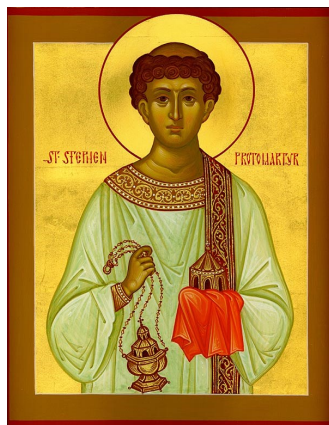


Protomartyr Stephen the Archdeacon (December 27)

The Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen was the eldest of the seven deacons, appointed by the Apostles themselves, and therefore he is called “archdeacon.” He was the first Christian martyr, and he suffered for Christ when he was about thirty. In the words of Asterias, he was “the starting point of the martyrs, the instructor of suffering for Christ, the foundation of righteous confession, since Stephen was the first to shed his blood for the Gospel.”



Filled with the Holy Spirit, Saint Stephen preached Christianity and defeated Jewish teachers of the Law in debate. The Jews maligned Saint Stephen, saying that he had uttered blasphemy against God and against Moses. Saint Stephen came before the Sanhedrin and the High Priest to answer these charges. He gave a fiery speech, in which he recounted the history of the Jewish nation, and denounced the Jews for persecuting the prophets, and also for executing the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ (Acts ch. 7).

During his speech, Saint Stephen suddenly saw the heavens opened and Jesus Christ standing at the right hand of God. The Jews shouted and covered their ears, and rushed at him. They dragged him out of the city and stoned him, but the holy martyr prayed for his murderers. Far off on the heights stood the Mother of God with the holy Apostle John the Theologian, and She prayed fervently for the martyr. Before his death Saint Stephen said, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” Then he joyfully gave up his pure soul to Christ.

The body of the holy Protomartyr Stephen, left to be eaten by beasts, was secretly taken up by the Jewish teacher Gamaliel and his son Habib, who buried Stephen on his estate. They both believed in Christ, and later received holy Baptism.

Saint Stephen is also commemorated on August 2 (Translation of his relics) and on September 15 (Uncovering of his relics in the year 415).

(Taken from <https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2020/12/27/103659-protomartyr-and-archdeacon-stephen>)



ST. PHILIP ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the
Antiochian Archdiocese

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH



His Grace Bishop THOMAS



Father Noah Bushelli, Pastor

215-954-9286



Father James Thayer

215-692-0890

December 27, 2020

SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

COMMEMORATIONS:

PROTOMARTYR STEPHEN THE ARCHDEACON
JOSEPH THE BETROTHED
DAVID THE PROPHET AND KING
JAMES THE BROTHER OF THE LORD
THEODORE THE CONFESSOR, BROTHER OF SAINT
THEOPHANES THE POET
THEODORE, PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Tone 4 - Eothinon 7

Orthros Gospel: St. John 20:1-10
Epistle: Acts 6:8-7:5, 47-60
Liturgy Gospel: St. Matthew 2:13-23

RESURRECTION TROPARION - Tone 4 - Having learned the joyful message of the resurrection from the angel, the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation, and proudly broke the news to the disciples saying, Death hath been spoiled. Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!

APOLYTIKION OF THE NATIVITY - Tone 4 - Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn therefrom to worship Thee, O Sun of Justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee .

APOLYTIKION OF ST. STEPHEN - Tone 4 - The crown of the Kingdom hath adorned the brow of thy head * because of the contests that thou hast endured for Christ God, thou first of the martyred Saints; * for when thou hadst censured the Jews' madness, thou sawest * Christ thy Savior standing at the right hand of the Father. * O Stephen, ever pray Him for us, that He would save our souls.

TODAY: ORTHROS & Confession 8:45 a.m.
Divine LITURGY 10 a.m.
No Sunday School & Catechism

1970 Clearview Road, Souderton, PA 18964

www.st-philip.net (215) 721-4947

Emails: office@st-philip.net nbushelli@gmail.com frjamesthayer@gmail.com

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 10:00 - 3:00

Fr Noah & Fr James are available for hospital visits. If you or anyone you know is in the hospital or homebound and would like a visit, please call the church office.

