



Saint Anthony serves as the  
Patriarch of Monastic Life

# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Sunday after Theophany

January 10, 2010

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

+++ We have festal anointing today on the occasion of this past week's feast of Theophany and Baptism of our Lord. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we reply, "He Is And Shall Be!"

+++ The total to date offering received for the Nativity of our Lord amounts to \$1725.00. If you were away, it is not too late to augment this gift of love to our new-born Saviour.

+++ Those of our faithful who would like their homes blessed are asked to inform Father and arrange an appointment when convenient.

+++ We thank sincerely all who came, prepared for, worked at and secured and delivered orders for the monthly Pirohi Sale held yesterday. We invoke on all and their loved ones the blessed grace of our Lord for continued good health for Many & Blessed Years.

+++ We are pleased to announce and thank the three family units who have already increased their Sunday offering, one of which is practicing tithing, that is, offering one tenth of income to our generous God. Having the example and support of these generous souls is important to our parish. We pray others will pray and follow their example for the glory of God and the good of the parish. We pray their generosity be blessed with good health of body and soul for Many & Blessed Years!

+++ 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, \$567.00; Candles, \$37.00; Food Coupons, \$420.00; Pennies From Heaven, \$2.00; Nativity of our Lord, \$35.00; Holyday, \$22.00; Energy, \$211.00; Web Site, \$25.00; Parish Dues, \$125.00; Diocesan Dues, \$370.00; Refund, \$401.00, for a total of \$2215.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offered their God-given treasure for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls! The attendance was 41 adults and 15 children last Sunday.

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Father Lucas, Pani Lucas, Robert Gorbich, +Paul Szmaida, Debra Szmaida, Robin Pasquino, Kent Pasquino, Anna Zacharyczuk 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 **\$1560.00** 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 \$102, 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.

+++ 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.

+++ Be certain your child attends the spiritual formation classes held each Sunday following the Divine Liturgy. We make a serious attempt to share the love of our Lord with all.

+++ 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 \$5000.00 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.

+++ We invite those who pledged support for the Building Fund when building is about to begin, to consider redeeming their pledges as we are preparing to apply to Millstone Township for the variance and Building Permit.

+++ We offer our parish faithful the blessed opportunity to recognize and acknowledge the feast of the Nativity of our Lord is the birthday of our God in the flesh among us. Please remember it is his birthday, his celebration and his feast day in which it is our privilege to participate. We invite all to express their gratitude and devotion by offering at least \$50.00 on the holyday offering taken after the gospel reading. The second collection is for regular expenses.

+++ We thank all in advance for making the effort to make returns on the Bake Sale, Pirohi Sale and Candy Sale before the end of the year.

+++ 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!



## Investing

*Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a noise behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." Isaiah 30: 21.*

*Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice Psalms 112: 5.*

*Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power. By me kings reign and rulers make laws that are just; by me princes govern and all nobles who rule on earth. I love those who love me and those who seek me find me. With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. My fruit is better than fine gold, what I yield surpasses choice silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, along with paths of justice. Bestowing wealth on those who love me and making their treasures full Proverbs 8: 14 – 21.*

*The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity. Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death Proverbs 11: 3, 4.*

*The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty Proverbs 21: 5.*

*Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life. In the paths of the wicked lie thorns and snares, but he who guards his soul stays far from them Proverbs 22: 4, 5.*

# The Power of **LIFE**



The preservation of **LIFE** is foremost among human instincts. And people will give up nearly anything and some have sacrificed *everything* in their struggle to preserve it. We make our most agonizing decisions based on the hope of preserving **LIFE**, and the greatest sorrow we experience in this age is the loss of **LIFE**. Our bodies tenaciously cling to **LIFE**, many times against great abusive odds. **LIFE** is our strongest God-given drive, and as any parent knows, a good **LIFE** is our greatest earthly concern for our children. Our society makes heroes of those who risk their lives to save the **LIFE** of others. The U.S. Constitution hypocritically exalts "**LIFE**" as the first of mankind's "inalienable rights." Human beings celebrate **LIFE** at every festive gathering, embracing it and thanking God for it. When the saints wished to show the depths of their love for Christ, they willingly sacrificed what we hold most dear: **LIFE**. And when our Lord Jesus Christ wished to reveal His divinity to His disciples, He raised Lazarus from the dead and restored him to **LIFE**, thus showing that He not only has power of **LIFE**, but that He is, in the deepest and most profound sense, **LIFE** itself.

