



THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church



BABY STEPS TO HOLINESS - ASSUME GOOD MOTIVES IN OTHERS

A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In one of his moving homilies recorded by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, St. Peter lays out the blue print for a refreshed life in Christ. After a lame man is healed, he stands up at Solomon's Porch and calls the people to repentance. The sermon crescendos with these words: "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

I suggest you follow this apostolic advice in this manner.

Many of us feel burnt out by the burden of responsibilities, communication, and information. But, we don't need to succumb to the decadence and hopelessness of the contemporary. We can beg God to help us to change our hearts (repent) and be converted (turn back to God). As we turn to God in our habits of mind and action, our passions will settle down. With the cooling of the fires of desire and anger, we can more perfectly enjoy the peace and brightness that God shines down on us.

This is the task of Great Lent on the road to Pascha: To focus the mind's eye on God, thus disentangling ourselves from our sinful desires, and come away with the fresh radiance of God's presence with us.

May God help us in this pilgrimage from ourselves to God!

+ Fr. Noah

PS: There seems to be a haze of anti-Christian, un-enthusiasm spreading over our beloved country. Fight off the stupor with prayer, repentance, and ministry. Can your love for God and His love for you fight off "Global Cooling"?

OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST



is offered to **Kathye Ciruolo & family** upon the passing of Kathye's son **Patrick Titus**, who reposed in March. The funeral was held in Sellersville on April 2, with burial in St Philip's Cemetery.

MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

Mark Your Calendar:

Lenten Services

Mondays in Lent

Great Compline 7 p.m.

Wednesdays in Lent

Presanctified Liturgy 7 p.m.

Fridays in Lent

Presanctified Liturgy 10 a.m.

First five Fridays in Lent

Akathist 7 p.m.

International Spring Festival at North Penn H.S.

Saturday, April 16

11 a.m.-5 p.m.

We will have an information table; see Larry or Louise Shaheen to help.

Events with Fr Seraphim of the Monastery of All Celtic Saints, Scotland

Handmaidens' Tea

Friday, April 15, 5:30 p.m.

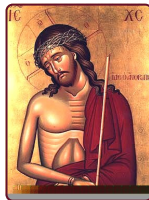
Men's Gathering

Friday, April 15, 8 p.m.

Celtic Christianity

Saturday, April 16, following Vespers

HOLY WEEK & PASCHA



Sunday, April 24

7:00 p.m. Bridegroom Matins

Monday, April 25

10:00 a.m. Presanctified Liturgy

7:00 p.m. Bridegroom Matins

Tuesday, April 26

10:00 a.m. Presanctified Liturgy

7:00 p.m. Bridegroom Matins

Wednesday, April 27

10:00 a.m. Presanctified Liturgy

7:00 p.m. Holy Unction

Thursday, April 28

4:00 p.m. Vesperal Liturgy
7:00 p.m. Twelve Gospels Matins

Holy Friday

Friday, April 29

INVITE SOMEONE TO CHURCH TODAY!

10:00 a.m. Royal Hours

4:00 p.m. Vespers of Burial

7:00 p.m. Lamentations Matins

Holy Saturday

Saturday, April 30

10:00 a.m. Vesperal Liturgy

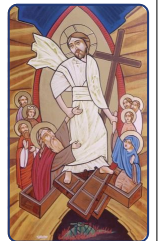
11:30 p.m. Nocturn, Paschal Matins, and Resurrection Liturgy

GREAT & HOLY PASCHA

Sunday, May 1

CHRIST IS RISEN!

2:00 p.m. Agape Vespers



Bright Week

Services every day!

Including Divine Liturgy
Monday & Friday at 10 a.m.

Introduction to Orthodoxy

Saturdays, May 28 - June 18, 4:15 p.m.

Three Serbian Apostles to America

The Lives of St. Nicholai of Zicha & South Canaan, St. Sebastian of Jackson, and St. Mardarije of Libertyville

Saturday, June 4th following vespers
Presented by Archpriest Milorad Orlic

High School Graduate Recognition

Sunday, June 12

Parish Life Conference

June 29 - July 3

At the Antiochian Village
WWSTL - We Will Serve The Lord

Sacred Music Institute

July 13-17

At the Antiochian Village



Did You Know?

