

## **St. Philip's Fast**

This fast begins forty days before the Nativity of our Lord on November 15, the day after the feast of St. Philip, and that is why it called Saint Philip's Fast (or the Philipian Fast - Pilipiwka in Ukrainian).

The Philipian Fast is a time to prepare us to receive Christ into the world and into our hearts.



On each Sunday of the fast in our church we celebrate a different figure who has helped to show us the way.

1. The first holy person we encounter is the Evangelist St. Matthew whose feast is celebrated on November 16. St. Matthew is the first Evangelist to give us the infancy narratives in the Gospels, the first to announce the "Good News" of salvation. He begins us on our journey.
2. Next we celebrate the entrance of the *Theotokos* (The God bearer - Mary) into the temple. Mary goes into the Temple to prepare her heart for God. She is the Temple where the Son of God will make His home until His birth. She shows us how to be a true servants of the Lord who may give our entire life, so that we may also become worthy dwelling places for our Saviour.
3. St. Andrew who is celebrated on Nov. 30, was the first apostle called by Jesus. Tradition tells that he travelled to Slavic territories to bring the light of Christ's message to the Slavic people. He encourages, us to be the bearers of the light of Jesus to others.
4. The Feast of St. Nicholas, the Wonderworker, is on December 6. The story of this Saint is well known. St. Nicholas' life is an example to us all of preparing our hearts by loving acts for one another.
5. This week we commemorate the ancestors of our faith; the great men and women of the Bible who kept the promise of the Messiah alive through the ages; the prophets, and we especially admire the Prophet Daniel and the faith and courage of the three children who went into the fiery furnace. They teach us to be courageous in our faith.
6. This week, we remember the ancestors of Jesus. These holy people waited and prayed with hope in their hearts that God would send the promised Saviour to the world. They remind us to wait for the saviour with hope in our hearts.