



THE PARISH PRESS



St. Philip Orthodox Church

WISDOM FROM FR. B: A PRAYER ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU...

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

GIVING UPDATES

MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION: Thank you for your generosity to the needy of our community! In **March**, we are collecting **Baby 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!

Challenge for 2017: **Be led by the Spirit, not pushed by the passions** (Romans 8:12-14)

Abba John the Dwarf said, "If a king wanted to take possession of his enemy's city, he would begin by cutting off the water and the food and so his enemies, dying of hunger, would submit to him. It is the same with the passions of the flesh: if a man goes about fasting and hungry the enemies of his soul grow weak."

This beautiful little passage gives us a clear demonstration of why fasting is essential to our life in Christ. We fast for many reasons (prayer, obedience, generosity, physical health, as well as being "poor in spirit") including regaining control of our souls and bodies. Let's continue the fast with the prayer: Lord, lead us by your Holy Spirit out of the bondage to the passions that have enslaved us.

Lay siege to your soul, starve your spiritual enemies, and let God reign as King on the throne of your heart!

A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Saint Philip's Family,

Our Lenten Journey to Holy Pascha is underway. We are purposely exiling ourselves from the comforts of the kitchen, the media, recreation, and the marriage bed so that we can more purposefully sojourn into our hearts to meet God. Likewise, we are enriching our lives with silence, scripture, the services, and the sacraments, with service and sacrifice, to speed us along our way to God's secret dwelling in our hearts.

As we take up the three pillars of the Christian Life (prayer, fasting, and almsgiving) with extra zeal, beg God for repentance and spiritual renewal for your heart, your habits, your home, our community, and our country, our Church, and our world.

Our country, especially, is hurting, divided over policy and personality, and we need God's help to heal it: Let's pray in the prophetic words: "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Lord, dwell richly in our hearts and heal our families, our land, and our world!

In Christ,

+ *Fr. Noah*

Mark Your Calendar:

Desert Fathers Reading Group 2017

Selected Thursdays from Noon - 2 pm

March 9 - St. John the Dwarf

April 6 - St. Macarius the Great

May 11 - Abba Moses of Nitria

June 1 - Abba Poemen

The Lenten Services calendar has been posted and distributed. Pick up a copy from the literature rack.

Youth Choir

Saturdays at 5 pm, March 4-18

Singing 2nd Akathist (Mar 10) and

4th Presanctified (Mar 22)

Creative Art Workshop (Film/Media)

Saturday, Mar 11, 1-4 p.m.

Missionary Visit

Jesse Brandow

home from Guatemala on furlough.

Saturday, March 18, following Vespers.

Services for Annunciation

Friday, March 24

Vespers & Artoklasia 6 pm, Matins 7 pm

Saturday, March 25

Liturgy 9 am, potluck (fish, wine, oil)

Lenten Retreat

Saturday, March 25

Dr Christopher Veniamin

St Silouan of Mt Athos



We live Pascha to Pascha!

April 16, 2017

Parish Life Conference

June 29 - July 2

www.antiochianevents.com/ny.html#

International Food Festival

Sept 15 & 16 - Mark your Calendar!

Everyday Evangelist

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

Practice intentional acts of kindness out of love for God.

Missions Minute

Lynn Homg is preparing for two short term mission trips this summer, to Alaska and to Mexico. Please pray for her and all who are sent in the Name of Jesus Christ! For more information on her plans: https://www.ocmc.org/about/open_teams.aspx

Did You Know?

- **Fr. James** is travelling to Lafayette, LA, March 16-27, visiting a priest-less parish to serve Lenten and festal services and hear confessions.
- **Subdeacon Benjamin Daniel** is completing his second year of the St. Stephen's Program.
- Several young families in our parish are **pregnant**. Please pray for them and support them!
- **The Library** is now open during coffee hour thanks to the flexibility of the stewardship team who are now counting the church's collection in the office. Please take advantage of this hidden treasure our of parish by checking out a book to strengthen your soul.
- **A Psalm a Day** keeps the Devil Away
- Your **prayerful presence** in the church and in your icon corner makes a difference in our world, our parish, your family, and your heart.
- The information at our fingertips on our phones is a cheap substitute for the **wisdom** that wells up in our hearts in prayer and silence.

