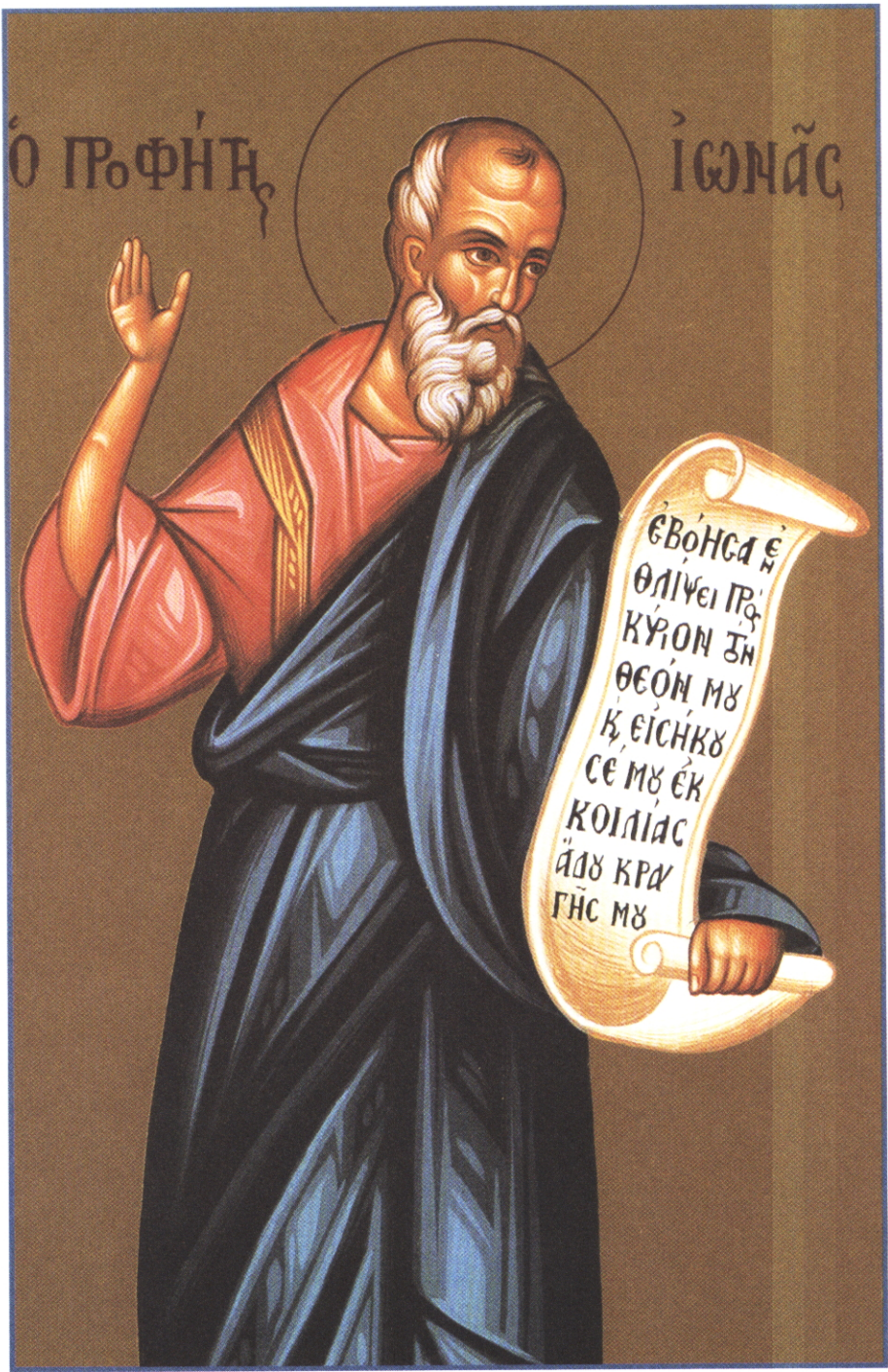


PROPHET

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Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ

ΙΩΝΑΣ



Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 20, 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

+++ Next Sunday prior to the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, we will have a Memorial Service for the repose of the soul of +Bishop John of thrice-blessed memory, whose twenty-fifth anniversary of repose we celebrate. Please join us in prayer at that time, particularly as he is the founder of our parish. May our gracious Lord grant the soul of +Bishop John a blessed repose and create for him Eternal Memory!

