

DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA + WILKES-BARRÉ DEANERY

**ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
ORTHODOX CHURCH
WILLIAMSPORT, PA.**



28TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

**CONCEPTION BY THE RIGHTEOUS ST ANNA OF
THE THEOTOKOS**

DECEMBER 9TH, 2018

ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749

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Today's Scripture Readings:
Epistle: Colossians 1:12-18
Gospel: St. Luke 17:12-19

A VERY WARM welcome to EVERYONE this morning to our visitors and guests! Please join us over in the Parish Hall after the Liturgy for some fellowship!

Services, Events & Announcements

*****Great Vespers (Feast of St. Herman of Alaska) Wednesday Dec 12th @ 5pm, Divine Liturgy Thursday Dec 13th @ 10am***

*****Great Vespers, Saturday Dec 15th @ 5pm***

*****Divine Liturgy, Sunday Dec 16th @ 10am***

*****Compline (Evening Prayers) w/confessions Friday Dec 14th @ 5pm***

*****Help Needed to make baklava on Tuesday Dec. 11th @ 5pm, pickup on Friday Dec. 14th Anyone interested in helping with baking, and/or pierogi making, please see Chris Sinatra or call 570-745-7740***

*****Bake Sale/Craft Sale – Sunday Dec. 16th During Fellowship Hour. Food and craft donations are needed, and the proceeds will go to our Parish Education Fund.***

****St. Tikhon's Bookstore will be with us on Sunday Dec. 16th, in the Parish Hall during Fellowship Hour!**

****Services for the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:**

Vigil - Monday Dec. 24th @ 6pm

Divine Liturgy - Tuesday Dec. 25th @ 10am

****Need to go to Confession during this Advent Season? There are many times available to do this. Let us make an extra effort to celebrate this wonderful Sacrament as we prepare for the Birth of Our Savior. If you would like to make an appointment for confession, please see Fr. Seraphim. ☺**

+ As we prepare the budget for 2019, please take a moment and fill out the *Stewardship* and the *Time and Talent* cards. They can be given to Anthony (Eric) Affsprung.

LAST SUNDAY – Dec 2

Attendance 66 - Regular Offering – \$4,372.00

Candles – \$129.00, Monthly Special – \$241.00

NEXT SUNDAY – Dec 16

Reading of the Hours – Herman (Brad) B.

Reading of the Epistle – Anthony A.

Fellowship Hour – Beth Y. & Yvonne B

Dec. 23rd – Cory C. & Joel S.

Dec 30th – Mat. Mary & Beth Y.

Venerating the Holy Virgin

As far as we know, the earliest known prayer to the Virgin Mary is known as “Beneath thy compassion” (Greek: Ὑπὸ τὴν σὴν εὐσπλαγχνίαν). The earliest text of this hymn was found in a Christmas liturgy of the third century. It is written in Greek and dates to approximately 250 A.D.

In 1917, the John Rylands Library in Manchester acquired a large panel of Egyptian papyrus including the 18 cm by 9.4 cm fragment, containing the text of this prayer in Greek.

C.H. Roberts published this document in 1938. His colleague E. Lobel, with whom he collaborated in editing the Oxyrhynchus papyri, basing his arguments on paleographic analysis, argued that the text could not possibly be older than the third century, and most probably was written between 250 and

280. This hymn thus precedes the “Hail Mary” in Christian prayer by several centuries.

The prayer reads: “Under your mercy we take refuge, Mother of God! Our prayers, do not despise in necessities, but from the danger deliver us, only pure, only blessed.”

The idea held by our protestant friends, that the veneration of the Holy Virgin is of late, pagan introduction, is simply not true. Christians have been invoking the prayers of the Mother of God from the time of the Ancient Church and continue to this day. Yet more proof that we get into doctrinal and liturgical trouble when we think we can interpret the Bible on our own. The Holy Spirit is not the author of confusion, and the Church has survived 2,000 years because she is conciliar in nature, teaching only that which has always been taught, everywhere and at all times.

The Church even worships in the same manner, with her divine services having roots in the worship that took place in the Temple in Jerusalem and born out of the synagogues and hidden places of the earliest Christian worship of the first century.

In an age when we don’t even remember our own American past, is it any wonder so many do not know the history, the worship, and the dogma, of the Ancient Christian Faith? When we live in an age where the attention span is hardly past a ten-minute lecture, is it any wonder so many of our neighborhood churches are constantly reinventing their form of worship, in a desperate attempt at remaining relevant?

Not a day goes by that I do not give thanks to God for having revealed His Church to me. I am grateful that I am growing old in a Church that is actually older than I, and whose traditions, teachings, and way of life, will live far beyond myself.

*Love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon
All Merciful Saviour Monastery, Vashon Island, WA*

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by fasting, prayer, confession, who were at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel and are at peace with one another should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. Questions? Please see Fr. Seraphim.