

Ἡ ΠΑΤΕΡ  
Ὁ ἍΓΙΟΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ

Ὁ ἍΓΙΟΣ ΖΕΝΟΦΩΝ Ἡ ἍΓΙΑ ΜΑΡΙΑ

ΟἶΚΟΓΕΝΕΙΑ:  
Ὁ ἍΓΙΟΣ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΣ



ΕΙ ΠΑΤΕΡΑ  
ΘΕΛΕΤΕ ΜΕ  
ΚΑΛΕΙΝ  
ΜΙΜΗΣΘΕ  
ΤΩΝ ΒΙΩΝ  
ΜΩ.

# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Thirty Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

January 20, 2008

Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;  
Father John Cmur; Deacon Kenneth E. Ellis and  
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

+++ Those of our faithful who would like to have their homes blessed are asked to speak to Father as soon as possible.

+++ Next Sunday at 9: 15 AM, we will celebrate a Memorial Service requested by Robin Pasquino for the repose of the soul of her beloved grandmother, +Terry Sabol on anniversary of her repose. We raise prayers heavenward that the merciful Lord continues to comfort Robin and loved ones in their loss and that He grants a blessed repose to the soul of +Terry and creates for her Eternal Memory!

+++ 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 this past week-end: Tithe Offering, \$367.00; Candles, \$25.00; Energy, \$25.00; Pennies From Heaven, \$2.00; Christian Fellowship, \$4.00; Parish Dues, \$50.00; Holyday, \$15.00; Diocesan Dues, \$150.00; Food Coupons, \$800.00; Kitchen, \$1102.00; Initial Offering, \$30.00; Candy Sales, \$120.00, for a total of \$2690.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offered their God-given treasure for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls! The attendance was 38 adults and 14 children last Sunday.

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Bob Gorbich, Karpiak, Pani Lucas, Paul Szmajda, Father Lucas, 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 **\$1251.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish!

+++ For the expansion of our much needed parochial facilities, our parish pledge support to date totals **\$92, 405. 00**. As we thank the Lord for inspiring generosity in the hearts of our faithful, we also thank the donors for accepting the challenge of the Lord in building up His Body. We cordially invite and look forward to receiving additional and increased pledges from all our devoted parishioners.

+++ Please check the Sign-Up-Sheet for the weekly Christian Fellowship for the coming weeks. Simple foods without need for preparation are the best. Marilyn Korba coordinates this vital apostolate. Please assist her in making it a success by bringing your donation early so that all are present at the worship of our God.

+++ Please be certain to see **Helen Karpiak** or 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 \$4100.00 on this project to date!

+++ The weekly sponsor list for Christian Fellowship Food for this year is available to be filled out on the table in the kitchen. We appeal to **ALL** our parishioners to participate, not just a few, so that it is equitable and the responsibility shared by **ALL**.

+++ We express our gratitude to the Robin Pasquino Family for sponsoring the bulletin this month of January. We pray the Lord continues to bless the Pasquino family with continuing good health for Many and Blessed Years!

+++ May all glory, adoration, worship be accorded our God in the Holy Trinity by all the faithful of our parish with one mind, one soul and one heart each day of the week!

LORD



TEACH  
US

## Colors

*Another wonder appeared in heaven; there was a great red dragon* Revelation 12: 3.

*He was shining as bright as lightning. His clothes were as white as snow* Matthew 28: 3.

*Jesus said to the followers, 'Tell all the people to sit in groups on the green grass'* Mark 6: 39.

*I looked and there before me was a black horse* Revelation 6: 5.

*They gave him treasures of gold, frankincense and myrrh* Matthew 2: 11.

*There was a woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira. Her job was selling purple cloth* Acts of the Apostles 16: 14.

*Suppose a woman has ten silver coins, but she loses one of them. She will light a lamp and clean the house. She will look carefully for the coin until she finds it* Luke 15: 8.

*...held by cords of crimson byssus from silver rings on marble pillars* Esther 1: 6.

*...every one not brown shall be counted as stolen* Genesis 30: 32.

*...fashioning each corner tassel with a blue cord* Numbers 15: 38.

*...if the scale has not spread and has no yellow hair on it and does not seem to have penetrated below the skin, the man shall shave himself, but not on the diseased spot* Leviticus 13: 32.

