

## Invest in God to Achieve True Wealth In Heaven

By FATHER PETER DELVIZIS

How many of you are shocked when you view your investment portfolio each month? It seems that each month is followed by another horrific financial month. Many are expressing their shock as they watch so much value; so much hard-earned money, just evaporate in such a short period of time.

With such a precipitous drop in stocks adding to the already precarious mortgage state, and one unsettled world crisis after another, there is definitely a worry concerning personal financial security. The main question is how to preserve an accustomed standard of living when nothing seems to hold value?

Inquiries, as who is to blame for this financial chaos, have arisen. The Congress, the Democrats or Republicans, mortgage companies, Wall Street brokers, banking institutions, the President and his administrative policies, the inability of citizens to manage their own finances and live within their means all have been batted back and forth as potential perpetrators. One might say that all these events have come together to form the perfect financial storm.

In the midst of a credit crunch, a mortgage meltdown, a broken banking system and shredded stocks, how are you currently investing your wealth?

If you are completely vested in the financial systems, your house is in

### Y's Men's Tree Sale Underway In Westfield

WESTFIELD—The Westfield Area Y's Men have kicked off their 60th annual Christmas tree fundraising sale at the Elm Street Field in Westfield.

Members from Westfield, Scotch Plains, Mountainside, Plainfield and Cranford participate in this event, which began in 1947. Many other volunteers from area organizations also lend their support to make this sale possible.

This year's tree selection includes Fraser Fir, Canaan, Colorado Blue Spruce, Concolor, Douglas Fir and Balsam. Sizes range from three-foot "tabletop" trees to nine-foot-plus Fraser Firs. All trees are given a fresh cut to take water; branched trimmed per customer request; vertically drilled for a tree stand, and baled and loaded onto customers' cars or vans. Also available are wreaths, roping and tree stands.

All proceeds will benefit local charities and organizations. The tree lot will be open through Tuesday, December 23. Sale hours are 3:30 to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

ruin. But if you have periodically made virtuous deposits of faith in the Lord, you can be assured that you can weather this or any other storm. Forget dollar-cost averaging; I'm talking about heavenly wealth that comes with a personal expression of faith.

Holy Scripture provides concrete answers and direction as we seek the best place to add value to our wealth portfolio. "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19-21).

Is your heart invested in the Lord's heavenly corporation? Hasn't it become vividly clear in the last few months that investing our treasures in material items such as "paper money," "property" or "commodities" does not provide for the future life? And how can it, when it has failed to even provide adequately for this present temporal life?

The true treasure belongs to those who find the everlasting treasure found in the Lord, for He is the eternal value. By investing in Him, we become free of those things that bind us to earthly possessions and assure for ourselves a place in His heavenly kingdom. We must remember that, just as moths consume that which is precious and just as rust destroys that which is made of steel, our investment in the earthly will also eventually dissolve and disappear. It profits us not. Only by investing in God's portfolio of faith do we add precious and eternal value to our souls.

In this time of financial turmoil, it is important to remember that the discovery of true and fulfilled life is found in our Lord God.

St. Ambrose of Milan, a fourth-century saint, says, "Christ does not ask for money, but for faith which is more valuable than money."

The Prophetic Book of Isaiah provides us with much wisdom at such time. This verse should remind us that the true treasure is found in our Lord, who in His heavenly kingdom will provide for all.

"You, who are thirsty, go to the water, and all who have no money, go and buy wine and food, and eat and drink without money and price. Why do you value at the price of money, and give your toil for what does not satisfy? Listen to Me and eat good things, and your soul will delight in good things. Seek God, and when you find Him, call upon Him when He draws near to you." (Isaiah 55).

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Father Delvizi is presiding priest of the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, located at 250 Gallows Hill Road in Westfield.



CHRISTMAS TREES FOR ALL...Members of the Westfield Area Y's Men bring trees to the Elm Street lot in Westfield for the organization's annual Christmas tree sale. Currently in its 60th year, the sale is now underway and will continue through Tuesday, December 23. See related article on this page.

## Tree Lighting This Saturday To Kick Off Holiday Events

MOUNTAINSIDE — The Mountainside Historic Preservation Committee has announced a lineup of holiday events that will take place this month, including the Gingerbread Open House at the Deacon Andrew Hetfield House.

Leading off the festivities will be the community tree lighting ceremony at New Providence Road and Route 22 on Saturday, December 6. It will begin at approximately 4 p.m., depending on the weather and light of day. Traditional hot cocoa and baked cookies will be available for sale.

While the familiar tall tree fell victim to disease and had to be cut down, a newer, smaller tree at the site will take center stage for the tree lighting. A third tree, donated to the County of Union, has been designated to serve as the county's Holiday Tree in the courthouse rotunda.

