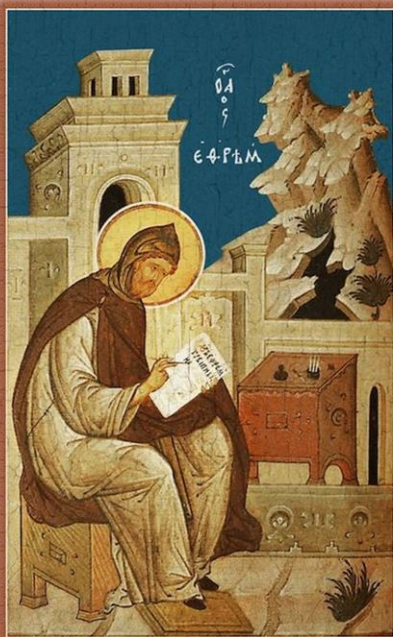


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross

Orthodox Church

Williamsport, PA.



Ven. Ephraim the Syrian

New Martyrs & Confessors of Russia

January 28th, 2024

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749
www.holycrosswilliamsport.org

Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, *Rector/Pastor*
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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11
Gospel: St. Matthew 22:35-46

A warm welcome to EVERYONE this morning!!

UPCOMING SERVICES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- + Church **OPEN** for prayer/Confession/Talk to Fr. – Tuesday Jan 30
- 7 to 9:30am
- + *Compline/Bible Study* – Wednesday January 31st at 5:30pm
 - ++ FEAST OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD IN TEMPLE ++**
- Vesperal Liturgy* – Thursday February 1st at 5:30pm
- + *Great Vespers* – Saturday February 3rd at 5pm
- + *Hours, Divine Liturgy* – Sunday February 4th at 9:40am –
Fellowship following in the Hall.
- + *Confessions on Saturdays before Vespers or by appointment.*
- + Benevolence Fund for January: - *Priest's Discretionary*
- + House Blessings are now happening! Please contact Fr. Seraphim
to set up a day and time. 😊

OUR GIVING — JANUARY 21ST, 2024

Tithes/Offerings - \$3,077.25 / Online Giving - \$468.65

Candle Offerings - \$80.00 / Benevolence - \$25.00

Thank you all for your generous giving to our Parish!

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by **fasting, prayer [i.e., *Prayers Before Communion*], recent confession**, and who were *at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel* should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. ***We must be at peace with everyone too.*** If you have any questions, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

**** Please remain (quietly) for the *Prayers of Thanksgiving* after the Liturgy, before going over to the Hall for Fellowship.**

Despondency

When Despondency Seizes Us

The renowned 19th century Russian saint, Seraphim of Sarov (1759-1833), said of himself, "I don't know anything". These words were remarkable coming from a hermit who was the most sought after spiritual adviser of his age, with even the Tsar seeking out his counsel. Yet Saint Seraphim recognized that he was but a funnel from which anything good that came out of him, was from God.

As a hieromonk I am often tortured with the knowledge that I am a poor example to others, and that I fall short, daily, of living out the image of Christ to others. Yet I am compelled to live out every day with joyfulness of heart, no matter what. I am also compelled to preach, teach, and write of the things of the Lord, and to try to trust God, no matter what. I try, as best I can, to remember the words, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice (Philippians 4:4)".

I try to remember the words of Saint Basil the Fool for Christ, whose holy relics reside in Saint Basil's Cathedral in Red Square, who said, "winter is cold, but paradise is sweet". Knowing that true validation comes only from God, I try not to be hurt when I do not receive validation from my peers, remembering that I am called upon to give to others, what I want to receive.

Like Saint Anthony the Great, I cry out to God, "where are You?", all the while floating in a river of grace. I want to be a friend of God, yet often feel like the chick, who has been pushed out of the nest by the mother eagle.

Yet I am comforted by the counsel of Saint Seraphim, who instructed his spiritual children with the words: "When despondency seizes

us, let us not give in to it. Rather, fortified and protected by the light of faith, let us with great courage say to the spirit of evil: "What are you to us, you who are cut off from God, a fugitive for Heaven, and a slave of evil? You dare not do anything to us: Christ, the Son of God, has dominion over us and over all. Leave us, you thing of bane. We are made steadfast by the uprightness of His Cross. Serpent, we trample on your head."

With love in Christ,

Abbot Tryphon, All Merciful Saviour Monastery, Vashon Island, WA.

Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk.

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant.

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. Amen.

Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!

Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Archpriest Michael (Evans), Priest Gregory (White), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Pres. Rosy (Tanveer), Mat. Mary Lynn (Henry), Mat. Deborah (Belonick), Mat. Barbara (Matusiak), Mat. Daria Pelesh, Xenia Crews (child Odette), Anastasia Linnehan & Sarah Gunter (children to be born of them), Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Sebastian Fillar, Anna Conrad, Isaac Bannister, Christine Perrin, Agnes Andreanoff, Michael Lazorchak, Edward Hojnicky, Brian Gunter, Vladimir Kerkendall, Alec Litchard & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

Archpriest Moses Berry +1/12, Archpriest Robert Stephen Kennaugh +1/12, Deacon Horia Roscanu +1/19, Deacon Joseph Rabickow, Jr +1/22, Matushka Rosemary Mariamna Soot +1/16, Mother Elizabeth Lutz +1/6, & Those who have lost their lives in the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & Middle East