

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.

Upcoming: 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.

New: Wednesday: 6:30pm Prayer and Essentials

After praying an Akathist, join us as we explore and discuss the Core Teachings of Christian Faith and Practice through the Scriptures and the Church Fathers.

Monday through Friday: 8am Morning Prayer

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

Announcements

Regular Wednesday evening Choir Rehearsals begin October 9, at 7pm

Please let Fr. Joshua know about any upcoming birthdays or anniversaries, or about those who are sick or travelling and may need prayer.

Please be in touch with Fr. Joshua for your regular practice of Confession.

Out of respect for the unique wishes of each parishioner, please personally request for pastoral visitation. If unable to make a personal request, the parishioner's directly authorized loved one is encouraged to request for pastoral visitation on their behalf.

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, October 13, 2019

Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1

Gospel: Luke 8:5-15

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

Our lives rush by and we take nothing with us except for the totality of who we are. We tend to think of ourselves almost exclusively as who we are right now. Sure, we bring into the present moment with us memories and associations, but typically we center our sense of who we are in the present moment, where the past is the past. This is natural, since we only live in the present, but it is also very misleading. Elder Sophrony put it this way: “The whole of our earthly life, from birth to our last breath, in its final conclusion will appear as a single act without duration in time. Its content and quality will be seen at a glance. Imagine,” he continues, “an absolutely clear glass filled with water. One look will tell whether the water is clean or not, and if dirty, how dirty. So will it be with us when we cross into the other world. Every impulse, however transient, of our heart, every thought, leaves its mark on the general sum of our life.” In other words, *all* of what we have thought, said, and done will be seen as a present unity. Now, continues the Elder, “Suppose that just once during the whole course of my earthly existence an evil thought crossed my mind - murder, for instance. This single thought will leave a black spot on the body of my life... Nothing can be hidden.” The black spot of sin will testify against us that we have fallen short of the glory of God, and that our condemnation is just, “unless,” cautions the Elder, “it be wiped out by repentant self-condemnation.” God graciously cleanses the repentant.

Keep Praying

“Stand with the mind in the heart before the Lord and pray to Him: ‘Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me.’ Do so at home before beginning prayers, in the intervals between prayers, and at the end of praying; do so in church, and all day long, so as to fill every moment of the day with prayer.” -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. He taught:

Only perfunctory prayer is displeasing to God, when someone reads the prayers at home or stands in church at the service without attending to the meaning of the words: the tongue reads or the ear listens, but the thoughts wander who knows where.

One way to understand this is to be amazed at how often we are inattentive to prayer. Yet, inattention to prayer is inattention to God. Inattention to God is carelessness about salvation, and risks being cut off from Him. God is the central focus of life and prayer, at least He ought to be. St. Theophan says in many places and ways that *the principal thing is to stand with the mind in the heart before God, and to go on standing before Him unceasingly day and night, until the end of life.* This is the only truly God-pleasing way of life, and is not only for some Christians but all, and not only for the mature but also beginners, for *we should from the very first give full instructions on the practice of the Jesus Prayer to everyone who repents or begins to seek the Lord.* St. Theophan insists that *only following on from this should we introduce the beginner into other practices... Many people, not knowing this, may be said to waste their time and labour in going no further than the formal and external activities of the soul and body.* Even to consider pausing the rhythm of life in order to practice inner prayer can sound impossible, but it is not. All it requires in the beginning is ten to fifteen minutes, morning and evening, to practice, for *the practice of prayer is called an ‘art,’ and it is a very simple one. Standing with consciousness and attention in the heart, cry out unceasingly: ‘Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me,’ without having in your mind any visual concept or image, believing the Lord sees you and listens to you. It is important to keep your consciousness in the heart, and as you do so to control your breathing a little so as to keep time with the words of the prayer. But the most important thing is to believe that God is near and hears.* By this practice one learns how to restrain the wandering nature of the mind by training it to center on the Name of Jesus and the awareness of God’s living presence.