



# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 26, 2007

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

+++ This Wednesday is the simple feast of the beheading of St. John the Baptist. In anticipation of the holyday, we will celebrate the vespersal Divine Liturgy Tuesday evening at 7: 30 PM. This is a day of strict fast which means no meat or dairy products are to be part of our diet on that day. Please come and join us in prayer and praise.

+++ 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, [REDACTED]; Holy Day, [REDACTED]; Candles, [REDACTED]; Grocery Coupons, [REDACTED]; Utilities, \$[REDACTED]; Bible Camp, [REDACTED]; Christian Fellowship, [REDACTED]; Pennies From Heaven, [REDACTED], for a total of \$[REDACTED]. 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 with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Rachel Korba, Robert Gorbich, Helen Karpiak, Debbie Szmaida, Pani Lucas, Paul Szmaida, Father Lucas, 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 [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED]. 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 use Grocery Coupons for food shopping as we have gratefully realized [REDACTED] on this project to date!

+++ The weekly sponsor list for **Christian Fellowship Food** for this year is available to be filled out on the table in the kitchen. We appeal to **ALL** our parishioners to participate, not just a few, so that it is equitable and the responsibility shared by **ALL**.

+++ The first Pirohi Sale for the coming season will take place on Saturday, September 8. The working schedule was attached in last week's bulletin, but is going to be altered to reflect additional names. Preparations will be made on Thursday, September 6 at 9:00 AM. We are in **NEED** of additional workers and look forward to hearing from helping souls who wish to be a blessing to the parish and assist particularly on Team B. We urge all to begin now securing orders that the Sale be a huge success. **The Pirohi will now sell for \$6.00 a dozen.**

+++ We thank all the children, their parents for sending them and the teachers who invested their time this past week in the **Annual Summer Bible Camp** which took place in our Parish Center and on the grounds. We acknowledge the kindness and hospitality of **Pani Buletza**, a good friend and supporter of our parish in inviting our children for a beach holiday of recreation. May our gracious Lord continue to bless our teachers and children and parents with good health for **Many & Blessed Years!**



## Honesty

*A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies* Proverbs 12: 17.

*The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful* Proverbs 12: 22.

*The righteous hate what is false, but the wicked bring shame and disgrace* Proverbs 13: 5.

*A truthful witness does not deceive, but a false witness pours out lies* Proverbs 14: 5.

*A false witness will not go unpunished and he who pours out lies will perish* Proverbs 19: 9.

*And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body* Ephesians 4: 24, 25.

*Do not repay evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody* Romans 12: 17.

*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things* Philippians 4: 8.


*Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us* 1 Peter 2: 12.

## START WITH LITTLE THINGS

God in his mercy offers us opportunities for service that are best suited to the talents that he has given to us. We are called by God to develop our abilities and natural talents, and to use them appropriately, no matter how insignificant they might seem. If God then chooses to promote us to greater responsibilities, He will do so in His own way and time.

One of the great scientists of our history was George Washington Carver. He once confided that as a young man it was his ambition to understand the principles that guided the universe. As he grew older, however, he came to understand that the task he had set for himself was beyond his abilities and, in fact, belonged to God alone. So he set about the task of studying what was one of the lowliest and least significant of God's creations – the peanut. After a lifetime of study, Carver had either discovered or developed more than 300 useful products that could be made from that tiny bit of God's world. In the process he transformed the peanut into a significant agricultural product and created many new industries.

There is nothing wrong with thinking big and aspiring to do something important and lasting. But as Christians, we need to be mindful that all of our goals and plans must be laid at the altar of God, and all of our aspirations must be motivated by a desire to do the will of the Lord. In this offering of obedience, we must count it an equal honor to start at the bottom, with little things, if that is His plan for us. We must be mindful that in God's service, promotions to greater usefulness are given to those who are faithful in little things, and are willing to start with "peanuts". In the parable of the gold coins, the faithful servant is told by Jesus, "Since you were faithful in small matters, I will put you in charge of ten cities." (Lk. 19:17). It is a big thing to do something small, if you take care to do it well, and consecrate it to God.

