



Christ heals St. Veronica



Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

July 5, 2009

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

+++ Today we have festal anointing on the occasion of this past Monday's feast of the prime Apostles, Peter & Paul at which we prayed for their intercession in the success of our petition for the building program we are entering. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we respond, "He Is And Shall Be!"

+++ 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 sincerely thank all those who labored so diligently for the success of this past week's Bake Sale and invoke upon all the grace and blessing of our Lord for Many & Blessed Years!

+++ 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, \$404.00; Candles, \$23.00; Food Coupons, \$420.00; Christian Fellowship, \$5.00; Pennies From Heaven, \$3.00; Kitchen, \$141.00; Book Sale, \$50.00; Holyday, \$122.00; Diocesan Dues, \$100.00, for a total of \$1268.00. 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 41 adults and 15 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, Debra Szmajda, +Paul Szmajda, Anna Zacharyczuk, Mary Jaakobss 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 \$1500.00 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 \$100,415.00. 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 \$4750.00 on this project to date!

+++ As soon as possible, please see Marilyn Korba to sign up for the Alaskan Cruise next August, 2009. We are in need of your support.

+++ May all glory, adoration and 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!



Birthday Wishes!

We are pleased to greet those of our faithful communicants who celebrate their birthday this month. Our Lord has offered these souls yet another year of blessed life. The most obvious way He blesses us and participates in our life is by sharing His divine life with us in the Eucharist at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Thus we can gather together and offer thanks to Him for yet another year of life blessed by His most gracious hands. Today, we prayerfully remember in the Divine Liturgy the following souls who celebrate their birthday during the month of June and July.

June 3 Alexander Lucas Choti

June 5 Mary D. Demyan

June 15 Miguel A. Garcia

June 18 Sophia Rose Choti

June 22 Kyle Pasquino

June 26 Nadya Alexandra Choti

June 29 Angeliki Tsokris

July 6 Cynthia Ellis

July 7 William J. Ellis

July 11 Helen Karpiak

July 11 Laura A. Ellis

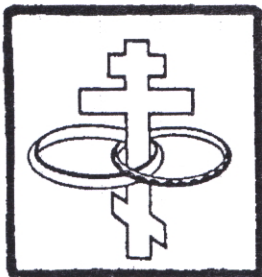
July 14 Louis Pasquino

July 17 Eleni Pallas

July 30 Katherine G. Simon

With a prayerful heart and grateful soul, our parish faith community asks the Lord to continue to bless these birthday celebrants with good spiritual and physical health for the coming year. We invite all to add their intercessory prayers so that with one voice and one heart we may also participate in the grace and joy of their celebration. As we wish them a happy and blessed celebration of their birthday, our ardent prayer is that the Lord will continue to bless them for

Many and Blessed Years,



WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

The Byzantine Fathers of the Church were wont to emphasize how ancient and how venerable marriage is in the sight of our God because it was established yet in paradise before the fall of Adam and Eve and brought to blessed perfection by Christ in Cana of Galilee. Its grace survived the sin of our first parents and it remains a sign of the presence of the Holy Trinity in our midst. It is a living symbol of the deep and abiding love between Christ and His Bride, our blessed Church. It is characterized in the liturgical life of the Church as a happy martyrdom. And it is precisely for this reason the sacramental Mystery of Marriage is such a joyous event. On the third Sunday of this month, we honor those of our good parishioners who observe their marriage anniversaries this month of June and July. They are specially remembered in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and subsequently receive an individual and personal blessing of the Lord at its conclusion. Celebrating this month are:

June 1 William & Helen Karpiak

June 9 George & Debra Szmaida

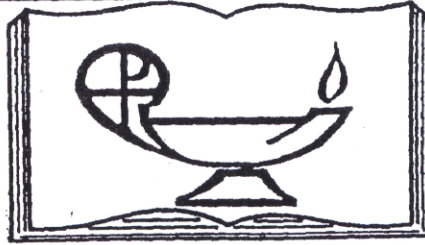
June 13 Father Robert E & Pani Marlene Lucas

