



# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

August 17, 2008

Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;  
Father John Cmur; Deacon Kenneth E. Ellis and  
Subdeacon Daniel J. Korba and Nikitas Tsokris,  
Cantors

Rectory 215-862-9227; Parish Center 732-780-3158

## We Are A Stewardship Parish Of Time, Talent and Treasure

The mission of our parish faith community is to teach the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Orthodox Church; to enable people to reflect the image of Jesus Christ in every day activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Orthodox believers in our Freehold area.

We of St. Paul the Apostle Parish dedicate ourselves to maintaining the sanctity of worship and spiritual enlightenment in a family environment that reaches and involves all ages and unifies all people.

We believe in the spirit of ecumenism in which we share our faith by word and example and extend our spiritual insights to all people.

We accept the responsibility of Christian Stewardship that through generous giving we may all experience a faith communion with Christ as the Center of our lives.

We dedicate ourselves to insuring the well-being of all people so that we may truly experience the message of Christ's salutary gospel.

We are a beacon on a hill with the eyes of many upon us; that beacon is the inspired Light of Christ which must shine brightly in our lives.

*It is not ourselves we preach but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts, that we in turn might make known the glory of God shining on the face of Christ. This treasure we possess in earthen vessels to make it clear that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way possible, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in us 2 Corinthians 4: 5 – 8.*

## GLAD TIDINGS

+++ The annual Summer Bible Camp of our parish will be held this coming week of August 18 to 22. Non-parishioner children are welcome. Subject matter will be The Parables of our Lord. Please inform Kyra Choti immediately if your child will attend.



**+++ Today we have festal anointing on the occasion of this past week's solemn feast of the Dormition of the Birthgiver of God. The customary greeting is "Christ is Among Us!" to which we respond, "He Is And Shall Be!"**

**+++ We acknowledge with deep gratitude the sponsorship of the bulletin for this month of August by Mrs. Anna Sabo, in thanksgiving for God's rich blessings on her. We join her in gratitude and praise and ask continued good health and blessings 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, \$269.00; Candles, \$43.00; Food Coupons, \$220.00; Christian Fellowship, 3.00; Holyday, \$46.00; Special Gift, \$250.00; Bulletin, \$25.00; Utilities, \$310.00, for a total of \$1166.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offered their God-given treasure for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls! The attendance was 38 adults and 14 children last Sunday.**

**+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Pani Lucas, Father Lucas, Paul Szmaida, Maria Garcia, Robin & Kent Pasquino, and Pani Buletza.**

**+++ We acknowledge with profound gratitude the sponsorship of the recently acquired Icon of the Mystical Supper by Diana & Bill Boyes from Florida in honor of the 94<sup>th</sup> birthday of our good parishioner, Mrs. Anna Sabo. We invoke the choicest blessing of heaven on these devoted souls who love the beauty of God's Temple and gladly praise and glorify His holy Name. The icon was blessed and anointed and now reposes on the altar table and will be exposed for proper veneration in the near future.**

**+++ We give thanks to our generous and gracious God for the generosity of Paul & Helen Pallas in sponsoring the parish Web Site this month of August in gratitude for the blessings of our God on their family. We ask the gracious Lord to continue blessing them with good health for Many & Blessed Years!**

**+++ The first Pirohi Sale of the season will be on Saturday, September 6, with preparations being made Thursday, September 4. Please begin securing orders so it will be a success.**

**+++ 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 \$1350.00 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 \$99, 685. 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 \$4350.00 on this project to date!

+++ Please see Marilyn Korba to sign up for the Alaskan Cruise next August, 2009.

+++ We have some remaining rolls and pirohi available from the recent sales. Please see the woman in the kitchen to secure yours if you had no order.

+++ On Sunday, September 21, we will have our Parish Picnic in the Picnic grove of the property. We will have a listing for donated foods in the near future. Please plan on being with us on that day.

