

# *St. Athanasius the Great*

*Shining  
forth with  
works of  
Orthodoxy,  
you  
quenched  
every false  
belief and  
teaching.*





# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Sunday of the Pharisee & Publican

February 13, 2011

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

+++ This week there is no fasting since we fast eagerly and voluntarily for the sake of our salvation, not after the example of the Pharisee in today's gospel lesson.

+++ The Scripture Study Class meets on Tuesdays at 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Please come and join us by investing time in learning our precious faith so we can better enjoy and live it! The public is invited to participate

with us, so invite a friend or neighbor. In preparation for this week, please read the thirteenth to sixteenth chapters of the Book of Genesis.

+++ Please remember in your daily prayers our good parishioner, Anna Zacharyczuk who is recovering from recent surgery. We pray the gracious Lord grants her a speedy recover and restores her to good health for Many & Blessed Years!

+++ 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: Tithe Offering, \$777.00; Candles, \$10.00; Holyday, \$10.00; Diocesan Dues, \$10.00; Parish Dues, \$10.00; Food Coupons, \$10.00; Energy, \$24.00; Kitchen, \$10.00; Christian Fellowship, \$10.00 for a total of \$971.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offered 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! The attendance was 41 adults and 13 children last Sunday.

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Father Lucas, Pani Lucas, Louis Pasquino, +Paul Szmaida, Debra Szmaida, George Idromenos, Kent Pasquino, Kyle Pasquino, Bob Gorbich, 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 \$10.00 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 \$10,000.00. 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 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 \$6250.00 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.



LORD



TEACH  
US

## Repentance

*Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call upon him now while he is near. Let men cast off their wicked deeds; let them banish from their minds the very thought of doing wrong! Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy on them and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon! Isaiah 55: 6, 7.*

*But if a wicked person turns away from all his sins and begins to obey my laws and does what is just and right, he shall surely live and not die. All his past sins will be forgotten and he shall live because of his goodness. Do you think I like to see the wicked die? asks the Lord. Of course not! I only want him to turn from his wicked ways and live. And if a wicked person turns away from his wickedness and obeys the law, and does right, he shall save his soul for he has thought it over and decided to turn from his sins and live a good life. He shall surely live, he shall not die. I will judge each of you, O Israel, and punish or reward each according to your own actions. O, turn from your sins while there is yet time. Put them behind you and receive a new heart and a new spirit Ezekiel 18: 21 – 31.*

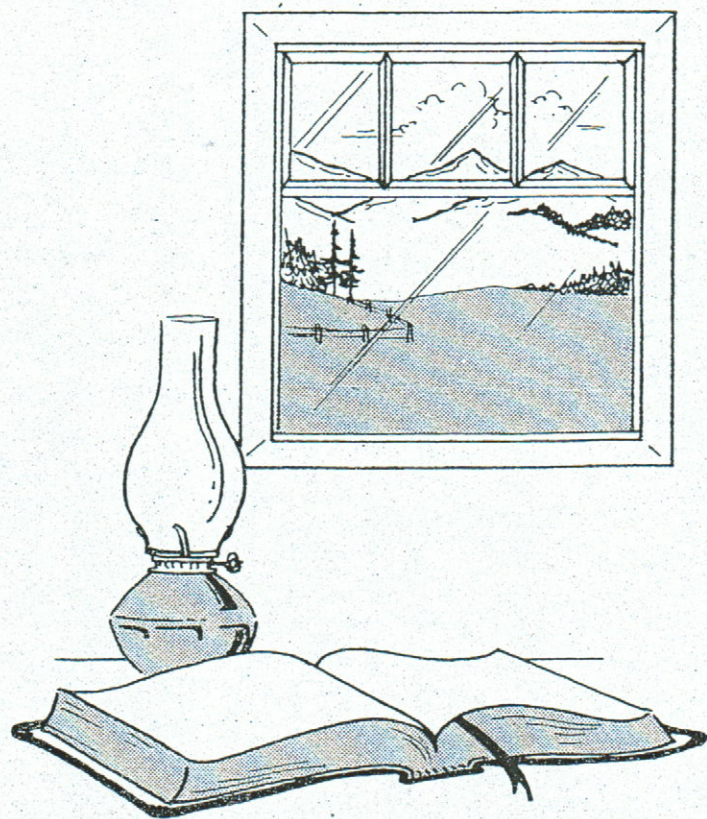
*Then you will look back at all your sins and loathe yourselves because of the evil you have done Ezekiel 36: 31.*

*I will abandon them and return to my home until they admit their guilt and look to me for help again, for as soon as trouble comes, they will search for me Hosea 5: 15.*

*And that this message of salvation should be taken from Jerusalem to all the nations: There is forgiveness of sins for all who turn to me Luke 24: 47.*



# Search For God





St. Paul teaches us to "...believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved" Acts of the Apostles 16: 30, 31. When Nicodemus inquired of the way of salvation, our Lord told him, "Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" John 3: 3. Like Nicodemus, we must ask how this can be done. To be born again is to be reborn spiritually as realistically as we have been born physically. As we experience the tender love of our God, we feel sinful and unclean before him. The loving sacrifice of Christ for our sins causes a deep sorrow in man's heart. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" 1 John 1: 9.

