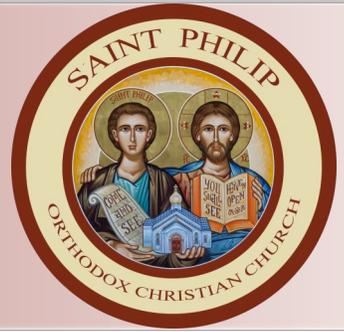


THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church

VOL. 21.06 – JUNE 2020



NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

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

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

PHASE THREE EXPANSION: Our Parish Council has approved hiring an architect (Aram Piligian who designed our church's first two phases) to develop an expansion plan.

Mark Your Calendar:

Daily Liturgies (10 am) thru June 29

Evening services (6:30 pm)
open to all

Wednesday: Little Compline
Friday: Paraklesis
Saturday: Great Vespers

High School Graduate Recognition
Sunday, June 21

Holy Unction
Wed, June 24th at 4 pm
(Fast and Confess in preparation)

Apostles' Fast
June 15-28

Births & Holy Mysteries

Congratulations to Raja and Christina Kyriakos on the birth of their healthy baby girl, **Serafina Nicole Kyriakos**, born at 10:44am on May 4, 2020.



& to Evan and Maddie Hewitt on the birth of **Evelyn Marie Hewitt**, on April 11, at 5:03am. Maddie and Baby Evelyn were churched this past Sunday, May 31.

Congratulations to **The Moody family**, (Todd, Kendra, Liesel, Todd, John Moses, & Virginia) & to **Robert Lantz** who were received into the Church by Chrismation here at St Philip on Holy Pentecost, June 7.

MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!

OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST is extended to **John & Doris Dudash** and family upon the repose of their son-in-law, **David Lee**, on May 22.

MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

A Message from Fr. Noah

Dear Saint Philip's Family, Christ is risen! And Ascended!

I miss you all very, very much. As I am reaching out to our parishioners and encouraging everyone to come back to church, I'm noticing some themes: We are feeling vulnerable, scattered, and divided. Some of us are looking to politicians for safety and leadership. Some of us are looking to medicine for prevention and treatment. Some of us are looking at the news and numbers, confused and benumbed by the pandemonium that our country is falling into. We are all tired of the panic and presumption that this pandemic and our collective response has brought upon us.

I am sad that our parish, like Orthodoxy in America and our country, is divided along partisan lines over the interpretation and solution to the problem. Perhaps my neighbor was correct when she said that the "cure is worse than the illness." Indeed, without the consolation of the Divine Services and the grace of Holy Communion, we are orphaned, scattered, and divided; these are not just random feelings or stray thoughts aimed at us from the netherworld. We feel that way because that is the fallen human condition. We are

born into this fallen world and have to work out our salvation in God's providence throughout our sojourn through this tragic gap between possibility and reality, vision and execution, paradise and the world.

These are dark days and I am more and more grateful for the light. Without God our Father, we are indeed orphans, vulnerable, scared, hopeless and helpless. Without God the Son, our High Priest and Chief Shepherd, we are indeed lost sheep, scattered, starving, prey for the wolf of souls. Without God the Holy Spirit, who comes to us, ever renewed in His Descent at Holy Pentecost, we are divided, weak, withering, and worthless.

It seems like the evil one is winning when we turn on the news, when we see American liberties compromised, when we are scared to come to church, scared of our brothers and sisters in Christ, awkward and ashamed in negotiation new social-dynamics in with old friends. Let's arouse ourselves from the media malaise and stir ourselves up to faith with God's promises and providence. What a blessing that we all feel the brokenness of humanity; let's embrace our Lord, the God-man, more fully so we can rest in a taste of divinity!

In Christ,
+Fr. Noah

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES!

Eyassu Tadesse is graduating from Germantown Academy. He played basketball and soccer all years. At St. Philip, he served in the altar for 8 years, now sings in the choir, and has been helping with the Festival since it began. Eyassu will be going to Temple University Fox Business School majoring in Business and Pre-Law.

Sophie Rose Collins is graduating from North Penn High School. She is a member of the National Honor Society, Key Club, Goodwill Ambassadors Club, and was North Penn Television morning show anchor. Along with her 15 years at Delaware Valley Dance Academy, she served and participated at St. Philip in many ways, in the choir, as a handmaiden, and in Teen SOYO. She will be attending Penn State University at University Park (major undecided).

Sophia Helene Bushelli is graduating from being homeschooled and dual enrolled at Bucks County Community College this year. Her

extracurricular activities include singing in the church choir and in Solo Gratia Musicians Choir, and serving as Artos baker, handmaiden, and volunteer at St. Philip's annual Food Festival, as well as working at the A&N Diner. She is particularly proud of her opportunity to volunteer at Special Olympics Camp for two years. She plans on attending Eastern University to study Psychology.

Sarah Katherine Case graduated high school in December 2019 after 3 years at The King's Academy and one semester at Reading Area Community College (RACC).

