



## St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

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### Services Schedule

Please see our [online calendar](#) for dates and times of Feast Day services.

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### Bulletin for Sunday, June 13, 2021

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#### Welcome



Jesus Christ taught us to love and serve all people, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. To understand that, we need to look no further than to the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Every time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, it is offered "on behalf of all, and for all." As Orthodox Christians we stand against

racism and bigotry. All human beings share one common identity as children of God. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatian 3:28)

#### Members of our Parish Council are:

Joseph Barbera - Council Member at Large

Dori Kuziak - Council Secretary

Carolyn Neiss - Vice President

Marlene Melesko - Council Member at Large

Kyle Hollis - President

Roderick Seurattan - Treasurer

## **Pastoral Care - General Information**

Emergency Sick Calls can be made at any time. Please call Fr Steven at (860) 866-5802, when a family member is admitted to the hospital.

Anointing in Sickness: The Sacrament of Unction is available in Church, the hospital, or your home, for anyone who is sick and suffering, however severe.

Marriages and Baptisms require early planning, scheduling and selections of sponsors (crown bearers or godparents). See Father before booking dates and reception halls!

Funerals are celebrated for practicing Orthodox Christians. Please see Father for details. The Church opposes cremation; we cannot celebrate funerals for cremations.

## **Announcements**

### **Morning Services**

I am resuming certain morning services, specifically some Akathist services. These will be held as online services only, typically at 8:30a. If any would like me to hold these services any earlier, so that you may participate before you go to work, please let me know. I will resume Daily Matins, in person, when Anne returns from North Carolina and things return to "normal" just a bit.

### **Study Sessions**

Please keep the questions coming in! We, for the most part, are having a good time, and the conversations have been, I hope,

enlightening. I have recordings of each session in our shared folder. My apologies for the abrupt start to last night's recording. I forgot to start the recording until we were 10 or so minutes into the session.

### **Pentecost Sunday**

Currently, the schedule for Pentecost Sunday is to hold Liturgy at 9:30, have a short break, and then begin Vespers of Pentecost at 11:30a. Please note that, by necessity, this schedule will be flexible. It is possible, that we will have the Kneeling Prayers in conjunction with the end of Liturgy. Please plan on being flexible. I will try to determine the exact schedule before Pentecost.

### **Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry**

The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the US (in which the OCA does participate) has blessed Sunday, July 25, to be Prison Ministry Awareness Sunday. Attached to this bulletin are some general information with regards to this ministry. Please consider contributing to this worthy cause.

## Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Archpriest Dennis,  
Archpriest Michael,  
Deacon Timothy, Evelyn,  
Katheryn, Anne, Aaron,  
Veronica, Richard,  
Nancy, Susanne, Carol,  
Alexander, Gail, Vincent,  
Nina, Ellen, Maureen,  
Elizabeth, Christopher,  
Joshua, Jennifer, Petra,  
Olivia, Jessica, Sean,  
Sarah, Justin, Arnold,  
Carol-Anne, Anthony,

Natasha, Gene, John, John, Michael, Kelley,  
Krisha, Alix, Natalie, Edward, Nathan, Caila,  
Julianna, Paul, John, Jacob, Lynn, Anna,  
Richard, Robert, Dorothy, Elaina

Many Years to Nancy Davis on the occasion of her birthday.

Memory Eternal to Joan Navarro on the anniversary of her repose.

- Pray for: All those confined to hospitals, nursing homes, and their own homes due to illness; for all those who serve in the armed forces; widows, orphans, prisoners, victims of violence, and refugees;
- All those suffering chronic illness, financial hardship, loneliness, addictions, abuse, abandonment and despair; those who are homeless, those who are institutionalized, those

- who have no one to pray for them;
- All Orthodox seminarians & families; all Orthodox monks and nuns, and all those considering monastic life; all Orthodox missionaries and their families.
- All those who have perished due to hatred, intolerance and pestilence; all those departed this life in the hope of the Resurrection.

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### 7th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 6. Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

**Afterfeast of Ascension.** Martyr Aquilina of Byblos in Syria (293). St. Triphyllius, Bishop of Leucosia (Nicosia), Cyprus (ca. 370). Ven. Andronicus (1395), disciple of Ven. Sergius of Rádonezh, and Ven. Savva (Sabbas), Abbots, of Moscow (15th c.). Martyr Antonina of Nicæa (3rd-4th c.). St. Anna and her son, St. John, of Constantinople (9th c.). 10,000 Martyrs.

