



Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Cheesefare Sunday

March 6, 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

+++ We express our sincerest sympathies and deepest condolences to the family of +Paul Pallas, our dear parishioner, who was unexpectedly called to his eternal reward this past Tuesday. We embrace his devoted wife, Eleni and daughter Maria along with spouse Frank and their son Christopher who are communicants of our parish, along with remaining sons and daughters as well as grandchildren. We ask the merciful Lord to comfort Eleni and her family in their great loss and to grant a blessed repose to the soul of +Paul and create for him Eternal Memory!

+++ 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.

+++ We express our deepest sympathies and condolences to our good parishioner, Robin Pasquino and her husband, Louis on the recent death of his father, +Louis Pasquino, after a lengthy illness. We pray the merciful Lord comforts Louis and Robin and their loved ones in their loss and that He creates for +Louis a blessed repose and Eternal Memory!

+++ Please join us Monday evening at 7: 30 PM the first day of the Great Fast, for the Prayer Service asking the Lord's blessing on our efforts during this holy time.

+++ The first All Soul's Saturday will take 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.

+++ Everyone is welcome to participate in the Luncheon prior to the Great Fast after the Divine Liturgy today. Immediately afterwards, we will have Forgiveness Vespers for the whole parish to enjoy.

+++ 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 sincerely thank all who came and volunteered their time and prayerful effort to make the Pirohi Sale a success. God bless you devoted souls with good health for Many & Blessed Years.**

+++ 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, \$~~1,200.00~~; Candles, \$~~110.00~~; Diocesan Dues, \$~~200.00~~; Food Coupons, \$~~200.00~~; Special Gift by Robert Gorbich in memory of +Marian D'Elia, \$~~100.00~~; Kitchen, \$~~100.00~~; January Website, \$~~25.00~~; Christian Fellowship, \$~~100.00~~, for a total of \$~~1,000.00~~. 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 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 Buleta.

+++ 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 \$100.00 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 \$100.00. 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 \$100.00 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 remind our faithful only those who are present for the entire Divine Liturgy should come forward to receive Communion. The entire Liturgy means "Amen" to "Amen."

+ Some of the bulletins which were not able to be distributed because of the copy machine break down are available on the desk in the vestibule. Hopefully the remainder for the month of January will be printed for your spiritual edification by next Sunday.

+++ 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 eight 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!



Birthday
Wishes!

We are pleased to greet those of our faithful communicants who celebrate their birthday this month. Our Lord has offered these souls yet another year of blessed life. The most obvious way He blesses us and participates in our life is by sharing his divine life with us in the Eucharist at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Thus we gather together and offer thanks for yet another year of life blessed by his most gracious hands. Today, we prayerfully remember in the Divine Liturgy the following souls who celebrate their birthday during this month:

March 1 Kevin J. Henry
March 5 Nina Marya Harrison
March 5 Christopher M. Simon
March 10 Anna Zacharyczuk
March 14 Robert Gorbich
March 18 Damian Velez

With a prayerful heart and grateful soul, our parish faith community asks the Lord to continue to bless these birthday celebrants with good spiritual and physical health for the coming year. We invite all to add their personal intercessory prayers so that with one voice and one heart we may also participate in the grace and joy of their celebration. As we wish them a happy and blessed celebration of their birthday, our ardent prayer resounds that the Lord our God will continue to bless them for

Many and Blessed Years!

THE GREAT FAST

An Eastern approach to fasting

Why should we fast?

When we fast, we become hungry. We sense our own weaknesses and dependence. We are not self-sufficient. Fasting bursts the balloon of our rugged individualism. This is especially significant in our American culture. We fancy ourselves to be strong and self-sufficient, not needing anyone else, except to indulge ourselves and increase our personal pleasure. We do not like to be seen as dependent on others. We prefer to drive our own automobiles rather than use public transportation. In fact, many families have more than one vehicle of travel where even each individual member is independent of the others because they drive their own car. We create lavish home entertainment centers so that we do not have to go out for our leisure time fulfillment. It is easy for us to create the illusion we are indeed self-reliant in our prosperous society.