July 11 Deacon Kenneth & Cynthia Ellis

We gratefully give thanks to the Blessed Trinity for having guided and strengthened the marriages of these believers, and their cooperation with sacramental grace to remain faithful to one another over the years. Like all who are faithful to Christ, they recognize the presence and necessity of the Holy Spirit not only in the marriage, but in subsequent family life as well. As we praise our God for their witness in our midst, let us also join them with our prayers and thanksgiving before the throne of the Lord. May they continue to praise His Holy Name by their love and devotion to one another for

Many and Blessed Years

LORD



TEACH
US

Divination

A man or woman who acts as a fortune teller shall be put to death by stoning; they have no one else to blame for their death Leviticus 20: 27

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, that place of slavery. You shall have no other gods beside me. You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth; you shall not bow down before them or worship them. For, I, the Lord your God am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their fathers' wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation; but bestowing mercy down to the thousandth generation, on the children of those who love me and keep my commandments Exodus 20: 2 – 6.

When you come into the land the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to imitate the abominations of the prophets there. Let there not be found among you ...a fortune teller, soothsayer, charmer, diviner or caster of spells nor one who consults ghosts and spirits or seeks oracles from the dead. Anyone who does these things is an abomination to the Lord Deuteronomy 18: 9 – 12.

Lies these prophets utter in my name, the Lord said to me. I did not send them. I give them no command nor did I speak to them. Lying visions, foolish divination, dreams of their own imagination, they prophesy to you. ...The people, to whom they prophesy shall be cast out into the streets of Jerusalem by famine and sword Jeremiah 14: 14 – 16.

You did not build a wall about the house of Israel that would stand firm against attack on the day of the Lord. Was not the vision you saw false, and your divination lying? Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Because you have spoken falsehood and have seen lying visions, therefore see! I am coming at you, says the Lord God. Ezekiel 13: 5 – 8.

Fortune Telling Divination

Eastern people and particularly, the Israelites were always very fond of divination, fortune-telling, magic and the curious arts of interpreting dreams, and inquiring by unlawful methods into the knowledge of what is to come and what transpires beyond the grave. This is a consequence of their timorous and superstitious genius which they often times preferred to absolute responsible faith in God. When Moses published the Law of God, this evil was and had been for sometime very common in Egypt and the neighboring countries. To cure Israelites of their inclination to consult diviners and fortune tellers and interpreters of dreams, he promised them from God that the spirit of prophecy should not depart from them, that it should not be diluted and intermixed with false approaches to living and forbade them, under most severe penalties to consult fortune tellers or diviners as they were then known because the falsities purported, from a pagan perspective from revealers of divine secrets, that is secrets of the pagan idol gods. Such persons who practiced this wicked consortium of misleading and deceiving nonsense were to be eliminated from the face of the earth by the very drastic method of stoning. "A man or a woman who acts as a fortune teller shall be put to death by stoning" Leviticus 20: 27. The seriousness of their contentions is thus revealed. God apparently has no sympathy for such as these.

There were several sorts of fortune telling employed in incurring the favor of the pagan gods, namely by water, fire, earth, air, by the flight of birds and their singing; by lots, by dreams, by the staff or wand, by reading the position of entrails of victims. "The heathens used many divinations, being excited to distrust God and submit to the temptations of the devil, who had a great hand in many of their answers" Acts of the Apostles 16: 16.

All the varied means of superstitious nonsense enjoyed in daily living by foolish pseudo believers served to identify them for what they were: charlatans and hypocrites, not at all endowed with supernatural faculties by God Himself.

There is a new breed of shrinks in the land. But instead of couches; comfortable upholstery, and Rorschach tests, their accouterments are tarot cards and astrology charts. Perhaps because they orient people to the future rather than dwell on the broken past, astrologers and their ilk are the shrinks of the Yuppie generation. Although we are people that worship science, belief in the occult is stronger than ever. Psychics are even increasingly used by the police for last chance detective work. Research into the paranormal and courses in parapsychology are gaining momentum in colleges and universities. At the most popular level, some twenty million enlightened Americans read their horoscopes in newspapers and magazines avidly each day.

