



# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Meatfare Sunday

February 27, 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 meets on Tuesdays at 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Please come and join us by investing time in learning our precious faith so we can better enjoy and live it! The public is invited to participate with us, so invite a friend or neighbor. In preparation for this week, please read the thirteenth to sixteenth chapters of the Book of Genesis.

+++ The first All Soul's Saturday takes place this Saturday with the Divine Liturgy celebrated at 9:00 AM followed by a memorial service. Please join us in prayer after you have submitted to Father the names of your departed relatives. The customary offering is \$10.00.

+++ Mistakenly Father listed the luncheon before the Great Fast taking place today. Correctly it will be on March 6, next Sunday, following the Divine Liturgy. Immediately afterwards, we will have Forgiveness Vespers for the whole parish to enjoy. Please sign in the kind of food you will prepare for this event.

+++ 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.

+++ **At the time of the next Pirohi Sale which takes place this Saturday, March 5, we will have a Clam Chowder Sale for \$8.00 a 32 oz. container. Please secure orders that it be a success and benefit our parish.**

+++ 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, [REDACTED]; Candles, [REDACTED]; Diocesan Dues, [REDACTED]; Parish Dues, [REDACTED]; Food Coupons, [REDACTED]; February Website, [REDACTED]; Christian Fellowship, [REDACTED], for a total of [REDACTED]. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offered their God-given treasure and labored for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls! The attendance was 41 adults and 13 children last Sunday.

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

+++ We make a **PENNIES FROM HEAVEN** Canister available for our faithful to bring in pennies for our altar and its appointments. We are already in receipt of [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED]. 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.



### CHILDREN

*It is good for a man to bear a yoke from his youth. Lamentations 3: 27*

*The rod of correction gives wisdom, but a boy left to his whims disgraces his mother. Proverbs 29:15*

*All your sons shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children. Isaiah 54:13*

*He who loves wisdom makes his father glad, but he who consorts with harlots squanders his wealth. Proverbs 29:3*

*If a widow has any children or grandchildren, let these learn that piety begins at home and that they should fittingly support their parents and grandparents; this is the way God wants it to be. 1 Timothy 5:4*

*Observe, my son, your father's bidding, and reject not your mother's teaching; keep them fastened over your heart always, put them around your neck; 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. Proverbs 6:20-22*

*Folly is close to the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him. Proverbs 22:15*

*Withhold no chastisement from a boy; if you beat him with the rod, he will not die. Beat him with the rod, and you shall save him from the nether world. Proverbs 23:13, 14*

*My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes keep to my ways. Proverbs 23: 26*

## Who Rules The World???

In the Tradition of the Church and in scriptural revelation to us, our heavenly Father teaches the expression "the world," has two different meanings. In the first, "the world" is described as all of God's creation. As such it is the product of the goodness of God and the object of his love. We are taught in revelation that God creates the world and all that is in it. He creates the heavens and earth as the declaration of his glory. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament proclaims his handiwork" Psalms 19: 1.

He creates all living things, crowned by the formation of man in his own image and likeness. According to the scriptural record, our heavenly Father describes his creation as "good...very good" Genesis 1: 12, 18, 25, 31. And according to the gospel message, Christ comes among us as "savior of the world" Luke 2: 11; John 4: 42.

But in addition and in contrast to this positive scriptural understanding and revelation of "the world", there is also a negative use of the expression which has caused confusion about the proper understanding of Christian faith and life. This negative use of the term, "the world," is presented not as God's object of love, but as creation in rebellion against God. Thus our Lord is constrained to say, "If the world hates you, know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore, the world hates you" John 15: 18, 19; "O you of little faith, are you not aware that love of the world is enmity with God? A man is marked out as God's enemy if he chooses to be the friend of the world. Do you suppose it is to no purpose that Scripture says, 'the spirit he has implanted in us tends towards jealousy.' Yet he bestows a greater gift, for the sake of which it is written. God resists the proud but bestows his favor on the lowly" James 4: 4 - 7.

