

Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

# Elevation of the Holy Cross

## Orthodox Church

### Williamsport, PA.



# Sunday of the Last Judgment

Meatfare Sunday

March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024

# 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

***A warm welcome to EVERYONE this morning!!***

## UPCOMING SERVICES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- + Church **closed** for prayer/Confession – Tuesday March 12<sup>th</sup>
- + *Compline/Bible Study* – Wednesday March 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm
- + Church **open** for prayer/Confession – Thursday March 14<sup>th</sup> - 7 to 9:30am
- + *Free Community Luncheon* – Saturday March 16<sup>th</sup> – 10 til Noon
- + Choir Practice – Saturday March 16<sup>th</sup> at 4pm
- + *Great Vespers* – Saturday March 16<sup>th</sup> at 5pm
- + *Hours, Divine Liturgy* – Sunday March 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:40am – *Cheesefare Potluck Fellowship* following in the Hall. *Forgiveness Vespers* following
- + *Confessions on Saturdays before Vespers or by appointment.*
- + Benevolence Fund for March – *Archbishop's Appeal for Youth*

## **OUR GIVING – MARCH 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2024**

Tithes/Offerings - \$1,906.00 / Online Giving - \$250.00

Candle Offerings – \$62.05 / Benevolence - \$250.00

*Thank you all for your faithful giving 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 must be at peace with everyone too.* If you have any questions, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

**\*\* Please remain (quietly) for the Prayers of Thanksgiving after the Liturgy, before going over to the Hall for Fellowship.**

### ***The Christian Life: Living the Beatitudes***

The next Beatitude commends the merciful. If a person delivered a public insult to you by slapping you across the face, you were to do nothing except offer him the other cheek for a second slap. If a man sued you and took your shirt, you were to let him have your coat too, as a kind of unforeseen gift. If a Roman soldier insisted on enforcing the letter of the law for those occupying a country and compelled you to carry his pack one mile, you were to carry it for another mile after that. For Christ's disciples, the offering of mercy and forgiveness for offences were not to be occasional acts of moral heroism, but a way of life.

The disciple of Jesus must also be clean of heart (usually rendered as "pure of heart"). The Greek word is *katharos*. The word *katharos* has a slightly different feel and nuance than the Greek word for "pure" (*agnos*). The word *katharos* is used to describe the clean water used in the Law's rites of purification (Heb 10:22), the clean linen shroud in which Christ was buried (Matt 27:59), and the clean state of those who have just bathed (John 13:10).

Our Lord's words in this Beatitude have this concept of ritual cleanness as their background and were intended as a polemical response to them. Christ Himself had little time for the Pharisees' obsessive concern with possible ritual contamination (Mark 7:5), and He blamed them for combining such outward scrupulosity with blindness toward the inner state of the soul. Like the hypocrites they were, they were careful to

cleanse the outside of the cup and the plate, while inside their souls were full of extortion and greed (Matt 23:25).

In contrast to this disparity between outer ritual cleanness and inner spiritual filth, Christ focused entirely upon the inner state. It was the clean of heart who would see God and be able to truly approach him in worship. Approaching him in a state of ritual cleanness while one's heart was unclean was useless and worse than useless. If one cleansed one's heart of stain, one could confidently approach God. Indeed, the sight of him was guaranteed. Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs, 44-45

*“It is impossible to love God if we do not love our neighbor, and it is impossible to love our neighbor if judgment is our secret greeting and the substance of our hidden relationship with him. Do not claim to pray, or even to be a Christian, if your heart fosters any judgment of your brother!”* Bishop Irenei Steenberg, The Beginnings of a Life of Prayer p.106

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

His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Archpriest Michael (Evans), Archpriest Antony (Hughes), Priest Gregory (White), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Pres. Rosy (Tanveer), Mat. Mary Lynn (Henry), Mat. Deborah (Belonick), Mat. Barbara (Matusiak), Anastasia Linnehan & Sarah Gunter (children to be born of them), Newly Illumined child Odette Crews, Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Sebastian Fillar, Isaac Bannister, Christine Perrin, Elizabeth Yonkin, Michael Lazorchak, Edward Hojnicki, Brian Gunter, Vladimir Kerkendall, Alec Litchard & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East

### **Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!**

Protodeacon Taras Papish +2/18, & Those who have lost their lives in the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & Middle East