Fasting breaks through all this superficiality in life. When we seriously begin to fast, we notice our hunger; we see how needy we really are. We cannot go for very long without feeling the pangs of hunger. We are not self-generating beings. We cannot go to an isolated island without resources and continue to live. We need to take in food and drink; but we also need to take in sight and sounds and smells and taste and touch. As human beings we need to be nourished on all these levels. In order to remain healthy persons, we need to take in attention and affection as well as nourishment and hydration.

The myth of our self-made person is thus shattered. I must ask myself: Upon what do I depend? Upon whom do I depend? Then I begin to realize that everything is truly a gift. Everything that I have is ultimately given to me by our heavenly Father. This realization leads me to a spirit of gratitude, of thankfulness to God for every good gift that comes from on high.

Fasting also purifies our eating. It is only when we can say "no" to something that we can say "yes" to it freely. Otherwise, we are enslaved or addicted. If I cannot say "no" to something or to someone, then I am enslaved. Whether it is food, drink, drugs, work, pleasure, or people, if I cannot say "no" then I must admit I am addicted, that I am a slave to it. When I am a slave, I am no longer able to say "yes" freely. My yes is offered under constraint. There is nothing meritorious about doing something to which I am enslaved, even if this action is something "good." To be free is to be able to appreciate something graciously. Then I can see it and appreciate it as a gift.

Have you ever had the experience of being in an automobile for a long period of time without anything to drink? Or perhaps it was a long walk, or hike on a hot and dry day? Your mouth begins to taste like cotton, and even the thought of a few drops of water seems delightful. Then, when you finally come to a fresh water cooler, how wonderful that simple taste of water is! Hopefully, we are able to savor the taste and refreshment that it offers.

There is a very similar experience when we fast. Whenever we voluntarily impose upon ourselves deprivation of food and drink, every bite or taste that we then take becomes a blessing. We begin to see the world in a new way, in the way God intended it from the beginning. We see creation once again as something good and gifted us by our God. We do not take anything for granted. We truly experience ourselves as priests of creation, and the world is our cosmic liturgy. We wish always to celebrate it and our privileged place in it!

Fasting purifies our bodies as well as our spirits. In the secular world, many people fast regularly for purely personal reasons: to cleanse the body of toxins, to exercise more effectively; to control weight; to clarify the mind; to heighten one's sensations, and so forth. The discipline of fasting spiritually purifies us as well.

"A brother in a monastery was hungry early in the morning and he fought the desire so as not to eat before the third hour which is ordinarily at 9:00 AM. When the third hour came, he forced himself to wait until the sixth hour which is noon. At that time he broke his loaves and sat down to eat, then stood up again, saying, 'Now wait until the ninth hour' (3:00 PM). At the ninth hour he said the prayer and saw the power of the devil like smoke rising from his manual work, and his hunger vanished" *The Wisdom of the Desert Fathers*.

Fasting calls us to hunger for the Lord, to realize his absence in our lives by our own choice. We begin to recognize how much we have taken our lives into our own hands and tried to do things our own way, not the way we were created to do them. Fasting helps us to understand our restlessness and our sense of not being satisfied with the way things are. We are looking for something, but often we do not know what we are looking for. Fasting helps us to realize that our true longing is for the Lord. When we feel physically hungry, we begin to ask ourselves: 'What am I truly hungry for? What is it that I am really looking for in life? What am I honestly missing?'

Then, together with the Psalmist, I can honestly begin to say,

As the hind longs for the
running waters,

So my soul longs for you, O
God.

Athirst is my soul for God, the
living god

When shall I go and behold the
face of God? [Psalm 42.2-3]

O God, you are my God whom
I seek;

For you my flesh pines and my
soul thirsts

Like the earth, parched, lifeless
and without water.

Thus have I gazed toward you
in the sanctuary

To see your power and your
glory,

For your kindness is a greater
good than life;

My lips shall glorify you.
[Psalm 63.2-4]

Much like the parched dry earth, literally longs for drops of water, so my soul longs for the Lord. It is only when we have had the experience of truly yearning for communion with God that we begin to understand the true meaning of fasting.

Fasting deepens our sense of hope. We begin the Great Fast while still in the grips of the darkness of winter. The earth around us seems to be cold and barren and lifeless. The skies are often pewter grey, the trees are brown and bare, and at least for those of us in the

northeastern part of the United States, the sun rarely breaks through the clouds. The short days give way to long nights. But as the Great Fast progresses, the sun creeps slowly higher in the sky, lengthening the days, warming the air and it begins to tease life from the barren earth. We begin to see and smell and hear sounds of spring. Yes, the first fragile plants push their way through the rock-hard ground and once again our sense of hope comes alive.