As we believe, as we genuinely respond to God's first shown love, we are able to surrender our will to him in full commitment. We receive a new heart and God's Holy Spirit leads us to deny ourselves and turn away from sin, We thus experience the peace of God in our heart. "Now that we have been justified by faith, we are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have gained access by faith to the grace in which we now stand and we boast of our hope for the glory of God" Romans: 5 1, 2.

The choice is ours if we truly wish to walk with him. We have nothing to lose and all to gain. If we move toward God, we will find him. A seeking soul and a seeking Saviour always meet!

"This means that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old order has passed away; now all is new! All this has been done by God who has reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation" 2 Corinthians 5: 17, 18.



## Pharisee & Publican

Unfortunately, the miserable Pharisee in today's prescribed gospel narrative never heard of utilizing his five senses in worshipping our God. Instead, from every direction within himself, he creates havoc of soul and mind by approaching God totally and completely from a dastardly sinful perspective. If only the Pharisee had taken seriously and lived the words of the Old Testament Psalmist, "To do your will, O my God, is my delight, and your law is within my heart. I announced your justice in the vast assembly; I did not restrain my lips as you, O Lord, know. Your justice I kept not hidden within my heart; your faithfulness and your salvation I have spoken of. I have made no secret of your kindness and your truth in the vast assembly" Psalms 40: 10, 11.

Our senses complement each other and help us interpret difficult concepts that lead us to a greater understanding and service of our Creator/Maker. Have you ever noticed how things often taste like they smell or look like they sound, or feel like they look? In nature, our God engages all five senses and our blessed Church is the only one, as the Body of Christ which worships totally and completely, that is, employing the giftedness of the senses to elevate our glorification of God to actual heavenly worship. It is only the complete man who uses all his senses in praise and prayer. Yes, everyday places like restaurants, theme parks, shopping malls and rock concerts have copied the approach of the Church and come alive to our senses. It is from the very teaching of the Lord himself that we enjoy total and complete, therefore heightened and fulfilling worship. The Pharisee mentions his approach to God through the senses, but stifles their fulfillment by being satisfied in their negative expression and therefore being proud he is not able to bring about the rightful fulfillment of the senses in worship experience which every man is created for.

The entire characterization of our physical parish church is a vehicle for learning and enhancement of worship, because senses do affect learning styles. Some people are more visual for example, while others learn best from hands-on experience. All this we have available in the perfect worship we participate in at our parish church.

Here we learn our God speaks to all five senses in worship and exalts their use for the advancement and fulfillment of the soul. Music is an obvious way to worship by using our sense of hearing. We use the only natural, not artificial, man-made instruments to glorify our God. It is sad that in some churches because they do not understand what worship is, they have resorted to musical instruments to cover up the horror of their singing. In the Old Testament Church, our God commanded the voice be used so man could hear and be



spiritually uplifted and stimulated by the richness and truth of his revelation to us. It is again only in our Church that the proper approach is made and lived to respond to the sense of hearing.

Here is how we can engage our senses of sight, taste, touch and smell.

Sight is a powerful sense. Imagine the first time you saw your favorite painting or a depiction of our Lord in a magnificently executed icon. Think of the ways light affects our lives. God's revelation to us teaches we are to let our light shine before the people of the world so that they may see our good works and praise the Father in heaven (Matthew 5: 16). Obviously we use sight dramatically in worship. The icon screen, the iconography on the walls and in the windows of our churches challenges us to remember we participate in heavenly worship where we are surrounded by the saints and angels, in the actual presence of God! We are no longer on earth, but are mystically transported before our God. We can also engage our sense of sight more intentionally. The expression of joy on a worshipper's face affects our worship. The posture of prayer inspires us to pray as well. The vestments of the priest and servers reinforces our presence before the throne of God. The icons we venerate can present profound truths in a memorable way. The burning candles remind us of Christ burning out his life to save our souls. Photos of our children and grand children impact us each time we look at them. They evoke wonderful emotions and memories. Think of how the iconography in worship inspires believers to greater levels of commitment and triggers truths they hold deep in their hearts to be expressed and lived. And this is the only authentic Christian art form given the world by our blessed Church. Icons express in a physical way mystical spiritual truths.

