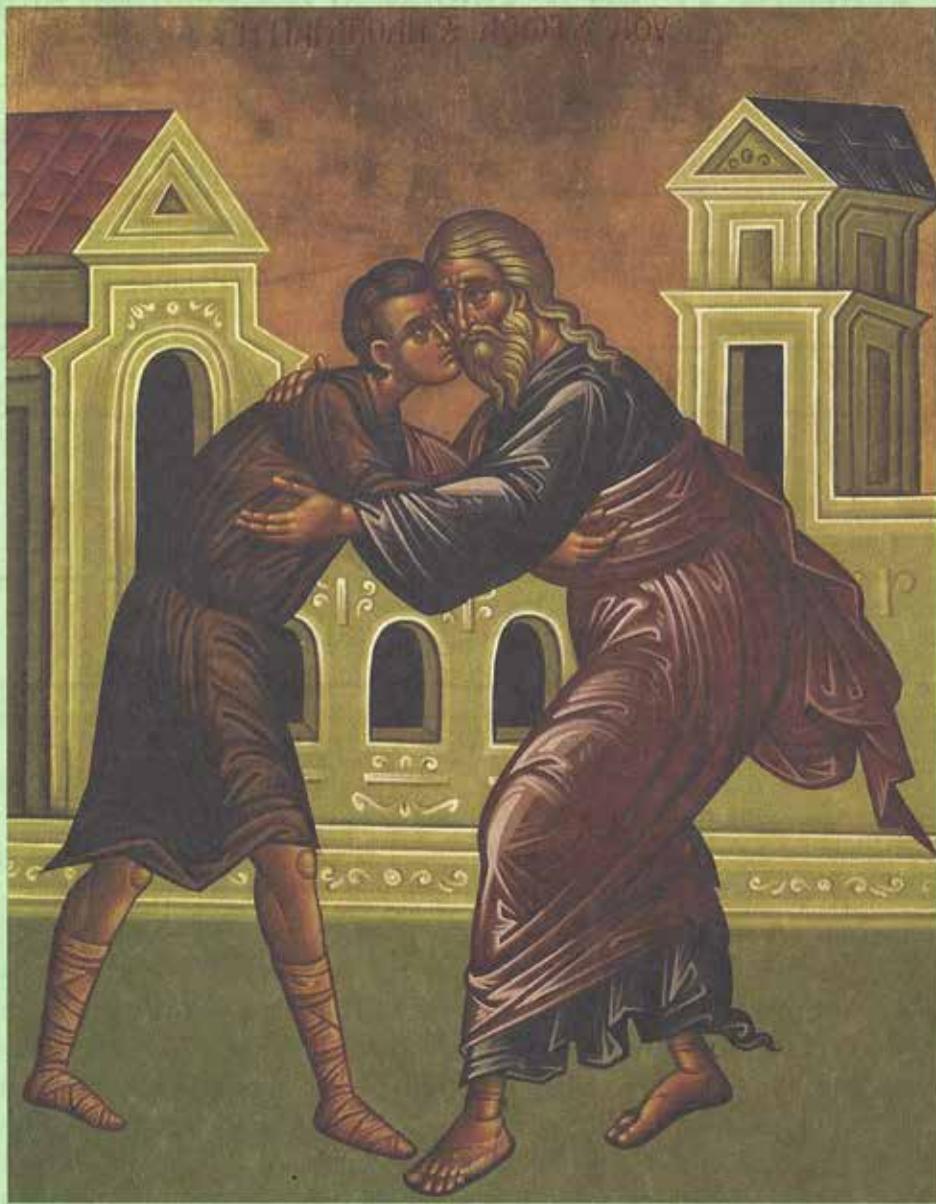


SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON



*Icon of the Prodigal Son*

<b>February 12, 2017: Sunday of the Prodigal Son</b>		
Epistle: 1 Cor. 6: 12-20		Gospel: Lk. 15: 11-32
<b>Mon., Feb. 13</b>	8:00	+ Robert & Elaine (Father Nestor)
<b>Tues., Feb. 14</b>	8:00	+ Daniel Telep Sr. (Daughter Lauren Telep)
<b>Wed., Feb. 15</b>	8:00	+ Ann Jablonski (Diane Spiteri)
<b>Thurs. Feb. 16</b>	8:00	God's Blessings on Michael O'Halloran (Howard Smith)
<b>Fri. Feb. 17</b>	8:00	+ Stanley, Stephanie & Michael Wysochansky (Legate)
<b>Sat., Feb. 18</b>	<b>No Morning Divine Liturgy</b> 10:30 Confessions 2:00 pm Confessions 4:00 pm + Michael Hermanovich Sr. (Family)	
<b>Sun., Feb. 19</b>	9:00	For Our Parishioners 11:30 + Robert Sembrat (Cousin Jane)

## **The Sunday of the Prodigal Son**

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son is the second Sunday of a three-week period prior to the commencement of Great Lent. On the previous Sunday, the services of the Church began to include hymns from the Triodion, a liturgical book that contains the services from the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the tenth before Pascha (Easter), through Great and Holy Saturday. As with the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the theme of this Sunday is repentance, and the focus on

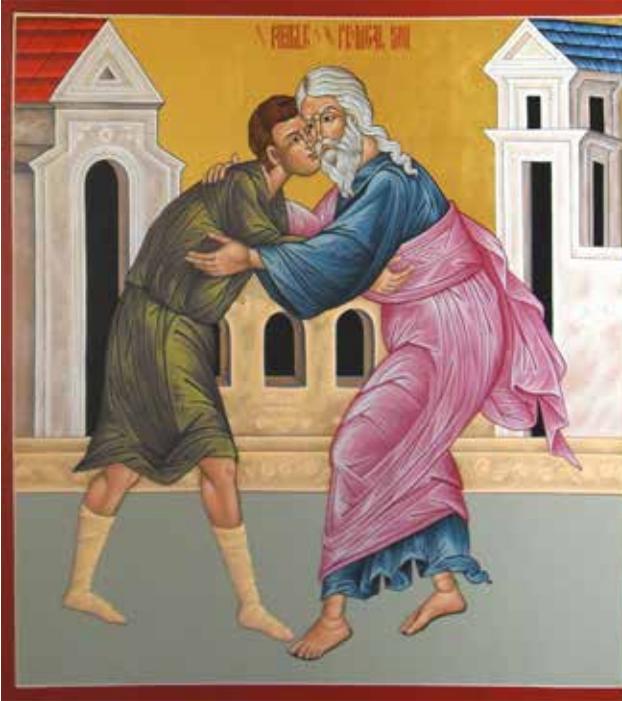
the parable of the Prodigal Son leads Eastern Christians to contemplate the necessity of repentance in our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

