



THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church



SPIRITUAL WARFARE: "DESTROY"

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

GIVING UPDATES

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

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

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Festival Preparations Continuing

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.



FOCUS Backpack Program UPDATE

54 filled backpacks were delivered on Monday plus a large box of school supplies! It is our 5th year helping a Souderton School District Elementary School right in our area! St. Philip's was one of 58 parishes that joined with FOCUS of North America to help supply backpacks in cities in the USA to needy children.

MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR
FAITHFUL GIVING & SERVICE!

A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Saint Philip's Family,

Christ is in our midst! It is my joy to be writing this from the floor of our Archdiocese Convention, surrounded by hierarchs, priests, and the faithful.

The Convention has been a nice blend of family reunion, business meetings, divine services, along with edifying sermons, Bible studies, lectures, and workshops.

We gathered in joy and peace with our conference theme: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." It was a joy to greet sons and friends of our parish: Fr. Gabriel Tanous, Fr. David Bleam, and Fr. Herman Acker.

Our Clergy Meeting and deliberations called on us to be more serious in our faith and more diligent in reaching the lost young generation. The sermon on this theme that I was humbled and blessed to deliver to the General Assembly was well received, thank God.

This trip also gave us the occasion to stop by Holy Dormition Monastery in Rives Junction, MI. Mother Gabriella fondly remembers her visit to St. Philip and of our parish's vibrancy.

Indeed I am grateful to be returning home with refreshed courage and creative zeal to work with you in Christ's vineyard. Here is a teaching for us to pray about as we roll up our sleeves for the coming year — Seven essentials for ministry team building:

- + Collaboration
- + Self-awareness
- + Inner Life
- + Priorities
- + People
- + Quality
- + Love

I am grateful to be an Orthodox Christian, to be an Antiochian priest, and to be the pastor of our parish. May God continue to bless our labors for His Glory!

In our Lord Jesus Christ,
+Fr. Noah

Mark Your Calendar:

Dormition Fast - August 1-14
Daily Paraklesis

Feast of the Dormition
Wednesday, August 14
Vespers, Artoklasia, & Lamentations
7 pm
Blessing of Herbs & Flowers 8 pm

Thursday, August 15
Orthros 9 am, Liturgy 10 am
Blessing of Herbs & Flowers 11:30
am
Festal Potluck to follow

Beheading of the Forerunner
(Strict Fast)
Wednesday, August 28
Vespers 7 pm

Thursday, August 29
Orthros 9 am, Liturgy 10 am
Fasting Potluck to follow

Ecclesiastical New Year
Sunday, September 1

**Feast of the Nativity of the
Theotokos**
Sunday, September 8

Sunday School begins Sept 8

International Food Festival
September 20-21
Work & Pray & Invite!

Summer Chanting Workshop

Wednesdays – 6 p.m.
July 17 – Sept. 4

+Join us for an introduction to the Eight Tones of Byzantine Chant and how to free-chant in the prescribed tones.

+The workshops will be led by Paul Heveran and Ephrem Acker.

+For more information contact Subdeacon David at dhyatt@st-philip.net.

Did You Know?

- An Orthodox Christian ought to **come to confession** about four times per year and as needed.
- The **liturgical offerings** of our parish (Prosphora, Artos, Kolyva, Altar Candles, Wine, Classic Olive Oil, Flower Decorations) are simple and profound ways to offer our talents to God and to each other.
- **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.
- Your **Amazon** purchases can benefit St Philip's! Simply start your shopping from the link at the top of every page of the St Philip's website.



Spiritual Warfare:

Taking Every Thought Captive to Christ "Destroy"

Of Jesus' words in Scripture, Revelation 3:15-16 are among the most perplexing and sobering:

I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

In our world of endless "options," we are uncomfortable with all-or-nothing propositions and claims. Certainly, we think, there must be a "third way." And so we brook truces with the enemies of our souls, and we eventually become zealous for things that are "cold"—empty, fleeting, inert.