- **Paul Heveran** won an essay contest at Bucks County Audubon Society for a full scholarship to attend the Hog Island Audubon Camp - Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens this summer. Entrants were asked to write about their appreciation for and connection with a threatened or endangered wildlife species. You can read Paul's essay, published in the Bucks County Herald, on the bulletin board. Congratulations!
- The **Gohl Family** and **Bob & Barbara Mullen** were welcomed as Catechumens recently. Pray for a fruitful journey for them!
- Our **Bible Bowl** participants review the Gospel of John each Saturday following Vespers, preparing for their competition at the Parish live Conference this summer.
- **Disciple**, which is the primary New Testament word for Christian, means "student." Are you are student? Is your "continuing education" enough to merit the title "disciple"?
- **Stewardship and Almsgiving** are an invitation to change your relationship to money.
- The **liturgical offerings** of our parish (Prospora, Artos, Kolyva, Altar Candles, Wine, Flower Decorations) are simple and profound ways to offer our talents to God and to each other.
- **We live from Pascha to Pascha!** May 1, 2016. Take off from work at least Holy Friday and Bright Monday.
- We're always looking for interesting **Did You Know items** for the newsletter. If you have a special experience or accomplishment you'd like to share, email it to Vera at the church office.

Holy Mysteries

Sean Stonier, son of **Bill & Felicia Stonier**, was baptized into Christ here at St Philip's on Sunday, March 27. **MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!**

**Challenge for 2016:
Pray Without Ceasing
(1 Thessalonians 5)**

Let's broaden our definition and practice of unceasing prayer with this keen insight from St. Basil the Great:

We should not express our prayer merely in syllables, but the power of prayer should be expressed in the moral attitude of our soul and in the virtuous actions that extend throughout our life.

This is how you pray continually - not by offering prayer in words, but by joining yourself to God through your whole way of life, so that your life becomes one continuous and uninterrupted prayer.

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

GIVING UPDATES

MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION: Thank you for your generosity to the needy of our community! In **April**, we are collecting **Cleaning Supplies**.

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!

Wisdom

This is what it means not to judge. Do not have hostile feelings towards anyone and do not let dislike dominate your heart; do not hate him who hates his neighbor.

- *Abba Moses the Black*

Baby Steps to Holiness

April - Assume Good Motives in Others



It is natural for us to assume the best of ourselves... We know we "meant" to finish the dishes. We "planned" to get there on time, but something came up. We "feared" falling into the same trap of poor communication, but it happened again ...

Why can't we do the same for others? Why can't we realize that others are doing the best they can? The answer is that we are selfish, deeply selfish. Even when we are "serving others" it is not without a bit of self-serving in our motivation.

But God calls us to change this and gives us the means to do so. In the Great Fast, we repeat the Prayer of St. Ephrem (hopefully) several times a day with customary prostrations and bows... The last line of this reads: "Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother..." Don't just vainly repeat this prayer! Change! When you catch yourself judging someone by assuming an evil intent, reverse the trend and find something praiseworthy in them.

Ask Abouna

Previous Question: I'm tired of fasting, Father! Why should I fast?

Answer: I have been given many undeserved compliments. The one that hurts the most is: "Father, you have such a gentle spirit." It stings because I know that I am often able to be gentle, but not as much as I should. It especially stings because my name, Noah, in Hebrew means "peaceful". However, I know my heart and am ashamed that the tumult therein erupts from time to time.

I share this with you, because I know that we all have similar weaknesses. So, here the method of acquiring a gentle spirit:

1. *Only by God's Grace* - and our humble asking for His help.
2. *With Fits and Starts* - We are learning to walk, just as babies learn to walk, falling down and getting back up.
3. *With real love* for the real people in our lives.
4. *With confession of sins* immediately after, at your bedtime-prayers when you examine your conscience before God, and in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

New Question: What is the "Paschal Vortex"?

Book Recommendation

The Lenten Spring

by Fr Thomas Hopko

"The Church welcomes the Lenten spring with a spirit of exultation... with the enthusiasm of a child... The tone of the church services is one of brightness and light."



Thus the author begins the first of forty meditation on Great Lent, casting out the gloom and darkness with which many Christians approach this holy season and revealing, in a simple, clear and beautiful manner, its true meaning. All Christians who undertake the yearly journey to the blessed Pascha of our Lord will find inspiration and guidance in these meditations. All can enjoy reading and rereading them and share in the profound thoughts of the author as they make their own spiritual way through this holy season.