



Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Sunday of Myrrhbearing Womean

May 8, 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

+++ The Scripture Study Class will meet this Tuesday 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 the next class, please read the twenty-second to twenty-fourth chapters of the Book of Genesis.

+++ Today we greet and embrace our beloved Mothers as we join the nation in honoring them. We love our Mothers; we honor our Mothers and embrace our Mothers with a holy kiss in gratitude for all they do for us in fulfillment of their vocation. A holy, blessed and enriched celebration, dear and devoted Mothers! Blessed flowers are distributed to our Mothers today to complement the fragrance of holiness which characterizes their vocation. We offer prayers of intercession for the repose of their souls at the concluding Memorial Service as we ask blessings from heaven for those who strive among us for continued holiness.

+++ We acknowledge with deep gratitude the generous and kind offerings received in the amount of ~~\$315.00~~ from Bill & Anna Zacharyczuk, Pani Lucas, Rosalie Choti, Joseph Choti family, Eleanor Korba, Betty Samaris, Anonymous and Eleni Pappas in blessed memory of our beloved departed parishioner, +Paul Peter Pallas. We pray the merciful Lord comforts Eleni Pappas and loved ones in their loss and provides a blessed repose for the soul of +Paul Peter and creates for him Eternal Memory as we thank the generosity of these devoted souls. Any others who would like to join this exclusive list, please see Father as soon as possible.

+++ We have received recently ~~\$65.00~~ as gifts to the church from an Anonymous Soul, Sarah Harrison and Tatyana Harrison in blessed memory of our beloved +Metropolitan Nicholas. We thank the gracious souls who made the offering and continue to pray the merciful Lord provide blessed repose to the soul of +Metropolitan Nicholas and create for him Eternal Memory!

+++ 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, ~~\$558.00~~; Candles, ~~\$44.00~~; Food Coupons, ~~\$420.00~~; Kitchen, ~~\$1036.00~~; Candy Sale, ~~\$44.00~~; Resurrection, ~~\$110.00~~, for a total of ~~\$2212.00~~. 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, Louis Pasquino, +Paul Szmaida, Debra Szmaida, George Idromenos, Kent Pasquino, Kyle Pasquino, Bob Gorbich, Marina Topsis, 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 ~~\$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."

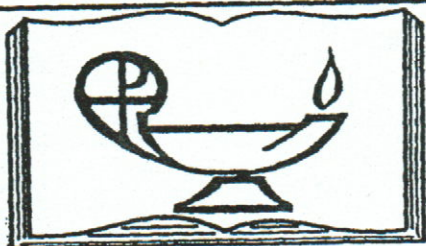
+++ Those who have from time to time taken food home from the church in either plastic kitchen containers or on the aluminum trays, please return them as we note a number of the containers are missing and four trays are no longer around.

+++ 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!

Christ Is Risen!

Indeed He Is Risen!

LORD



TEACH
US

Christ's Priesthood

And Jesus drew near them and spoke to them saying, All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me Matthew 28: 18.

...as the Father sent me, so I send you John 20: 22.

Go therefore and teach all nations...all that I have commanded you Matthew 28: 19, 20.

God into the world and preach the gospel to every creature Mark 16: 15.

He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that does not believe shall be damned Mark 16: 16.

I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it Matthew 16: 18.

This day salvation is come to this house Luke 19: 9.

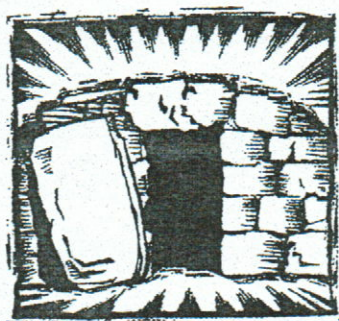
This is my body... this is my blood Mark 14: 22, 24.

Do this in commemoration of me Luke 22: 19.

For we are laborers together with God 1 Corinthians 3: 9.

I have made you as a new trashing tool, with teeth like a saw; you shall trash the mountains and break them into pieces, and shall make the hills as chaff. You shall fan them and the wind shall carry them away Isaiah 41: 15, 16.

