

## Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures

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

### Judges 16:19-20

"Delilah lulled Samson to sleep on her knees, and called for a man, and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Thus she could finally subdue and control him, for his strength departed from him." (OSB)



Samson is the last of the judges in the Book of Judges, and his story occupies a whole *four* chapters of the Book (chs. 13-16). One biblical commentator has characterized the succession of judges in Judg 3-16 as a three-stage movement from Triumph (3:7-5:31), to Transition (6:1-10:5), to Tragedy (10:6-16:31). And Samson is indeed a tragic and deeply ambiguous figure. In his person, he shows forth the extremes of an impassioned man, and so comes to exemplify how Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics* II.6) defines the nature of vice and true virtue: virtue is a "mid-point" between the two vices of an excess of virtue and a deficiency of virtue with regard to the passions and action. Extreme, misdirected, or deficient passions turn virtues into vices.

Are we supposed to *root* for this "savior" who is quite clearly a womanizing rage-aholic? Are we to celebrate his courage and commitment in "taking it to" the Philistine outsiders, with his devious and ruthless campaigns, or are we to censure those same acts for their degeneracy, even as God uses them to bring about the deliverance of His people? Are we to view Samson as "set apart" because of his Nazirite vow—at least he refuses to *cut his hair* and perhaps refrain from strong drink, he has self-control enough (or *only*) for that—even as he takes a foreign wife and succumbs to her caresses?

Samson is a picture of Israel as a whole: a decadent, chaotic, and self-destructive mess. The narratives that conclude the Book of Judges (17:1-21:25) show that Israel as a people is what Samson is as an individual. And as St. Ephrem the Syrian hymns, Samson is a type of Adam (humanity) and his fall, Satan having "outwitted" both "with a woman" (*Hymns on Paradise* 13.12-13). Samson → Israel → humanity as a whole: *We are Samson*.

And yet he is a *judge and savior*, so we must ask, with the Church Fathers, how do we see Christ prefigured in Samson? St. Caesarius, the early 6th century bishop of Arles (France), notes how Samson's death resembles our Lord's crucifixion: tied up with hands outspread, surrounded by mocking enemies, despised and humiliated, yet by his selfless death Samson destroys his enemies and liberates his people (ACC, 167). For St. Gregory the Great, when Samson evades the Gazites in Judg 16:1-3 and "at midnight ... carried off the gates of the city [of Gaza] and ascended to the top of the hill," this foreshadows the work of our Redeemer in the harrowing of hell (ACC, 158). St. Caesarius applies this tension in Samson to Christ and the Church:

"[S]ome things Samson did as the head and others as the body, but all in the person of Christ. Inasmuch as Samson performed virtues and miracles, he prefigured Christ, the head of the church. When he acted prudently, he was an image of those who live justly in the church, but when he was overtaken and acted carelessly, he represented those who are sinners in the church" (ACC, 163).

Again this puts the question to us: What sort of Christian will we be? Will we allow the gloomy night of the world (Delilah) to lull us into the deadly sleep of the passions and sins (cf. Rom 13:11-14; 1 Thess 5)? Or will we be illumined by the Sun of Righteousness (Samson) and be watchful, sober, and vigilant, cultivating the talents of our virtues by the grace of the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit (Isa 11:2)?



## 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

March 8, 2020

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

### COMMEMORATIONS:

THEOPHYLACT THE CONFESSOR, BISHOP OF  
NICOMEDIA

HERMAS THE APOSTLE OF THE 70  
PAUL THE CONFESSOR

DOMETIOS THE RIGHTEOUS

FELIX OF BURGUNDY, ENLIGHTENER OF EAST ANGLIA

**Tone 5 - Eothinon 5**

**Orthros Gospel:** St. Luke 24:12-35

**Epistle:** Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40

**Liturgy Gospel:** St. John 1:43-51

**RESURRECTION TROPARION - Tone 5 -** Let us believers praise and worship the Word, coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation; for he took pleasure in ascending the cross in the flesh, to suffer death, and to raise the dead by his glorious resurrection.

**APOLYTIKION FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT- Tone 2 -** Thy pure image do we venerate, O good One, asking forgiveness of our sins, O Christ our God; for by Thine own will Thou didst ascend the Cross in Thy body, to save Thy creatures from the bondage of the enemy. Wherefore, with thankfulness we cry aloud to thee: Thou hast verily filled all with joy, since Thou didst come, O our Savior, to save the world.

### TODAY:

- ORTHROS & Confession 8:45 a.m.
- ★ Divine LITURGY 10 a.m.
- ★ Coffee Hour, Catechism, SS, & Teens 11:45 a.m.
- ★ Pro-Life Meeting, 12:30 p.m.
- ★ Women of St. Mariamne, 12:45 p.m.
- ★ Choir Rehearsal, 12:45 p.m.
- ★ Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers (St. Nicholas GOA in Bethlehem, PA), 4 p.m.