She participated in girls' soccer, held a lead role in two seasons of the school play, and was selected as an ambassador for the International students. Her extracurricular activities include her love of ballet where she takes classes and performs in recitals. Sarah has been an active participant in many ministries at St. Philip, and as an attendee, volunteer and sports coach at AV Camp & Special Olympics. Sarah has already completed one full semester at RACC in general studies and immensely enjoys her work as a babysitter.

Ministry Together w/ Dn. David Hyatt

"Men cling with their whole being to the earth and everything earthly."

+ St. John of Kronstadt, *My Life in Christ*



These past months as we have been under Stay-at-Home orders due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have had much time to reflect on the purpose and focus of our lives. While doing our best to prevent the spread of a potentially deadly virus, it is quite possible that we have discovered that we have had a white-knuckled grip on the things of earth rather than the things of heaven.

St. John of Kronstadt writes, "The Devil endeavors by every means to keep men in error, in the enticement of the passions, in darkness of mind and heart." This darkness has swept across our country, and indeed the world, in the forms of hatred, racism, bigotry, anarchy, power-hungry politicians, slander, fornication of all kinds, and more. Why? Because *"your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."* (1 Peter 5:8) And brothers and sisters, he is devouring our nation, our world, and if we are not careful, our own souls. After all, in the words of our Savior, *"What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"* (Mark 8:36).

St. John writes, "Christ wishes to raise men up to heaven, and has given them all the means to attain this; whilst the Devil, who himself for his pride was cast down from heaven into the dominions of the air, wishes by every means to attach men to earthly, sensual, transitory things, and, in order to attain this end, he employs the most powerful, most prodigious means."

How then can we break free from the grasp of the Enemy of our Souls, shake loose the grip of the passions, and take hold of the Kingdom of Heaven in these days of confusion, chaos and contempt? Jesus provides the way. *"Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me... For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"* (Matt. 8:34, 36).

May it not be said of us that we clung to the things of this world, only to lose both the trinkets of this world as well as our souls, but instead that we were a people who learned to *"love without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good"* (Romans 12:9).

What are you clinging to?

"Making a Defense":

Explorations in Orthodox Apologetics

THE DEVIL & THE REALITY OF EVIL

There is a word we sometimes hear borrowed from the German language: *Zeitgeist*, literally "spirit of the time/age." This word communicates the fact that we can perceive in certain times and places, a certain collective, unified "mind" or mode of perception and understanding that bears certain concrete results and which transcends any individual person's will or action. While people do not cease to be responsible for their actions, a *Zeitgeist* definitely influences them and disposes them "naturally" towards certain things, whether good or evil.

When it comes to the question of evil, and particularly the reality of the Devil, this is very much how the Scriptures and the Fathers instruct us to think. On the one hand, Holy Tradition reveals to us that the Devil is a *personal, created being* with a mind and will. The Devil is not just a "force"—an impersonal projection of the evil side of collective human society or consciousness. And yet, the Devil is at work in the world in a way that manifests itself in both individual and collective ways, in paradigms of delusion and deception and division that insinuate themselves into the whole "mind" of a people and direct their whole life unto destruction. There is, in other words, a diabolical *Zeitgeist*, "spirit of the world/age" (1 Cor 2.12), for "the whole world lies in [the power of] the evil one" (1 Jn 5.19).

And just as one can know wisdom by its fruits (Matt 11.19; Lk 6.34; 7.35), so also one can know this "spirit" by its fruit which is deadness and sin:

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. (Eph 2.1-2)

More concretely, we can discern the works and *Zeitgeist* of the Devil especially where there is unholy division. The name "devil" (*diablos*) comes from the Greek word for "dividing, setting at variance, causing a quarrel, slandering, deceiving."

May we resist this "spirit" and cling to the Lord as being "one spirit with Him" and each other (1 Cor 6.17)!



KID'S CORNER

w/ Calzb Gohl

I love to think about words and how they're connected. When I hear the word "communion," I think about community. And community means being together. That's what communion is about: coming together and becoming one with Christ and with each other.

In the communion hymn we hear "But like the thief will I confess thee: Remember me, O Lord, in Thy Kingdom." This is basically saying we need to confess our sins and ask the Lord to remember us in His Kingdom, to never let us go. We are not worthy of forgiveness but through our Lord's love He forgives. He died on the cross because of love. And, thinking again

about the thief, we see that he asked for forgiveness on the cross. That's why on Sunday morning we see people going to confession, to ask for forgiveness and to make us worthy of His holy gifts.

The consecration is when the bread and wine are blessed. At the Mystical Supper, Jesus broke the bread and said "Take eat this is My body which is broken for you for the remission of sins." Then He said "Drink of this, all of you; this is My blood of the new covenant which was shed for the remission of sins." So, as we can see, the wine and bread become Jesus' body and blood. They re-present Him to us. In the consecration we ask God to come and bless the bread and wine and make it the Holy Gifts.

We are blessed to have a God that loves us and wants to be us. We should take the opportunity to be in communion with God and each other.

Did You Know?

- Congratulations to **Dr. Barbara Gibbs** on her well-deserved retirement from her medical practice as a pediatrician!

Parenting Suggestion

Discuss with your families this most troubling question from our Lord's loving lips:

"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26).

May His holy words haunt your hearts for many years and your families for many generations!