





# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Sunday of the Holy Fathers

May 27, 2012

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

+++ We have Festal Anointing today on the occasion of this past week's solemn feast of the Ascension. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we respond, "He Is And Shall Be!"

+++ We celebrate the final All Souls' Day this coming Saturday with Divine Liturgy and Memorial Service at 9:00 AM. Please come and join us in prayer and praise.

+++ We will have our final Pirohi Sale for the season this coming Friday. Preparations will take place on Thursday. Please come and assist us in making this fund raiser a success by securing orders and offering helping hands. We sincerely thank all who came this past Friday to assure the success of the Bake Sale. Some 101 rolls were made and sold. God bless you devoted souls!

+++ Next Sunday is Pentecost, the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the Birthday of our blessed Church. We ask all to pray about being generous with an acceptable birthday offering, taken after the homily, in appreciation of having a parish church in our area so we can practice and live our blessed faith.

+++ Today we remember our beloved men and women, country people, who offered their lives to safeguard our nation, particularly our religious freedoms. **A memorial Service is celebrated at the conclusion of our Divine Liturgy today asking the Lord to have mercy on their souls. Eternal Memory and blessed repose!**

+++ We thank all who came and attended the nightly Akathist services in praise of the Birthgiver of God this past week. Our special Mothers' Day blessing from heaven was the myrrh exuding during the Divine Liturgy, in full view of all present, on the icon of the Birthgiver of God which was touched to the miraculous icon in Taylor, Pa. This is a sign of the blessing of our heavenly Father on our parish faith community, particularly our beloved mothers. We give thanks to our God for manifesting his love for our souls once again. This is a renewal of the challenge and expectation for us to remain forever faithful and devoted to the task of the salvation of our souls. God bless you devoted souls with continued good spiritual and physical health for Many Years!

+++ 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 this past week: Tithe Offering, ~~\$21.00~~; Candles, ~~\$22.00~~; Food Coupons, ~~\$20.00~~; Kitchen, ~~\$14.00~~, for a total of ~~\$77.00~~. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offered 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! The attendance was 44 adults and 13 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: Father Lucas, Pani Lucas, Anna Zacharyczuk, Eleni Pallas, Debra Szmaida, Paul Szmaida, Eleanor Korba, Sophia Choti, Alex Choti, Nadya Choti, Nina Harrison, Sarah Harrison, Tatyana Harrison, Marilyn Korba, and Pani Buletgza.

+++ 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 ~~\$1637.00~~ from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.





## Listening To Your Spouse

*Dear friends let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love 1 John 4: 7, 8.*

*The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice Proverbs 12: 15.*

*Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice Proverbs 13: 10.*

*My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires James 1: 19, 20.*

*The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise man seek it out Proverbs 18: 15.*

*Let the wise listen and add to their hearing, and let the discerning get guidance Proverbs 1: 5.*

*Listen my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck Proverbs 1: 8, 9.*

*He who listens to a life-giving rebuke will be at home among the wise Proverbs 15: 31.*

*Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid Proverbs 12: 1.*



# Did You Know That ...

...one of these days is none of these days?

...there are two sides to every question and if you want to be more popular, you take both?

...logic is the art of being wrong with confidence?

...all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye?

...the man who is too old to learn was probably always too old to learn?

...it is what you learn after you know it all that counts?

...the rich need not beg a welcome?

...castles in the air are all right until we try to move into them?

...for most of us it would be convenient if God were a rascal?

...the only sure thing about luck is that it will change?

...it is difficult to see the entire picture if you are in the frame?

...we hear and apprehend only what we already half know?

...a real Orthodox Christian is one who can give his pet parrot to the town gossip?

...the most welcome person is the one who knows when to leave?

...he who loses his head is usually the last one to miss it?

...one meets his destiny often on the road he takes to avoid it?

...he that has but four and spends five has no need of a wallet?

...many a live wire would be dead except for his connections?



# The Book of ACTS

**Author**—Traditionally, Acts is ascribed to Luke—“the beloved physician,” as Paul calls him (Col 4:14); the “disciple of Paul,” as St. John Chrysostom describes him. It is a continuation by Luke of the account given in his gospel (see note on 1:1).

