and I felt no harm." After six years of slavery in Ireland, he was guided by God to make his escape, and afterwards struggled in the monastic life at Auxerre in Gaul, under the guidance of the holy Bishop Germanus. Many years later he was ordained bishop and sent to Ireland once again, about the year 432, to convert the Irish to Christ. His arduous labours bore so much fruit that within seven years, three bishops were sent from Gaul to help him shepherd his flock, "my brethren and sons whom I have baptized in the Lord - so many thousands of people," he says in his

Confession. His apostolic work was not accomplished without much "weariness and painfulness," long journeys through difficult country, and many perils; he says his very life was in danger twelve times. When he came to Ireland as its enlightener, it was a pagan country; when he ended his earthly life some thirty years later, about 461, the Faith of Christ was established in every corner.

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## **March 18**

### **Cyril, Patriarch of Jerusalem**

This Saint was born in 315, and succeeded Maximus as Archbishop of Jerusalem in 350. He was zealous for the Orthodox Faith, and was a defender of the poor. He was exiled three times by the Arian Emperors Constantius and Valens. But after their death, he was recalled to his throne; he reposed in peace in 386. Of his writings, the most prominent are his catechetical lectures, which are considered the most ancient systematic summary of Christian teaching. Before Saint Cyril, there had been two dioceses, one of Jerusalem, and one of Holy Sion; under Saint Cyril, they were united into one bishopric. See also May 7.

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## **March 19**

### **Chrysanthos & Daria the Martyrs**

Saint Chrysanthus, who was from

Alexandria, had been instructed in the Faith of Christ by a certain bishop. His father, who was a senator by rank and a pagan, had him shut up in prison for many days; then, seeing the unchanging disposition of his mind, he commanded that a certain young woman named Daria be brought from Athens. She was a very beautiful and learned maiden, and also an idolater, and Chrysanthus' father wedded him to her so that he might be drawn away from the Faith of Christ because of his love for her. Instead of this however, Chrysanthus drew Daria unto piety, and both of them boldly proclaimed Christ and received the crown of martyrdom in 283, during the reign of Numerian, when they were buried alive in a pit of mire.

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## **March 20**

### **Cuthbert the Wonderworker, Bishop of Lindisfarne**

Saint Cuthbert was born in Britain about the year 635, and became a monk in his youth at the monastery of Melrose by the River Tweed. After many years of struggle as a true priest of Christ, in the service both of his own brethren and of the neglected Christians of isolated country villages, he became a solitary on Farne Island in 676. After eight years as a hermit, he was constrained to leave his quiet to become Bishop of Lindisfarne, in which office he served for almost two years. He returned to his hermitage two months before he reposed in peace in 687. Because of the

miracles he wrought both during his life and at his tomb after his death, he is called the "Wonderworker of Britain." The whole English people honoured him, and kings were both benefactors to his shrine and suppliants of his prayers. Eleven years after his death, his holy relics were revealed to be incorrupt; when his body was translated from Lindisfarne to Durham Cathedral in August of 1104, his body was still found to be untouched by decay, giving off "an odour of sweetest fragrancly," and "from the flexibility of its joints representing a person asleep rather than dead." Finally, when the most impious Henry VIII desecrated his shrine, opening it to despoil it of its valuables, his body was again found incorrupt, and was buried in 1542. It is believed that after this the holy relics of Saint Cuthbert were hidden to preserve them from further desecration.

## Hymns of the Day



### **Tone 7 Troparion (Resurrection)**

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death.  
To the thief Thou didst open Paradise.  
For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy,

and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,  
to proclaim that Thou art risen, //  
granting the world great mercy.

### **Tone 1 Troparion of the Cross**

O Lord, save Thy people,  
and bless Thine inheritance!  
Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians  
over their adversaries;  
and by virtue of Thy Cross, //  
preserve Thy habitation!

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit  
Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen*

### **Tone 7 Kontakion (Cross)**

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden;  
it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross.  
The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished;  
for Thou, O my Savior, hast come and cried to those in hell: //  
"Enter again into Paradise!"