+++ Accompanied by a parish bank draft amounting to \$7050.00, application was made for Site Plan approval to the Planning Board of the Township of Freehold recently. An additional check for \$540.00 was also sent to the Zoning Board. This past week we dispatched a check for \$1350.00 to the Freehold Township District Soil Conservation Board which plans a visit to our property. A \$300.00 check was sent to the State of N. J. for recording our agreement not to build anything else on the property but the church and parish center. The County Planning Board advises it has no jurisdiction since we are not on a county road. A new well will have to be dug for the building program. Prayers are needed as in the past. We were advised we will be invited to the next meeting of the Township Planning Board.

+++ **The Thanksgiving Bake Sale will take place on Friday and Saturday, November 14 and 15 while that for the Nativity of our Lord will be held Thursday and Friday, December 12 and 13. Cookies will be available at the Nativity Bakesale.**

+++ 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!



## Pirohi Volunteers

Father Lucas 215-862-9227  
Pani Lucas 215-862-9227  
Kyra Choti 609-397-7281  
Joseph Choti 609-397-7281  
Nadya Choti 609-397-7281  
Elizabeth Simon 609-397-7281  
Deacon Kenneth 732-845-0873  
Diaconisa Cindy 732-845-0873  
Robert Gorbich 732-780-1619  
Eleanor Korba 732-845-5304  
Betty Samaris 732-868-9468  
Michael Garcia 732-780-6359  
Maria Garcia 732-780-6359

Subdeacon Daniel 732-845-4715  
Marilyn Korba 732-845-4715  
Rachel Korba 732-845-4715  
Eleanor Korba 732-845-5304  
Betty Samaris 732-866-9468  
Mary Demyan 732-929-3051  
Steve Demyan 732-929-3051  
Nina Harrison 215 862-9227  
Robin Pasquino 732-780-7914  
Maria Pashos 732-833-1342  
Frank Pashos 732-833-1342  
Anna Zacharyczuk 732-780-0169

Oct. 4, Dec. 6

Sept. 6, Nov. 1

Thursday Before

Father Lucas, Pani Lucas, Eleni  
Pallas, Joan Henry, Anna Sabo,  
Marion Peles, Betty Samaris,  
Eleanor Korba, and Anna  
Zacharyczuk



## The Devil

*Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the animals that the Lord God had made. The serpent asked the woman, "Did God really tell you not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?"* Genesis 3: 1.

*A satan rose up against Israel, and he enticed David into making a census of Israel* 1 Chronicles 21: 1.

*Those on the path are the ones who have heard, but the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts that they may not believe and be saved* Luke 8: 12.

*Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens. Therefore, put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground* Ephesians 6: 11 – 14.

*Do not be afraid of anything that you are going to suffer. Indeed, the devil will throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will face an ordeal for ten days. Remain faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life* Revelation 2: 10.

*Then war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels battled against the dragon. The dragon and its angels fought back, but they did not prevail and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The huge dragon, the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and satan, who deceived the whole world, was thrown down to earth, and its angels were thrown down with it* Revelation 12: 7 – 10.



# **WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE**

*You came down from on high, O merciful Lord. You accepted the grave for three days to deliver us from our passions. O Lord, our Resurrection and our life, glory be to You! Troparion, Resurrection Tone Eight.*

*Rising from the dead, You raised the dead. You lifted up Adam. Eve rejoices in Your Resurrection. The world acclaims Your rising from the dead, O most merciful Lord Kontakion, Resurrection Tone Eight.*

*Make vows to the Lord Your God, and fulfill them. Prokimenon, Resurrection Tone Eight.*

*In the fullness of time and by His own free will, the Word born of God the Father before all ages, became incarnate of the Virgin. He endured crucifixion and death. By His Resurrection, He saved man, dead from the beginning Vesper Hymn, Tone Eight.*

*We glorify You, O Lord; You freely endured the Cross for us. We worship You, Almighty Saviour; do not turn us from Your presence; hear and save us because of Your Resurrection; You alone love mankind Vesper Hymn, Tone Eight.*