As the Great Fast continues week after week, we find ourselves longing more deeply for the Lord. Of course, the Lord is always with us. But, in times of fasting, we come to realize how far we have strayed from him. We are the Prodigal, we are the Pharisee; we are the sinful fallen woman. Fasting strips us of all illusions of self-sufficiency and allows us to recognize our dependence on the Lord. Week by week, we find ourselves being drawn to the hope of the Resurrection.

Fasting hurts. It stirs up in us a deep sense of repentance and compunction. It awakens us to what we have lost through our disobedience. We sit there like Adam and Eve outside the gates of paradise, dejected, head in hands, realizing what we have done and what we have lost. It stirs up a desire for repentance, for change, a willingness to turn around. Fasting controls our desires and takes the edge off our compulsions, the compulsiveness to have all our needs fulfilled, and fulfilled immediately.

Abba John the Dwarf, one of the desert Father said, "If a king wanted to take possession of his enemy's city, he would begin by cutting off the water and the food and so his enemies, dying of hunger, would submit to him. It is the same with the passions of the flesh; if a person goes about fasting and hungry, the enemies of the soul grow weak."

Finally, fasting strengthens our prayer and intensifies our intercession. Prayer in conjunction with fasting becomes a deeply spiritual experience of hungering for the Lord, depending on the Lord, trusting in him and opening ourselves completely to him. We invest ourselves more fully in our prayer. It also purifies our prayer by driving out whatever is not of God. One of the Desert Mothers, Amma Syncletica says; "Just as the most bitter medicine drives out poisonous creatures, so prayer joined to fasting drives evil thoughts away."

Thus, far we have stressed primarily fasting from food and drink. This is the necessary beginning, for we only reach the heart through the body. But fasting is much more than physical; it is fasting from evil desires, thoughts and actions that is important. Our liturgical prayers continually tell us that it is useless to be without food and boast about it. Unless there is a change of heart and purification for our passions, our fasting is useless.

We must necessarily begin with a physical form of fasting. If we try to bring about a change of heart and inner renewal, without any physical form of discipline, it usually does not work. We only reach the spirit through the body.

Sometimes people say that fasting is only for monastics, those who have given up life in the world. Others say that it is too negative, that we need to do something more positive. But evil does not reside in things; it resides in our intentions and in our attitudes. Through fasting, our own intentions are purified. Things such as food and drink are not bad in themselves or God would not have created them. They only become bad when we misuse them, when we abuse them or have become enslaved to them.

Still others say that fasting is difficult. Well, it is! But we all need that discipline that allows us to say "no." If we cannot say "no" to small things such as food and drink and other forms of entertainment, then how will we ever be able to say no to the greater temptations that assail us? If parents do not teach their children restraint and give them boundaries and borders from an early age, how can they expect that the children will grow up with an inner discipline later in life?

St. John Climacus cautions us to control our appetites before they control us. He goes on to say that one who does not know discipline, but instead "looks after his belly and at the same time hopes to control the spirit of fornication is like someone trying to put out fire with oil."

Others say that fasting focuses too much on what we do and not enough on what God does. Actually, it is the opposite that is true. Fasting opens us to listen more intently for the voice of God and gives us inner strength to follow his will. Some say that fasting is negative and gloomy. But Jesus has already dealt with this. He tells us in the Sermon on the Mount that, when we fast, we are not to look glum as do hypocrites. Rather, we are to wash ourselves and groom ourselves so that no one knows we are fasting.

St. John Climacus, the great spiritual writer of the seventh century, uses a beautiful term when he speaks of this inner discipline. He says that it brings about a "joyful sorrow" in us. This dialectic of a joy-creating sorrow perfectly describes the experience of one who seeks to learn inner discipline through fasting and penance.

The Great Fast

The Great Fast, with its penitential spirit accompanied by the liturgical prayers and services in the Orthodox tradition, is much like the whole Church going on retreat. We are surrounded by

other Christians who are embracing a similar experience, and we find support from the larger group, our parish faith community. Even though not everyone in our communities and neighborhoods may be keeping a fasting style of life, there are enough supports around us to remind us of the spirit of this season.

