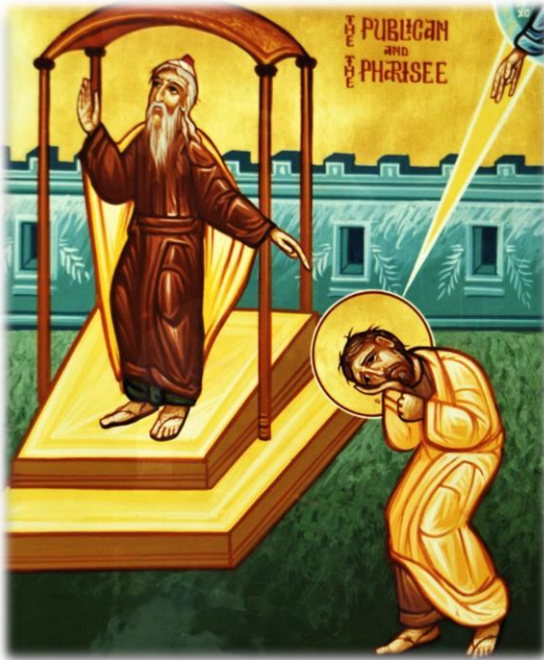


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross
Orthodox Church
Williamsport, PA.



Sunday of the
Publican & the Pharisee
February 9th, 2025

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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

Very Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, Pastor/Rector
Office: 570.322.3020
(c) 717.576.3503
Email: archpriestserafim@gmail.com

Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15; Hebrews 7:7-17
Gospel: St. Luke 18:10-14; St. Luke 2:22-40

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 & Thursday from 7:00 - 9:30am for private prayer and/or Confession.
- + **Compline/Bible Study** - Thursday February 13th at 5:30
- ** **Free Community Luncheon** – Saturday February 15th – 10 ‘til Noon
- + **Parish Council** - Saturday February 15th at 3
- + **Great Vespers** - Saturday February 15th at 5
- + **Hours & Divine Liturgy** – Sunday February 16th at 9:40 Fellowship following in the Hall.
- + **House Blessings** continue . . . Please see Fr Seraphim to set up a day and time. 😊
- ** **February Benevolence** – 50/50 - Holy Cross Saturday Luncheon - St Ann Food Pantry

Our Giving – February 2nd, 2025

Tithes/Offerings - \$1.998.00 / Online Giving - \$455.00
Candle Offerings – \$43.00 / Benevolence -\$85.00

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 😊

✝ ***The Sunday of the Publican & the Pharisee*** (oca.org)

The Sunday after the Sunday of Zacchaeus is devoted to the Publican and the Pharisee. At Vespers the night before, the Triodion (the liturgical book used in the services of Great Lent) begins.

Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee who scrupulously observed the requirements of religion: he prayed, fasted, and contributed money to the Temple. These are very good things, and should be imitated by anyone who loves God. We who may not fulfill these requirements as well as the Pharisee did should not feel entitled to criticize him for being faithful. His sin was in looking down on the Publican and feeling justified because of his external religious observances.

The second man was a Publican, a tax-collector who was despised by the people. He, however, displayed humility, and this humility justified him before God (Luke 18:14).

The lesson to be learned is that we possess neither the Pharisee's religious piety, nor the Publican's repentance, through which we can be saved. We are called to see ourselves as we really are in the light of Christ's teaching, asking Him to be merciful to us, deliver us from sin, and to lead us on the path of salvation.

Two weeks before the beginning of the Fast, as part of our preparation for Great Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha, the Church prescribes the reading of Saint Mark's Gospel. From Monday to Friday the focus is on the end times, and the Savior's death and burial.

St. Luke 18:10-14 (Gospel)

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men – extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

St. Macarius (4th c.)

Saint Macarius survived many demonic attacks against him. Once, he was carrying palm branches for weaving baskets, and a devil met him on the way and wanted to strike him with a sickle, but he was not able to do this. He said, “Macarius, I suffer great anguish from you because I am unable to vanquish you. I do everything that you do. You fast, and I eat nothing at all. You keep vigil, and I never sleep. You surpass me only in one thing: humility.” (oca.org)

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 (child to be born of her), Catharine Mann, Paul Beard, Harry Hiras, Evelyn Chabal, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Isaac Bannister, Elizabeth Yonkin, Michael Lazorchak, Elizabeth Davis, Lara Schmitt, Larissa Chapin, Brian Gunter & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East, the California Fires, & 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

His Eminence Archbishop Anastasios +1/25, Archpriest John Maxwell +2/4, Subd Yakov Hando +1/15, Mat Eugenia Nehrebecki +1/2, 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 California Fires, & the Air disasters