## Saints and Feasts

### June 13

#### Fathers of the 1st Council

The heresiarch Arius was a Libyan by race and a protopresbyter of the Church of Alexandria. In 315, he began to blaspheme against the Son and Word of God, saying that He is not true God, consubstantial with the Father, but is rather a work and creation, alien to the essence and glory of the Father, and that there was a time when He was not. This frightful blasphemy shook the faithful of Alexandria. Alexander,

his Archbishop, after trying in vain to correct him through admonitions, cut him off from communion and finally in a local council deposed him in the year 321. Yet neither did the blasphemer wish to be corrected, nor did he cease sowing the deadly tares of his heretical teachings; but writing to the bishops of other cities, Arius and his followers requested that his doctrine be examined, and if it were unsound, that the correct teaching be declared to him. By this means, his heresy became universally known and won many supporters, so that the whole Church was soon in an uproar.

Therefore, moved by divine zeal, the first Christian Sovereign, Saint Constantine the Great, the equal to the Apostles, summoned the renowned First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, a city of Bithynia. It was there that the shepherds and teachers of the Church of Christ gathered from all regions in the year 325. All of them, with one mouth and one voice, declared that the Son and Word of God is one in essence with the Father, true God of true God, and they composed the holy Symbol of Faith up to the seventh article (since the remainder, beginning with "And in the Holy Spirit," was completed by the Second Ecumenical Council). Thus they anathematized the impious Arius of evil belief and those of like mind with him, and cut them off as rotten members from the whole body of the faithful.

Therefore, recognizing the divine Fathers as heralds of the Faith after the divine Apostles, the Church of Christ has appointed this present Sunday for their annual commemoration, in thanksgiving

and unto the glory of God, unto their praise and honour, and unto the strengthening of the true Faith.

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## June 15

### Amos the Prophet

The Prophet Amos was from the city of Thekoue of the land of Zabulon. He was an unlearned man, a shepherd of goats and sheep, as he testifies concerning himself (Amos 7:14-15). He began to prophesy two years before the earthquake, which some say took place in the twenty-fifth year of the reign of Ozias, King of Judah, about the year 785 B.C. (Amos 1:1). Later, however, Amasias, the false priest of Bethel, brought about his death. His book of prophecy, divided into nine chapters, is ranked third among the minor Prophets. This Amos is different from the Prophet Esaias' father, who also was called Amos. His name means "bearer of burdens."

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## June 16

### Tychon the Wonderworker

This Saint was born of pious Christian parents and flourished in the fifth century. Because of his piety and purity of life he was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Amathus, and later was made Bishop of Amathus by the great Epiphanius (see May 12). He worked many signs and wonders and turned many from the worship of idols unto Christ. Once he planted a vine in the ground and it wondrously sprouted

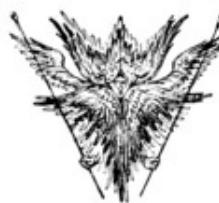
and brought forth ripe grapes. After his death, on his annual feast-day on June 16, it being yet early in the season, that vine would be laden with unripe grapes, as is natural; but as the Divine Liturgy began, the grapes would begin to darken, and by the end of it, they would be fully ripened. The third of the Vespers stichera in the Menaion service to Saint Tychon alludes to this yearly miracle.

## June 19

### Pāsius the Great of Egypt

Our righteous Father Pāsius the Great was born in Egypt about the year 300 and was consecrated to God as a monk at a young age. He together with Saint John the Short (commemorated Nov. 9) was trained in the ascetical life in Scete by the great Abba Pambo (July 18). He practiced extreme fasting and vigil beyond the limits of human strength, and received many revelations of mysteries. The Saviour often appeared to him; once He appeared to him with two Angels, as He had to Abraham, and allowed him to wash His immaculate feet. When he was asked which virtue was the highest of all, he would answer, "That which is done in secret." He reposed in peace in deep old age; his relics are found in the monastery of Amba Bishoy in Wadi Natrun (the ancient Nitria of Egypt), and to the present day they work healings and miracles.

## Hymns of the Day



### The First Antiphon

The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims His handiwork. (Ps. 18:1)  
Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior,

save us!

Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. (Ps. 18:2)  
(Refrain)

Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the universe. (Ps. 18:4) (Refrain)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. (Refrain)

### The Second Antiphon

The Lord answer you in the day of trouble; the Name of the God of Jacob protect you! (Ps. 19:1)

Refrain: O Gracious Comforter, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

May He send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion!