**Date**—Acts was written about AD 75–85, some time after the composition of the Gospel of Luke.

**Major Theme**—*The spread of the gospel by the apostles from Jerusalem to the whole world (1:8)*: The Book of Acts recounts the triumphant march of the Christian mission from Jerusalem throughout the Roman empire. This achievement points to the work of the Holy Spirit, who descended on the early Church, empowering the apostles and other missionaries to carry the good news of salvation. At the same time, Acts narrates the expansion of the Church by means of small congregations.

The primary subtheme of Acts is the same as the major theme of the Gospel of Luke: Immanuel, God with us. In Luke’s gospel, God is with us in His incarnate Son. In Acts, the incarnate Son of God is yet present in the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Background**—The Acts of the Apostles is a spiritual and theological record of how the Church developed, as seen through the actions of the early Christians. The book is not to be read as a blueprint for reproducing the specific details and aspects of the Church which we read there. However, it is of great importance for understanding the organization and structure of the Church; its method of resolving controversies; the role of apostles, bishops, priests (elders), and deacons; and the spiritual life of the Church.

## Outline

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|---|--|
| I. Introduction (1:1–3)   | B. The first missionary journey (13:4–14:28)   |
| II. The Birth of the Church (1:4–12:24)                                     | C. The Jerusalem Council (15:1–35)             |
| A. Preparation for the church (1:4–26)                                      | D. The second missionary journey (15:36–18:22) |
| B. Beginning of the church (2:1–4:37)                                       | E. The third missionary journey (18:23–21:14)  |
| C. Life in the church (5:1–7:60)  | F. Paul in Jerusalem (21:15–23:22)             |
| D. Persecution and expansion of the church (8:1–12:24)                      | G. The journey to Rome (23:23–28:31)           |
| III. The Growth of the Church from Antioch: The Labor of Paul (12:25–28:31) |  |
| A. Barnabas and Saul commissioned (12:25–13:3)                              |  |



## Our Father in Heaven

*Lord, teach us pray*

Luke 11: 1.

Our Father in heaven and everywhere else, we are your people, the exalted work of your hands. We praise your goodness, we celebrate your goodness, we remember the story of your love which never ends.

How ardently we pray your kingdom come so that it may free us from fear and darkness we so many times impose on ourselves and even embrace because of our limitations. We pray your kingdom may come so that it may heal our brokenness and bring blessed peace in your creation.

Impart to us and share with us your wisdom to understand your divine will and recognize your presence, especially when we are hurt by the unexpected, when we are confused by what is happening to us, when we search for meaning in the midst of our losses, when we are trapped by our emotions and forget our eternal destiny.

Give us the confidence to always thank you for our daily gifts, even though we may not understand their true value. Let us recognize the true value of the gift of food, the gift of beauty, the gift of love, the gift of faith, particularly in others. May we recognize as giftedness from heaven the gift of friends, the gift of every color in your creation that brightens and enriches our daily living.

Grant us the generous gift of forgiving others as you are eager to forgive us. Make us more aware of how you cleanse away our resistance and bring your light into our sleepy soul. Awaken us from the misery of sin and separation. May our eyes be kept on the workings of grace in daily living, that we appreciate how intimately you associate yourself with the salvation of our souls.

Help us to reach out to others, to become healing instruments in your world, to be affirming agents in places and times of temptation, to build bridges rather than walls of separation among souls in creation. Then, finally, we will discover that your kingdom is already here not only within us, but among us. Amen.





**When you**



**faith**

**to your life, you**



**your life potential!**



## Saying Yes

*He who believes in me will also do the works I do*

John 14: 12.

The genuine believer, fully and seriously aware of his baptismal vocation is destined to no longer do his own works, but fulfill the will of our heavenly Father. We must say “yes” to the transmission of grace so that we are continually aware of our august vocation. The heavenly Father wishes to utilize us for the fulfillment of man’s destiny on earth and subsequently, in eternity.

The eternal Father needs our “yes” as He needed the consensual “yes” of Mary to come to earth, for it is He who must do our work and utilize our frail humanity on an individual and personal level with souls to achieve their salvation. Our Lord needed the responsive “yes” of the disciples before grace could transform them into apostles. It is through our “yes” that our heavenly Father lives in our families, who witnesses through us in our neighborhood. It is simply that we lend ourselves to his use, that we make ourselves usable to the grace of our heavenly Father for the salvation of the world.

