



he story of ST. ANANIAS was closely tied with St. Paul. Ananias was involved in the conversion of "Saul the persecutor of Christians" to "Paul the Great Apostle."

The Acts of the Apostles provides this account. "There was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision: 'Rise and inquire in the house of Judas for a man of Tarsus named Saul; for behold he is praying.'" Indeed Saul was praying. He had gone to the high priest and obtained letters to the synagogues in Damascus searching out followers of Christ, that he might bring them back to Jerusalem in chains. This was Saul, the violent persecutor of Christians, breathing threats of murder against the disciples of the Lord.

A FIRST CENTURY SAINT WHO BAPTIZED SAINT PAUL



Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 22, 2013

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.

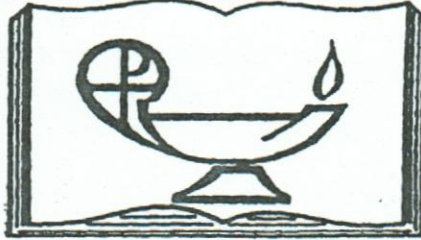
We are a beacon on a hill with the eyes of many upon us; that beacon is the inspired Light of Christ which must shine brightly in our lives.

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

+++ Today we remember St. Euphemia whose relics are embedded in our altar table. Her feast was remembered this past Monday. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we reply, "He Is And Shall Be!"

LORD



TEACH
US

Being Christ-Centered

O God, you are my God; early will I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh longs for you in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see your power and your glory as I have seen you in the sanctuary. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise you with joyful lips; When I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the night watches. Because you have been my help, therefore in the shadow of your wings will I rejoice Psalms 63: 1, 2; 5-7.

It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to your name, O most High; to show forth your loving kindness in the morning and your faithfulness every night, For you, Lord, have made me glad through your work; I will triumph in the works of your hands Psalms 92: 1, 2, 4.

Sing to the Lord, bless his name; show forth his salvation from day to day Psalms 96: 2.

From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised Psalms 113: 3.

I will delight myself in your statutes: I will not forget your word. Make me understand the way of your precepts; so shall I talk of your wondrous works Psalms 119: 16, 27.

For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your poets have said, for we are also his offspring Acts of the Apostles 17: 28.

Growing Together

Our Lord was the Master psychologist. He definitely understood those whom He created. It's no wonder then that He insisted we not only espouse our faith interiorly, but are impelled to manifest it, show and provide an encouraging example to others with it. St. James was not wrong and even rather emphatic when he insisted faith without our good works is dead. In other words, what we believe, must be translated into practical reality. These put living flesh on our professed Christianity.

Although we cannot vouch for the accuracy of these figures from a first year Educational Psychology text book, the principles are surely true.

People retain

- 10% of what they *read*
- 20% of what they *hear*
- 30% of what they *see*
- 50% of what they *see and hear*
- 70% of what they *say*
- 90% of what they *do and say*

These statistics are truly good news for parents who should make a serious effort to introduce faith life to their children. Any efforts parents or other devoted adults make to communicate faith commitment to their children are bound to deepen adult spiritual life in the process. Thus then parents and their children are jointly blessed when both proceed together in a united venture to follow seriously after the Saviour. A deeper, richer and more profound faith and life commitment is the result of parents and their children learning, living and practicing their Orthodox faith together. And now is the time to begin this glorious adventure so it will have eternal repercussions!

The Jake O'Shaunessey Story

Once on the west coast of Ireland there lived a seagull whose name was Jake O'Shaunessey. Jake was a healthy, handsome and intelligent seagull, but he was not able to fly.

When he was just a wee bird, Jake's parents and siblings had been lost in a severe storm and he'd had no one to teach him.

He grew older and decided to try to learn by himself. He watched other seagulls and imitated them. He ran along the ground and flapped his wings and hopped up and down, trying to get into the air, but nothing would happen and the young seagulls laughed at him because Jake looked so funny.

Some of the older seagulls tried to teach him, but each one told Jake a different way of learning to fly, and Jake tried to think of all the ways each of the seagulls had told him: "Flap your wings more, get your feet back, head straight," and all the other instructions. He was thinking so hard about what everyone told him that he wasn't able to get off the ground. He began to believe something was wrong with him, that he would never fly.

He tried going to the top of a cliff and jumping off, but he simply fell to the bottom. He went to a higher cliff, over the sea, closed his eyes and jumped. Again he fell. Other seagulls took pity on Jake and tried to take care of him. But this

made him feel more discouraged than ever.