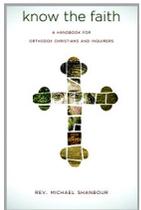


Book Recommendation

Know the Faith: A Handbook for Orthodox Christians and Inquirers

by Fr. Michael Shanbour
(Ancient Faith Publishing)

This is an excellent catechetical and apologetic handbook which unfolds through the eyes of a convert of the earliest days of the church.

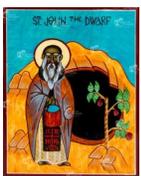


Wisdom

St. John the Dwarf

A beloved Desert Father: although small in body, in works he was great.

- Humility and the fear of God are above all virtues.
- Even if we are entirely despised in the eyes of men, let us rejoice that we are honored in the sight of God.
- The saints are like a group of trees, each bearing different fruit, but watered from the same source.



Wisdom from Fr. B.

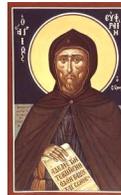
"A Prayer Assignment for You..."

There are many wonderful opportunities for service and sacrifice in family, work, neighborhood, and parish life. Be ready to respond with compassion, forgiveness, and sincerity. Also, don't forget to pray! If you need a special assignment, please come ask my blessing and I'll give you something to pray for. "Lord, teach us to pray!"



Lenten Prayer of St. Ephrem

Say it several times a day with prostrations on weekdays of the Fast. Study it, make St. Ephrem's words your plea to God!



O Lord and Master of my life,
take from me the spirit of sloth,
faintheartedness, lust of power
and idle talk.
But give rather the spirit of chastity,
humility, patience and love to thy
servant.
Yea, O Lord and King,
grant me to see my own sins, and not
to judge my brother,
for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages.
Amen.

OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST

is offered the **Smerkanich** family upon the passing of **Helen Smerkanich**. The funeral was held here at St Philip's on Thursday, January 12, with burial in the St. Philip's Cemetery.

AND to the **Bakas family** upon the passing of **Steve Bakas**. The funeral was held here at St Philip's on Saturday, February 11, with burial in the St. Philip's Cemetery.

MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL!



Read a book of the Bible!

Perhaps Proverbs, blueprint for righteousness

Ask Abouna

Previous Question: I become distracted in Church; how can I concentrate?

Answer: This is something I struggle with constantly, too. Generally, I try to follow the readings, prayers, hymns, and homilies. But, sometimes I catch myself thinking about this or that thought. Whether our thoughts are good or bad, they are not appropriate in Church because we come to Church to pray and enter into the heavenly worship of God.

If the distraction is external (an immodestly dressed parishioner, boisterous child, heavy incense) we can physically move ourselves to a more peaceful place. Or sometimes we must look at the beautiful iconography to dislodge an image from our minds. Some thoughts are a cue to pray for who or what concerns us.

Sometimes, thank God, we are able to concentrate on the service very well. Other times, however, when we are plagued by thoughts, we need to take up the "Sword of the Spirit" which is the "Word of God," Jesus Christ. The Jesus Prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me" is, perhaps, the most effective way block the thoughts and focus more deeply on Christ.

Often, when we are praying more outside of Church, our experience in Church is more blessed by God. In fact, "what I get out of church" is a barometer of my own spiritual life, rather than the incidental questions of performance: "how was the choir?" "the homily?" These things are important offerings to God and to each other, but they must not overshadow the reality of the "work of God's people," the Liturgy: we are mystically but truly joining the heavenly hosts in worshipping at the Throne of the Almighty God (Hebrews 12:22ff) and we partake of Christ's very Body and Blood.

Let us struggle, then, to let nothing separate us from the love of Christ! As we approach the church in our cars, begin asking God for a prayerful service.

This is a perennial problem that the disciples of Christ had too. Let's take up that most humble prayer: "Lord, teach us to pray!"

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Noah

New Question: Fr. Noah, please tell me about the new "Men's Fellowship" gatherings.