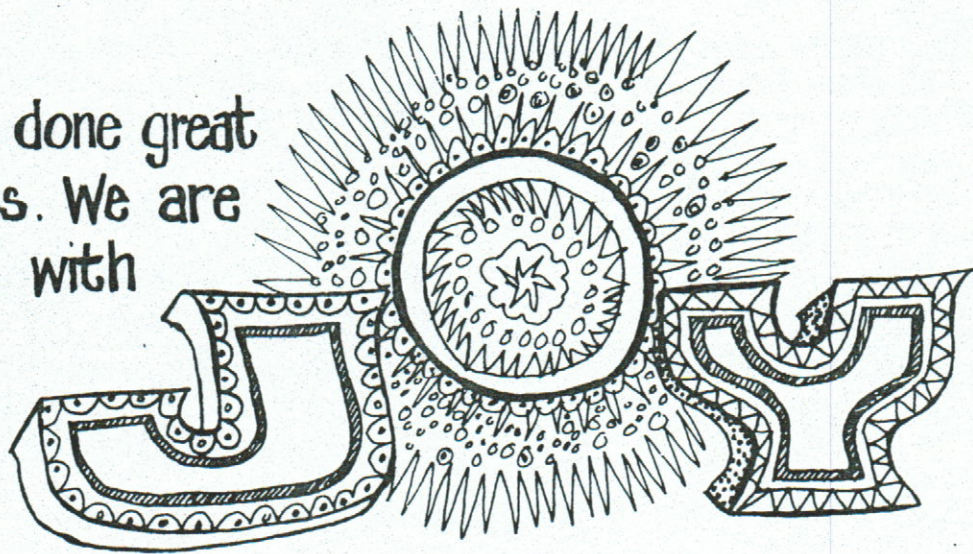
THE MYRRHBEARERS



"After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples:

'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee...' Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'" (Matthew 28:1-20)

the Lord has done great
things for us. We are
filled with



NEVER, NEVER GIVE UP

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

"Never give up!" No doubt we have all heard this admonition time and again. It may have been advice strongly proffered. But how can one keep doing what must be done over and over, when it seems as if there are not going to be any discernible results? Our Lord's story about the persistent widow impresses with the usefulness of incessant prayer. And he makes His point by means of contrast. The widow who sought justice had no claims whatsoever on the judge. Widows in that society did not have many recognizable rights. And the judge was not one whit interested in her problems. But he gave in finally because he became weary of her incessant pleadings. And our Lord tells us it is no different when a faithful soul, committed to our Heavenly Father calls upon Him in prayer day and night. The widow was a nobody in our common understanding, but one of God's chosen believers is a somebody, a soul intrinsically important in the sight of the Lord. And each chosen one prays to God described in Psalm 103: "As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him."

That great praying soul, St. Monica, offered intercessions and prayers for years on end for the salvation of her recalcitrant son. There is a story of a greatly devoted believer who prayed over twenty years for the conversion of his beloved friend, but the friend was never converted until the very day the prayer died! That friend attended the requiem Divine Liturgy of his praying friend with his own thanksgiving prayer in his soul. We have heard of the prayers of many saints for others which did not find fruition during their life time, but only later, as it was the will of our Heavenly Father when it pleased Him to bring it about and permit it to happen.

Our supposed discernment is not the important thing; it is that our prayers persevere in the sight of the Lord; that we trust His will as best for us, that we know and believe His will is done even when we do not recognize it and are blind to it. That is how the gift of faith provides us with the endurance and necessary commitment to remain faithful.

If we are faithful, we certainly can expect the Lord to be faithful. Even if we are not faithful, our God is faithful, but in our fidelity, we come to grasp and understand the ways of our God are not like our ways and discernments. He will never permit us to be outdone in fidelity and prayer. The more we pray, the greater we understand even when it is hard to keep on praying, we continue simply out of love for Him.

Wisdom, Be Attentive!

The noble Joseph took down your most pure body from the cross. He wrapped it in a clean shroud, and with fragrant spices, laid it in burial in a new grave. But You arose in three days, O Lord, bestowing great mercy upon the world Troparion, Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women.

The angel stood by the grave and cried out to the women bearing ointment: "Ointment is for the dead, but Christ has shown himself not subject to corruption. So now cry out: 'The Lord is risen, bestowing great mercy upon the world!'" Troparion, Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women.

When You descended to death, O Immortal Life, You destroyed the Abyss through the radiance of your divinity; and when You raised the dead from the depth of the earth, all the heavenly powers cried out: "O Giver of Life, Christ our God, glory to You!" Troparion, Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women.

By your resurrection, O Christ God, You told the women bearing ointment to rejoice and you stilled the weeping of Eve, the first mother. You instructed the women to announce to your apostles, "The Saviour is risen from the tomb!" Kontakion, Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women.

