



CHRISTMAS IN JULY

St. Philip's Parish Press



WISDOM FROM FR. B: "THE DEVIL'S FAVORITE LIE IS, 'THERE IS PLENTY OF TIME TO REPENT.'"



CHRISTMAS IN JULY GREETINGS

Father Boniface loved Christmas in July. Even after retiring from St Philip's, he continued to write this piece every year for our Christmas in July newsletter. Since we lack any better way to proceed, we continue with his words:

It is time to say THANK YOU and GOD BLESS YOU to our parishioners and stewards AND to our many friends. Your support of Christ's work through Saint Philip's has continued year after year to make a difference. This year should be no exception as we pause to count our many blessings.

This is our 41st year for this annual appeal, and through the years, many special projects and needs have become possible through your gifts. This year our identified needs are Beautification (narthex murals), Cemetery "gifting plots," children's books for the narthex, and a full-time-access chapel.

Thank you for making a special offering beyond your regular pledge. Your gift and encouragement will add strength to all our ministries in the Lord's Name.

Please place your Christmas in July offering in the basket at Church or send by mail to:

St Philip's Orthodox Church
1970 Clearview Rd.
Souderton, PA 18964



Many thanks, and God bless you for your generosity.

In Christ,
+Fr. Noah

Holy Mysteries

Abraham Hewitt, son of Evan & Maddie Hewitt, was baptized into Christ here at St Philip's on June 3.



MAY GOD GRANT HIM MANY YEARS!

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

GIVING UPDATES

MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION: Thank you for your generosity to the needy of our community! In July, we are collecting **Oral Care Products**.

NON-PERISHABLE FOOD COLLECTION: We continue to collect non-perishables of all kinds for the food pantries.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Choir - Women singers needed! If you can carry a tune, humbly take direction as a team player, and love God and our church's rich worship of Him, then please get Fr. Noah's blessing and speak with Kh. Elizabeth about singing in the choir.

Festival Preparations Beginning

Work and pray for success in this our major outreach event of the year! Success means showing hospitality to many from our community, bringing visitors into contact with the Orthodox Church and Her Gospel. Success means our parish community grows closer from our common work. Success means we can help with funding for some local charities and, lastly, for special projects for our parish.



MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAITHFUL GIVING & SERVICE!

Vacation Church School

"Feasts of the Theotokos"

July 30-August 3

- ◆ All Kids (ages 4 to grade 8) are welcome!
- ◆ Invite your family and neighbors!
- ◆ We will be exploring how we as Orthodox Christians remember and celebrate the Theotokos Mary.



Please use the link below to sign up your children. Are you able to be a volunteer in this important ministry? For more information, contact Kate Gohl (katego1@gmail.com).

<https://goo.gl/forms/ClA5CziYGEbYdVz1>

Mark Your Calendar:

Sacred Music Institute

July 11-15

At the Antiochian Village

Vacation Church School

July 30 - Aug 3

"Feasts of the Theotokos"

Dormition Fast

Aug 1 - Aug 15

Transfiguration of Christ

Monday, August 6

Divine Liturgy 10 am, w/ Blessing of fruit & garden produce.

Dormition

Tuesday, August 14

Vespers, Artoklasia & Lamentations 6 pm

Wednesday, August 15

Orthros 9 am, Liturgy 10 am, w/ Blessing of herbs & flowers.

Beheading of the Forerunner

Tuesday, August 28

Vespers 6 pm

Wednesday, August 29 -

STRICT FAST DAY

Orthros 9 am, Divine Liturgy 10 am
Fasting Potluck to follow.

Sunday School begins Sept 9

International Food Festival

Sept 21 & 22

Blood Drive Results!

Thank you to all who donated blood and participated in the May 30 Blood Drive here at St. Philip. This event was a huge success!



- We had 27 people who came to be donors.
- We collected 23 pints of blood, which was over our goal of 22 pints.
- 69 potential lives have been saved at our local hospitals as a result of this collection.

OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST

is extended to **Bob & Christal-Line Hoffman** upon the repose of Bob's father, **Theodore**, who passed away on June 9. The funeral was held at Holy Spirit Anglican Church in Hatfield, PA, on June 14.



MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

Did You Know?

- There will be **no Wednesday night services** during the Summer. We will resume them in September.
- **Parents**, as our kids play outside during coffee hour, let us teach our children to be **watchful** of cars (even when they're parked), to be **respectful** of others' property, and to **pick up** their trash. (No food or plates outside.) Also, younger children **MUST** be properly **supervised**.



