



CHRISTMAS IN JULY



St. Philip's Parish Press

WALKING IN THE STEPS OF THE AMERICAN SAINTS: SERVE GOD BY SERVING THE CHURCH



CHRISTMAS IN JULY GREETINGS

It is time to say thank you to our parishioners and also to our many friends at a distance for helping us meet this year's "Christmas in July" challenge!

This is the thirty-sixth year we have been blessed with your special summer offerings. During the years we have been able to accomplish a great many projects which helped strengthen our ministry.

This year's identified needs are: Cemetery, a sign that can be seen from Rt 309, missions, and children's books.

Your generosity will make a difference! Please place your special gift in the offering basket, or send by mail to:

St Philip's Orthodox Church
P.O. Box 64565
Souderton, PA 18964



Thank You and God bless you for your love for Christ and our Church.

A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

My schedule this month is dominated by archdiocesan and diocesan events and these come with a significant price tag of time, energy, preparation, and money. But these costs are indeed a worthy investment as the return is spiritual refreshment and deeper connection to the hierarchs, clergy, and laity that make up our archdiocese. Believe it or not, the life of a parish priest can be a little bit isolated or "parochial." I realized this early on and am grateful for the many opportunities for spiritual growth and networking. Join me in rejoicing in the unity of faith that our parish shares with our diocese, archdiocese, and all of the Orthodox Christian Church.

Your Servant in Christ, + *Fr. Noah*

CHALLENGE FOR 2013:

Arrive before Liturgy to help sing the Great Doxology!

Walking in the Steps of the American Saints SERVE GOD BY SERVING THE CHURCH



St John Maximovich, who passed into eternal life in Seattle on July 2nd, 1966, was a brilliant and erudite, yet simple, joyful, and very fruitful servant of God's Church. After studies in Serbia, he dedicated his life to monasticism as well as the pastoral ministries of prayer, teaching, preaching, building churches, and caring for orphans. This took him from Ukraine to Shanghai to the Philippines to Europe and finally to San Francisco. His letter to a young man seeking direction for his life and career, is a strong reminder for us to "answer the call" for ministry, whether it be our life's work or part of our parish involvement:

"When I meet and observe the lives of those whom I knew as young people and who have now reached a ripe age, I see how weighed down they are with worldly cares and sicknesses, how bleakly they spend their days if they have no higher yearnings. But those who give themselves to God's service, even if they suffer for it, are spiritually vibrant and feel God's hand protecting them."

Mark Your Calendar!

Matushka Olga Sewing Club

Tuesdays, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.



Learn or teach, work on your own project or on projects for those in need. All welcome.

Theotokos Fast

August 1-14

Paraklesis Services

Weekdays during the Fast, 7 p.m.
(exc. Aug 14 - Vespers for Feast)

VCS - August 5-9

Miracles - Mark your calendars now!
Register in the Narthex.

Services for Transfiguration

Monday, August 5

Vespers w/Artoklasia & Lamentations 6 p.m.

Matins 7 p.m. - Blessing of harvest

Tuesday, August 6

Divine Liturgy, 9 a.m. - Blessing of harvest

Services for Dormition

Wednesday, August 14

Vespers & Artoklasia 7 p.m.

Blessing of herbs & flowers

Thursday, August 15

Matins 9 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Blessing of herbs & flowers

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES FESTIVAL PREPARATIONS

Mark your calendar - **September 20-21.** We'll need everyone's help to make this year's Festival even more successful than last year's. Have you shared a sponsorship packet with a business you frequent?



GIVING UPDATES

MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION:

Many thanks to all for your contribution to our June collection. We collected & delivered numerous paper products! In July, we are collecting **Oral Care products.**

May God bless all our faithful givers!



Wisdom from Elder Epiphanius

(+1989)

- I have made an agreement with God: I will empty my pockets doing charity and He will fill them. He never transgressed our agreement. Will I? Let it not be!
- The worst hell for me is to know that I have saddened a beloved person.
- All the programs I made - all failed. For this reason, I let God make the program of my life.
- Go to Church early. We do Orthros (Matins) for the faithful, not for the chairs!



Did You Know?

