



# THE PARISH PRESS

## St. Philip Orthodox Church



AFTER MORNING PRAYERS, PREVIEW THE DAY.

### NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

#### STEWARDSHIP

*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).*



This is the theme of our fall "Forty Days of Growth in Stewardship." Our annual stewardship emphasis begins Sunday, October 9. It's that time again when we need to pause and give God credit for our blessings and express our thanks for His love for us through Jesus Christ. Once again we remember that we are especially blessed to live out our Christian faith within Holy Orthodoxy and through our Saint Philip's parish community.

#### CHALLENGE FOR 2011

Bring someone to church. The year is almost over. Have you brought someone with you?

### Recipe

#### Brisket of Beef in Foil



- 3 lb. fresh beef brisket
- 1 pkg. onion soup mix
- 1 lb. fresh mushrooms, sliced

Place large sheet of heavy aluminum foil in shallow baking pan. Trim fat from meat and place on foil. Sprinkle meat with onion soup mix and top with sliced mushrooms. Wrap and seal foil around meat so it is closed tightly and juices will not escape. Cook 3 hours in 325° oven. Open carefully so as not to get burned by steam. Yields lots of its own gravy.

Note: Can be cooked and sliced and frozen. Place in oven to defrost and heat through. Great do-ahead for parties.

*Anne Foutrakis  
Adapted by Doris Dudash*

### A Message from Father Noah

Christ is in our Midst!

It is such a blessing to live in this beautiful area and serve at our wonderful little corner of paradise. While we are settling down into our routines, I want to challenge you to "work on" your relationship with God! Sometimes we think that this idea of a "relationship with God" is not Orthodox, but that is simply not true. St. Anthony the Great, the founder of monasticism in 4th Century Egypt offers us this measuring stick of our relationship with God: *If we have a strong relationship with God, this will distinguish our relationship with others. We will be able to be a source of peace, tranquility, and comfort to them.* Let us "launch out into the deep" (Luke 5:4), truly obeying Christ who loves us and gives Himself to us in the Sacraments!



Your Servant in Christ,

+ Fr. Noah



### Mark Your Calendar:

**Catechumens & Inquirers classes**  
Wednesdays through November 16,  
following Akathist at 7 p.m.

**Bishop THOMAS visit**  
Wednesday-Thursday, October 5-6

**Sacred Arts Festival**  
Sunday, October 16, 2-5 p.m.  
How can you help? Ask Rdr. Nicholas Muzekari for information. This is a perfect opportunity to introduce a friend or neighbor to Orthodoxy.

**St Demetrius Soul Saturday - October 22**  
Akathist for the Departed, 10 a.m.

**Annual Parish Meeting**  
Sunday, October 23, 12:45 p.m.

**Visit of Nuns from Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Ellwood City, PA**  
October 29-30

Details are posted on the bulletin board.

**Services for St. Raphael**  
Friday, November 4  
Vespers & Artoklasia,  
7 p.m.  
Saturday, November 5  
Matins 9 a.m.,  
Liturgy 10 a.m.



### Baby Steps to Holiness

October: After morning prayers, preview the day.

Are you tired of committing the same sins day after day? Our Lord tells us to "watch and pray lest you enter into temptation" (Matthew 25:41). But how is that done practically? It's simple ...

In the morning, after we say our prayers, we can spend a minute previewing, or thinking through, the day. For example, if it is a Wednesday and I am planning to visit a parishioner at their ice cream shop, I need to be ready with how I will graciously accept their hospitality and also keep the fast ... perhaps water ice or some soy ice cream.



Another example: this will probably hit closer to home for all of us. It is a holiday and you will be travelling to visit so-and-so-in-law, with whom you have a very strained relationship. Prepare yourself with positive thinking (focusing on the good, the blessings, etc.) and asking God for his help in that situation.

We can and should employ this strategic planning at the beginning of every day, so that we are not constantly caught off guard. This practical vigilance is good spiritual practice that will keep us from stumbling into sin. If we sin less, it means that our consciences are cleaner and we have more boldness in prayer, ministry, and evangelism.

## Did You Know?

• **Dennis Stavrou** has moved to San Diego, California, accepting a transfer within his company and a promotion to Account Manager. He relocated in January. We wish him well in his new position and location. Dennis' parents, **Barry & Chris**, have moved into his condo in Warwick, PA, and have returned to St Philip's after living a number of years in Georgia.



• **Holly Vergara**, after a visit home in August, is back in Japan on a teaching assignment. She reports that she recently volunteered in the area devastated by the earthquake and tsunami, and was encouraged by the people's positive attitude and diligence in rebuilding their lives. She also attends an Orthodox church in Kyoto regularly.