# MOVING MOUNTAINS

If you believe you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer  
Matthew 21: 22

Some might rather have the prayer promise here expressed in connection with a more attractive miracle. We are puzzled as we read the surrounding passages. The cursing of the fig tree and its nearly immediate withering bothers most. We would rather think of the power of prayer in connection with positive events, not negative ones. We prefer our own fuzzy and cuddly warm approach to God because it demands nothing but a smile and a happy thought which just about anyone can arouse within themselves. And if that is what being good implies, we reason, then certainly we will follow Christ.

But our Lord is speaking to men who would become the foundation of the Church, his Body, the vehicle of salvation of the world, and like it or not, the Church would inevitably face fierce enemies and wage bitter battles. He knew that his followers would have to call God at times to wield his almighty power against those who were bent on destroying his people. So He challenged them to believe that prayer would move physical mountains if it could transform spiritual souls.

Of course, our great puzzlement comes in trying to comprehend just what it might mean to tell a mountain to throw itself into the sea. Jesus was using a compelling figure of speech here, obviously. Getting mountains to toss themselves around is the height of the impossible, is it not? Or so it would seem to us in our superficial grasp of actually being a genuine disciple of Christ. Jesus is simply telling us to pray that impossible circumstances be changed because changed they can be.

Many of the problems we face in life are, for example as big as mountains. And how miserable they can make us sometimes! But we must respond to the invitation of the Saviour who fulfills all things and believe and pray and wait to see how our heavenly Father will inevitably solve them. If we belong to him, then so does whatever challenges and perplexes us.

The Lord is aware of the mountains of difficulties and problems which fill our lives. We must believe what He has taught us and so we dare pray about them, entrusting them to his solution, knowing He hears us.

## Mystery of the Harvest

Four young men sit by the bedside of their dying father. The old man, with his last breath, tells them there is a huge treasure buried in the family fields. The sons eagerly crowd around him crying, "Where, where?" but it's too late. The day after the funeral and for many days to come, the young men go with their picks and shovels and pitchforks and turn the soil, digging deeply into the ground from one end of the field to the other. They find nothing and, bitterly disappointed, abandon the search.

The next season the farm has its best harvest ever.

## Fail Your Way To Success

The secret of success is to know how to survive failure.

Failure is not fatal; it just feels that way sometimes. That's what some people tell themselves as they embark upon a career and way of life. The would-be writer may be astonished each time he receives the standard two line letter from an editor telling him why his masterpiece is unpublishable! We can become brilliant insightful failures, though, because it may happen so many times.

Failure is not bitter if not swallowed. Although a failure does feel like forever, it is fleeting. Each time one fails, it can be celebrated with success. A fear of failure

can so often overwhelm a desire to succeed. If you do not understand failure, failure will undermine you. We, all of us, must graduate from the school of failure if we are to gain entrance into the university of success. Failure does not stand in the way; it is the way to advancing and growing and becoming stronger and a better. Nobody begins as a success; failure is the fire that forges the metal in us to succeed. By learning how to fail well we learn how to succeed well. Here are some thoughts on failure.

*There are only lessons.* Every event in the universe offers a teaching. Look for the lesson and you can then pass the grade. There are no failures; only lessons to be learned. Lessons are everywhere if you "see" them.

*Failures teach success.* Every failure is a step to success if you take it that way. By learning how not to succeed you are automatically learning more about how to succeed. Every failure is a lesson in success.

*Failures are not "bad."* It is what you do with failure that makes it so. If you take it that failure is "bad", "bad" is what you will get. Instead, look for the good news in every failure. It is an invitation to further improve oneself.

*Failures can be "good."* Every event in the universe can be helpful if you take it that way. Defeat can stand you on your feet; endings make ways for beginnings, the worst trial can set you free from prior

misunderstandings. Make your failures work for you , not against you.

Failures are not final. Failure is not falling down; it is staying down, and even then all you are doing is learning another lesson. Perhaps the ultimate lesson is that you are always free in life to take another chance for yourself. Are you willing? Will you simply continue to do what you should be doing until you actually cooperate with God's grace to save your own soul and that of those around you?

## Understanding

Wealth consists not in having possessions and earthly goods, but in being so enriched of soul spiritually that you have few legitimate earthly wants.

## Our History

After some two thousand years, we are still under the same management!

## You Are The One

There is a marvelous story of a man who once stood before God, his heart breaking from the pain and injustice in the world.

"Dear God," he cried out, "look at all the suffering, the anguish and distress in the world. Why don't you send help?"

Our heavenly Father responded: "I did send help. I sent you."

## Best Advice

If asked to give the single most useful bit of advice for all humanity, it would be this: Expect trouble as an inevitable part of life and when it comes, you're your head high, look it squarely in the eyes, and say, "I will be bigger than you. You cannot defeat me; with Lord I shall overcome..."