(Ps. 19:2) (Refrain)

May He remember all your offerings, and fulfill all your plans! (Ps. 19:3) (Refrain)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

("Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God... ")

### **The Third Antiphon**

In Your strength the king rejoices, O Lord, and exults greatly in Your salvation.  
(Ps. 20:1)

### **Tone 8 Troparion**

Blessed are You, O Christ our God,  
You have revealed the fishermen as most wise  
by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit,  
and through them You drew the world into  
Your net.//  
O Lover of Man, glory to You!

You have given him his heart's desire, and  
have not withheld the request of his lips. (Ps.  
20:2)

Troparion of the Feast

For You meet him with goodly blessings; You  
set a crown of fine gold upon his head. (Ps.  
20:3)

Troparion of the Feast

Entrance Verse

Be exalted, O Lord, in Your strength! We will  
sing and praise Your power!  
(Ps. 20:13)

### **Tone 8 Troparion**

Blessed are You, O Christ our God,  
You have revealed the fishermen as most wise  
by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit,  
and through them You drew the world into  
Your net.//  
O Lover of Man, glory to You!

### **Tone 8 Kontakion**

When the Most High came down and confused  
the tongues,  
He divided the nations;  
but when He distributed the tongues of fire,  
He called all to unity.//  
Therefore, with one voice we glorify the All-  
holy Spirit.

### **(Instead of the Trisagion, we sing:)**

As many as have been baptized into Christ,  
have put on Christ. Alleluia.

### **Tone 8 Prokeimenon (Pentecostarion)**

Their proclamation has gone out into all the  
earth, / and their words to the ends  
of the universe. (Ps. 18:4)

V. The heavens are telling the glory of God,  
and the firmament proclaims His handiwork.  
(Ps. 18:1)

Tone 1

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. By the Word of the Lord the heavens were  
made; and all their host by the Spirit of His  
mouth. (Ps. 32:6)

V. The Lord looked down from heaven, and  
saw all the sons of men. (Ps. 32:13)

### **(Instead of "It is truly meet...," we sing:)**

Rejoice, O Queen, glory of mothers and  
virgins!

No tongue, however sweet or fluent, is  
eloquent enough to praise you worthily.  
Every mind is overawed by your

childbearing.  
Therefore, with one voice, we glorify you.

### **Communion Hymn**

Let Your good Spirit lead me on a level path!  
(Ps. 142:12a)  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## **Gospel and Epistle Readings**

### **Epistle Reading**

#### **Prokeimenon. 4th Tone. Daniel 3.26,27.**

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers.

Verse: For you are just in all you have done.

#### **The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 20:16-18, 28-36.**

IN THOSE DAYS, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesos, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. And from Miletos he sent to Ephesos and called to him the elders of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I command you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.' " And when he had spoken thus, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

### **Gospel Reading**

#### **Fathers of the 1st Council**

#### **The Reading is from John 17:1-13**

At that time, Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, you glorify me in your own presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made.

"I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world; yours they were, and you gave them to me,

and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you; for I have given them the words which you gave me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you did send me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are mine; all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

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## Wisdom of the Fathers

For there is One God, and One Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus. For He still pleads even now as Man for my salvation; ...

## St. Gregory the Theologian

*4th Theological Oration, 4th Century*

... for He continues to wear the Body which He assumed, until He make me God by the

power of His Incarnation; although He is no longer known after the flesh -- I mean, the passions of the flesh, the same, except sin, as ours.

## St. Gregory the Theologian

*4th Theological Oration, 4th Century*

## Beyond the Sermon



SUNDAY OF THE  
FATHERS OF THE  
FIRST ECUMENICAL  
COUNCIL

SOURCE: The Saint  
Gregory Palamas  
Outreach  
by Fr. Milan Medakovic

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,  
My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we hear our Lord pray in the Gospel today for the Father to "keep through Your own name those whom You have given me, that they may be one, as we are" (John 17:11).

Our Lord prays these words because He knows the attacks that the Church will undergo after His death, resurrection and ascension into heaven. He further confirms these struggles in the Gospel of Saint Matthew when he says, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening

wolves" (Matthew 7:15).

The Church commemorates the fathers of the First Ecumenical Council, today, that were victorious over one of these wolves that attacked the unity of the Church. This attack came from a priest of the Church of Alexandria by the name of Arius.

What Arius had taught was that our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ was a creature created by God, from nonexistence, when God created all of creation. In other words, Arius denied that the divinity of Christ was the same as His Father's. There are many that still believe this today and many other false teachings about Christ and God.

These false teachings are stated the decisions of the Seven Ecumenical Councils. As a result of these false teachings, these councils affirmed the teachings of the Church regarding Christ and the All-Holy Trinity.

