



# **Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church**

**24 BURKE ROAD**

**FREEHOLD, NJ 07728**

**Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost**

**August 31, 2014**

**Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;  
Subdeacon Daniel J. Korba and Nikitas Tsokris,  
Cantors**

**Rectory 215-862-9227; Parish Center 732-780-3158**

## **We Are A Stewardship Parish Of Time, Talent and Treasure**

The mission of our parish faith community is to teach the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Orthodox Church; to enable people to reflect the image of Jesus Christ in every day activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Orthodox believers in our Freehold area.

We of St. Paul the Apostle Parish dedicate ourselves to maintaining the sanctity of worship and spiritual enlightenment in a family environment that reaches and involves all ages and unifies all people.

We believe in the spirit of ecumenism in which we share our faith by word and example and extend our spiritual insights to all people.

We accept the responsibility of Christian Stewardship that through generous giving we may all experience a faith communion with Christ as the Center of our lives.

We dedicate ourselves to insuring the well-being of all people so that we may truly experience the message of Christ's salutary gospel.

We are a beacon on a hill with the eyes of many upon us; that beacon is the inspired Light of Christ which must shine brightly in our lives.

*It is not ourselves we preach but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts, that we in turn might make known the glory of God shining on the face of Christ. This treasure we possess in earthen vessels to make it clear that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way possible, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in us 2 Corinthians 4: 5 – 8.*

## **GLAD TIDINGS**

**+++ The first Pirohi Sale will be on Saturday, September 13.**

**+++ Every Monday, we have prayerful devotions before the Myrrh bearing icon at 6:00 PM. Everyone is invited to be present in praise. The Birthgiver invites us to manifest our faith in response to her first shown love, to unite our prayers with hers for the salvation of our souls. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us.**



+++ We sincerely thank Nikita & Angeliki Tsokris for sponsoring the cost of the pamphlet, *Orthodoxy* which is being distributed in the parish. We pray the good Lord continue to bless them with good health for Many & Blessed Years!

+++ Today we have festal anointing on the occasion of this past week's simple feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we respond, "He Is And Shall Be!"

+++ Please keep the intentions of these members of our parish intercession community in your daily prayers: Father George, Anna, Barbara, Betty, James, Yevlogia, Nicholas, Maria, Pani Anna Marie and Andrea.

+++ The sign-up sheet for both the Web Site and Bulletin sponsors is on the bulletin board in the kitchen. Please sign up as soon as possible. Do NOT make payment until your sign-up month has arrived. This will make it easier for Father to keep track of payments. Thanks in advance to all who support the parish in this way.

+++ We offer thanks to the Blessed Trinity for inspiring generosity in the souls of our faithful and the blessing of abundant grace in our midst with the offering received last Sunday: Tithe Offering, \$377.00; Candles, \$13.00; Pamphlets \$55.00; Icon Fund, \$500.00; Food Coupons, \$300.00, for a total of \$1245.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offer their God-given treasure and labored for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls!

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Father Lucas, Delores Waller, Maria Idronmenos, Anna Zacharyczuk, Eleanor Korba, Marilyn Korba and Pani Buletza.

+++ We make a **PENNIES FROM HEAVEN** Canister available for our faithful to bring in pennies for our altar and its appointments. We are already in receipt of **\$1809.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

+++ Please be certain to see a member of the Parish Council if you would like to help our parish by using **Shop Rite Food Coupons** available in \$20.00 denominations. We invite **ALL** to be caring and supportive and use Grocery Coupons for food shopping as we have gratefully realized \$5750 on this project to date!

+++ The Clothing Drive is a permanent on-going project in our parish. Please bring any type of clothing and fabrics along with stuffed animals and shoes for the benefit of our parish. The bags can be left in the vestibule or on the front porch of the rectory. Please invite your friends and neighbors to assist us in disposing of unwanted clothing, shoes and fabrics.

+++ We invite all pray the Lord our God grants us the grace of enrichment of our spiritual lives for his glory.