## Habit

First forget inspiration. Habit is more dependable. Holy habit can be soul-saving. Habit will sustain you whether you are inspired or not. Habit is persistence in practice. Do not give up the habit of being a disciple of Christ and you will save your soul.

## How To

How to make it as a Christian? Be so good, so faithful to Christ they cannot ignore you!

## No Choice

You don't get to choose how you are going to die. Or when for that matter. You can only decide how you are going to live. So live that you die well.

## Giants

A team of giants need s giant pitchers who throw good ideas. Giant pitchers

throw good ideas. But every giant pitcher needs an outstanding giant catcher. Without giant catchers, the ideas of giant pitchers may eventually disappear.

## How Not

In a monastery garden, a wise old monk who was blind was walking with a newcomer to the monastic life.

It was a beautiful spring day. The garden was coming to bloom in myriad color and the wind blew softly. As they passed near a large peach tree, the monk moved his head to miss the over hanging limbs. The novice looked startled and asked, "Father, how is it that you *saw* those limbs?"

The blind monk answered, "To see with the eyes is only one sensation. I *heard* the wind sing softly in the trees' branches."

The novice looked puzzled as the blind monk continued. "Close your eyes and tell me what you hear. Do you hear your heartbeat? Do you hear the footfall of the monk across the courtyard? Do you hear the grasshopper at your feet?"

The young novice looked down in astonishment and saw the first grasshopper of the new spring. "How do you hear these things?" the novice exclaimed.

The blind monk answered, "How do you *not* hear them?"

## How To Respond To Failure

No Christian escapes a taste of the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land.

**F**orget about your failures. Do not dwell on past mistakes, do not cry over spilled milk.

**A**nticipate failure. Realize we all make mistakes.

**I**ntensity should be felt in everything you do. Never be a failure for lack of effort.

**L**earn from your mistakes. Do not repeat previous errors.

**U**nderstand why you failed. Diagnose your mistakes so as not to repeat them.

**R**espond; do not react to errors. Responding corrects mistakes; reacting simply magnifies them.

**E**levate your self-concepts. It is okay to fail. Everybody does from time to time. Now how are you going to deal with and respond to failure?

Wanting something is not enough. Everyone wants to achieve the salvation of their soul. But you must hunger for it. Your motivation must be absolutely compelling in order to overcome the obstacles that will invariably come your way. Christ's love for us is our motivation



and inspiration. Fear will make you hesitate and hesitation will make your fear come true. Failure is never anything more than an obvious and generous invitation to have recourse to the strengthening and affirming and uplifting hand of God. The difficulties of life are intended to make us better, not bitter.

The misfortune of evil does not kill you, but surely instructs you; human tribulation teaches you; it does not destroy you. The more afflicted in this world, the greater is our assurance for the next; the more we sorrow in the present, the greater will be our joy in the future.

### Life Clock

The clock of life is wound but once  
And no one has the power  
To tell just when the hands will stop...  
At late or early hour.  
NOW is the only time you own,  
Live, love and toil with a will.  
Place no faith in tomorrow, for the  
Clock may then be still.

### Successful Living

"For as long as I can remember," an septagenarian monk once said, "whatever I was doing at the time was the important thing in the world for me...which is why I have such enthusiasm for worshipping and singing God's praises God every day of my life. I have found it to be the priceless ingredient in any recipe for successful living. I thank God good

judgment was taught me by a merciful and loving Father. It is an important acquired skill." The old monk long ago learned, at the Divine Liturgy, eternity enters time and time sanctified, is caught up into eternity.

### Blessing

May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
May he show his face to you and have  
mercy on you.  
May he turn his countenance toward you  
and give you peace.  
The Lord bless you.  
Numbers 6: 24.

### Uplift

To give and not count the cost; to fight  
and not heed the wounds; to toil and not  
seek rest; to labor and not ask for reward  
save knowing that we do God's will.

### Lightening

Like lightening, grief strikes my life. Its piercing impact momentarily paralyzes my mind, but soon the reality of loss shatters the numbness with torrents of despair. At last the downpour diminishes to a drizzle. The thundercloud passes, the sky clears and so a lovely world smiles understandingly. Lightening is an essential part of God's plan for clearing the atmosphere; likewise, sorrow burns away the dross so that only lasting values remain. It is not finality. God is in control, using it in His wonderful way for good.

## PRAYER AND FORGIVENESS

If you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father...  
may forgive you your sins  
Mark 11: 25.

