

Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures

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

Exodus 25:9

“According to all I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, so you shall make it.” (OSB)

Having been marked off as God’s people of promise by the blood of the Paschal Lamb, having been saved from slavery and been created anew in waters of the Red Sea, God through Moses leads Israel to Mt. Sinai. It is there that God will reveal to Israel the nature of its calling as a “royal priesthood” (Exod 19:6). Just as God gave Adam and Eve a “law,” activating their free will, as it were, and inviting their faithful response, so too now God gives His new humanity, Israel, a series of “words” and “commands” that spell out the privileges and responsibilities of life in covenant with God.

The “Ten Commandments” of Exodus 20 and the “Covenant Code” of Exodus 21-23 begin to define the character of life before God, both as relates to God (vertical) and to fellow humans (horizontal). The Law (*Torah*), then, is something of an icon or pattern—it is a portrait of God’s desires and intentions for true human life. There is nothing frivolous or despotic about this; it is an expression of God’s grace and love, demonstrating and bestowing great dignity on humanity.

In Exodus 24, God and Israel enter into formal covenantal agreement, as both are—symbolically and literally—covered with the blood of the covenant-ratifying sacrifice (cf. Heb 9:19-24). The free nature of Israel’s response is emphasized by their twice-repeated declaration, “All the words the Lord spoke we will do” (Exod 24:3, 7). This covenant is consummated with a meal on Mt. Sinai, with God hosting Moses, Nadab, Abihu, and the Seventy elders, and their mystical vision of God’s presence (Exod 24:9-18).

As we enter into Exodus 25, we come to the heart of what it means to truly be “Israel”: Israel is defined by being a *worshipping people*, a people with whom the true God dwells, a people who are oriented towards this one, true God who is their Creator and Redeemer. The rest of the book of Exodus, with the exception of the “golden calf” episode in Exod 32-34, will be concerned with the construction of the Tabernacle.

At the very beginning of these instructions, God communicates a principle of profound importance to the Church’s worship in all ages: The “earthly” worship of the Church is a reflection of and participation in the eternal, spiritual worship of God that is always and ever going on in heaven. All the elements of the Church’s worship, then, are iconic and incarnational—that is, they make available to the physical senses the spiritual realities themselves, such that we are elevated in and to the worship in “Spirit and Truth” (Jn 4:24).

St. Paul invites us to read the Tabernacle on a still more profound level, when he calls Christ “the mercy-seat” (Rom 3:25; that is, the top of the Ark of the Covenant) and says that Christ’s flesh is “the veil” of the Holy of Holies itself (Heb 10:20). As St. Gregory of Nyssa discusses (*Life of Moses*, Bk 2.170-88), we are to contemplate *Christ Himself* as the Prototype as we view the Icon that is the Tabernacle. Indeed, it is Christ, the eternal Logos, who *tabernacled among us* (Jn 1:14) by means of the Virgin Theotokos who is also a *living tabernacle/temple of Christ God*, as are all Christians (1 Cor 3:16-17; 6:19).

The temporary nature of the first Tabernacle is indicated as early as Exodus 15:17-18, where we learn that the ultimate destination of the exodus is Zion, for us, the City and Sanctuary not made with hands (Heb 11:10; 12:18-24; Rev 21).



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
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May 5, 2019
SUNDAY OF THOMAS

CHRIST IS RISEN!



Orthros Gospel: St. Matt 28:16-20
Eothion 1

Epistle: Acts 5:12-20
Gospel: St. John 20:19-31

**CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, TRAMPLING DOWN DEATH
BY DEATH, AND UPON THOSE IN THE TOMBS BESTOWING LIFE.**

TROPARION OF ST. THOMAS - TONE 7 - While the Tomb was sealed, thou didst shine forth from it, O Light! While the doors were closed, thou didst come in to thy disciples, O Christ God, Resurrection of all, renewing in us through them an upright spirit, according to the greatness of thy mercy!

TODAY: Orthros 8:30 am; Baptismal Liturgy 9:45 am (Jekel - Many Years!)
Coffee Hour, SS, & Teens 11:45 am
Welcome Class, 12:00 noon
Women of St. Philip, 12 noon

WEATHER PERMITTING: Procession to Cemetery for Blessing of Graves following Sunday School and Coffee Hour.