The parable of the Prodigal Son forms an exact icon of repentance at its different stages. Sin is exile, enslavement to strangers, hunger. Repentance is the return from exile to our true home; it is to receive back our inheritance and freedom in the Father's house. But repentance implies action: "I will rise up and go..." (v. 18). To repent is not just

to feel dissatisfied, but to make a decision and to act upon it.

In the words of our Lord, we also learn of three things through this parable: the condition of the sinner, the rule of repentance, and the greatness of God's compassion. The reading of this parable follows the Sunday

of the Publican and the Pharisee so that, seeing in the person of the Prodigal Son our own sinful condition, we might come to our senses and return to God through repentance. For those who have fallen into great despair over their sins thinking that there is no forgiveness, this parable offers hope. The Heavenly Father is patiently and lovingly waiting for our return. There is no sin that can overcome His love for us.



Finally, this parable offers us insight into the world in which we live. It is a world where the activities of people are disconnected and not ordered toward the fulfillment of God's divine purpose for life. It is a world of incoherent pursuits, of illusory strivings, of craving for foods

and drinks that do not satisfy, a world where nothing ultimately makes sense, and a world engulfed in untruth, deceit and sin. It is the exact opposite of the world as created by God and potentially recreated by his Son and Spirit. There is no cure for the evils of our age unless we return to God. The world in which we live is not a normal world, but a wasteland.

