

# 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



January 26, 2020

New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia

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Epistle: 1 Timothy 1:15-17

Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28

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**

There is a question we rarely ask ourselves: Why do I go to Church? Why do I, personally, go to Church? What is my reason? What is my motive? What is my purpose in consistently coming to Church? Now, in order to answer that question, there is a singular temptation we must avoid. We must avoid the temptation to give an answer that is someone else's answer. We must answer from the heart: "For God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). In other words, what answer will the Lord find when He looks into your heart? For there are many answers, but not all of them are why God calls people to the Church. The reason the Church exists, in God's mind, is to be an ark of salvation. The reason for the Church, in God's mind, is to call people out of the world and into the kingdom of heaven. The reason for the Church, in God's mind, is to proclaim victory over sin, death, and the devil. The reason for the Church, in God's mind, is to train up a people unto righteousness and holiness. The reason for the Church, in God's mind, is to reveal His love for man, His grace, and to draw people to Him through the cords of love in communion. Is that your reason? Is the reason you come to Church in agreement with God's reason for creating and maintaining the Church? For the Church is a place for those who want to know and pursue God, and to worship and glorify Him. The Church is a place to grow in holiness and virtue. The Church is a place to practice loving people. So, discover your real reason for coming to Church. Do not slack until your heart reveals its honest answer, for your answer may determine what will be declared at the Final Judgment. In sum, the reason for the Church is three: Love people; be holy; know and pursue God. Are these your reasons?

### **Keep Praying**

*"Faith is the key of God's treasury, she dwells in simple, kind, loving hearts."*  
-St. John of Kronstadt

### **Wisdom, Let us Attend**

The Church Fathers are a repository of living wisdom. One such Church Father is St. Nicodemus (fl. 18th cent.). He taught:

*It is important to note here that those who study the Sacred Scriptures must be convinced and must believe from within that all the words of the Lord contained in the Scriptures are credible, in agreement with each other, certain and true.*

The foregoing statement declares the mind of the Church regarding the Bible. The Scriptures are the word of God, and therefore they are absolutely reliable and trustworthy. Even more than this, they are inerrant. In other words, the Bible is without error. It is holy and impeccable. They are infallible, for God's word cannot fail. On what they speak and declare, they are absolutely authoritative. As God's own word, nothing stands above them, or in principle can contradict them. They have been delivered to the Church, and have been received and interpreted faithfully by the Fathers, and so as the Church's book they must be read with the mind of the Church. As the Bride of Christ, the Church also has the singular authority to receive, interpret, and declare the teaching of her Bridegroom, and is duty bound to do so. What the Scriptures command, therefore, must be obeyed as the word of God speaking to us, for that is indeed what they are. What it enjoins becomes our responsibility to observe. What it commands, we must obey. Its law is our law. But how do you teach someone to obey the Law of God? Teach them to love. It is worth repeating: How do you teach someone to obey the Law of God? Teach them to love. The whole of God's command, His infallible and inerrant word, is that we love: "For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself" (Galatians 5:14). Therefore, love. Love more! To love is to fulfill God's will, His command; it is the royal law. But if it fulfills the whole law, then to not love others is therefore to break the whole law: "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). "Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Love, therefore, is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:10). "Do not owe anyone anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8). Love!