





# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 3, 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

+++ Tomorrow the Saviour Fast which is concluded by the feast of the Dormition begins. Our faithful are asked to assume the challenging grace of this holy time and offer it for the spiritual growth of our parish. Tomorrow, evening at 7: 30 PM we will celebrate the praises of our Lord in anticipation of the coming feast of the Transfiguration. Please come and join us in prayer and praise.

+++ Today we have festal anointing on the occasion of this past week's healing feast of St. Pantelemon. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we reply, "He is And Shall Be!"

+++ This Saturday is the great feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord. In anticipation, the vesperal Divine Liturgy will be celebrated Friday evening at 7: 30 PM. It is customary to bless fruit and grapes on this holy day. Please bring your baskets to enjoy the grace of this blessing.

+++ 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, \$364.00; Candles, \$6.00; Holyday, \$25.00; Food Coupons, \$240.00, for a total of \$635.00. 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 44 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, Ryan Pallas, Bob Gorbich, Debra Szmaida, Paul Szmaida, 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 \$1617.00 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 \$107,815.00. 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 \$5300.00 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.

+++ We remember only those who are present for the entire Divine Liturgy should come forward to receive Communion. The entire Liturgy means "Amen" to "Amen."



LORD



TEACH  
US

### Our Victorious God

*The Lord your God is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing* Zephaniah 3: 17.

*I do not trust in my bow, my sword does not bring me victory; but you give us victory over our enemies, you put our adversaries to shame* Psalms 44: 6, 7.

*Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous; the Lord's right hand has done mighty things* Psalms 118: 15.

*This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God* 1 John 5: 3 – 5.

*Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ* 1 Corinthians 15: 57.

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control* Galatians 5: 22, 23.

*For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and self-control* 2 Timothy 1: 7.

*I am the vine, you are the branches* John 15: 5.



## REAL SERVANTS

*Whoever wants to be great must become a servant* Mark 10: 43.

*You will know them by their deeds* Matthew 7: 16.

*A good man produces good from the store of his goodness;  
an evil man produces evil from his evil store* Matthew 12: 35.

*Jesus told his disciples...that they should always pray and never give up*  
Luke 18: 1.

We serve the Lord God by serving others. The world defines greatness in terms of power, possessions, prestige and position. If you can demand service from others, you have arrived. In our self-serving culture with its *me-first* obsessive mentality, acting like a servant is not a popular concept.

Jesus however, measured greatness in terms of service to others, not status, especially sedentary self-satisfied status. God alone determines greatness by how many people you serve, not how many people serve you. This is so contrary to the idea pervasive in the world about greatness and importance that we have a hard time understanding it, much less practicing it. The disciples argued about who deserved the most prominent position and 2,000 year later, Christian leaders still jockey for position and prominence and all sorts of useless titles and incidental positions which is pathetic for the outside observer to assess. In one diocese more than half the priests have elevated titles without substance. Probably none of them have earned the titles or the diocese would be bustling with zealous missionary evangelical activity and stupendous spiritual and numerical growth. Titles have been distributed that have no value and are actually insulting to the bearer except in isolated and very rare cases. The world rightly calls this pandering and appealing to the least common denominator in the weakness of man.

Thousands of books have been written on leadership, but far fewer on servanthood. Everyone wants to lead; no one wants to be a follower, even fewer want to be servants. We would rather be generals than privates. Even baptized and ordained Christians want to be servant-leaders,



not just plain servants. But to be like Christ is to be just a plain ordinary servant. That is exactly what He called himself.

While knowing who you are is important for serving God, having the heart of a servant is even more important. Remember, God shaped us for service, not for self-centeredness. Without a servant's heart, we are tempted to abuse ourselves for personal gain. We will also be tempted to use our position as an excuse to exempt ourselves from meeting need.