People do not seem to quite comprehend if their know-how is sheer coincidence or cogent science, but psychics are considered to be healing wounds inflicted by massive shifts in social roles since the turbulent sixties: the entry of women into the workplace on a massive scale, the commonality of divorce, the rise of single-parent households. In a time of flux and radical change, astrologers and psychics are offering what nobody else apparently can: answers, solutions, reassurance and hope. But to us who believe, it is crystal clear what is going on. In times of great stress, when we feel out of control, non-believers and pseudo believers are drawn to magic. Believers know that dependence on astrologers and psychics does not help us face our problems, but only exacerbates them. Fundamentally non believers are grasping at security and they look to these charlatans for a belief system, a reference point for self exploration, something outside themselves to believe and have faith in.

There is no question that there is such a thing as witchcraft. Common sense will show that the habit of invoking evil spirits, often because they are evil, has existed in far too vast a variety of different cultures, classes and social conditions

to be a piece for childish credulity. Experience will show that it is not true it often disappears everywhere before the advance of education and the enlightenment of our Christian faith; on the contrary, some of its most evil ministers have been seemingly the most highly educated.

It is entirely true that no believer in Christ will submit to placing faith in such absurd ideas as astrologers and psychics who claim to see into the future and predict our lives. Yet it continues to amaze me when I hear so called "believers" speak about consulting with a variety of mediums to determine what fate has in store for them. They oftentimes blushing and even jokingly admit to such practices, not seeing them as irreconcilable with a commitment to Christ. If we believe in the Saviour, we cannot submit ourselves to the temptation of this prevalent nonsense. It labels us for what we are: disbelieving and superstitious fools.

The Old Covenant prophets were wearied in this sort of participation by those called to be faithful to God. Isaiah castigates them sternly:

**You wearied yourself with
many consultations, at which
you toiled from your youth. Let
the astrologers stand forth
and save you, the stargazers
who forecast at each new moon
what would happen to you.
Isaiah 47:13.**

He is expressing his profound distress over the prevalent sentiment among the chosen people. They lost faith in our Heavenly Father and began to look elsewhere for spiritual security. They abandoned the safety of faith in the Lord and were seduced by the allurements of paganism. They were attracted to witches and fortune tellers and forgot their faith commitment to the Lord. It is no wonder, God placed these words on the lips of the prophet:

*Complete bereavement and
widowhood shall come upon
you for your many sorceries
and the great number of your
spells. Because you felt secure
in your wickedness and said,
'No one sees me.' Your wisdom
and your knowledge led you
astray and you said to
yourself, 'I and no one
else.' But upon you shall
come evil you will not know
how to predict. Disaster shall
befall you which you shall
not allay. Suddenly there
shall come upon you ruin
which you will not expect.
Isaiah 47:9-11.*

In their puffed-up pride, they do not respond, so He mocks them in their utter simplicity.

*Keep up now, your spells and
your many sorceries; perhaps
you can make them avail,
perhaps you can strike terror.
Isaiah 47:12.*

This attempted divination by the power of evil spirits is to be kept at a distance from any believer in Christ. It is an old error with a new name, to fit our current sophistication. Its practitioners and participants may be sophisticated in sinful matters, but are deprived abysmally in things spiritual. It was plainly forbidden to us by the Lord.

*Do not practice divination
or fortune telling.
Leviticus 19:26.*

*Do not go to mediums or
consult fortune tellers, for
you will be defiled by them.
Leviticus 19:31.*

*Should anyone turn to mediums
and fortune tellers, and follow
their wanton ways, I will turn
against such a one.*
Leviticus 20:6.

As if to remind them His mandate is not to be taken lightly, He quickly offers a reason for its serious adherence. Our faith and trust in them deprives us of holiness and sanctity.

*Sanctify yourselves, then, and be
holy, for I, the Lord, your
God am holy.*
Leviticus 20:7.

