

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

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, November 24, 2019

Greatmartyrs Catherine and Mercurius

Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10

Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

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 power of baptism to save the soul is only activated by living faith in Christ. Without this living faith, in the words of St. Gregory of Nyssa in his *Catechetical Discourse*, “the water is water, since the gift of the Holy Spirit is nowhere manifest in what takes place.” If “they see no change in him who has been washed,” then one vainly takes the name of Christian. God never saves apart from man’s willing agreement. As such, without faith baptism is buried and rendered inoperative. Only living faith in Christ activates the grace of baptism. There must, in other words, be a substantial change, “for it is clear to all that the saving birth is received for the renewal and change of our nature,” and it is realized in “no other way than by becoming holy.” God’s grace is power, and so to fail to be changed does *not* mean one did not try hard enough. People confuse change with personal willpower. This is not God’s way. God is not asking you to try harder; He is asking you to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2). God is not asking you to be stronger, but to be weaker, to be empty of all personal agenda and filled with heaven’s agenda. Baptismal faith therefore means handing over the control of one’s life and choices to God. The day to day purpose and interest of the normal Christian life is to glorify God in all that one does. Thus, if one’s heart is cold towards God, if one is not interested in God or the things of God, then know that God is far away. How could one be knowingly saved from eternal hell and fail to think hourly of their sweet Savior? The greatest sign of being reborn is therefore a change of affections, the presence of an active and abiding desire for God, growth in holiness, and to draw nearer still to Him in prayer.

Keep Praying

Prayer has reached perfection when it is offered to God without the mind’s wandering into distraction, when all a person’s thoughts and feelings are gathered into one prayer.

- St. Kallistos

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 fourth and fifth sentences as expressing but a single thought, one way to understand this is in the fact that at the heart of all acts of knowing is the knowing person. No act, whether of knowing or of anything else, happens apart from the person doing the act. In this way, the personal self is at the heart of all action and experience. Consequently, the personal self is prior to all other experiences and actions, and so to all other knowledges. To have knowledge of self is therefore to have knowledge of that which underlies all kinds of knowledge, for knowledge must conform to the organ of knowledge. Thus, since knowledge of all things is not had apart from the knowing person, by knowing oneself one receives insight into the nature of that which precedes all knowledge: the self. The self knows according to the nature of its own ability to have knowledge, and so no act of knowledge can fail to be conformed to the nature of the knower. As such, through knowledge of self one is granted knowledge of the nature of all knowable things. In this way, knowledge of all things is not an item-by-item knowledge, but knowledge of natures. By knowing something’s nature, one knows that which has the nature. For example, an eye doctor studies the nature of eyes, and so by understanding the nature of eyes he is able to understand all individual eyes. Otherwise, he would have to study all possible eyes in order to understand their nature. So, by knowing something’s nature, one receives insight into all things bearing that nature. Since all things have a rational principle causing them to exist, and man is himself rational, by understanding his own nature at the depth of his being he receives the fullness of knowledge of all things.