Our God often challenges our hearts by asking us to serve in ways we are not prepared to do. If we happen upon a man who falls into a ditch, our heavenly Father expects us to spontaneously help him out, not explain, "I do not have the gift of mercy or service." While we may not be gifted for a particular task, we may be called to do it if no one gifted at it is around. Our primary area of service should be in the area of our expertise and ability, but our secondary and ever-expectant role of service is where ever we are needed at the moment.

The hope of our heart reveals our ministry, but our servant's heart will reveal our maturity. No special talent or gift is required to stay after a meeting to pick up the trash or stack chairs. Anyone can be a servant. All it requires is character.

Yes, it is possible to serve in a church for an entire lifetime without ever being a servant because we must have a servant's heart. How can we know if we have the heart of a servant? Jesus said, "You can tell what they are by what they do" Matthew 7: 16.

Real servants make themselves available to serve. Servants do not fill their time with other pursuits that could limit their availability to the cause of Christ. They want to be ready to jump into service when called on. Much like soldiers, a servant must always be standing by for duty: "No soldier entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life so that he may please his commanding officer" 2 Timothy 2: 4. A woman not long ago said, when commenting on the works others do in our parish, "Oh, it was never given to me as a vocation to help and work for the church that way." Certainly not, because she was too busy pursuing worldly and condemning nonsense in her life so she had no time for serving the needs of the parish because she was too wrapped up in her imaginary wants. She did not know that real servants do what is necessary even if it is inconvenient. The person with the heart of a servant looks for ways to serve Christ through others.

So the question we ask ourselves during this Apostles' Fast is, "Are we available to our heavenly Father any time? Does God have to wait on our schedule or do we rearrange our life to accommodate the demands of our God? Can God mess up your plans without your being



resentful? As a servant you do not get to pick and choose when or where you will serve. Being a servant means giving up the right to control your schedule and allowing God to interrupt it and redirect it whenever He has needs to fulfill.

If we remind ourselves at the start of each day that we are servants of God, interruptions will not frustrate us as much, because our agenda will be whatever God wants to bring into our lives. Servants see interruptions as divine appointments for serving and are happy for the opportunity to practice serving.

The particular reason for this fasting period in the center of the fun-loving and fun-filled summer is to become in heart, soul and mind what the Mother of God achieved by God's grace judged worthy of becoming the earthly vehicle in which the Son of God becomes man and effects the salvation of our souls. The Virgin Mother becomes a servant that her divine Son may become an even greater servant of our salvation! What an incomparable glorious mystery to think about! The perfect servanthood of the Birthgiver of God makes it possible for the servanthood of the Son of God! What eternal implications our service to God has!

Real servants pay attention to needs. Servants are always on the lookout for ways to help others. When they see a need, they seize the moment to meet it, just as God's revelation to us commands: "Whenever we have the opportunity we have to do what is good for everyone, especially for those of the household of faith" Galatians 6: 10. When God puts someone in need right in front of you, He is giving you the opportunity to grow in servanthood. Notice that God says the needs of our church family are to be given preference, not put at the bottom of "things to do list."

We lack many occasions for serving because we lack sensitivity and spontaneity. Great opportunities to serve never last long. They pass quickly, sometimes never to return again. You may only get one chance to serve that person or in particular circumstances, so take advantage of the moment. "Never tell your neighbors to wait until tomorrow if you can help them now" Proverbs 3: 28.

What if we would adopt as our own the truism or slogan to describe our life's endeavors: "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you can." That is what greatness consists in. Look about for small tasks that no one else thinks are important. Do these little things as if they were great things because God is watching and will elevate them to far beyond their actual meaning and value. Responding to the opportunity to attend, to pray at and



praise the Lord at a holyday Liturgy may not seem that important, but in the overall view of things, it becomes a consistent, ongoing glorification of God far beyond the simple holyday being acknowledged and celebrated. It in fact becomes its reality: participating with the angelic choirs in heavenly, eternal, never-ending glorification of God. It means choosing the presence of God, the company of the angels and saints to worldly amusements and entertainment and advancement in holiness as superior to remaining in the tiresome and troublesome world.

