



ΩΝΤΟΝ

ΚΡΑΤΕΣ

ΟΝΤΕΣ ΓΑΡ Η	ΓΙΣ ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΙΑΣ
ΕΝ ΟΘΕΝ ΚΟΣ	ΜΑΓΙΟΛΙΑΜΑ
ΜΟΝΩΣ ΤΕ ΤΟΝ	ΧΗΡΗΝ ΔΙΟΝΙΣ
ΥΟΝ ΔΕ ΤΟΝ	ΣΥΓΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΩΝ
ΜΟΝΟΤΕΝ ΗΕΑ	ΟΘΕΝ ΥΟΝ Δ
ΚΕΝ ΙΝΑ ΠΑΘΕ	ΣΥΣΤΗΝ ΚΟΣ

Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Sunday after Theophany

January 11, 2009

Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;
Father John Cmur; Deacon Kenneth E. Ellis and
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 have festal anointing on the occasion of this past week's feast of Theophany. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we reply, "He Is And Shall Be!"

+++ Any of our faithful who would like their homes blessed are asked to make an appointment with Father as soon as possible.

+++ This Monday we have Healing Services through the intercession of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker. Please join us at 7: 30 PM in prayer and praise.

+++ 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.

+++ **The weekly Scripture Study meets on Sundays following the Divine Liturgy while children attend their own classes. Everyone now has an opportunity to participate in adult religious education at which Scripture is discussed and explained along with other interests.**

+++ **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-end: Tithe Offering, \$204.00; Candles, \$20.00; Food Coupons, \$100.00; Christian Fellowship, \$100.00; Candy Sales, \$100.00; Nativity of our Lord, \$100.00; Pennies From Heaven, \$100.00; Rental, \$100.00; Parish Dues, \$100.00; Building Fund, \$100.00; Holy Day, \$100.00; Energy, \$100.00; Diocesan Dues, \$100.00; Kitchen, \$100.00, for a total of \$1000.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offered their God-given treasure for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls! The attendance was 38 adults and 14 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, Pani Buletza, Robert Gorbich, Paul Szmaida, and Debra Szmaida.**

+++ **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 \$2000.00 from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.**

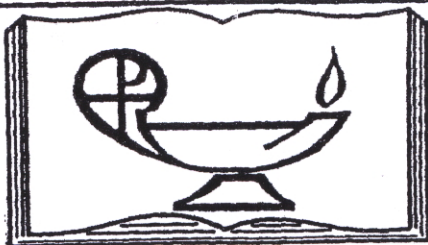
+++ **For the expansion of our much needed parochial facilities, our parish pledge support to date totals \$700,000.00. As we thank the Lord for inspiring generosity in the hearts of our faithful, we also thank the donors for accepting the challenge of the Lord in building up His Body. We cordially invite and look forward to receiving additional and increased pledges from all our devoted parishioners.**

+++ Please check the Sign-Up-Sheet for the weekly Christian Fellowship for the coming weeks. Simple foods without need for preparation are the best. Marilyn Korba coordinates this vital apostolate. Please assist her in making it a success by bringing your donation early so that all are present at the worship of our God.

+++ 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 \$4000.00 on this project to date!

+++ **As soon a possible, please see Marilyn Korba to sign up for the Alaskan Cruise next August, 2009. We are in need of your support.**

LORD



TEACH
US

Worthy Of Praise

His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace Isaiah 9: 6.

This also comes from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in guidance Isaiah 28: 29.

Blessed is the Lord for he has wondrously shown his steadfast love to me when I was beset as a city under siege Psalms 31: 21.

Wonderful are your decrees, therefore I observe them Psalms 119: 129.

O, that men would give thanks to the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men Psalms 107: 15.