St. John continues to speak of the enmity between Christ and "the world" in the first letter where he gives a striking commandment for believers to pursue: "Do not love

the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, it is of the world. And the world passes away and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever" 1 John 2: 15 – 17.

The apostle Paul makes it perfectly clear in his writings how the fallen world approaches man's frail flesh and the same contrast is made of "the flesh" which is used in the same negative way and employed as a catchword for godless and unspiritual existence, destined for failure. "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's Law, indeed it cannot please God" Romans 8: 5 - 8.

Consequently "the flesh" and "the world" used negatively express the worship of the creature rather than the Creator, they are carnal life mindful only of the flesh.

The evil one was expelled from; heaven and entered the world, "...such is the spirit of the antichrist which as you have heard, is to come; in fact, it is in the world already" 1 John 4: 3.

So the thinking of those who erroneously imagine God is the ruler of this world is dispelled. Significantly, nowhere does God's revelation to us say either Jesus Christ or the eternal Father are the real rulers of the fallen world. On the contrary, Jesus said, "The ruler of this world will be cast out." Then He added, "The ruler of the world is coming and he has no hold on me" John 12: 31; 14: 30; 16: 11. St. John witnesses for us in the gospel read on the feast of the Resurrection: "He came unto his own and his own did not accept him, but to those who did accept him, he empowered to become children of God" John 1: 11, 12. Precisely to save the world is why the Lord came among us. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him may not die but have eternal life. God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him" John 3: 16, 17.

So, the ruler of this world is in opposition to Jesus Christ, its Saviour and Redeemer. Who could this be?

Despite the efforts of well-meaning human beings, the world has suffered terribly throughout history. This causes people who are capable of thinking to wonder, about "Peace on earth –nearly everyone wants it. Good will toward men – almost all people of the world feel it toward one another." Then, what is wrong? Why is war threatening despite the innate desires of people?

It seems a paradox. When the natural desire of people is to live in peace, they commonly hate and kill one another and with such viciousness. Consider the cold-blooded excesses in monstrous cruelty. Humans have used gas chambers, concentration camps, flamethrowers, and napalm bombs along with heinous methods to torture and slaughter one another mercilessly. And how many lives have been extinguished by legalized abortion?

Who can believe that human beings, created in the image and likeness of God, who long for peace and happiness themselves, are capable of such gross wickedness against each other? What impels man to such loathsome deeds or maneuver them into situations where they feel compelled to commit atrocities? Have you ever wondered whether some invisible power, some wicked being, is influencing people to commit such acts of violence?

There is no need to guess at the matter, for the Church clearly shows and God's revelation to us teaches that an intelligent, unseen being has been controlling both man and nations. They say, "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." It further identifies him, saying "The one called devil and satan, the seducer of the whole world was driven out; he was hurled down to earth and his minions with him" 1 John 5: 19; Revelation 12: 9.

Prior to commencing his public ministry, Jesus was "tempted by the devil." He did not question the role of satan as leader of this world. It has been revealed to us what happened. "Then Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil....The devil took him up a very high mountain and displayed before him all the

kingdoms of this world in their magnificence, promising, 'All this will be bestowed upon you if you bow down in homage before me.' At this Jesus said to him, 'Away with you satan! Scripture has it: 'you shall bow down only to the Lord your God; him alone shall you adore!'" Matthew 4: 1, 8 -10.

The devil tempts Jesus by offering him "...all the kingdoms of the world." Yet, would satan's offer have been a real temptation if were not actually the ruler of these kingdoms? Jesus does not deny the power of satan over these kingdoms, these worldly governments. So, then, the devil is really the unseen ruler of this world! St. Paul goes on to observe, "Their unbelieving minds have been blinded by the god of the present age so that they do not see the splendor of the gospel showing forth the glory of Christ, the image of God" 2 Corinthians 4: 4.

