

Weekly Schedule of Services

Saturday: 4pm Great Vespers

This ancient prayer service assists in preparing us for the most sacred of services, the Sunday Liturgy. *Coming Soon* Stay after as we preach through a book of the Bible.

Sunday: 9:30am Divine Liturgy

This is the central day of the Christian week, where we worship our great God in holy array, and receive the most sacred Body and Blood of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Coming Soon Wednesday: 6:30pm [Vespers and] Bible Study

Join us as we study and discuss Sacred Scripture and the Core Principles of Christian Faith and Practice.

Monday through Friday: 8am Morning Prayer

Come join us in prayer for our Church family and community as she begins her day!



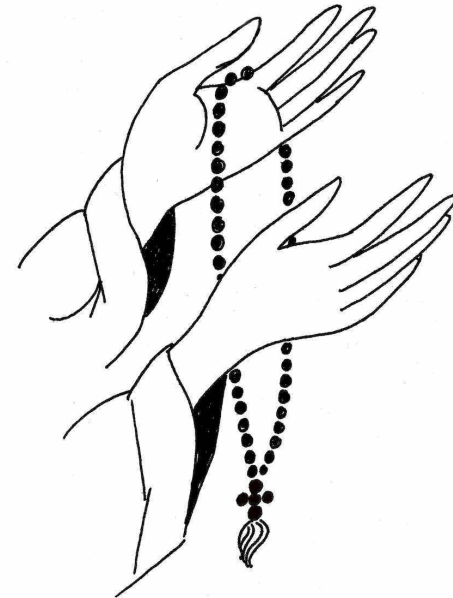
Find Peace of Soul at

All Saints Orthodox Church

211 Willow Avenue, Olyphant, PA 18447

www.allsaintsolyphant.org

Fr. Joshua Schooping - Parish Priest - 570-489-0942



Sunday, June 23, 2019

ALL SAINTS

Epistle: Hebrews 11:33-12:2

Gospel: Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38; 19:27-30

Biblical, Sacramental, Patristic, Christ-centered, and Spirit-filled, *All Saints Orthodox Church* is a community of Orthodox Christians seeking to live the Gospel by putting on the Mind of Christ and acquiring the Holy Spirit. Discover who you are in Christ with practical teachings to uplift and transform your mind, open and expand your heart, and experientially know the awesome and intimate presence of God in your soul.

Pastoral Reflection

The ceaseless prayer, *Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me*, is the constant training of our mind to look away from our self and to look to Jesus, to look to Jesus in everything. In absolutely everything we can look to Jesus, who is the source of all our life, who is Life in Person. Is there a struggle? Look to Jesus. Turn away from self and turn towards Him. His holy Name draws our mind away from living from our senses so that we see and live through the eyes of faith, living from Jesus. Knowing Jesus is inherently transformative, but transformation is blocked if we constantly keep our eyes on our thoughts and emotions, on others, or on the world. Look to Jesus and turn over everything to Him. Present to Him, His presence in you, the Name of Jesus can so fill the mind and heart that everything will be seen in the light produced by His Name shining there, and nothing will distract from Him or steal your joy. How can your joy be stolen when Christ is the sum of all joy and He never leaves your mind? Keep Jesus therefore ever in your mind, awakened to His presence despite whatever you see or encounter, and rejoicing in tribulation you will come out all clean through the ceaseless calling on His holy Name.

Keep Praying

"We should always be turning the Name of Jesus Christ round the spaces of our heart, as lightning circles round the skies before rain." -St. Hesychius of Jerusalem (5th Century)

Wisdom, Let us Attend

The Church Fathers are a repository of living wisdom. One such Church Father is St. Philaret of Chernigov (19th Century). His teaching on the nature of sin and salvation is very sobering:

The Apostle does not promise us forgiveness of our sins because of our holy life, but by the very fact that Christ died for us, that we are bought at a dear price.

One way to understand this is by reflecting on how value is determined: What someone is willing to pay. Christ was willing to pay *a dear price* to redeem us, the highest possible price: His own Blood. This means we have the highest value in God's eyes. But why was Blood necessary? St. Philaret answers: *"From our youth to the grave we are all sinners, we are all guilty before God. And how can we justify ourselves before Him? Even if we sincerely repent of our sins, no manner of repentance can make a guilty man innocent... No manner of repentance can destroy the results of sin... We are not able to reconcile God with ourselves by a better life, either - if we live in a better way, we are only fulfilling our duty, but our old debts remain with us."* In other words, the nature of sin is not abolished by our efforts, for *"this is not within the power of our will."* Salvation is not rooted in our efforts, but in what Christ did and does for us and in us. We are the recipients of His grace, and our good works are the consequence of the energy of His Spirit in us. In this way we reject a "performance-based salvation." But what does this mean about sin? For sin is often misunderstood precisely as a performance issue. Many think sin means a mistake or blunder, but sin is not this. Sin is fundamentally deeper than this. Sin is any willful act which comes from a state of alienation from God. We sin because something deep inside refuses to surrender self-will, the real sin. Sin is thus not a mistake or mishap, but *choosing* self over God, darkness over Light, indifference over Love, criticism over Mercy. For a sinner to end in darkness is thus the result of personal choice. Sin comes from the depths of our fallen human heart, and only Christ's new Life in us, in place of the old, can overcome sin and the effect of sin, which is death.