

## Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures

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

### Genesis 22:2

“Then He said, ‘Take now your beloved son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a whole burnt offering on one of the mountains I tell you.’” (OSB)

The “Sacrifice of Isaac” is certainly one of the most profound narratives in Scripture, both illuminating and being illumined by the Passion of Christ, of which it is a prefigurative icon. Indeed, the account is filled with references to “seeing”—“God will see for himself a lamb” (22:8), “Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked” (22:13), “In the mountain the Lord was seen” (22:14). No wonder Christ says, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad” (Jn 8:56).

As St. John Chrysostom discusses (*Hom. Gen. 47.4-5*), this narrative must be read in the context of God’s *promise and covenant* with Abraham. In Genesis 15, God in effect swears by Himself that He will be faithful to His covenant promises with Abraham (outlined in Genesis 12), and of course God cannot lie. So while it is conceivable that Abraham might endanger the promise God has made (e.g., in his failings with Hagar & Ishmael [Gen 16], with “Sarah is my sister” lies [Gen 20]), it is shocking and mysterious that God would make a request of Abraham—even as a “test”—that would end up nullifying the very promise He Himself has made—“in Isaac your seed shall be called” (Gen 21:12; Rom 9:7). If Isaac dies, how will God prove faithful to His promises?

The answer: by means of the “ram” who is the Lamb of God “foreordained before the foundation of the world” (1 Pet 1:19-20; Jn 1:29). What the Christian cannot help but see here is God’s providence at work revealing to Abraham, Isaac, and their descendants the spiritual reality in which they are participating and to which their lives are pointing—namely, that the Seed of Abraham is Christ Himself (Gal 3:16), and thus to be an heir of God’s promise to Abraham, *even for Isaac*, means identification with the slain Lamb of God, Christ, not with a particular people-group or forebearer.

So God seemingly jeopardizes His own promises to Abraham to teach us, first, that the true Abrahamic people of God are defined by faith in and faithfulness to God. Abraham acting as priest and Isaac acting as both offering and priest show in outline the restored priesthood of humanity—God does not want their “sacrifices,” He wants *them as living sacrifices* (Rom 12:1-2). The life of total self-offering and communion with God is the only real sacrifice in which God delights—and such is the offering that Christ makes to God the Father once and for all. It is Christ’s sacrifice into which we continually enter and by which we offer ourselves to God in the Eucharist and in a life of repentance and love for God and others expressed in good works.

Secondly, God teaches us that “it is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing” (Jn 6:63)—“for we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, [who] rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil 3:3). It is by God’s grace alone—which is the gift of His own life to us—that we are accounted worthy of participation in Abraham’s spiritual family. And thus our “boast” must ever and only be in Christ crucified, the Seed of Abraham, for in truth “God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones” (Matt 3:9).

The Sacrifice of Isaac acquires even more depth when we realize that Mt. Moriah (Gen 22:2) is equated with Jerusalem in 2 Chronicles 3:1: where Isaac is offered is the same place that Israel will offer all of its sacrifices, and where Christ Himself will be sacrificed! Jerusalem is also connected with “Salem” where Melchizedek served as king-priest to the Most High God (Gen 14:18) according to an eternal priesthood (Ps 109/110:4). We see, then, that the sacrifice of Isaac is a “founding event” for Israel’s whole system of worship and sacrifice, linking the Old Covenant system to both the “eternal past” and “eternal future” of Christ’s high-priestly ministry and self-offering “outside the city” of Jerusalem. We worship Thy Passion, O Christ! Make us to behold Thy glorious Resurrection!



## ST. PHILIP ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the  
Antiochian Archdiocese

*His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH*



*His Grace Bishop THOMAS*



*Father Noah Bushelli, Pastor*

215-954-9286



*Father James Thayer*

215-692-0890

## March 17, 2019

### SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

#### COMMEMORATIONS:

ALEXIS THE MAN OF GOD  
PATRICK THE ENLIGHTENER OF IRELAND  
MARINOS THE MARTYR  
THEOCTERISTOS THE CONFESSOR  
PAUL THE RIGHTEOUS MARTYR

**Tone 1 - Eothinon 9**

**Orthros Gospel:** St. John 20:19-31

**Epistle:** Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40

**Liturgy Gospel:** St. John 1:43-51

**RESURRECTION TROPARION - Tone 1 -** While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding thy most pure Body, thou didst arise on the third day, O Saviour, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto thee, O Giver of life: Glory to thy resurrection, O Christ! Glory to thy kingdom! Glory to thy providence, O thou who alone art the Lover of mankind!

**APOLYTIKION OF THE FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - Tone 2 -** Thy pure image do we venerate, O good One, asking forgiveness of our sins, O Christ our God; for by Thine own will Thou didst ascend the Cross in Thy body, to save Thy creatures from the bondage of the enemy. Thou hast verily filled all with joy, since Thou didst come, O our Savior, to save the world.