**"See what love the Father has given us,  
  
that we should be called children of God."**

1 John 3:1

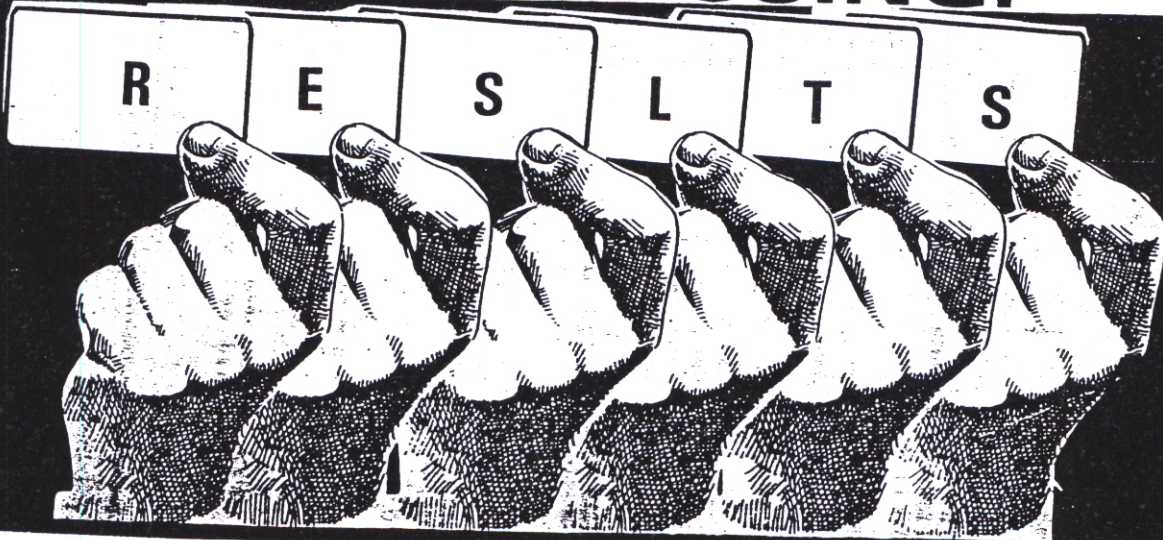
**You do not want to leave too, do you? (John 6:67)**

"Many have forsaken Christ, but what reason do YOU have to do the same? Hasn't Christ proved Himself all-sufficient? Haven't you found your Lord to be a compassionate and generous friend to you, and hasn't simple faith in Him given you all the peace your spirit could desire? Can you possibly dream of a better friend than He's been to you? Then don't change the old and tried for something new and false. What could compel you to leave Christ?"

"When we're surrounded by the difficulties of this world, or with the severer trials within the Church, we find it a most blessed thing to pillow our head upon the heart of our Savior. We have the joy today of knowing that we're saved in Him—and if this joy is satisfying, why would we think of changing? We will not give up the sun until we find a brighter light, nor leave our Lord until a better lover appears. Since this can never be, we'll hold Him with a grasp immortal, and bind His name as a seal on our arm.

"Can you suggest anything that can arise that will make it necessary for you to desert Him? If we're poor, what comfort to have Christ who can make us rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). When we're sick, what joy to have Jesus console us. When we die, how grand that it's written, 'neither death nor life, neither the present nor the future, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8:38-39). We say with Peter, 'Lord, to whom shall we go?' (John 6:38)."

