



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.

GIVING UPDATES

MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION: Thank you for your generosity to the needy of our community! In **March**, we are collecting **Baby 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!

Missions Minute

Very soon our great Lenten journey begins! As this beautiful season approaches, please remember that OCMC's Mission Sunday is March 13th. What better way to approach our March toward Pascha than to pray for and support the Church's mission to share the salvation of Christ with the world! On March 13th, please say a prayer for Orthodox Missions and Orthodox Missionaries serving around the world, consider volunteering to serve as part of an Orthodox Mission Team, and support this eternal work of the Church with a gift to the Mission Center.

Everyday Evangelist

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

I have other sheep, which are not of this fold, I must bring them also, and they will hear my voice, and they will become one flock with one shepherd.
- John 10:16

A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am really thankful for the warming weather as we are approaching spring. The word "Lent," which we have borrowed in English for the "Great Fast," means lengthening, in reference to the longer days. I am praying for a Lenten spring in my heart, our parish, and the world.

My heart, first, needs thawing from the coldness of self-reliance, self-direction, and self-centeredness. My plan is to thaw it by the rays of Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ! Lengthening my time of prayer, scripture and holy reading, and especially serving others, will bring more exposure to the warm rays of God's love for us.

Our parish, as vibrant and beautiful and welcoming as it is, is in constant need of "revitalization," refreshment, and rejuvenation. The Church, as our wise mother and master psychologist, knows this need and calls us to extreme Christian living during the 40 Days of the Fast and Holy Week. More services, constant fasting, and greater opportunities for ministry all give us a personal opportunity to help our parish become the greenhouse of paradise that it should be.

Finally, our world needs the warmth of God's love to thaw its deep frigidity. We are surrounded by numbness to truth, life, the self-sacrifice of God's loving-kindness, and the joy to which we are called. We are benumbed by ever-slicker techno-gadgets, ever more abundant food and other luxuries, and the bemusing waves of inane entertainment, news, and opportunities for recreation. These aren't necessarily bad. However, a constant barrage of "unnecessaries" means less time and attention for the one thing needful.

We can be a positive force for change in this ever-complex world and refreshment in our parish. Personally, by God's grace, we can be the answer to questions that people are forgetting to ask. Our parish needs to continue to warm to the fire of God's love. With the saints' prayers and examples, and each other's support and love, we can open our hearts so that the seed of the Gospel can bear great fruit.

Grateful for the lengthening of days and for the springtime of our souls.

+ Fr. Noah

Mark Your Calendar:

Youth Choir Rehearsals
Saturdays, 5 p.m. - through April

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

Canon of St Andrew - Clean Week
Mon & Wed, Mar 14 & 16, 12 noon
Tues & Thurs, Mar 15 & 17, 7 p.m.

Lenten Services
Mondays in Lent: Great Compline, 7 pm
Wednesdays in Lent: Presanctified Liturgy, 7 pm
First five Fridays in Lent: Akathist, 7 pm

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

Annunciation
Thursday, March 24
6 p.m. Vespers & Artoklasia
7 p.m. Matins
Friday, March 25
10 a.m. Divine Liturgy



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

Celtic Christianity
Saturday, April 16, following Vespers
Fr Seraphim, Monastery of All Celtic Saints

Palm Sunday: April 24
Pascha: May 1, 2016

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



Did You Know?

- The Gohl family, the Mullen family, and Sarah Kaminsky were recently accepted as catechumens, marking their commitment to the path of uniting themselves to Christ in the fullness of the Church. Welcome them and pray for a fruitful and faithful journey for them.
- Nancy Smerkanich completed her doctorate in Regulatory Science at the University of Southern California at the end of 2015 and was recently appointed to the faculty there as an Assistant Professor of Clinical Pharmacy, as well as teaching and working at the International Center for Regulatory Science, USC School of Pharmacy. Congratulations!
- We live from Pascha to Pascha! May 1, 2016. Take off from work at least Holy Friday and Bright Monday.
- Add **prostrations** to your prayer rule now (ask Fr. Noah if you need guidance how to do this safely), so you are in shape for Great Lent.
- Our **Library & BookShelf Ministry** (bookstore) have a great selection of many topics related to our Holy Faith. Get a book for the Great Fast!
- We are blessed with a beautiful choir, but **please join in! Singing along** with the choir is the best way to keep your mind from wandering in church.