*Because of His love for mankind, the King of heaven appeared on earth. He became incarnate of a pure Virgin and lived among men,. He was seen in the body He received from her. He is the One and only Son, having two natures but not two persons. Therefore we profess Christ to be our true God, proclaiming Him to be really perfect God and perfect man. O Virgin Mother: intercede with Him that He may have mercy on our souls Vesper Hymn, Tone Eight.*

*O Lord of all, Creator of heaven and earth. Suffering on the Cross, You became a fountain of immortality. You endured burial and rose in glory. By Your powerful hand, You raised Adam with You. Glory to Your Resurrection on the third day. Through it, You gave us eternal life and the forgiveness of sins. You alone are the gracious Lord Vesper Hymn, Tone Eight.*

## Ninth Sunday

Today our Lord teaches us how vitally important it is to be concerned in love for each other, particularly our fellow believers. And when we fail to live up to his challenge, He hits the nail precisely on the head in exposing the reason for our sin of omission, “How little faith you have!” Matthew 14: 31. St. Paul echoes the secret of life for man: “No matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I am bankrupt without love” 1 Corinthians 13: 3. The beloved disciple could not have worded it better: “Love means living the way God commanded us to live. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is this: live a life of love” 2 John 1: 6.

Love should be our top priority; primary objective and greatest ambition. Love is not a good part of our lives; it is the most important part. God’s revelation to us teaches, “Let love be your greatest aim” Galatians 3: 26. It certainly is not at all enough to say, “One of the things I want in life is to be loving” as if it is in our top ten list of aspirations. Our relationship with God must have priority in our lives because life without love is worthless.

St. Paul makes this point, “No matter what I say, what I believe, what I do, I am bankrupt without love” In today’s gospel episode, our Lord demonstrates in concrete form his dramatic love for those closest to him. Often we act and live as if relationships, particularly among believers, are something to be squeezed into a limited and overwhelming schedule. We talk about finding time for our children or making time for people in our lives. That gives the impression that relationships are just a part of our lives along with many other tasks.

But our God tells us that our relationship with Him and then of course, with others, is precisely what life is all about. Our loving relationship with our heavenly Father must be a priority in our lives. It is in these relationships that we find and assure our salvation. Our Lord summarized what matters most to our heavenly Father: “You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul and with all your mind. This is the second and is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself” Matthew 22: 37, 38. After learning to love God, we must translate that act of the will to each other. Love of God and love of each other is an associative relationship; each is based on the other and cannot truthfully exist in isolation.

Because love endures forever according to the witness of St. Paul “These three things endure forever, faith, hope and love. And the greatest of these is love” 1 Corinthians



13: 13. Love leaves a legacy and it certainly made a profound impression on the disciples in today's prescribed gospel. "Beyond doubt you are the Son of God" Matthew 22: 33.

It is not so much the great accomplishments we achieve, but the love we invest in them. Are you here every Sunday and holyday because you truly love God? Do you assist in contributing to the financial stability of our parish because you love of God motivates your giving? Do you come and glorify our God every opportunity, such as at the healing services each month because you love our God? Do you invest your time at the various events of the parish simply because you love God? Is the love of God your only motivation, or is it to achieve some personal satisfaction and fulfillment?

Love is the secret of a lasting heritage. Our Lord teaches us, "Truly I tell you just as you did it to one of these least of my brethren, you did it to me" Matthew 25: 40. Time is focused attention which must be eagerly offered to fellow believers, to each other as members and communicants of the family of God. It is here we learn the secret of Christ' unconditional love. It is here we have the opportunity to respond to God's first shown love. Love concentrated so intently on another that for the time being you forget yourself, go beyond yourself and actually share the grace of God in blessing with another.

The best time to love is now. The best time for Christ to demonstrate his continuing love to the disciples was in their moment of need. Yes it is true you can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving. Don't the plainly declarative words of Scripture teach us something vital, "God so loved the world that he gave..." John 3: 16.

