

Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross

Orthodox Church

Williamsport, PA.



4th Sunday of Pascha

The Paralytic

May 7th, 2023

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19; Acts 9:32-42
Gospel: St. John 10:1-9; St. John 5:1-15

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!
Christos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese!
Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!

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

Services, Events & Announcements

- + *Daily Vespers / Bible Study* – Wednesday May 10th at 5:30
 - + *Great Vespers* – Saturday May 13th at 5
 - + *Hours & Divine Liturgy* – Sunday May 14th at 9:40 - Fellowship following in the Hall / Mother's Day brunch!!
 - + *Men of the Parish!* Please see Cory Chelko to arrange what you will be helping with for the Mother's Day brunch next Sunday!
- ALL HANDS-ON DECK!** 😊

Our Giving – April 30th, 2023

Tithes/Offerings - \$420.00 / Online Giving - \$205.00

Candle Offerings – \$51.00

Thank you all for your giving for the work of Church!

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. 😊

† *Sunday of the Paralytic by Fr. Milan Medakovic*

“All too often, when we examine the causes of our sufferings, we try to find causes outside of ourselves. In short, we try to place blame on someone or something other than ourselves. This is because we do not want to look at ourselves, because we do not want to see our own selfish, self-centered behaviors that put us into conflict with others or caused us to abuse our own bodies. If we look honestly at our lives, we will find that some aspect of this type of behavior is the cause of all of our suffering, no matter how much fault we can find with someone or something other than ourselves as the cause of our suffering.

Selfish, self-centered behaviors are sinful behaviors. The question is, how long are we going to let sin bring us suffering? If we let sin run its course in our lives, it will bring us to death, both a spiritual and physical death. Saint Paul reminds us of this in his epistle to James: “and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death,” (James 1:15) or again in the epistle to the Romans, “For the wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23)

If we have become paralyzed because of our sin, we have reached a bottom where there is no one to help us, which is like there being no one to help the man in the Gospel. However, we all have someone who is all powerful and merciful, not only to help us in our paralysis, but to heal us of it. That one is our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. In other words, our sufferings bring us to God.

Thus, we should embrace our sufferings as a gift from God because they bring us to Him. The Holy King David reminds us of this when he says in the Psalms, “You, which have shown me great and sore

troubles, shall enliven me again, and shall bring me up again from the depths of the earth.unto You will I sing with the harpMy lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto You; and my soul, which You have redeemed.” (Psalm 70:20-23). Saint John Chrysostom further reminds us of this when he says, “Glory to God for everything,” as he was dying in exile, despised by the men of his day.

So, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, my prayer for you is that you will be able to see your sins in your suffering and that, as a result, you may be able to embrace your sufferings by coming to God and rejoicing in Him for them. Amen.”

“Whomever God loves, to him he sends sorrows, and that mortifies the heart of the chosen one to the world, teaches him to soar near God. All struggles, including illness, bring healing to the soul and consolation: devotion to the will of God, thanksgiving to God, reproach of oneself and acknowledgment of the worthiness of God's punishment, the remembrance that all the saints completed their earthly journey in ceaseless and dire suffering. Suffering is the chalice of Christ. He who has not taken communion from this chalice is not able to inherit eternal blessings.”

St Ignatius (Brianchaninov)

Harbor for Our Hope: On Acquiring Peace Amidst Suffering p.147

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), Mat. Mary Lynn Henry, Mat. Deborah Belonick, Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Phoebe Davis, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Sebastian Fillar, Infant John, Infant Wyatt, Isaac Bannister, Barbara Cain, Vera Christopher, Paisios Sundin, Christine Perrin, Agnes Andreanoff, Michael Juran, Edward Hojnicky, & those suffering in Ukraine.

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

Mat. Carol Steffaro +4/14, John Fravel +4/5, Barbara Shatto +4/14 & Those who have lost their lives in Ukraine.