## ARE "U" MISSING?



## Prayers for Families

**M**y God, source of all life, thank you for the blessing you gave me when you entrusted me with children. I have tried to live up to your expectations. It is not for me but for each of them that I pray. Care for all of them in your great kindness. Supply the blessing of your protection. You see the sincere love of my caring, small as it is, compared with what they need and deserve. In the name of my love, keep them free from evil, and make them strong, happy and loving. All of them are a living part of me. My God, I want them to be better than I. In the rich opportunities of life, may they count on your help. I place them under your divine parental care. Amen. □

**A**lmighty God, by whose goodness we were created, and whose mercies never fail, we commend to you all who have a place in our hearts and affections; all who are joined to us by kindred, friendship and love; keep them safe and sound outwardly in their bodies and inwardly in their souls. Amen. □

**O** God, we pray for those who, full of confidence and love, once had a partner for life, but are now alone. May they receive grace-filled time, so that bitterness may be redeemed by healing and love, weakness by strength, despair by the joy of knowing you and the joy of serving others. Amen. □

# THE ALTAR TABLE



The entire church building is centered around the altar table. The altar table does not merely symbolize the table of the Last Supper. It is the symbolic and mystical presence of the heavenly throne and table of the Kingdom of God; the table of Christ the Word, the Lamb and the King of the ever-lasting life of God's glorified dominion over all of creation.

The Book of the Gospels is perpetually enthroned on the altar table. It is on the altar table that we offer the "bloodless sacrifice" of Christ to the Father. And from the altar table we receive the Bread of Life, the Body and Blood of the Lord's Passover Supper. This table is the "table of God's Kingdom" (Lk 28:30).

In the Orthodox liturgical tradition, the altar table is often carved wood or stone. It is usually vested with colorful fabric to show its divine and heavenly character as a part of the eternal kingdom. It should always be a simple table of proportional dimensions most often, a perfect cube, and is always free standing so that it may be encircled in procession. The altar table in our parish church was hand made and in the new church will represent the ongoing living sacrificial offerings of our faithful.

On the altar table one always finds the antimimension. This is the cloth depicting Christ in the tomb, which contains the signature of the bishop and is the permission for the local community to gather as the Church. "Antimimension" means literally "instead of the table." Since the bishop is the proper pastor of the Church, the antimimension is used instead of the bishop's own table which is, obviously, in his own church building, the cathedral -- the place where the bishop has his chair (cathedra).

The antimimension usually contains a relic (normally a part of the body) of a saint which shows that the Church is built on the blood of the martyrs and the lives of God's holy people. This custom comes from the early Church practice of gathering and celebrating the Eucharist on the graves of those who have lived and died for the Christian faith. Usually, a relic of a saint is embedded in the altar table itself as well.

Also on the altar table there is a tabernacle, often in the shape of miniature church, which is the repository of the gifts of Holy Communion that are reserved for the sick and dying. Just as candles were prescribed in the Old Testament sanctuary, so on the altar table today we have two three-branched candle sticks on either side of the tabernacle, reminding believers of the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. The Jerusalem temple is highly valued in Orthodox tradition of worship and church construction as the prototype of true worship in "spirit and truth" John 4: 23, of the kingdom of God.



# *S*LOW ME DOWN, LORD

*Slow me down, Lord*

*Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind.*

*Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time.*

*Give me, amid the confusion of the day, the calmness of the everlasting hills.*

*Break the tensions of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory. Help me to know the magical, restoring power of sleep.*

*Teach me the art of taking minute vacations—of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from a good book.*

*Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values that I may grow toward the stars of my greater destiny.*

## My Lord and my God --



Here I am again, daily falling down before Your Holiness. How I long to abide in Your holiness, yet how far, far away I am -- light-years away. My whole life I have known You and sought to be close to You.

Yet it seems that the closer I come, the further away I am. Or maybe it is that the closer I come, the more aware I become of how far away from You and Your Holiness I am, because of my sinfulness. Those whom we look up to as Christian heroes and role models, those whom we honor as saints, seem to have been so acutely aware of their sinfulness -- yet we call them holy. Is this another example of divine Truth as paradox?

