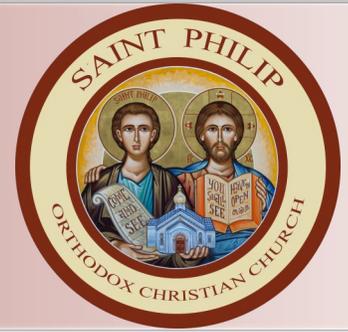


THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church

VOL. 21.02 – FEBRUARY 2020



NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES!

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.

ST NICHOLAS HOUSE—

"HOUSE WARMING COMMITTEE"

Thanks to Jennifer Howanetz and those working with her to make our newly acquired house a warm and inviting place of prayer and retreat, ministry and outreach, fellowship and hospitality. God willing, Fr Jesse and his family will stay there during Holy Week. It will be a blessing for us all and for them to have them with us during this most holy time!

PARISHIONER'S YEAR END GIVING STATEMENTS FOR 2019 ARE ON THE TABLE IN THE GREAT ROOM.

A School at St Philip's: From Possibility to Reality

During his recent visit, our Bishop THOMAS specifically directed us to proceed with starting a school here at St. Philip.



Our steering committee is still regrouping after the Holy Days, but is anxious to continue working with the renewed initiative from Bp. THOMAS.

With this goal in mind, please make it a priority to attend our Lenten Retreat, March 28:

***"Recollecting Glory:
Orthodox Education for
Wisdom, Virtue, and Joy"***

w/ Dr. John Mark Reynolds

Please keep the upcoming retreat in your prayers, along with the steering committee!

OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST

is extended to the family and friends of **Julie Locke**, who reposed in the Lord on January 13. The funeral was held at St. Philip on January 20.

MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!



A Message from Fr. Noah

Dear Saint Philip's Family,

This has been a very difficult winter for me and my family. The dark clouds of my dad's life-long disability, and the gathering storm of his final illness, though radiant with silver linings innumerable, shook me with the lightning flash of his death. As the clouds lighten and start to disperse, and I have been packing up his life and unraveling some of the knots, I am understating myself so much more deeply: as a son of our Heavenly Father and reflection of that Fatherhood, ever refined, to my children and you, my spiritual children.

I am writing this note from my dad's house – surrounded by dust, paperwork, and some sweet surprises – and want to share a few of the stirrings of my bosom. These were little gifts, sweet nothings whispered into my tenderized heart, by the Lover of Mankind, and I am grateful, despite the pain and sorrow allowed me:

First, a few words that came to me as I prepared to preach at my home parish this past Sunday:

- + Repentance is the eclipse of guilt by forgiveness.
- + Repentance is the overshadowing of weakness by strength.
- + Repentance is the radiant dawn of true love after the gloomy night of self-love.

Second, the poem I wrote as part of my toast to my dad with his friends and family and neighbors at his memorial meal:

Cobblestones and Curbscuts

For my dad
*carried, crawling, walking, hiking,
 stumbling, and finally, cool and shy, rolling
 through the valley of the shadow of death
 classical, classy, compatriot, compassionate,
 poetic, patient, passive, passionate
 beloved, bemused, benumbed, benobled,
 a choice word, an apt phrase,
 artful eye, tuneful ear
 but too soon a sweet memory,
 already fading, and too soon we*

I have many sorrows from my sonship to my father, but only one regret:

Mark Your Calendar:

Lenten Triodion

Publican & Pharisee - February 9

Prodigal Son - February 16

Sunday of Judgment (Meatfare) - Feb 23

Forgiveness Sunday

March 1 - Forgiveness Vespers 1 pm

Great Lent Begins

Monday, March 2 - Clean Monday

Start preparing for the fast now! Plan out your increased prayers, church attendance, confession, fasting, almsgiving, inviting someone to church, etc.

LENTEN REREAT – March 28, 2020

"Recollecting Glory: Orthodox Education for Wisdom, Virtue, and Joy"
 w/ Dr. John Mark Reynolds

Mark your calendar!

We live Pascha to Pascha!

April 19, 2020

that I didn't spend more time with him, listening, understanding, forgiving, enjoying, and serving.

Grateful and gratefuller for God's Fatherhood, shared among us, I remain,

**In Christ,
 +Fr. Noah**

P.S. **May all parents**, old and young, as a gift to their children, **have their affairs in order and weeding out possessions.**

Make sure to communicate this and especially your love for God, your family, church, friends, our world, by your life and your preparation for death. It seems grim but it isn't. Rather it is a joy to anticipate a fuller life in Christ. We should be joyfully joining our hearts to St Paul when he says, "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).

Try a "Legacy Drawer" containing:

- + last will and testament,
- + a trust if needed,
- + financial and other accounts,
- + healthcare directives,
- + burial wishes
- + Etc...