## Sorrow For Sin

*My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit; a heart contrite and humble, O God, you will not spurn Psalm 50: 19.*

*The other man, however, kept his distance, not even daring to raise his eyes to heaven. All he did was beat his breast and say, 'O God, be merciful to me, a sinner' Luke 18: 13.*

*Yet I tell you the sober truth: It is much better for you that I go. If I fail to go, the Comforter will never come to you, whereas if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin, about justice, about condemnation. About sin: in that they refuse to believe in me; about justice: from the fact that I go to the Father and you can see me no more; about condemnation: for the prince of this world has been condemned John 16: 7-11.*

*Then I said, 'Woe is me, I am doomed! For I am a man of unclean lips, living among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!' Isaiah 6:5.*

*They show that the demands of the law are written in their hearts. Their conscience bears witness together with that law, and their thoughts will accuse or defend them Romans 2: 15.*

*Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loin cloths for themselves. When they heard the sound of the Lord God moving about in the garden at the breezy time of day, the man and his wife hid themselves from the Lord God among the trees of the garden Genesis 3: 7, 8.*

*For I acknowledge my offense, and my sin is before me always. Against you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight. That you may be justified in your sentence, vindicated when you condemn Psalm 50: 5, 6.*

*Look, O Lord, upon my distress: all within me is in ferment, my heart recoils within me from my monstrous rebellion. In the streets the sword bereaves, at home death stalks Lamentations 1: 20.*



## Spiritual Seduction

Surely the people of Israel grew hot - physically and spiritually - wandering around the desert following Moses into the Promised Land. Chasing a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, watching all that is familiar wane until unrecognizable makes for a long and dreary forty years.

Pursued, hungry, thirsty and tired, it did not take long for God's Chosen People to raise questions concerning His character. Certainly He has brought us into the desert to die, rose the lament. Assuredly, He had not fled from them. In fact, He remained ever constant. God wrote a fitting caption for their trip: "These forty years the Lord your God has been with you and you have not lacked anything" (Deuteronomy 2:7). A scrapbook might contain pictures like these: passing through the Red Sea without wet sandals; dining on bread rained down upon them from the heavens; enjoying quail given them as a gift from God, and for a little variety, watching Moses miraculously extract water from a rock so their thirst could be quenched.

Still, in spite of all they witnessed, the Israelites grew impatient as Moses climbed the mountain to meet the Lord. With Moses out of sight, the memory of God's provision for a generation seemed wiped from their recollection. Almost immediately, they clamored for Aaron, their first priest to make an idol for their worship. And with little resistance, he was seduced by their cunning and soon produced a golden calf shaped from their melted Egyptian jewelry.

Amazing, we might think.

For forty years, our God called Israel His chosen people, His favorites in the world, and they experienced the fruit of His blessed love. But as they perceived their circumstances becoming increasingly uncomfortable, they turned to the tangible. When they thought God abandoned them, they turned to worship something they formed themselves rather than remaining faithful in worshipping God who created and formed them. They turned to an idol as their thoughts of God became corrupt, no longer reflecting the truth of His character.

God's chosen people, then and now, flirt with a spiritual activity abhorrent to Him - idolatry - by replacing His truth with false thinking and then acting as if it were true and genuine. Idolatry's delicate seduction lies in its intangible nature. Even if we never bow to the image of a golden calf, we worship an idol every time we exchange the truth of Who God is for a lie.

Therefore I urge you, brothers, in view  
of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices,

holy and pleasing to God, which is your  
spiritual act of worship  
Romans 12:1.

Let us beware lest we in our pride accept the erroneous notion that idolatry consists only in kneeling before visible objects of adoration, and that civilized and educated people are therefore free from it. The essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts about our God that are unworthy of Him. It begins in the mind and may be present where no overt act of worship takes place.

Idolatry begins in our mind, travels to transform the heart, and appears outwardly on the tips of our fingers and the words falling from our lips. Sadly, this generation of God's people isn't much closer to a right image of God than those trekking behind Moses in the desert dust. There are people who profess to be Christians but do not believe Christianity is relevant to the way man lives in this time and age. They believe we no longer trust in a God Who transcends time, but One Who has become outdated. Often what we should know as truth of Him is not what comes to our minds when confronted with life's adverse circumstances. The thoughts we permit to linger in our minds then reveal much about our real idea of God. And if the thoughts lingering are unworthy or untrue of Him, we have erected our own idol altar, specifically to meet our own personal needs. We are no longer worshipping the one, true, eternal God, but the caricature of Him we like much better.