- **Modesty** is an important offering to God and to each other, even in the summer months, at church and out and about.
- Don't miss the blessing of **going to church when you go on vacation**. Research. Call ahead. Ask a blessing from the priest before taking Holy Communion. Bring back a bulletin or other info and ideas for Fr. Noah.
- **The Dormition Fast** (August 1-14) is a time to tune up our souls and bodies with escalated prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and other spiritual disciplines to bring us closer to Christ and His Holy Mother! Please plan on attending at least one Paraklesis.
- Please **save the date for our Food Festival** – to help out and to bring a friends, families, colleagues, and neighbors! Pray for a successful outreach event.



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Friday, July 28, 8 am

Breakfast at St. Philip.

A time of sharing & encouragement

Wisdom from Fr. B.

The devil's favorite lie is, 'there is plenty of time to repent.'

Scripture is full of images and admonitions that focus on the finite nature of our lives, and of our inability to know when and how they will end. Indeed, Fr. Boniface's passing was itself unexpected, catching us all by surprise.

It was his intense labors and devotion to the Church, for his own salvation and that of many others, that prepared him, and us, to face that end with joyful sorrow and confidence, knowing that he had run a good race and fought the good fight.

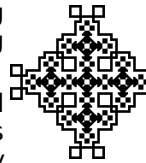
Fr. Boniface did not squander his "talents"; rather, he modeled for us the Psalmist's instruction to "number our

days rightly, that we may obtain a wise heart" (Psalm 89/90.12).

The world, the flesh, and the devil all tell us the complete opposite—to live in the "eternal now" of self-seeking pursuit of pleasure, material comfort, and other vanities, or to imbibe the never-ending hysteria machine of our culture and media.

The end of those things is not peace with God and each other, nor our salvation or our neighbor's. Those things only serve to distract us and numb us to what is really happening—the devil's theft of our short time on this earth for *metanoia*, repentance, to lay aside the image of the earthy and acquire the image of the heavenly.

"[I]t is already time for you to awaken out of sleep, for salvation is now nearer to us than when we first believed" (Rom 13.11).



Challenge for 2018:

Keep the Feasts & the Fasts

Having taken leave of the Apostles' Fast, we now glimpse the Dormition Fast just over the horizon. And we are reminded that our Life in Christ is also Life in and by His Mother, the Theotokos, who is the Saint of saints. Through Mary's birth-giving to Christ, eternal Life is made available to us, and so She is in a very real sense our Mother, an Image of the Church itself.

It is only natural, then, that the Church would begin and end the Liturgical year by commemorating the Theotokos' birth and death—or, rather, her *falling asleep*. For it is in Her "falling asleep" that we glimpse our own future as Her spiritual children—Her translation into Her Son's arms, like Jesus' own Transfiguration (Aug 6), reveals the glorious destiny that awaits us.



The Fasts allow us to begin even now this process of transformation from glory to glory (2 Cor 3), and the Feasts give us a foretaste of our destination!

Abouna's Corner

Dear St. Philip's Family, Glory to God!

Many critics of religion come to atheistic conclusions because of the dissonance involved in believing that a loving and all-mighty God would allow suffering. This problem of pain is not just an intellectual issue but also a tremendous emotional hang-up. However, it begins with a very humanistic, or man-centered, view of God and the world.

I think we would do well to bring our thinking back a few centuries before man became the frame of reference. Our Holy Tradition (Scripture, Fathers, Canons, Sacraments, Hymnography, Iconography...) explores the full weight of human suffering and reflects God's deep fatherly care for persons, families, cities, nations... but caring within a heavenly horizon, rather than an earthly frame. Our Lord's words in the sermon on the mount (Matt 5-7) bear this out, mentioning God as "Father" 18 times in those three very short chapters. The prophetic and apostolic writings constantly bring us back to the reality of our eternal, rather than temporal, inheritance.

Please take these beautiful words of St Paul (from Romans 8) to heart. "We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit."

Indeed, when viewed within the heavenly horizon, we can begin to see our experience of pain and grief as divine gifts that instruct and form us, to let go of worldly attachments and to cling to Jesus Christ, who is the Alpha and the Omega.

In Him,
+ Fr. Noah

St Philip's Closet

Have some **good, lightly-worn clothes** you **think others might be able to use?** Don't forget about St. Philip's Closet located in the south entrance foyer! Leave bags on the left side upon entering to be sorted and put up. Any questions, contact BethAnn Hyatt or Inga Kovalenko.