



THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church



SPIRITUAL WARFARE: "PRAY FOR GOD'S HELP"

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

GIVING UPDATES

MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION: Thank you for your generosity to the needy of our community! In **November & December**, we are collecting **Turkeys**.

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

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Choir - Women singers needed! If you are interested in participating, please get Fr. Noah's blessing and speak with Kh. Elizabeth about singing in the choir.

Liturgical offerings - Prospora, Artos, Kolyva, Altar Candles, Wine, Flower Decorations ... These are simple and profound ways to offer our talents to God and to each other. We are in need of more **Prospora bakers!** If interested, please talk to BethAnn Hyatt.

MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAITHFUL GIVING & SERVICE!

FORTY DAYS OF GROWTH IN STEWARDSHIP

"One Body In Christ"

We all have something to offer! God in His providence has made the Church in such a way that we all need one another to be and become who we truly are in Christ, a living Icon of the Trinitarian life of mutual love and self-giving.



As we continue in our 40 Days of Growth in Stewardship this year, prayerfully consider how God is calling you to give more of your time, talents, and resources for the building up of Christ's body! Perhaps you could support our church in these ways:

1. With your pledge, growing toward a tithe. Prayerfully return the pledge card ASAP.
 2. Get involved with at least one ministry.
 3. Host coffee hour at least once per year.
 4. Pray, and repent of your sins.
 5. Attend services with visitors.
- <https://www.st-philip.net/stewardship.html>

A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Saint Philip's Family, Glory to Jesus Christ!

Our Holy Tradition—consisting of the Scriptures, the Saints, Sacraments, Canons, Icons, Divine Services, etc.—presents salvation in a host of different ways. Each one, it seems, is more sublime than the next.

Here are just a couple that quickly come to mind: Forgiveness, Washing, Emancipation, Healing, Adoption, Birth, Return, Waking Up, Building, Victory, Battle, Running, Boxing, Building, Ark, Gift, Stewardship, etc...

All of these concepts reflect the many dimensions of the mystery of our saving union with and transformation in Christ. Certainly, this all helps us to marvel at the greatness of God's love for us and to realize our great need.

I encourage you all to pursue the questions, How do I think about salvation? What analogy do I naturally use to understand salvation? How does that affect how I pray and talk about salvation and God's work in my life with others?

I've been working on mine for about 25 years now and, thanks to God's patience, I think I've finally forged something worthy of sharing:

Salvation is the Free Gift that costs us everything.

If you don't have a "motto" like this, open your heart, your Bible, your calendar to God's mercy in the Church Year, and seeking, you will surely find!

In Jesus Christ, our Salvation,
+Fr. Noah

Mark Your Calendar:

Intro to Orthodoxy Class
Saturdays at 4:30 pm

Adopt-A-Highway
Saturday, Nov 10 at 8 am
(Rain date - Nov 17)

Services for St Philip
Tuesday, November 13
Vespers & Artoklasia 6 pm
Wednesday, November 14
Orthros 9 am; Divine Liturgy 10 am

ADVENT FAST
November 15 - December 25
Advent Paraklesis, Mon/Fri 6 pm

St. Nicholas
Wednesday, December 5 - Vespers & Artoklasia w/ Youth Choir 7 pm, Youth Activity 8 pm
Thursday, December 6 - Orthros 9 am, Liturgy 10 am w/ Potluck to follow

Advent Retreat
Saturday, December 8
with Drs. David & Mary Ford
"The First & Second Comings of Christ"

Bp THOMAS Visit
December 22-25

Nativity of Christ
Sunday, December 23 -
Sunday School Christmas Program, 12:30 pm

Monday, December 24 -
Royal Hours 8:45 am, Vespers & Liturgy 10 am
Festal Orthros 8:45 pm, Festal Liturgy 10 pm

Tuesday, December 25 -
Vespers for Synaxis 12 pm
Wednesday, December 26 -
Orthros for Synaxis 9 am, Liturgy for Synaxis 10 am

We live Pascha to Pascha!
April 28, 2019



Holy Mysteries

Levi & Jocelyn (Jekel) were united in marriage in Harrisburg, PA on Oct 7.

John & Irene (Coutros) were united in marriage at St. Philip on Nov 3.

MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!

Help Us Improve Our Website!

We are preparing to make some changes to our website and are reviewing all our communications avenues. We would like your input so we can best respond to your needs. Please take a few minutes and complete the survey linked at the website homepage:

<https://www.st-philip.net/>

Spiritual Warfare:

"Pray for God's help."

The spiritual warfare we undertake is a mysterious intersection of our strenuous effort and God's gracious work. St. Paul tells us that God is at work *in us* so that we do His good will and pleasure (Phil 2.13), that Christ is *in us*, the hope of glory (Col 1.27).

When we strip away the fragile and faulty world of our thoughts and feelings, we are opening ourselves up to the possibility of discovering, or rediscovering, Christ at work in us, always present as a faithful guide and friend—indeed, as our Captain and General in our struggle with spiritual forces of darkness.

And so our prayer, our true prayer from our heart (*nous*), is a reaching toward Christ, who is both inside us and beyond us. It is a desire for communion with Christ, perhaps as a respite from battle, but even more as a realization that Christ is known most deeply in the struggle itself. *Thou hast prepared a table before me in the presence of those afflicting me* (Ps 22.5).