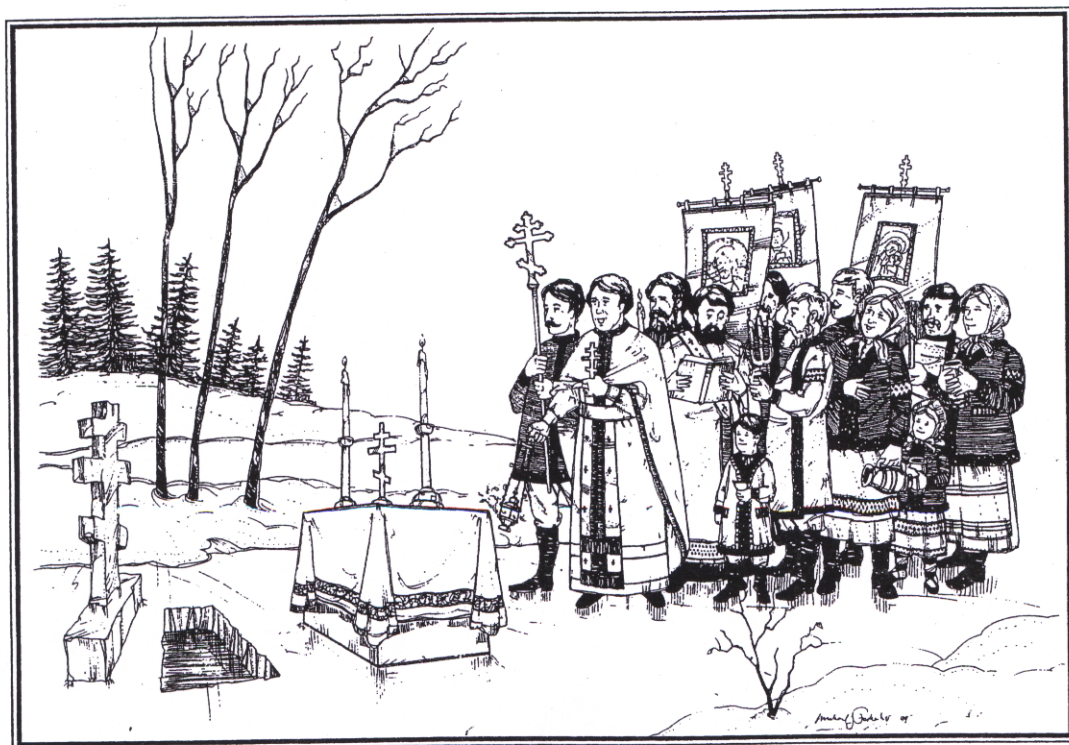
On the glorious splendor of your majesty and on your wonderful works, I will meditate. The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed and I will declare your greatness. They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness Psalms 145: 5 – 7.

...that you may show to others how God called you out of darkness into his wonderful light 1 Peter 2: 9.

For the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart Hebrews 4: 12.

At Your baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, worship of the Trinity was revealed. For the Father's voice bore witness to You, calling You His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of these words, O Christ God who appeared and enlightened the world, glory be to You.

Tropar of Theophany



Two Seas

There are two seas in the Holy Land, both very familiar to our Lord. One is fresh and fish abound in it. It provided livelihood for several of the apostles and our Lord taught near its banks and used it to work signs, wonders and miracles. Splashes of green adorn its bank. There were prosperous communities on its shores. Trees spread their branches over it, and stretch out their thirsty roots to sip of its healing and nourishing waters. Along its shores children play, as children played happily when Christ was there. He loved this body of water and made his earthly home on its northern shore. He could look across its silvery surface when He spoke his parables and taught eager hearts. And on a rolling plain not far away He fed five thousand people.

The river Jordan makes this sea with sparkling water from the hills. Men build their homes for centuries near it and birds their protective nests. Animals approach its shore to satisfy their thirst. Every kind of life is happier here because it is simply generously there. The happy shouts of laughter of playing children and successful fishermen resound and reverberate across its mostly smooth waves. It brings awe to the beholder when weather conditions roll out whipping winds and storms tumult over its thrashing waves.

The river Jordan flows on south into another sea. Here is no splash of fish, no flutter of leaf to behold, no song of native birds, no children's laughter nor the voice of triumphant fishermen over the challenges of nature following a day's work. Travelers choose another route unless on urgent time-compelling business. The air hangs heavy above its water and neither man nor beast nor fowl will approach it for a drink. What make this mighty difference in these neighboring seas?

THIS is the difference. The Sea of Galilee receives but does not keep the Jordan. For every drop that flows into it another precise corresponding drop flows out. The other sea is shrewder, hoarding its income jealously. It will not be tempted into any generous impulse. Every drop it gets, it keeps. The Sea of Galilee gives and lives. The other sea hoards and dies. It is rightly named the Dead Sea.

There are two seas in the Holy Land. There are two kinds of people in the world. Which are you?

