

# 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.

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 Rehearsal is at 7pm

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

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

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

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



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Sunday, November 17, 2019  
St. Gregory the Wonderworker

Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18

Gospel: Luke 12:16-21

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*

The simplicity of the Gospel is an essential element that guides our life. As St. Paul teaches, "I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Christ is simple, and His Gospel is simple: The sentence of death is on all who have not committed their life and their way of living to Christ. Christ, however, took the sentence of death on Himself for all those who commit their life and way of living to Him. God forgives all sin in Christ, and loves you and believes that your value is worth His own life. In exchange for His life He asks for your life. Faith in Christ means the total commitment of your day to day living to Him, the giving of each decision to His will. That means handing over your worries, your habits, your fears, your goals, and all that your life touches, to Him, to be guided, nurtured, and transformed into His likeness. God does not accept half-hearted trust, because half-hearted trust is not real trust. In Christ is true peace; outside of Christ is false peace. False Gospels, however, are all over the place. As Paul continues, "For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted--you may well put up with it!" We are surrounded by false gospels, and we are tempted to believe that true, lasting satisfaction in life and in death comes from hard work, self-sufficiency, comfort, ease, family, friends, security, or any number of other things. But if our *highest satisfaction* is sought in anything other than Christ, then we have been deceived and placed our faith in a false gospel, one that will not heal or save our soul. In order to escape hell and reach heaven we must keep Christ first, foremost, and center in our living.

### *Keep Praying*

*Silence prepares a soul for prayer. Stillness - how beneficial it acts upon a soul!*  
-St. Nikon of Optina

### *Wisdom, Let us Attend*

The Church Fathers are a repository of living wisdom. One such Church Father is St. Isaac the Syrian (7th Century). He taught:

*He who senses his sins, is greater than he who raises the dead with his prayer. He who groans one hour for his soul, is greater than he who benefits the whole world. **He who is made worthy to see himself, is greater than he who is made worthy to see angels.** To him who knows himself, is given the knowledge of all things. For the knowledge of ourselves is the fullness of knowledge of all things.*

Taking the third sentence, one way to understand this is to see how important seeing oneself is. The idea of seeing oneself could sound confusing. Certainly, it does not mean looking in the mirror. Seeing oneself does not refer to seeing the body. It also doesn't mean seeing one's habits or opinions. Anyone can see themselves in this way. It also doesn't mean seeing one's attitudes, and yet, very many people do not even see their attitude. They don't see that they complain often, and about trivial matters; don't see that they talk about people who aren't around in a negative way; don't see that they criticize people's imperfect efforts; don't see that they point out people's faults; don't see that they are constantly being opinionated; don't see their own bad manners; don't see their own rude speech; don't see that they are being superficial in their thoughts and feelings; don't see that they are constantly worried about things they cannot control. Although St. Isaac is not talking about seeing those things about oneself, seeing those things is preparatory for the type of seeing he is talking about. If people were able to see their bad attitudes, they would weep. It would look to themselves like they are covered with mud, and they would want to run to the nearest stream and jump in. And yet, even faithless people can cleanse these things. Thus, having cleansed themselves of their bad attitude, people of faith will see a deeper layer of dirt that was not cleansed. This is starting to approach the seeing that St. Isaac is talking about, for one will start to see the depth of one's sinfulness, how there is a deep urge in us to vanity, anger, and desire. This is the beginning of seeing, seeing in oneself the absolute need for God, that in Him *alone* is life, and that He loves you beyond all imagination.