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Office Hours: Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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:

	This Week:	Next Week (May 12):
PROSPHORA BREAD:	Kristi Moore	Carolyn Kaminsky
EPISTLE READER:	Terry Kaminsky	Greg Howanetz
USHERS:	Justin G. & Gabe Q.	Steve K. & Peter C.
ALTAR CANDLES:	----	----
GREETERS:	The Gohl Family	Celia-Marie & Sharon
CLEANING TEAM:	Lasha, Natalia M. & John G.	Sdn John & Maxine; Tatiana
COFFEE HOUR:	Jekel Baptism	All Men of St. Philip

- * **MANY THANKS** to all who made offerings for flowers and decoration; who provided palms and willows, olive oil, wine, rose water, and incense for the Holy Days, and red eggs for Pascha; and who gave their voices for singing and their time for cleaning.
- * **THOMAS SUNDAY CEMETERY OFFERINGS** this year will be used to fund one or more "mercy graves" to be offered to bereaved families when appropriate. Please be generous.
- * **IT IS TIME TO RETURN OUR FOOD FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE OFFERINGS.** Thank you for remembering the needs of others.

Mark Your Calendar:

All-Church Cleaning Day
Saturday, May 11, 10 am

Memorial Day
Monday, May 27

Outdoor Liturgy & Trisagion in Cemetery 10 am;
Cook-out & Farewell to Kh. Vera

Blood Drive

Wednesday, May 29, 2-7pm

Ascension

Thursday, June 6

Pentecost

Sunday, June 16

Apostles' Fast

June 24-29

Vacation Church School

July 29–August 2

International Food Festival

September 20-21

Pray For:

Living	Departed
Bp. Nikon	Demetra
Bp. Alexander	
Fr. Julian	
Jonathan	
Lawrence	
John	
Child Gregory & family	
Mona-Rebekah	
Caroline	
Zerfenesh	<u>St. Nina's List</u>
Dianna	Catechumens
Michael & families	Zachary, Evan,
Paul (H)	Tina, Robert,
Lasha (B)	Michael
Otari (B)	
Daniel (H)	
Mebrat	New & Expectant
Aristidis	Mothers & children
Veronica	
Thomas, Elizabeth & all Missionaries	

ATTENDANCE: Palm Sunday: 248 At Bridegroom Matins on Sunday, Apr 21: 69
Bridegroom Matins on Holy Monday evening: 86 Bridegroom Matins on Holy Tuesday evening: 69 Holy Unction: 160 Vespers on Holy Thursday: 74 Twelve Gospel Matins: 139 Vespers of Burial on Holy Friday: 126 Lamentations Matins: 177 Paschal Services: 240 Agape Vespers on Sun., Apr 28: 69 **OFFERINGS:** Candles, \$1,133.50. Collections, \$357. Flowers, \$105. Youth, \$4. Bookshelf, \$192. Food for Hungry, \$786.25. Land Acquisition, \$500. Bp Appeal–Syria Rebuilding, \$100. Stewardship, \$2,455. Total received: \$5,632.75.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

DURING THE PASCHAL SEASON:

- ✦ We say or sing the Resurrection Troparion every day with our devotions.
- ✦ We continue to share the good news with the greeting, "Christ is risen!"
- ✦ We read the Book of Acts and the Gospel of John in our family Bibles.
- ✦ There is a relaxed fast on Wednesdays and Fridays. (Communion fast continues as usual.)
- ✦ In honor of the Resurrection, there is no kneeling, in Church or at home, until the Pentecost Kneeling Prayers.

This Week:

Monday, May 6:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 noon
Tuesday, May 7:	Matushka Olga Sewing Club, 11 a.m. SIXTH HOUR, 12 noon
Wednesday, May 8:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 noon COMPLINE & Patristic Reading, 7 p.m.
Thursday, May 9:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 noon
Friday, May 10:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 noon
Saturday, May 11:	Men's Breakfast, 8-10 a.m. All-Church Cleaning Day, 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. VESPERS at 6 p.m., Confession, 7 p.m.
Sunday, May 12:	HOLY MYRRHBEARERS ORTHROS 8:45 a.m., LITURGY 10 a.m. 40-Day Memorial for Maria Habib Sunday School, Teens, & Coffee Hour.

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)

"Cemetery"

The purpose of St. Philip Orthodox Cemetery is to provide a prayerful place for Orthodox Christians and their Christian spouses and children to be buried in keeping with Orthodox Christian traditions. The cemetery was established in 2001, and is the only dedicated Orthodox Christian cemetery in the Bucks-Mont area consecrated as a prayerful place. In addition to single-depth plots, the cemetery offers a Memory Garden available for the remembrance of children lost through miscarriage as well as a Green Burial section which is being developed for those desiring a more natural burial process. A Perpetual Care Fund has been established for the ongoing maintenance of the cemetery and all donations are tax deductible. If anyone is interested in being a part of the Cemetery Team, or has questions, please talk with Fr. Noah Bushelli (nbushelli@gmail.com).

OUTREACH COLLECTION:

Skin Care Products

SPIRITUAL WARFARE: "Disregard"

Taking Every Thought Captive to Christ

The Doors! The Doors!

Starting this Sunday, the south entrance doors to the Great Room will be locked by the Ushers at 10 am. This is to provide more security to the great room and classrooms.