Working People

Many of us tend to identify with the type of work we do and to rate ourselves accordingly. We generally score a lawyer higher than a carpenter or other tradesman. Yet, when our heavenly Father looked about His creation for a foster-father for His Son, even with all the choices open to Him, He settled for a common artisan, the elderly Joseph of Galilee. Even those who identified the Saviour for whatever purpose, saw His imperative relationship to the humble, but specially chosen carpenter. "This is the carpenter's son" Matthew 13: 55. No doubt, this is God's way of telling us that we are far more important than the actual work we do and perform and that the way we do the work, the devotion we bring to it, is far more important than the work itself.

Therefore, the job does not exalt us; it is in fact, we who exalt the job, just as Joseph did by his fidelity, his application, his motivation. He introduced and gave expression to his faith commitment to God in his daily tasks, in the labor he performed so devotedly to sustain his family, and in so doing, guided the tender years of our Lord and Saviour.

When our routine work begins to wear or grind on us, we too, need to remember that we are not only bigger, but more important than our job or vocation. We can inject God's glory into what we do, we can give it value exceeding its superficial appearance, and if we so choose, we can even make it a sacrificial and holy offering to the Lord and glorify Him with all our efforts.

Just as with Joseph, what we are immersed in daily as a legitimate means of supporting and sustaining our physical well being, can also be a direct means to elevating our soul and sanctifying our bodies. We can call upon the grace of the Holy Spirit to infuse us with a new and elevated perception of our jobs so they contribute to re-creating us into the new creatures, the new man about which the Apostle so often speaks. We can take the ordinary, the mundane, the everyday burden of our lives and enter it in an extraordinary way so we are truly exalted by our efforts, coupled with Christ's hard won grace.

SHARING

*Is someone happier because
you passed his way today?
Did you bring a smile to a clouded face
when you did not turn away?*

*Is someone's burden lighter
for just a little lift,
a pleasant word, a little boost,
or perhaps some little gift?*

*Do you feel content and happy
when you settle down at night
because you found a troubled friend
and helped to set him right?*

*A load is always lighter
when a friend walks by your side.
You cannot cure all ills,
but at least you know you tried.*

*Let not one single day go by
at home, at work, at play . . .
unless someone is happier
because you passed his way.*



"Faith without works and works without faith will both alike be condemned, for he who has faith must offer to the Lord the faith which shows itself in action."

Diacochos of Photiki, *On Spiritual Knowledge*, 20.

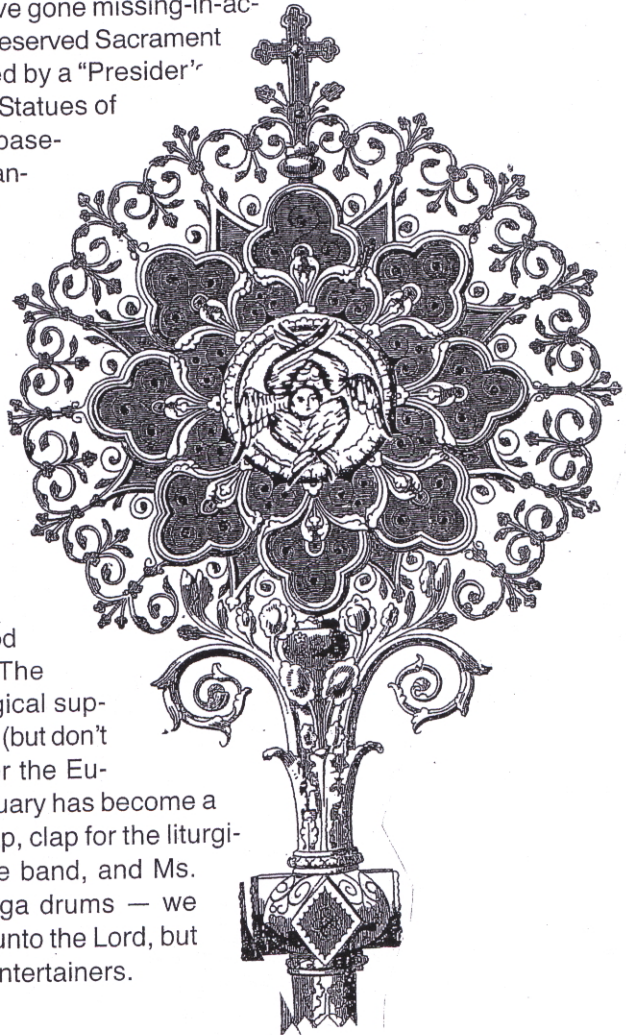
In the epistle of James (2:26) we are told that "faith apart from works is dead." "If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his neighbor, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. ... Whoever loves God must also love his brother." (I Jn 4: 20; 21) You can tell a Christian by his love for his neighbor and for the "least ones."