- Congratulations to **Nick Bendas**, who has accepted a position at Vanguard.
- **Thanks to your generosity** and thankfulness, St. Philip's is faring fairly well financially during this trying economic time. God bless our faithful stewards!
- **St. Philip Stewardship Team** is working with our bank to make Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) possible for those who are interested. Look for more information on this convenient giving option during the Forty Days of Growth in Stewardship.
- **You have talents and skills** that St. Philip's can utilize in building up this beautiful parish. Please prayerfully consider speaking to Father Noah about how you can offer your time.
- **St. Philip's Annual Parish Meeting** will be held on October 23rd, following coffee hour.
- We have **catechumens** and many **inquirers**. Pray for them.
- **Confession** is not only a spiritual duty (four times a year) but it is a great medicine of the soul and a second baptism! Got something on your heart?
- If you are following our **Bible Reading Program** you've read Genesis, Exodus, many Proverbs and Psalms and much of St. Matthew's Gospel.
- **Pascha**, the feast of feasts, is April 15th in 2012. Indeed, Christ is Risen!



## Wisdom

### On Obedience, by St. Silouan of Mt. Athos

✦ Obedience is necessary not only for monks, but for all people. Even the Lord was obedient. The proud and self-assured do not let grace reside within them, and therefore they never have internal peace, whereas the soul of the obedient easily accepts the grace of the Holy Spirit, bringing with it joy and serenity.

✦ Whoever carries in him even a small amount of grace will submit to leadership with great joy. He knows that the Lord controls heaven and earth and the netherworld, and his own self, and his affairs and all that exists in the world, and for this reason he is always at peace.



✦ Obedience prevents pride. In return for obedience you receive the ability to pray, along with the grace of the Holy Spirit. This is why obedience is greater than fasting and prayer.

✦ If the fallen angels had retained obedience, they would have stayed in the heavens and would glorify the name of the Lord to this day. And if Adam had retained obedience, then he and his issue would have remained in Eden.

## Ask Father

**Previous Question:** Why is a priest's face covered when he is buried?

**Answer:** Upon the death of a priest (or similarly for a bishop) the clergy in the area gather to wash, anoint, dress and vest his body. This putting on of the liturgical vestments is done with the same prayers that the priest has said before each liturgy that he has served, except that his face is covered with the "Aer" -- the vestment that covers the chalice and paten before the time of consecration at Divine Liturgy. (You see this aer during the Great Entrance of the Divine Liturgy on the shoulders of the deacon or priest, and you see it waved over the Holy Gifts during the reciting of the Creed, where it symbolizes the action of the Holy Spirit.) This may seem strange, but when we understand the symbolism of this final action it beautifully reminds us that the priesthood is a great gift - a gift to God and a gift from God.



But first, we should turn to the book of Exodus to understand the importance of the liturgical vestments in the Old Testament, which is the context of Christ's priesthood; He is our priest, in whom our priests serve. Moses covered his face when he descended from Sinai. Having just been in the presence of the Lord of Glory, Moses' face was shining so brightly that he could not be looked upon by the rebellious Israelites over whom he was appointed as leader and teacher. (Would that all priests would have such faces!) Again, God directs a curtain, richly embroidered with images of the Cherubim, to veil the Ark of the Covenant which was the physical location of God's dwelling with his people, a proper covering of His glory.

So, the priesthood as a gift that a family gives to God must be covered properly. Wrapping a gift shows the intentionality, integrity, and care of the gift - indeed, the manner of giving enhances the gift. When we present the holy gifts to God on His Holy Altar, we carry them in covered by the finest brocade fabrics. Similarly, when a family and a parish offers a man as a priest, he is clothed in richly embroidered garments that have been carefully sewn and blessed for this holy purpose. When the priest is perfected, coming to the end of his days, he wears his vestments again and this time even his face is covered. Only his hand is exposed, holding a cross, which we reverently kiss, as an icon of Christ.

When God receives a gift, He gives it back transformed. In the Eucharist, for example, the bread and wine become His Body and Blood, as He commanded us. But the heavenly glory of the Eucharist is veiled from our fallen minds and hardened hearts. Likewise the priest, transformed and often overwhelmed by the glory of heavenly worship, is offered back to us by God, as a reminder of His abiding presence with us.

Thanks to God for this great gift of the priesthood offered and received in the Old Testament and in our time, pointing always to our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, the greatest gift, from God and to God, who was buried in a new tomb, wrapped in fine linens.

**New Question:** Father, I can't get over such-and-such insult. Help me!

## Holy Mysteries

**Todd David and Kristi Anna Moore** were received into the Holy Orthodox Church by baptism and chrismation on September 17, at Our Lady Joy of All Who Sorrow Church in Philadelphia.

**MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!**