



CHRISTMAS IN JULY

St. Philip's Parish Press



WISDOM FROM FR. B: HOW ARE YOU, FATHER? "NEVER BETTER!"



CHRISTMAS IN JULY GREETINGS

Father Boniface loved Christmas in July. Even after retiring from St Philip's, he continued to write this piece every year for our Christmas in July newsletter. Since we lack any better way to proceed, we continue with his words:

It is time to say THANK YOU and GOD BLESS YOU to our parishioners and stewards AND to our many friends. Your support of Christ's work through Saint Philip's has continued year after year to make a difference. This year should be no exception as we pause to count our many blessings.

This is our 40th year for this annual appeal, and through the years, many special projects and needs have become possible through your gifts. This year our identified needs are Beautification (narthex murals), Cemetery "gifting plots," children's books for the narthex, and a full-time-access chapel.

Thank you for making a special offering beyond your regular pledge. Your gift and encouragement will add strength to all our ministries in the Lord's Name.

Please place your Christmas in July offering in the basket at Church or send by mail to:

St Philip's Orthodox Church
1970 Clearview Rd.
Souderton, PA 18964



Many thanks, and God bless you for your generosity.

In Christ,

+ Fr. Noah

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

GIVING UPDATES

MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION: Thank you for your generosity to the needy of our community! In July, we are collecting **Oral Care Products.**

NON-PERISHABLE FOOD COLLECTION: We continue to collect non-perishables of all kinds for the food pantries.

NEWSPAPERS: Salfid Rescue Kennel, our neighbor on Clearview Road, is always in need of old newspapers. Look for the box in the hallway.

MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAITHFUL GIVERS!

Holy Mysteries

Sviatoslav Matthew Stuhltrager, son of Matthew & Julia Stuhltrager, was baptized into Christ here at St Philip's on May 13.

Dylan John Morrash, son of Philip & Bailey Morrash, was baptized into Christ here at St Philip's on May 21.

Robert Mullen was received into the Orthodox Church by Baptism and Chrismation here at St Philip's on June 4.

Andrew Matczak was also received into the Orthodox Church by Baptism and Chrismation here at St Philip's on June 4.

Beckham Alexander Gambashidze, son of Beka & Teresa Gambashidze, was baptized here at St Philip's on June 17.

MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!

OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST

is offered to the **Fitzgerald family** upon the passing of Helen's father **Tewfiq Shnoudeh**, who reposed on June 7. The funeral was held in Jordan.



AND to the **Muzekari family** upon the repose of Stephanie's father, Gregory Reph, who reposed on June 8. The funeral was held in Northampton, PA.

AND to the **Acker family** upon the repose of Fr Herman's brother-in-law, Robert Fyan, who reposed on June 8. The funeral was held in upstate New York.

MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

Mark Your Calendar:

Sacred Music Institute

July 12-16

At the Antiochian Village

Transfiguration of Christ

August 6 - Falls on a Sunday this year
Saturday Vespers & Artoklasia, 6 p.m.
Sunday Matins 8:40 am, Liturgy 10 am
Blessing of fruit & garden produce.

Vacation Church School

August 7-11

The Parables of Christ

Fr Boniface Memorial & Retreat

August 12-13

Fr Joseph Morris

"Spiritual Lessons from the teaching and deeds of Fr. Boniface Black and his patron, St. Boniface, Enlightener of Germany"

Dormition

Monday, August 14

Vespers, Artoklasia & Lamentations 6 pm
Matins 7 pm

Tuesday, August 15

Liturgy 10 am

Blessing of herbs & flowers.

Red Cross Blood Drive

Tuesday, August 17, 2-7 pm

See Beth McClintock or Jerry Burke to sign up.

Beheading of the Forerunner

Monday, August 28

Vespers 7 pm

Tuesday, August 29 - STRICT FAST DAY

Divine Liturgy 10 am

Sunday School begins Sept 10

International Food Festival

Sept 15 & 16

Work & Pray & Invite!



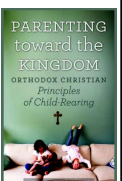
Biblical Wisdom

God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

James 4:6

Parenting Suggestion

From *Parenting Toward the Kingdom* by Philip Mamalakis: "Children are not problems to be solved, but people to be loved."



Did You Know?

- Now that warmer weather is here and Sunday School is not in session, our children will naturally want to play outside during coffee hour. Parents, please teach your children to be watchful of cars (even when they're parked), to be respectful of others' property, and to pick up their trash. (They should not bring cups or plates out with them. Have them finish their snack indoors and place their trash in the bin.) Also, younger children MUST be properly supervised.
- Modesty is an important offering to God and to each other, even in the summer months, at church and out and about. Modesty doesn't have to mean homely. Beards and head-coverings are traditional expressions of modesty that can stylishly complement respectful and beautiful clothes.