One reason some people never serve is because they fear they are not good enough to serve the Lord. They have believed the lie that serving God is only for superstars. Some have fostered this myth by making excellence an idol which makes people of average talent hesitant to get involved. Others wait until the time is right. "If we wait for perfect conditions we will never get anything done" Ecclesiastes 11: 4.

Real servants do every task with equal dedication. Whatever they do, servants of the Lord "...do it with all their heart" Colossians 3: 23. The size of the task is irrelevant. The only issue is, does it need to be done? No one ever arrives at the state in life where we are too important to help with menial tasks. God will never exempt us from the mundane. It is a vital part of our character curriculum. "If you think you are too important to help some one in need, you only fool yourself because you are really a nobody" Galatians 6: 3. It is precisely in such small services that we grow into Christ-like spirit and behavior.

Our Lord specialized in menial tasks that everyone else tried to avoid: washing feet, helping children, fixing breakfast and serving lepers. Nothing was beneath him; because He came to serve. It is not in spite of his greatness that He did such things, but because of it, and He expects us to follow his example. "What I just did was to give you an example, as I have done, so you must do. I solemnly assure you no servant is greater than his master, no messenger outranks the one who sent him" John 13: 15, 16.

Small tasks show big hearts and the servant's heart is revealed in the little acts that others do not think of doing, as when St. Paul gathered brushwood for a fire to warm everyone after a shipwreck (Acts of the Apostles 28: 3). He was just as exhausted by the series of events as everyone else, but he did what everyone needed. No task is beneath you when you have the heart of a servant.

Great opportunities often disguise themselves in small tasks. The little things in life determine the big things. Do not look for great, colossal things to do for God. Just do the not so great



stuff and God will assign you whatever He wants you to do next. If you are not even on his list, it is your loss. But before attempting the extraordinary, try serving in ordinary ways.

Faithfulness has always been a rare quality. "Help, O Lord! for no one now is dutiful; faithfulness has vanished from among men" Psalms 12: 1; "To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the lord than sacrifice" Proverbs 21: 3; "I have no one quite like him for genuine interest in whatever concerns you. Everyone is busy seeking his own interests rather than those of Christ Jesus. You know from experience what Timothy's qualities are, how he was like a son at his father's side serving the gospel along with me" Philippians 2: 19 - 22.

Most people do not know the meaning of commitment so they lose so much in life and in the end are impoverished because of their own light approach to salvation. They make commitments to God very casually but for worldly events are most serious. They break God's commitments but are faithful to the values of the world. They feel no regret, remorse or hesitation in offending the Lord. How many times in the past have we had to improvise, and reorganize because the proper people did not show up? No Divine Liturgy can be celebrated without at least one person. A priest cannot celebrate himself. It has happened, although thank God, not any more but when Father first came here that services could not be held because the church was empty. The priest was cheated, the people were left abysmally poorer because they, by absence, would not permit God's grace and blessing to reach them.

In heaven, our God is going to openly reward some of the most obscure and unknown servants, we have never heard of here and now, who taught emotionally disturbed children, cleaned up after incontinent elderly; nursed AIDS patients and in thousands of other unnoticed and unrewarded, even castigated ways, served the needs of people in trouble .

Finally, self-promotion and servanthood do not mix. Real servants do not serve for the approval or applause of others. They live for an audience of ONE. St. Paul said, "If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ" Galatians 1: 10.

Knowing this, do not be discouraged when service is unnoticed or taken for granted. Keep on serving God! "Throw yourself into the work of the Master, confident that nothing you do for him is a waste of time or effort" 1 Corinthians 15: 58. Recall always the encouraging words of the Saviour at this time: "If, as my representatives, you give even a cup of water to a little child, you will be surely rewarded" Matthew 10: 42.



## KEEP THE FAITH

*I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me* Acts of the Apostles 27: 25.

The twenty seventh chapter of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles is a literary gem. It is St. Luke's personal account of a storm on the Mediterranean Sea. He was on board a small ship when it was hit by winds of hurricane force. After many days of foul weather, everyone on the vessel gave up hope of being saved so savage was the adverse weather attack they sustained.