It is the gracious look of love of our heavenly Father in our eyes that penetrates, not those of man. It is his resounding-with-love words that carry weight and not our gracious speech. It is the message from heaven that constitutes the salutary gospel, not our understanding or interpretation. It is the life of Jesus Christ that transforms, not ours. It is the influencing grace of the Holy Spirit that covers human flesh and elevates and changes it.

No wonder, then, the invitation of our Lord to sacrifice ourselves to him, to give ourselves in offering, to give all to Christ, abandon all to the Lord without counting the cost, is so fundamentally necessary for the fulfillment of the Christian baptismal vocation. Just as Christ needs our consensual ongoing “yes” to be united with us, as He needed Mary’s “yes” to come down to earth, so He needs our ongoing “yes” to continue saving the world. God cannot save us without us.

While it is many times true we are afraid of the demands and expectations of our God, who can resist his compelling love? That your kingdom may come and not mine, that your will may be done in all matters, and not mine; help me always to eagerly say “yes.”





## Know Someone Who's Looking For Direction?

In today's confused world, people are searching for truth, searching for a spiritual identity so they can work out, by God's grace, their salvation. Many people are not grounded in truth, so they stumble and even fall along life's path. It is our task as believers to help and affirm those who seek after stability in their day to day existence. By our personal faith experience, the result of our commitment to the Saviour, we can personally witness how the Holy Spirit has strengthened and blessed us with abundant grace.

Look around you and notice. Look around you and pray. Look around you and seek out souls who would benefit from an association with Christ in our parish. Befriend them and invite them to join us in worship at the Divine Liturgy. In church, sit with them and guide them. And do not forget to let Father know, so he can add his prayers to yours that God be glorified in our midst.





## *The Place of Icons in Church and Home*

**W**e have seen that an icon exists rightfully as an icon only in the framework of worship and belief. Prior to the fifteenth century, icons were mainly in the larger churches. Later, small private chapels imitated the practice. Gradually, as people became more prosperous, personal ownership of icons grew more common until every believer's home became the shrine of at least one icon. Let us look first at the use of icons in churches.

The early Fathers saw symbolic meaning in the church building itself. The church is the image both of the immaterial world and the sensory world, of the spiritual and the physical man. The sanctuary symbolizes the first, the immaterial and the spiritual; the nave symbolizes the sensory, the physical. Yet, each area of the church constitutes, with the other, part of the whole, the first nourishing and enlightening the second, with the latter becoming a sensory manifestation of the former.

The ceiling with the open dome represents heaven. From the dome of the church the figure of Christ the Pantocrator, Ruler of all, looks

incarnation of the God-Man. At the center of the line of prophets came the icon of our Lady of the Sign, an image of the fulfillment of all these prophecies. Below the line of prophets came the tier holding the festal icons corresponding to the major feasts of the Church year: the Nativity of Christ, the Presentation in the temple, the Baptism of Jesus, the Transfiguration, the elevation of the Cross, the entry into Jerusalem, the Ascension and Pentecost; the birth of the Holy Virgin, her entry into the temple, the Annunciation, and the Assumption. In the whole ensemble the Feast of feasts holds a privileged place, the Resurrection of the Lord.

The entire iconostasis comes to its perfect center in the Royal Doors, symbolic of entrance into the kingdom of God. The lower tier, in which the Royal Doors are placed, is called the worship tier. Here the local icons are displayed: for example, the icon of the saint for whom the church is named, icons of the movable feasts and the current holy day. The icon of a movable feast remained on the iconostasis during a post-festal period, after which there was a celebration of its leave-taking. It is to the icons of this tier that the faithful paid their veneration most conveniently by reason of its position nearer the floor of the church. The devout expressed intimate communion with the saints represented there by placing a kiss on the faces of the icons and by burning candles before them.

Some of the icons painted on the iconostasis were very large. As private chapels became more common, artists painted smaller icons for them; even smaller ones were done for the homes of individuals who could afford them. Eventually every dwelling, from the palace of the richest prince to the hovel of the lowliest peasant, was adorned with its own icons. In the home a special corner of the living room was reserved for the icons. It was called the fair corner or the red corner since the word for red in Old Slavonic is the same as the word for beautiful. A lamp always burned before the icons. Placed in the central room of the home, the sacred images ensured divine protection for the family.



down from heaven upon the assembled faithful and hears their prayers as he reminds them of his omnipresence. The floor of the building represents this world, where a pilgrim people makes its way to heaven. Stairs lead to the altar which stands higher than floor level. The altar is, as it were, suspended between heaven and earth, lifting the faithful up to heaven through the Word of the gospels and the grace of the sacraments.