How did such wickedness ever come into this powerful position? The one who is satan had been an angel created by God, but he became envious of his Creator. He challenged God's rightful rule. To this end, he used a serpent as a mouthpiece to deceive the first woman, Eve and was able to get her and her spouse, Adam, to do his bidding rather than obey the will of God (Genesis 3: 1 – 6). "My fear is that, just as the serpent seduced Eve by his cunning, your thoughts may be corrupted and you may fall away from your sincere and complete devotion to Christ" 2 Corinthians 11: 3.

Significantly, satan is not alone in his rulership of the world. He was successful in persuading some of the bodiless powers to join him in rebellion. These became demons, his spiritual accomplices. Scripture sheds some light on them, "Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. Our battle is not against human forces but against the principalities and powers, the rulers of this world of darkness, the evil spirits in the regions above" Ephesians 6: 11, 12.

These unseen, wicked rulers are determined to mislead all mankind, turning them away from the worship of God. One way wicked spirits do this is by promoting the idea of survival after death and being able to stay in touch with earthly beings through a medium of sorts. Non-believing, desperate souls are eager to maintain contact with their departed dead because of deeply aroused guilt within. They feel

relieved and confirmed in their non-belief when they think they communicate with departed souls to learn how well they are doing.

Gods' revelation to us along with the traditional teaching of the Church continually echoes the same truth: the dead are not conscious and do not communicate with us.

"From that tree you shall not eat; the moment you eat from it you are surely doomed to die" Genesis 2: 17; "...until you return to the ground from which you were taken..." Genesis 3: 19; "For all lives are mine; the life of the father is like the life of the son, both are mine; only the one who sins shall die" Ezekiel 18: 4; "Put not your trust in princes, in man in whom there is no salvation. When his spirit departs he returns to his earth and that day his plans perish" Psalms 146: 3, 4; "For the living know they are to die, but the dead no longer know anything. There is no further recompense for them, because all memory of them is lost" Ecclesiastes 9: 5; "Anything you can turn your hand to, do with what power you have for there will be no work, nor reason, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the nether world where you are going" Ecclesiastes 9: 10.

Thus, a wicked spirit, imitating the voice of one who is dead, may talk with that one's foolish living relatives or friends, either through a spirit medium or by a "voice" from the invisible realm. The voice pretends to be the departed one, yet it is actually demon based! If one should hear such a voice, he should not be deceived. Reject whatever it says and echo the words of Jesus: "Satan be gone!" Matthew 4: 10. "God resists the proud but bestows his favor on the humble" James 4: 6.

No one should allow curiosity about the spirit realm to cause them to become involved with wicked spirits. Such involvement is called spiritism and our heavenly Father warns against it in all its forms. No believer is to be confused about consulting a spirit medium, a professional fortune teller of events or anyone who inquires inordinately about the dead, "Let there not be found among you ...a fortune-teller, soothsayer, charmer, diviner, or caster of spells, or one who consults ghosts or spirits or who seeks oracles from the dead. Anyone who does such things is an abomination to the Lord" Deuteronomy 18: 10 – 12; "It is obvious what proceeds from the flesh: lewd conduct, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, bickering, jealousy, outbursts of rage, selfish rivalries, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like" Galatians 5: 19 -21; "As for the cowards, and

traitors to the faith, the depraved and murderers, fornicators and sorcerers, the idol-worshippers and deceivers of every sort – their lot is the fiery pool of burning sulphur, the second death” Revelation 21: 8.

Spiritism brings persons under the influence of the devil and his demons, believers resist all practices regardless how much seeming fun they produce because they are not a joke. They are not exciting as they seem to be. They ultimately lead to destruction. Such practices as crystal ball gazing, use of Ouija boards, ESP, examining the lines of one's hand known as palmistry and astrology are proscribed by the Church. Demons have also caused noises and other physical phenomena in homes that they make their territory.

