

# 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 after Theophany, January 12, 2020  
Martyr Tatiana of Rome and St. Sava of Serbia

Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17

Biblical, Sacramental, Patristic, Christ-centered, and Spirit-filled, *All Saints Orthodox Church* is a community of Orthodox Christians glorifying God, seeking to know and live the Gospel, putting on the Mind of Christ, and acquiring the Holy Spirit. Discover your identity in Christ with practical teachings to uplift and transform your mind, open and expand your heart, and know the freeing, awesome, and intimate presence of God in your soul.

### *Pastoral Reflection*

What does it mean that we are commanded to not judge others? The idea of not judging means we are not to assume the place of their divine Judge. Jesus, however, commands us to judge with righteous judgment, so it is not judgment *per se* that is forbidden, but the kind that places itself in a position above others. We *must* judge in the sense of discerning between good and evil. In fact, it is this discernment, together with love, that informs righteous judgment. For example, it is because we love children that we hate child abuse. But we also have to understand that “hurt people hurt people,” that those who commit evil are enslaved to it, and that “if not for grace, there go I.” No one is saved by being perfect; we are saved by grace. As we learn to rely on grace more and more, we start to realize that we don’t have to work our way into heaven through our own goodness, but that we are saved by Christ’s work at work in us. We are working *out* our salvation, we are not working *for* our salvation. God saves sinners; He didn’t come to save the righteous. In other words, the Gospel of salvation in Christ is not dependent on a person’s ability to attain some predetermined percentage of righteousness. Christ Himself is our righteousness. Therefore our entry into heaven is not rooted in our abilities or in our relative sanctification, but in Christ’s perfect work of blood atonement that we freely receive *in Him*, in faith, in the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, in the Church. If a person thinks they won’t see heaven because of their inability to be perfect, then they subtly see themselves as their own savior by what they self-approve as worthy of heaven, and by what they accomplish as regards what they deem acceptable growth in righteousness. No, it is by grace we are saved through faith, and not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.

### *Keep Praying*

*“Faith requires a mode of thinking that is single, limpidly pure and simple, far removed from any inventions of methods.” -St. Isaac the Syrian*

### *Wisdom, Let us Attend*

The Church Fathers are a repository of living wisdom. One such Church Father is St. Theophan the Recluse (19th cent.). He taught:

*Our first enemy is ignorance, and the second forgetfulness. We keep forgetting who we are, what we ought to be, and fall into carelessness.*

The foregoing passage is so important that it would be well to read it slowly, several times, and let it sink in. It points to the all-important question of our identity. It speaks to the question, Who am I? And yet, it also highlights the tragedy that pervades so much of our lives: *We keep forgetting who we are.* We forget that, first and foremost, we are created by the Almighty God. We are creatures, His creatures. We are not our own. We are not our own makers. We are not our own masters. We have a Master in heaven. When we forget this, we think that we are our own masters, that we are first and foremost someone’s son or daughter, that we are first and foremost such and such a nationality, that we are first and foremost a parent, that we are first and foremost some kind of professional, and so on. We become in this way careless of our true identity as God’s creation, and live as if we emerged out of our own personality, and as if we are not His each and every breath we receive. Our identity is found only in God, and only as we realize this, as we fight against forgetting this, do we live in freedom as sons or daughters of heaven. For not only are we His creatures, we were purchased by Him at the cost of His blood. We were born in Adam, but we have been reborn in Christ, if it is so that we have conviction in regards to following Him. If we do not have faith in Him, then we have doomed ourselves to the darkness of never realizing who we really are, who we were created to be and saved to become. When we fall into such carelessness, and do not carry the sense that we are God’s, then we begin to act as we choose, to invent our own laws, our own morality, our own ways, and we abandon the Cross that beckons us to carry it and follow after our glorious Savior. If we are God’s, if we are Christ’s, then our greatest meaning in life, our greatest joy, will be found in Him, in following His Way, in glorifying Him for all that He is, and faithfully obeying His Commands as if they were the very lifeblood of our lives.