

Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania + Wilkes-Barre Deanery

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



Sunday of the Publican & the Pharisee

Meeting of the Lord in the Temple

February 9th, 2020

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749

Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, Pastor
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Mr. Michael (Cory) Chelko, Parish President
Dr. Theodore Federoff, Vice President

Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15

Gospel: St. Luke 18:10-14

Welcome to ALL our visitors and guests this morning! Please, come over to the Hall after Liturgy for some food & fellowship!!

Services, Events & Announcements

++Weds. Feb 12th – Daily Vespers (Adult Ed/Orth 101) @ 6pm

++Sat. Feb 15th – Great Vespers @ 5pm (Confessions)

++Sun. Feb 16th – Divine Liturgy (Hours @ 9:40)

****Choir Practice - Feb 22nd after Vespers**

Our Giving – Feb 2nd

Attendance 64 - Regular Offering - \$4556.00

Candles - \$106.00 / Love Offering - \$65.00

Auxiliary Gift - \$6,000.00 / Memorial \$20.00

From Your Pastor . . .

If you would like to have your home blessed, please see Fr. Seraphim to arrange a day and time.

Also, on Wednesdays after Vespers, we have begun a new study on prayer. Please think about joining us as we explore what “prayer” is about. We will be using the book “Beginning to Pray” by Met. Anthony Bloom (available from your favorite bookstore) and also look at some Orthodox prayers. If you are looking for a prayer book, we have copies of the new “Orthodox Christian Prayers” from St. Tikhon’s for \$20.

Thanks to ALL who helped with perogies this past week!! A job well done!!

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.



Love & Mercy: Where the Temporal and the Eternal Are Connected

We can be rich in liturgical correctness and wealthy in traditions, but if we do not have love and mercy, we are in reality bankrupt. Our Lord Himself made love and mercy the chief criterion whereby we will be judged on the Last Day. The fulfillment of the law is love, not liturgical correctness, as was thought by the Pharisees. When we see our Orthodox Christian faith only in the context of liturgical correctness, and the length of our services, but do not love others, we will have gained nothing of eternal value. If we do not show compassion and mercy towards everyone we meet, we will have committed a grievous crime against our Orthodox faith, and will stand before God with nothing to show for our life.

Our liturgical rites and religious traditions are of no value if we have not love and mercy. When we rise to a sincere evangelical love for others, we become God's collaborators, for our Christian love and mercy is the most divine trait possible for the human being. Our mercy is the expression of our love of God, for it is in our love of God that our mercy is poured out upon those who suffer, and upon those who are ill, or helpless in body and mind. Our Christian mercy springs from love and is a concrete expression of love.

Our religious rites and practices are not ends in themselves, but vehicles by which we enter into a profound relationship with God, Who is love. The very essence of our Christian faith is love because God Himself is love (1 John 4:8). Thus, our Christian morality, our ethics, and even our liturgical services and rites, are inconceivable in the absence of love. And, this love is not merely an act that has sprung up from a sense of ethical duty, but something that binds our world, the one seen, to the heavenly world, that world unseen. One world is temporal, and the other world is eternal, yet both have been created by God. The temporal world is wherein we exercise, preparing ourselves for the eternal world. Mercy and love is the means by which both are connected.

Love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon

All Merciful Monastery, Vashon Island, WA.

Met. Anthony Bloom says this concerning today's parable: "And the parable is clear: the man who came and stood brokenhearted, ashamed of himself, knowing that he is unworthy of entering this sacred space goes back home forgiven, loved, indeed: accompanied by God Himself Who came into the world to save sinners and Who stands by everyone who needs Him, who recognises his need, or not, unto salvation."