We cannot be dismissive of our love response because as instruments of God, we must invest it in our very midst so that it will grow and spread and become a cohesive factor in our devotion to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

A very practical reminder from the disciple whom Jesus loved tells us "Love has no room for fear; rather perfect love casts out all fear. And since fear has to do with punishment, love is not yet perfected in one who is afraid. We for our part love because he first loved us. If anyone says, 'My love is fixed on God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. One who has no love for the brother he sees, cannot love the God he does not see. The commandment we have from him is this, whoever loves God must also love his brother" 1 John 4: 18 – 21. After seeing and witnessing the devoted love of Christ for us as shown to the disciples, let us go from the church today and live and exhibit it everyday!

## A Message of Healing

As followers of Jesus Christ our Saviour, we are taught to set our minds and keep them stabilized and set on things above, on eternal values and not on changing things of the earth. "Be intent on things above rather than on things of earth" Colossians 3: 2.

Thoughts of other people's disapproval and rejection seem to fill every waking moment of so many people's lives. But instead of thinking wrong thoughts, we must make an earnest effort to choose right ones. Filling our mind with positive thoughts naturally turns us toward our God. If we meditate on God's revelation and love and His will, wrong thoughts will find no place of entry or can easily be dismissed.

We all have the terrible experience of being worried about something, of having our minds rotating around and around a problem endlessly. If we get involved in something else that interests us, we stop worrying for a period of time. When it is quiet and we are alone, or when we have something else to do, we begin to worry again.

One of the greatest allies against wrong thinking is to stay busy doing something for someone else. Then we do not have time to think about ourselves as we are preoccupied with someone else's need. Thus we set our mind on what is above, not on simple earthly things. We concentrate on God's instructions to us to walk in love. "Follow the way of love, even as Christ loved you. He gave himself for us as an offering to God, a gift of pleasing fragrance" Ephesians 5: 2.

We must be armed with right thinking or we will easily give up in hard times. "Christ suffered in the flesh, therefore arm yourselves with his same mentality. He who has suffered in the flesh has broken with sin. You are not to spend what remains of your earthly life on human desires, but on the will of God. Already you have devoted enough time to what the pagans enjoy, living lives of debauchery, evil desires, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and idolatry. It is no wonder that those blasphemers are surprised when you do not plunge into the same swamp of profligacy as they. They shall give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. The reason the gospel was preached even to the dead, was that although condemned in the flesh in the eyes of men, they might live in the spirit in the eyes of God" 1 Peter 4: 1 - 6.



We as believers move from being victimized by the onslaught of the devil, even through the misuse of fellow human beings, to becoming a victory in Christ is not a quick or easy process. It takes time, but the investment is worth it in the end.

We must never forget we can go either through the pain of deliverance that is temporary or keep the pain of bondage that never ends unless it is confronted. Fear is involved when we are intimidated. We fear the dreadful outcome, we fear ostensibly hurting or offending others; we fear rejection because of our behavior, being alone, alienated and of what people will think or say about us.

But fear is not of God. "The Spirit of God has given us no cowardly spirit, but rather one that makes us strong, loving, and wise...but with the strength which comes from God bear your share of the hardship which the gospel entails" 2 Timothy 1: 6 - 8.

Fear means to run away from something and our God does not want us to run from anything. He desires we confront things, especially problems, knowing that he has promised to be with us, never to leave us or forsake us. "Do not love money but be content with what you have, for God has said, 'I will never desert you, nor will I forsake you.' Thus we may say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid; what can man do to me?'" Hebrews 13: 5, 6.

There are times in life when we must do things actually being afraid. In other words, we do what we know we should do even though we feel fear. Fear is a spirit that produces feelings and creates psychological changes in our bodies. Fear can make the heart beat faster and harder. It can cause sweating, shaking, irrational thinking, and other physical manifestations.

