



THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church



BABY STEPS TO BIBLICAL LITERACY - 1-2 EZRA, NEHEMIAH, TOBIT, JUDITH, ESTHER

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

HOME BLESSINGS

From Theophany to just before Great Lent is the season of home blessings. To schedule with Fr Noah or Fr James, please see the scheduling calendars on the table in the narthex. Instructions are posted and reminder slips are available. (If you'd like to schedule your home blessing with Fr Boniface, please contact him directly via phone or email.)

PHOTO DIRECTORY



We continue to take photos for our upcoming photo directory. Sign up in the narthex, or send a photo you like to apostlephilip@gmail.com.

LIBRARY

Are you making good use of our Library? Please remember to return your books promptly! The borrowing period is normally three weeks, but if you need to keep a book longer, please speak with Chris Stavrou.

GIVING UPDATES

MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION: Thanks to all for your generosity to the needy of our community! For **January**, we are collecting Oral Care products.

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

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

MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAITHFUL GIVERS!

A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Where there is no vision, the people perish – Proverbs 29:18

Guided by this ancient, inspired, biblical wisdom, I'd like to lead our parish in setting goals... for ourselves, for our families, and for our parish. Knowing that we are rational sheep in the flock of the Good Shepherd, let's make our goals with prayer, consideration, wise counsel, determination, and reliance on God. **Here are some goals I have for myself this year, perhaps yours will be similar to mine.**

- Pray more consistently and less distractedly
- Read the entire Bible
- Visit my father and other family in California
- Go on a pilgrimage
- Participate in a missionary activity
- Exercise three times each week
- Sharpen my communication skills
- Give my heart to God (more and more)



Here are some goals for my family:

- Pray together more often and more peacefully
- Read and discuss the Bible, spiritual literature, and other literature
- Go on a pilgrimage
- Get our new yard into shape and improve our chore routines
- Become more hospitable
- Practice a Screen Sabbath

Here are some goals for our parish:

- Honor Fr. Boniface and Kh. Joyce (March 11th, save the date!!!)
- Sustain generosity in stewardship and outreach
- Increase attendance at services and educational activities
- Grow as evangelists
- Send 30 children to Antiochian Village Summer Camp

What are your goals? Take a moment to write them down and discuss them.

May God help us excel in everything that is good and honorable!

Grateful for God's love and presence with us in the Church, I remain, Your Servant in Christ,

+ Fr. Noah

Mark Your Calendar:

Services for Theophany

- Monday, January 5 - Strict Fast Day**
 Royal Hours 10 a.m.
 Vespers 6 p.m.
 Great Blessing of Water
- Tuesday, January 6**
 Matins 9 a.m., Liturgy, 10 a.m.
 Great Blessing of Water
- Sunday, January 11**
 Outdoor Blessing of Water, 1 p.m.
 Lake Lenape Park

Patristics Class

Saint Athanasius the Great
Saturdays, 5 p.m.
January 17 - February 14
 Presented by Brian Fitzgerald

Presentation of Christ

Sunday, February 1
 Vespers & Artoklasia 7 p.m.
 Blessing of Candles

Monday, February 2
 Matins 9 a.m., Divine Liturgy 10 a.m.
 Blessing of Candles

Soul Saturday - February 14

Divine Liturgy 10 a.m.

Upcoming Dates:

- Publican & Pharisee: February 1
 Prodigal Son: February 8
 Meatfare/Last Judgment: February 15
 Cheesefare/Forgiveness: February 22
 Forgiveness Vespers 1 p.m.

Annunciation

Tuesday, March 24
 6 p.m. Matins
 7 p.m. Vespers & Artoklasia

Wednesday, March 2
 7 p.m. Divine Liturgy



Pascha - April 12, 2015



Did You Know?

- **Tadesse Abay** and family announce the start of their new **catering business**, specializing in International Foods. God bless your endeavor!
- **Dn. Herman Acker & Nick Morelli** have started a band, **Marooned in Black**. Their debut performance was at our New Year's Eve talent show.
- The 2015 **Coffee Hour** chart has been posted. **Coffee hour is a vital ministry of hospitality**. Please help us keep this tradition of fellowship strong in our parish.
- **We live from Pascha to Pascha – April 12th, 2015.**

Evangelism on the Train

If I were to meet you on a train and ask you, "What is the center of the Christian message?," how would you succinctly put that?

