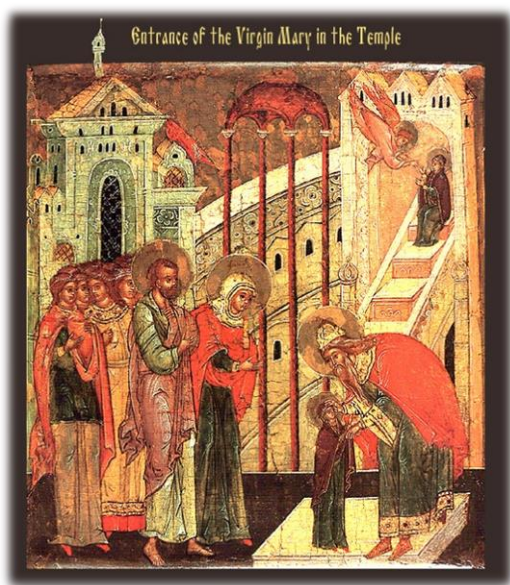


Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania + Wilkes-Barre Deanery

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



*The Entrance of the Most
Blessed Theotokos into the
Temple*

22nd Sunday After Pentecost

November 21st, 2021

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18; Hebrews 9:1-7 (*Feast*)
Gospel: St. Luke 12:16-21; Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (*Feast*)

Joyous Feast! A very warm welcome to everyone, and especially to our visitors this morning! Please join us for some fellowship after in the Parish Hall!

Services, Events & Announcements

+ NO Compline/Bible Study this week Wednesday Nov 24th

A BLESSED THANKSGIVING (NOV 25TH) TO EVERYONE!!

+ Great Vespers – Saturday November 27th @ 5pm

+ Divine Liturgy - Sunday November 28th @ 10am (Hours @ 9:40), fellowship following in the Hall.

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 Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

The Mystery of the Church and the Corporate Nature of Salvation

There is a certain emptiness in trying to live the Christian life outside the life of the Church. This is because it is impossible to truly live as a Christian without the Church. The reading of the scriptures, and our commitment to prayer, are important foundations in the life of a Christian, but they are incomplete without the mystical and sacramental life that is found within the Church.

If we hope to grow spiritually, we will take advantage of the Mysteries that are found only within the Church. Without the Mystery of Penance, and the absolution of the Church, we have no hope of transformation and holiness, for without the corporate life of the Church, our sins keep us captive. Without the Mystery of Christ's Body and Blood, received during the celebration of the Church's Divine Liturgy, the healing of the soul remains undone, and salvation is next to impossible.

The center of the Church's Eucharistic liturgy is to be found in the descent, the appearance, the divine presence of the resurrected Christ, and is central to every moment of the liturgy. As believers, the partaking of Communion is actually that moment when we are encountering the living person of the Lord who enters the congregation as "King of the universe borne invisibly over their spears by the angelic hosts." This act is so central to the life of a Christian, as to make it the necessary component to being a Christian.

Love in Christ,

Abbot Tryphon

All Merciful Saviour Monastery, Vashon Island, WA.

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), Subdeacon Anthony (Affsprung), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Mat. Seraphima (Hunter) and the child Theodora Marie, Helen Maybo, Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Phoebe Davis, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak & Phillip Paxos

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

Archpriest Peter Tutko +11/5, Priest Narcis Stoica +10/16
Priest Maximos Herman +10/26, Olga Uvari +10/23

Looking for a unique gift or need to buy groceries (or maybe gas)? See Mat. Mary and pick up some Giant gift cards! Our Parish receives 5% of the sales of these cards, and it's a simple way to generate a little income for our Parish. Available in denominations of \$25, \$50, or \$100.





*Ladies of Holy Cross,
You are invited to our first
Lady's W(h)ine Fest Christmas Gathering.*

*Thursday - December 9th at 6 o'clock in the
evening - Church Rectory*

*Please join us for a relaxing time of
Christmas joy and friendship.*

****Bring a WRAPPED gift (\$20 max.) for a fun
Christmas exchange game.*

****Bring a delicious Nativity Fast dish to share
(no meat).*

*Please RSVP by Dec. 1
Mat. Mary
diaconissamary@gmail.com
717-580-8594*

The Entry of the Most Holy Mother of God into the Temple Commemorated on [November 21](#)

According to Holy Tradition, the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple took place in the following manner. The parents of the Virgin Mary, Saints Joachim and Anna, praying for an end to their childlessness, vowed that if a child were born to them, they would dedicate it to the service of God.

When the Most Holy Virgin reached the age of three, the holy parents decided to fulfill their vow. They gathered together their relatives and acquaintances, and dressed the All-Pure Virgin in Her finest clothes. Singing sacred songs and with lighted candles in their hands, virgins escorted Her to the Temple (Ps. 44/45:14-15). There the High Priest and several priests met the handmaiden of God. In the Temple, fifteen high steps led to the sanctuary, which only the priests and High Priest could enter. (Because they recited a Psalm on each step, Psalms 119/120-133/134 are called “Psalms of Ascent.”) The child Mary, so it seemed, could not make it up this stairway. But just as they placed Her on the first step, strengthened by the power of God, She quickly went up the remaining steps and ascended to the highest one. Then the High Priest, through inspiration from above, led the Most Holy Virgin into the Holy of Holies, where only the High Priest entered once a year to offer a purifying sacrifice of blood. Therefore, all those present in the Temple were astonished at this most unusual occurrence.

After entrusting their child to the Heavenly Father, Joachim and Anna returned home. The All-Holy Virgin remained in the quarters for virgins near the Temple. According to the testimony of Holy Scripture (Exodus 38; 1 Kings 1: 28; Luke 2: 37), and also the

historian Josephus Flavius, there were many living quarters around the Temple, in which those who were dedicated to the service of God dwelt.

The earthly life of the Most Holy Theotokos from Her infancy until She was taken up to Heaven is shrouded in deep mystery. Her life at the Jerusalem Temple was also a secret. “If anyone were to ask me,” said Saint Jerome, “how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth, I would answer that that is known to God Himself and the Archangel Gabriel, Her constant guardian.”

But there are accounts in Church Tradition, that during the All-Pure Virgin’s stay at the Temple, She grew up in a community of pious virgins, diligently read the Holy Scripture, occupied Herself with handicrafts, prayed constantly, and grew in love for God. From ancient times, the Church has celebrated the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. Indications that the Feast was observed in the first centuries of Christianity are found in the traditions of Palestinian Christians, which say that the holy Empress Helen (May 21) built a church in honor of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa, in the fourth century, also mentions this Feast. In the eighth century Saints Germanus and Tarasius, Patriarchs of Constantinople, delivered sermons on the Feast of the Entry. The Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple foretells God’s blessing for the human race, the preaching of salvation, the promise of the coming of Christ.