Scripture never tells us that we are not to feel any of these things connected with fear; it simply tells us not to be afraid, not to fear. When God said to his people, "fear not," He meant for them to keep going forward, taking eager steps of obedience to carry out his instructions and His will.

In essence He is telling them, "This is not going to be easy, but do it anyway. As preposterous as what I am asking you to do, seems to sound, do it anyway because I want to transform you, I want you to overcome whatever fears you have, abandon what you are afraid of. You will then be made into a new creature, full of confidence and courage, able to survive and overcome whatever problems life throws in your path. I may ask you to be sacrificial and give up your fears myself or through my

representatives because courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear.

There are too many people praying for mountains of difficulty to be removed when what they all need to be praying for is the courage to climb them.

Courage is being the only one who knows you are afraid. Running from the hard things in life to avoid pain and discomfort is one of the biggest problems in life. "Love has no room for fear; rather perfect love casts out all fear. And since fear has to do with punishment, love is not yet perfect in one who is afraid." 1 John 4: 18.

In order to have good spiritual health, to be possessed of fine physical health, we must press past fear, we must go beyond the pain and do what fear demands we run from. Because he who fears he shall suffer already suffers what he fears.

Approval addicts are afraid of the pain of rejection. They will spend their lives keeping other people happy and fixed while forfeiting their own joy unless they make a decision to break the cycle of emotional addiction. They will have to "do it afraid." They will have to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and their own heart rather than follow the will and desires of other people.

Satan regularly uses fear to prevent us from making progress in our lives. He will not stop attacking us with feelings of fear, but we can, as the Lord insists, "...fear not". We can do what is necessary to advance spiritually by "doing it afraid." The only way out of our problems is going through! The only way Christ could conquer death was by embracing it and overthrowing it! Feelings buried alive never die; they just eat away at our mental, emotional physical and spiritual health as they fester. They also have a devastating affect on the development of healthy relationships.

We may hide painful memories, but they are still somewhere doing their dirty work. We are often afraid of someone's anger and denial, and blaming us and transferring their problems to us. We are afraid to face the anxiety attacks of other people as we try to clear the air in our lives, in our relationships with them. But we should not fail to ask God for the strength to persevere and press on rather than run away and hide once more.

Many times doing what we fear to do and confront the varied negative feelings and ideas opens the door to healing and wholeness. It is a process that involves stages and



the final stage should be our own cleansing and salvation. Christ instructs and insists we do what has to be done by “doing it afraid.”

We cannot make progress unless we confront our own fears and past neglects. I had a parishioner once some years ago who was having major chest pains. He was afraid that if he went to a physician, he would find out he had heart problems, so he ignored the pain, hoping it would go away. He died a short time later! The thing he feared came upon him.

Our Creator God tells us that we can have what we believe, but also that we can have what we fear. “Put your trust in God. I solemnly assure you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea’ and has no inner doubts but believes that when he says it will happen, shall have it done for him. I give you my word, if you are ready to believe that you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer, it shall be done for you” Mark 11: 22 – 24.

## Christian Self-Portraits

*They worship no alien gods. They live in the awareness of their smallness. Kindness is their nature. There is no falsehood among them. They love one another. They do not neglect widows. Orphans they rescue from those who are cruel to them. Every one of them who has anything gives ungrudgingly to the one who has nothing. If they see a traveling stranger they bring him under their roof. They rejoice over him as over a real brother, for they do not call one another brothers after the flesh, but they know they are brothers in the Spirit and in God. If one of them sees that one of their poor must leave this world, he provides for his burial as well as he can. And if they hear that one of them is imprisoned or oppressed by their opponents for the sake of Christ's name, all of them take care of all his needs. If possible, they set him free and pay his bail. If anyone among them is poor or comes into want while they themselves have nothing to spare, they fast two or three days for him. In this way, they can supply any poor man with the food he needs. **Apologia** by Aristides.*