In addition, wicked spirits capitalize on the sinful and naïve bent of humans by promoting literature, movies and television programs that feature immoral and unnatural sexual behavior. They know wrong thoughts if not expelled from the mind will cause indelible impressions and lead human beings to behave immorally in imitation of the demons themselves.

“When men began to multiply on earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of heaven saw how beautiful the daughters of men were, and so they took for their wives as many of them as they chose” Genesis 6: 1, 2; “It is God's will that you grow in holiness; that you abstain from immorality, each of us guarding his member in sanctity and honor, not in passionate desire as do the Gentiles who do not know God; and that each refrain from overreaching or cheating his brother in the matter at hand; for the Lord is an avenger of all such things, as we once indicated to you by our testimony. God has not called us to immorality but to holiness; hence, whoever rejects these instructions rejects not man, but God who sends his Holy Spirit upon you” 1 Thessalonians 4: 3 – 8; “There were angels too, who did not keep to their domain, who deserted their dwelling place. These the Lord has kept in perpetual bondage, shrouded in murky darkness against the judgment of the great day” Jude 6.

It is true many will scoff at the idea that much in the world is ruled by evil spirits. But their disbelief is certainly not surprising since “Even satan disguises himself as an angel of light. It comes as no surprise that even his ministers disguise themselves as

ministers of the justice of God. But their end will correspond with their deeds" 2 Corinthians 11: 14. The deception of the devil has been most clever in blinding many to the fact that he and his demons actually exist. People like to think the evil they do is simply their own idea, that they are not puppets played with by the devil. No one should be deceived! The devil and his demons are real and must be resisted continually. "Stay sober and alert. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, solid in your faith, realizing that the brotherhood of believers is undergoing the same suffering throughout the world" 1 Peter 5: 8, 9.

Happily, each day brings us closer to the time when the devil and his cohorts will be no more! "And the world with its seductions is passing away but the man who does God's will endures forever" 1 John 2: 17. What a relief and joy in soul it will be to have that evil influence removed permanently! May we, therefore be among those who do the will of our heavenly Father and enjoy forever the eternal kingdom.

"For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall possess the land. Yet a little while and the wicked man shall be no more, though you mark his place, he will not be there. But the meek shall possess the land, they shall delight in abounding peace" Psalms 37: 9 – 11; "What we await are new heavens and a new earth, where according to his promise, the justice of God will reside" 2 Peter 3: 13; "This is God's dwelling among men. He shall dwell with them and they shall be his people and he shall be their God who is always with them. He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes and there shall be no more death nor mourning, crying out or pain, for the former world has passed away." Revelation 21: 3, 4.



Wisdom Of  
The



Byzantine  
Fathers

*You shall not kill an unborn child nor murder a newborn infant. Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.*

*A woman who deliberately destroys a fetus is answerable for murder. And any fine distinction as to its being completely formed or unformed is not admissible among us. Letters, St. Basil the Great.*

*The Lord, my Maker, forming me of clay, by His own breath the breath of life conveyed: Over the bright new world He gave me authority, a little lower than the angels He made me. But satan using for his guile the crafty serpent's cruel wile, deceived me by the tree; and severed me from God and grace, and brought me death and all my race. O Lover of the sons of man, forgive me and call me back again! St. Theophanes.*

## **The Gift of Love**

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends; as for the prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:1-13)

# Did You Know That ...

...if it is not worth fighting for, it is not worth having?

...a good friend is someone who likes the same people you do?

...those who get the most out of life are the one who do not ask much from it?

...a good friend is one, who, though he sees through you, will also see you through?

...the person who says "I may be wrong," is about to give you conclusive evidence that he isn't?

...love unspoken is a letter written but not mailed?

...there are few atheists being wheeled into operating rooms?

...the man who has a right to boast, doesn't have to?

...a sharp person rarely resorts to blunt statements?

...no rewards are offered for finding faults?

...wisdom consists in passing up non-essentials?

