



**SAINT STEPHEN  
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
90 BETHEL ROAD  
NORTH HUNTINGDON, PA. 15642**

Christ is Risen!

Dear Members of St Stephen Parish Family,

On this beautiful weekend we continue to “shelter in place” as the now familiar phrase goes. I hope that each of you have the opportunity to get outside and enjoy some of the sun and fresh air. As much as we may love our homes, and I do admit that I enjoy living in this lovely rectory, we do need to expand our wings and get some exercise and stretching. I look forward to doing some planting around the church property once again this year so that the beauty of God’s creation will grace our site and lift our spirits. (If by next week you hear me complaining about aches and back pains, please disregard them!)

We will continue to live stream the **Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:30 am**. This has brought many fine comments and notes of gratitude. We are reaching people far and wide and will report on this soon. Additionally, tomorrow will be the final ECF class for the year, and it will also be live streamed at 11.30 am as it has been in the past several weeks. I am grateful to Andrew Soltis, Kristen Keleschenyi and Leia Shilabod for their energy and creativity during this lockdown time. They have generated much enthusiasm during their on-line presentations, and we all owe them a round of thanks for their contribution to the life of our parish.

The financial contributions continue to come in to our parish even though we are not physically able to be present. This week we deposited \$1,032.00 into our account. As always, you may send your tithes to the church through the mail or drop them off during the week. I am pleased to see the regular donations continue to come in.

This week the Parish Advisory Council will meet online via a Zoom connection, and among other things, we will look at what might be necessary when the gradual opening of churches takes place.

In the meantime we have received some information from Archbishop William concerning present guidelines for the Archeparchy along with directives and guidelines from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). I will share them with you here in the following attachments. I realize that the attachments are rather lengthy, but I want to keep everyone informed about what we receive in this special time.

Please continue to be well and let us pray for each other and all those who are in need at this time.

God be with you,

*Fr John*



## *THE PARALYTIC MAN*

*Out of love for us  
Christ appeared upon the earth,  
and the sick man took up his pallet and walked,  
in spite of the wicked Scribes  
who would not see the miracle worked by the Lord,  
and in their malice  
they envied Him who freed our souls from chains.*

We all look ... and only sometimes do we actually see ...

Our eyes let us look ... but it is the heart which allows us to see.

When Jesus walked this earth, he not only looked at the people around him ... he also *saw* their deeper needs and longings ... he saw from heart to heart.

It is the way parents and relatives and friends not only look at the newest members of our parish when they receive Baptism, Chrismation and the Eucharist for the first time ... they also *see* on a deeper level ... on the level of the heart. It is the way we *see* a young couple, standing before the face of God and in the presence of family and loved ones, ask that their marriage be crowned in heaven as it is on earth. It is the way we *see* a sick or dying person, on their bed and ready to receive the Anointing of the Sick, and the deep sense of peace and comfort knowing that the Lord awaits them and they are ready to hand over their spirit to Him.

We all seek to see the innocence and beauty of infants... the deep sense of joy and reverence of the parents and loved ones ... the pure love and commitment of these couples ... the ultimate faith and trust of those whose life is slowly slipping away. It somehow puts us in touch with something within the depths of our own hearts ... something that is like a fragment of a memory ... of a time in our life when we remember those occasions when we were and still are touched by God in a special way.

When we are in touch with that memory ... something is rekindled within ... and we too are renewed in our faith.

On the darker side ... there is the cynicism of the Scribes that blocks their vision ... and so they cannot see goodness and love. And that same cynicism often afflicts us ... so that we too are blinded.

But today we continue to celebrate the gift of life that is given to us ... New Life in the risen Lord. We pray to be able to *see* it all around us.