Ministry Together

w/ Dn. David Hyatt

*"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."
(St. John 1:4)*



This past month I had the opportunity to participate in the March for Life in Washington, D.C. along with a group of 30 people from our parish. This is something that I have wanted to do for many years but having lived in the Midwest for much of that time I was unable to attend. It was everything that I expected it to be, and more!

We met up with our own Bishop THOMAS along with the Orthodox Christians for Life group. After the rally, which we could not see and only barely hear because of all the people, we were led in a short prayer service by Metropolitan Tikhon (OCA). What a contrast this was from all the activity which surrounded us, peaceful voices being raised in petition to the Holy Trinity amidst the pulsating energy of the crowds. **Thank God for our bishops who lead us in remaining focused on the One who is the source of life!**



As Orthodox Christians we profess that we believe in "One God, the Father Almighty maker of heaven and earth." The Apostle and Evangelist John writes that "... the Father has life in Himself..." (Jn. 5:26). The Father is the source of and fountain of the divinity and life itself, and out of the Father flows the same life in the Son (begotten) and the Holy Spirit (proceeding). If there ever was a person who is pro-life, it is God the Father!

St. John also writes about Jesus, the Logos (Word) of God, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (Jn. 1:4). Jesus is, according to his own testimony, "the way, the truth and the life" (Jn. 14:6). Each

Divine Liturgy we repeatedly pray, "let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God." If there ever was a person who is pro-life, it is Jesus!

St. Paul writes of the life-creating Spirit, "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you" (Romans 8:11). The life-creating, life-bestowing, life-sustaining Holy Spirit is opposed to sin, death and the devil. He stands in stark contrast to the culture of death that permeates our culture in entertainment, education, and healthcare. If there ever was a person who is pro-life, it is the Holy Spirit!

So, if we are to be the Church, the Body of Christ, we too must be pro-life! Men and women, boys and girls, young and old, all ethnicities and languages, **united in the life of the**

Holy Trinity.

Resisting the culture of death inspired by the demons and instead embracing the life-creating, life-bestowing, and life-sustaining rule of the Kingdom of God. This is more than political, although it encompasses politics. It is more than social engineering, although it shapes culture. It is ... well ... about all of life.

This, after all, is what it ultimately means to be pro-life – to find our life in Christ our God and to make our choices based in this life!

God willing, we will participate next year in the **March for Life in Washington, D.C. on January 29, 2021.** Please put this on your calendar and plan to join us in giving witness to the sanctity of human life because it flows from the life of the Holy Trinity. If there ever was a community of people who is pro-life, it is the Orthodox!

Did You Know?

• Your offering of "classic" olive oil (not virgin or especially not extra-virgin) for the Altar candelabrum is greatly appreciated. You can put your bottles under the icon of St. Thekla on the north/left of the iconostasis with prayer requests.



- Your gift to the **Camp Scholarship Fund** supports the spiritual formation and education of our youth.
- We are blessed a **beautiful choir!** Please consider joining if you can carry a tune, take direction, and make a commitment to services and rehearsals. **Women singers are especially needed!**
- **Our Library** has a great selection of many topics related to our Holy Faith. We are looking for someone to be our **parish librarian.**

Evangelism Challenge

"Pray for open doors to the Gospel in closed countries"

St. Paul requested that the church in Colossae pray for him and those with him, that God would open doors to preach the word and that he would be able to clearly declare the mystery of Christ. Again we see the invitation to partner in God's salvation of the world: we do not pray because we seek to convince God to do something, but rather to participate in His work as co-laborers.

The message of the gospel has always encountered hostility and opposition, and that remains true today. In many countries, the proclamation of the good news remains illegal and converts risk their jobs, their relationships, and even their lives. More than that, there are many different "messages" competing with the gospel: some masquerading as Christianity, such as the "prosperity gospel," others in open opposition to the gospel, such as secular humanism and Islam.

Yet in one way, little has changed since the first century, in which there were various sects claiming to be the true faith, or malicious rumors spread about Christians. In our global era, our responsibility likewise remains unchanged: we are to neither bemoan the sorry state of world affairs or fear a rising tide of anti-Christian hostility, but rather, we are to pray for open doors to the gospel that no one can shut and for a clear proclamation of the good news.

We worship the God who not only created, but loves mankind, and He has invited us to participate in the healing of the nations. Even if we never travel to another country, nothing excuses our lack of prayer for the unhindered spread of the message of God's kingdom to every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

Challenge for 2020: "Living the Liturgy"

The Liturgy is where we contemplate and sacramentally bring about the reality that is – and should be – true of our whole life, in the words of St. Paul:

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, [which sacrifice is] your rational worship (Romans 12:1).

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma (Eph 5:1-2).

Parenting Suggestion

Treat your children with dignity, love, and prayer while caring for them, so they do the same for you in your need.