As a result of sin in our lives, we lose the joy of communion with God,

we defile and lose our spiritual beauty, and we find ourselves far away from our real home, our real life. In true repentance, we realize this, and we express a deep desire to return, to recover what has been lost. On this day the Church reminds us of what we have abandoned and lost, and beckons us to find the desire and power to return. Our Heavenly Father is waiting and ready to receive us with His loving forgiveness and His saving embrace.

The icon of the Sunday of the

Prodigal Son shows the prodigal being received by his father upon his return. We are presented with an image of a warm and loving embrace, the son showing his need for his father, an attitude that represents repentance, love, and hope for renewal and restoration. The father is shown full of compassion for his son, having born the burden of his sin and suffering, but now filled with joy that he has returned.

*-Edited from goarch.org*

## Ask The Pastor

**QUESTION:** What is the significance of receiving the blessing of a priest or a bishop? And when should you get such a blessing?

**ANSWER:** In Holy Scripture, we find stories of blessings given to the entire people of God by the High Priest and blessings given to individuals by Prophets and by parents. So we see that there are two types of blessings – sacramental or liturgical and personal. We must remember that the liturgical and

personal blessings are not the blessings by human beings, but are the blessings of the Lord. In our Church today we see the same sorts of blessings as can be found in Scripture. Blessings are commonly sought at the beginning of any arduous task, going to war, having surgery, after confession. In ‘the old country’ people frequently ask the blessing of priests or bishops or monks as they walk down the street.

## Humor... The Children Of Israel

The boy listened closely as the rabbi read the Bible. “May I ask a question” he asked. “Sure. Go ahead. Ask your question,” replied the rabbi. “Well, the Bible says that the children of Israel

crossed the Red Sea, the children of Israel built the temple, the children of Israel did this and the children of Israel did that. Didn’t the grown-ups ever do anything?”

## **Welcome to Our Parish Family**

Congratulations and Best Wishes to **Aliza Hoenie**, along with her parents Craig and Ana, on the occasion of her initiation into the flock of Jesus Christ during the 11:30 Divine Liturgy. Aliza

we welcome you into our Parish Family and pray that God grant you many Happy and Blessed Years! Mnohaya Leeta!

## **Cell Phones - Switch them OFF!**

Please switch off cell phones or put them into silent/vibrate mode BEFORE stepping into Church. If your cell phone does go off accidentally then do not answer it in church and start speaking loudly. To prevent the noise of the call interfering the service you should answer the call (accept it), but do not start speaking until you have stepped away (outside or in the nar-

thex-vestibule). Walk out of the church quietly and calmly. Do not sprint/dash out of the church when this happens. Make the caller wait. You can also try to cover the phone with both hands to minimize the sound as another option. Usually one incident like this will make you remember to always switch off before stepping into church.

## **Holy Name Society Raffle**

The Holy Name Society Raffle drawing is extended to Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup> in order to give everyone one more week to make their raffle returns. Please

make your raffle returns AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to support our Holy Name Society that in turn helps our Parish.

## **2016 Tax Reports**

Parishioners who want a 2016 end of year financial report for tax purposes

are asked to contact the Parish Office at 570-489-2271.

## **Myasopusna Celebration**

Transfiguration of Our Lord Ukrainian Catholic Church announces its

11<sup>th</sup> annual Myasopusna Celebration, a pre-lenten event, to be held on Meat-

fare (Myasopusna) Sunday, February 19, 2017. A dinner of holubtsi (stuffed cabbage), kobasa, roast pork, varenyky (Transfiguration pierogies), kapusta, blackbread, and dessert will be served at the church's banquet hall at 240 Center Street, Hanover Section of Nanticoke, from 12:30 to 2:00pm, with borscht also for sale, as well as Ukrainian and other beverages. Din-

ner is followed by entertainment until 4:00pm from the Holy Year Choir, Kazka Ukrainian Folk Ensemble, and Saint Mary's Traditional Ukrainian Dancers. Doors will open at noon, with Ukrainian crafts on display and for sale throughout the event. Dinner tickets are \$15 and are available at 570-735-4654.