Is it possible to use our sense of taste in worship? Emphatically yes, since it is to receive the Blessed Eucharist, the precious Body and Blood of our Saviour that we come to worship, to be here nourished by heavenly food. Each of our senses has a direct connection to the brain. We taste the Body and Blood of our Saviour as we experience the result of the descent of the Holy Spirit. Taste helps us understand spiritual concepts. David says, "Taste and see how good is the Lord" Psalms 34: 8. So we physically taste the Lord and become like him if we cooperate with his grace. We become what we eat as the Greek truism teaches us. We hunger therefore for that which tastes good. So we hunger for the Lord which is why the Church prescribes us to fast before receiving, not that it makes us better, but that we actually experience hunger for the nourishment we receive in Christ. We know food that tastes good gains our attention and our God is food for our soul. He makes us understand and experience what He means when He says, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty" John 6: 35.



Like taste, touch is engaged metaphorically and actually in worship. When we feel "touched" by the Lord we are having a spiritual experience, not a physical one. God also uses our physical bodies to touch a world with physical needs. Hugs represent love, brotherhood, friendship. We touch ourselves with the sign of the cross. Touch is a very real expression of love and is an extension of the heart and soul. Touch connects one soul to another as when we greet each other and exchange the kiss of peace. The laying on of hands for healing, anointing, commissioning and showing compassion is an outward expression of a deep spiritual connection. Another way that God uses touch in worship is through music. It is the touch of the skillful singer that brings life to words expressing the teaching of Christ. The voice actually resonates with those who hear it. And of course, we are God's instruments. The touch of God's hand on our life is like that of a Master Musician "...because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else" Acts of the Apostles 17: 25.

Smell indicates a sense of presence. When people smell something, they do not have to see it to know that it is really there. In our church we use candles to remind us we worship a God who is pure Spirit and cannot be seen but is actually with us. Smell of incense inspires to prayer more intensely so that our prayer, as God's revelation teaches us, can rise before the throne of heaven and be acceptable there. Smell can indicate the quality of something. When we visited, worshipped and prayed before the miraculous Icon of Our Lady of Chicago some years ago, just as soon as we entered the church there was an aroma, a very pleasing and other-worldly type of aroma. You knew the eternal encountered the physical then and there. When something smells good, as in our church when incense is used, when the candles are burning, like food, like a fresh pillow, the air we breathe, is perceived as clean, healthy, good, desirable, inspiring and uplifting. St. Paul in this instance also teaches us "Our lives are a fragrance presented by Christ to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those being saved and by those perishing" 2 Corinthians 2: 15. Nobody, including our heavenly Father enjoys a bad smell.

And it is a bad smell coming from the Pharisee we see today that we might avoid him and his example and follow that of the repentant and penitent publican.

When we determine we can do something positive, but figure someone else can do it, we sin by omission. When circumstances are such that our contribution to the success of an endeavor will promote it and assure its far-reaching well-being, but we just do not follow through, our neglect is sinful.

For a follower of Christ, one of life's most haunting regrets is to realize that we never shared our faith in Jesus with others. We cannot alter the past. But we can ask our God to forgive our



silence and turn our regret into determination to tell people within our reach about Christ and how He affects and inspires our life. An the easiest way to live faith, share faith and practice faith, is to let our senses enrich and delight us in worship.

## A Pottery Lesson

...we are the clay and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand  
Isaiah 64:8.

A woman speaks of the summer she took a beginner's pottery class. Her instructor made it seem effortless as she showed the group how to center the clay on the wheel and then pull up a beautifully formed mug. However, when her turn came about, she learned using the wheel was not so easy. She tells of wasting a lot of clay in her first attempts. As she fought with the clay, struggling and trying to force it into obedience, she became impatient and frustrated.

Noting her frustration, the instructor suggested she stop her struggle. She was told to close her eyes, feel the clay and then relax. As she followed these directions, she could feel the clay finding its midpoint. She was no longer forcing it into submission but allowing it to center on its own. From that moment on, she was able to create better pieces of pottery, most of which were actually admired by others.

