

## Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures

“How I have loved thy law, O Lord! The whole day it is my meditation.” (Ps 118:97)

### Deuteronomy 30:14

“But the word is very near you, in your mouth, in your heart, and in your hands, that you may do it.” (OSB)

Chapters 27-30, together with chapters 31-32, of Deuteronomy comprise some of the most important teaching in Scripture for our understanding of the history of salvation and of God’s covenantal relationship with His people. In these chapters, we meet the “blessings and curses” for the second time in the Pentateuch. The first listing in Leviticus 26, which is given to the first generation of Israelites after the exodus, is reiterated to the second generation in this “second giving” of the Law. The setting forth of “blessings and curses” indicates that what is taking place in Deuteronomy is a *renewal of the covenant* (cf. Deut 28:69; 26:16-19): Israel agrees to the covenant, with its privileges, responsibilities, and consequences, and in doing so, Moses says, “this day you have become the people of the Lord your God” (Deut 27:9).

There is a fascinating twist here, however. While Moses says that “Today, you proclaimed”—or rather, *chose*—“God to be your God, and to walk in His ways, to keep His ordinances and judgments, and to obey His voice” (Deut 26:17), *we never, it seems, actually hear the voice of the Israelite people in Deuteronomy*. That is, there is no narration of Israel actually saying these things. What does this suggest? Namely, that the *readers of Deuteronomy* are to understand themselves as the “second generation,” and so supply the covenantal confession every day, every time they read the words of this Book, every time they walk with their son by the way and recount the mighty deeds of the God of Israel (Deut 6:6-9). The covenant must be *renewed continually by the daily remembrance of God’s Word, and the writing of God’s Word on the heart*. As the Psalmist says, every day is the “Today” of covenant renewal (Ps 94:7), with the opportunity to hearken to God’s voice, to repent, to not harden one’s heart, to persevere in faith and to enter into Rest (cf. Heb 3-4).

There is another twist, but it is a much darker one. Deuteronomy 27-32 is filled with predictions of Israel’s coming exile. The actual “second generation,” and the vast majority to follow, will not obey God and will not remain faithful to the covenant, and God will judge them severely by sending them into exile—in effect, a return to Egypt (Deut 28:68). And yet, just as clearly, God promises to redeem, save, and restore His people. Who is this people, the spiritual “second generation,” who have been purified from exile, who have God’s Covenant and Law inscribed on their hearts, who love God from their whole heart and soul (Deut 30:6)?

St. Paul tells us that the “word” of Deut 30:14 is nothing other than the Apostolic Preaching of Christ Himself (Rom 10:5-13), and the “true Israelite” is the one who has been “begotten” by this Word (1 Cor 4:15; 1 Jn 5:1) and has become an “epistle of Christ,” having the New Covenant inscribed “not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, on the heart,” “not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God” (2 Cor 3:3). May we be God-bearers (*theotokoi*) in this way!



## ST. PHILIP ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the  
Antiochian Archdiocese

*His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH*

◇◇

*His Grace Bishop THOMAS*

◇◇

*Father Noah Bushelli, Pastor*

215-954-9286

◇◇

*Father James Thayer*

215-692-0890

December 15, 2019

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST

### COMMEMORATIONS:

HIEROMARTYR ELEUTHERIOS, BISHOP OF ILLYRIA  
SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS (ANCESTORS) OF  
CHRIST

MARTYR ANTHIA, MOTHER OF ELEUTHERIOS  
VENERABLE PAUL OF LATRA  
STEPHEN, BISHOP-CONFESSOR OF SUROZH  
VENERABLE TRYPHON OF PECHENGA

Tone 1 - Eothinon 4

Orthros Gospel: St. Mark 16:9-20  
Epistle: 2 Timothy 1:8-18  
Liturgy Gospel: St. Luke 14:16-24

**RESURRECTION TROPARION** - Tone 1 - While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding thy most pure Body, thou didst arise on the third day, O Saviour, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto thee, O Giver of life: Glory to thy resurrection, O Christ! Glory to thy kingdom! Glory to thy providence, O thou who alone art the Lover of mankind!

**KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST’S NATIVITY** - Tone 3 - The Virgin cometh today to the Cave to give birth, ineffably to bring forth the Word eternal. Therefore, rejoice O earth, at the message, with the angels and shepherds give glory to Him, Who shall appear by His own will, as a young Child, He Who is from eternity God.

**TODAY:** Orthros 8:45 am, Divine Liturgy 10 am  
Coffee Hour, Catechism, SS, Teens after Liturgy  
Confession (SS Grades 6-8), 12 pm  
Choir Practice, 12:30 pm  
Parish Council, 12:45 pm  
Advent Paraklesis, 2 pm

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Office Hours: Monday through Friday 10:00 - 3:00

Fr Noah & Fr James are available for hospital visits. If you or anyone you know is in the hospital or homebound and would like a visit, please call the church office.