### **Instead of Holy God - Before Thy Cross...**

#### **Hymn to the Theotokos**

All of creation rejoices in thee, 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 thy body into a throne,  
and thy womb He made more spacious than the heavens.  
All of creation rejoices in thee, O Full of Grace. //  
Glory to thee!

## Communion Hymn

The light of Your countenance has shone on us, O Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## Gospel and Epistle Readings

### Epistle Reading

#### **Prokeimenon. 6th Tone. Psalm 27.9,1.**

O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance.

Verse: To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.

#### **The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6.**

BRETHREN, since we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was.

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So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

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### Gospel Reading

#### **Sunday of the Holy Cross**

#### **The Reading is from Mark 8:34-38; 9:1**

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

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### Wisdom of the Fathers

The key to knowledge is the humility of Christ. The door of the Kingdom of Heaven is open, not to those who only know in their learned minds the mysteries of faith and the commandments of their Creator, but to

those who have progressed far enough to live by them.

### **St. Bede the Venerable**

*Unknown, 8th century*

To deny oneself means to give up one's bad habits; to root out of the heart all that ties us to the world; not to cherish bad thoughts and desires; to suppress every evil thought; to avoid occasions of sin; not to desire or to do anything out of self-love, but to do everything out of love for God. To deny oneself, according to St. Paul means "to be dead to sin. . . but alive to God."

### **St. Innocent of Alaska**

*The Lenten Spring, SVS Press, p. 147, 19th Century*

### **Beyond the Sermon**



Mother Raphaela Wilkinson, the founding abbess of the Orthodox Monastery of the Holy Myrrhbearers, is known for her practical, grounded, and deeply compassionate approach to spiritual life. Her trilogy

provides a roadmap for moving from the initial stages of faith to a mature, sacrificial love.

Here is a summary of the core themes in each book.

### **1. Living in Christ**

This first volume serves as an **invitation to the spiritual life**, focusing on the foundational habits and mindsets required to follow Christ in a modern, distracted world.

- **The Power of Routine:** She emphasizes that holiness isn't found in "spiritual highs" but in the discipline of daily prayer and the mundane tasks of life.
- **Healing the Heart:** A major theme is recognizing our inner brokenness without falling into despair. She views the spiritual life as a hospital where we are gradually healed by God's grace.
- **The Community:** She discusses how we cannot be Christians in isolation. Whether in a monastery or a family, our interactions with others are the primary tools God uses to "sand down" our rough edges.

### **2. Becoming Icons of Christ**

The second book shifts the focus toward **transformation**. In Orthodox theology, an icon is a window to the divine; here, Mother Raphaela explores how human beings are meant to reflect God's light.

- **The Human Person:** She explores the concept of being made in the "Image and Likeness" of God. While the *image* is inherent, the *likeness* is something we grow into through our choices.
- **Transfiguration through Suffering:** She addresses how to handle pain and disappointment. Instead of avoiding them, she encourages readers to offer these experiences to Christ, allowing them to become means of sanctification.
- **Authenticity:** A key takeaway is the importance of "stripping away" the false masks we wear for society so that the true person—the icon—can emerge.

### 3. Growing in Christ

The final installment deals with **spiritual maturity and endurance**. It is written for those who have been on the path for a while and may be facing the "mid-day demon" of boredom or spiritual exhaustion.

- **Patient Endurance (*Hypomone*):** Mother Raphaela highlights the virtue of staying put and remaining faithful when the initial excitement of faith has faded.
- **Deepening Prayer:** She moves beyond the "how-to" of prayer and discusses the move toward a constant awareness of God's presence throughout the day.
- **The Fruit of the Spirit:** The book emphasizes that the ultimate sign of growth is not intellectual knowledge or mystical visions, but a tangible

- increase in humility, peace, and selfless love for others.

### Core Philosophy at a Glance

Book	Primary Focus	Key Virtue
Living in Christ	Foundations	Discipline & Obedience
Becoming Icons	Transformation	Vulnerability & Healing
Growing in Christ	Maturity	Patience & Perseverance

Mother Raphaela's writing is often described as "common sense" spirituality—she avoids overly flowery language in favor of direct, maternal advice that acknowledges how difficult (and rewarding) the Christian path actually is.





# St. Vladimir's Seminary Chorale IN CONNECTICUT

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Join us at the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts  
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