- **Our Teens and several adults** - 30 in all - are traveling to **Appalachia** to serve for a week with the FOCUS North America mission there. Please pray for safe travel, a fruitful ministry, and spiritual growth for all.
- **Antiochian Village Camp** - 22 of our youth attended the first session, 2 more are now enjoying the second session, and another 3 will be at camp for the third session. What a blessing for our young people! Thanks to all for your contributions to our **Camp Scholarship Fund**, which made camp attendance possible for so many! May God bless you.
- **Simeon Acker** is at Antiochian Village Camp all summer, working as a counselor. In addition, he was the Chanting Camp instructor for first session, and about half his class were St Philip's kids!
- **Kh. Jing Kees**, wife of our former assigned seminarian **Fr. Symeon Kees**, has graduated from medical school. Congratulations!
- Our Parish Council is seeking **nominations for new Parish Council members**. If you have a suggestion or would like to be considered, please contact a member of the council (see list on minutes posted) or email Fr. Noah to submit a name for the consideration of the Nomination Team.
- The **Archdiocese National Convention** will take place in Houston, TX, July 21-28. Fr Noah will represent us at this biennial event.
- Our **Food Festival** - Sept 20-21. This is a joyous time of hospitality for our neighbors! Please pray and work for another success.
- It is our duty and joy to pray for and welcome the many **visitors, inquirers, catechumens, and new members** to our parish. A warm welcome can often help a visitor deepen his faith in Christ's church.
- **Fr. Noah** is planning to travel to Mt Athos in October and **Fr. James** is planning a pilgrimage to Russia in August. Thanks for your prayers for our safe and edifying pilgrimages.
- Our **Bishop THOMAS**, our link to the Apostles and the guarantee of the oneness of the church, will be visiting from Nov 13-17. Please save the dates.
- Your **pledges & special gifts** keep our parish vibrantly glorifying God, celebrating His Love, and building up His Church & His people!
- We have a great opportunity to expand our knowledge of the faith with about 70 different topical podcast series on **AncientFaith.com**



- **You can be prepared for the end.** Advanced medical directives, wills, burial plot, leaving something to the Church in your will! Whenever it is, don't waste your last moments on tidying up earthly cares.
- **We live from Pascha to Pascha:** April 20th, 2014!



How to Stop Gossiping

A brother asked Abba Poemen, "If I see my brother sin, is it right to say nothing about it?" The old man replied, "Whenever we cover our brother's sin, God will cover ours; whenever we tell people about our brother's guilt, God will do the same about ours."

MAILING ADDRESS CHANGE - P O BOX BEING CLOSED!

In order to save the time and expense of traveling to the Post Office, we have installed a mailbox at the church, and will now be receiving mail at our street address. Make a note:
1970 Clearview Road, Souderton, PA 18964

Ask Abouna

Previous Question: Fr. Noah, tell me about **Vespers**. Why is it important?

Answer: Vespers, from the Latin for "evening," has been an essential element in the life of God's people since the Creation (Genesis 1:5). In the Old Testament, Vespers is primarily about kindling and tending the "evening light" and the accompanying incense offering (Ex 30:8, Lev 24:1-4, 1 Chr 23:30). The evening light was an important source of protection, hope, productivity, and joy in ancient cultures.



Psalm 140/141:2 has poetically and prayerfully captured this, is one of the most beloved Lenten hymn sung at the Presanctified Liturgy: "Let my prayer arise in your sight as incense and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice."

The themes of our Orthodox Vespers service (Creation: Psalm 103/104; Fall: The "Lord I Cry Psalms" 141/140, 142/141, and 129/128; and Redemption: Gladsome Light as well as the "Hymn of St. Simeon," Luke 2:29-32) are a magnificent context for the rich hymnography for the feasts and saints.

It was at the (evening) offering of incense that Zacharias heard the good news of the birth of John, the forerunner of the Messiah. It was at the evening offering of incense that Judith (Chapter 9, of the Septuagint/Greek Old Testament) begged God for strength before she struck out on her desperate and risky mission to save Jerusalem. It was with the prayer at the lighting of the lamp that St. Macrina prayed deeply with thanksgiving and then breathed her last. It has been at Vespers that many saints and faithful people have sifted through their consciences. It is on the eves of the Lord's Day and the Feasts that we are called to rekindle the fire of God's love in our hearts in preparation for offering the sacrifice of praise in the Liturgy.

Vespers is, perhaps, the best service to bring someone to church. Glory to God! It was at Vespers that I met my dear wife all those years ago in Alaska! I'm sure glad I didn't stay home that night!

New Question: Fr. Noah, how long have you been serving at St. Philip's?

We must be super-conservative in preserving the Orthodox Faith, and super-modern in propagating it. – *St. Nikolai*

Recipe: Blueberry Dumplings

Dumplings

- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup vegetable shortening
- 6-8 tablespoons milk

Stewed Blueberries

- 2 cups blueberries
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 cup sugar
- Heavy cream



Bring the blueberries, water and sugar to a boil in a wide pan.

Mix together the flour, sugar, salt and baking powder. Cut in the shortening with a pastry cutter or two knives until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Gently mix in milk until it becomes a very soft dough.

Divide the dough into about five dumplings and drop on top of the blueberries. Lower heat to a simmer and cover the pan tightly. Steam for 12 minutes. Serve warm, drizzled with cold heavy cream.

<http://www.npr.org/2013/06/27/195633254/blueberry-dumplings-the-star-of-lasting-summer-memories>

Or go to npr.org & search for "blueberry dumplings." According to the comments, this works with other fruit as well!