

# 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.

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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February 2, 2020: Zacchaeus Sunday  
Meeting of Christ in the Temple

Epistle: Hebrews 7:7-17

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

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*

The reason for the Church is three: Love people; be holy; know and pursue God. This brief summary, although it does not say everything, contains within itself the entire activity of the Christian life, and thus it is important to unpack the meaning contained in such a summary. The first states to love people. God Himself is love, as St. John the Theologian teaches in his epistles. He says: "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:8). In other words, not only is God love, but the fact that He is love means that a refusal on our part to love others means that we do not know God. In short, our knowledge of God is proportional to our love of others. St. John continues: "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. (1 John 4:16). This is to say that not only our knowledge of God is proportional to our love, but our very relationship with God hinges on it. If we do not love others, then God has no place in us. This sacred truth, then, to love people (and are not the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit also Persons?) is tied up with and touches everything, even the keeping of God's Law, for, as St. Paul teaches, "love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:10). Loving people is thus even connected with our keeping of the Law, i.e. the Commandments, for "this is love, that we walk according to His commandments" (2 John 1:6). Thus the Commandment to love others includes our fulfilling of the Law, and all the more it is also the way in which love for God is made manifest: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments" (1 John 5:3). Not only does this show love of God, but also love for people, for "by this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments" (1 John 5:2).

### *Keep Praying*

*"When the mind forgets the object of godliness, then any visible act of virtue becomes pointless."*

*-St. Mark the Monk*

### *Wisdom, Let us Attend*

The Church Fathers are a repository of living wisdom. One such Church Father is St. Maximus the Confessor (7th cent.). He taught:

*Faith in Christ is manifested by the practice of the commandments, for "faith without works is dead," just as "works are dead without faith."*

The presence of faith energizing itself through works of faith and love is the all-determining factor of our life in Christ, of our very salvation. Even though our works are imperfect, our faith must be of such a character that it cannot remain idle, cannot sit still, but must manifest itself in activity. What is yet more defective, however, is works that are devoid of faith. Some will say that even though they have not faith that they will yet do the works that faith would otherwise require. Ah, this is a clever trick, but it does not fool the Lord. For without faith even our best works are dead, and even serve to condemn a person. Faith and works are therefore not two things, but one thing: faith working a working faith. Faith itself is a great mystery, for *faith contains the divinity of the Word*. Christ Himself is present in faith, and so for works to be without faith is to be works done without Christ. Works accomplished by the power of our fallen nature, however, are always mixed with sin, which is to say with egotism, anger, lust, greed, etc. In this way, apart from Christ, our righteousness is what Scripture calls "filthy rags." Therefore, our faith in Christ, that faith which receives Christ, must be the foundation stone of our life, so that when we act we act with faith in Christ; when we rest we rest with faith in Christ; when we speak we speak with faith in Christ; when we keep silence we keep silence with faith in Christ. In short, let everything be done with faith in Christ, and let nothing be done with reference to Him. In this way we keep the commandments by faith, the principle and sum of them being to love. This means that, since Christ is present in our believing, we therefore keep the commandments *by means of the energies of the Spirit*. Faith is therefore a wondrous thing. But if faith does not keep the commandments, then *faith itself punishes those who do not adorn their faith by keeping of the commandments*. But if in faith we keep the commandments, *it rewards those who preserve and keep it radiant*.