How Others Are Deprived and Hurting

THE LITURGY AT THE CROSSROADS

In many Catholic parishes today the sense of awe — of majesty and mystery — has been suppressed, willfully in some cases. The incense, chant, sanctus bells, and Communion rail have gone missing-in-action. The Tabernacle, with the reserved Sacrament on the altar, has been replaced by a "Presider's Chair" or a bouquet of twigs. Statues of the saints are locked in the basement, replaced by balloons, banners with greeting-card sentiments, and other dime-store decorations. The organ gathers cobwebs. And the crucifix has been taken down, replaced by a floating Jesus.

It's virtually impossible to pray before or after Mass because of all the chatter and backslapping. The Creed is left unsaid. Schlockmeister-homilists pander with feel-good bubblics and lame jokes. The Scripture readings and liturgical supplications are gender-bended (but don't you dare bend your knee for the Eucharistic Prayer!). The sanctuary has become a stage, and we must clap, clap, clap for the liturgical dancers, the clowns, the band, and Ms. Cantor banging on her conga drums — we aren't making a joyful noise unto the Lord, but only unto the (amateurish) entertainers.



An Opportunity to Intercede and Help

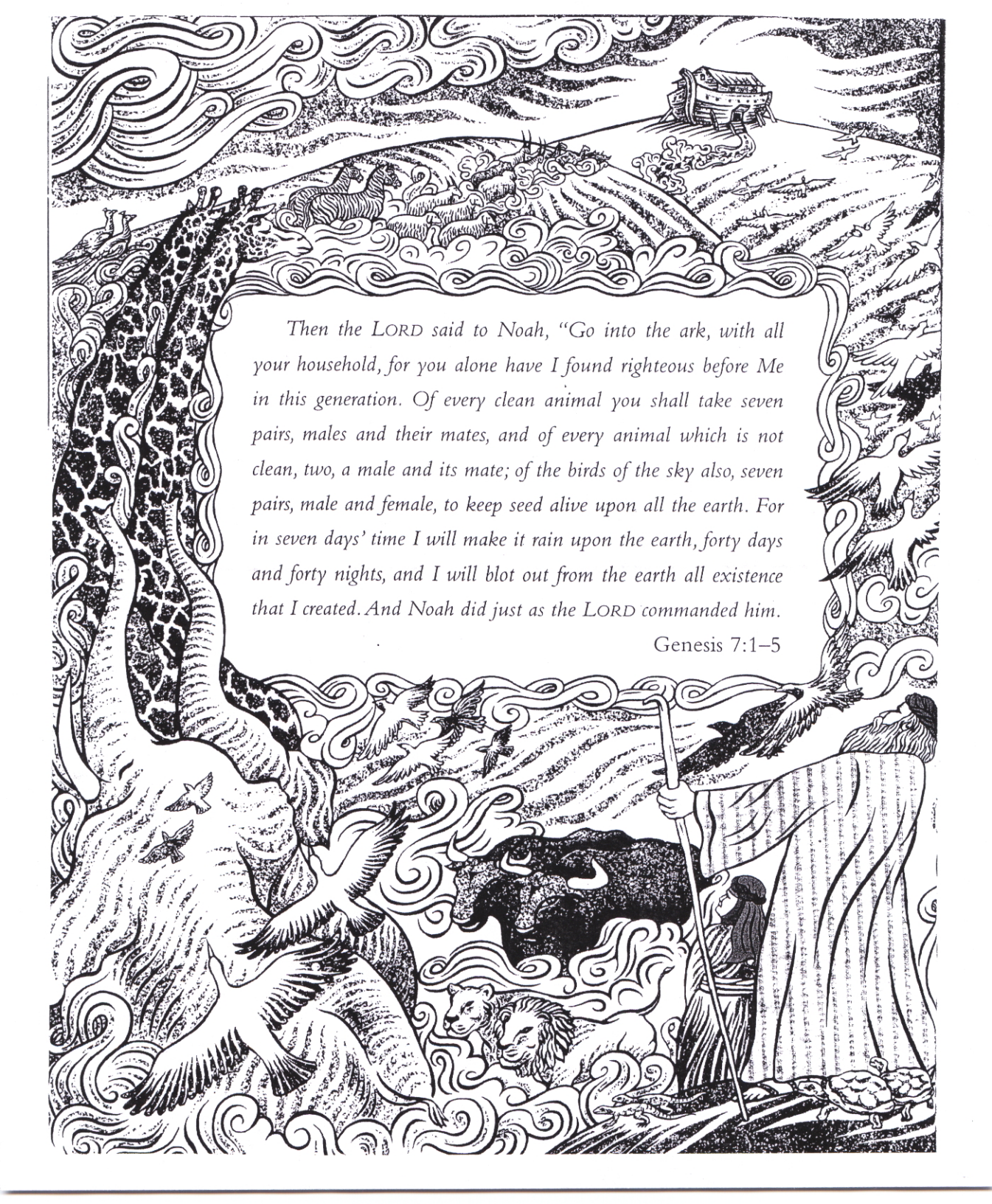
In many parishes the primary purpose of the Mass has been transformed from receiving Christ and worshipping the Almighty into “celebrating community” — i.e., celebrating our wonderful selves. One so-called liturgical expert, the now-disgraced Archbishop Rembert Weakland, has said the Mass shouldn’t convey “a feeling of infinity or eternity or the world beyond,” for it’s really about “communal sensitivity” among parishioners. But touchie-feelie Catholicism — where, at the Sign of Peace, the band breaks into lounge music for ten minutes of hugging and laughing — has no power or magnetism. Not many people get out of bed on Sunday morning in search of huggies and giggles.