It stands to reason, then, that the most persuasive message the Church has in reaching those who would consider abortion is a positive appeal to **LIFE**: it is **LIFE** affirmation and its inherent goodness. It is a common ground we share with all people, regardless of color or creed. And, while we may not succeed in convincing others of the claims of this fundamentally Orthodox dogma, we can certainly share our conviction that **LIFE** is indeed a gift from God and this message may turn out to be the most saving truth we can possibly share with others.

Followers of Christ believe that **LIFE** in the womb is precious, sacred and holy. This is an important part of our Tradition; this has been believed always, everywhere and by all. Christians do not need the discovery of DNA to know that the little one in the womb is a sacred human **LIFE**. From the beginning, God revealed that from the moment of conception, the womb holds a human person. The Biblical expression for "pregnancy" is "to be with child" Isaiah 7: 14. King David wrote "You did form my innermost parts. You knit me together in my mother's womb...You knew me right well; my frame was not hidden from You when I was made in secret...Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, everyone of them; the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them" Psalms 139: 13 - 17. How marvelous! What a wonderful, saving message we have to bring to a disillusioned and hurting world!

The abortion message is the opposite of this wonderful news. Abortion is the most frequently performed surgery in America. In the United States alone, an innocent baby is killed every twenty seconds. What an unspeakable tragedy! What a denial of our most basic principal: **LIFE**! The depths of despair and utter hopelessness which lead one to destroy the tiny human being growing in the womb cry out for our vibrant and zealous message in defense of **LIFE**.

As disciples of Christ, we stand not only on the side of the innocent child, but also on that of the mother. The positive effect of carrying a baby to term, becoming a co-Creator with God and then holding one's newborn, is a maturation and a joy beyond words. "When she is delivered of a child, she no longer remembers the anguish for joy that a child is born into the world" John 16: 21.

Conversely, the negative physical and psychological effects of abortion, with its accompanying pain, nightmare, depression, guilt and self-loathing, are deep and **LIFE**-long. Abortion affects the capacity to enjoy **LIFE** and colors both experiences.

and relationships. Countless women have expressed - all too late - their unbearable grief, talking about "the torment of knowing I killed my baby...if only I could have known; if just one person would have told me, I would have grasped any offer for help." Our powerful message of **LIFE** changes such despair into self-giving love.

There are no circumstances in which the message of **LIFE** will not bring salvation to a lost soul, and help direct it closer to Christ. Why? Because God's way, and He is the One Who granted **LIFE** in the first place, is always for our good. He knows what is best for us, even if it is most difficult. Our ultimate fulfillment and joy is realized when we conform to His will rather than to our own. God's way is the way of love, and it is best for all, mother, child, and everyone involved. "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him" Romans 8: 28, writes St. Paul for our edification. We believe even the gravest trial can be providentially transformed into our most treasured blessing. God the Father guides us through our suffering, through our pain, through our anguish, to **LIFE**. God is in the suffering itself, using it for our redemption. Our lives, including our unplanned pregnancies, are truly in His capable and blessed hands.