We can imagine the frustration of the prophets who encountered in their faithful some who were reluctant to give themselves fully to the Lord in a faith commitment which would endure. They castigate them and villify fortunetellers and mediums. One even comically addresses them as those who

...chirp and mutter!
Isaiah 9:19.

There is no question those who profess to practice foretelling the future are not filled with the Spirit of God. They are, instead, led by the devil himself. Our visiting them and placing faith in what they say places us in the enemies' camp. They are full of lies because they follow the

...father of liars.
John 8:44.

Jeremiah saw them and recognized them instantly, as should we who are possessed of the Spirit of the Lord. They cannot be mistaken. They should not deceive one who is faithful to Christ.

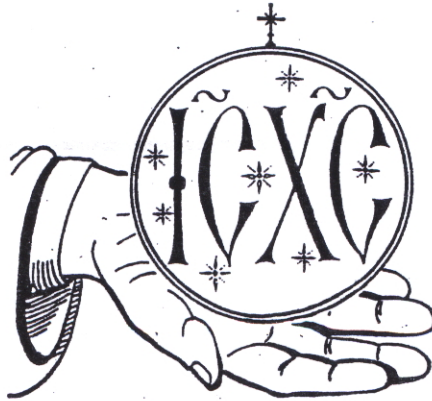
*Lies these prophets utter in
my name, the Lord said to me.
I did not send them; I gave
them no command nor did I
speak to them. Lying visions,
foolish divination, dreams of
their own imagination, they
prophesy to you.*

Jeremiah 14:14.

It is more than time we put away dealing with such nonsense and pursue as did the early converts of the Apostles, the love of Christ. It is in Him alone we place our trust, it is to Him alone we offer our worship and adoration. It is He alone Who can satisfy our innermost needs. Only those who do not take seriously their devotion and commitment to Christ visit such devil-inspired creatures because

*...they do not know the thoughts
of the Lord, nor understand
His counsel.*

Micah 4:12.





Enthroned Christ as Lord
in your hearts.

If anyone asks you
to give an account
of the hope
which you cherish,
be ready at all times
to answer for it,
but courteously
and with due reverence.

SAINT PETER

He Did Not Save Himself

A pious believer rented a room at the home of a farmer, whom, to his dismay, he later found out was not Christian. The believer waited for an appropriate time to talk to him about the Lord. Finally, early one morning the opportunity came when the farmer asked him to accompany him in the chicken coop. There, on one of the nests, sat a hen with a brood of little ones peeking out from under her wings. "Touch her," the farmer said. As the believing man put his hand on the hen he found she was cold and obviously dead.

"Look at the wound on her head," the farmer continued. "A weasel that I have been having trouble with around here, apparently has sucked all the blood from her body and she never once moved for fear the animal enemy would harm her little chicks who were hiding beneath her wings."

"Oh," said the believer, "that was just like Christ. He endured all the horrible suffering for us on the cross. He could have saved His own life in the flesh, but He would not, because if He had moved we would have been lost." The Holy Spirit applied the simple analogy to the farmer's heart and soon he placed his faith in the One Who on Golgotha chose to save us, rather than to spare himself!

"He saved others, but himself he cannot save," was heard when Christ our Lord was crucified; but He sheltered us from death and hell because of his enduring love. There is no question it was for us the Saviour bled and died. The symbol of our blessed faith is a Cross, not an easy chair!

Thus we readily come to understand the protective and salutary life and death of our God on the Cross cannot be forgotten or dismissed. He chose not to save himself so that we would be saved. He chose to die for us that we might live. He chose us to be his witnesses in the world today.

How we respond to his first offered and plainly exhibited love will determine our inheritance. Will Meribbaal's devoted and faithful service in the Old Testament characterize our response? "Your servant shall do just as my Lord...has commanded him" 2 Samuel 9: 11.

Triumph Over The Grave

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he may die, yet shall live John 11: 25.

Death may steal from us the ones we love and admire, but for followers of Christ the separation is only temporary. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ assures us that as death could not hold him so too, the tomb cannot cling to the children, parents, friends and companions who have died before us. Christ's Resurrection is the foundation of our hope.