No wonder Mass attendance among Catholics has dropped by over half since the liturgical trivialities began. And today nearly two-thirds of Catholics don’t believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist — which isn’t surprising, given that *how* we worship has a profound effect on *what* we believe.

This article appeared in a national Catholic magazine and should arouse our concern and care.

People are looking for truth. Perhaps you are the one to introduce it in their lives!

**A reason for EVANGELIZATION
and Introducing our blessed Orthodox Faith!**



Then the LORD said to Noah, "Go into the ark, with all your household, for you alone have I found righteous before Me in this generation. Of every clean animal you shall take seven pairs, males and their mates, and of every animal which is not clean, two, a male and its mate; of the birds of the sky also, seven pairs, male and female, to keep seed alive upon all the earth. For in seven days' time I will make it rain upon the earth, forty days and forty nights, and I will blot out from the earth all existence that I created. And Noah did just as the LORD commanded him.

Genesis 7:1-5

“THERE IS NOTHING HIDDEN THAT WILL NOT BE REVEALED”

There is a part of us and a side to us that nobody else knows completely. For a variety of reasons, all of us find ourselves covering up and concealing our faults and shortcomings, seeking to present ourselves in the best possible light before our friends and colleagues. Yes, we have become quite adept at creating the image of the person we want people to THINK we are rather than the person we REALLY are.

It was President Abraham Lincoln who said: “You can fool some of the people some of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can’t fool all of the people all of the time.” As Orthodox Christians, we can also add a footnote to this wise adage: “You can never fool God!” God knows our every thought and He knows the real motivation behind our every action. When Adam and Eve tried to hide in the Garden of Eden, attempting to disguise their disobedience, God found them - and saw through their feeble

excuses as well! When Judas attempted to conceal his treacherous act of betrayal, Christ greeted him with these words: “Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?” (Luke 22:48) When the Pharisees were exhibiting righteous indignation at His act of forgiving the sins of the paralytic, Jesus instantly identified what was really going on within them, saying to the Pharisees: “Why do you think evil in your hearts?” (Matthew 9:4)

Indeed, it is humbling - and frightening - to realize that nothing we think, say or do goes unnoticed by God’s watchful eyes. This is why the Church reminds us that our repentance must be sincere and complete. Our Father Confessor may not know what sinful deeds we may be concealing from him . . . but God does! Truly “There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed” (Mark 4:22) and there is nothing for which we can escape responsibility on the day when the Lord passes judgment on us.