*Among us you can find uneducated people, artisans, and dear old mothers who would not be able to put into words the usefulness of their teaching, but by their deeds they demonstrate the usefulness of their principles. They do not repeat words learned by heart, but they show good deeds; when hit they do not hit back; when robbed, they do not go to court; they give to those who ask, and they love their fellow man as themselves. **A Plea Regarding Christians** by Athenagoras.*

Pauline Year \* June 29 \* 2008-2009



2000th Anniversary \* Birth of St. Paul

It is believed that Paul was born in the year 8 A.D. in Tarsus, Cilicia, Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey)

He was "an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin" (Philippians 3:5)

His given name is actually "Saul"

As a Roman citizen, he was known as "Paul"

Paul worked as a tentmaker (Acts 18:3)

He was a witness to the martyrdom of St. Stephen (Acts 7:57-8:3)



# The Year of St. Paul

**REVITALIZING THE FAITH AND  
SPREADING IT ARE KEY GOALS OF  
A YEARLONG COMMEMORATION  
OF THE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES**

**This jubilee year solemnly announced by our gloriously reigning Holy Father, Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople marks the approximate 2,000<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the saint's birth. All believers are invited and challenged to celebrate it with renewed faith response to the love of Christ and the apostle He chose and sent among us for the sake of our salvation.**



## ***“Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel” 1 Corinthians 9: 16!***

May this year of honor to the great and untiring evangelizer, St. Paul, be appropriate time for renewing our missionary heart. Undoubtedly one goal of our Patriarch in proclaiming this year of St. Paul is to have every Orthodox believer hold up a mirror to their life and ask, ‘Am I determined and as energetic about spreading the truth of Christ as St. Paul was?’

What are we doing, in particular, to instill a love of Christ and an understanding of our faith in the hearts and minds of our young people? In his boundless energy and athletic metaphors, St. Paul’s example should be especially appealing to young people, encouraging them to apply their youthful robust energy and enthusiasm to spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

We are continually reminded that our Orthodox faith only grows when we consciously and conscientiously share it with others. Christ looks at each one of us with merciful eyes at our individual judgment and asks what efforts we make during the course of our life time to invite people into communion with Jesus Christ and his Church. It should not be a surprise to us that Patriarch Bartholomew resounds Christ’s message and uses this opportunity to renew it.

The mission of Christ the Saviour, which is entrusted to the Church is still very far from completion. As the second millennium after Christ’s has drawn to an end, an overall view of the human race shows that this mission is still only beginning and that we must commit ourselves wholeheartedly to its service. It is the Holy Spirit who impels us to proclaim the great works of God: “For if I preach the gospel, it gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel” 1 Corinthians 9: 16! In the name of the whole Church, we sense an urgent duty to repeat this truth of St. Paul.

May each of us, now living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century sense that same duty to repeat within ourselves the cry of St. Paul. We are shown that mysticism and missionary spirit go hand in hand and that the universal call to holiness is closely linked to the universal call to missionary endeavor.

The model evangelizer, the Apostle Paul, wrote these words to the Thessalonians and they are program for us as well. “With such yearning love we chose to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but our very selves, so dear had you become to us” 1 Thessalonians 2: 8. What is this love?

It is far more than that of a teacher; it is the love of an endearing father and again, it is the love of a devoted mother. It is this love that the Lord expects from every preacher of the gospel, from every builder of the Church. And we are all builders of the Body of Christ! A sign of love will be the concern to share the truth and to bring people into unity. Another equal sign of love will be a devotion to the proclamation of Jesus Christ, without reservation or turning back.

Living in a television age, we must recognize the potential for harnessing modern means of technology to spread the gospel. Imagine how St. Paul would have used satellite communications, the Internet and YouTube. We must support measures that will produce a Pauline missionary in a fire that spreads to the ends of the earth influencing the formation of priests and religious in our day.

May the fire that the Holy Spirit cast down into the heart of St. Paul, which in turn lit up the earth, inflame our hearts to be vibrant and effective missionaries in the Year of St. Paul and throughout our lives.

