



THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church



WISDOM FROM FR. B: ALWAYS REMEMBER AND SAY TO YOURSELF: GOD IS NEAR!

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.

MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAITHFUL GIVERS!

Wisdom from

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

A Lenten "Style of Life", from Great Lent: A Journey to Pascha (p. 99-100)

Attending liturgical services, fasting, and even praying at regular intervals do not exhaust the lenten effort. Or rather, in order to be effective and meaningful, they need the support of our whole life. They need, in other terms, a "style of life" which would not be in contradiction with them, would not lead to a "split" existence. In the past, in Orthodox countries, such support was given by society itself ... [But we] are not living in an Orthodox society and no lenten "climate" can therefore be created on a social level ... Consequently, this requires from us a new effort of rethinking the necessary religious relationship between the "external" and "internal." The spiritual tragedy of secularism is that it forces us into a real religious "schizophrenia"—dividing our life into two parts ... Thus a spiritual effort is needed in order to transpose the traditional customs and reminders, the very means of our lenten effort. In a tentative and, of necessity, schematic way, one can consider this effort in terms first of *home*, and second, *out of home* existence. In the Orthodox world view, the home and the family constitute the first and most important area of Christian life, of *application* of Christian principles to daily existence.



A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Saint Philip's Family,

Our life in the Church is one of trust—ultimate trust in God, of course, but trust as well, and equally, in all the ways and means that God uses to guide us on the path of salvation.

Our wise Mother, the Church, who recently invited us to contemplate our Savior in a manger, now calls us to accompany Him into the wilderness for our "40 days" of testing, repentance, and purification so that we may share in all aspects of His life, death, and glorious resurrection.

Indeed, the Great Fast is looming large on the horizon of our hearts. And while my flesh groans and recoils, my spirit rises up in anticipation of being (relatively) free from mundane life for the adventurous and arduous journey of repentance whose destination is Heaven, life in God's Kingdom.

Let us begin now to plan our fast, considering the following: confession, silence, screen sabbatical, retreat, pilgrimage, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, scripture, spiritual reading, special services, taking off Holy Week and Bright Monday, inviting a friend, deepening ministry, etc. What must we both give up and take on to become more conformed to the Image of Christ?

May we embrace the Great Fast, and so embrace and be embraced by our Savior!

In Christ,

+Fr. Noah

Mark Your Calendar:

House Blessing materials are in the Narthex. Please plan to have your house blessed before Great Lent begins!

Ice Skating Event

Sunday, February 11 - 2:40 pm at Hatfield Ice

Great Lent Begins

Monday, February 19 - Clean Monday

Choir Workshop & Concert

Saturday, March 10 - Retreat, 11 am–7 pm
Sunday, March 11 - Concert, 1 pm

Lenten Retreat - "A Christian Ending"

Saturday, March 17

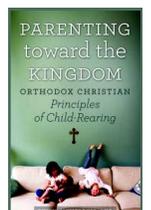
Pascha

Sunday, April 8

Parenting Suggestion

From *Parenting Toward the Kingdom* by Philip Mamelakis:

"God's love is the very love we are trying to model and teach to our children. Attending to our own struggles means learning to turn to God and others in the midst of all the daily challenges we face. We want to remember and teach our children that we are all learning how to love God and each other through the struggles of daily life. ... We allow them to struggle because we want them to succeed ... To reach our long-term goals, we must separate our struggles from our children's struggles, our path from their path" (p. 124-5).



Did You Know?

- We are in need of several volunteers to staff our weekly **cleaning crews**. This is an essential ministry, and the need is *urgent*. Please contact Larry Shaheen for more information and/or to volunteer to become part of the rotation.
- Our Parish, along with St. George and Holy Ascension are hosting the **Parish Life Conference** at Antiochian Village June 27 - July 1, 2018. Please plan on attending this "spiritual family reunion" with our bishop and the parishes. We are looking for some volunteers and sponsors.
- **Holy Bread** is now being offered fresh each week.
- You can offer **Altar Candles** in thanksgiving to and for the glory of God. A sign-up sheet is on the Ministries bulletin board.
- There are always opportunities to be **Coffee Hour Sponsors**. Enlist the help of a friend, and sign up! It is a wonderful way to receive a blessing by being a blessing to our parish!
- If you haven't yet, check out our parish podcast, **Living Orthodoxy**, available at the bottom of the homepage of our parish website. Stimulating discussions and interviews to help us live our Living Faith! Sdn David and Justin welcome your feedback, too!
- 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.



Everyday Evangelist

"As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (Jn 20:21)

Pray daily for St. Philip's Outreach and Evangelism.

Ask Abouna

Previous Question:

Fr. Noah, how can we support the work of God at St. Philip's?

Answer:

What a beautiful question:

- Foremost, you must be living the Christian life, repenting, praying, obeying the commandments and participating in the sacraments. Your first thought should be "I will be drowned in the sea of life without the ark of salvation" and only then can you think "how can I help the ark?"
- Participate in the Divine Services (not just Sunday Liturgy) with humility, joy, reverence, peace, and thanksgiving.
- Welcome, get to know, invite, and bring visitors.
- Pray for our parish, clergy and laity, as well our diocese, and archdiocese.
- Fulfill your monetary pledge, growing annually toward a tithe.
- Host coffee hour twice a year.
- Be involved in a regular ministry in the parish.
- Help with the festival and other outreach events.
- Be ready to serve as needed and asked.
- Continue to be patient with me as grow in the priesthood, in leadership, organization, communication.
- Fight the ever-present temptation to criticize, complain, gossip and generally undercut the bond of love.

May God help us!

New Question:

Fr Noah, how was your pilgrimage to Mount Athos?

Challenge for 2018:

Keep the Feasts and the Fasts

Our contemporary society, fragmented by Western Christianity, secularized by atheism, distracted by the media, hypnotized by screens, is attempting to make us forget that God is with us. But, we are Orthodox Christians and we rejoice in the great works of God and the mighty men and courageous women through whom He has worked throughout history. We remember them. We keep our eyes fixed on them. We participate in them, and they in us, as we rearrange our schedules and our diets, as we seek to continually "put on Christ," by keeping the feasts and the fasts!

Pray for our Catechumens!

Gabe, Sze, and Rebecca were recently enrolled in the Catechumenate. Please pray for, welcome, and get to know them! And pray for God to send us many more.

Wisdom from Fr. B.

Always remember and say to yourself: God is near!

What a beautiful and simple way to pray without ceasing, be watchful, and to be ready for God's loving judgment and assistance. It is those who are deceived by the evil one who think that God has forgotten his people, that he doesn't see and doesn't care. Indeed, the psalmist asks: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there" (Psalm 138/139: 7/8).