

I AM THE VINE, YOU ARE THE BRANCHES

Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

September 21, 2014

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

+++ Every Monday, we have prayerful devotions before the Myrrh bearing icon at 6:00 PM. Everyone is invited to be present in praise. The Birthgiver invites us to manifest our faith in response to her first shown love, to unite our prayers with hers for the salvation of our souls. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us.

+++ Please keep the intentions of these members of our parish intercession community in your daily prayers: Father George, Anna, Barbara, Betty, James, Yevlogia, Nicholas, Maria, Cynthia, Pani Anna Marie and Andrea.

+++ 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 last Sunday: Tithing Offering, \$250.00; Candles, \$19.00; Kitchen, \$1757.00; Web Site, \$25.00; Food Coupons, \$320.00; Holyday, \$21.00, for a total of \$2402.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offer their God-given treasure and labored for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls!

+++ 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, Maria Idronmenos, Anna Zacharyczuk, Eleanor Korba, Marilyn Korba 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 **\$1809.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

+++ Please be certain to see 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 \$5750 on this project to date!

+++ The **Clothing Drive** is a permanent on-going project in our parish. Please bring any type of clothing and fabrics along with stuffed animals and shoes for the benefit of our parish. The bags can be left in the vestibule or on the front porch of the rectory. Please invite your friends and neighbors to assist us in disposing of unwanted clothing, shoes and fabrics.

+++ We invite all pray the Lord our God grants us the grace of enrichment of our spiritual lives for his glory.

+++ Work is about to begin on the exterior of our building with the soffit being replaced completely so that new gutters and down spouts may be installed. Plans are being made to have the dome refurbished and reinstalled on the roof.



Honesty

Do not steal, do not lie. Do not deceive one another Leviticus 19: 11.

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator Colossians 3: 9, 10.

So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man Acts of the Apostles 24: 16.

True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin Malachi 2: 6.

Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you Deuteronomy 16: 20.

Do to others as you would have them do to you Luke 6: 31.

Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we are told 1 Thessalonians 4: 11.

Let their lying lips be silenced, for with pride and contempt they speak arrogantly against the righteous Psalms 31: 18.

But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by God's name will praise him, while the mouths of liars will be silenced Psalms 63: 11.