- You should still go to church when you go on vacation. Research. Call ahead. Ask a blessing from the priest before taking Holy Communion. Bring back a bulletin or other info and ideas for Fr. Noah.
- Atlas of American Orthodox Monasteries (2nd ed.) is now available. Visit holycrossbookstore.com for more information and to order.
- Please save the date for our Food Festival – to help out and to bring a friends, families, colleagues, and neighbors! Pray for a successful outreach event.
- The Dormition Fast (August 1-14) is a time to tune up our souls and bodies with escalated prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and other spiritual disciplines to bring us closer to Christ and His Holy Mother! Please plan on attending at least one Paraklesis.



Ask Abouna

Previous Question: Fr. Noah, please tell us about your pilgrimage to Romania.

Answer: *Doamne ajută!* (Romanian for "Lord, help!") This is the most common greeting among the faithful of this beautiful Orthodox country. Romania received the gospel from St. Andrew the Holy Apostle and has kept the faith firmly and consistently unto the shedding of blood through Barbarian, Catholic, Muslim, and Communist oppression and assault.

It was one of the great joys of my life to see but a small portion of the castles and caves, monasteries and seminaries, graves and reliquaries, and experience the rich chant and iconography and deeply God-centered architecture and culture. It was also surprising to hear about and observe the revitalization of the faith after the fall of communism on Christmas day, 1989. Everywhere I turned I saw ancient churches, still prayed in and maintained for God's glory, being overshadowed by brand new magnificent churches to receive the growing flock. Every clergy, monastic, and faithful layman I spoke with had a warmth, a brightness, and a loving-generosity that truly made me feel at home and at peace. The emphasis on maintaining Holy Tradition was always in the context of loving the Lord God and one's neighbor as one's self. I saw massive monasteries built from scratch in less than 20 years by nuns: churches with frescoes, carvings, printing houses, retirement homes. I heard the confident and joyful chanting of 40 voices as one heavenly voice: *Doamne miluiește!*



Are there problems there? I'm sure there are, but there are many clergy, monastics, and faithful filled with love for God, and their creativity and obedience will answer the challenges.

Please set aside the evening of July 22 to attend Vespers and then come to the Great Room for a Romanian snack and a slide show with stories from my trip. Please make sure you get a souvenir near the confession stand.

I encourage all of you to build pilgrimages into your life. They don't leave you spiritually or financially bankrupt (like many vacations), and they do build you up.

New Question: What has been the fruit of the festival?

Wisdom from Fr. B.

**How are you, Father?
"Never better!"**

Only on two occasions did I hear Fr. Boniface not say "never better" to a question about how he was (and that was when I pressed him). Frankly, from the perspective of physical health, it was not true. He had terrible sinus pain and terrible hip pain. But, from the perspective of the soul, it was true. He was more and more transformed into Christ's image by every year, month, week, day, and moment of service to

God's people. This showed the positive side of repentance. Repentance is ever-awakening to God's continual mercy, making each moment a movement from glory to glory. This was also evidence of the nobility of his soul: he was hesitant to put any unnecessary burden on another; he was loath to steal the focus from God and to himself. I'd like to ask him now: "How are you, father?" I can't wait see his face in glory, his eyes glowing with love, and his smile framed by the joy and peace of heaven, and his gentle voice replying: "Never better!"

Missions Minute

Support a Mission Priest (SAMP) is a development program of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center that offers monthly financial assistance to indigenous priests in extremely poor areas around the world. Through SAMP donations, the priest is able to apply himself more fully to the needs of the parish, and hierarchs are able to ordain more clergy to meet the growing needs of their flock. St Philip's is supporting two mission priests this year. Read about them on the Missions board, and pray for them.

Everyday Evangelist

"As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (Jn 20:21)

Be available.



Challenge for 2017:

Be led by the Spirit, not pushed by the passions (Romans 8:12-14)

For out of the heart come evil thoughts: murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. -Mt 15:19

Our Lord taught us clearly, along with the rest of Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition, that our hearts are not right. This is why we really need to address the passions behind the sin. Stopping the sin is essential and it is part of the process of healing from the passions and being restored as an icon of God! This is why prayer - constant, focused, humble, positive prayer - is essential. We must be synergistic with God, cooperating with the Christ, in the sacraments and the ascetical life, working and praying for the Holy Spirit to overshadow us.