

Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross

Orthodox Church

Williamsport, PA.



Sunday of the Last Judgment

*Hieromartyr Polycarp, Bishop of
Smyrna*

February 23rd, 2025

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2

Gospel: St. Matthew 25:31-46

Welcome to everyone! Please join us for some fellowship in the Parish Hall after the Liturgy!

**** Parish Announcements ****

+ The Church will be open this Tuesday from 7:00 - 9:30am for private prayer and/or Confession.

+ **NO Compline/Bible Study** - Thursday February 27th (Clergy Retreat)

+ **Great Vespers** - Saturday March 1st at 5

+ **Hours & Divine Liturgy** – Sunday March 2nd at 9:40 - **Cheesefare Potluck Fellowship** following in the Hall.

+ **Rite of Forgiveness Vespers** – Sunday March 2nd at 1pm

+ **House Blessing** (last week) . . . Please see Fr Seraphim 😊

**** February Benevolence – 50/50 - Holy Cross Saturday Luncheon - St Ann Food Pantry**

Our Stewardship – February 16th, 2025

Tithes/Offerings - \$4,951.00 / Online Giving - \$255.00

Candle Offerings – \$33.00 / Benevolence -\$250.00

Thank you for your generosity to our Parish!

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 😊

✝ *St. Matthew 25:31-46 (Gospel) The Last Judgment*

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’

Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’

Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’

And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (NKJV)

✝ Today's Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live (Ezek. 33:11).

The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous Judge, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. 2:6). Then the time for entreating God's mercy and forgiveness will have passed. (oca.org)

"Do not judge others, for this alone will intercede for us during any judgement before God." St. Macarius of Optina

"A further patristic counsel for acquiring a humble outlook, so crucial in the battle against the thoughts, consists in being skeptical about one's initial judgment regarding another person or situation."

His Grace, Bishop Alexis of Alaska

Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!

His Eminence Archbishop Alexander, Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Alexa Stover & Morgan Fallon (children to be born of them), Catharine Mann, Paul Beard, Harry Hiras, Evelyn Chabal, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Isaac Bannister, Michael Lazorchak, Elizabeth Davis, Larissa Chapin, Brian Gunter, Patricia Macy, Parker Fox & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East, & the families of the Air disasters
Our Catechumens: Garrett Payer, Shyanne Vance, Melissa Czock, Kurt Schmitt (Military), Lucas Malek & Jiselle Macari

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal

Archpriest John Maxwell +2/4, Subd Yakov Hando +1/15, Mat Tatiana Peterson +1/13, Mat Susanne Senyo +1/18, Wayne Lucas +2/1 All those who have lost their lives in the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East, the victims of the Air disasters