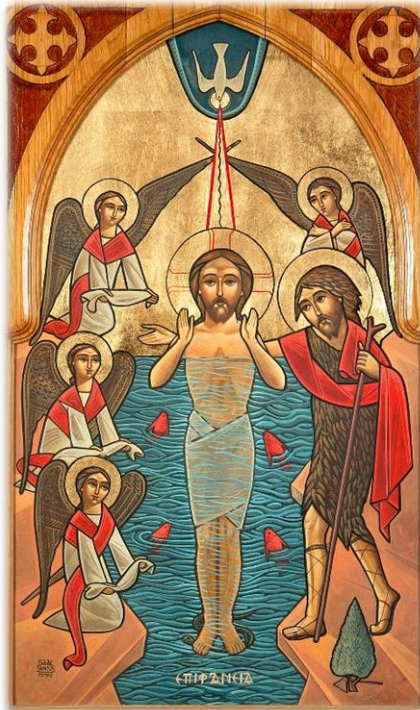


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania
Wilkes-Barre Deanery

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



*Afterfeast of the Theophany
Venerable George the Ghozebite*

January 8th, 2023

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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

Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, Pastor
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Scripture Readings:

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

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

- + *Compline/Bible Study* - Wednesday January 11th at 5:30
- + *Ladies' Group* - Thursday January 12th at 6pm
- + *Great Vespers* - Saturday January 14th at 5pm
- + *Divine Liturgy* - Sunday January 15th at 10am (Hours @ 9:40), fellowship following in the Hall. Church School / Orthodoxy 101
- + *House Blessings* are now going on! If you would like to have your home blessed, please see Fr. Seraphim to set up a day and time. 😊

Our Giving – January 1st, 2023

Tithes/Offerings - \$1,585.00 / Online Giving - \$125.00
Candle Offerings - \$31.00 / Christmas Gifts - \$25.00
Seminarians - \$20.00

Thank you all for your generosity!

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 everyone too.* If you have any questions about Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

A few words from Fr. Seraphim . . .

Repentance then is not just an idea, a thought, it is above all an action. Repentance is a real change of mind which leads to a practical and visible change in the way that we live. It is when we allow the light of Christ back into our lives to dispel the darkness we formerly "sat in" because of sin. The Greek word for repentance is *metanoia*, and this word literally means to make a 180 degree about face, to turn away and go in the opposite direction. So, it is when we have the true desire to turn away from sin and turn back toward God.

When we cast away pride and learn real humility, then we will find true repentance. When we surrender our own stubborn will to God, and stop thinking we have it all together, then we will find true repentance. If you ever want to know what real repentance is about, read and meditate on what King David says in Psalm 50.

St. Nilus of Sinai said, "*Always remain in a state of repentance, the foundation of our salvation, for we know not the day or the hour at which the Lord will come.*"

Often, we come to confession with the same sins as before. Yes, it is true, that often we seem to make no progress, that although we have done wrong yet again, we have no tears, no depth of repentance to make us change our way of life. However, this should not mean that we lose hope, that we despair. That would be to fall to another temptation of the demon, the thought that we are unable to repent and that all our efforts are futile. Merely coming to confession and saying that we are weak, that we have done wrong yet again, that our repentance lacks depth, is an act of repentance. Moreover, by continued repentance and the determination to repent, eventually depth of repentance and tears will come to us.

The Apostle Peter said in the Book of Acts, “*Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord*” (3:19). Thanks be to God for His great love and kindness toward us! +

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 Moses (Berry), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Pres. Rosy (Tanveer), Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Phoebe Davis, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Gary Larson, Sebastian Fillar, Infant John, Isaac Bannister, Joseph Wojtkielewicz & those suffering in Ukraine

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

Archpriest Theodore Panchak +12/30, Matushka Theodora Davis +12/26, Matushka Emily Shuga +12/7, & Those who have given their lives in Ukraine