We see this in our parish churches. Blood red covers adorn the altar table and icon stands; the haunting penitential melodies linger with us long after the services end; deep bows and prostrations punctuate our personal as well as liturgical prayer; and we are all touched by the famous Prayer of St Ephrem that is said so many times during this period. Services such as Vespers and the Divine Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts set a tone for this time of the year. And of course, there is the rigorous fasting!

The discipline of fasting turns attention away from ourselves and our own preoccupations and focuses us on the heavenly dimension of our lives. As we note, fasting is a sign of waiting or anticipation, of eagerness to be filled with God's grace, to be fulfilled and made complete. "Jesus replied, 'How can the guests at a wedding fast as long as the groom stays with them? So long as the groom stays with them, they cannot fast. The time will come, however, when the groom will be taken away from them; on that day they will fast...'" Mark 2: 19, 20.

When we fast, then, we are awaiting the Bridegroom, who comes. In doing this we are in the constant living tradition of the Church. The origin of the Great Fast can be traced to this same waiting for the Bridegroom. In the beginning it was a forty hour fast from Great and Holy Friday to the Resurrection. Its basic meaning was a mourning of the absence of the Lord and awaiting his coming return. Later it was extended to a full six days, our present Great and Holy Week. Finally, it was extended and prolonged to the forty days that we know as our present Great Fast.

Thus the Great Fast is a season of waiting and fulfilling ourselves spiritually. Liturgically we experience our alienation, our expulsion from paradise, the breakdown of our communion with God. In the Great Fast, we experience our human situation once again. We are Adam. We are created for glory, yet we are in exile by our own choosing. Adam was deceived and enticed to break the fast that God our heavenly Father enjoined on him and Eve. He was enticed to eat and so he lost paradise. Hence, we return to paradise by doing what Adam and Eve did not do; we return to paradise by keeping and observing faithfully the fast. That is why this time is called the Great Fast.

How Do I Fast ?

Our experience tells us that we are never satisfied. We always long for something more. Some seek it in money and possessions, power and prestige, in human respect, but these never satisfy us totally and completely. Others seek it in ultimate experiences; the ultimate sound system, the ultimate automobile, the ultimate computer system, the ultimate anything. They ascribe to their imagined needs a value far beyond reality and anything they can actually experience. Realistically they live in an imaginary world of their own making. Even their mind in time becomes imaginary. They seemingly achieve their own ultimate attainments and think they are satisfied because the world of advertising always promises us an ultimate experience. But it never comes through. Nothing ever satisfies us ultimately and so we keep looking for something more and something new, something we do not have and perhaps can never have or attain because of our own circumstances.

This continual searching tells us that there is nothing truly ultimate except for that which Adam and Eve lost. And we can only go back and regain it by doing what Adam and Eve did not do, that is by denying ourselves and fasting.

Even though there are many different rules and multiple traditions surrounding fasting, there is one that is the most simple, the easiest to remember, and the most common among the Fathers of the Church of Christ. It applies to everyone, no matter how old or how young we are, how healthy we are or how weak we are, or what kind of diet we follow.

Many of the Desert Fathers and Mothers have taught this. Here is the teaching of Abba Poemen, the Shepherd. Abba Joseph asked Abba Poemen, 'How shall one fast?' Abba Poemen said to him, 'For my part I think it better that one should eat every day, but only a little so as not to be satisfied.' Abba Joseph said, 'When you were younger, did you not fast two days at a time, Abba?' The old man said, 'Yes, even for three days and four and the whole week. The Fathers tried all this out as they were able and they found it preferable to eat every day, but just a small amount. They have left us this royal way, which is light.'

Yes, the simplest way of fasting is to get up from the table while we are still a little hungry. It preserves all the values of fasting. We will still long for the Lord. We will be hungering and yearning for something more. And then the light flashes within us, and we realize that we are truly hungering and yearning for a closer relationship with the Lord. He is our true hunger and our true authentic thirst.