+++ Today we have festal anointing on the occasion of this past week's holyday of the Exaltation of the Life-giving Cross. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Among Us!" to which we reply, "He Is And Shall Be!"

+++ 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-end: Tithe Offering, \$██████, Candles, \$██████, Food Coupons, \$██████, Kitchen, \$██████, Holyday, \$██████, Pennies From Heaven, \$██████, Christian Fellowship, \$██████ for a total of \$██████. 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 41 adults and 15 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, +Paul Szmaida, Debra Szmaida, Robin Pasquino 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 \$██████ from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

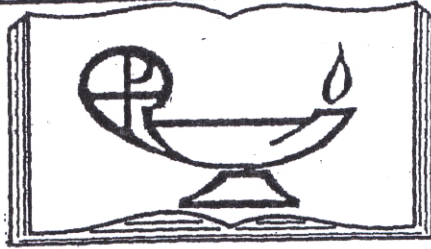
+++ For the expansion of our much needed parochial facilities, our parish pledge support to date totals \$██████. As we thank the Lord for inspiring generosity in the hearts of our faithful, we also thank the donors for accepting the challenge of the Lord in building up His Body. We cordially invite 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 \$██████ on this project to date!

+++ 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!

LORD



TEACH
US

Persecution of Jesus

What fools the nations are to rage against the Lord! How strange that men should try to outwit God. The kings of the earth rise up and the princes conspire together against the Lord and against his anointed. Let us break their fetters and cast their bonds from us. He who is enthroned in the heaven laughs and the Lord derides them. Then in anger he speaks to them, he terrifies them in his wrath Psalms 2: 1 – 5.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me, far from my prayer, from the words of my cry? O my God, I cry out day by day, and you answer not; by night and there is no relief for me. Yet you are enthroned in the holy place, O glory of Israel!...But I am a worm, not a man; the scorn of men, despised by the people. All who see me scoff at me, they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads. He relied on the Lord, let him deliver him; let him rescue him if he loves him Psalms 22: 2 - 9.

Indeed many dogs surround me, a pack of evildoers closes in upon me; they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They look on and gloat over me; they divide my garments among them and for my vesture they cast lots Psalms 22: 17 – 19.

Since for your sake I bear insults and shame covers my face. I have become an outcast to my brothers, a stranger to my mother's sons. Because zeal for your house consumes me and the insults of those who blaspheme you fall upon me. I humbled myself with fasting and this was made a reproach to me. I made sackcloth my garment and I became a byword for them. They who sit at the gate gossip about me and drunkards make me the butt of their songs Psalms 69: 7 – 13.

I give my back to the whip and my cheeks to those who pull out my beard. I do not hide from shame; they spit in my face Isaiah 50: 6.

How To Walk

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man

Ephesians 3: 16.

A young married couple, David and Florence went out for an afternoon bike ride expecting to come home exercised, invigorated and refreshed. Instead, their lives were changed forever. As David rode triumphantly down a hill, he lost control of his bike and crashed. His body was mangled and he barely made it to the hospital alive, so great was his blood loss.

Florence faithfully kept a devoted vigil by her husband's side. He could not feed himself and he could not walk. One day, as the two of them sat under a shade tree outside the rehabilitation hospital, David turned to his wife and said, "Florence, I don't know if I'll ever walk again, but I am learning to walk closer to Christ and that is what I really want, and certainly need." Instead of shaking his fist at God, David reached out and grabbed his helping hand.

