



THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church



SPIRITUAL WARFARE: "SPEAK LIFE"

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

GIVING UPDATES

MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION: Thank you for your generosity to the needy of our community! In **February**, we are collecting **Paper Products**.

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

FORTY DAYS OF GROWTH IN STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

"One Body In Christ"

We now have 101 pledges totaling \$286,032 for 2019. Glory to God!

We are stewards, custodians or guardians, of God's blessing in our lives. Most importantly it is the Holy Orthodox Faith (God's abiding love) with which we are entrusted as well as Family, friendship, time, health, house, environment, opportunities, vocation, intelligence, and finances. "Salvation is the free gift that costs everything."

THANK YOU to Sue Psomiadis for sealing the granite countertops in the kitchen & Great Room!



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Saturday, March 2, 8-10 am

Breakfast at church.
"Cultivating Patience"

OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST

Is extended to the **Khalifa family** upon the passing of **Rdr Maxime Nagib**, who reposed on January 16. The funeral was held on January 23 at St. Mary Orthodox Church in Chambersburg, PA.



MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Saint Philip's Family, Glory to Jesus Christ!

It is easy to get priorities mixed up in the "rat race" of life. As difficult as it has been, I'm quite thankful for the opportunity to love and serve my father in his declining health. It is not "my pleasure," but it is "my honor," "my joy," "my blessing," not to mention "my duty." It is also "my repentance" (which means "change of mind/heart"). Serving and Sacrificing are Sanctifying, at least as long as we undertake them with faith, hope, and love. They are also frustrating if we come to them with our own hidden agendas, expectations, or motivations. Yet, God uses even these low moments of bitterness and confusion to help us cling to Him, as our only sure provider and protection. This phenomenon also brings us back to the truth that true mysticism is practical; just as our Lord Jesus Christ brought Heaven down to earth, breaking eternity into time, and uniting divinity and humanity.

From these fresh "scenic vistas of the soul" I ask you to take a moment to pause your busy life and take stock of your blessings and failures and offer them to God in prayerful silence, in your daily prayer, your weekly liturgical participation, & in answering these questions:

- ✦ Who has God entrusted to me?
- ✦ How can I more perfectly and lovingly serve them?
- ✦ If Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Virgin Mother were the ones dwelling in my home, across the aisle at work or school, next to me in the Liturgy or Coffee Hour, at the register, traffic light, on the screen or the other end of the phone, email, or text, how would I act differently?

It may seem like an exercise in fantasy, but it is actually closer to reality than we might think. Indeed, my father, and my step-mother, and all around us, though they might not necessarily recognize it, do bear God's image, and do deserve love, active and affectionate love.

In Christ, the Lover of Man,
+Fr. Noah

Mark Your Calendar

Lenten Triodion

Publican & Pharisee - February 17
Prodigal Son - February 24
Sunday of Judgment (Meatfare) - Mar 3

Forgiveness Sunday

Mar 10 - Forgiveness Vespers 1 pm

Great Lent Begins

Monday, March 11 - Clean Monday

Lenten Retreat – March 30

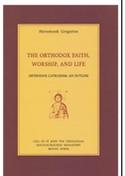
Exile, Journey, Destination!
with Fr. Timothy Sas, priest at Twelve Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church in Duluth, MN

We live Pascha to Pascha!

April 28, 2019

Intro to Orthodoxy Class

Saturdays at 4:30 pm



Home Blessings

Tis the Season for Home Blessings!



Sign up sheet is in the Narthex with the availabilities of both Fr. Noah and Fr. James. Please plan to have your house blessed before Great Lent begins!

Holy Mysteries

Baby Simeon, son of Alex and Sarah Kaminsky, was baptized into Christ at St. Philip on February 2.



MAY GOD GRANT HIM MANY YEARS!

Did You Know?

- **Great Vespers** is a beautiful, peaceful service that prepares our hearts for the Divine Liturgy through its theologically rich hymns. It is a great service to bring someone to for the first time.
- You can offer **Altar Candles** in thanksgiving to and for the glory of God. A sign-up sheet is on the Ministries bulletin board.
- As we enter the New Year, we are in need of **Coffee Hour Sponsors**. Enlist the help of a friend, and sign up! Keep it simple. **Finger foods foster fellowship!**
- Stay connected with parish life by synching with our calendar on **Google Calendar**. See <https://www.st-philip.net/calendar.html> for instructions on how to add the parish calendar to your own device.
- **A Psalm a day** keeps the devil away.