We are equally on the side of those who have aborted their own babies, their own flesh, bone and blood. The saving message we have is that there is indeed forgiveness in Jesus Christ. Genuine repentance brings new life to all sinners, regardless of the sin. We can even assure such persons that the holy Fathers of the Church teach that aborted children are in heaven with God completing their development, and that they will one day be together again. God is able to restore our peace. Christ can turn our weeping into joy. This hope is desperately needed by all involved in an abortion. Countless studies are proving that abortion is devastating to siblings, particularly to those children who come later. What does abortion say to them about ultimate self-worth, about love, about themselves? Most men involved in an abortion experience the side effects of "Post Abortion Syndrome." What once brought intimacy and relief now brings all the pain and guilt of an intentional pre-meditated death. The forgiveness of Christ is the answer - the only answer - and we are obliged as believers to offer it.

The Church of Jesus Christ and all those who cherish the truth of Christ, stand firmly against abortion and every other diminishing violation of human **LIFE**. We oppose abortion because we believe in **LIFE**. We believe **LIFE** is sacred, inviolate, blessed, precious and created by the personal hand of Almighty God. We stand against



abortion because we believe in love. We believe that love is the giving of oneself, that it involves sacrifice, and that it is our highest aim and ultimate goal. "What we are aiming at in this warning is the love that springs from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith" 1 Timothy 1: 5. We stand against abortion because we believe in hope. We believe that hope is eternal, that it is founded on the One Who will return again in glory, and that it transcends the fickle sentiments and feelings of parents who do not think they "want" a baby. "My knowledge is imperfect now; then I shall know even as I am known. There are in the end three things that last: faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love" 1 Corinthians 13: 12, 13.

We stand against abortion because we believe in truth. We believe truth lives past the fleeting whims of fashion, stands firm amid the "me-first" generation, and clings to things eternal in a world enamored of things temporal. And most of all, we stand against abortion because we follow this **LIFE**, Love, Hope, and Truth embodied in our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The holy prophets warn us that God judges His people, not on their religious ritual, but on their concern for justice and mercy. We are exhorted to "...rescue those who are being taken away to death..." Proverbs 24: 10, and to "...give justice to the weak and the fatherless (delivering) them from the hand of the wicked..." Psalms 82: 3, 4. At the very least, Orthodox believers are called to live and witness to the truth in the society in which they belong. We are to be "the lights of the world" Matthew 5: 14, and "the pillar and bulwark of truth" 1 Timothy 3: 15. The incarnational dimensions of the Orthodox perspective do not allow for a withdrawal from engagement with the moral issues of the nation and state. When the issue at hand involves the taking of human **LIFE**, it become imperative that Christians respond. In other words, silence is consent!

Abortion is the greatest disservice to women in human history. It is dehumanizing and dewomanizing. It denigrates a woman's inherent uniqueness as a woman. The loving role as co-Creator and Nurturer of **LIFE** is destroyed, and with that, a part of her integral personal fulfillment is lost. St. Basil the Great explains that the woman who commits abortion, "...has plotted against her own self." Abortion strips womanhood of all distinctive dignity.

But there is good news! **LIFE** is the alternative to abortion, and there is forgiveness and peace, even after abortion. We have been divinely entrusted with this **GOOD**

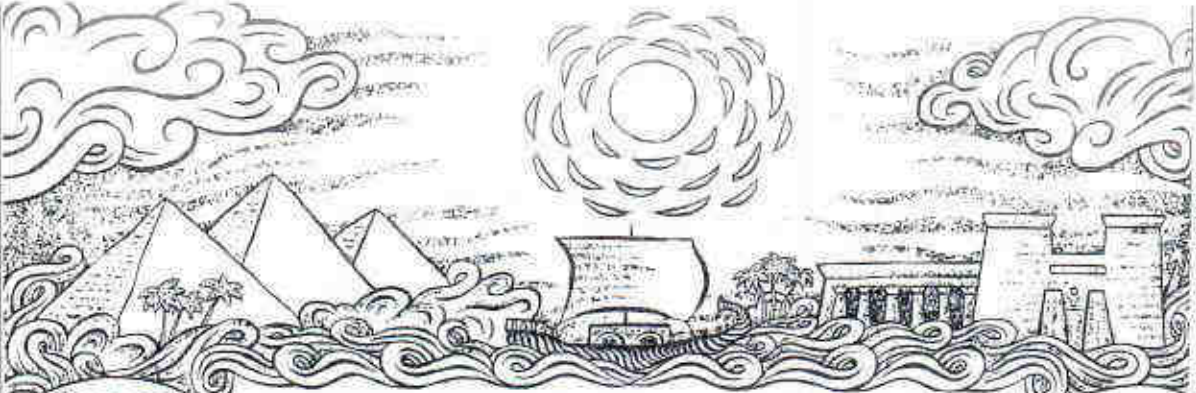
NEWS; dare we not speak out? "Open your mouth for the dumb, for the rights of all who are left desolate" Proverbs 31: 8. Ours is the most powerful, **LIFE**-saving message; let us heartily share it!