One day a very old and very wise seagull flew into the western coast where Jake lived. He listened to Jake's problem and told him to climb to the top of the special cliff that abutted all the others, the highest and steepest one. On the top of the cliff he would find a large boulder, and on this boulder was written a secret message. This was the message Jake needed in order to fly, the wise bird told him. No seagull had ever climbed such a steep cliff before. Jake had to tie starfish to his feet to help him with the suction. He climbed slowly, painfully, and finally reached the very top. He saw the large boulder. On it was written, *What you believe, you can do.*

Jake looked down from the dizzying cliff and was terrified, but he closed his eyes and jumped. He started to drop, and as he did, he remembered to say to himself, "I believe I can fly, I believe I can fly." He was so busy saying it that he forgot to doubt himself.

Instead of paying attention to all the different things he'd been told to do, he just did it. And he found himself flying – flying like any other seagull, with wings outstretched, gliding on the wind currents. It was the most beautiful and powerful moment of his life. He flew and dipped and never once wondered if he was doing it right. Far below on the sand, the other seagulls, who were watching him heard him sing out, "I can fly! I believe!"

Procrastination

A painfully shy man fell in love with a young woman from a distance. He sensed that she felt the same way, but he could not find the courage to ask her out.

Finally, he decided he would mail her a love letter every day for a year and then ask her out for a date.

Faithfully, he followed his plan and at the year's end he was courageous enough to call her – only to discover she had already married the letter carrier.

It is better to follow the Lord's plan instead of our own. Doesn't our Lord teach us something similar in the parable of the Ten Virgins?

Failures...But Not Quite

After Fred Astaire's first screen test, a 1933 memo from the MGM testing director said, "Can't act. Slightly bald. Can dance a little." Astaire kept that memo over the fireplace in his Beverly Hills home.

An expert said of the famous football coach Vince Lombardi, "He possesses minimal football knowledge. Lacks motivation."

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper for lacking ideas. He also went bankrupt several times before he built Disneyland.

Beethoven handled the violin awkwardly and preferred playing his own

compositions instead of improving his technique. His teacher called him hopeless as a composer.

After all His miracles, cure of the sick, resurrection of the dead, Christ was denounced as a blasphemer and liar and crucified. All before He rose triumphantly from the dead!

Flock Of Geese

Even the birds of the sky our Lord spoke of can teach us something about working together as a faith family.

Have you ever watched a flock of geese flying their traditional "V" formation? Two engineers learned that each bird, by flapping its wings, creates an uplift for the bird that follows. Together the whole flock gains about 70 percent greater flying range than if they were journeying alone.

That is one of the reasons our Lord calls us to be part of His Body, not to struggle after salvation by ourselves, individually.

Teamwork And Ego

A frog asked two geese to take him south with them. At first they resisted; they did not see how it could be done. Finally, the frog suggested that the two geese hold a stick in their beaks and that he would hold on to it with his mouth.

So off the unlikely threesome went, flying southward over the countryside. It was really quite a sight. People looked up and

expressed great admiration at this demonstration of creative teamwork.

Someone finally said, "It's wonderful! Who was so clever to discover such a fine way to travel?"

Whereupon the frog opened his mouth and said, "It was I" as it plummeted to the earth.

Practice

A story is told of the famous cellist, Pablo Casals, who was to be interviewed by a young reporter at his studio. Casals kept the reporter waiting past the scheduled time. Throughout the wait, the reporter heard Casals' music coming through the studio's French doors. Finally, the doors opened and Casals appeared. He realized he kept the reporter waiting and apologized profusely.

"Oh, my young friend, I am so sorry to have kept you waiting. You see, I was practicing my cello all day as I do every day and totally lost track of time. I forgot you were waiting."

The reporter jumped to his feet and said, "You are the world's greatest cellist, and you tell me that you have been in your studio practicing your cello all day and that you do that every day. Whatever for?"

Casals turned to the reporter and said, "Ah, my young friend, that is precisely why I practice my cello every day, all day ... *to remain the world's greatest cellist.*"

How true this is of the follower of Christ who wishes to remain a faithful believer. He must practice and live his faith daily so he remains devoted to the Lord all the days of His life!

The Question

What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?

Didn't our Lord teach us, "I can do all things with Christ who strengthens me" Philippians 4: 13?

A Little Knowledge Is A Dangerous Thing

A man who lived by the side of the road and sold hot dogs was hard-of-hearing, so he had no radio. He had trouble with his eyes, so he read no newspapers. But he sold good hot dogs. He put up signs on the highway advertising them. He stood by the side of the road and invitingly cried out, "Buy a hot dog, mister?" And people bought his hot dogs. He increased his meat and bun orders. He bought a bigger stove to take care of his growing trade.

He finally got his son to come home from college to help out. But then something strange happened. "Father, haven't you been listening to the radio?" his son said. "Haven't you been reading the newspaper? There's a big recession on. The European situation is terrible. The domestic situation is worse." Things may not improve, but get worse.

Whereupon the father thought, "Well my son's been to college, he reads the papers and he listens to the radio, so he ought to know."

