



# THE PARISH PRESS



## St. Philip Orthodox Church

BABY STEPS TO HOLINESS - WRITE OUT YOUR BLESSINGS AND THANK GOD FOR THEM

### NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

#### A NEW FACE? A NEW FAMILY?

We have many Visitors-Inquirers-Catechumens-Parishioners-Stewards who are new to our dear church community. Greet Them. Invite them to Sit with You at our Agape Meal of Coffee Hour. Get to Know Them. Invite Them to Dinner. Pray for Them.

#### ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE

Summer Camp registration has begun! Visit [www.avcamp.org](http://www.avcamp.org). Scholarships are available. (Your contributions to the scholarship fund are appreciated!)

#### 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.



NEWSPAPERS: Salfid Rescue Kennel, our neighbor on Clearview Road, is always in need of old newspapers. Look for the box in the hallway.

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

### A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are celebrating the great feast of the "Meeting of the Lord" in the temple, which was the Virgin Mary's Purification in the Temple and Christ's first encounter with His people. This feast is truly a feast: a feast of Encounter, of Completion, and of Commendation.

First, in the Temple and in the persons of St. Simeon and St. Anna, Christ encounters His people.



Second, His encounter is a completion of the Old Testament ritual purity. The temple was built as the house of God. Christ, as God's son, the Son of Man, fulfills its purpose and initiates the unity of God and man.

Finally, this is a commendation. Jesus and His Mother are honored in foretelling of their life's work while St. Simeon and St. Anna are honored with release from their life's works.

May this feast, which completes the celebration of Christ's birth and points to His Sacrifice on the cross, commend us to encounter Him more and more, now and at the completion of our lives and unto ages of ages!

By God's grace,

+ Fr. Noah

### Mark Your Calendar:

#### Introduction to Orthodoxy II

*Living the Faith*

(Catechumens, Inquirers, & Refresher)  
Saturdays at 4:15 p.m., Jan 9 - Feb 27

#### Orthodox Thought and Culture

February 7 following Liturgy.

#### Bp Thomas Visit

February 19-21

#### Sacred Music Workshop

"Singing the Triumphal Hymn"

February 20, 1-8 pm - Fr Mark Sahady

Publican & Pharisee: February 21  
Prodigal Son: February 28

#### Bible Study

*The Resurrection in the Old Testament*

Presented by Subdn. Benjamin Daniel  
Saturdays at 4:45, March 5 - April 16

Meatfare: March 6  
Cheesefare: March 13  
Lent begins: March 14

#### Choir Concert

The Passion & Resurrection of Christ  
Sunday, March 20, 2 pm

#### Annunciation

Thursday, March 24

6 p.m. Matins  
7 p.m. Vespers & Artoklasia  
Friday, March 25  
7 p.m. Divine Liturgy



#### Lenten Retreat

"Mary, Mystery, & Mission"  
March 26, 9 am-7 pm - Fr Chad Hatfield

Palm Sunday: April 24  
Pascha: May 1, 2016

#### Parish Life Conference

June 29 - July 3  
At the Antiochian Village  
WWSTL - What does this mean?

### Baby Steps to Holiness

February: Write out your blessings and thank God for them

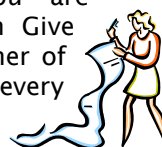
It is very easy for all of us to focus on the negative aspects of our life. But as Christians we are called to transcend this worldly thinking by overlooking peoples' shortcomings and thanking God in every situation, even the most dire! The trials in our life, of course, are allowed by God so that we can come to maturity in Him and be more sympathetic with those in need.

Psalm 102 tells us to "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His

benefits." But how can we not forget all of God's blessing? Well, when I want to remember something, I write it down and store it in a safe and organized place.

So, make yourself a cup of tea, get out pen and paper or open a new document on your computer and start plugging away. You'll be surprised how many blessings are in your life.

Review your blessings from time to time, especially if you are feeling down, and then Give Thanks to God, the Father of Mercies, the Giver of every good and perfect gift!



