

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, December 8, 2019
Holy 362 Martyrs of Africa

Epistle: Ephesians 4:1-6
Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

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

Knowledge of God is a precious treasure. Knowledge of God is the inheritance of Christians. An impoverished soul is one that does not have knowledge of God. What is yet more impoverished is that soul that has safe access to knowledge of God and yet does not approach, nor seeks, nor finds relish or interest in it. To find God boring is a sign of spiritual death. But to be occupied with the glories of God, His nature, and His attributes, is to taste of heaven, to possess a portion of heaven while on earth. But what do we too often spend our time learning? What do we put our mind on? Typically, the world. And then we wonder why we are joyless, fearful, worried, short-tempered, judgmental, impatient, and so on. It is impossible to find any peace by keeping our attention fixed on the world. But more than our own experience of peace, God is worthy to be meditated upon, thought of, dwelt upon, and gloried in. God is truly glorious. Men, women, and children have died seeking knowledge of God, died preserving knowledge of God, died sharing the knowledge of God, but why? Because knowledge of God is so glorious, so wonderful, so precious, so valuable. Nothing is more valuable than knowledge of God, not only knowledge about God, but knowledge of Him. We are called to have both broad and intimate knowledge of God. St. Peter teaches with Holy Spirit inspired insight and authority, “giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge.” It is clearly not the end to simply have faith and be virtuous. Knowledge is a necessary next step, to be diligently pursued. What a joyful calling! Knowledge of God is given for us to enjoy Him. And how could we enjoy Him in heaven if we do not enjoy Him on earth? For where our joy is, there is our faith. Let us learn of God, that we may enjoy Him more fully.

Keep Praying

“It is more important that we should remember God than that we should breathe.” -St. Gregory the Theologian

Wisdom, Let us Attend

The Church Fathers are a repository of living wisdom. One such Church Father is St. Gregory the Theologian (4th Century):

It is more important that we should remember God than that we should breathe: indeed, if one may say so, we should do nothing else besides. I am one of those who approve the precept that commands us to “meditate day and night,” to tell of the Lord “evening, and morning, and at noon,” and to “bless the Lord at all times,” or in the words of Moses, “when we lie down, when we rise up, when we walk by the way,” or when we do anything else whatever, and by this mindfulness be molded to purity.

The life of man is his attention. What a person puts their mind on, and even more so what they center their mind on, is the sum and substance of who that person is. The outward actions of a person are only the overflow of the heart, but judging by appearance can be deceiving. Many hypocrites mouth the words of prayer while inwardly their hearts are as far away from God as the east is from the west. God looks at the heart, and His eye never moves from that place. Therefore the heart is the all-important place of action, for as Christ teaches, *Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* If your treasure is in the world, then your heart will be so bound up with the world that it will follow the world into destruction. Men may plead with your soul, through threatenings or enticements, and yet if the heart’s attention is centered on the world then no inducement will avail to turn your attention. This is why St. Gregory teaches that we should do nothing but remember God, day and night, through all of our labors, while brushing our teeth, changing a lightbulb, pumping the gas, driving the car, and all else besides. And the remembrance of God need not distract from one’s duties. Nay, the remembrance of God will purify the soul and free it to be more effective in its duties and occupations. It is this mindfulness to the Lord that will purify the heart and cleanse it of all that is not heavenly. Yet, we so often seek God only for what He can or may do for us, but then our attention is only centered on self, on God’s personal benefits to us. Rather, God Himself is intrinsically valuable and is the proper object of our heart.