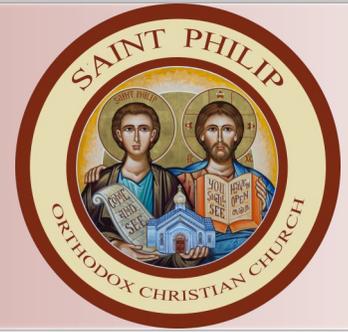


# THE PARISH PRESS

## St. Philip Orthodox Church

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### NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

#### GIVING OPPORTUNITIES!

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



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

#### ST NICHOLAS HOUSE UPDATE

Thanks to Jonathan Black and Jennifer Howanetz and all who are working with them to get our new property ready for ministry, prayer, hospitality. We have applied for the property to be tax-exempt and several of us are attending a hearing regarding that this week. Please pray for a favorable response.

#### Lenten Retreat

Saturday, March 28

*“Recollecting Glory: Orthodox Education for Wisdom, Virtue, and Joy”*

w/ Dr. John Mark Reynolds



Beginning at 1 pm, through Vespers, with fellowship meal after.

#### In honor of Antiochian Women’s Month,



throughout March the epistle readings during the Divine Liturgies will be chanted by the women of our parish. Glory to God for all the women of our parish, for their labors and ministry with and for us!

### ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN

THE MOST REVEREND METROPOLITAN PHILIP - FOUNDER  
A SISTERHOOD SERVING CHRIST THROUGH SERVING OTHERS

#### Holy Mysteries

**Benjamin Kaminsky**, son of Alex & Sarah Kaminsky, was baptized into Christ here at St Philip on Feb 16.



**Vladislav Stuhltrager**, son of Matt & Julia Stuhltrager, was baptized into Christ here at St. Philip on Feb 23.

**MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!**

### A Message from Fr. Noah

Dear Saint Philip’s Family,

Despite my too-human-and-severely-limited-ministry, but by God’s grace, the protection of the Virgin Mary, the prayers of the saints, the example and sacrifice of our founders, the guidance of holy hierarchs and clergy, the generosity of the stewards, and the ministry and friendliness of all the faithful, our parish is thriving!

Here are a couple issues I need to address with that in mind:

**First, A quiet church is an empty church.** I realize, and rejoice, that we don’t have a quiet church! We have squeaky babies, twisting toddlers, distracted teens, young families, catechumens and inquirers, baptisms, chrismations, tonsures and ordinations.

We all have an opportunity to exercise hospitality, patience, and prayer in our Sunday Liturgies! Seasoned parishioners, please don’t scare or shame young parents with harsh looks or rolled eyes. Bless them for actually living up to God’s call of godly marriage and childbearing! Check yourself, swallow your pride, find a sweet way to help them. Younger families, new parents, remember the peace you used to feel in church—BC, Before Children—and try to train your children to experience it themselves.

**Two, The Divine Liturgy is the “Work of the People.”** I realize, and relish, that we don’t have a short Divine Liturgy. There are some churches who have few communicants, meager choirs, anemic preaching, few announcements because nothing is going on, no baptisms, Chrismations, and only memorial after memorial. Thank God that does not describe us... But it might describe Saint Philip’s in a generation if we don’t take seriously our roll of repentance, prayer, ministry, sacrifice, generosity, witness, and evangelism.

It isn’t convenient to have 100 or even 120 minute Liturgies. It is exhausting. But it should be!!! Our services are called services because they are exactly that, “service.” It is our work, our duty, to gather to praise the Lord. And we gather not just with our families, our co-parishioners, but also all the saints around the throne of God! We are learning to stand in the all-consuming fire of God’s love. We are receiving, again and

### Mark Your Calendar:

#### Weekly Lenten Services:

Mon-Thurs: 6th Hour, 12 noon  
Mondays: Great Compline, 7 pm  
Wednesdays: Presanctified Liturgy, 7 pm  
Fridays: Presanctified Liturgy, 10 am  
Little Compline 7 pm, w/ Akathist

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

#### Sunday of Orthodox Vespers

March 8, 4 p.m. @ St George GOA (Bethlehem, PA)

#### Youth Choir

Saturdays at 5 pm, March 7-28  
Singing 2nd Akathist (Mar 13),  
the Annunciation Liturgy (Mar 25),  
and Presanctified (April 8)

#### Services for Annunciation

Tuesday, March 24  
Vespers & Artoklasia 7 pm  
Wednesday, March 25  
Orthros 6 pm, Liturgy 7 pm  
Fish/Wine/Oil potluck to follow

#### LENTE REREAT – March 28

*“Recollecting Glory: Orthodox Education for Wisdom, Virtue, and Joy”*  
w/ Dr. John Mark Reynolds

#### Holy Wednesday Schedule Change

Holy Unction at 4 p.m.  
Bridegroom Orthros 7 p.m.  
w/ Anointing of Holy Unction  
Fast in preparation.

#### We live Pascha to Pascha!

April 19, 2020

#### Pentecost

June 7

#### Parish Life Conference

June 25-28

<https://antiochianevents.com/ny1>

#### International Food Festival

Sept 18 & 19 - Mark your Calendar!

again, deeper and deeper, the free gift of salvation that costs everything.