Although You descended to the grave, O Immortal One, You destroyed the power of death; You arose again as a Victor, O Christ God! You announced to the women bearing ointment, "Rejoice." You gave peace to your apostles and resurrection to the fallen Kontakion, Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women.

Save your people, O Lord, and bless your inheritance Prokimenon, Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women.

Receive the Body of Christ! Drink the Source of immortality! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! Communion Hymn, Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women.

ALL FOR LOVE

+++ Our deeds have all the greater value if they are accomplished with great love for God. +++ Only a burning love for God can break the bonds of selfish love, for love always leads away from the "I" towards the "Thee." +++ Love alone holds the promise of success. +++ God and love are one and the same. +++ God is everlasting, therefore love will also last forever and so will a thing born of love. +++ Love alone lends value to all else. +++ Love is the only thing that counts by divine standards. +++ The smallest act of pure love is more beneficial for the Body of Christ than all other deeds together. +++ When life is engulfed by the night of death, love alone remains aglow. +++ Only love can help us along on our heavenly journey. +++ The love that inspires self-denial is the measure of merit. +++ What wins the crown for us is not patience in illness, silence in the face of slander, perseverance in prayer, or apostolic zeal and labor, but the underlying motive of love. +++ The most precious thing for Orthodox Christians to do is light up the fire of divine love in others. +++ Every sin is rooted in a deficiency of love. +++ In the hour of death we will find great comfort in being judged by the one Whom we have loved above all things. +++ If it is true the entire work of creation is nothing compared to divine love, how much more is it true all the works a man can accomplish appear as nothing compared to a single act of genuine love? +++ The only kind of activity worthy of a child of God is love. +++ The sinner who knows how to love needs to learn nothing else but repentance. +++ Love is the only door that leads to the heart of God. +++ In the end, everything depends upon our love for God. +++ If all the riches granted to you through the love of God appeared before your eyes as they eventually will in eternity, you could not possibly close your heart before this love. +++ Without love for God, there can be no fulfillment for man. +++ Holiness does not consist in knowing, seeing and thinking a great deal; the great secret of holiness is to love very much. +++ Love for God alone makes life worth living. Without love everything is shallow and empty. +++ The capital sin of God's friends is they do not love enough. +++ The deeper divine love penetrates the hidden recesses of our lives, until it becomes the soul and support of our every action, the more mature and rich our lives will become. +++

Christ Is Risen!



Christ Is Risen! Indeed He is Risen! This is the Resurrection feast day greeting and salutation with which believers in ancient times greeted one another. The joy and love, the faith and fellowship which went into these proclamations set up a chain reaction from person to person and from congregation to congregation all over the world. They created a spiritual bond of unity within the Church and at the same time established a united front against the paganism around them by sanctifying every day life and its activities. Early Christians were not too concerned to offer intellectual arguments in proof of the Lord's Resurrection as they were not only to proclaim the fact of the Resurrection and show its effect and influence in their every day life. They saw the Resurrection as the moment of transition from sight to faith, from physical proof to interior witness and awareness. They also saw it as the triumphant fruit of Christ's victory on Great Friday. The triumph of light over darkness was won when divine love broke through human hate which had placed it on the Cross. That victory brought a fresh new dawn which henceforth could rout the powers of darkness in the heart of any man who desire the truth of light.

Three gifts come from the Cross out of the empty sepulcher:

Salvation for all repentant men; the Peace of God which surpasses all understanding; and Life Eternal. No wonder they were exultant! What more important gifts are possible in this world or the next?

But what of us? Have our materialistic times succeeded in moving us to cast out faith in favor of sight? Do we put no trust in interior awareness and admit only physical proof? Or does the soft radiance of the Resurrection Sun cast its glowing shafts over the battlefield of our own dark nights, making it possible to see salvation and peace and eternal life in our celebration of this glorious feast? Let us repeat over and again the glorious and soul-invigorating truth. Let us make holy particular moments in greeting one another with the truth of Christ's triumph. Let us utilize the means our blessed Church offers us in the hallowed tradition of our spiritual forbears. Let us assume it, make it our own and evangelically boast in the victory of our God. Let us spread the message of its elementary truth. Let us joyfully repeat it for our own benefit and that of others. Let us constantly affirm our belief in the eternal truth of Christ's Resurrection. Let us then live the Resurrection truth. Let us not fail to greet one another with the warm and fraternal greeting: Christ Is Risen! to which we should zealously respond: Indeed He Is Risen!

