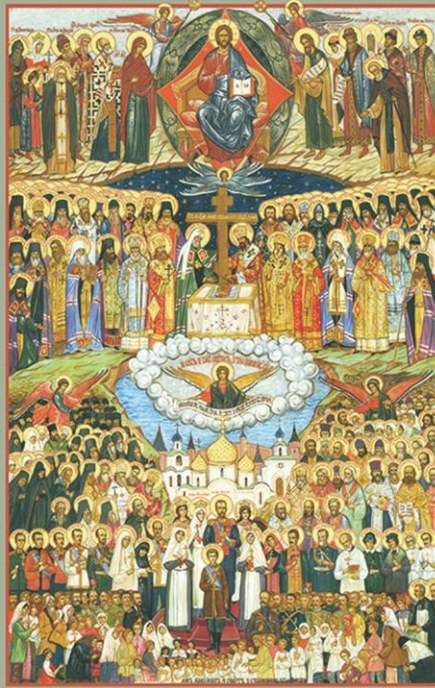


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



*New Martyrs and
Confessors of Russia*

January 26th, 2025

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749
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Very Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, Pastor/Rector
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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: 1 Timothy 1:15-17
Gospel: St. Matthew 15:21-28

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 January 30th at 5:30

+ The Meeting of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple +

+ *Great Vespers w/Litya* – Saturday February 1st at 5

+ *Hours & Divine Liturgy* – Sunday February 2nd 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 – January 19th, 2025

Tithes/Offerings - \$1.030.00 / Online Giving - \$255.00

Candle Offerings – \$51.00

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 😊

+ ***New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia*** (oca.org)

On the Sunday closest to January 25, the Church commemorates the Synaxis of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, remembering all those Orthodox Christians who suffered for Christ at the hands of the godless Soviets during the years of persecution. These include the royal Passion Bearers Tsar Nicholas II and his family, and the Grand Duchess Elizabeth. Countless thousands of martyrs, both clergy and laity also suffered, some of whose names are known, as well as millions of simple believers whose names have been lost to history.

It is estimated that the number of the New Martyrs of Russia, who were glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church at the Jubilee Council of 2000, far exceeds that of all the martyrs who died for Christ during the first three centuries of Christianity. The Russian Church lost millions of its sons and daughters, not only at the hands of external enemies, but also those of their own country. Among those who were murdered and tortured in the years of persecution were countless Orthodox: laity, monks, priests, and bishops, whose only “crime” was their unshakable faith in God.

In the long history of the world, never have so many new heavenly intercessors been glorified by the Church in such a way (more than one thousand New Martyrs were numbered among the saints). Among those who suffered for their faith were some who labored in America before the Russian Revolution: St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia (April 7); St. Alexander Hotovitzky (Dec. 4); St. John Kochurov (Oct. 31).

+ ***Martyr Neophytus of Nicea*** (oca.org)

The Holy Martyr Neophytus, a native of the city of Nicea in Bithynia, was raised by his parents in strict Christian piety. For his virtue, temperance and unceasing prayer, it pleased God to glorify

Saint Neophytus with the gift of wonderworking, while the saint was still just a child!

Like Moses, the holy youth brought forth water from a stone of the city wall and gave this water to those who were thirsty. In answer to the prayer of Saint Neophytus' mother, asking that God's will concerning her son might be revealed to her, a white dove miraculously appeared and told of the path he would follow. The saint was led forth from his parental home by this dove and brought to a cave on Mt. Olympus, which served as a lion's den. It is said that he chased the lion from the cave so that he could live there himself. The saint remained there from the age of nine until he was fifteen, leaving it only once to bury his parents and distribute their substance to the poor.

During the persecution by Diocletian (284-305), he went to Nicea and boldly began to denounce the impiety of the pagan faith. The enraged persecutors suspended the saint from a tree, they whipped him with ox thongs and scraped his body with iron claws. Then they threw him into a red-hot oven, but the holy martyr remained unharmed, spending three days and three nights in it. The torturers, not knowing what else to do with him, decided to kill him. One of the pagans ran him through with a sword (some say it was a spear), and the saint departed to the Lord at the age of sixteen.

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

His Eminence Archbishop Alexander, His Eminence Archbishop Anastasios, 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), Paul Beard, Harry Hiras, Evelyn Chabal, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Isaac Bannister, Elizabeth Yonkin, Michael Lazorchak, George Quinn, Elizabeth Davis, Lara Schmitt, Larissa Chapin, Brian Gunter & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East and the California Fires. **Our Catechumens:** Garrett Payer, Shyanne Vance, Melissa Czock, Kurt Schmitt (Military), Lucas Malek & Jiselle Macari

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal

Subd Yakov Hando +1/15, Mat Jeanne Ciarciagolino +12/16, Mat Eugenia Nehrebecki +1/2, Mat Tatiana Peterson +1/13, Mat Susanne Senyo +1/18, Faith Posten +12/20, All those who have lost their lives in the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East, and the California Fires.