St. Paul was also on that storm-tossed vessel. He was a prisoner bound for Rome, on his way to stand trial before the Roman Caesar. An angel of God had reminded him of that. So no devilish raging sea could prevent him from reaching Rome. No winds could thwart God's purpose. And the angel said that all those sailing with Paul would be saved with him. So the Apostle to the Gentiles did not lose hope. He had faith in God.

Faith is a basic trust in Almighty God and his promises to us. It is the conviction that, no matter what happens, God's purpose for our good will be fulfilled. Whether we are young or old, imbued with health or wrapped in sickness, experiencing renewed strength or continual illness, enjoying extended life beyond three score and ten, or actually facing imminent death, we can be of good courage because God's promise cannot fail. "While we live we are responsible to the Lord, and when we die, we die as his servants. Both in life and in death we belong to the Lord" Romans 14: 8. What an all-encompassing promise!

There are so many conflicting and contradictory messages advanced today. But believers in Jesus Christ in his Body the Church, know that God's Word and his promises are the only messages we can rely on. How blessed we are that as communicants of the Church, we are reassured of blessing if we follow the lifestyle of the Saviour.

Jesus pilots our lives over stormy seas. He assists us in reaching by our example those without hope of the message of God's enduring love and mercy. We believe. We have faith. We will persist and endure until the end.



# **WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE**

*Angelic powers descended to Your grave, and the guards fell down and appeared dead. Mary came to the grave seeking Your most pure body. You conquered and despoiled the Abyss without being touched by it. You, the Giver of Life, met the Virgin. O Lord, risen from the dead; glory be to You! Troparion, Resurrection Tone Six.*

*Christ our God, the Life-giver with His life-giving hand raised all the dead from the valley of death, granting Resurrection to all mankind. He is the Saviour, the Resurrection, the Life and the God of all      Kontakion, Resurrection Tone Six.*

*Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance      Prokimenon, Resurrection Tone Six.*

*O Lord, You are present everywhere; Where can we poor sinners flee? Heaven is where you dwell; in the Abyss, You conquered death; in the depths of the sea, Your powerful hand is there, O Lord. We come to You, and we worship You saying: "O Lord, risen from the dead, have mercy on us!" Vesper Hymn, Tone Six.*

*We take pride in Your Cross, O Christ; We praise and glorify Your Resurrection. You are our God and we know no other      Vesper Hymn, Tone Six.*

*Who would not call you blessed, Mother of God! Who would not praise your virginal birthgiving? The only-begotten Son, born of the Father before all ages, has become incarnate of you in a manner beyond understanding. God by nature has taken the nature of man for us, not divided into two persons. He has two natures without mixture or confusion. O most pure and holy, intercede with Him that He may have mercy on our souls      Vesper Hymn, Tone Six.*

*Christ willed to save us from corruption; He was crucified, buried in the tomb. The faithful women sought Him. In tears they said: "O Saviour of all, how did you accept burial? How were you stolen, how taken away? Which place holds Your life-giving body? Appear to us, O Lord, as You promised. Wipe away our tears      Vesper Hymn, Tone Six.*



# VESPER VERSES ACCORDING TO THE EIGHT TONES

## TONE 6

1. O Christ, You conquered the Abyss, You  
ascended the cross,  
You raised those who stood in the shadow of  
death.  
You are the only one free among the dead.  
From your light you give life.  
Almighty Savior, have mercy on us!
2. Today Christ has conquered death.  
He is risen as he said;  
He has given joy to the world.  
Let us all sing a hymn and say  
"O Source of life, unapproachable light,  
Almighty Lord, have mercy on us!"
3. O Lord, you are present everywhere :  
Where can we poor sinners flee?  
Heaven is where you dwell;  
In the Abyss, you conquered death;  
In the depths of the sea,  
Your powerful hand is there, O Lord.  
We come to you, and we worship you saying :  
"O Lord risen from the dead, have mercy on  
us!"
4. We take pride in your cross, O Christ;  
We praise and glorify you resurrection.  
You are our God :  
We know no other.