Weekly Ministries & Stewards:

	This Week:	Next Week (Jan 3):
PROSPHORA BREAD:	MaryLynne Black	Kristi Moore
USHERS:	Steve K. & Bill H.	Dan M. & Sdn Justin
ALTAR CANDLES:	----	----
ALTAR BOYS:	"Archangel Michael"	"Archangel Gabriel"
CLEANING TEAM:	Todd & Kendra Moody; Natalia M.	Justin & Kate Gohl and Olena M.

Mark Your Calendar:

Circumcision of Christ & St. Basil

Thursday, December 31
Vespers 6:30 pm & Orthros 7:30 pm

Friday, January 1
Liturgy of St. Basil, 10 am

Holy Theophany
Tuesday, January 5
Royal Hours, 10 am
Vesperal Liturgy 6:30 pm w/ Great Blessing of Water

Wednesday, January 6
Orthros, 9 am
Liturgy 10 am w/ Great Blessing of Water

March for Life
Friday, January 29

Meeting of the Lord in the Temple *February 2, 2021*

Hierarchical Liturgy and Ordination
Please take off the day of work to welcome and receive the blessing of our beloved Bp THOMAS and pray with Subdeacon Luke (Dr. Jeff) Carpenter for his ordination to the Holy Diaconate.

Pray For:

Living	Departed
Elias & family	+Archbishop David
Yvonne & family	+Nun Bridget
Doris & John	+Mat. Linda (D)
APr. Gregory & Family	+George
Aristidis	+Albert
James	+Victoria
Lasha B	
Otari B	
Daniel H	
John	
Peter	
Stavroula	
Anesia	
Svetlana & Family	
Paula	<u>Catechumens</u>
James	Matthew,
Joshua	Michael,
Vicki	Shaun,
	Tina,
	Asena,
	Sara,
	Jonathan,
	Barry
Dn. Thomas, Elizabeth, Elaine & all Missionaries	
New & Expectant Mothers & their children	
For the people of our land and their repentance, healing & unity	
All who are suffering, serving and rebuilding from the pandemic	

OFFERINGS: Candles, \$325.25. Collections, \$1,944.50. Flowers, \$25. Youth, \$1. Book Shelf Ministry, \$92. Christmas Card Fund, \$750. Endowment, \$300. Pastoral Discretion, \$5,504.47. Women's Fund, \$167. Stewardship, \$8,106. Total received: \$17,215.22.

GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS & GENEROSITY!

This Week:

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

Office closed this week.

- Monday, Dec 28:** Office closed
- Tuesday, Dec 29:** Matushka Olga Sewing Club, 11 a.m.
- Wed, Dec 30:** Little Compline 6:30 p.m.
Patristic Reading Group 7 p.m.
- Thursday, Dec 31:** Vespers 6:30 p.m. & Orthros 7:30 p.m. for Circumcision & St. Basil
- Friday, Jan 1:** FEAST OF CIRCUMCISION/ ST. BASIL
Liturgy of St. Basil, 10 a.m.
w/ New Years Prayers
Paraklesis, 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Jan 2:** Divine Liturgy (Mask Required) 10 a.m.
Vespers 6:30 p.m.
Confession 7:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Jan 3:** ORTHROS 8:45 a.m.
Divine LITURGY, 10 a.m.



REVERENCE IN GOD'S HOUSE

To Cross or Not To Cross



Anyone who has looked around on a Sunday morning will notice that different people cross themselves at different times (and sometimes in different ways). To a certain extent, when to cross oneself is according to personal piety and not an issue of dogma. But there are times when it is specifically proper to cross yourself, and times when you should not. Here is a brief list of when to cross and when not to cross:

To Cross: When you hear one of the variations of the phrase, "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"; at the beginning and end of the liturgical service or your private prayers; entering or exiting the church, or when passing in front of the Holy Altar; before venerating an icon, the cross, or Gospel book.

Not to Cross: At the chalice before or after taking Communion (you might hit the chalice with your hand); when being censed, or when the priest or bishop blesses saying, "Peace be to all" (bow slightly and receive the blessing); when receiving a blessing from a bishop or a priest (kissing the right hand of the bishop or priest is appropriate, but not making the sign of the cross).