Visiting Day

He was looking forward to this moment all day long, after six days of labor and it finally arrived, Visiting Day!

The man with the keys arrived to swing open the large, heavy doors. The cold grey hall springs to life in the warm glow of light. He can hardly control His emotions.

The families began to arrive. He peers from the center of the room longing for the first glimpse of His loved ones. He lives for the weekends. He looks forward to these visits, that they may share their heart's treasure.

As the cars arrive, He watches intently. Then, finally, they come, for whom He would do anything. They embrace, eat a light lunch in which He wishes to sustain them and reminisce how things used to be.

At one point, they break into singing because they enjoy His company so much. They even break into laughter and applause. But all too soon it is over. A tear comes to His eye as they depart to go their way in the world.

Then the man with the keys closes the heavy doors. He hears the key turn in the lock marking the end of a special meaningful day. There He stands, once again, all alone.

He knows that most of His visitors will not contact Him again until next week. He must patiently wait their arrival once again. As the last car pulls away from the parking lot, Jesus retreats into loneliness as He waits until next Sunday, visiting day.

Is the time that we spend with Jesus an every day thing, or do we just visit Him on Sunday? Think about it. Do we simply make Him our Divine Prisoner in our parish church?

Χ ρ ι σ τ ο ς 'Α ν έ σ τ η !

Did You Know That ...

- ...in literature as in love, we are always astonished by what is chosen by others?
- ...income tax returns are the most imaginative fiction being written today?
- ...the man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who can't read them?
- ...some people drink to make others more interesting?
- ...because God is just, we ought to tremble for our country?
- ...things have never been more like the way they are in history?
- ...what saves us from bureaucracy is its inefficiency?
- ...what our nation needs most is more unemployed politicians?
- ...too many people chew more than they bite off?
- ...when men are pure, laws are useless; when men are corrupt, laws are broken?
- ...mistakes are all out there waiting to be made?
- ...moral victories do count?
- ...a closed mouth gathers no feet?
- ...there is no one key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everyone?
- ...nothing is said today that has not been said before?
- ...few people know how to be old?
- ...beauty may only be skin deep, but ugly goes clear to the bone?
- ...satan's law is nobody has to do anything?



Our Mothers

I find myself thinking of your sincere faith, faith which first belonged to your grandmother and to your mother 2 Timothy 1: 5

Greet Rufus, eminent in the Lord, also his mother and mine Romans 16: 13.

She opens her mouth in wisdom and on her tongue is kindly counsel. She watches the conduct of her household, and eats not food in idleness. Her children rise up and praise her; her husband, too, extols her: "Many are the women of proven worth; but you have excelled them all" Proverbs 31: 26 - 29.

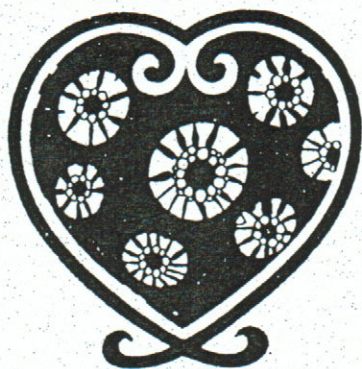
But who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me Luke 1: 43?

But the Jerusalem on high is freeborn, and it she who is our mother...Therefore my brothers, we are not children of a slave girl, but of a mother who is free Galatians 4: 26, 31.

Together they devoted themselves to constant prayer. There were some women in their company, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers Acts of the Apostles 1: 14.

He said to the one who told him, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" Then, extending his hand toward his disciples, he said, "There are my mother and brothers. Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is brother and sister and mother to me" Matthew 12: 48 - 50.

He told then in reply, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and live it" Luke 8: 21.



Mother, the eyes of God
are always turned
your special way.

His love is steady
though you change
as buds unfold in May.

God stays near you
whether you abide
or run away.

He hears all hearts
and blesses your joy
on Mother's Day.





A Mother's Prayer

Dear Lord,

As I start my day, may I ever be mindful of Your presence in all whom I encounter, but in particular my children and family whose souls You have entrusted to my care. Grant me grace, Your wisdom, and my example through You, to show them how to know You, love You, and serve You from their birth to my death, so that they and I may be granted Your eternal reward in heaven.