Lord, You told us to be perfect, that is, holy, as our Father in Heaven is holy, or perfect. But the desire to be holy as You are holy seems not to be taken seriously by most people in Your Church, even by those who attend Divine Services regularly and are "active." Why is it that it seems so few of Your followers really want to be holy, but instead take a minimalistic attitude of "What is the least I can do and still manage to get by?" They say, "Well, *I* am not a monk," or "Well, *that* is just for monks." But monastics are just people like us, although people who really and truly try to devote themselves to living holy lives, dedicated to serving You, but without the extra encumbrances of a spouse, children and living "in the world."

But Lord, don't you call all of us to live lives of holiness, loving and serving you above all else, whether married or single, with or without children, regardless of the type of work we do, being *in* the world but not *of* the world? I know that You never said it would be easy for us to take up our crosses and follow You. I know that You and Your Presence should be enough to satisfy me. But if we could and would support each other more in our daily struggles to truly follow You, we probably wouldn't feel so isolated. I think that such support would be helpful to us all as fellow--travellers-along-THE-WAY. I wouldn't be surprised if there really were far more fellow-travellers-on-THE-WAY -- on the path of holiness -- than I realize. I sure hope so. I think that even we who are in the Church have picked up so much our society's animosity towards holiness, so that talking about "holy" or "spiritual" things is rather taboo -- even in the Church, and even among the clergy. And then Satan really wins some significant victories, when so many churches become social and ethnic clubs or vehicles of social reform rather than soul reform.

Lord, You told us through Your Apostle, St. Paul, that each of us forms a part, a member of Your One Body, the Church, Your Bride. Please help me and all Your disciples and fellow-travellers-on-THE-WAY to desire You and Your Holiness with all our hearts and minds and strength, so that you may form Yourself within us. Please help us to support each other on our daily path along THE WAY, and work together in unity as fellow members of Your One Body.

# Did You Know That ...

...our God seeks genuine worshipers?

...either you decide to stay at the shallow end of the pool or you go out into the ocean with God's help?

...extend kindness to all because everyone seems to be fighting a hard battle?

...you should keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions as small people always do that?

...you should not waste your life in friction when it could be turned into momentum?

...a moment's insight is sometimes worth a life's experience?

...do not cry because it is over; smile because it happened?

...a child's life is like a blank piece of paper on which every person he encounters makes a mark?

...three things in life are important; the first is to be kind; the second is to be kind and the third is to be kind?

...the game of life is like a boomerang; our thoughts, deeds and words return to us sooner or later with astounding accuracy?

...when you reach for the stars you may not always catch one, but you won't come up with a handful of mud either?

...remedies to our problems often lie within us?

...monuments are not erected to pessimists?

...when you change your thinking, you can change your world?

...millions long for immortality who do not know what to do on Sunday mornings?

## THE NEED TO BE CONNECTED TO CHRIST

**F**or the most part, our Lord ministered to common, ordinary people, so when He wanted to teach them an important lesson, He used language and imagery that could be readily understood. It is no wonder that when Christ sought to emphasize the need for total dependence upon Him, He spoke about vines, vinedressers and branches! After all, the economy of Israel depended largely on their vineyards. **I AM THE TRUE VINE. MY FATHER IS THE VINEDRESSER. HE WHO ABIDES IN ME AND I IN HIM BEARS MUCH FRUIT, FOR WITHOUT ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING.** These verses, and other related ones found in the 15th chapter of the Gospel of St. John were meant to remind His followers that they were expected to live productive lives, and that only through



their connection to Him - as a branch is attached to a vine - could they bear any fruit. Just as life flows from a vine to its branches, we, too, become "alive" through our relationship with Christ. Our Lord has no use for "withered branches" that have broken off from their Divine Source of nourishment - they are doomed to failure and destruction. The world is Christ's vineyard. We are His laborers, and much is expected of us. The fruit we bear will have a direct impact on the growth and development of the Church. To successfully harvest a crop that is pleasing to the Lord, we must find ourselves living in complete union with Him in faith, love and obedience. Any less of a commitment to our Master will bring about the real risk of being cut off from Him and being "thrown into the fire and burned."