Spiritual Warfare:

Taking Every Thought Captive to Christ

“Speak Life”

Words are powerful things. We know that this is the case because all of God’s works are done in and through his Word—His Logos—in the power of the Spirit. God creates with His Word; with a word Jesus speaks forgiveness and healing into existence; the word of the Apostolic preaching is effective, transforming hearts and minds.

The eternal Word of God, Christ, is also Life itself. He is the “communication” of the Divine Life to all that the Holy Trinity has made. His Word is one eternal conferral of Life ... and Love, Truth, Way (Jn 14.6).

When we speak, then, we must always be aware that we are imitating God Himself, using the faculties He has given us in making us according to His Image. The power of our words is why Scripture is filled with warnings not to swear—make oaths—before God lightly.

What are we “creating” with our words?

Is our talk “empty,” “vain,” like the “vanities”—the mute idols—that pagans worship? Is our talk chaotic and destructive like the serpent’s “dark speech” in the Garden?

Or do our words communicate life, truth, and beauty to those around us, fostering their and our ascent to God?

Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures

“How I have loved thy law, O Lord! The whole day it is my meditation.” (Ps 118.97)

What is the Law?

The Pentateuch is the Greek term, meaning “five volumes,” for the first five books of Scripture—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy—also called the Books of Moses, or simply the Law or the Torah.

While the term “law” implies a list of rules and regulations, and there are many of those in the Law, the Law is primarily *a story, a narrative* that unfolds the divine origins of the created order, the fall and dispersal of humanity, the calling of the Patriarchs, and the creation, redemption, and organization of God’s chosen people, Israel.

In terms of the overall structure of the Pentateuch, God’s conference with Israel at Mt. Sinai after the exodus from Egypt dominates the story—beginning from Exodus 19, through Leviticus, and up to Numbers 10.10 (see diagram).

Egypt to Sinai	at Sinai	to Kadesh	wandering in the wilderness	to the plains of Moab
Ex 12-18	Ex 19–Num 10.10	Num 10.11–14.45	Num 15–19	Num 20–Deut 34
three months	ca. eleven months	ca. three months	thirty-eight years	seven months

The reality that the God who created by His Word would then *speak* to Israel, giving them direct revelation of His will for them, led Israel to make a profound theological connection between God, the Law/Word of God, and God’s ideal pattern for human life. That is, the Law came to be viewed almost as a Person alongside God, like Wisdom in Proverbs 8, who is also present in and fills, even is *incarnate* in, creation and the life of Israel. Ben Sirā in fact comes to make these very connections explicit:

“Then the Creator of all things gave me [Wisdom] a command, and my Creator chose the place for my tent. He said, ‘Make your dwelling in Jacob, and in Israel receive your inheritance.’ ... All this is the book of the covenant of the Most High God, the law that Moses commanded us as an inheritance for the congregations of Jacob. (Sirach 24.8, 23)

Through all this, God was preparing His people to receive the full revelation of Himself and what it means to be truly human in Christ, the Word of God, through Whom the Father created all that is, Who “tabernacled among us” (Jn 1.14), and fulfilled the Law through His perfect obedience to the Father as the New Adam. The Law is Christ Himself!

Ministry Together

w/ Sdn David Hyatt

“Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.”

1 Corinthians 13.3

In my article last month, I invited you to consider what “gift” God has deposited in you for the work of ministry. Do you know, or are you beginning to discover your gift? If you are not sure, please talk with our priests or me about how to identify and use the gifts God has implanted in you.

To minister is to serve. This is the meaning of the Greek word *διακονία* – ministry/service. So, whether one is a vocational or lay “minister” does not matter. What matters is the spirit with which one uses the gift(s) God has given them to serve.

In the book titled, *If You Love Me*, Matthew the Poor writes, “Love is the ultimate criterion of Christ’s service. Any criterion used to measure our service, other than love, is a merely human measurement.”



It is quite possible to serve with the wrong attitude or motive, no matter how spectacular the results of our ministry. In the Gospels we read of Jesus’ encounters with the Scribes and Pharisees, men who were very devout and serious about fulfilling the Law of Moses. They certainly carried out their duties with precision, a spectacle to behold, and yet Jesus called the motivation of some of them into question.

Are you ministering with a whole-hearted love for God? This, Jesus said, is the first and greatest commandment.

And what about a selfless love for those being served? Do you love your neighbor as yourself in the way in which you go about your ministry? According to Jesus, we cannot separate loving God from loving our neighbor.

Finally, is your ministry an act of love for the Church – Christ’s body? With each act of service, we are called to be motivated and measured by love. Without love...it profits us nothing.