To engage seriously in spiritual warfare, we must recapture the clear and cutting vision of the Psalmist who prays, *Utterly destroy [my enemies] in thy truth* (Ps 53:7), and, *Have I not hated those who hate You, O Lord?* (Ps 138:20). We seek not the destruction of our fellow men, whom God wishes to save, but rather of the "old man" and the demons and vices that war against the "new man" we are becoming in Christ (Col 3:9-10).

While it is a frightful thing, at times the "coldness" we experience in life apart from the Father becomes the catalyst for our repentance, for our taking up arms in the spiritual battle. Better this, Christ says, than tinkering around the edges of being a Christian, pretending we're ok, feigning health when our insides are putrid.

Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures

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



Scripture as Inspired Language

Our understanding of Scripture flows from the Incarnation. The Word becomes flesh and communicates with His image-bearers in ways that they can receive and understand. Indeed, God has created us with the faculty of *reason (logos)* so as to commune with the Logos (Word).

It is because of this that the Church has always considered it, not just beneficial, but *necessary*, for the Scriptures and Liturgy to be translated into the vernacular of people groups who are evangelized into the Church. We have several important examples of this.

In the mid 4th century, missionary efforts to the Goths, who would eventually overrun the Western half of the Roman Empire, included the creation of a Gothic alphabet and the translation of the Scripture into Gothic.



6th c. Gothic Manuscript

Five centuries later, of course, Sts. Cyril & Methodius would do the same thing for the Slavic peoples.

The first and most important translation of the Scriptures, however, was the Septuagint—the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek by the Jews in Alexandria, Egypt in the 3rd-2nd centuries BC. It is this translation that, in general, the Apostles themselves used and handed on to the Church as inspired Scripture. While largely consistent with the Hebrew, the Septuagint has several important differences, not least the inclusion of the "deutero-canon," those books generally—and rashly—rejected by the Protestants since the 16th century.

Since Scripture is a work of God in and from the life of God's people, Scripture is organically related to and expressive of this whole life, from composition to translation.

Upcoming Ordination

Many of you remember **Dn. Michael Sochka**, his wife, and daughter from our years at the Old Church. Dn. Michael compiled our St. Philip Cookbook.

He will be **ordained to the Holy Priesthood on August 17th** in the Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania. He would like the faithful of St. Philip to know that we are welcome to attend the Ordination and that he appreciates our prayers.

May God bless Dn. Michael and his family and grant them many years!



Ministry Together

w/ Sdn David Hyatt

"For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

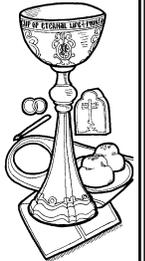
1 Corinthians 2:2

In June of this year, we had the opportunity to attend the Parish Life Conference for our diocese at the Antiochian Village. The guest speaker at the Antiochian Women's meeting was Mother Christophora, the abbess of The Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City, PA.

My wife shared with me something beautiful that Mother Christophora said in her talk. She said, "Our ministry flows from the Chalice." What a powerful and important comment!

I am reminded of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians in which he writes, "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.... that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Cor 12:2, 5).

Our Communion with the Holy Trinity, experienced most profoundly in the Eucharist, is the source of our life and the fountainhead of our service. Rather than serving out of our own wisdom and power, we are blessed and called to gain our life, strength and motivation for service from the Chalice. And if I may be so bold as to add to Mother Christophora's beautiful words, our ministry also should lead us back to the Chalice.



Our life of ministry (service) to Christ and His Church is one of abiding communion. It is a never-ending flow of the life of Christ into us, through us, and then back to Christ to be renewed through his Body and Blood so that we might be sent out in ministry once again.

May we all be determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and may our ministry flow from the Chalice and lead us back to the Chalice again and again!

Biblical Wisdom

God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

James 4:6