**Did You Know?**

- Pick up a book at the **Bookshelf** or the **Library** to gear up for a spiritually profitable Great Lent.
- Today can be a blessing if you **allow God's love to shine** through you!
- **Coffee hour does not start until after the Liturgy is over.** The food is blessed after the announcements, after we sing Our Father together.
- 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.**
- Our **Sunday School, Teens, and Young Adults** need your prayers and love to keep them living and growing in Christ.
- Your **Redner's Market** purchases can benefit St Philip's! Simply **put your receipts in the envelope** posted on the bulletin board in the hallway.
- An Orthodox Christian should **come to church** for Vespers, Matins, Feasts, and other special services.
- **God loves you!**

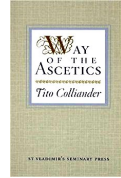
**Challenge for 2016:  
Pray Without Ceasing  
(1 Thessalonians 5)**

This holy task of unceasing prayer, which St. Paul gives to us in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, is a difficult and overwhelming task, the task of a lifetime, the task of eternity. Difficult, yes. Overwhelming, yes. But not complicated. No, it is very simple. Just remember God. Constantly draw your mind back to the fact of God's presence. Steady your heart with the fact of His providence. Imbue your breath with praise and with prayers for His blessing and forgiveness.

**Book Recommendation**

**Way of the Ascetics**

by Tito Colliander



This is a simple book that packs quite a punch! Never have I read it and felt satisfied with "where I am at" in my spiritual life. (What does that mean anyway?) Tito (a form of Titus), a Finish Orthodox novelist, was influenced by Dostoyevsky. He unfolds the spiritual life as something that one does with regularity and fervor. This is basic reading for all of our Catechumens. Every Orthodox Christian should read and re-read this book to help focus and fuel us in repentance and turn ever more to God. Pick up a copy at the BookShelf, borrow it from the library, or purchase online.

**Missions Minute**

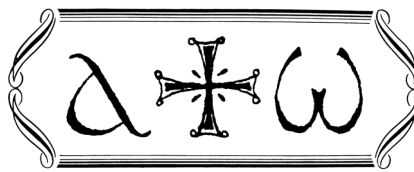
Since metropolitan Philip founded the Department of Missions & Evangelism 108 missions, excluding Western rite parishes, have been established by the Antiochian Archdiocese. Of these, 55 have grown two full parishes. At the present the department is developing missions in 7 cities across the United States and Canada, and is exploring possibilities in several more.

from <http://antiochian.org/missions>

**Everyday Evangelist**

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

Say genuinely, "God willing," and "Thank God"



**Wisdom from Amma Sarah**

There were a number of Desert Mothers that lived out their extreme Christian life in the Egyptian Thebaid alongside the Abba Anthony and the rest of the Desert Fathers. May we all be so "manly" in our spiritual life.

- For 13 years she waged warfare against the demon of fornication. She never prayed that the warfare should cease but she said, "O God, give me strength."
- Once, after failing to entice her away from her life of prayer, the spirit of fornication appeared to her and said, "you have overcome me." But she said, "It is not I who have overcome you, but my master, Christ."
- She said, "I put out my foot to ascend the ladder, and I place death before my eyes before going up it."
- She also said to the brothers, "It is I who am a man, you who are women."



**Ask Abouna**

**Previous Question:** What is the new Center for Orthodox Thought and Culture at Eastern University?

**Answer:** Thanks to God and the vision and hard work of Dr. Gary Jenkins, a faculty member at Eastern and a parishioner at St. Paul's in Emmaus, this new center is underway. Dr. Jenkins is our special guest to introduce us to this great new program in announcement after Liturgy today. Please be attentive to his announcement and feel free to ask him any questions about the university, the honors program he oversees, and the new center he has started.

- Minor in Orthodox Thought and Culture
- Some Orthodox faculty
- An Orthodox community
- Orthodox worship and spiritual retreat
- Teaching and workshops on iconography and chant
- Emphasis on Arabic, Hellenic, and Slavic thought and culture
- High profile lectures, events, trips
- A Summer Scholars Program for both high school and college students
- Seminars for the public on issues pertinent to Orthodox thought and life
- Engaged in service to the Church and society
- preparing students for lives of virtue and leadership

More information is available online: [www.eastern.edu/orthodox](http://www.eastern.edu/orthodox).

Grateful to be  
Your Humble Servant In Christ,  
+ Fr. Noah

**New Question:** I'm tired of fasting, Father! Why should I?

**OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST**

**Memory Eternal** is offered to the **Shuhaibar family** upon the passing of **Mimi Shuhaibar**, who reposed in the Lord on January 21. The funeral was held at St Philip's on January 25, with burial in St Philip's Cemetery.

**MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**