We come to realize, then, that our experience of trial, persecution, etc., is actually God the Father's parental teaching strategy to make us perfect, to form us into the Image of Christ (cf. Hebrews 12).

It is a simple truth of our life in Christ that we pray for help because we need help. God teaches us the most about ourselves and about Himself—and His saints—in our weakness, when the walls of our pride and self-assuredness are broken down and we become receptive to God's presence and work in and through us.

And so we pray, now and always, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" (Matt 8:25).

Looking ahead to the Challenge for 2019 —

Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures.



"How I have loved thy law, O Lord! The whole day it is my meditation."
(Ps 118:97 LXX)

Parenting Suggestion

From *Parenting Toward the Kingdom* by Philip Mamalakis: "Understand struggles in terms of the values and the virtues of the Kingdom of God."



Challenge for 2018: Keep the Feasts & the Fasts



'And Jesus said to them, "The sons of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.'" (Matt 9:15)



As Christians, we find ourselves living in between the two Advents of Christ. We live "in between" the times—we participate in the "age to come" and so our relationship to reality has been totally transformed, and yet we live in a world and in bodies that have not yet been renewed.

Advent, thus, has an essentially future-looking orientation, anticipating Christ's Second Coming. As we prepare for Nativity, we find ourselves in much the same posture as the saints and righteous under the Old Covenant who awaited in hope the coming of the Messiah.

In the terms of Matthew 9:15 above, we fast because "our Bridegroom" is absent. The Nativity Fast is our opportunity to repent and prepare for the Bridegroom's Return! And in the Feast of Christmas, then, we experience a foretaste and glimpse of the eternal Wedding Banquet that will be ours when we are finally and fully united with Christ.

Please pray for our upcoming Advent Retreat, and invite others!

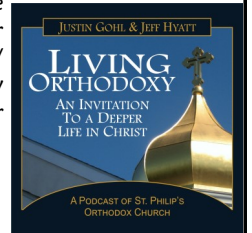
Did You Know?

- Calling "Junior Librarians"! St. Philip's Parish Library is looking for teens to help out with library operations by checking in/shelving books and general tidying-up. We'll work for no more than an hour on Saturday evenings, either before or after Vespers depending on volunteers' schedules. If interested, please contact Fr. Noah or Mindi Popovich (mnpopovich@gmail.com).

- Reminder! Let your Amazon purchases support St Philip's! Simply click the Amazon Logo in the right panel of every page of our website to begin your shopping. Our commission ranges from 1% to 10%. (Note: This is not Amazon Smile, which pays only 1/2%, so you won't find us on their list.)



- Our parish website is rich with resources. Check it out: www.st-philip.net. And if you haven't already, check out our parish podcast titled **Living Orthodoxy**, produced by Sdn David and Rdr Justin. Included are **discussions** of the liturgical year (e.g., feasts & fasts), weekly **homilies**, and **interviews** from a variety of people. It can be accessed on the parish website (at the bottom of the home page) for download / subscription. They welcome your feedback!



Ask Abouna

Question: Fr. James, what were some of the highlights of your Pilgrimage to Russia?

Answer:

During much of the month of September, I was on pilgrimage in Russia. Basing myself in St. Petersburg, I visited two monasteries, Solovki and Valaam. I should mention that I went to the holy sites of Russia to pray for myself and also for the members of St. Philip's, both the living and the departed. In St. Petersburg I visited the tombs of St. Xenia of Petersburg, St. John of Kronstadt, St. Alexander Nevsky, and St. Ambrose of Optina.

I spent a week at Solovki Monastery, located on an island in the White Sea. It was very remote. Founded in the 15th century, it was a thriving monastery of about 300 monks until the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. The monastery was confiscated by the government and was turned into a prison camp for political and religious prisoners (one of whom was Patriarch Kyril's grandfather, a priest, who spent two years in the camp). Tens of thousands died here through execution, torture, exposure, starvation, or illness. This brutal camp became the model for the many slave labor camps throughout Siberia,

which existed until the end of the Communist era in 1989. While there, we were shown the sites of mass graves. A visiting Russian priest conducted a memorial there for those poor souls. Since 1990 Solovki is once again a monastery, with about forty five monks. I prayed for you all there at the tombs of the founders of the monastery, Ss. Herman, Sabbati and Zosima.

I also spent ten days at Valaam Monastery, located on an island on Lake Ladoga north of St. Petersburg. It was my second visit there, and I stayed in a skete named for St. Alexander Nevsky. I had a wonderful time and prayed for you at the tombs of the founders, Ss Sergius and Herman. Our own St. Herman of Alaska came from Valaam. There is a field called "Herman's Field" where St Herman lived with several other monks before they were sent to Alaska. Valaam Monastery is very proud of their native son, and they are building a chapel dedicated to our St. Herman in that field!

I also went fishing with one of the monks (we caught a large pike), and even experienced a Russian "banya" (sauna) at the monastery. This was a wonderful and prayerful trip; I hope each of you managed to get some of the religious souvenirs I brought back. Glory to God for all things!

