

# **ARCHANGEL GABRIEL: GOD'S MESSENGER**

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Our Holy Orthodox Church  
celebrates the  
FEAST OF THE SYNAXIS  
of the  
ARCHANGEL GABRIEL  
in July.

Also observed in the Spring,  
this day has been  
set aside to call  
to remembrance  
the multitude  
of times that  
the Archangel Gabriel  
was sent by God to herald  
significant events  
in His great plan  
of salvation for mankind.





# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 11, 2010

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 remind our faithful that at the last Diocesan Council this past summer, the Diocesan Dues were raised, due to inflation and need, from the past \$50.00 per adult individual, eighteen years and older, to \$60.00 per year. Our envelope offering system still has the old amount on it, so please disregard that figure and make your offering according to the new mandated amount. If this offering was made in the old amount, please correct it by submitting the additional amount with a notation on the envelope because the parish must send the entire amount to the diocesan chancery.

++ 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-end: Tithe Offering, ~~\$528.00~~; Candles, ~~\$10.00~~; Food Coupons, ~~\$320.00~~; Christian Fellowship, ~~\$2.00~~; Holyday, ~~\$15.00~~; Website, ~~\$25.00~~; Diocesan Dues, ~~\$180.00~~; Parish Dues, ~~\$50.00~~, for a total of ~~\$1130.00~~. 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 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, Louis Pasquino, +Paul Szmaida, Debra Szmaida, Maria Idromenos, Robert Gorbich, Kent Pasquino, Kyle Pasquino, 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 ~~\$1575.00~~ 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 ~~\$104,715.00~~. 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.

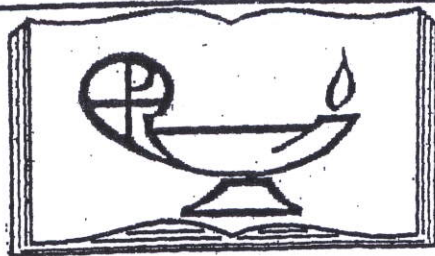
+++ There is currently a Ukrainian Icon Exhibit from the Caves Monastery in Kiev at the museum of Biblical Art in New York City until September. The museum is opened from Wednesday to Sunday each week from noon onward. Admission is most reasonable with discounts for senior citizens. Nina Harrison has additional information. Please see her if you are interested in Bus Rates for Saturday, August 14. We would like to have a thanksgiving prayer service at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Manhattan, then proceed to the museum or to a restaurant for lunch before returning home.

+++ Please continue to bring used clothing and other items described in the flyers distributed a few weeks ago. Encourage your friends and neighbors to assist as this will be an ongoing fund-raiser. These items are currently being stored in the rectory and when we receive an appreciable amount, they will be turned in. It will help our parish.

+++ 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 ~~\$5100.00~~ on this project to date!



LORD



TEACH  
US

## Help In Trouble

*I tell you all this that in me you may find peace. You will suffer in the world. But take courage! I have overcome the world* John 16: 33.

*Rejoice not over me, O my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will arise; though I sit in darkness, the Lord is my light. The wrath of the Lord I will endure because I have sinned against him, until he takes up my cause and establishes my right. He will bring forth to the light; I will see his justice. When my enemy sees this, shame shall cover her; she who said to me, 'Where is the Lord, your God?' My eye shall see her downfall, now shall she be trampled under foot like mud in the streets* Micah 7: 8 – 10.

*The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul; the decree of the Lord is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the command of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eye; the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true, all of them just; they are more precious than gold, than a heap of purest gold, sweeter than syrup or honey from a comb* Psalms 19: 18 – 11.

*Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all* Psalms 34: 19.

*You indeed, O Lord, give light to my lamp; O my God, you brighten the darkness about me; for with your aid I run against an armed band and by the help of my God I leap over a wall* Psalms 18: 29, 30.

## Biblical Preaching

As the priest prepares for the Sunday or holiday homily, he will inevitably spend time meditating on the biblical text that has been assigned by the wisdom of the Church for that day. For certain circumstances and times the homilist will wisely choose not to preach from the scripture readings, but this should be rare. If Scripture proclaimed during the Divine Liturgy is routinely ignored, it may become mysterious and not understood by those gathered in the Holy Spirit for worship. And when the homilist determines erroneously not to meditate on, or prepare a homily, but just “wings” it he cheats his listeners as well as himself of an opportunity to fulfill his vocation and appropriately teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, substituted by his own musings.

Since Scripture holds such a prominent place in the Divine Liturgy, the homilist will need to engage in biblical preaching. But what is a biblical sermon? What should its purpose and scope be?

Initially we can say what a biblical sermon is not. It is not a loosely connected string of biblical quotes or a simple paraphrasing of the required scriptures read. The congregation has just heard the scripture proclaimed and they do not need to hear the gospel story retold word for word. The biblical sermon is also not necessarily a sermon about dogmatic or moral theology. For example, if the homilist were going to preach on the two natures of Jesus Christ or abortion, he ought to preach about those topics in their own right and not use the scriptures simply as a springboard from which to address them.

A true biblical sermon is either an explanation of the biblical passage that is centered around its literal sense or an explanation and development of a biblical theme that runs through many passages.

Perhaps we can elaborate on what it means to explain the literal sense of the biblical passage. It is always important to discern what the literal sense of a passage is before proceeding. The ‘literal sense’ refers to what the biblical passage meant to its author and to those who heard it in its original context. It is in this foundational meaning that all other types of meaning are rooted. The homilist ought to be aware of the issues that surround the text and its original meaning. This may require some technical information that will be helpful for understanding the passage.



For example, when reading the gospel story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman found in John 4, the homilist ought to be familiar with the details of the story. Who were the Samaritans and what was their relationship to the Jews? What is the significance of the story's setting at Jacob's well? What important information and insights can be gleaned from the literary structure of the story? While it is necessary for the homilist to be aware of this information, he does not necessarily need to bring all of his knowledge about this subject into the homily. The homilist should never say something like: "As I was preparing this homily, I discovered some very interesting facts about the Samaritans...etc.," launching into an exhaustive history of the relationship between Jews and Samaritans. The sermon is not a class lecture, but sometimes it may be. Ordinarily, through that is not its purpose!

A little bit of this technical information inserted into a sermon can go a long way. A few of the most significant lines of the passage explained well will make for a more effective sermon than painstakingly analyzing every verse. In the Orthodox Church, the lectionary is limited enough that the homilist will have plenty of opportunity to preach on a particular passage – some times, even more than once a year. The homilist does not need to cram everything there is to say about a particular passage into a single sermon.

By understanding the literal sense of a passage, the homilist can discern what theological themes are most prominent. By focusing on these themes, explaining them as they are found rooted in the text, there is less of a danger of being too abstract. Having then explained the passage sufficiently for the scope of the sermon, the homilist should then point out the relevance of the scripture to the life of the congregation here and now. If the homilist has not strayed very far from the biblical passage and its literal meaning, he will not have much difficulty applying the theological themes found therein to the lives of his audience.

The sermon ideally should simply enable the scripture to speak for itself. The homilist should not put himself between the Lord speaking and the listener in the pew. The homilist should remember that the Word of God is quick and powerful as any two-edged sword! "Indeed, the word of God is living and active, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart" Hebrews 4: 12. A homily at the spur of the moment, ill-conceived and ill-prepared dulls the ability of the Word of God to have a meaningful impact on the lives of believers. The homilist must be careful not to become an obstacle to salvation; for the listener.

Biblical preaching requires accurate knowledge about the scriptures and therefore, a good deal of work should go into preparation of a sermon. The real serious shepherd discerns for his

flock and thus provides spiritual food for its sustenance. If the homilist is not an ongoing student of the teaching of Christ, he fails and betrays his listeners. Perhaps the greatest danger that faces the homilist is a tendency to substitute his own impression about the scripture in place of what they are actually saying. Too often the words, "As I was preparing today's homily, I felt that..." are heard from the pulpit and indicate how deeply goes the lack of seriousness engaged in. While from time to time personal impressions can be powerful and insightful, they usually become nothing more than musings and silly pietistic pleasantries, typically getting in the way of the power of the passage itself.

The Scripture is the Word of God. In a particular way the gospels, which are proclaimed at every Divine Liturgy show us the face of Jesus Christ. Improperly prepared, the priest puts a mask on the teaching of the Lord. The gospels are written so they that we "...might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, we might have life through his name" John 20: 31.

By becoming familiar with the countenance of Christ in the gospel narrative through sound biblical preaching, we will surely be transformed by our vision of him.

We know love by this, that Jesus Christ laid down his life for us — and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

*1 John 3:16-18*

*May*

*His wisdom*

guide you,

*His strength*

uphold you,

*His care*

protect you,

*and His love*

enfold you.



## **Abundant Life!**

*I come that they may have life and have it abundantly*  
**John 10: 10.**

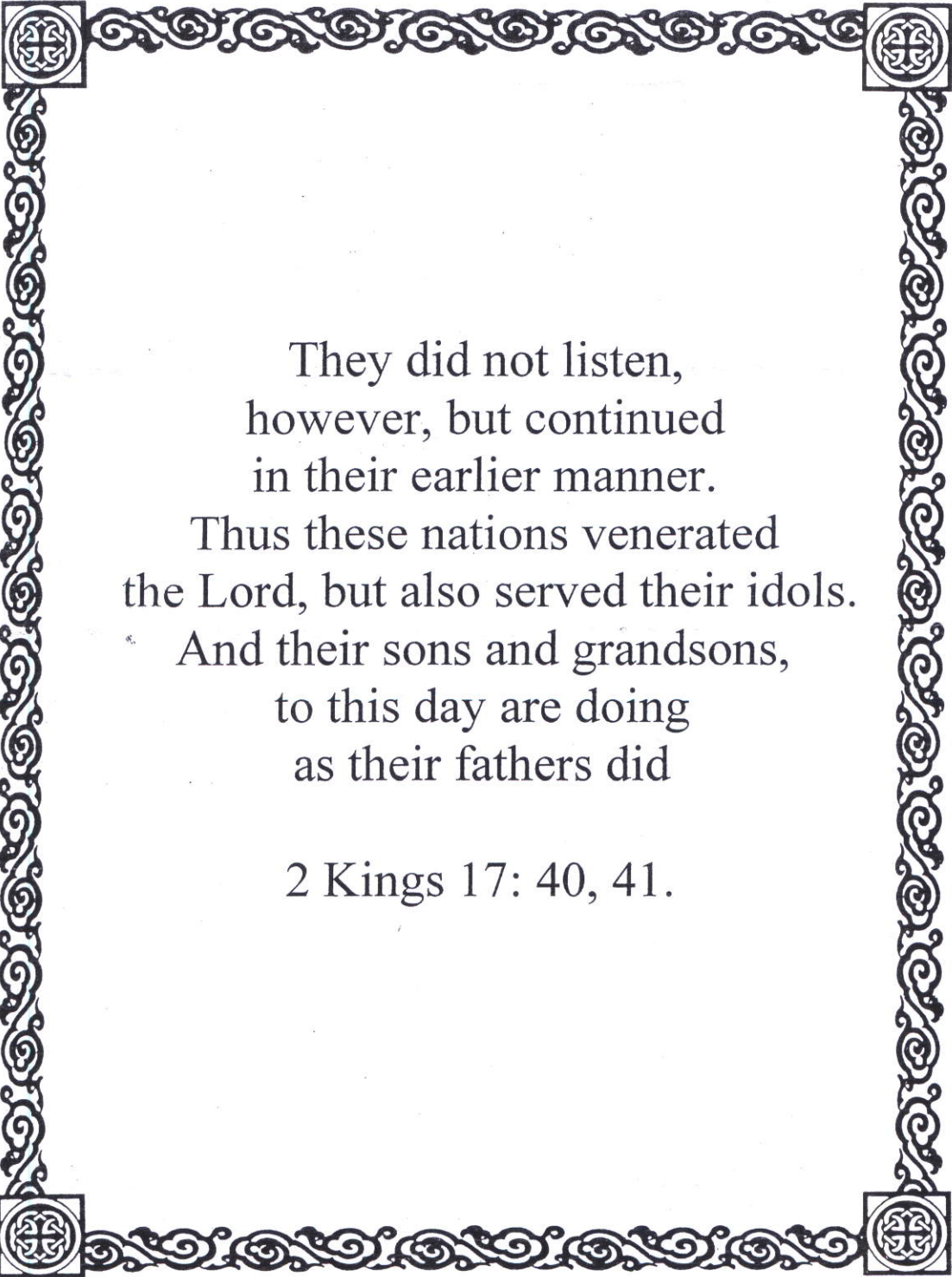
The singular great work of our heavenly Father for us is that He gives us his divine Son. In him we have all. Hence, the one great work of our heart and soul must be to receive the Jesus who has been given us, to consider him and use him as ours, as Saviour, Redeemer, brother in faith response to the first shown love of the Father made manifest by the Holy Spirit.

We must begin each day, every day anew with thought we have Jesus to inspire, to fulfill and to provide the example which we pursue in the challenges we face unremittingly. In all weakness or darkness or danger, in the case of every desire or need, let our first thought always be that we have Jesus to make everything good and right for us, his grace to sustain us simply because our God has gifted us with him!

Whether our need be forgiveness or consolation, or confirmation, whether we have fallen or been tempted to trip and fall, we have the sublime gift of Jesus Christ. It is Jesus who will make everything right for us in correction and penitence. If we have strayed, He will lead us back to the walk path of salvation. If we are headed for a detour of danger, he will divert us and redirect us. Whether you know not what the will of the Father is in one or another matter, or know that you have not the courage or strength to do his will, let this always be your first thought and safe conclusion that the Father has gifted us with Jesus Christ to care and to intercede for us.

Thus for the safety of our soul, for the advancement of our daily living, for the purpose of salvation, assume this gift of God as vital and necessary, as personally appropriated by heavenly inspiration, reckon this gift of God each moment of the day as belonging to you in Baptism and Chrismation.

Take him, assume him, appropriate him and hold him fast in the love of your entire heart and soul!



They did not listen,  
however, but continued  
in their earlier manner.  
Thus these nations venerated  
the Lord, but also served their idols.  
And their sons and grandsons,  
to this day are doing  
as their fathers did

2 Kings 17: 40, 41.



## **WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE**

*Angelic powers descended to Your grave, and the guards fell down and appeared dead. Mary came to the grave seeking Your most pure body. You conquered and despoiled the Abyss without being touched by it. You, the Giver of Life, met the Virgin. O Lord, risen from the dead; glory be to You! Troparion, Resurrection Tone Six.*

*Christ our God, the Life-giver with His life-giving hand raised all the dead from the valley of death, granting Resurrection to all mankind. He is the Saviour, the Resurrection, the Life and the God of all      Kontakion, Resurrection Tone Six.*

*Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance      Prokimenon, Resurrection Tone Six.*

*O Lord, You are present everywhere; Where can we poor sinners flee? Heaven is where you dwell; in the Abyss, You conquered death; in the depths of the sea, Your powerful hand is there, O Lord. We come to You, and we worship You saying: "O Lord, risen from the dead, have mercy on us!" Vesper Hymn, Tone Six.*

*We take pride in Your Cross, O Christ; We praise and glorify Your Resurrection. You are our God and we know no other      Vesper Hymn, Tone Six.*

*Who would not call you blessed, Mother of God! Who would not praise your virginal birthgiving? The only-begotten Son, born of the Father before all ages, has become incarnate of you in a manner beyond understanding. God by nature has taken the nature of man for us, not divided into two persons. He has two natures without mixture or confusion. O most pure and holy, intercede with Him that He may have mercy on our souls      Vesper Hymn, Tone Six.*

*Christ willed to save us from corruption; He was crucified, buried in the tomb. The faithful women sought Him. In tears they said: "O Saviour of all, how did you accept burial? How were you stolen, how taken away? Which place holds Your life-giving body? Appear to us, O Lord, as You promised. Wipe away our tears      Vesper Hymn, Tone Six.*

# VESPER VERSES ACCORDING TO THE EIGHT TONES

## TONE 6

1. O Christ, You conquered the Abyss, You  
ascended the cross,  
You raised those who stood in the shadow of  
death.  
You are the only one free among the dead.  
From your light you give life.  
Almighty Savior, have mercy on us!
2. Today Christ has conquered death.  
He is risen as he said;  
He has given joy to the world.  
Let us all sing a hymn and say  
“ O Source of life, unapproachable light,  
Almighty Lord, have mercy on us! ”
3. O Lord, you are present everywhere :  
Where can we poor sinners flee?  
Heaven is where you dwell;  
In the Abyss, you conquered death;  
In the depths of the sea,  
Your powerful hand is there, O Lord.  
We come to you, and we worship you saying :  
“ O Lord risen from the dead, have mercy on  
us! ”
4. We take pride in your cross, O Christ;  
We praise and glorify you resurrection.  
You are our God :  
We know no other.