Sometimes in the middle of our trials and challenges, we need to think about someone like David and Florence to help us adjust realistically our perspective, to remind us of the remarkable relationship we have with God through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Redeemer. This is the relationship we need most when the going gets toughest.

No one is equipped to handle all the problems we face, but our heavenly Father is and can He can. That is why He used the lips of the Old Testament King David to remind us to give them all to him, to "...cast our burden on the Lord" Psalms 55: 22. As both David and Florence found out, walking with the Lord does not depend on our legs; it depends on our heart and soul!

We cannot worry over the outcome of the future, but we do know who holds the future in his hands and if we walk beside him, He will lead us safely through what lies ahead.

Fathers of the Church

The saintly writers and teachers of the early centuries of the life of the Body of Christ are recognized as her special witnesses of faith. They gave true, orthodox expression to what Christ taught and bequeathed to the world for the sake of our salvation, thus they literally sired true faith. Antiquity, orthodoxy, sanctity and approval by the Church are their four main descriptions. They are commonly divided into Byzantine and Western Fathers. It is now generally held that the last of the Eastern Fathers was St. John Damascene (675 - 749), while he who closed the Westerns is St. Isidore of Seville (560 - 636).

LATIN FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

- St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (340-97)
- Arnobius, apologist (d. 327)
- St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354-430)
- St. Benedict, father of Western monasticism (480-546)
- St. Caesarius, Archbishop of Arles (470-542)
- St. John Cassian, abbot, ascetical writer (360-435)
- St. Celestine I, Pope (d. 432)
- St. Cornelius, Pope (d. 253)
- St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (d. 258)
- St. Damasus I, Pope (d. 384)
- St. Dionysius, Pope (d. 268)
- St. Ennodius, Bishop of Pavia (473-521)
- St. Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons (d. 449)
- St. Fulgentius, Bishop of Ruspe (468-533)
- St. Gregory of Elvira (died after 392)
- St. Gregory (I) the Great, Pope (540-604)
- St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers (315-68)
- St. Innocent I, Pope (d. 417)
- St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons (130-200)
- St. Isidore, Archbishop of Seville (560-636)
- St. Jerome, priest, exegete, translator of the Vulgate (343-420)
- Lactantius Firmianus, apologist (240-320)
- St. Leo the Great, Pope (390-461)
- Marius Mercator, Latin polemicist (early fifth century)
- Marius Victorinus, Roman rhetorician (fourth century)
- Minucius Felix, apologist (second or third century)
- Novatian, the Schismatic (200-62)
- St. Optatus, Bishop of Mileve (late fourth century)

St. Pacian, Bishop of Barcelona (fourth century)
 St. Pamphilus, priest (240–309)
 St. Paulinus, Bishop of Nola (353–431)
 St. Peter Chrysologus, Archbishop of Ravenna (400–50)
 St. Phoebadius, Bishop of Agen (d. 395)
 St. Prosper of Aquitaine, theologian (390–463)
 Rufinus, Latin translator of Greek theology (345–410)
 Salvian, priest (400–80)
 St. Siricius, Pope (334–99)
 Tertullian, apologist, founder of Latin theology (160–223)
 St. Vincent of Lérins, priest and monk (d. 450)

GREEK FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

St. Anastasius Sinaita, apologist, monk (d. 700)
 St. Andrew of Crete, Archbishop of Gortyna (660–740)
 Aphraates, Syriac monk (early fourth century)
 St. Archelaus, Bishop of Cascar (d. 282)
 St. Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria (c. 297–373)
 Athenagoras, apologist (second century)
 St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea (329–79)
 St. Caesarius of Nazianzus (330–69)
 St. Clement of Alexandria, theologian (150–215)
 St. Clement I of Rome, Pope (30–101)
 St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem (315–86)
 St. Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria (376–444)
 Didymus the Blind, theologian (313–98)
 Diodore, Bishop of Tarsus (d. 392)
 Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, mystical theologian (late fifth century)
 St. Dionysius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria (190–264)
 St. Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis (315–403)
 Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea (260–340)
 St. Eustathius, Bishop of Antioch (fourth century)
 St. Firmilian, Bishop of Caesarea (d. 268)
 Gennadius I, Patriarch of Constantinople (d. 471)
 St. Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople (634–733)
 St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishop of Sasima (329–90)
 St. Gregory of Nyssa (330–95)
 St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop of Neocaesarea (213–70)
 Hermas, author of *The Shepherd* (second century)
 St. Hippolytus, martyr (170–236)
 St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch (35–107)
 St. Isidore of Pelusium, abbot (360–c. 450)
 St. John Chrysostom, Patriarch of Constantinople (347–407)
 St. John Climacus, monk (579–649)
 St. John Damascene, defender of sacred images (675–749)
 St. Julius I, Pope (d. 352)