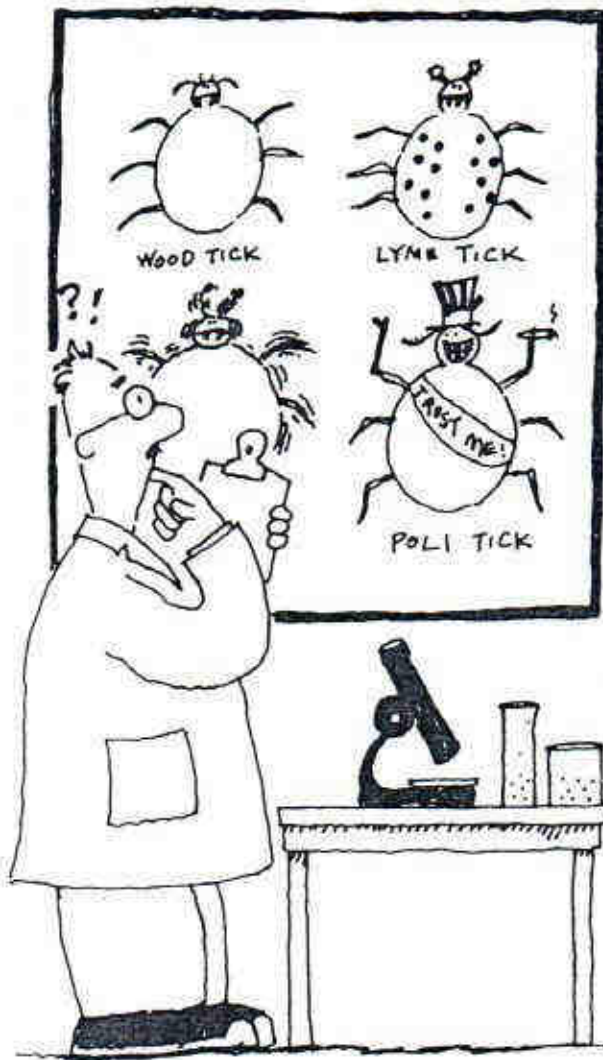
*Wisdom Of
The*



*Byzantine
Fathers*

God has created all people spiritually equal. Every person has the same propensity for good and evil. Every person has the same choice, as to whether to obey God or defy Him. Yet, in other ways, we are very unequal. Some people are highly intelligent, while others have feeble intellects. Some people are physically strong and healthy, while others are weak and prone to illness. Some people are handsome and attractive, while others are plain. Those who are gifted in some way should not despise those less gifted. On the contrary, God has distributed gifts and blessings in such a way that every person has a particular place and purpose within society and thus everyone is equally necessary for a society to function well. So do not resent the fact that someone is more intelligent or stronger than you are. Instead give thanks for their intelligence and strength, from which your soul can benefit. And then ask yourself: "What is my gift, and thence, what is my place in society?" When you have answered this question, and you act according to your honest answer, contempt and all resentment will melt away St. John Chrysostom.

Your brother is naked and crying! Yet you stand confused over the choice of an attractive floor covering St. Ambrose of Milan.



Who Needs Politics?

THERE ARE **PLENTY** OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS TO CHOOSE FROM.



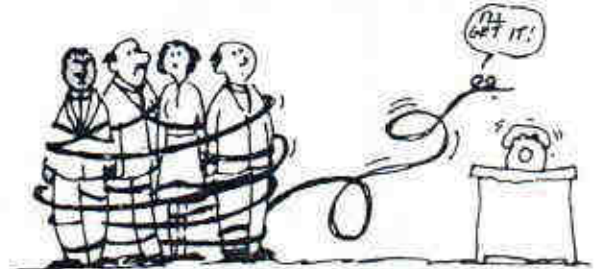
GOVERNMENT BY THE PEOPLE IS **DEMOCRACY**.



GOVERNMENT BY ONE PARTICULAR PERSON IS **AUTOCRACY**.



GOVERNMENT BY RED TAPE IS **BUREAUCRACY**.



GOVERNMENT BY LUNATICS
IS YOUR ALL CRACY.



WE EACH HAVE OUR OWN
POLITICAL SYSTEM...



WHAT SHAPES YOUR PERSONAL
POLITICS?



NOT TO MENTION YOUR "ISMS"
AND YOUR "ARCHYS".
THERE IS COMMUNISM, SOCIALISM,
FASCISM, HUMANISM, CUBISM...



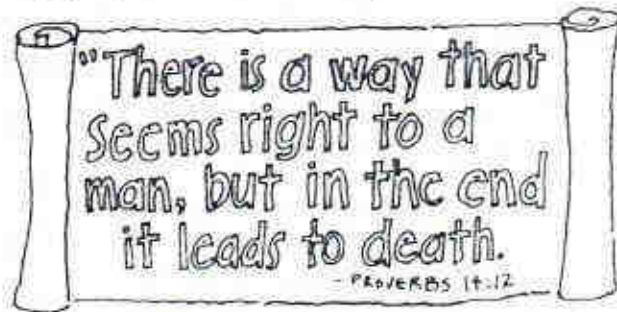
THERE IS MONARCHY, OLIGARCHY,
MATRI-AND PATRIARCHY, ANARCHY
AND NOAHSARCHY.



EVERY "CRACY", "ISM" AND
"ARCHY" HAS ITS PROBLEM.
SYSTEMS ARE ONLY AS GOOD
AS THE PEOPLE WHO RUN THEM.



THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES WARN:



THERE IS ONLY **ONE** SYSTEM
WHERE WE DO NOT SUBJECT
OURSELVES AND OTHERS TO
OUR OWN FALLIBLE AND UL-
TIMATELY DANGEROUS VALUES.

IT'S CALLED **THEOCRACY**.
(GOVERNMENT BY **GOD**.)



*Whoever lives in love lives in God,
and God in him. In this way,
'love is made complete among us
so that we will have confidence
on the day of judgment."*

1 JOHN 4:14-17



NOW **THAT'S** A SYSTEM THAT
CAN'T BE BEAT!