What are some of the practical ways in which we can fast? St. John Chrysostom often speaks about fasting in his homilies. He too has some very strong words about those who fast only from food products, but not from sinful practices. "...for the honor of fasting consists not in abstinence from food, but in withdrawing from sinful practices...Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works!...If you see a poor person, take pity on him! If you see an enemy, be reconciled with him! If you see a friend gaining honor, envy him not...Let not the mouth only fast, but also the eye, and the ear, and the feet and the hands, and all the members of our bodies....Let the hands fast by being pure from plunder and avarice. Let the feet fast by ceasing from running to the unlawful spectacles. Let the eyes fast, being taught never to fix themselves rudely on handsome countenances or to busy themselves with strange beauties. For looking is the food of the eyes...The fasting of the ear consists in refusing to recite evil speech and calumny...Let the mouth too fast from disgraceful speeches and railing. For what does it profit if we abstain from birds and fish, and yet bite and devour our brothers and sisters?' On The Statutes.

Indeed, this is practical and realistic advice that is most valuable and insightful in our present time and place. We can make serious efforts to control our tongues by fasting from idle talking and scandalous speech. Fasting from the tongue is undoubtedly one of the most difficult forms of discipline for us today. We can also refrain from going to modern "spectacles" that is, those forms of entertainment that engulf our minds and hearts, that rob us of our inner peace and from wholesome thoughts.

As St. John Chrysostom said, fasting is a perfect time to become reconciled with those from whom we are estranged. Is there someone with whom you have a parting of ways? Are there tensions in the family that need to be resolved? This the time to take the first step and seek healing. This is what it means to fast from evil

As we begin our journey through this holy Fast, let the prayer of our blessed Church from Forgiveness Vespers be our guide and inspiration.

"Let us begin the time of this bright Fast, giving ourselves over to spiritual struggle. Let us sanctify our soul and purify our flesh. Let us not fast only from food; let us also abstain from every passion and cultivate spiritual virtues. And let us faithfully persevere in this, so that we may be worthy to see the holy passion of Christ our God and the joy of his holy and glorious Resurrection."



Birthday
Wishes!

We are pleased to greet those of our faithful communicants who celebrate their birthday this month. Our Lord has offered these souls yet another year of blessed life. The most obvious way He blesses us and participates in our life is by sharing his divine life with us in the Eucharist at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Thus we gather together and offer thanks for yet another year of life blessed by his most gracious hands. Today, we prayerfully remember in the Divine Liturgy the following souls who celebrate their birthday during this month:

March 1 Kevin J. Henry
March 5 Nina Marya Harrison
March 5 Christopher M. Simon
March 10 Anna Zacharyczuk
March 14 Robert Gorbich
March 18 Damian Velez

With a prayerful heart and grateful soul, our parish faith community asks the Lord to continue to bless these birthday celebrants with good spiritual and physical health for the coming year. We invite all to add their personal intercessory prayers so that with one voice and one heart we may also participate in the grace and joy of their celebration. As we wish them a happy and blessed celebration of their birthday, our ardent prayer resounds that the Lord our God will continue to bless them for

Many and Blessed Years!

YOUR SPEECH BETRAYS YOU!

Do you remember how St. Peter boasted that he would never turn away from Christ in His hour of need, and then shamefully tried to deny that he even knew Jesus? Despite his protests to the contrary, Peter could not fool one of the maid servants in the courtyard of Caiaphas, who accused him of being one of Christ's followers. *"Even your speech betrays you!"* she exclaims.

The same can be said of all of us. OUR speech betrays us many times in life. Unfortunately, we do not always show control and restraint in the manner in which we speak, nor do we always speak in an admirable way. St. James writes about this in great detail in his New Testament epistle. He tells us: *"Man has tamed every kind of beast and bird, every reptile and creature of the sea, BUT NO MAN CAN TAME THE TONGUE. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison!"* James also points out that *"... out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. THIS SHOULD NOT BE SO!"*

Our speech must be in harmony with how we live. We must say what we feel, and feel what we say. Good words are worth much, and cost little. More importantly, good words and kind speech are witnesses to the quality of our Christian character. The words we speak often give others an insight into our heart and soul. They are a reflection of our feelings, for what we SAY reveals what we ARE. All of us are followers of Jesus Christ, and we should choose our words accordingly. An Orthodox Christian must speak with conviction and kindness. We are called upon to speak truthfully and respectfully at all times to everyone with whom we come in contact, always following the example of our Lord.

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey Litho in U.S.A.