## Weekly Ministries & Stewards:

	This Week:	Next Week (Dec 22):
<b>PROSPHORA BREAD:</b>	Gabi & Catalin T.	MaryLynne Black
<b>EPISTLE READER:</b>	Raja Kyriakos	Jack Morrash
<b>USHERS:</b>	Dan M. & Sdn. John N.	Colin M. & Steve K.
<b>ALTAR CANDLES:</b>	Ken Hedrick <small>In Memory of his mother (Dec 17-51 yrs)</small>	----
<b>ALTAR BOYS:</b>	"Archangel Michael"	"Archangel Gabriel"
<b>GREETERS:</b>	Angie Drăghici	Jim & Doris Eggers
<b>CLEANING TEAM:</b>	Serge & Alex Kaminsky	Olena K., Almash A., Zerfenesh & Tsegereda
<b>COFFEE HOUR:</b>	----	Order of St. Ignatius - Donation

EVERYONE is invited to stay for refreshments after the Divine Liturgy. Your assistance in cleanup is appreciated.

**YOUR FLOWER OFFERINGS** support the beautification of our church during this holy season. Flower offering envelopes are available on the literature rack. Thank you!

**YOUR CHRISTMAS CARD OFFERINGS** benefit Ministries, Monasteries, & Mission Situations.

### Mark Your Calendar:

#### Feast of the Nativity of Christ

*Tuesday, December 24*  
Royal Hours, 9 am  
Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil, 10 am  
Festal Orthros, 9:30 pm  
Divine Liturgy, 11 pm

#### *Wednesday, December 25*

Vespers for the Synaxis of the Theotokos, 12 pm

#### *Thursday, December 26*

Orthros 9 am; Liturgy 10 am for the Synaxis of the Theotokos

#### Circumcision & St. Basil - New Year's

*Tuesday, December 31*  
Vespers & Artoklasia 6 pm  
Game Night 7 pm  
New Year's Prayers 9 pm  
*Wednesday, January 1*  
Divine Liturgy 10 am,  
New Year's Prayers 11:30 am

#### Bp THOMAS Visit

January 9-14, 2020

### Pray For:

Living	Departed
Archimandrite David	Doris
Lasha B	George
Otari B	Kh. Anastasia

Daniel H	
John	
John	
Zerfenesh	

Thomas, Elizabeth & all Missionaries

New & Expectant Mothers & children

#### Catechumens

Zachary, Evan,  
Tina, Robert,  
Michael, Todd,  
Kendra, Liesel,  
Todd, John  
Moses, Virginia,  
Conor

#### St. Nina's List

Michael  
Andrea  
Faith  
Sloane

### OUTREACH COLLECTION:

Turkeys

### EVANGELISM CHALLENGE:

"Serve in a soup kitchen or shelter"

## This Week:

### *NATIVITY FAST CONTINUES ...*

- Mon, Dec 16:** SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.  
Advent Paraklesis, 7 p.m.
- Tues, Dec 17:** SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.  
Matushka Olga Sewing Club, 11 a.m.  
Conshohocken Fellowship, 6:30 p.m.
- Wed, Dec 18:** SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.  
Holy Unction, 4 p.m.  
(Fast in preparation)  
Compline & Patristic Reading, 7 p.m.
- Thur, Dec 19:** SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.
- Fri, Dec 20:** SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.  
Confessions, 4-7 p.m.  
Advent Paraklesis, 7 p.m.  
Confessions, 8-9 p.m.
- Sat, Dec 21:** Rehearsal for Christmas Program, 4:30 p.m.  
Catechism Seminar, 4:30 p.m.  
VESPERS 6 p.m., Confession 7 p.m.
- Sun, Dec 22:** ORTHROS 8:45 a.m., Divine LITURGY 10 a.m.  
Coffee Hour, Catechism, 11:45 a.m.  
Sunday School Christmas Program, 12:30 p.m.  
Advent Paraklesis, 2 p.m.

Please check the table in the Great Room for items marked with your name or free to take!



### Ministry Highlights

"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10)

## UPDATING THE Photo Directory

to encourage unity, fellowship, and ministry at St. Philip

Please submit your updated family photo, address, emails, and telephone numbers to:

[stphilipphotos20@gmail.com](mailto:stphilipphotos20@gmail.com).

You may also submit a printed photo for the directory. We will have a section for Stewards, and another for Friends. Have questions? Contact Dale Yeager ([daleyeager@live.com](mailto:daleyager@live.com)), Colin Miller ([Colinmil@comcast.net](mailto:Colinmil@comcast.net)) or Subdeacon David Hyatt ([dhyatt@st-philip.net](mailto:dhyatt@st-philip.net)).

**ATTENDANCE:** At Vespers Dec 7: 47 Divine Services on Dec 8: 198  
**OFFERINGS:** Candles, \$319. Collections, \$475. Youth, \$1. Flowers, \$42. Book Shelf Ministry, \$38. Building Fund, \$1,020. Needy Fund, \$60. Stewardship, \$7,300. Total received: \$9,255.

GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS & GENEROSITY!