The Gingerbread Open House will follow on Sunday, December 14, from 1 to 4 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by the Deerfield Middle School choir at 2 p.m., the Deerfield School

woodwinds at 2:30 p.m. and the Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church children's choir at 3 p.m.

The event will feature a display of gingerbread house creations from the community, including an original gingerbread replica of the storied Hetfield House itself, plus cider and desserts provided by various local bakers.

Throughout the afternoon, the Westfield Volunteer String Ensemble will perform holiday tunes. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on hand to greet guests and for pictures — visitors are invited to bring their cameras. There also will be free crafts for children.

Anyone wishing to display a gingerbread creation is asked to drop it off at the Hetfield House between 10 a.m. and noon on Saturday, December 13. The displays may be picked up after the event between 4 and 5 p.m. on December 14.

The restored kitchen fireplace will provide warmth during the open house. The Hetfield House is located on Constitution Plaza near the Mountainside Public Library, off of Birch Hill Road. For further information on these events, visit mountainsidehistory.org.

### Visitors Invited Sunday To Cannonball House

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Osborn Cannonball House, located at 1840 Front Street in Scotch Plains, will be open to visitors this Sunday, December 7, from 2 to 4 p.m. during the township's holiday celebration and Christmas tree lighting.

Festive decorations will adorn the circa 1750 farmhouse museum, which is maintained by the Historical Society of Scotch Plains and Fanwood.

There is no admission charge. This will be the final event of the year at the Cannonball House. The museum will reopen on Sunday, March 1, 2009.

### Santa to Ride Through Borough December 13

FANWOOD — Santa Claus, along with the Fanwood Fire Department, rescue squad and Policeman's Benevolent Association Local No. 123, will make his annual ride through the borough on Saturday, December 13, starting at 11 a.m.

Packages can be dropped off at the Fanwood Police Department through Sunday, December 7. Late gifts cannot be accepted.

All packages must include a name, address and telephone number and should be no larger than 12 inches by 12 inches. All packages for the same address must be bundled together. Sirens will announce Santa's arrival.

## American Legion Requests Troop Care Package Items

WESTFIELD — American Legion Martin Wallberg Post No. 3 of Westfield is continuing its participation in the "Support Our Troops" initiative, whereby care packages filled with donated items are shipped to United States troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. All shipping and packaging expenses are covered by donations and other Legion revenues.

Needed supplies include personal care items and toiletries (toothbrushes, tooth paste, eye drops, foot powder and baby wipes), along with food items such as dried drink mixes, granola bars, Pop Tarts, small juice cans and instant coffee, among other such selections. Contributors are asked not to donate chocolate or aerosol items.

Additionally, American flags and pre-paid international phone cards have been requested. A complete list of acceptable items is available online at operationsshoebbox.com. Monetary donations will be used to purchase additional requested items. All donations are tax deductible.

Care package items may be dropped off at American Legion Post No. 3 from 2 to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Items also may be left at ReMax Properties Unlimited, located at 200 North Avenue, East, in Westfield from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Post No. 3 also has "packing" nights to prepare shipments for overseas. Anyone interested in participating is asked to call (908) 232-9689.

Monetary donations may be mailed to "Support Our Troops," American Legion Post 3, 1003 North

Avenue, West, Westfield, N.J. 07090. Participants are invited to write an inspirational message or include a card with their donations. Efforts will be made to send donations directly to troops and military units from New Jersey.

For more information on "Support Our Troops," call Chairman Pete Hogaboom at (908) 518-5448 or Richard Thompson of the Union County Office of Veteran Affairs at (908) 659-7407.

### Rotary Luminary Sale To Begin on Saturday

FANWOOD — The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club will begin its annual luminary sale on Saturday, December 6, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will take place at the Fanwood Municipal Garage, located on Mantra Way across from the Fanwood Memorial Library at Tillotson Road and North Avenue. Proceeds will benefit charities supported by the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club.

Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club volunteers also will sell candle kits on the weekends of December 13 and 14 and December 20 and 21 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day, and on Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24, from 9 a.m. to noon. Each candle "kit" costs 50 cents and contains one candle, a paper bag and sand.

During the luminary sale, the club also will accept non-perishable, packaged food for distribution to the local food pantry. For more information about the sale, call Denise Hughes at (908) 490-0742.



### St. Paul's Students Help to Feed the Hungry

WESTFIELD — St. Paul's Day School students participated in a Thanksgiving food drive held by the church to benefit local homeless programs and food pantries. Pictured above is Mrs. Elizabeth Belden's class presenting some of the school's donations to Gwen Howard, director of Christian Education at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Westfield. The students helped about 178 families while learning about the meaning of giving and sharing in this worthwhile program. St. Paul's Day School serves children from age 2 through kindergarten. For more information, please call the school at (908) 233-3417.

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