Let us also support women who are pregnant out of wedlock. The time for moralizing is *before* a baby is conceived. When a young woman walks into church with her stomach swollen by a child within, this sign of pregnancy is a sign of honor. She is resisting the pressure of the pagan world to destroy her child and she is choosing **LIFE**. God is involved dramatically with her, a truth we cannot deny. As our Lord and Master commands, "Judge not, that you be not judged" Matthew 7: 1.

There are many avenues of action to pre-born children, not the least of which is to pray for anyone involved in or contemplating an abortion, and to vote **PRO-LIFE**. But perhaps the best means of persuasion is simply to talk positively about **LIFE**. One of the simplest and most effective ways is by breaking the conspiracy of silence that keeps the topic of the unborn child's right to **LIFE** out of most conversations. If most people know the facts, such as those revealed by one look at a picture of a ten week old fetus, they would know they stand on the side of the unborn child's very real right to **LIFE**.

One loving conversation with a scared girl may lead her to give **LIFE** to her child. We really do not know the extent of our influence; perhaps the young man we talk to knows someone considering an abortion, or the elderly woman we visit with has a granddaughter who is "in trouble" Our sharing and caring can change a woman's life, from the confusion and torment of selfishness to the peace and confidence of love. And for the baby, it is literally a matter of **LIFE** and death. In such cases, a child is alive that would not have been, and a mother is at peace, who would have been tormented for the rest of her **LIFE**. Eventually her child will have children too. The truth changes many lives.

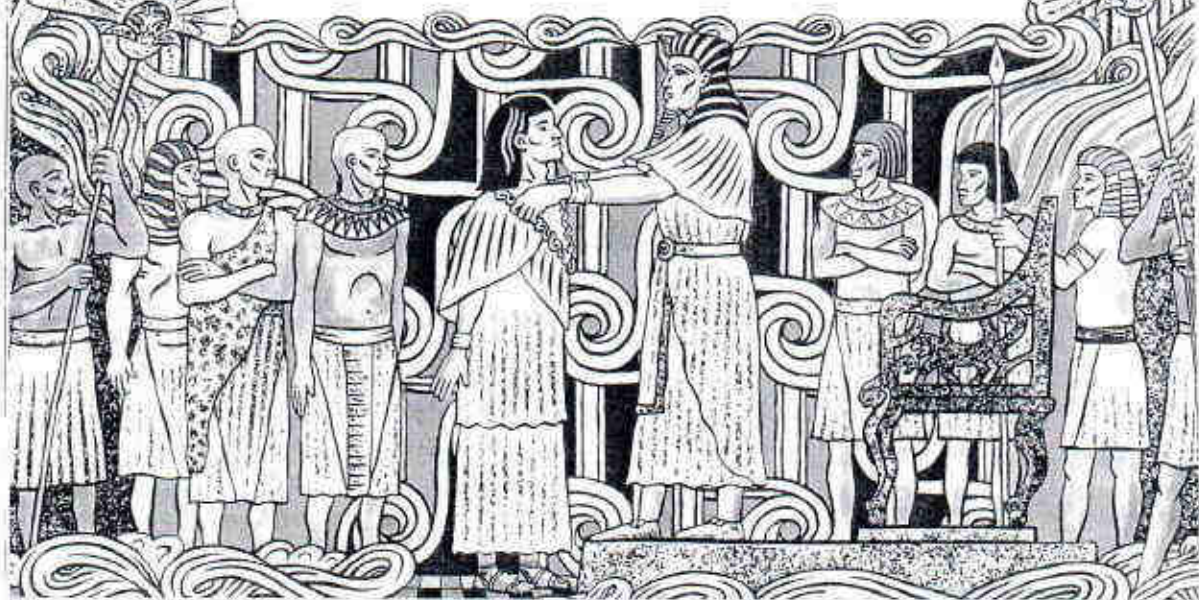
Of course, the ultimate answer is to love. Love gives hope, light, and **LIFE** to those who live in darkness. Love shares the truth. Love sacrifices one's own comfort to help and support those in crisis. And love sees every human **LIFE** as precious. How we treat these little people is not a measure of their humanity, but definitely a description of our own.