...anyone who says there are not two sides to every argument is probably involved in one?

...a most difficult problem in the business of life is minding your own?

...if our precious faith is not worth sharing with others, it is not worth keeping at home?

...there are a lot of ways to go wrong and a lot of people have tried them all?

...admitting our sins is a virtue second only to not committing any?

...sitting and wishing takes just as much time as sitting and planning properly?

...doing nothing to avoid making mistakes is probably the worst one you can make?

# WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE

*When You will come to earth in glory, O God, and all creatures will tremble before You, the river of fire will flow before Your judgement seat, and the books will be opened and all hidden things revealed; deliver me from the unquenchable fire and make me worthy to stand at Your right hand, O righteous Judge. Kontakion, Meatfare Sunday.*

*When You shall come to render just judgement, O righteous Judge, You shall sit upon Your throne of glory. A river of fire shall flow before Your judgement seat; the powers of heaven will be there with You. Filled with fear, all humanity will be judged according to their deeds. At this hour, O Christ, spare us, and because of Your great love, grant that the faithful who pray to You, may be given a place with Your chosen ones. Vesper Hymn, Meatfare Sunday.*

*The books will be opened and the secrets laid bare before Your awesome judgement seat; and the whole valley of tears shall resound with a dreadful sigh, when it sees sinners sent to eternal punishment by Your just judgement, and hears them weeping hopelessly. Therefore, O God of mercy, we pray to You: Spare us who sing to You, O only Good One. Vesper Hymn, Meatfare Sunday.*

*The trumpets shall sound and the tombs shall be opened; humanity shall come forth trembling. Those who have done good shall rejoice, as they await the reward they shall receive. Those who have done evil shall shriek in terror, as they are sent to punishment and separated from the elect. In Your goodness, spare us, O Lord of glory, and grant that we may enjoy a place with those who love You. Vesper Hymn, Meatfare Sunday.*

*I weep and lament when I think of the outer darkness and eternal fire, together with Hades, the worm that consumes, and the gnashing of teeth, the unceasing grief that falls upon those who have sinned without measure, and who have provoked You to anger, O God, most good. Alas, among these sinners, I am the first. But in Your great mercy, O Judge, save me. Vesper Hymn, Meatfare Sunday.*

*Alas! O my darkened soul, how long will you persist in sin? How long will you lie in laziness? Why do you not think of the dreadful hour of death? Do you not fear the awesome judgement seat of the Saviour? How will you defend yourself? How will you be vindicated? Your works are there to convict you, and your actions to witness against you. Moreover, time is growing short, O my soul; hasten and cry out in faith: I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned; but I know Your love and Your mercy. O Good Shepherd, in Your goodness, do not deprive me of a place at Your right hand. Vesper Hymn, Meatfare Sunday.*

## PRAYING FOR THE DEPARTED



One of the common questions asked by Orthodox Christians about their Faith concerns our approach to those who have fallen asleep in the Lord. Should we pray for the departed? Of what value are such prayers?

The underlying principle behind praying for the dead is based on unity in Christ. Since the inception of the Church, prayers for the deceased have always been offered in their behalf. We believe that the dead are really in another state of "life." Those who are related to God in a living faith have life even though they may be physically dead. Christ Himself said: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die." (John 11:25) In the Gospel of St. Matthew, Jesus spoke to the Sadducees about the rising from the dead, saying: "And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, 'I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob?' He is not God of the dead, but of the living." (Matt 22:31)

Though physically dead, the soul lives on, and we keep in contact with the departed by praying to God for the forgiveness of their sins. Thus does the Church provide the services for the dead because she believes that the departed may be helped, since Christ is able to do all things at will. The Orthodox Church, in fact, sets aside special days, referred to as ALL SOULS' SATURDAYS, to pray for all departed souls. It is customary on these days to have the names of our deceased loved ones mentioned aloud during these memorial services. In this way, we commemorate the ones who have passed on to their eternal reward.

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