MOTHER'S PRAYER OF LOVE

Jesus, in fulfilling the greatest of God's commands I place my love before You. You are worthy of my love in all I do. And out of love I offer my thanks to You. I bow in adoration before You. I praise You in my heart and mind for Your many kindnesses. Because I love You I dare to ask You to forgive me my faults, my sins, my every shortcoming. In my assurance of Your love I am encouraged to ask that You bless me, enlighten me, and draw me to You to abide in the glory of God, with Mary Your Mother, and all the saints. Amen.

A MOTHER'S PRAYER FOR HER CHILDREN



Dear Lord, bless my children in their waking and sleeping, in the food they eat and in their play and study. Grant them, O Lord, the right use of Your grace and gifts that in all they do, in every pursuit of their lives, they may seek to give You glory and come to share in Your eternal joy. Direct their steps, O Lord, and lead them along paths that will bring them to You, in peace and love forever. Amen.

What Is More Glorious?

The most important person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built a magnificent cathedral or architectural monument. But she need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral, more glorious than any prayer house, a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body. She knows God is glorified in an infant far more than in stone and marble.

The angels in heaven have not been blessed with such stupendous grace. They cannot share in God's creative miracle to bring new saints and citizens to heaven. Only a human mother can truly understand the procreative power of our God. Mothers are closer to God the Creator than any other creature. Our God joins forces with mothers in producing new and glorious life.

What on God's good earth, what among all of creation is more glorious than this: to be a mother?

PRAYER OF A JOYOUS MOTHER

"Once more I will set forth my theme to shine
like the moon in its fullness!

Listen, my faithful children;

open up your petals,

like roses planted near running waters;

Send up the sweet odor of incense,

break forth in blossoms like the lily.

Send up the sweet odor of your hymn of praise;

bless the Lord for all he has done!

Proclaim the greatness of his name,

loudly sing his praises.

With music on the harp

and all stringed instruments;

sing out with joy as you proclaim;

The works of God are all of them good;

in its own time every need is supplied."

- Sir. 39: 12-16



SOME THOUGHTS ON MOTHERHOOD

My first job is to be a good mother.

FAYE DUNAWAY
Actress



No matter how old a mother is, she watches her middle-aged children for signs of improvement.

FLORIDA SCOTT-MAXWELL
Writer



If you bungle raising your children, I don't think whatever else you do well matters very much.

JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONASSIS (1929-1994)
U.S. First Lady



Whoever heard of *Father Earth*?

VANCE BOURJAILY



A mother is not a person to lean on but a person to make leaning unnecessary.

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER (1879-1958)
Writer



Mother's Influence

"I find myself thinking of your sincere faith, faith which first belonged to your grandmother and to your mother" 2 Timothy 1:5. Godly and faithful parents leave an unforgettable impression on other families. This is often evidenced by the genuine love and healthy respect they receive from their devoted children. Take for example, the thoughtfulness William McKinley showed his mother. He kept in touch with her every day. When he did not see her, he wrote or telegraphed. When she became ill, he arranged to have a special train standing by at full steam, ready to take him to her bedside. Then one night, she did call for him. Immediately, he wired, "Tell Mother I will be there." His mother died in the comforting arms of her son. It was her gentle, faithful, believing virtue that helped mold the President's character, for when he was gunned down some four years later in Buffalo, NY, he showed no bitterness or animosity towards his assassin. It was with deeply imbued courage that he said, "God's will be done." Before he died, he asked to hear once again an old spiritual which his mother taught him as a child.

Those who have been blessed with a heritage in Christ, communicants of His Body, the Church, remember fondly the faith commitment of their mothers, particularly as we join in the national honors being accorded them today. If you have strayed from the principles taught by your mother, return to them so as to honor her. Honor her by confessing your sin and returning to Christ! Let the precious memories of the precious mother in your life, who all these years has been pointing you in the direction of the Lord, awaken in your heart and soul a new desire to live for Him, to be faithful once again to Him. Today, particularly, do not turn your back on the Godly influence of a good mother.

There is no better or greater, or more respectable way to honor our mothers today than to reaffirm the Godly principles we learned from them. It is our mother that introduced us to the truth and love of Christ. It is our mother who nourished in us child-like faith until we matured and grew up. We must all ask ourselves, has our faith also matured and grown as befits an adult believer. Has the seed of faith, planted in our heart and soul, been permitted to drop deep roots in the core of our being? Does it influence our daily course of life? Has it improved us so that we are pleasing in the sight of the Lord? Have we so tended it that we are even more faithful today than when we had the benefit of mother's presence in lives?