Trying times can often provide a test for what we believe is true about our God. One young lady's impulse was not to run to God after her first miscarriage. After all, she figured, if He really cared for her, He would not have let this happen in the first instance. Then an overwhelming fear took over her entire being as she was prepared for the surgery that followed. "I was afraid of the anesthesia," she tried to explain. "I was afraid that God was going to let me die. If He let my baby die, why wouldn't He let me die?" And a seething anger followed her second miscarriage a few months later.

"I've always felt I was called to be a mother. And I made up my mind I was going to be a really great mother because I never wanted a career or a job. I wanted to be home with my children, making them my career. I feel God set me up."

Now her image and understanding of God is more realistic, she says. "God isn't saying, 'I'm going to put her through the worst things and see if she responds spiritually.' There is a reason He did not intervene and prevent the miscarriages. God does love me and He cares about what's happening in my life and important to me, so I will worship Him whether my situation changes or not." But she still deals with the emotional aspects of her circumstances. "I find myself crying a lot during the Divine Liturgy," she says. "God is right here, and you have to deal with Who He is and with what is going on in life. Singing His praise when other communicants raise their voices in "Holy God, Holy and Mighty,



Holy Immortal One...." is difficult. Her emotions tell her He is not an awesome God. "But I have decided to worship the almighty, powerful God, even though at times I feel like He let me down." Her worship is now based not on emotions alone, but on the truth of His enduring character which she is coming more and more to understand. Her focus is now on abandoning herself to the will of the Lord for her life that she might become conformed to His image. There are many things she will not be able to understand, but she looks to the comfort of God's presence in her life.

Unsettling numbers of people are seduced by another phantom of their own creation, rather than the Truth. It is said more than half of the worshippers gathered in churches in America believe that if they do enough good things they will earn a place in heaven, according to some surveys. So they serve the god of deeds. Jesus committed the only acceptable deed to earn eternal life by dying on the Cross atop Golgotha and rising subsequently from the dead victoriously. What can we add to that? By trusting the work produced by our own hands, rather than the saving work God has already finished, we serve a self-formed or perhaps deformed god. We should, instead, immerse ourselves in the grace of the Cross so that we might also triumph with Him in the Resurrection.

Our God makes it plain for us: there are as many idols as there are those who create them. As people are pre-occupied with worshipping their gods more and more, they become more and more like them, rather than like the God in whose image they were created. "Therefore watch yourselves very carefully," we are reminded and warned, "so that you do not become corrupt and make for yourselves an idol, an image of any shape, whether formed like a man or a woman, or like an animal on earth, or like any creature that moves along the ground, or any fish in the water below. And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars - all the heavenly array - do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshipping things the Lord your God has apportioned to all the nations under the heavens" (Deuteronomy 4:15-19).

We have been created to worship and we will worship because our God has fashioned within us that elementary need. But He also realizes how little it takes for us to turn our eyes, our mind and our soul away from Him. The question is always pertinent: "Who, or what, will we turn our love toward?"

Sprinkled through the passages recounting Israel's shame and God's commensurate anger, another story line surfaces: God's enduring and never ending love for each of us. We are constantly reminded of how desperately He loves us as His own and wants us to remain faithful and avoid idolatry. Over and over He warns us and entreats us: "Be careful that you do not....Watch yourself that you do not....Be careful that you do not become corrupt and turn from me and worship another."

Our Heavenly Father wants to protect us from the pain of uniting with other gods and committing spiritual adultery. Even when we wander through our own personal desert, He is ever present. His voice can be heard clearly, speaking through the truth of His revealed Word. We are not alone!

## TIME WITH DADDY

Kevin and I walked Krista to kindergarten today. Her school is up and over a large hill and through a wooded area, so we noticed each flower and green leaf that told us spring was near and listened to the birds that had returned after a long, cold winter.

After good-bye kisses, Kevin and I began our walk back up and over the big steep hill. He was fascinated by the selection of rocks and sticks and immediately began gathering a collection. Our progress was slow because we had to stop every few steps to retrieve dropped treasures. The capacity of his two small hands just was not enough to accommodate the desires of his curious little mind! He had no more time for noticing birds and flowers. With a grim, serious determination, he tended to the safe passage of his wonderful and exciting collection.

I could not understand why each stone was so special, nor why he needed so many sticks, but he attended to them with great care and knew instantly when he dropped even one. Upon

reaching our front door, Kevin and I were both exhausted.

