



# THE PARISH PRESS

## St. Philip Orthodox Church



WISDOM FROM FR. B: THE CHURCH IS THE ARENA.

### NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

#### GIVING UPDATES

**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.

**MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAITHFUL GIVERS!**

#### Wisdom from St Basil the Great



*Homily on the Beginning of Proverbs §§16-17 on Prov 1:5*

"All of us who travel the path of the gospel are merchants, being in the business of acquiring heavenly goods through the profits we earn by keeping the commandments ... We must put our goods on board, and try to pass through this life safely ... So then, hold the rudder of your life steady. Steer your eye, lest a fierce wave of desire ever crash upon you through your eyes. Steer your ear, your tongue, lest you hear something harmful, lest you utter something forbidden. Do not let the storm of anger capsize you. Do not let the buffets of fear overwhelm you. Do not let the burden of sadness sink you. The passions are our waves. If you raise yourself above them, you will be a trusty steersman of your life. But if you do not steer clear of each of these waves with skill and steadfastness, then like a ship without ballast tossed about by their constant assaults you will be lost in the sea of sin. ... It is the custom of sailors to gaze up at the sky in order to receive guidance [from the sun or constellations] for their voyage ... As for you, direct your eye to heaven ... Look upon the Sun of Justice. Guided by the commandments of the Lord as if by bright stars, keep your eye sleepless ... so that the commandments may guide you forever more."

### A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Saint Philip's Family,

Did the Great Fast start without you? If so, it isn't too late to jump onto the path toward Pascha!

We certainly know from life generally that any destination worth reaching requires walking a particular path to get there. The Holy Fathers and Christ himself have given us the path that we must walk, that of increased prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, of increased participation in the Church's holy services. This is the way of preparation given to us so that we may participate in, be incorporated into, Christ's victory over death!

Let's remember that the food part of the fast is the lowest – foundational and indispensable – level of fasting. We fast from entertainment, distractions, decisions (as able), screens, vacations, and various other luxuries so that we have more time to focus on God's love and share it with those around us.

Please, take this time seriously. Don't let the lenten tailwind pass over you and leave you in the middle of the stormy sea of life! Put up the sails of your soul and be driven by God's Spirit into the calm harbor of the Resurrection!

In Christ our Helmsman,

*+Fr. Noah*



### Mark Your Calendar:

**Choir Workshop & Concert**  
Saturday, March 10 - Retreat,  
9 am–9 pm

**Friends & Family Day –  
Choir Concert**  
Sunday, March 11 - Concert, 1 pm

**Lenten Retreat -  
"A Christian Ending"**  
Saturday, March 17 - 9 am–7pm  
Please speak with Fr Noah, Martha,  
or Stephanie about Burial Ministry  
Teams.

**Pascha**  
Sunday, April 8

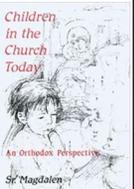
**Pentecost**  
Sunday, May 27

**Parish Life Conference**  
June 27 - July 1

### Parenting Suggestion

From *Children in the Church Today* by Sister Magdalen:

"When we live realistically, and actively commit our lives to God, we are given to experience the divine potential of our particular situation. ... Everything we do is done with the aim of acquiring the Holy Spirit; that means doing what conforms to God's will for us in our real situation. If we are parents, it is the sacred task of parenthood which will sanctify us as much as our fasting, private prayer and reading. ... Our family cannot be an excuse for never being alone with God, but neither should the need for solitude be an excuse to escape family responsibilities" (p. 61).



## Did You Know?

- 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. Check out the Facebook page for the PLC for other content and information!
- Our **Library & BookShelf Ministry (bookstore)** have a great selection of many topics related to our Holy Faith. Get a book for the Great Fast!
- **Slawomir Sawicki** recently completed his accounting degree, is taking clients for tax preparation through the H&R Block (Lansdale). Please contact him if you have any questions or call the H&R Block office.
- **Dan Marquardt** is starting a Karate School in Quakertown! See the flyer posted on the Marketplace bulletin board for info and schedule.
- **Todd and Kristi Moore** are making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land the first couple weeks of March. We look forward to hearing all about it!
- We're delighted to be welcoming the **Archut family** to our parish. Please get to know them, the other new families, as well as the many visitors.
- **Finger Foods Foster Fellowship.** Coffee Hour doesn't have to be a meal. It doesn't have to be expensive or elaborate. Thanks to all who offer hospitality from their hearts!
- You can help make our many visitors feel welcome by a warm smile and a kind greeting. Please take a minute to **say hello to visitors.**
- The **liturgical offerings** of our parish (Prospora, Artos, Kolyva, Altar Candles, Wine, Flower Decorations) are simple and profound ways to offer our talents to God and to each other.
- 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)*

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

## Ask Abouna

### Previous Question:

Fr. Noah, how was your pilgrimage to Mount Athos?

### Answer:

Εὐλογεῖτε! (Greek for, “bless!” - the standard Athonite greeting - of love, respect, and humility before another Christian)

As they say, “a picture is worth a thousand words”. But words are not enough to capture the blessings, the struggle, and joys of a pilgrimage anywhere, let alone the Holy Mountain. We stayed at 5 monasteries and visited about 10 more, both on Mt Athos and on the mainland. I'll limit myself to a few highlights:

I travelled with exceptional people. While we had the inevitable interpersonal challenges, it was truly humbling and inspiring to be with the priests and laymen I traveled with. A little snoring did not drown out the blessing of brotherly affection, mutual support, and in-depth discussions.

The landscape of northern Greece and the virgin lands of the Garden of the Panagia were truly refreshing and ascendant. It was like going back in history, seeing monastery after monastery, skete after skete, kelli after kelli, punctuate such fiercely beautiful land.

The holy relics and miraculous icons abound beyond imagination, deepening faith and appreciation for the fact that God is wondrous in His Saints.

The highlight, though, of course, are the living saints that we met and the wisdom and love that they imparted to us. We spent hours and hours in deep conversation with men and also women (we visited several convents off Athos - indeed, the nuns rivaled the monks in manliness!) who shared from their uncompromising pursuit of God's love in prayer and ministry, in poverty and obedience.

### New Question:

Fr Noah, what are some good local places of pilgrimage?



## Challenge for 2018: Keep the Feasts and the Fasts

The Feasts and Fasts of the Church are continual reminders of who we truly are. They are reminders that the life in Christ is accessible to us—that we “have died and [our] life is hidden with Christ in God” (Col 3:3), that “In Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

As we build our lives around the feasts and the fasts we are introduced into a rhythm of life that has shaped God's people (including the prophets, apostles, the Virgin Mary, and Christ Himself) down through the ages: a rhythm that can pull us out of the mundane and open us up to the wonders of God all around us and that are yet to be revealed!

### Pray for our Catechumens!

Pray for Sarah, Sze and Rebecca, and in particular for Gabe as he approaches for Chrismation next month (Mar 25). Let's continue to pray for, welcome, and get to know them. And pray for God to send us many more!

## Wisdom from Fr. B.

### The Church is the Arena.

We think of the Church as a calm, joyous, and nourishing place – like a hospital – which it is. And yet, it is also one of the arenas in which we find ourselves in some of the most acute battles with our selfish tendencies. “So-and-so is getting on my nerves.” “Why does he always do that?” “Can't she mind her own business?” This aspect of our life together in church is magnified during holy times, most especially Great Lent and Holy Week and Pascha.

How do we win in this arena? Patience! Love! Service! Forgiveness! Humility!

*“Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus ...”*

*Philippians 2:5ff*