So the father cut down his meat and bun orders, took down most of the signs and no longer bothered to stand out on the highway to sell his hot dogs. His sales fell overnight.

"You're right son," the father said to his boy. "We certainly are in the middle of a big recession and things have become hopeless."

"...the man who acquires wealth unjustly, in middle life it will desert him; in the end he is only a fool" Jeremiah 17: 11.

"The way of the fool is right in his own eyes" Proverbs 12: 15.

"...the father of a fool has no joy" Proverbs 17: 21.

Facts

When we line up all the facts we think are against us, the facts can stop us before we start. Whatever we need to discourage us – "I'm too young, too short, too tall, unprepared, inexperienced, or not quite ready – we can uncover and overcome. And if we miss a few details, we can always find someone to help us "face the facts." The facts, after all speak for themselves – except they're often not true. Courage is doing it anyway, whatever it is, even consistently persevering in the salvation of one's soul

in spite of odds, can be achieved by God's grace, certainly not alone. We all doubt ourselves, we all wonder whether we really have the goods, whether we have the wherewithal to achieve what Christ insists is our destiny.

Persistence

When we see ourselves in a situation which must be endured and gone through, it is best to make up our minds to it, meet it with firmness, and accommodate everything to it in the best way practicable. This lessens the evil, while fretting and fuming only serves to increase our own torments. Count on the Holy Spirit and you shall overcome!

The Laws Of Learning

The four great laws of learning are explanation, demonstration, imitation and repetition. The goal is to create a correct habit that can be produced instinctively under great pressure, to make the process a part of our very nature.

To make sure this goal is achieved, create eight laws of learning: namely, explanation, demonstration, imitation, repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition, and repetition.

In other words, practice your Orthodox faith at home, on the job, in your neighborhood, on the golf course, while traveling, when recreating, in simple conversation with friends and family, even how you relate to your pet dog or cat!

Soul Of Christ

*Soul of Christ sanctify me;
Body of Christ save me;
Blood of Christ inebriate me;
Water from the side of Christ, wash me;
Passion of Christ strengthen me.*

*O good Jesus hear me;
Within Your wounds hide me;
Never permit me to be separated from You;
From the evil one protect me,
At the hour of my death call me,
And bid me come to You
That with Your saints I may praise You forever. Amen. -*

IT CAN BE DONE

*The ones who miss all the fun
Are those who say, "It can't be done."
In solemn pride they stand aloof
And greet each venture with reproof.
Had they the power they'd efface
The history of the human race.
We'd have no radio or motor cars,
No street lit by electric stars;
No telegraph nor telephone,
We'd linger in the age of stone.
The world would sleep if things were run
By those who say, "It can't be done."*

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Hail (or Rejoice), you who have crushed
the corruptor of minds.

Hail (or Rejoice), you who have given birth to
the source of chastity.

Hail (or Rejoice), nuptial bed of pure mar-
riages.

Hail (or Rejoice), you who reconcile the faith-
ful
to the Lord.

Hail (or Rejoice), beautiful nourisher of vir-
gins.

Hail (or Rejoice), you who dress the holy souls
as spouses.

Hail (or Rejoice), O immaculate Bride.

AKATHIST HYMN

MOTHER OF THE LAMB

In this strophe of the Akathist Hymn, Mary is greeted as the Mother of Christ, the Lamb Who will be immolated and the Shepherd Who guides and defends the flock. The hymn also celebrates Mary's protection and defense of us until we enter the sheepfold of heaven, because she is the gate of heaven.

HAIL (or Rejoice), Mother of the Lamb and
the Shepherd.

Hail (or Rejoice), sheepfold of the spiritual
flocks.

Hail (or Rejoice), shelter against invisible
enemies.

Hail (or Rejoice), entrance to the gates of
paradise.

Hail (or Rejoice), because heaven embraces
earth.

Hail (or Rejoice), because earth sings together
with heaven.

But as Saul approached the ancient city, a light from Heaven flashed around him. It was so bright that he fell to the ground. He heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, why do you persecute Me?" And Saul answered, "Who are you, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

The experience on the Road to Damascus was a shattering one. Saul was struck blind. He was raised to his feet and then lead by hand to Damascus. For 3 days he remained sightless, eating and drinking nothing.

Now it was time to complete the conversion experience. The Lord spoke to Ananias and instructed him to come to Saul. But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to Thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon Thy name."

But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of My Name."

Ananias obeyed the command of the Lord and went to the house where Saul was being kept. Ananias laid his hands on him and said: "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came, has sent me that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized, and took food and was strengthened.

This "unbeliever" was born again in the waters of Baptism administered by Ananias, and he became Paul. He went about the synagogues, now not seeking out Christians for persecution, but proclaiming to all about Jesus, saying "He is the Son of God."