**TODAY:** Orthros 8:45 am; St. Basil’s Divine Liturgy 10 am  
Coffee Hour, SS, & Teens 11:45 am  
Parish Council, 12:45 pm  
Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers, 4 pm

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**Office Hours:** Monday through Thursday 8:30 - 4:00; Friday 10:00 - 3:00

Fr Noah & Fr James are available for hospital visits. If you or anyone you know is in the hospital or homebound and would like a visit, please call the church office.

## Weekly Ministries & Stewards:

|                         |                            |                             |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                         | <b>This Week:</b>          | <b>Next Week (Mar 24):</b>  |
| <b>PROSPHORA BREAD:</b> | Gabi & Catalin Tinjala     | Justin G / Mary Lynne B.    |
| <b>EPISTLE READER:</b>  | Raja Kyriakos              | Terry Kaminsky              |
| <b>ALTAR CANDLES:</b>   | ----                       | ----                        |
| <b>USHERS:</b>          | Steve Kulp & Dan Marquardt |                             |
| <b>GREETERS:</b>        | Todd & Kristi Moore        | Jordan & Natalie Gamble     |
| <b>CLEANING TEAM:</b>   | Hyatt Family               | Kim B. & Todd and Kristi M. |
| <b>COFFEE HOUR:</b>     | Potluck                    | Tadesse & Hirut             |

**MANY THANKS** to all who participated in today's potluck Coffee Hour. **EVERYONE** is invited to stay for refreshments after the Divine Liturgy. **Your assistance in cleanup is appreciated.**

### SPECIAL APPEAL

Please consider making a special offering to the **Camp Scholarship Fund.**  
Thank you and may God bless your generosity!

## Ministry Highlights

"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10)

### "Altar Boys"

The purpose of the Altar Boys (Acolyte) ministry is to be apprentices, serving God and His Church by serving the priest. Being an Altar Boy is not a 'rite of passage' or just something to do during the services of the Church. Instead, it is an opportunity to learn how to serve around the Holy Altar of God under the guidance of the Priest(s), Deacon and Subdeacon(s) with an open heart and mind to the possibility of one day being tonsured/ordained as a Reader, Subdeacon, Deacon or Priest. Serving God as an Altar Boy is a ministry that we take very seriously, and which brings us great joy! Boys ages eight(8) years and older who are interested in serving as an Altar Boy should talk with Subdeacon David Hyatt at 218-576-8324 or dhyatt@st-philip.net.

## Mark Your Calendar:

**Lenten Retreat**  
*Exile, Journey, Destination!*  
with Fr. Timothy Sas  
March 30, 2019

**Lazarus Saturday**  
Bp THOMAS Visit  
April 19-20, 2019

**We live Pascha to Pascha!**  
April 28, 2019

**OUTREACH COLLECTION:**  
Baby Care Items

**SPIRITUAL WARFARE:**  
*Taking Every Thought Captive to Christ*  
"Confess"

## This Week:

### GREAT LENT

- Monday, Mar 18:** SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.  
Great Compline, 7 p.m.
- Tuesday, Mar 19:** SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.  
Matushka Olga Sewing Club, 11am-3pm
- Wed, Mar 20:** SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.  
Presanctified Liturgy 7 p.m., w/ Fasting Potluck
- Thurs, Mar 21:** SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.
- Friday, Mar 22:** Presanctified Liturgy 10 a.m., w/ Fasting Potluck  
Akathist 7 p.m.; Choir Rehearsal 8 p.m.
- Sat, Mar 23:** Ministry Reading Group, 8 a.m.  
Intro to Orthodoxy 4:30 p.m.  
Youth Choir Rehearsal 5 p.m.  
VESPERS 6 p.m.; Confession 7 p.m.
- Sunday, Mar 24:** Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas  
ORTHROS 8:45 a.m., Divine LITURGY 10 a.m.  
Coffee Hour, SS, & Teens  
11:45 a.m.

**Vespers & Artoklasia for Feast of Annunciation, 6 p.m.**

**Monday, Mar 25: Feast of ANNUNCIATION**  
ORTHROS 9 a.m.,  
Divine LITURGY 10 a.m.  
w- Fish/Wine/Oil potluck

*(Most services preceded by available times for confession.)*

### Pray For:

| Living   | Departed   |
|--|--|
| Bp Alexander Child Gregory & family  | Maria Natella Hertanse   |
| Mona-Rebekah Caroline Zerfenesh  |  |
| Michael & families Paul (H) James E Lasha B Otari B Daniel H Mebrat Aristidis Doris Veronica Ezekiel | <u>St. Nina's List</u><br>Catechumens Zachary, Tatiana (Sze), Evan, Tina<br>New & Expectant Mothers & children |
| Thomas, Elizabeth & all Missionaries   |  |

**ATTENDANCE:** At Vespers on Mar 9: 53 Divine Services on Mar 10: 212  
**OFFERINGS:** Candles, \$210. Collections, \$149.93. Youth, \$7. Book Shelf Ministry, \$5. Camping Fund, \$400. Memorial for Hertanse Ibrahim, \$150. Stewardship, \$3,173.63. Total received: \$4,095.56.  
**GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS & GENEROSITY!**