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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 (Mar 15):
PROSPHORA BREAD:	Carolyn Kaminsky	Gabi & Catalin Tinjala
EPISTLE READER:	Terry Kaminsky	Jennifer Howanetz
USHERS:	Peter C. & Rdr. Jordan	Sdn. Luke & Rdr. Nathan
ALTAR CANDLES:	Georges/Mirna Alramadi Michael, Marcia, Souzah <small>In loving memory of Salime Alramadi In loving memory of Karam Basil</small>	Neno Family <small>2-year Memorial for Constantine Neno</small>
ALTAR BOYS:	“Archangel Gabriel”	“Archangel Michael”
GREETERS:	Jim & Doris Eggers	Teen SOYO
CLEANING TEAM:	Jordan & Natalie; Zell & Redeat	Natalia M. & Moody family
COFFEE HOUR:	----	Ulrich & Neno Family

### Mark Your Calendar:

#### Game Night & Potluck (sponsored by the Teens)

Saturday, March 21, after Vespers

#### LENTEN REREAT – March 28, 2020

“*Recollecting Glory: Orthodox Education for Wisdom, Virtue, and Joy*”  
w/ Dr. John Mark Reynolds  
*Mark your calendar!*

#### Holy Wednesday Schedule Change

Holy Unction at 4 p.m.  
Bridegroom Orthros 7 p.m.  
w/ Anointing of Holy Unction

#### We live Pascha to Pascha!

April 19, 2020

Pray For:	
Living	Departed
Newly-illuminated Vladislav (Matthew)	Julie Robert-Joseph
Doris John	Salime Karam
Lasha B Otari B Daniel H John	<u>Catechumens</u>
Zerfenesh Tsighe Maximos Eyassu Gloria	Evan, Robert, Todd, Kendra, Liesel, Todd, John Moses, Virginia, Conor, Matthew, Shaun, Tina, Michael
Thomas, Elizabeth & all Missionaries	<u>St. Nina's List</u>
New & Expectant Mothers & children Inquirers and those who don't know God's love	Andrea, Derek, Bennett

### OUTREACH COLLECTION:

Baby Care Items

### EVANGELISM CHALLENGE:

“Pray for Mission Priests”



## ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN

THE MOST REVEREND METROPOLITAN PHILIP -- FOUNDER  
A SISTERHOOD SERVING CHRIST THROUGH SERVING OTHERS

In honor of Antiochian Women's Month, throughout March the epistle readings during the Divine Liturgies will be chanted by the women of our parish. Glory to God for all the women of our parish, for their labors and ministry with and for us!

## This Week:

### GREAT LENT

*(Most services are preceded by available times for Confession.)*

<b>Mon, Mar 9:</b>	<b>SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.</b> <b>Great Compline 7 p.m.</b>
<b>Tues, Mar 10:</b>	Matushka Olga Sewing Club, 11 a.m. <b>SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.</b>
<b>Wed, Mar 11:</b>	<b>SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.</b> <b>Presanctified Liturgy 7 p.m., w/ Fasting Potluck</b>
<b>Thu, Mar 12:</b>	<b>SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.</b>
<b>Fri, Mar 13:</b>	<b>Presanctified Liturgy 10 a.m., w/ Fasting Potluck Akathist w/ Youth Choir, 7 p.m.</b>
<b>Sat, Mar 14:</b>	Catechism Seminar, 4:30 p.m. Youth Choir rehearsal, 5 p.m. <b>VESPERS 6 p.m., Confession 7 p.m.</b>
<b>Sun, Mar 15:</b>	<b>SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS ORTHROS &amp; Confession 8:45 a.m.</b> <b>Divine LITURGY 10 a.m.</b> Coffee Hour, Catechism, SS, & Teens 11:45 a.m. Parish Council, 12:45 p.m. Pan-Orthodox Lenten Vespers 4 p.m. (here at St. Philip)

### **Preparation for Confession Fifth Commandment**

*“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.”*

Have I respected my parents and been obedient to them? Have I been guilty of deception, or caused them pain by my words or action? Have I neglected them or failed to help them? Have I done my duty toward my family? Have I been wanting in love or kindness toward my husband/wife, or harmed him/her in any way? Have I set my children a good example and tried to bring them up properly? Have I corrected their faults with patience and not with anger? Have I over-indulged or spoiled them? Have I neglected my god-children and failed in my obligations toward them? Have I worked for my employers honestly and diligently? Have I treated fairly all those who have worked for me? Have I honored God as my Heavenly Father by treating others as my brothers, and have I honored the Church as my spiritual Mother by honoring and practicing my religion in accordance with her teachings?

**ATTENDANCE:** At Vespers Feb 29: 52    Divine Services on Mar 1: 209  
**OFFERINGS:** Candles, \$232.    Collections, \$339.04.    Youth, \$16.    Book Shelf Ministry, \$38.    COF, \$40.    Pastoral Discretion, \$100.    Stewardship, \$5,692.    Total received: \$6,457.04.

**GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS & GENEROSITY!**