He struggled up the front steps through the front door. But suddenly he let go of this precious collection and they fell to the front hall floor. His determined scowl melted into a wide happy grin. He ran off as if the things he struggled to bring home had already lost their value. Kevin had seen something far more important and compelling, so immediately his focus changed to a new center of attention, his Daddy!

I long to keep in mind that joyous picture of my little boy dropping his burdensome treasures to run to his father. I too get burdened down by my treasures. My house, my belongings, my responsibilities, and all the things I've spent so much time and energy acquiring and caring for seem to take over my life sometimes. I find myself attending to their care with an overwhelming single-mindedness. Sometimes I need to see God and do more than just acknowledge His presence. I also need to drop everything else and run to Him with the same joy of soul my son had in running to his father. I need to forsake the shopping, the housework, and the thousand other



things that are in themselves important and which occupy my time, and just go to Him for a unique time of simple togetherness.

Scripture readings: St. Luke 10:38-42;  
St. John 21: 4-7.



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## Liturgical Prayer

Liturgical prayer, or the prayer of assembled believers is not simply the prayer of individual Christians joined into one. It is not simply a "corporate" prayer service of many persons gathered together. It is rather, the official prayer of the Church formally assembled; the prayer of Christ in the Church, offering His "Body" and "Bride" to the Father in the grace of the Holy Spirit. It is the Church's participation in Christ's perpetual prayer in the presence of God in the Kingdom of Heaven. *"Jesus, because he remains forever, has a priesthood which does not pass away. Therefore he is always able to save those who approach God through him, since he forever lives to make intercession for them"*. Hebrews 7:24,25. *"For Christ did not enter into a sanctuary made by hands, a mere copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself that he might appear before God now on our behalf"* Hebrews 9:24. The model for believers of liturgical prayer is the Book of Revelation and not the gospel events of Jerusalem or Galilee.

In the Church of Christ, there is no tradition of corporate prayer which is not liturgical. Some consider this a lack, but it is based on Christ's teaching that the prayer of individuals should be done *"in secret"* Matthew 6: 5,6. This guards against vain repetition and the expression of personal petitions which are meaningless to others. It also protects persons from being subjected to superficialities and shallowness of those, who instead of praying, merely express the opinions and desires of their own minds and hearts.

When a person participates in the liturgical prayer of the Church, he can only do so effectively to the extent that he prays by himself, at home, and in his own mind and heart when alone. The one who personally *"prays without ceasing"* is the one who offers and receives most in liturgical prayer. Personal and corporate prayer for the believer complement and enrich one another. Neither can truly exist without the other. All the Eastern Fathers insist the person who subsists on personal prayer will be impelled by the same Holy Spirit to participate in the corporate prayer of the believing community when the Divine Liturgy or other corporate prayers are offered and celebrated. No believer is ever excepted or excused from personal prayer nor from corporate prayer.

When one participates in the liturgical prayer of the Church, he should make every effort to join himself fully with all the members of the Body of Christ. He should not say his own prayers in Church at worship, but should pray with the Church. This does not mean he forgets his own needs and desires, depersonalizing himself and becoming but one more voice in the crowd. It does mean rather that he should unite his own person, his own needs and desires, all of his entire life with those who are present, with the Church throughout the world, with the angels and saints, indeed with Christ Himself in the one great divine and heavenly liturgy of all creation before God.

Practically this means that one who participates in liturgical prayer should put his whole being, his whole mind and heart, into each prayer and petition and liturgical action, making it come alive in himself. If each person does this, then the liturgical exclamations become genuine and true, and the whole assembly as one body will glorify God with *"one mouth, one mind, and one heart"* Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.



# Did You Know That ...

...where there is great love, there are always miracles?

...we are all inclined to judge ourselves by our ideals; others by their acts?

...forgiveness is a gift of high value, yet its cost is nothing?

...laurels do not make much of a cushion?

...the difference between a taxidermist and a tax collector is that the taxidermist takes only your skin?

...every generation of Americans needs to know that freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought?

...it is the things in common that make relationships enjoyable, but it is the little differences that make them interesting?

...everyone wishes they'd known everything sooner?

...as a child, one looks for compliments; as an adult, one looks for evidence of effectiveness?

...success is only temporary; the only permanent thing is character?

...where we come from is no longer significant; it is where we go, and what we do to get there that speaks for who we are?

...the job of the citizen is to keep his mouth open?

...classical music is one of the best things that happened to mankind?

