

Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania + Wilkes-Barre Deanery

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



Afterfeast of the Theophany
of our Lord and Savior Jesus
Christ

31st Sunday After Pentecost

January 10th, 2021

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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

Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, Pastor
Office: 570.322.3020
(c) 717.576.3503
Email: priestserafim@gmail.com

Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13
Gospel: St. Matthew 4:12-17

Welcome to everyone, and especially our visitors and guests this morning! Please join us for some fellowship after in the Parish Hall!

Services, Events & Announcements

***Compline/Adult Ed. - Wednesday Jan. 13th @ 6pm**

***Great Vespers – Saturday, Jan. 16th @ 5pm**

***Divine Liturgy – Sunday, Jan. 17th @ 10am (Hours @ 9:40am)
Fellowship After in the Hall**

***House Blessings have begun! If you would like to have your home blessed this year, please see Fr. Seraphim to setup a day and time.**

***This morning, with the blessing of Archbishop Mark, the 2021 Parish Council will be installed at the end of the Liturgy. Please keep your Council in your prayers. MANY YEARS!!**

Our Giving – January 3rd, 2021

Tithes/Offerings - \$2,298.00

Candle Offerings – \$87.25

Christmas Offerings - \$40.00

From Your Pastor . . .

My dear Brothers and Sisters, it has been a while since I last posted the guidelines for receiving Holy Communion. This is very important for a couple of reasons: first, it is so that we are prepared to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord who IS truly present. Secondly, so that we do not bring judgement upon ourselves. St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:27, "Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord." If we are not prepared, it is best not to receive. AND, if we are not prepared, let us do what we need to do in order that we might be spiritually fortified. We will never be perfect in our preparation, but we must do the best we can, and remember, God does know our hearts. I would certainly be glad to speak with anyone concerning this.

With Love and God's Blessing,

+ Fr. Seraphim

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 should all be at peace with each other too.*** If you have any questions about this, please see Fr. Seraphim.**



Discerning and Doing God's Will by Remembering Him in a World of Distraction

by Mother Dorothea, St. Xenia Skete (Wildwood, CA)

[In] order to be submitted to God and do His will in the moment, especially in difficult times, we must first be practicing the remembrance of God in our lives. Remembering God with consistency has always taken great toil, and this is especially so in today's world where noise—visual, audio, subliminal and emotional—continually bombard and can distract one from devotion to God.

What is the remembrance of God? More than calling God to mind now and then, it is the continuing awareness that He is ever with us and knows us—our heart, mind and soul. Remembering God brings help and consolation to our souls: "I remembered God and was gladdened (Ps. 76).

St. Theophan the Recluse wrote much about this:

"The recollection (or remembrance) of God is mentally standing before God in the heart.

"Everywhere and always God is with us, near to us and in us. But we are not always with Him, since we do not remember Him; and because we do not remember Him, we allow ourselves many things which we would not permit if we did remember.

"The more firmly you are established in the recollection of God, the more quiet your thoughts will become and the less they will wander.

"Remembrance of God is something that God Himself grafts upon the soul. But the soul must force itself to persevere and to toil. Work, making every effort to attain the unceasing remembrance of God, and God, seeing how fervently you desire it will give you this constant remembrance of Himself.

"To succeed in this remembrance it is advisable to accustom oneself to the continual repetition of the Jesus Prayer, 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me,' holding in mind the thought of God's nearness, His presence in the heart. [If one prays the Jesus Prayer when one is idle for a time, while driving, doing dishes, etc., will help greatly in building prayer in the heart and mind.]

"To pray does not only mean to stand in prayer. To keep the mind and heart turned towards God and directed towards Him...this is already prayer."

St. Macarius of Egypt said that we must first remember God in order to love Him.

The more one strives to do this—to remember God in one's mind and heart—the more one becomes aware of those things in oneself that keep one from this remembrance.