To affirm the Church's teachings about Christ, the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council formulated the first part of the Creed.

The Creed starts by confirming the person of God as Father. The Son of God taught us to pray to God with the following words: "Our Father, who art in heaven ..." (Matthew 6:9). This name of God and character of God was previously unknown to the world of the Old Testament. God was known in the Old Testament as God, Creator, Lord, King and Judge. It is through His Son that we are given this intimate relationship with God.

As it says in today's Gospel, this intimate relationship is confirmed by the words, "Yours they were, and You gave them me" (John 17:6). This confirms that Christ takes men, who were creatures and servants of God that knew God only as their Creator and Judge, making them His own. Through making men His own, Christ makes all men sons of God by adoption. As it says in the Epistle to the Galatians: "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:5). The second section of the Creed that was developed by the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council confirmed the person of the Son of God. In this portion of the Creed, the Son of God is shown to have both divine and human natures. It also confirmed that the divine nature of Christ was the same as the Father's.

Jesus refers to His divine nature in His prayer from today's Gospel when He says: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). Through this phrase, we can clearly see that Jesus is no ordinary man or creature of God. Our Lord tell us that He was with the Father before the worlds creation, as it says in the beginning of the Gospel of Saint John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1). And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Through these words, we should be able to see the errors of Arius' teachings that are still proclaimed to this day.

Saint Nikolaj Velimirovic reminds us that this prayer KEEP THEM is “not only for the apostles ... This prayer ... was also for the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council ... And the Father kept them from the errors of Arius, and inspired, illumined and strengthened them ... to defend and confirm the Orthodox faith. This prayer is for all of us who are baptized in the Apostolic Church who have ... come to know the saving name of Christ the Savior,” Jesus.

So, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, my prayer for you is the same as our Lord’s, that you may be kept in the Orthodox Catholic faith so that you may be illumined and strengthened like the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council, against all errors that surround you, and that you may worship the one True God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit—the Trinity consubstantial and undivided.

Amen.

6/15/2013

## Parish Calendar

June 13 to July 12, 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>13</b> Nancy Davis Fathers of the 1st Council 9:30AM Divine Liturgy	<b>14</b> Repose of Joan Navarro The Holy Prophet Elisseus (Elisha)	<b>15</b> Amos the Prophet 6:30PM Parish Council Meeting	<b>16</b> Tychon the Wonderworker	<b>17</b> Isaurus the Holy Martyr & his Companions of Athens 7:00PM Faith Study	<b>18</b> The Apodosis of the Feast of the Holy Ascension 8:30AM Akathist of Ascension	<b>19</b> The Saturday of Souls 5:30PM Great Vespers
<b>20</b> Repose of Ann Cooke Holy Pentecost 9:30AM Divine Liturgy 11:30AM Vespers with Kneeling	<b>21</b> Monday of the Holy Spirit 8:30AM Akathist to the Holy Spirit	<b>22</b> 1st Tuesday after Pentecost	<b>23</b> Luke Hosking Tina Roman John Krawchuk 1st Wednesday after Pentecost	<b>24</b> Nativity of the Forerunner John the Baptist Nativity of St John the Baptist 8:30AM Akathist to St John the	<b>25</b> Olga Kucharski 1st Friday after Pentecost	<b>26</b> The Apodosis of Holy Pentecost 5:30PM Great Vespers
<b>27</b> The Sunday of All Saints St. Joanna the Myrrhbearer 9:30AM Divine Liturgy	<b>28</b> Finding of the Relics of Cyrus and John the Unmercenarys	<b>29</b> Peter and Paul, the Holy Apostles Sts Peter and Paul 8:30AM Akathist to Sts Peter & Paul	<b>30</b> Synaxis of the Twelve Holy Apostles	<b>JUL 1</b> Cosmas & Damian the Holy Unmercenarys	<b>2</b> Deposition of the Precious Robe of the Theotokos in Blachernae St. John Maximovich 8:30AM Akathist to St John	<b>3</b> Sophia Brubaker Hyacinth the Martyr of Caesarea & Theodosius and Theodota the Martyrs Joan Skrobata -
<b>4</b> Christine Brubaker 2nd Sunday of Matthew 9:30AM Divine Liturgy	<b>5</b> Athanasius of Mount Athos	<b>6</b> Sisoes the Great	<b>7</b> Kyriake the Great Martyr 6:30PM General Confession	<b>8</b> Sitka Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos The Holy Great Martyr Procopius	<b>9</b> The Holy Hieromartyr Pancratius, Bishop of Tauromenium in Sicily	<b>10</b> Akathist to Sts Anthony & Theodosius 45 Holy Martyrs of Nikopolis, Armenia



**Sunday July 25, 2021**

**Prison Ministry Awareness 2021**

*"Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your name." (Psalm 142:7)*

*To the Reverend Clergy, Monastics, and Pious Faithful of our Holy Orthodox Church in the United States:*

**Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

Greetings and blessings to you all!