...you can make your own world so much larger simply by acknowledging everyone else's?

...the average man will bristle if you say his father is dishonest, but will brag a little if his great-grandfather was a pirate?

# Who Matters Most?

*Amid the distractions, temptations and concerns  
of modern life, putting God first is no easy task*

What would you answer if a reporter on the street, in a curbstome interview, were to ask, "Who matters most in your life?" We would imagine that many of us would answer the same way, "God matters most!" and of course, we would be right.

When we say, "I believe," we are saying, "I pledge myself to what I believe; I make it my own personally." So, when we say we believe in God, we are pledging our very lives to our God. Our profession of faith begins with God, for God is the very first and the last, the beginning and end of everything.

We routinely say that our heavenly Father matters most, but do our lives reflect this statement reality? At this time and place, we can make this observation. A particularly dangerous phenomenon for faith has arisen in our time; indeed a form of atheism exists which we define, precisely, as 'practical' in which the truths of faith or spiritual and religious rites are not in themselves denied, but are merely deemed irrelevant to daily living, detached from life itself, pointless. So it is that people often believe in God in a superficial manner and live as though God does not exist. The practices of Orthodoxy this country have abetted and increased this kind of thinking and living. Our bishops are strangely mute when it comes to the authenticity of the Church of Christ, but are vociferous in speaking out and seemingly explaining secondary, even tertiary matters which do not even touch on the daily living ethic of genuine faith. We claim to be the faith of Jesus Christ, but do not live or proclaim the truth we claim to speak of.

So we see the results of our neglect and participation in the salvation of Christ. We are not communicants of the Body of Christ as much as we are members, with paid up dues to prove the contention. Our parish churches are far more ethnic clubs than part of the Bride of Christ, able or even interested in delivering salvation to interested souls. We do not bother to be present for worship on Sunday mornings if something far better is about to transpire. We insist there should be vespers and matins on Saturday evening and Sunday morning prior to the Divine Liturgy, but we do not bother to avail ourselves of the grace of these celebrations. That



Our daily life is interfered with without recognizing our humanity is being sacrificed to our work.

Amid our busy lives, do we make room for our God through daily prayer and by striving to live the faith we profess? This is what our Lord speaks effectively about: *Where your treasure is, there also will your heart be* Luke 12: 34. And *whoever loves me will keep my word and my Father will love him and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him* John 14: 23.

Sometimes our God takes second, third, even fourth place in our lives because people fear that a life of faith is devoid of happiness and joy. They see the discipline of Christian morality as stoic, as a matter of keeping a stiff upper lip. Life is short, the reasoning goes, so why not just eat, drink and be merry? Ironically, people who think this way seldom experience deep joy and fulfillment in life.

The great danger today pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasure and a blunted conscience. Is this not a description of too many Orthodox so-called believers?

Even believers can fall into the sad trap of the world's seduction. Our lives can come to resemble a Potemkin village, a facade of religiosity concealing our flimsy relationship with God and others. Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own narrow interests and concerns, there is no longer serious room for others, no place for the poor and needy. God's voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love no longer felt and the challenge to do good quickly fades.

We have a greater opportunity to place God first if we are engaged in works of charity and fraternity in striving to take faith response to Christ's first shown love seriously. Making God a priority, in turn helps to find the inner strength to love not only the Church as God's vehicle of salvation, but our families more deeply and above all, God himself.

Our heavenly Father has made us, each human being, his top priority. He loves us infinitely and unconditionally. He sent us his Son to save us from our sins. We love because God loved us first and showed us how to love him in return. *We, for our part love because He first loved us* 1 John 4: 19.



we reason, is for someone else. And of course, if our parish priest does not comport himself the way we deem appropriate we will easily abandon the effort at saving our souls and run off to where we are not reminded it is our genuine privilege in faith to pursue whatever is necessary to achieve salvation. In practice we far more like the Protestant approach to God and do not even realize we daily fail our baptismal promises. We are eager to join the increasing number of people who claim no religious affiliation. We have degenerated into Protestantism and still control the behavior and practice of our fellow parishioners by our vote on substantial matters. We have degenerated our local parishes into two-headed monsters without realizing this is an abomination in the sight of our God and in the spiritual lives of our faithful. We have successfully in most cases reduced our priests into hirelings and set the standard for their behavior and functioning below we might easily say of values even among Protestants of the most elementary expectation.