"I believe in a God who loves humankind so intensely, so totally, that he chose himself to become human. Therefore, I believe in Jesus Christ as fully and truly God, but also totally and unreservedly one of us, fully human. And I would say to you, the love of God is so great that Christ died for us on the cross. But love is stronger than death, and so the death of Jesus was followed by his resurrection. I am a Christian because I believe in the great love of God that led him to become incarnate, to die and to rise again. That's my faith.

"All of this is made immediate to us through the continuing action of the Holy Spirit."

Metropolitan Kallistos Ware (Interview in Christianity Today, July 6, 2011)

OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST



is offered to **Vasso Scebes and family** upon the passing of her husband, **Nicholas**.

Services were held here at St Philip's on December 15, and burial was in St. Philip's Cemetery. **AND to the Gozur family** upon the passing of **Steve's mother, Florence**, in Ohio on December 16. **AND to the Horoschak family** upon the passing of **Joyce's father, Joseph Laurite**, on December 20. **AND to the Burke family** upon the passing of **Karen's grandmother, Evelyn**.

MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL!



Baby Steps to Biblical Literacy:

**Old Testament
1-2 Ezra, Nehemiah,
Tobit, Judith, Esther**

This is a tragic and hopeful time in our Holy History. The Kingdoms have fallen, the temple has been destroyed, yet there are men and women are courageously keeping the faith in exile and, finally, back in Jerusalem rebuilding the temple.

We are continuing to read the Old Testament for understanding and application. As you read through these books of the Bible try to understand the Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How of the following people and events in the books and then apply it to your life.

What is the significance of these names of people and places?

1 & 2 Ezra and Nehemiah – Josiah, Cyrus, Artaxerxes, Darius, Ezra, Nehemiah

Tobit – Tobit, Anna, Tobias, Raguel, Sarah, Gabael, Raphael/Azarias, Asmodeus

Judith – Nebuchadnezzar, Holofernes, Judith

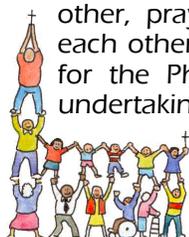
Esther – Artaxerxes, Mordecai, Vashti, Esther, Haman

How can you learn from their example?

Challenge for 2015:

**Build Up the Body of Christ
(Ephesians 4)**

In 2015 I want to challenge you all to help me build up the community of Saint Philip's. This is important work for each member of the parish. The pastor, the clergy, the parish council, the choir, the ministry teams, from elderly to middle age to young adult and youth, we need to purposefully come together and stay together. This has always been important, but it is more important today as our nation becomes more anti-Christian. We need to know each other, be there for each other, pray for each other, love each other. I am thankful to God for the Photo Directory we are undertaking toward this end. If you have other ideas how we can build parish unity, please share them with me.



Ask Abouna

Previous Question: Fr. Boniface, what is happening down in Talbot County, Maryland?

Answer: The Eastern Shore Orthodox Mission has been blessed by His Grace, Bishop Thomas to bring a sincere Antiochian "welcome home" to Maryland's "Eastern Shore" counties east of the Chesapeake. No Orthodox Church has until now been locally available to a large population.

At present our meetings for worship, education, and fellowship are centered in Easton, MD which is in Talbot County, a central point for all five area counties. Parishioners from Holy Cross, Linthicum, MD which is across the imposing "bay bridge" up towards the BWI Airport as well as parishioners who are driving to Lewes, DE are living in the "target area.". These are the "anchor people" for the mission. Word of mouth, newspaper ads, the internet, networking and the goodness of the Holy Spirit all contribute to a diverse and growing community where Orthodox people are discovering one another and praying and working together. All nationalities and all ages are represented by those who look forward to a spiritual home where they can be active and involved.



A historic first Divine Liturgy was celebrated the evening of Dec. 3rd, for Saint Barbara, with Father Gregory Mathewes-Green from Holy Cross and Father Boniface from Saint Andrew concelebrating. Subdeacon Jason Flowers also came from Saint John Chrysostom in York, PA to assist. Thirty-five people were in attendance. A newspaper article and picture from the occasion has found its way onto Facebook and you can access it from St. Philip's Facebook page.

Many thanks to the Parish Council and people of Saint Philip's for support and interest in this outreach, and in all mission work. Your recent gift is a sign of your parish being a strong base of missionary support. Your prayers and your interest will make a difference in the coming New Year.

New Question: I want to forgive, but I can't!