We are often astonished by Jesus' description of the power of prayer. It is hard for us to comprehend how prayer can accomplish so much, but what is really meant is that it expresses the strength of the soul which is enriched and empowered by faith response to our heavenly Father. It is not trusting God can, but knowing He will do what He says. Prayer can then move mountains, that is, it can provide solutions to impossible problems. But there are conditions.

In the gospel of St. Mark, the conditions are described more fully than elsewhere. Once again faith is prominently not only mentioned, but made necessary. An empty soul cannot approach its Creator, nor can one blemished and dirty in sin and faithlessness. But there is another condition here: anyone who stands before the Lord and asks him to do the impossible must examine himself and make sure that he does not harbor hatred. He must forgive those who have wronged him. He must correct the circumstances that are sinfully present. Otherwise God will not listen when a barricade of separating sin surrounds the petitioner.

This brings us up short. We wouldn't think that our relationships with our spouses, children, coworkers, and other would have anything to do with the effectiveness of prayer. But they do. Our willingness to forgive those who have hurt us is the measure of how well we understand God's forgiving love. We create and readily participate in circumstances which separate us from the Lord. The woman who marries a non-baptized pagan in the civil arena is only pretending and playing at marriage. Why she becomes angry when she cannot become a part of the communion line is difficult to grasp. She has eagerly made the separation from Christ on her own, thinking that lust is love. Instead of correcting the situation, she harbors grudges against the Church, against the parish priest who upholds the precepts of Christ and protects from further, far more dangerous sacrilegious sin. But too many are unwilling to make the adjustments to smooth out their own profiles even though they must do so to fully understand God's fullness of encompassing love.

The first word of our prayer won't get through to our heavenly Father unless He first forgives us. And He cannot move mountains for people who refuse to change their circumstances and move the mountains of their own sinful creation.

# Did You Know That ...

- ...the difference between history's boldest accomplishments and its most staggering failures is often, simply, the diligent will to persevere?**
- ...we live in such a society of self-gratification that we do not realize what God gives to us?**
- ...in the parables, Jesus speaks directly to us in our daily circumstances?**
- ...the single most important aspect of any parish is glorifying God in prayer and worship?**
- ...fathers have the most important impact on the spiritual life of their family?**
- ...students of our Jesus School make a difference when they are here every Sunday to worship, praise and learn about God?**
- ...God always gifts us with the blessings we need to assist others in their Christian pilgrimage?**
- ...if we do not talk about our faith commitment and our living Christ each day, who will?**
- ...Orthodoxy is not merely one more denomination with no greater merit than any other?**
- ...faith and good works are needed for eternal life?**
- ...Orthodoxy is unique because it is the one true Church of Jesus Christ in the world today?**
- ...the sacramental Mystery of Baptism invites us to become saints?**
- ...the book of Revelation is not a frightening or enigmatic warning, but an essentially encouraging vision of Christ's definitive victory over evil?**
- ...suffering is never perceived as the last word, but is seen as one point in the passage to happiness and in fact, is itself already mysteriously infused in the joy that flows from hope?**
- ...the suffering the Church endures in various places is not deserved just as Jesus himself did not deserve his torment?**

## FOLLOWING CHRIST: A FAMILY AFFAIR

**D**epicted on the cover of this morning's Church Bulletin is an entire family of saints: XENOPHON, his wife MARIA and their sons JOHN and ARCADIUS. They lived in Constantinople in the fifth century, and Xenophon and Maria were well respected citizens of the capital of the Byzantine Empire. Despite possessing great wealth, they distinguished themselves by living a simple life that centered on doing charitable works.

As their sons John and Arcadius grew older, the pious parents wished to give their sons the best possible education, so they sent them to study in Beirut, then a Phoenician center of learning. On their journey, the ship upon which the brothers sailed was destroyed in a terrible storm. Each was washed ashore in a different location, and each took up residence in a monastery, not knowing the fate of one another. After no news of their sons for a long period of time, Xenophon and Maria presumed their children to be dead.

After two years of mourning, Xenophon and Maria embarked upon a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Imagine their joy when they visited two monasteries there and found their sons to be alive! Out of gratitude to the Lord, Xenophon and Maria gave everything they owned to the poor and entered separate monasteries themselves. The brothers went out into the wilderness together and spent the rest of their lives in prayer and fasting, gaining a reputation for being wonderworkers. The parents as well practiced asceticism until their dying days. Through the example of Xenophon, Maria, John and Arcadius, the Church teaches us that patiently dealing with great trials in life can lead to experiencing even greater spiritual happiness.