Indeed, such attitudes are encouraged in our secular culture and we insist that since we are liberated Americans, the standard for our influencing and determining the teaching of the Church is heightened and should be lived and expressed even while the fundamentals of Church teaching are abandoned and shattered. A recent piece in *USA Today*, for example, asserted that belief in God has no connection with morality. The point of the article is that we can be good without God, which Orthodox life in this nation testifies to in our age.

Even among those Orthodox who attempt seriously to be faithful, it can be a challenge to make God our top priority. How many athletic events are scheduled for Sunday mornings is amazing and somehow Orthodox parents are so grateful for the opportunity to miss the opportunity for worship; and instead accompany their children to this mishmash of doing good for the physical body of a child while destroying the values of his soul. How many parents have such silly judgmental ability to opt for gaming on Sunday morning when worship should demand their whole and total attention? And what about the religious education of our children when so many parents drop off children on Sunday morning and run off in another direction themselves? And we cannot even depend on the veracity of truth in our catechetical system when it was discovered that abortion was prohibited except in the case of rape? Why does the Church betray itself and think it can compound sin and still receive the respect and devotion of its members? Does God matter most when we fail to devote a few hours of our time and attention each week?

Such attitudes spill out into our daily lives. Despite modern conveniences and technological advances, people find themselves working harder than ever. With fewer people doing more jobs, work days often extend really beyond eight hours. Thanks to smart phones which we love so much, we not only bring our work home with us, but we also take it wherever we go.





# *Lifelong Learning*

Many years ago, a European-born bishop told his seminarians at the annual oral examinations in his diocesan seminary that a good priest studies and learns all his life. Lifelong learning should be pursued by every believer in Christ so that the understanding mind and grace-filled soul can grasp precisely what the Lord teaches and then avidly translate it into everyday action.

## **Prayer for Vocations**

**Divine Saviour and eternal High Priest, Jesus Christ, it is You alone who chooses with special love those who are to be your priests. With all the fervor of my heart and soul, hear my prayer of intercession for all priestly candidates.**

**Now already in their years of study and preparation, fill their heart and soul with true priestly sentiments and aspirations. Grant them a lively and joyous faith, a great spirit of prayer, burning love for souls and a devotion to your Mystical Body and Bride, the Church. Inspire a tender devotion for the sacramental Mystery of the altar and enlighten and bless all their educators and teachers in their difficult and responsible obligations.**

**Birthgiver of God, intercede before the throne of your Son and our God that all candidates for the priesthood be protected, even from themselves, that they be shielded in all those interior and exterior dangers which threaten their holy vocation during their years of study.**

**Intercede and strengthen their resolve.**

**Holy Spirit of God, grant them good health, of body and soul always, progress in their studies and formation, and also the necessary financial means that not one of them may be excluded due to poverty. Above all, be always at their side in all the temptations that assail youth, so that they may persevere untarnished in purity of heart and soul and one day ascend the altar as holy priests of spotless purity. Especially keep away from the priesthood those who, uncalled and unworthy, would force themselves into the sanctuary of the most High God.**

**All holy Apostles, all holy Bishops and Hierarchs, Fathers of the Church, intercede for our priestly candidates that they too, one day become holy patrons of needy souls, praying for all aspirants to priestly life. Shield**



## AN EARTHLY ANGEL AND A HEAVENLY MAN

**T**here is no disputing that **ST. JOHN** was a great teacher of nations. Far and wide he preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Because of this, a series of names are associated with him. These are not arbitrary designations, for they are taken from the Sacred Scriptures and hymnology of the Church. Consider these:

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST** – This is his best known name, for he is the one who baptized our Lord in the waters of the Jordan. St. Matthew writes: "Then came Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him."

**ST. JOHN THE FORERUNNER** – He came to announce and prepare the people for the Saviour. St. Matthew quotes Malachi: "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee."

**ST. JOHN THE PROPHET** – Again St. Matthew: "What went you out to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet."

**ST. JOHN, ANGEL IN THE FLESH** – Hymns use this term, proclaiming of him: "Angel, for you have led an incorporeal life . . ."

**ST. JOHN THE MARTYR** – Again, hymns of the ritual say of John: "Martyr, for you have been beheaded for Christ."

Let us not forget St. John's **HUMILITY** when he proclaims of Christ: "Behold the Lamb of God . . . The latchet of Whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloosen."

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