

# 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.

*New:* Stay after as we preach through St. Paul's Letter to the Romans.

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 Prayer and Essentials

Join us as we explore and discuss the Core Teachings 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. Stay for morning coffee!

## Announcements

Save the Date: *The Exaltation of the Precious Cross*

*Great Vespers:* Friday, September 13 at 6:30pm

*Divine Liturgy:* Saturday, September 14 at 9:30am

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Please let Fr. Joshua know of any upcoming birthdays or anniversaries.

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If you haven't already, please be in touch with Fr. Joshua for your regular practice of Confession.

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*Update on Front Entrance:* The Engineer stated he will complete his report on Wednesday and send it to the Insurance Company. Joe Schlasta has expertly and beautifully fixed the closet. Thank you, Joe!

*Find Peace of Soul at*

# All Saints Orthodox Church

211 Willow Avenue, Olyphant, PA 18447

[www.allsaintsolyphant.org](http://www.allsaintsolyphant.org)

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



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Sunday, August 18, 2019  
Martyrs Florus and Laurus

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34

Biblical, Sacramental, Patristic, Christ-centered, and Spirit-filled, *All Saints Orthodox Church* is a community of Orthodox Christians seeking to know and 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 experience the freeing, awesome, and intimate presence of God in your soul.

### *Pastoral Reflection*

As our lives unfold, the incredibly important question may arise: What is my center? Do I have a center? What is it that guides or regulates my life? So often we operate on auto pilot, and let habit or our environment dictate how we live. We don't always choose to live intentionally from our convictions, but often let our mood determine our reactions. We often let our moods regulate our life. The problem is that moods are always fluctuating. They have no center, and we might wonder why our lives sometimes feel so out of balance. Moods, clearly, are a terrible master. They are like the wind that blows the weather vane, sometimes pointing us this way, sometimes that. Thankfully, St. Theophan the Recluse provides some guidance: "Inner regulation begins only when you choose the side of grace, and make the ways of life in the spirit of grace the inviolable rule of your life. From that moment, as the decision is forming inside you, a center will also form within you, a powerful center, which will begin more and more forcefully to draw you toward itself. In this center will be grace, which has taken hold of your consciousness and free will. This is the same thing which was previously called the resurrection or restoration of the spirit. Then the grace of God will begin to draw toward this center all of the other forces of your nature, both intellectual and spiritual, and govern their entire action, retaining within them that which is good, and destroying that which is bad. This drawing of everything to one center and directing of all to one goal is the inner rebirth which you have so fervently desired."

### *Keep Praying*

*"Keep the heart under the influence of your conviction about the Lord's love for you."* -St. Theophan the Recluse

### *Wisdom, Let us Attend*

The Church Fathers are a repository of living wisdom. One such Church Father is St. Theophan the Recluse (19th Century). Writing on the beginning of our life in Christ:

*We ourselves willfully take upon ourselves the obligation which was expressed for us by others during Baptism. When someone does this, then the Divine grace, which has been operating up to this point alone and in secret, begins operating with freedom and often allows the person who has made the decision to sensibly feel and manifestly help in arranging his own salvation.*

One way to understand this is by remembering that salvation in Christ does not happen apart from our will, apart from our desire and choice. Apart from God we cannot choose God, and so God's grace acts on our will, acts on our power to choose, and as such He graciously produces the desire that draws us to choose Him. If we do not desire God, then we are rejecting the manifest presence of God's grace that works within us, for God's grace is objectively present and implanted at holy Baptism. But we will not choose what we do not desire because, however feeble it is, desire is the prelude to choice. Desire is the turning of the will towards the desired object, and so whereas grace works secretly in the depths of our soul, when it irrupts or emerges within our conscious awareness as a desire for God, it is vital we act on that desire. Thus we *willfully take upon ourselves the obligation* of life in Christ. As infants, others spoke for us at Baptism, but *"now you are to stand up so that you will pronounce those Baptismal vows."* In youth it was others who renounced Satan and all his works, but *"now you yourself must renounce all of these things."* In youth it was others who confirmed that we would *"unite to Christ and serve and worship Him; now you yourself must proclaim this with all your heart and mind."* In this way we are urged to fully embrace the reality of Baptism, to enter into the death and life of Christ with full understanding and commitment, to surrender not only our time but also our lives to the glory of the Good King. Our fully intentional choosing of Christ frees the Spirit to act in us with our cooperation.