Our own lives with God are so much like the experience with pottery, about which Isaiah the Prophet was apparently very familiar. Sometimes we struggle to find our direction. We worry whether we are really being obedient to the will of our heavenly Father, doing all that we should be doing in cooperation with divine grace. But when we actually focus and relax on who our God is and then realistically sense his presence, our life suddenly feels right. We are at peace. We have come back to the center, to the truth of who we are and who God is. Having discovered the center, we can then live in the confidence that our Creator God is guiding us. We are then eager to be used, to be molded in his likeness.

If we all work to be centered in our daily living, we will experience a calming effect in our hearts and our soul will be stabilized. We will readily, then, sense our oneness with the Source of our being. We will be comforted and affirmed that God has found a resting place in our heart and soul!



# WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE

*Let us bring to the Lord the sighs of the Publican and as sinner let us approach the Lord. He desires the salvation of all mankind; He grants forgiveness to all who repent. For us He became man while remaining God, co-eternal with the Father. Kontakion, Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican.*

*The Pharisee, overcome with his pride, and the Publican, bent down in repentance, came before You, the only Lord: the first trusted in himself and was deprived of Your blessings; the other spoke but a few words and received Your blessings in abundance. Behold my tears and strengthen me, O Christ our God, for You are indeed the Lover of mankind. Vesper Hymn, Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican.*

*Open to me the doors of repentance, O Giver of life. As we worship in your temple this morning, teach us how to purify the temples of our bodies, and in Your compassion, purify me by the goodness of Your mercies. Matins Hymn, Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican.*

*In parables Christ invites us to correct our life. He raises up the Publican in his humility and shows us how the Pharisee was brought down by his vanity. Seeing the dignity to which the humble are raised and the deep abyss into which the proud fall, let us imitate the virtue of the Publican and despise the sins of the Pharisee. Vain pretensions deprive us of every good deed, while humility purifies us of every evil. O faithful, let us embrace the ways of humility and totally despise the ways of vainglory. Wishing to find humility in the hearts of His disciples, the King of the universe charged them to imitate the Publican and his humble sighs for pardon. I sigh as the Publican, O Lord, and my groaning does not cease. Thus do I find the path to Your heart. Have mercy on me who now seeks to live in humility. Matins Hymn, Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican.*

*Vainglory brings to nothing both justice and its treasures, while humility scatters a multitude of passions. O Saviour, grant that we may imitate the Publican. O Faithful, let us vie with each other in zeal, and let us seek to do good. Let us live together in humility, and may our hearts sigh with tears and prayer so that we may obtain forgiveness from God. Matins Hymn, Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican.*

*Raised up by his humility, the Publican who formerly lamented now was justified for having said: Lord be merciful to me a sinner. He is the one whom we imitate from the abyss into which our hearts have driven us. From the depth of our heart we say, Spare us for we are sinners, O Saviour, Who alone loves mankind, The Word has shown us the best path to exaltation; it is the way of humility. For He Himself was lowered to take the form of a servant. By following His humility, we shall be exalted. Matins Hymn, Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican*



# **Pirohi Volunteers**

**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**

**Jan 14 Mar 5 Apr 30**

**Bake Sale**

**Apr 15, 16**

**Preparation Thursday Before  
Father Lucas, Pani Lucas, Eleni Pallas,  
Joan Henry, Betty Samaris, Eleanor  
Korba, Anna Zacharyczuk**



**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**  
**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**

**Feb 5 Apr 2 June 3**



## A WORTHY CHAMPION OF OUR ORTHODOX FAITH

**S**aint Athanasius the Great was born in Alexandria, Egypt, about the year 297. His childhood was spent during the years that Christians were persecuted for their faith. He lived among people who suffered, and he was taught by teachers who suffered for Christ. But by 313, peace came to the Christians, for Constantine the Great granted religious freedom after his famed vision of the Cross.

Now, however, a different enemy arose, one from within the Church. The heresy of Arius infected the Church and caused great troubles. It was young Athanasius, now an archdeacon and secretary to the aged Patriarch of Alexandria, who arose to defend the faith. He relentlessly challenged Arians on the real issue: *"Either admit that the Son is of the same substance with the Father, or say openly that He is a creature, in which case He cannot be worshipped . . ."*

The controversy resulted in the calling by the Emperor of the Great Council, held in 318 at Nicea. It was Athanasius who led the struggle against the heresy. The Patriarch died shortly after the council, and Athanasius was elected to succeed him. He had a stormy career as Archbishop. The Arian troubles did not fade away but persisted for years. Five times Athanasius was banished; five times he returned in triumph, to the joy of the people.

Athanasius was archbishop of some 46 years, and he was 77 years old when death came in 373. This warrior for Christ finally received his crown of glory.

*The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin* . . . . . Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey . . . . . Litho in U.S.A.