St. Justin Martyr, apologist (100–65)
St. Leontius of Byzantium, theologian (sixth century)
St. Macarius the Great, monk (300–90)
St. Maximus, abbot and confessor (580–662)
St. Melito, Bishop of Sardis (d. 190)
St. Methodius, Bishop of Olympus (d. 311)
St. Nilus the Elder, priest and monk (d. 430)
Origen, head of the Catechetical School of Alexandria (184–
254)
St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (69–155)
St. Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople (d. 446)
St. Serapion, Bishop of Thmuis (died after 362)
St. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (560–638)
Tatian the Assyrian, apologist and theologian (120–80)
Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia (350–428)
Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrrihus (393–458)
St. Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch (late second century)



*...I have left a little light for you
so you will know that someone cares...*

*Just where it becomes the most dark and difficult
to find your way, there is the light left for you.
And when your way becomes lighter,
please go back to that darkest place
where you have been,
and set the little light there
to give heart to the next trembling soul
that braces the path through the dark...*

Two Kingdoms

*Render therefore to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar
and to God the things that belong to God*

Matthew 22: 21.

In most political observations and reports today, it might be noted that the young generally do not have an old-time political religion. They look at voting and see a quaint, irrational act. One graduate is quoted as saying, "I don't care enough to care about why I don't care." Believers have to therefore wonder if this is how we as Jesus followers sometimes view our civic responsibilities!

The insights of the Lord in St. Matthew's gospel helped his followers think clearly about their civic duty in the world. The Jews were, of course, required to pay taxes to the Roman government. They hated this taxation particularly because the money went directly into Caesar's treasury, where some of it supported the pagan religious temples and decadent lifestyle of the Roman aristocracy. Many questioned if they even had a civic responsibility to Caesar, so profoundly pervasive was their hate of the foreign ruler.

Jesus reminded them rather explicitly, however that they had a dual citizenship. They lived in a world with two kingdoms, that of Caesar with its purely human authority and of God's kingdom, with its pre-eminent spiritual authority. Having responsibilities to both simply showed their greater and primary one was to the Creator God and his kingdom. "We gave you strict orders not to teach about that name, yet have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us responsible for that man's blood." To this Peter and the apostles replied: "Better for us to obey God than man" Acts of the Apostles 5: 28, 29!

As disciples of Christ, as followers of Jesus, we are commanded to cooperate with civil authority for the general good order necessary in society. At the very same time, we are called to give God our ultimate obedience and commitment.

We live as citizens of two worlds and this of course demands we fulfill our dual duty conscientiously because far greater should be our heart's desire to honor Christ and always do his will.

LOST PRAYERS

In the day of my trouble I will call upon you, for you will answer me
Psalms 86: 7.

The small headline of a New Jersey regional shore paper read: UNANSWERED PRAYER LETTERS TO GOD FOUND DUMPED IN OCEAN.

The letters, some 300 in all and sent to a New Jersey minister had been tossed in the ocean, most of them unopened. The minister, now long dead, had once invited people to send prayer requests to him as he promised to pray for them and their needs and intentions. How the letters came to floating in the surf off New Jersey is a continuing mystery.