## **All You Can Eat Spaghetti Dinner**

The Annual "ALL YOU CAN IT" Spaghetti Dinner Sponsored by Eureka Hose Company No.4 will be held on Saturday March 4th at the fire station 717 East Grant St. Olyphant. Dinner includes pasta, salad, bread and

butter, dessert and beverage. Take outs will be from 3:00 to 5:00 pm and serving sit down dinners from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. Tickets can be obtained from any member or at the door.

## **Baked Fish Dinner**

Our Parish will once again be sponsoring a "BAKED HADDOCK" FISH DINNER on FRIDAY APRIL 7, 2017 from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the REGAL ROOM (Ballroom/side entrance), 216 Lackawanna Avenue. Sit Down or Take Out!! Tickets are:

\$13.00 per ticket/dinner: Baked haddock, potato, vegetable, cole slaw, roll and dessert. Call 570-383-9487 for Reservations. \*LIMITED amount of Dinners will be available a the Door \$15.00.

## **Marriage Preparation Workshop**

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church is pleased to present a marriage preparation workshop, "*Enter-*

*ing the Holy Mystery of Marriage*", to take place on **Saturday, April 29, 2017** with a follow up session on **Saturday, May 6, 2017**. The program fo-

cuses on various aspects of marriage, both spiritual and practical, and provides each person an opportunity for greater understanding of one's partner and a means to strengthen one's relationship.

In addition to various presentations and exercises, each couple will be given the opportunity to take the Catholic version of a premarital questionnaire called F.A.C.E.T. (Foundations Applied Conversation and Education Tool). The F.A.C.E.T. inventory provides participants with a computer-generated profile of unique couple issues, challenges, strengths and realities to be discussed prior to marriage. The F.A.C.E.T. results for each couple

involved will be presented to them by a Pastoral Counselor trained in the use of this tool in a subsequent 40 minute private session on May 6, 2017.

Each attending couple must commit to participating in all the sessions on April 29, 2017 as well as the 40 minute private meeting on May 6, 2017.

The workshop will be held at: Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church, 1204 Valley Road, Melrose Park, PA 19027

The total cost per couple will be \$160 which includes materials, lunch and refreshments. April 22, 2017 - Registration and payment due Date!!! No registration will be accepted after 4/22/ 2017.

### **Collection Processing Team...**

The Collection Processing Team for the month of February 2017 is Team #2: Eugene Zinsky, John Turko,

Jr., Leonard Mitchko, and Michael Shumek.

### **Sunday Collection for February 4 & 5, 2017: \$**

### **Altar Boy and Lector Schedule for February 18 & 19, 2017**

	<b>Altar Boys</b>	<b>Lectors</b>
4:00 pm	Nicholas Borowski -- Samuel Sczesniak	John Sakson
9:00 am	John Nasevich -- Patrick Marcinko	Pat Marcinko
11:30 am	Brian Radle -- Jordan Radle	Frank Lesnefsky

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Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

### *The Return of the Prodigal Son*

“He arose and went to his father.” He arose from the wreckage of his conscience and body alike. He arose from the depths of hell and touched the heights of heaven. Before the heavenly Father, a child rises higher because of pardon than he fell low because of guilt.

“He arose and went to his father.” He went not by the motion of his feet but by the progress of his thought. Being afar off he had no need of an earthly journey, because he had found short cuts along the way of salvation. He who seeks the divine Father by faith soon finds Him present to himself, and has no need to seek Him by traversing roads.

“He arose and went to his father. But when he was yet a long way off.” How is he who is coming a long way off? Because he has not yet arrived. He who is coming is coming to do pen-

ance, but he has not yet arrived at grace. He is coming to his Father’s house but he has not yet reached the glory of his former condition, appearance, and honor.

“But when he was yet a long way off, his father saw him.” That Father saw, he “who dwells on high; and looks down on the low things,” “and the high he knows afar off.” “His father saw him.” The father saw him, in such a way that the son could also behold his father. The father’s countenance illumined the face of the approaching son in such a way that all the dark aspect was dispelled which his guilt had previously cast about it.

*St. Peter Chrysologus*

For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit  
[www.ecpubs.com](http://www.ecpubs.com)