Remain faithful to the Lord in His Church and you will have redeemed yourself while at the same time honoring your mother while glorifying Christ!

An Old Fashioned Woman?

The description, "...worthy wife..." Proverbs 19:14, reminds us of the tintype we often see in a pioneer display, the seldom smiling woman, strong of back and arm, swathed and aproned in calico and booted in high buckled shoes, standing tall beside her bearded husband, surrounded by a brood of cleanly clothed children. Many

times our reaction to such a sight has already been cue-carded by the so-called modern advertisement: "You've come a long way baby!"

But for the believer, the picture drawn for us by the Revelation of the Lord is a beautifully appealing one, a picture of a gracious wife and mother who practices and is not ashamed of her love for our Heavenly Father and her husband and family in the state of life to which our Heavenly Father has called and placed her. One can only pray and hope that the current fad of pagan elements in the women's lib movement have not rendered this picture of a devoted mother obsolete.

But is it at worst obsolete or at best old-fashioned to suggest that this selection of the Old Testament's tribute to a hard working wife and mother still has significant meaning at the present time? Even though calico has been replaced by the expendable polyester and high buckle shoes by sharp pointed foot covering, the woman beneath the apron and the shoes remains a woman of God, created in His image and brought to perfection in His likeness by the sacramental Mysteries of the Lord in the life of His Body, the Church.

May the husband of every wife and mother declare openly and publicly as well as privately that a worthy wife and mother is indeed more valuable than pearls. And in so doing, he shows himself knowing and understanding then the intent of the writer of the Book of Proverbs: "And have joy of the wife of your youth, your lovely hind, your graceful doe. Her love will invigorate you always, through her love will flourish continually. When you lie down she will watch over you, and when you wake she will share your concerns; wherever you turn, she will guide you. Why, then my son, should you go astray for another's wife, and accept the embraces of an adulteress" Proverbs 5:18-20?

For he who has found one such pearl of great value knows that it was worthwhile to go and sell all that he had to obtain that treasure. "When he found one really valuable pearl, he went back and put up for sale all that he had and bought it" Matthew 13:46.

The fortunate man who has entrusted his whole heart, soul and complete self to his beloved has found "...a buried treasure..." Matthew 13:44, in her love and loyalty. Knowing from the very beginning that it is not good "...that man should be alone..." Genesis 2:18, that same man rejoices in God that his helper, his partner, and co-creator with God, "...brings him good, not evil, all the days of her life" Proverbs 31:13.

The skillful hands of today's woman have gone far beyond "...making cloth..." Proverbs 31:13, or "...plying the spindle..." Proverbs 13:19.

Today's woman of faith deserves much more recognition because remaining faithful to the Lord is a greater burden and responsibility. Her strong and gentle fingers are now making peace out of strife, justice out of discrimination, wisdom out of ignorance, joy out of sadness, health out of sickness, a family out of disparate members, and providing loving, caring service wherever there is evident need. Her arms are simultaneously short enough to embrace heartily and warmly and support those closest to her as well as long and strong enough to "...reach out her hands to the poor and extend her arms to the needy" Proverbs 31:20.

It is no wonder, then, that Solomon, the inspired writer of the God's Word addresses the worthy wife and mother and rightly insists "...fine linen and purple are her clothing" Proverbs 31:22.

Women's beauty and depth do not depend upon make-up, vanishing cream, or the latest slacks or sacks from fads. The understanding and acceptance in her eyes, the truth and tenderness upon her lips, the faith, hope,

and love in her heart make her eternally attractive. Her dignity and her confidence come from the Lord Who created her in His image in paradise itself.

How Solomon addresses salutes the Mother of God, who was yet to come in salvation history, as depicted on the Royal Doors of many an icon screen, he also utters identical words to a worthy wife and mother today: "Many are the woman who have done admirable things, but you have surpassed them all" Proverbs 31:29.

The labors of a woman, particularly her present pangs of pain in bringing new life in cooperation with the grace of the Holy Spirit, not only in the flesh of another created being, but to a new freedom of equality that will make it unnecessary for her to bury her myriad and varied talents out of fear or frustration from an ignorant or domineering husband who is not worthy of his vocation. Every labor a mother performs reminds all women of the world that every daughter of Eve remains "...a mother of all the living" Genesis 3:20, and never an enemy of life. A woman's rich reward for waiting while men discovered that alone they could name all things except their own personal fulfillment and completion to be finally lovingly accepted as helpmate and partner, on equal footing with man because of the very will of the Eternal Father Himself.