Between the nave and the sanctuary there stands a screen with a curtain that is opened at various times during the Divine Liturgy, thus making the sanctuary visible but inaccessible to anyone but the sacred ministers. This sanctuary screen, or iconostasis, developed into an increasingly complex structure: numerous icons of saints and of the holy mysteries of the faith were mounted on it. While this screen appears to separate the divine world and the human world, it actually unites the two, symbolizing the reconciliation accomplished between the God of all and his creation.

An icon of the Savior, situated directly above the Royal Doors through which the priest brings Holy Communion to the congregation, holds the central place in the iconostasis. Icons of the Virgin Mother, representing the New Testament, and of John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets, take their place on either side of the Christ icon, forming what is called the Deisis prayer group. They stand in an attitude of prayer, indicating continual intercession for man who stands ever in need of the Lord's redeeming mercy. In time, other figures were ranked in this group, e.g., Saints Peter and Paul and the Archangels Gabriel and Michael. The general movement of the group is one of prayerful supplication before the enthroned Lord.

With time the tiers on the iconostasis grew in number; as this happened the top row came to hold representations of the Old Testament patriarchs. Below this was the row with the prophets, holding in their hands scrolls that contained the prophecies concerning the

Sometimes in the homes of the very wealthy, a separate room, called the room of the Cross, was filled with icons.

Upon entering his own home or that of another, the devout believer venerated the icons and only then greeted the people who were present. If he found no icons there, he asked whether God dwelt in that home or not. The Russian proverb, "Before committing an ugly deed, carry out the saints," indicates how unthinkable it was to be cruel or disrespectful in any way in the presence of an icon. Frequently families took an icon from their home to the church and before it made their special supplications.

The ancestral icon, a concrete symbol of the paternal blessing and the continuity of religious tradition, was the spiritual link between generations of Russian families. As a young couple began their own home and family, the ancestral icon, called the "paternal blessing," went with them. A very special example of an icon handed from generation to generation is the Vladimir Mother of God, the first illustration in this book. The new bride took this icon to her new home where it was placed in a corner of the bedroom. There it formed, as it were, the cornerstone of the new family. Under this Mother's loving care, each child of the family was conceived and born.

The family customs of the Russians, the rituals that were woven into their daily lives, the solemnity surrounding life's more important moments—all these were influenced by the rites and prayers of the Church. Celebrations great and small had as their background the unparalleled Easter glory, the radiance of transfiguration shown forth by this greatest of mysteries, illuminating the heart of man in his ordinary life. Keeping in mind the deep veneration of the Russians for their icons, we will now look closely at some festal icons and their place and meaning in the life of the faithful.





**T**he profound beauty of an icon is gentle. It does not force its way; it does not intrude. It asks for patience with the uneasiness of early acquaintance. It asks for time spent before it in stillness of gazing. More important, it asks the one praying to allow himself to be gazed upon by it. One must yield space within himself to the icon and its persistent beauty. An icon is prayer and contemplation transformed into art. When exquisite art combines with prayer to become a work of worship and wonder, the art becomes sacramental. It manifests to us the God who breaks through all signs and symbols with truth.

## CHECK THE CREDITS

**A**t the end of every movie, a lengthy list of credits will roll across the screen. In this list, we will be given the names of the scores of people whose work went unrecognized and unnoticed. Yet without their important contributions, the finished product would certainly leave much to be desired. Yes, these “behind the scenes” individuals are the unsung heroes of every film.

While there are those who thrive on attention and recognition, Christians are implored by our Lord to take another approach to their lives. In the sixth chapter of St. Matthew’s Gospel — an excerpt from His famous Sermon on the Mount — Christ asks us to do our Christian labors in secret. “Therefore when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. When you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.” (Matt 6:2-4)

Christ’s words are quite clear, aren’t they? When we are doing God’s work, we are doing it for His glory, not ours. “For to You are due all glory, honor and worship.” Do we not hear these words in our divine services? While there is nothing wrong with others showing us their appreciation for our good deeds, a desire for praise can surely undermine our service to God and our fellow man.

Someday, we will all stand before the Throne of our Father. It is then that, if it is merited, we will truly have “top billing” and will see our name in the “marquis lights” of heaven — the only reward we should ever seek!

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