

DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA + WILKES-BARRE DEANERY

**ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
ORTHODOX CHURCH
WILLIAMSPORT, PA.**



**3RD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
SUNDAY OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS
MARCH 31ST, 2019**

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

A warm welcome to EVERYONE this morning! Please, join us over in the Parish Hall after the Liturgy for some fellowship!

Services, Events & Announcements

****NO Lenten Vespers today**

****NO Pre-Sanctified Liturgies this week.**

****Pre-Sanctified Liturgy - Wednesday Apr 10th @ 6:00pm**

****Pre-Sanctified Liturgy - Friday Apr 12th @ 6:00pm**

****Great Vespers - Saturday, Apr 6th @ 5pm (Confessions after)**

****Divine Liturgy - Sunday, Apr 7st @ 10am (Hours @ 9:40)**

****“Holy Week & Pascha in the Orthodox Church” An Evening with Fr. Timothy Hojnicky, Tuesday April 9th @ 6pm**

Regarding Confession & Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by fasting, prayer, 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 each other too.*

LAST SUNDAY – Mar 24
Attendance 68 - Regular Offering - \$1080.00
Candles - \$92.05 / Benevolence - \$7.00

NEXT SUNDAY – Apr 7
Reading of the Hours – Nicholas O.
Reading of the Epistle – Anthony A.

Fellowship Hour
Apr 7th – Hranitz/Schecter/Brown
Apr 14th – Thetford & Beth L.
Apr 21st – Anthony/Cory/Nick (Palm Sunday)

Wednesday Pre-Sanctified Lenten Meal sign-up sheet is on the
bulletin board in the Hall.

Friday Pre-Sanctified's are pot-luck, so please bring a little
something Lenten to share with everyone. Help with clean-up after
our meals together is greatly appreciated, so let's ALL help each
other! ☺

A Word from Your Pastor . . .

Thank you everyone for your kind words and love you have
poured out to my family. This will be a difficult week attending my
Dad's funeral and making the trek to Alabama to be with family. In
your kindness, remember us in your prayers.

Please make confession a part of your Lenten journey. I am
available most anytime. Want to stop by on your lunch break from
work? Passing through town? Just let me know.

With Love and God's Blessing,
+ *Fr. Seraphim*

How Do We Find God in an Unbelieving World?

God is a merciful God, quick to forgive, quick to show mercy,
quick to embrace us when we turn to Him. In all of eternity our God chose
to create humankind in His image and likeness, offering His creatures the
opportunity to commune with Him in the endlessness that is time. He's
given us free will, allowing us to choose, or not to choose, a relationship
with Him. We, in our freedom, can choose between good (God) and evil
(Satan), as is our choice.

We can usually tell the difference between good and evil. Murder and theft are obviously to be found in the evil camp, whereas kindness, philanthropic deeds, mercy and love, are in the camp of holiness, and the divine. Yet so many feel that God is simply a myth, a nice idea, but hardly believable. If this God they'd like to believe in were truly real, wouldn't He make it easier to see Him, and seek Him out? If we are free to chose God, why doesn't He make Himself easier to find? Why does this God expect us to believe in Him when we cannot see Him, or feel Him? If there be a God, why doesn't He simply make Himself known, letting us choose or not choose communion with Him?

These are questions that many people pose, at least to themselves. Many want to believe there is a God who cares for them and is capable of making a difference in their day to day struggles, but just can't quite surrender to belief. The nihilistic philosophy that has possessed the hearts of many young people today is based on the despair of an age that has seen so many wars, so much poverty, so many murders, so many children abused, and a seemingly hopeless future. How can there be a God when so much suffering abounds in this world? How can there be a God when even innocent people, good people, suffer?

Where is God? He is in the sunrise. He is in the glorious mountains, and the vast sea that stretches beyond the horizon. He is in the tender touch of a mother's hand on her newborn baby. He is in the protective arm of the police officer who comforts the lost child. He is in the words of absolution pronounced by the priest after a good confession. He is in the smiling face of an old woman at the site of a young couple holding hands. He is in the wonder of the cosmos on a darkened night. He is in the giggle of a small child playing with his grandfather. He is in the warmth of a kitten held in one's hand. He is in the cross that bore the Son of Man. He is in the bread and wine that become His body and blood. He is the transforming Spirit that changes hearts and makes men saints. He is closer to us than our own breath, more loving than a grandmother's embrace of a sick child. He is everywhere, for there is no place He cannot be. He fills all things. He is everywhere to be seen if only we look with open eyes and open hearts.

Love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon