

THE DOKATION

OF THE THEOTOKOS



Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

August 15, 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

+++ Today we celebrate the glorious Dormition of the Birthgiver of God and festal anointing concludes our celebration. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we respond, "He Is And Shall Be!"

+++ We have received donations to our parish amounting to ~~\$435.00~~ in blessed memory of +Mary Gorbich, beloved mother of our good parishioner, Bob Gorbich. To those who expressed their condolences in heartfelt generosity to the cause of the Lord, we acknowledge and sincerely thank offerings from:

Robert Gorbich, Barbara Bowker, Betty Samaris, Eleanor Korba, Paul & Helen Pallas, Father and Pani Lucas, Anna & Bill Zacharyczuk, Helen Litwinetz, Nina Harrison and daughters and Joseph & Kyra Choti Family. We express our gratitude to these devoted souls and pledge our continued prayers for their good health and repose of the soul of +Mary. Anyone wishing to make a similar offering may see Father.

+++ We acknowledge a hundred dollar gift to our parish Building Fund from Subdacon Daniel & Marilyn Korba Family in blessed memory of Marilyn's mother, +Margaret Alleruzzo. As we give thanks for this gift, we pray the gracious Lord will continue to comfort Marilyn and her loved ones in their loss and create for the soul of +Margaret a blessed repose and Eternal Memory!

+++ Today flowers are blessed on this solemn feast. We thank the good souls who brought blooms to be blessed as a reminder of the fragrance of holiness which is to permeate our souls as we follow the good example of the Birthgiver of God in our daily living.

+++ 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, ~~\$686.00~~; Candles, ~~\$46.00~~; Food Coupons, ~~\$300.00~~; Holyday, ~~\$55.00~~; Special Offering, ~~\$70.00~~; Christian Fellowship, ~~\$6.00~~; Building Fund, ~~\$100.00~~; , for a total of ~~\$1263.00~~. 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: Subdeacon Daniel J. & Marilyn Korba Family, Father Lucas, Pani Lucas, Louis Pasquino, +Paul Szmaida, Debra Szmaida, George Idromenos, 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 ~~\$104,815.00~~. 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.

+++ **We thank the good souls who made a success of the bus trip yesterday to the Icon Exhibit in New York City. Anyone wishing to see the commemorative booklet printed for this occasion and obtained for our parish library, can see Father.**

+++ *The first Pirohi Sale of the coming season will be on Friday and Saturday, September 3 and 4. Worker's schedule is in today's bulletin.*

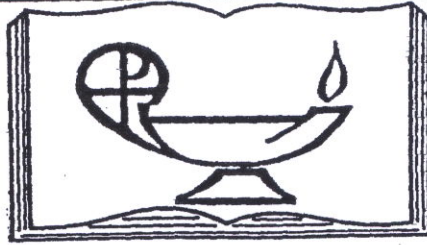
+++ **Please continue to bring used clothing and other items described in the flyers distributed a few weeks ago. Encourage your friends and neighbors to assist as this will be an ongoing fund-raiser. These items are currently being stored in the rectory and when we receive an appreciable amount, they will be turned in. It will help our parish. The deadline for the present collection is Saturday, September 4.**

+++ 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!

+++ **We remind our faithful only those who are present for the entire Divine Liturgy should come forward to receive Communion. The entire Liturgy means "Amen" to "Amen."**

+++ 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!

LORD



TEACH
US

GOD'S PROMISES

It is he who gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in roles of service for the faithful to build up the body of Christ, til we become one in faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, and form that perfect man who is Christ come to full stature. Ephesians 4: 11 - 13.

In him who is the source of my strength I have strength for everything Philippians 4: 13.

And this hope will not leave us disappointed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. At the appointed time when we were still powerless, Christ died for us godless men Romans 5: 5, 6.

Like a sure and firm anchor, that hope extends beyond the veil though which Jesus our forerunner, has entered on our behalf, being made high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek Hebrews 6: 19.

...I undergo present hardships. But I am not ashamed, for I know him in whom I have believed, and I am confident that he is able to guard what has been entrusted to me until that Day 2 Timothy 1: 12.

The Lord will continue to rescue me from all attempts to do me harm and will bring me safe to his heavenly kingdom 2 Timothy 4: 18.

Therefore a Sabbath rest still remains for the people of God. And he who enters into God's rest, rests from his own work as God did from his. Let us strive to enter into that rest, so that no one may fall, in imitation of the example of Israel's unbelief Hebrews 4: 9 - 11.

For Our Salvation

The second part of the Nicene Creed speaks about Christ in two ways: as God and as man. This is a fundamental affirmation of our precious faith; He is truly one person (Greek: *hypostasis*) in two distinct natures (Greek: *physes*).

If nature is that which makes something to be what it is, then this is a unique reality, a mystery beyond our powers of comprehension. Yet it is essential “for our salvation.” What we profess in the Creed cannot remain abstract speculation, it must transform us, conveying us beyond the transition from non- being into being, which is creation, but also from only being to being in God, which is described as salvation.

This is extended in the Divine Liturgy, for, in each dismissal in which an event in our Lord’s life is commemorated, we add the words, “for our salvation.” Thus, our Lord was born in a cave in Bethlehem, “for our salvation.” These words form a transition from the first series of affirmation about Christ to the second. That He is God is “for our salvation,” but that He also became a human being is “for our salvation,” too.

This is not simply self-centeredness. All being flows from God and the mystery of his inner being, that is, God in his own nature, is beyond our understanding and comprehension. What God reveals to us, therefore, is for us and for our salvation.

“Our salvation,” means our fulfillment as creatures. Since we are made in the image of God, our hearts and minds are restless until we rest in God, as the western saint, Augustine expressed it. Salvation means deification, to become “god-like.” That is why the Church has always undertaken the discernment of our Lord Jesus Christ with the highest priority. Only if we know who our Lord is, can we find the central meaning of God with us.

As St. John told us, “And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth” John 1: 14. And St. Matthew shares with us, “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means “God is with us”” Matthew 1: 23.

The Creed expressed this transforming reality in its proclamation of who Christ is. It is essential “for our salvation.” When we say this in the Creed, we do more than merely convey a fact; we profess our dependence on God for our very existence.

What does Christ do for us? The Creed explains, “He came down from heaven.” “For us and our salvation” is the connecting phrase between his divinity and his humanity. St. John teaches, “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that everyone who believes in him might not perish, but have eternal life” John 3: 16.

The Word of God was enfleshed and He was, if we might coin a word, “en-humanized” (Greek: *enanthropesanta*). This comes from the Greek word for “*human being*,” which is *anthropoes*. That humanity, according to nature is meant here is without doubt. Our faith recalls what is written in the Book of Genesis, “God created man (Hebrew: *adam*; Greek, *anthropos*) in his image; in the divine image he created him, male and female he created them” Genesis 1: 27.

Though as an individual Jesus was a Jewish male, his coming into the world was solidarity with all humanity. In our faith in Christ, then, salvation is opened to all members of the human race, for “...there is neither Jew nor Greek (no exclusions because of ethnic race); there is neither slave nor free person (no exclusions because of social standing); there is not male and female (no exclusions because of sex); for you are all one in Christ Jesus” Galatians 3: 28.

This salvation does not remain abstract in the Creed, and we do not say simply that Christ came for the salvation of the human race, but specifically and personally for “us” and for “our” salvation.

This coming of Christ is a new creation for humanity. St. Paul steeped in the Jewish tradition, makes Christ the new Adam. He writes, “The first man, Adam, became a living being; the last Adam (Christ) a life-giving spirit...The first man was from the earth, earthly; the second man (Christ), from heaven” 1 Corinthians 15: 45, 47.

St. Paul was aware of the Hebrew word play in this story of creation. What we read in English is a proper name, “Adam,” in Hebrew also meant “man.” That Christ is the “last Adam” and the “second man”, therefore, means the same thing. Adam, “the man” sinned in Eden, introducing death into human nature; but in Christ there is salvation, as St. Paul again teaches, “...for just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life” 1 Corinthians 15: 22.

There was a further word play, for the Hebrew word *adama* means “soil,” so that the first-created “Adam” “was from the earth, earthly.” Perhaps St. Paul’s Jewish hearers understood this word play, but it does not translate into Greek, nor in later times, into Slavonic. English actually comes closest; but even for us, Adam has become a proper name and would not be associated with “man” except by further catechesis.

St. Paul carries this word play even further. The first man and woman were in the image and likeness of God so through the salvation of Christ we now are-re-created in the image of God. “Just as we have borne the image of the earthly one (Adam), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one.” 1 Corinthians 15: 49.

The Creed, then, acknowledges and professes our transformation. Because in Christ, God is “enfleshed” in human nature, so we, as human beings, and as individuals making up the human race, are divinized in Christ’s humanity. When in the Creed we proclaim who Christ is, we also profess who we are slowly but inevitably becoming, as a result of our baptism, chrismation and eucharistic life.



Twelfth Sunday

Today our Lord speaks to us of the commandments. The commandment to love God and neighbor are found in the law of Moses. They are not commandments for God's people alone, but for everyone who breathes and obviously then no one is excepted or exempted from their mandatory embrace. They are the commandments "written on men's hearts and are given 'by nature' itself (Romans 2: 14, 15). They are the commandments granted us by the Creator in his words to man "from the beginning" 1 John 2: 7. In the New Covenant Church of Christ, however, there is a "new commandment" 1 John 2: 8 given us by Jesus himself for the benefit of those who believe in him. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you; that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" John 13: 34.

The astoundingly new element in this new commandment is not the teaching and value of love, for this is already written in the law. The new element is that believers in Christ must love as Christ himself loves. The new commandment is to love "as I have loved you."

Christian love must be the perfect love of Christ himself which is wholly and totally divine and does not itself benefit from its love except as fulfillment in Christ. It is disinterested love which means it does not love to receive love in return. It simply loves for the sake of loving.

Christian love must be the perfect love of Christ; it must be divine love of God the Father, poured into the heart of man by the Holy Spirit of God. It must be that love which is absolutely faithful, perfect, eternal and divine. Of all the men who ever lived on earth, or who ever will live, only one has faithfully fulfilled the two great commandments of God; one only has lived absolutely and perfectly according to the prescription of God's law; only one has loved the Father with all his heart, mind, soul and strength and his neighbor as himself.

Of course, we know this to be Jesus Christ in the flesh, the child of the ever-virgin Mary. There is no one righteous before God's law but Jesus. Only he has lived according to the law and by the teachings of the prophets. He also is the only one who has "fulfilled the law and the prophets" Matthew 5: 17. He alone, of all men, loves with perfect sinless, dispassionate love.

"By his wounds you have been healed" 1 Peter 2: 24. Having no sin, Jesus took our sins on himself and became sin "for us men and for our salvation" Nicene Creed. Thus the radiant love of God the Father is perfected in a human being, that all humanity might share the love and glory of God. As all

the Byzantine Fathers have professed, "He became what we are that we might become what He is...God became man that man might become god." Because of Christ living and fulfilling within himself all the commandments of the Father in a perfect way, our salvation is assured. He has done for us what we cannot do for ourselves. He has raised us up. He has elevated us from our evil and sinful way and formed us into children of the eternal Father.

We belong, because of our baptism to him and to the eternal kingdom of heaven. St. Peter tells us, "His divine power was granted to us in all things that pertain to life and godliness...that you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature" 2 Peter 1: 4.

In Christ we have been given God's love. When a person is "in" Christ, he can love with the love of God, with the certitude of our Creator. This is the new commandment that man, filled with the Holy Spirit should love with the love of God himself. In challenging us to follow and fulfill the commandments, our Lord is offering an opportunity to seek after and experience the love of God imparted to those who truly believe. Through the love of Christ man is to bear, to believe, to hope and to suffer all things. That is what Christ has done. This is what love does. The one who does this has fulfilled completely the new commandment of Jesus and abides in the love of the Father. The one who does this abides in God's embrace and already possesses eternal life as a member of his unending kingdom.

Job 38:1-7 (34-41)

Psalms 104:1-9, 24, 35c

Hebrews 5:1-10

Mark 10:35-45



God of Love:

*"Blessed are
those whose way
is blameless,
who walk in the
way of the
Lord!"*

(Psalm 119:1).

*Help us
live our lives
as if we truly
believe
this psalm.
Amen.*

Spending and Saving

BY BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX



WE MUST NOT give to others what we have received for ourselves; nor must we keep for ourselves that which we have received to spend on others. You fall into the latter error, if you possess the gift of eloquence or wisdom, and yet — through fear or sloth or false humility — neglect to use the gift for others' benefit. And, on the other hand, you dissipate and lose what is your own, if without right intention and from some wrong motive, you hasten to outpour yourself on others when your own soul is only half-filled.

If you are wise therefore you will show yourself a reservoir and not a canal. For a canal pours out as fast as it takes in; but a reservoir waits till it is full before it overflows, and so

communicates its surplus. . . . We have all too few such reservoirs in the Church at present, though we have canals in plenty . . . they (canals) desire to pour out when they themselves are not yet in-poured; they are readier to speak than to listen, eager to teach that which they do not know, and most anxious to exercise authority on others, although they have not learnt to rule themselves. . . . Let the reservoir of which we spoke just now take pattern from the spring; for the spring does not form a stream or spread into a lake until it is brimful. . . . Be filled thyself; then, but discreetly, mind, pour out thy fullness. . . .

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Bernard on the Song of Songs

Did You Know That ...

- ...the Lord sometimes sharpens his saints on the devil's grindstone?**
- ...there is no right way to do a wrong deed?**
- ...a well read prayer book and Bible mean a well-fed soul?**
- ...Jesus came into the world to talk to man for God the Father; now He is in heaven to talk to God the Father for man?**
- ...there is no reward from God to those who seek it from man?**
- ...Jesus who died to save us now lives to keep us his own?**
- ...if you keep your light shining, our heavenly Father will put it where it will be seen?**
- ...the man who looks down his nose at others usually has the wrong slant?**
- ...the breaking of the outward man is God's way of blessing the inner man?**
- ...those who sow seeds of wickedness inevitably reap a harvest of judgment?**
- ...procrastination is the door of too late?**
- ...the human spirit fails unless the Holy Spirit fills?**
- ...many a child has been lead out of the darkness of sin by the light of a mother's example?**
- ...true faith always weaves a pattern of good works?**
- ...God entrusts us with a little to see what we will do with a lot?**
- ...many a man lays down his life trying to lay down his money?**
- ...there is no place where earth's sorrows are more deeply felt than in heaven?**
- ...you may stop caring about God, but He never stops caring for you?**

WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE

O Mother of God, in giving birth you still preserved virginity; and in your falling asleep you did not forsake the world. You who are the Mother of Life have been transferred to life, and through your prayers have delivered our souls from death Troparion, Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

The grave and death did not detain the Mother of God; she prays perpetually and is our unfailing hope of intercession; for He Who dwelt in the womb of the ever-Virgin transferred to life the Mother of Life Kontakion, Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

My soul extols the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour Prokimenon, Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

Witnessing the Dormition of the most Pure One, the angels were filled with awe at how the Virgin went from earth to heaven Hymn, Instead of It is Truly Proper, Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

In you, O pure Virgin, the laws of nature were overcome: in birth, you remained a Virgin, and in death you heralded life. You remained a Virgin after giving birth, and remained alive after death, always saving your descendants, O Mother of God! Hirmos Hymn, Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

O Virgin Mother of God, when you were carried up to the One born of you in a manner beyond understanding, James and Peter were present; James the brother of the Lord and first bishop; Peter, the honorable head of the apostles, prince of theologians. The whole college of apostles was also there; all in one accord proclaiming things divine, praising Christ's astounding mystery, preparing with joy your body, O most glorious one, the Source of Life and the Temple of God. As for the most holy angelic powers, they were rapt in wonder at the sight of this miracle and they said to each other: "Lift up your gates to receive the Mother of the Creator of heaven and earth. Come let us all sing hymns to the noble and holy body that has contained the invisible Lord." We, too, celebrate your feast, O Woman worthy of all praise, and we cry out: "O glorious Lady, exalt the Christian faithful, intercede with Christ God, that He may save our souls!" Vesper Hymn, Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

THE FALLING ASLEEP OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

In the Apostolic Church, the Most Holy Virgin Mary was treated with great reverence and respect. It is said Christians came from all over the world to hear her speak about the wondrous events she experienced in her life and her intimate knowledge of the teachings of her Divine Son. Have you ever wondered what she was like? Drawing on information passed down from other early saints, Ambrose of Milan has this to say about the Theotokos: "She was humble in heart and full of wisdom. Her rule of life was to offend no one, to intend good for everyone and to be virtuous in all she did. Her steps were quiet and her voice straightforward, so that her face was an expression of her soul. She was the personification of purity."

Nicephorus Callistus, a 14th century church historian, describes the physical appearance of the Mother of God in this manner: "She was of average stature, with golden hair. Her eyes were bright and her face was marked with great character. She was not overly concerned with her outward appearance, nor did she pamper herself. A special grace surrounded all of her actions."

Although there are no scriptural details chronicling her death, accounts of her last days on this earth have been handed down to us from the writings of saints such as Dionysius the Areopagite and Meliton of Sardis. At the end, the Holy Spirit gathered together in Jerusalem all the Apostles (except Thomas) so that she could give them one final blessing and so that they could be privileged to witness her burial. Her Dormition occurred at the Third Hour (9 AM). Tradition tells us she had a vision of her Son shining brilliantly in her chamber, after which she uttered her last words - words that had guided her life from the moment the Archangel Gabriel appeared to her and announced that God had special plans for her: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."