Because he promised to pray, letters were addressed him. Some of the letters asked for frivolous things; others were written by anguished spouses, children or widowed persons. They poured out their hearts to God, asking for help with relatives who were abusing drugs and alcohol, for spouses who were cheating on them. One asked our heavenly Father for a husband and father to love her child. Many were interested in an increase of faith response to God's first shown love. Some promised to pray along with that minister to achieve their purposes in life.

But the reporter who wrote of the incident concluded that all were "unanswered prayers."

Not so! If those letter-writers cried out to God, He heard each one of them. Not one honest upright prayer is lost to his ears. "All my desire is before you," David wrote in the midst of deep personal crisis, "and my sighing is not hidden from you" Psalms 38: 9. The Old Testament king understood that we can cast all our cares on the Lord, even if no one else prays for us. He confidently concluded, "In the day of my trouble I will call upon you for you will answer me."

Our heavenly Father has given us a promise that He hears and answers prayer. He does respond to serious and sincere supplication if we cast our cares and needs on him.

Did You Know That ...

...if souls are to be healed, the believer's song must be sung and heard?

...in marriage two become a sacramental Mystery, a sacred sign of God's love?

...angels watch over us when we commend our lives to Christ our God?

...all creation welcomes the gift of a child into its midst?

...the work that we offer to God as a gift should be a reflection of all that is good within us?

...we ought pray the Holy Spirit inspire us to recognize his gifts ever-present in our life?

...prayer brings an awakening of the presence of God within us?

...holiness does not consist in doing extraordinary things; we can all do small things with great love?

...we must be the change we wish to see in the world?

...faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when dawn is still dark?

...we should never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed believers can change the world; indeed it is the only things that ever has?

...the blessings of each day are the ones you need most?

...many candles can be lit from one candle without diminishing it?

...we who are baptized are light-bearers to the world?

...love holds us, peace enfolds us as we are held in God's hands?

...regardless how badly we sin, we still belong to God?

...our prayer presence in the life of a believer is never forgotten?

...joy flows through us with every beat of our heart?

THE RELUCTANT PROPHET

The Prophet Jonah lived some 800 years before the birth of Christ. The Book of Jonah begins with God instructing Jonah to go to the city of Nineveh in Assyria to warn the people that if they did not change their sinful ways, they would be destroyed. But Jonah does not obey God - he gets onto a ship and heads in the opposite direction! While at sea, a terrible storm blows in, threatening to overturn the boat. Jonah knows that this is a direct result of God being angry with him for his disobedience. He asks the sailors to throw him in the water, and he is swallowed by a great fish. Immediately, the storm subsides. Jonah spends 3 days and 3 nights inside the whale. He prays fervently to God, expressing his sorrow for not following the Lord's command. He vows that if he were delivered from the belly of the whale, he would now obey. God is merciful to Jonah. He causes the whale to spit him out and He commands Jonah to go to Nineveh and warn them of their impending doom. This time, Jonah obeys, declaring to the people that within 40 days they would all be destroyed by God because of their sinfulness. When the King hears Jonah's words, he immediately takes off his royal robes and puts on a sackcloth garment. He orders his subjects to do the same, calling upon them to pray and fast. Amazingly, Jonah is now upset because God doesn't destroy the people of Nineveh! In his mind, they didn't deserve God's mercy. Jonah goes to the outskirts of town, builds a small shelter and waits for God to change His mind. The climate in Nineveh is brutally hot, so God causes a plant with large leaves to grow on the top of this shelter to shield Jonah from the sun. The next day, He causes the plant to wither and die, and the scorching sun is once again beating down on Jonah. God then says to him: "You are angry because I caused a single plant to die. And yet, you didn't want me to feel sorry for an entire city of 120,000 who needed to be taught the difference between right and wrong?" The behavior of Jonah is typical of ours. He expects God to be merciful to him, but he becomes judgmental of God's response to others in need of forgiveness. The lesson is clear: if we expect forgiveness, we must be willing to show it.