A decorative border at the top of the page features stylized clouds, a large sun with rays, pyramids, a boat on a river, and a temple with columns. The border is framed by ornate, swirling patterns.

*Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is none so discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my court, and by your command shall all my people be directed; only with respect to the throne shall I be superior to you."*

*Pharaoh further said to Joseph, "See, I put you in charge of all the land of Egypt." And removing his signet ring from his hand, Pharaoh put it on Joseph's hand; and he had him dressed in robes of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck.*

Genesis 41:39-44



# Did You Know That ...

...God cannot alter the past, but historians easily can?

...in our parish we pray for the sick and the suffering at each Divine Liturgy?

...more marriages would be happier if husbands tried as hard to keep their wives as they did to win them?

...you should turn in names of the sick and suffering to Father so they may be remembered in the Divine Liturgy?

...love's first cousin is trust?

...we are told every man has his price, but why do some hold bargain sales?

...the more we count the blessings we possess, the less we crave the luxuries we do not have?

...the world's greatest saints are the world's greatest sufferers?

...to err is human, but to blame it on someone else is even more human?

...we are not overworked, just under motivated?

...character needs no epitaph; you can bury a man, but character will beat the hearse back from the cemetery?

...one most important mark of the Orthodox believer is that he or she speaks well of he or she who speaks ill of him?

...example is not the main thing in influencing others; it is the only thing?

...if you are too busy to pray for others, you are just too busy?

...we offer seven day lights in our parish church to symbolize the intensity of our prayer commitment to our Lord?

## A TEACHER OF TEACHERS



**S**t. Anthony the Great is widely acclaimed by the Church as being the “Father of Monasticism.” Born in a remote village near the Egyptian desert, he was drawn to a life of asceticism and solitude. At the age of 20, Anthony followed Christ’s command to “**sell what you possess and give it to the poor**” and retired into the wilderness, hoping to spend the rest of his life in unceasing prayer and contemplation. Soon, St. Anthony discovered what many other saints knew and experienced: the harder one tries to give his life to the the Lord, the harder the Devil tries to take it away! For years, he struggled to overcome the temptations that constantly attacked him. Finally, the Lord spoke these words to him, rewarding him for his spiritual struggles: “**Since you have not yielded to temptation, I will always help you and make your name known throughout the world.**”

Yes, Anthony’s reputation spread, and others sought his advice and wise counsel. By the time of his death at the advanced age of 105, he had scores of followers who also became “**dwellers of the desert.**” When we read some of his teachings, we soon realize that St. Anthony had a unique perception of life. Listen to some of his thoughts: “**As a man comes forth naked from his mother’s womb, so the soul goes forth naked from the body. One soul is pure and light, a second soiled by sin and a third darkened greatly by them. If a body coming forth from an unhealthy womb cannot live, so also a soul, if it has not come to the knowledge of God through good works cannot be saved.**” Although he had no formal theological training, these words show that Anthony had a firm grasp of the Church’s teaching on salvation. It is, indeed, proper that he is referred to as an “**educator of educators.**”