COULD IT BE TIME TO RETHINK
YOUR PERSONAL POLITICS AND
ASK GOD IF HE'S GOT A
SYSTEM THAT WILL WORK
IN **YOUR LIFE?**

*"And we have seen and testify
that the Father has sent his Son
to be the Savior of the world.
If anyone acknowledges that
Jesus is the Son of **GOD**, **GOD**
lives in him and he in **GOD**."*

*"And so we know and rely on
the love **GOD** has for us.*

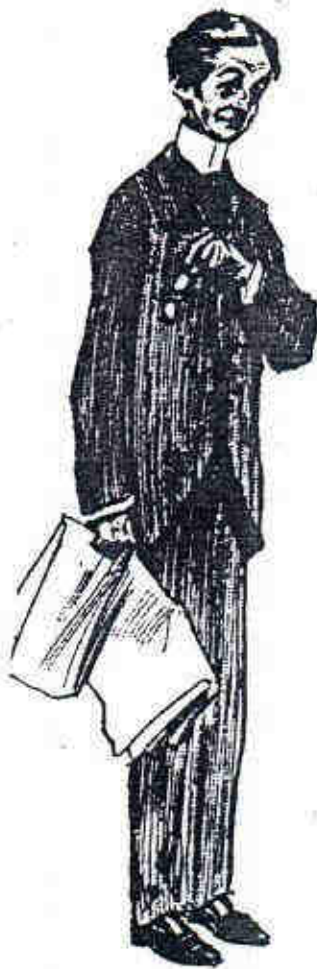
GOD is love.



Bible Courage Test

See how you score!

1. David went after Goliath because:
 - a. all the other shepherds dared him to
 - b. his sandal straps were too tight and making him cranky
 - c. he couldn't stand Goliath making fun of the God of Israel
2. Of the ten Israeli spies sent to report back on the promised land of Canaan, Joshua and Caleb were the only ones who:
 - a. missed the caravan and had to hitchhike home
 - b. got sick from drinking too much grape juice
 - c. encouraged the troops that God would enable them to defeat the "giants" in the land
3. When Esther went to the throne room of the king without an invitation she was:
 - a. sleepwalking
 - b. actually looking for the ladies room and made a wrong turn
 - c. risking her life in order to save her people
4. The New Testament says that God has not given us a spirit of _____, but of _____ (fill in blanks):
 - a. St. Louis, (but) St. Paul
 - b. failure, (but) success
 - c. fear, (but) power, love and a sound mind



I'm Somebody.

I'm Somebody Special

I'm God's Child!

I am an Orthodox Believer!

With God, I can change things!

I can make life better for myself!

I can make life better for my family
and for my community !

I can make life better in my church!

I want to labor with you to make this world
a better place for all of us!

Did You Know That ...

- ...the habit of looking on the bright side of things is worth a fortune?
- ...originality does not consist in saying what no man has ever said before, but in saying exactly what you think yourself?
- ...the place where optimism flourishes is in the bosom of Christ?
- ...a man with a new idea is a crank until the idea succeeds?
- ...pain adds rest to pleasure and teaches the luxury of health?
- ...the best academy is a mother's knee?
- ...the past is pleasant because it is not here?
- ...the optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all worlds and the pessimist fears this is true?
- ...ordinary people see not difference between men, but the more intelligent a man is, the more originality he discovers in men?
- ...there are times when parenthood seems like nothing but feeding the mouth that bites you?
- ...there can appoint where patience ceases to be a virtue?
- ...oh, what a tangled web do parents weave when they think their children are naive?
- ...the danger of passion is in its excess?
- ...the present contains nothing more than the past and what is found in the effect was already in the cause?
- ...to look back to antiquity is one thing while to go back is quite another?
- ...our soul should be possessed of patience?
- ...in time of war the loudest patriots are often the highest profiteers?



CHRIST THE TRUE VINE



In one of the most tender of scenes in the Holy Scriptures, Jesus at the Mystical Supper gathered His Apostles about Him for a final farewell before His death. He called them "little children," and spoke to them at some length about vital matters for the future.

It was on this occasion that our Lord used the symbol of the vine to describe the relationship that should exist between Himself and His loyal followers:

"I am the true vine Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If a man does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and withers . . ." (John 15)

That is the profound spiritual lesson that the iconographer teaches in today's unique icon. The majestic Figure of Christ occupies the central position; He is the vine. Around Him are the branches, His apostles, disciples, and followers, the fruit that results from the faithful teaching of the Gospel. Life flows from the Vine to the branches.

What a remarkable figure of speech our Lord utilizes to teach this lesson of relationship and attachment to Him! If we are to bear fruit, the living of a Christian life, then we are to abide in Him, and He in us!