5. Glory be to your power, O Lord!  
You have destroyed the power of death;  
You have renewed us by your cross;  
You have granted us life and great mercy.
6. We bless the Lord at all times;  
We sing of his resurrection :  
By accepting the cross, He has destroyed  
death.
7. By your burial, O Lord,  
You have broken and destroyed the bonds of  
death.  
Your resurrection has enlightened the world.  
O Lord, glory be to You!
8. Glory be to the Father ✝, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and  
forever. Amen.

Who would not call you blessed, Mother of  
God?

Who would not praise your virginal birth-  
giving?

The only-begotten Son, born of the Father  
before all ages,

Has become incarnate of you in a manner  
beyond understanding.

God by nature has taken the nature of man  
for us.

Not divided into two persons, He has two  
natures

without mixture or confusion.

O most pure and holy, intercede with him  
That He may have mercy on our souls.

*At the Apostichon*

1. Your resurrection, O Christ our Savior,  
The angels in heaven praise with hymns!

Make us on earth also worthy with a pure heart  
To extol and give glory to You.

2. You broke the gates of the Abyss; You broke  
its bonds :  
You are God almighty.  
You raised our fallen race.  
We sing to you :  
“ O Lord, risen from the dead, glory be to  
You! ”
3. Christ willed to save us from corruption :  
He was crucified, buried in the tomb.  
The faithful women sought him.  
In tears they said :  
“ O Savior of all, how did you accept burial?  
How were you stolen, how taken away?  
Which place holds your life-giving body?  
Appear to us, O Lord, as you promised.  
Wipe away our tears. ”  
While they wept, an angel appeared saying :  
“ Enough tears : go tell the disciples the news :  
The Lord is risen  
Granting forgiveness and mercy to the  
world. ”
4. Freely you accepted death;  
You conquered death by your burial;  
You arose on the third day in glory as God;  
You granted eternal life and mercy to the  
world.
5. Glory be to the Father ✚, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and  
forever. Amen.



Christ is the Lord, my Maker and Savior.  
He came from your womb in my likeness,  
    O most pure Lady.  
He freed Adam from the ancestral curse.  
O Virgin since you are the mother of God,  
We never cease calling upon you.  
As the angel, we also say :  
“ Hail, Lady, Advocate, shield and salvation  
    of our souls! ”

We are probably most familiar with Gabriel appearing to the Virgin Mary in Nazareth, "announcing" to her that she was chosen to give birth to Christ, Who would be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. Long before this, however, the Archangel's presence was made manifest throughout the OLD TESTAMENT. He appeared to Moses while he was tending to Jethro's flocks, revealing to him the story of Creation and other events pertaining to the early history of the world - inspiring him to write the first five books of the Bible, which are known as the "Pentateuch." He visited the Prophet Daniel and foretold of the tribulations of God's chosen people. It was the Archangel Gabriel who came to St. Anna and shared the news with her that her prayers would be answered, and in her advanced age she would give birth to the Virgin Mary.

The task of being God's primary messenger continues on into the NEW TESTAMENT for the Archangel Gabriel. While Zacharias was praying in the Temple, he received word from Gabriel that his wife Elizabeth would bear a son who would be the Forerunner - John the Baptist. On more than one occasion, the Righteous Joseph was warned in dreams by the Archangel to flee the wrath of Herod and his successor and protect the Christ-Child. When our Lord Himself prayed with great fervor in the Garden of Gethsemane, Gabriel was sent to comfort Him in His hour of agony. Even the Myrrh-bearing Women heard the joyous news of Christ's Resurrection from the Archangel Gabriel!

Yes, both the Old and New Testaments are filled with marvelous stories of Gabriel's angelic visitations. For this reason, our Holy Orthodox Church calls upon us to pray to the Holy Archangel with faith and love. It is no wonder that on this feast we are asked to utter these words: SAVE AND PRESERVE THOSE WHO CRY OUT TO YOU: "BE OUR DEFENSE SO THAT NO ONE CAN BE AGAINST US."