Lord, thank you for the hustle and bustle of our parish. Thank you for your priesthood, your sacrifice, your self-emptying love that brings us together and propels us to the end of the ages.

In Christ,  
+Fr. Noah



**Ministry Together w/ Dn. David Hyatt**

*"We shall run on the paths of God's commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love." + Benedict of Nursia*

On March 14, in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate our Righteous Father Benedict of Nursia. Benedict (meaning "blessed") was born in AD 480 in the town of Nursia about 70 miles north of Rome. As a young man he left his home town to study in Rome, but was disgusted with the paganism that he found there. He left Rome to live as a monk in a solitary cave. Over time, his way of life and spiritual light radiated so brightly that other people began to notice and some monks asked him to become their abbot. Reluctant at first, eventually he agreed. Some of the monks did not like this ascetic rigor and attempted to poison Benedict. Benedict took some monks with him and established a monastery in the mountains above Cassino.

Benedict's Rule for his monastic communities was widely embraced throughout Western Christianity. While not as strict as the Desert Fathers, Benedict's Rule called his monks to a disciplined and prayerful life.

At the end of the Prologue to the Rule, Benedict describes his vision for the kind of life that he wanted his monks to lead – and also is quite relevant and beautiful for those of us who are not monastics. He writes:

*"Therefore we intend to establish a school for the Lord's service. In drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in order to amend faults and to safeguard love. Do not be daunted immediately by fear and run away from the road that leads to salvation. It is bound to be narrow at the outset. But as we progress in this way of life and in faith, we shall run on the path of God's commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love."*

May we follow the example of St. Benedict as we enter the Great Fast with hearts full of love!

**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.

**Evangelism Challenge**

**"Pray for Mission Priests"**

Every parish has a beginning, and almost always, it starts with one priest who has been tasked by the Church to nurture a new community of faith. In addition to serving as priests, they are also missionaries, reaching out into their assigned communities with the Gospel of Christ. However, mission priests are often poorly supported and have to work a second job in order to provide for themselves and their families. In some parts of the world, mission priests are responsible for several parishes since the Church is growing faster than clergy can be trained. All of this increases the burden upon them and their families as they follow in the footsteps of the apostles.

Pray that they would be clothed in righteousness, that they would always remember the greatness of their calling, that they would not be entangled by the snares of the world and the devil, but rather saved from the cares of the world and kept from the desire for riches and other things entering into their hearts. (Also a good prayer for your priest!)

More information about financially supporting a mission priest in various countries of Africa, India, Indonesia, and the Philippines can be found at <https://www.ocmc.org/about/samp.aspx>.

**"Making a Defense":**

**Explorations in Orthodox Apologetics**

**FINE TUNING OF THE UNIVERSE**

Are you in tune? The Universe and our Earth are. Finely tuned, that is.

Our universe is governed by certain laws of physics and by known constants and quantities which are fixed in nature and determine the splendor of the world around us which our senses can appreciate. What we may not be aware of is how intricately precise and well orchestrated these constants need to be in order for the universe to be life sustaining.

Let's look at a few examples. If the gravitational constant were changed by just 1 in 10 to the 60th power, then we wouldn't exist. If you stretched a tape measure across the whole known universe and if gravity changed by one inch on that tape measure, the universe fails. Or consider the required precision of the cosmological



constant which is 1 in 10 to the 120th power or the entropy of the early universe which is fine tuned to 1 in 10 to the power of 10 to the power of 123 (that's not a misprint).

So many other factors are known, including ones regarding the earth and solar system and galaxy, with one count putting the number of these up to 850 with combined odds of 1 in 10 to the power of 1050.

Finally let's imagine the whole North American continent covered completely with dimes, edge to edge, then stack them to the moon, then increase that by 1 billion times more. Then imagine 1 red dime from that stack, which would be 1 in 10 to the 37th power, the same precision required in the strong nuclear force.

Scientific investigation and discovery of the magnificent ordering of the universe, far from drawing us away from God, has been a source of support for the arguing for the existence of God throughout the centuries.

Known as the teleological argument, the fine tuning and design of the physical universe has been contemplated by towering intellects over the centuries from early Greek philosophy to current day cosmology.

Numbers and statistics cannot be the foundation for our faith and are not meant to be; they cannot make us go to church on Sunday or make us repent from our sins. However, these observations may help to awaken us to the majesty of the universe so that both our hearts and minds may be further drawn to the Creator and His handiwork. Believer and nonbeliever alike may be inspired to begin "to clear some sacred space in which an introduction to God can take place" (Fr. Andrew Damick).

The Orthodox Study Bible commentary on Creation counsels us "...the astounding beauty, intricate order, and sublime harmony of all aspects of Creation, as well as the tremendously vast expanse of the universe, are intended to draw mankind to an awareness of and appreciation for the Creator, and to the worship of Him- and Him alone."

Ultimately, the journey for salvation established in Orthodoxy by Christ Himself and the towering theologians of the Church from the apostles to the Holy Fathers and saints calls us to be fine tuned to receive the Holy Spirit through the life of blessedness which we live through the sacramental life of the Church.