5. Glory be to your power, O Lord!  
You have destroyed the power of death;  
You have renewed us by your cross;  
You have granted us life and great mercy.
6. We bless the Lord at all times;  
We sing of his resurrection :  
By accepting the cross, He has destroyed  
death.
7. By your burial, O Lord,  
You have broken and destroyed the bonds of  
death.  
Your resurrection has enlightened the world.  
O Lord, glory be to You!
8. Glory be to the Father ✝, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and  
forever. Amen.

Who would not call you blessed, Mother of  
God?

Who would not praise your virginal birth-  
giving?

The only-begotten Son, born of the Father  
before all ages,

Has become incarnate of you in a manner  
beyond understanding.

God by nature has taken the nature of man  
for us.

Not divided into two persons, He has two  
natures

without mixture or confusion.

O most pure and holy, intercede with him

That He may have mercy on our souls.

*At the Apostichon*

1. Your resurrection, O Christ our Savior,  
The angels in heaven praise with hymns!



Make us on earth also worthy with a pure heart  
To extol and give glory to You.

2. You broke the gates of the Abyss; You broke  
its bonds :

You are God almighty.

You raised our fallen race.

We sing to you :

“ O Lord, risen from the dead, glory be to  
You! ”

3. Christ willed to save us from corruption :

He was crucified, buried in the tomb.

The faithful women sought him.

In tears they said :

“ O Savior of all, how did you accept burial?

Hew were you stolen, how taken away?

Which place holds your life-giving body?

Appear to us, O Lord, as you promised.

Wipe away our tears. ”

While they wept, an angel appeared saying :

“ Enough tears : go tell the disciples the news :

The Lord is risen

Granting forgiveness and mercy to the  
world. ”

4. Freely you accepted death;

You conquered death by your burial;

You arose on the third day in glory as God;

You granted eternal life and mercy to the  
world.

5. Glory be to the Father ✙, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and  
forever. Amen.



Christ is the Lord, my Maker and Savior.  
He came from your womb in my likeness,  
O most pure Lady.  
He freed Adam from the ancestral curse.  
O Virgin since you are the mother of God,  
We never cease calling upon you.  
As the angel, we also say :  
“ Hail, Lady, Advocate, shield and salvation  
of our souls! ”



## ✠ ✠ MOUNT TABOR & OUR LORD'S TRANSFIGURATION ✠ ✠

**A**lthough not specifically mentioned in any of the 3 Gospels that describe this event, Mount Tabor has long been revered as the site of our Lord's Transfiguration. The first church was built upon it in the 4th century and today, both the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches have a presence there. Located in the region of Lower Galilee, the mountain rises to an elevation of nearly 2,000 feet. Although this is not considered to be terribly high, its size dominates the level landscape around the Jezreel Valley, which it overlooks. The view from the top of Mount Tabor is breathtaking, but reaching it is a grueling task - even today. Tour buses are permitted to only go so far; then pilgrims proceed by foot, or chance a ride with local drivers. With its winding trails and rugged terrain, one can only imagine how difficult it was for our Lord - accompanied by Peter, James and John - to make that challenging climb.

What occurred on Mount Tabor is shrouded in mystery. While praying there, Jesus was suddenly joined by Moses and Elijah. The symbolism here should be quite clear to us: our Lord was the fulfillment of the Law - represented by Moses and the words of the Prophets - represented by Elijah. The Apostles present were privileged to catch a glimpse of Christ's glory, as "*. . . His Face shone as the sun and His garments became white as snow.*" (Matt 17:2) Adding to the drama of the Transfiguration was the Voice of the Father, Who proclaimed: "*This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.*" (Matt 17:5) This heavenly happening was all too brief; in an instant it was over, and Christ would come down from the mountain and embark upon an even more grueling walk to Golgotha.