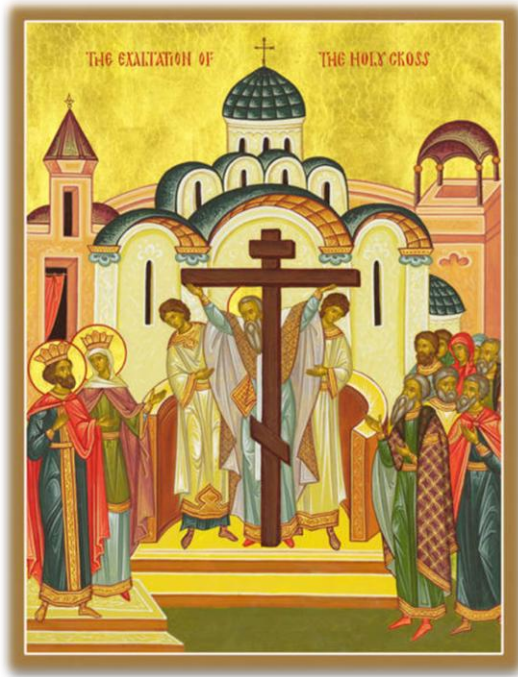


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross

Orthodox Church

Williamsport, PA.



3rd Sunday of Great Lent

Veneration of the Holy Cross

March 23rd, 2025

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6

Gospel: St. Mark 8:34-9:1

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

**** Parish Announcements ****

+ *Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos* +

Compline & Litya - Monday March 24th at 5:30pm

Vesperal Liturgy - Tuesday March 25th at 5:30pm

+ The Church will be open this Tuesday & Thursday from 7:00 – 10:00am for private prayer and/or Confession.

+ *Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts* - Lenten potluck following - **Wednesday** March 26th and **Friday** March 28th at 5:20pm

+ *Great Vespers* - Saturday March 29th at 5pm

+ *Hours, Divine Liturgy* – Sunday March 30th at 9:40 - *Lenten Fellowship* following in the Hall.

**** March Benevolence – Family Promise (Williamsport)**

Our Stewardship – March 16th, 2025

Tithes/Offerings - \$1,200.00 / Online Giving - \$255.00

Candle Offerings – \$56.00 / Benevolence -\$70.00

God loves a cheerful giver (1 Cor 9:7)

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. MARK 8:34-9: 1 (GOSPEL)

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.”

(NKJV)

“The Cross is the way of life. Learn to love the Cross. Make the sign of the Cross frequently. Indeed the Fathers say we should cross ourselves before beginning anything. And when we are done, we cross ourselves in thanksgiving. The Cross is the remembrance of God and the truth of our lives. Our lives are not our own. They belong to the Crucified God who invites His friends to join Him in the most pure act of love. Love God. Love His Cross.”

Fr Stephen Freeman

“The sign of the Cross is terrifying to demons and, as the sign of Christ, it is honored by Christians. “O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victory unto Orthodox Christians over their adversaries, and by the virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.”

The beginning of this prayer is taken from the twenty-seventh Psalm. In the Old Testament the word “people” designated only those who confessed the true faith, people faithful to God. “Inheritance” referred to everything which properly belonged to God, God’s property, which in the New Testament is the Church of Christ. In praying for the salvation of God’s people (the Christians), both from eternal torments and from earthly calamities, we beseech the Lord to bless, to send down grace, His good gifts upon the whole Church as well, and inwardly strengthen her.

The petition for granting “victory to kings” (Grant victory to Orthodox Christians over their adversaries) (ie: to the bearers of Supreme authority), has its basis in Psalm 143, verse 10, and recalls the victories of King David achieved by God’s power, and likewise the victories granted Emperor Constantine through the Cross of the Lord.

This appearance of the Cross made emperors who had formerly persecuted Christians into defenders of the Church from her external enemies, into “external bishops,” to use the expression of the holy Emperor Constantine. The Church, inwardly strong by God’s grace and protected outwardly, is, for Orthodox Christians, “the city of God.” Heavenly Jerusalem has its beginning. Various calamities have shaken the world, entire peoples have disappeared, cities and states have perished, but the Church, in spite of persecutions and even internal conflicts, stands invincible; for the gates of hell shall not prevail against her (Matt. 16:18).”

St John of San Francisco

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

His Eminence Archbishop Alexander, Hieroschemamonk 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 & Amelia Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Isaac Bannister, Michael Lazorchak, Elizabeth & Paula Davis, Larissa Chapin, Brian Gunter, Parker Fox & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East ***Our Catechumens***: Garrett Payer, Shyanne Vance, Melissa Czock, Kurt Schmitt (Military), & Jiselle Macari

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal

Archpriest Paul Harrilchak +3/12, Priest Jonas Worhsam +3/8, Paula Daubert +2/20, Patricia Macy +2/25, David McHenry, All those who have lost their lives in the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East