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

What does this mean? We are like little plants growing towards the sun which warms and nourishes us with its rays of light! Ask the Holy Spirit to come and teach you to pray with joy, with thanksgiving, and with peace!

Baby Steps to Holiness

March - Display only a Positive Attitude

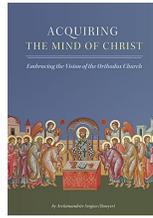
Several years back my family lived through a major remodel of our house. While it turned out better than we had imagined, living through it was difficult, especially when Christmas rolled around and we were living in the basement. Kh. Elizabeth (6 months pregnant) and I decided to make the most of the situation. On Christmas Eve of the next year, one of our children asked, "Can we please sleep in the basement tonight? It was so much fun last year." Glory to God! We were able to make it a beautiful and edifying time for our children by positively responding to the major disruption in our life.

In every situation, we are called to

Book Recommendation

Acquiring the Mind of Christ

by Abbot Sergius



St. Paul clearly states: Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus (Phil 2:5.). How do we acquire this Mind of Christ and where is it to be found? For the Orthodox Christian, salvation is the acquisition of this Mind of Christ which is to be found in the Church. This acquisition moves us from the image of God to the likeness of God; through our obedience to this call we begin to know God and this knowledge is eternal life (John 17:3). This small book hopes to begin to answer how acquiring the Mind of Christ is possible and why it is necessary in our lives today.

**Wisdom from St. Dorotheos
of Gaza
On Fasting**



There are two kinds of gluttony. There is the kind which concerns taste. Another man is concerned about satisfying himself. We must not only keep a sharp watch over our diet, but keep away from all other kinds of sin:

- So also may our tongue fast as we abstain from calumny, from deceit, from idle talk, from railing and anger, and all other vices which arise from the tongue.
- So also let our eyes keep fast. No looking for trivialities, no letting the eyes wander freely, no impudent lying in wait for people to talk to.
- The same with the hands and feet, to prevent them from doing anything evil.

display a positive attitude. Why? Because God is in control and we shouldn't burden everyone with our own shortcomings in trusting Him. Of course, there are relationships that need openness and honesty even in frustration, but those are much fewer than we tend to think. Does this sound disingenuous to you? It certainly isn't, it is us being faithful to what we know rather than what we feel; it is making room by our actions for our hearts to be enlarged.

So, start by little routine things that come up every day. How are you? "Better than I deserve!" or "Never Better!" (*a la* Father Boniface) or "Thank God!" Take this Baby Step to Holiness together with me and let's watch how we can be blessings to everyone around us!

Ask Abouna

Previous Question: I'm tired of fasting, Father! Why should I fast?

Answer: Frankly, I'm often tired of fasting, too! But those are the times that I am living for myself and not living for God and for everyone around me.

Yes, on the one hand, fasting is difficult. It is a discipline; something that a disciple does to learn from and be more like his teacher. We fast because we are in exile, in waiting, in preparation. We fast because we haven't arrived yet. We fast to stoke our hunger and thirst for righteousness. We don't fast to lose weight, though that is a welcome by-product for many.

But also, on the other hand, let's not forget the blessing and the grace of fasting. When I am not worried about myself and my wants and needs, I am more open to God's grace. When I fast, I am more reliant on and thankful for other people. When I fast, I am more grateful for the simple food that I do finally eat. When I fast, I have more money to give to those in need. When I fast, I am more aware that God's grace is guiding me.

This reminds me of a priest who is the son of a priest. As he was growing up he didn't want to be a priest because he saw his dad's struggle, and it seemed too much. But, as a he became a young man, he also saw his dad's grace, and he realized that the little struggle of ministry and self-sacrifice was well worth the great benefit of God's special grace!

O God, give us joy and grace in the midst of our struggles to draw near to you in this time of the fast!

New Question: How can I acquire a gentle spirit?

Holy Mysteries

Kerod Azaria Zemelak, son of **Zemelak Wolde and Melesech Lemma**, was baptized into Christ here at St Philip's on Saturday, February 20.

Scott and Zoë Endicott were received into the bosom of the Holy Orthodox Church by Chrismation here at St Philip's on Saturday, February 27.

MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!