Our women, our wives, our mothers, as old-fashioned as the very world itself, have surely come a long way, particularly when they associate themselves with the grace of the Holy Spirit and salvation in Christ. Theirs has never been an easy way, nor an easy lot. Many times abused, it was the Lord Himself Who raised their inherent dignity and placed it in its correct eternal perspective. It was He Who came into the world, in His fullest humanity without the aid or assistance of an earthly man or father, but solely with the complete cooperation and submission of just one woman, one mother, who continues to remain for every woman, every wife, every mother, the Way, the Life, and the eternal Truth.

As our nation salutes its Mothers, we enthusiastically join to honor these saints among us. We pray their joy will be fulfilled in this life as well as in the next. We pray the Lord continues to impart to our mothers His choicest grace and benediction, that in good physical and spiritual health, they may continue to enjoy the love of their husbands, their children, and be worthy of the respect of their friends and admirers now and for all time. May the good and gracious Lord continue to grant them Many and Blessed Years, Christ Is Risen!

Mother, We'll Do The Cooking!

The three devoted children told their Mother she was not to lift a finger on Mother's Day. They were going to do all the cooking and food preparation. So they immediately got out three pots, two frying pans, a double boiler, three mixing bowls, a chopping board, six measuring spoons, and eight serving dishes. Their devoted mother was absolutely delighted with their loving concern. They sent her into the family room to relax while they were preoccupied with preparations. In a few hours, when it was all over, she joyfully and lovingly said it was the best Jello she ever tasted. Just like a good mother, she understood it was the intention that counted.

Did You Know That ...

...child-like faith touches the heights of heaven and reaches God?

...sophisticated, intelligent doubt usually misses the grace of the Lord?

...real wealth is what you would be worth if you lost all your money?

...birth will send to heaven no better saints than the true Christian mothers who have done their best?

...even when a mother does not speak, a child knows the touch of her hand?

...all hell cannot tear a boy or girl away from a praying mother?

...a person shows what he is by what he does with what he has?

...life is an everlasting struggle to keep money coming in and teeth and hair from falling out?

...a conceited person has at least one virtue; he does not talk about others?

...believers participate in the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and holy days because of the innate need to hear, touch, sense, breathe, taste, feel and experience the salutary Gospel of Jesus Christ?

...the least we can do as believers is prepare ourselves to receive the Eucharist each time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy?

...the person who learns more from his defeats than his victories is following in the footsteps of our Lord?

...if we really wish to be like Christ, we will turn our defeats into victories?

...the believer can no longer hear the voice of Christ when he is preoccupied with political interests?

...no mother can say yes to abortion because it destroys a life sacred in the sight of our Creator?

"DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT YOU ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD ..."

Each year, the 3rd Sunday of Pascha finds our Holy Orthodox Church commemorating the MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN. These brave souls, who had followed Christ throughout His earthly ministry, were so committed to serving their Master that they were willing to challenge the authority of Rome and risk their very lives to carry out an important aspect of their Jewish tradition: the proper preparation of a body for burial.

Have you ever wondered why the Myrrh-bearers felt that this was so essential? For the Jews, the human body was considered to be a sacred vessel that needed to be treated with care - even after death. The Old Testament is filled with stories that exhibit this type of treatment for those who have departed this life. The prescribed ritual of anointing a body with oils and spices was a lengthy and costly process - the women had to return to the tomb early on *"the first day of the week"* because Joseph of Arimathea and

Nicodemus, who claimed Christ's Body from Pilate, lacked the time to complete their labors as sunset approached on that first Great and Holy Friday.

In a Christian context, the body is treated with the same reverence. In his first letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul poses this question: *"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"* (1 Cor. 3:16) While this verse has a broad meaning relating to the unity of the entire Church, it nonetheless is viewed as comparing our bodies to a *"temple"* that should be cared for in a special way. This is why the Orthodox Church continues to expressly forbid cremation, maintaining this practice would be a desecration of something sacred.

From the day of our baptism, when we *"put on Christ,"* the Lord wishes to dwell in all of us. May we all strive to keep our *"temple"* pure, so that the living God will be able to be a positive force in our lives!