How close he seems to us, this man whom the Divine Light struck down on the road to Damascus – defeated in his own limited purpose, yet through his very defeat, overwhelmed by a profound anticipation of grace – for after all, we ourselves are still treading that same Damascus road today, hoping and depending upon the intervention of heavenly grace to assist us. He is, after the Lord, the most vivid and complete of all the New Testament figures, the man whose face we can visualize most clearly and whose spirit and zeal is engaging. And whenever we listen to the least important of his sayings, we recognize that tone of unforgettable confidence attainable only by those who have risked all.

As we celebrate this Year of St. Paul, may we all risk all in our lives for the gospel. May we make, even desperate attempts to advance the cause of the Saviour in the lives of those around us. Permit the love of his words to encourage us:

“Do I need letters of recommendation to you or from you as others might? You are my letter, known and read by all men, written on your hearts. Clearly you are a letter of Christ which I have delivered, a letter written not with ink by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of flesh in the heart” 2 Corinthians 3: 1 - 3.

St. Paul, apostle, martyr, mystic, and missionary, through prayer, intercede with the Lord our God for us!



## *Ways To Celebrate*

**Pray to the Holy Spirit about your unique and intimate “road to Damascus” conversion experience that the Spirit is calling you to fulfill in the year of St. Paul.**

**Live out *Galatians 2:20* – “...it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me” – and study the lives of holy men and women from St. Paul to St. Nectarios the Wonderworker.**

**Read and reflect on the *Acts of the Apostles* and the epistles of St. Paul in the New Testament.**

**Assume seriously and sincerely the challenge of the Patriarch and engage daily in prayer so that the Church will have a new springtime of spiritual growth and evangelization, particularly in our Freehold area.**

**Study the teachings of the Church on divine revelation and biblical interpretation.**

**Pray about St. Paul’s insightful teaching on the power of the cross of Christ. “Preach Christ crucified” in the way you carry the cross and the way you help others carry their crosses.**

**Develop even more deeply a Pauline awesome reverence for the Eucharist.**

**Seek the intercession of St. Paul to be a more vibrant missionary in the world and to your family and neighbors. Respond to the universal call to holiness and call to mission. Study classic Church texts from the Fathers and saints on missionary spirit and evangelization that discuss the life and mission of St. Paul.**

**Study and reflect on the classical paintings of St. Paul. For an internet tour of these art works that focus on St. Paul, see the Web site: [www.jesuswalk.com/philippians/artwork-st-paul.htm](http://www.jesuswalk.com/philippians/artwork-st-paul.htm).**

## CELEBRATING THE DORMITION IN JERUSALEM

**T**he Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God is one of the greatest holy days on our church calendar. Even though no mention of the Virgin's falling asleep is found in the scriptures, detailed accounts of her death are found in various sources of sacred tradition – dating back as far as the 1st century. Material from these sources was ultimately gathered and expanded by the Church Historian Nicephorus Callistus in the 14th century. We are told that the body of the Theotokos was laid to rest in a family tomb in Gethsemane. Although her body was no longer in the sepulcher – having been taken into heaven by her Divine Son – a church was built on that site by the early Christians. Despite undergoing destruction and changes through the centuries, the Church of the Dormition still stands upon this sacred place.

Nowhere is this feast celebrated with as much solemnity as in Jerusalem itself. On the eve of the feast, a large procession begins at the Jerusalem Patriarchate and winds its way through the narrow streets of the Old City, slowly making its way to Gethsemane. An icon of the Dormition leads the procession, with clergy, monks, nuns and pilgrims following closely by. The two-hour walk ends at the church there, with the Lamentations Service celebrated at that time. In front of the altar in the edifice – beyond the burial chamber of the Mother of God – is a raised spot, upon which rests the shroud in which the body of the Virgin was wrapped. It is customary for those in attendance to venerate the processional icon of the Dormition and then stoop down and go beneath it as a sign of piety.

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