The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States has blessed us to observe the Sunday before the feast of St. Silas, the patron saint of prison ministry, as Prison Ministry Awareness Sunday. This year we remember this sacred ministry on July 25, 2021.

After a year of isolation, we are experiencing the full joy of our freedom this summer. Many of us are making up for lost time: taking trips, seeing our friends, and most importantly, returning to our churches in person.

For our brothers and sisters in prison, it has been a hard year as well. Lockdowns meant many of the 2.3 million men and women incarcerated in the United States were in truly deep isolation without visitations from family, friends, and clergy. As restrictions now ease, we are called more than ever to exercise our own freedoms to serve those who have suffered emotionally, physically, and spiritually over these last months. Now is the moment to cherish our blessings by sharing them with those who our Lord has commanded us to see Himself in.

*Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' (Matthew 25).*

Along with those in prison right now, we can find the Lord in the faces of those who have been released from prison and are seeking to find community in our parishes and rebuild their lives through the Orthodox way of life. We can also visit the Lord in caring for the family members of prisoners. Indeed, the staggering rates of incarceration in the US make it difficult to find an Orthodox parish in our country that does not have a parishioner deeply affected by the incarceration of an immediate family member.



Orthodox Christian  
**PRISON MINISTRY**

**HOMILY IDEAS**  
**PRISON MINISTRY AWARENESS SUNDAY**  
**JULY 25, 2020**

**Gospel Reading: Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1 (The Gergesene Demoniacs)**

**Mt. 8:28a - "When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs..."**

Many of the people in prison have been under the influence of the powers of darkness their whole lives. They are often school dropouts from broken and dysfunctional families, whose lives have been ones of continual abuse. God has a heart for these precious people in prison and He reaches out to them in amazing ways. The Theotokos and other Saints have appeared to some of the toughest prisoners in order to soften their hearts and set them free from the bondage of this darkness.

**Mt. 8:28b – "(They were) exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way."**

Because of the movies, we can often picture people in prison as violent animals like these demons. Jesus sees them as they really are: "Men made in the image and likeness of God." How many of us have said things like: "Those people in prison have nothing coming!" "They should lock the doors and throw away the keys!" No matter how far someone has fallen, they do not lose the image of God. It is through the Holy Orthodox Faith that the mud and mire of sin can be washed off these precious souls and they can begin to live a new life in Christ, even inside a darkened prison or jail cell. **May we see people not as they are, but as they could become through the Holy Orthodox Faith.**

Tie in this quote: "Never confuse the person, formed in the image of God, with the evil that is in him: because evil is but a chance misfortune, an illness, a devilish reverie. But the very essence of the person is the image of God, and this remains in him despite every disfigurement" (St. John of Kronstadt).

**Can there be any place in our world darker than the bowels of a prison?** The powers of darkness rule the lives of so many who live there. Yet total darkness cannot exist with even the smallest light. Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry has the task of bringing the Light of Christ to many men and women sitting in the darkness of a prison. Every Orthodox Study Bible; every Holy Icon; every prayer and study book, sent to a prisoner brings that precious Light of Christ to their darkened world. And that Light begins to spread in that place driving out the darkness with each person it touches.

Tie in this Old Testament passage (Isaiah 42:5-8), revealing God's heart and mission: "**Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: "I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord!"**



# PRISON MINISTRY AWARENESS SUNDAY

## JULY 25

Did you know that there are Orthodox Christians practicing their faith in prison? Or that there are prisoners who are ready to repent of their crimes and embrace the Orthodox Church?

### Who will minister to them?

Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (OCPM) is the national prison ministry of the Orthodox Church. We correspond with thousands of prisoners across the country and provide them with spiritual books, Bibles, icons, and catechism courses. We also train Orthodox priests and laypeople to enter prisons and minister to prisoners.



**Together we can  
fulfill the Lord's  
commandment to visit  
Him in prison (Matthew  
25:36 – "I was in prison  
and you visited me.")**

**2MILLION**  
ICONS DISTRIBUTED TO PRISONERS

**40,723**  
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