An army chaplain told of a soldier at the battle of Inkerman in the Crimean War in 1854 who was somehow able to muster enough energy and strength to crawl back to his tent after he was hit by the dispersal of a canon shot. When he was later found by fellow soldiers, he was lying face down. His open pocket Bible before him, his hand stuck to one of the pages by his blood which covered it. When the hand was lifted, some of the words from the printed page were clearly visible on it. The verse was: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he may die, yet shall he live" John 11: 25.

It is only our blessed Orthodox faith that can comfort and inspire us even at moments of impending death and can unite us in faith with glorified saints and the angels of heaven. What gloom and darkness would settle on this world were it not for the glorious Resurrection of Christ!

In our grieving moments, we can find uplifting and comforting grace in this: Because Jesus lives, we shall also live! We crown him the Lord of life who triumphed over the grave, who rose victorious to the glory of those He came to uplift and save.

The Resurrection of Christ is God's blessed answer of hope and inspiration to man's cry of despair.

WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE

Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad. With his arm the Lord has won victory. By His death, the Lord has conquered death. He has become the first-born of the dead, He has delivered us from the depths of the Abyss and has granted great mercy to the world Troparion, Resurrection Tone Three.

Today, You arose from the grave, O merciful Lord. You rescued us from the gates of death. Today, Adam sings in exultation and Eve rejoices. With them, the prophets and patriarchs ever praise the might of Your divine power Kontakion, Resurrection Tone Three.

Sing praise to God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise Prokimenon, Resurrection Tone Three.

O Christ our Saviour, by Your Cross the might of death has vanished; the deceit of the devil has been broken; the human race saved by faith. Therefore we offer You unceasing praise Vesper Hymn, Tone Three.

I glorify the power of the Father; I extol the power of the Son; I sing a hymn to the power of the Holy Spirit, One Divinity, indivisible, uncreated, equal in essence and reigning forever Vesper Hymn, Tone Three.

Although unworthy, we stand in Your temple, O Christ our God. We offer our evening hymns of praise; We proclaim loudly: "O Christ our God, Lover of mankind, You have enlightened mankind by Your resurrection; deliver Your people, save them from the hands of Your enemies" Vesper Hymn, Tone Three.

By the good pleasure of the Father, by the work of the Holy Spirit, as a Virgin you conceived the Son of God. He was born of the Father before all ages. In you, He became man for us. You gave Him birth without a father; You nourished Him as a child. Never cease to intercede with Him that He save our souls from affliction Vesper Hymn, Tone Three.

ST. VERONICA: A BEARER OF THE TRUE IMAGE OF CHRIST

In Church History, it is often difficult to distinguish between fact and legend. In the early years of Christianity, stories abounded concerning the spiritual exploits of saintly men and women, often making them out to be larger than life. Nevertheless, the exaggerations and embellishments associated with them do nothing to diminish the **sincerity** of their commitment to Christ.

St. Veronica certainly falls into that category. The Church has adhered to the pious tradition that she was, in fact, the woman with the issue of blood who touched the hem of the garment of our Lord as he was passing by (Matthew 9:20). After her divine healing, St. Veronica had such a deep devotion to Christ that it is said that she erected a statue of Him and placed it in front of her home as a token of gratitude.

The name "**Veronica**" comes from the Latin word "**vera**" (true) and the Greek word "**eikon**" (image). It is little wonder then that the story developed about St. Veronica stepping out of the crowd that fateful Good Friday and wiping the perspiring Face of the Lord with her veil - an act of kindness that left an imprint of the Countenance of the suffering Messiah upon it.

Through the years, several traditions have surfaced concerning "**Veronica's Veil.**" Veronica is said to have married a Christian convert named Zacchaios, who joined her in extensive missionary efforts. The veil was their constant companion. One such adventure brought them to the court of the Emperor Tiberius, who was grievously ill. Miraculously, when the Emperor was shown the veil he was instantly cured of his disease. Little else can be factually verified about the life of St. Veronica.