

Glory to God for all things!

We are currently asking for the prayerful giving of donations towards a sign to be placed in our parking lot. This beautiful and well-crafted sign will help newcomers find us, and also announce things like special services and food sales. The cost of the sign is \$6,200, plus installation fees. We have currently received \$1,000 in donations towards the sign, with pledges for more, and are asking for additional giving so that we can reach this goal. Any amount is welcome!

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.

Monday through Friday: 8am Morning Prayer

Come join us in prayer for our Church family and community as she begins her day.

Announcements

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.

Please let Fr. Joshua know if you would like to have your home blessed.

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



July 12, 2020

Martyrs Proclus and Hilary

Epistle: Romans 10:1-10

Gospel: Matthew 8:28-9:1

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

Today's world is entangled and awash in electronic media. From television to the computer to the smartphone, everywhere we turn we are confronted with screens filled with programming, messaging, propaganda, ads, memes, and more, all in a tireless barrage of data that we are increasingly led into becoming dependent on and involuntary managers and consumers of. We may not normally think of this as having much spiritual significance, but nothing could be further from the truth. Today there is an increasing disparity between two worlds: the real world around us, on the one hand, and the increasingly immersive digital world, on the other. Many of us witness this in our children and grandchildren, and we may wonder how someone can spend so much time on their phone or computer. The division of worlds, and the immersion into the digital world, has become so intense that real world relationships will be in danger of becoming abandoned. For children are now often an interruption for the parent's use of technology, and the parent an interruption for the child's use of technology, and both are increasingly estranged from each other. Whether it is a smartphone, a video game, or social media, we are more and more experiencing ourselves as avatars, as digital beings in a digital world having a digital presence there in "cyberspace." This is not only a cultural crisis, but a spiritual one. Human life is a spiritual life lived in the context of flesh and blood in the world God created. And just as we cannot serve two masters, we cannot live in a divided world, much less a digital world. It is therefore vital that we become aware of the role digital technologies play in our lives, guarding against losing sight of Christ, or losing sight of those nearest us in preference to those afar.

Keep Praying

"Real faith is truth which is all-embracing, all-sustaining, and free from all falsehood."
-St Maximus the Confessor

Wisdom, Let us Attend

The Church Fathers are a repository of living wisdom. One such Church Father is St. Nikitas Stithatos (11th Century). He taught:

What I am is an image of God manifest in a spiritual, immortal, and intelligent soul.

Knowing *what* we are is key to living life fully in Christ. Knowing *what* we are is key to knowing *who* we truly are. Today people are taught that they are fundamentally irrational animals. As irrational animals, intelligence is just the tool humans use to rationalize desires, urges, and impulses. These urges are themselves just the blind operations of survival mechanisms born randomly in a fragmented and directionless world. Nothing like an image of God, man is said to be just a hairless ape without a purpose or destiny other than the one he vainly constructs for himself. Such a hopeless teaching, however, is far from the truth. God reveals in His Word that we are made in His image, and that we are fundamentally spiritual, immortal, and intelligent, and that we are born into a world of cosmic meaning and purpose that transcends the empirical cycle of creation but extends rather into eternity. St. Nikitas emphasizes this, and draws from the Scriptures the deeper truths of human being. He says man possesses at the core of his identity *an intellect that is the father of his consciousness and that is consubstantial with the soul and inseparable from it*. In this way man is created in the image of the Trinity. Man is a single consciousness, which generates the intellect, and from which proceeds the soul, three facets and one being. He continues, saying *that which characterizes me, and is regal and sovereign, is the power of intelligence and free will*. Making a clear distinction between, firstly, what man is and, secondly, what characterizes him, the meaning is that intelligence and free will are consequent characteristics that function to distinguish *how* a person is, not *what* a person is. Who you are is prior to what you think, or choose. This is why surrender and stillness are essential, for they allow one to experience the core of being. Typically man reduces himself to his characteristics. But by going deeper than one's characteristics, surrender and stillness transform a person through the experience of what one most truly is: the image of God.