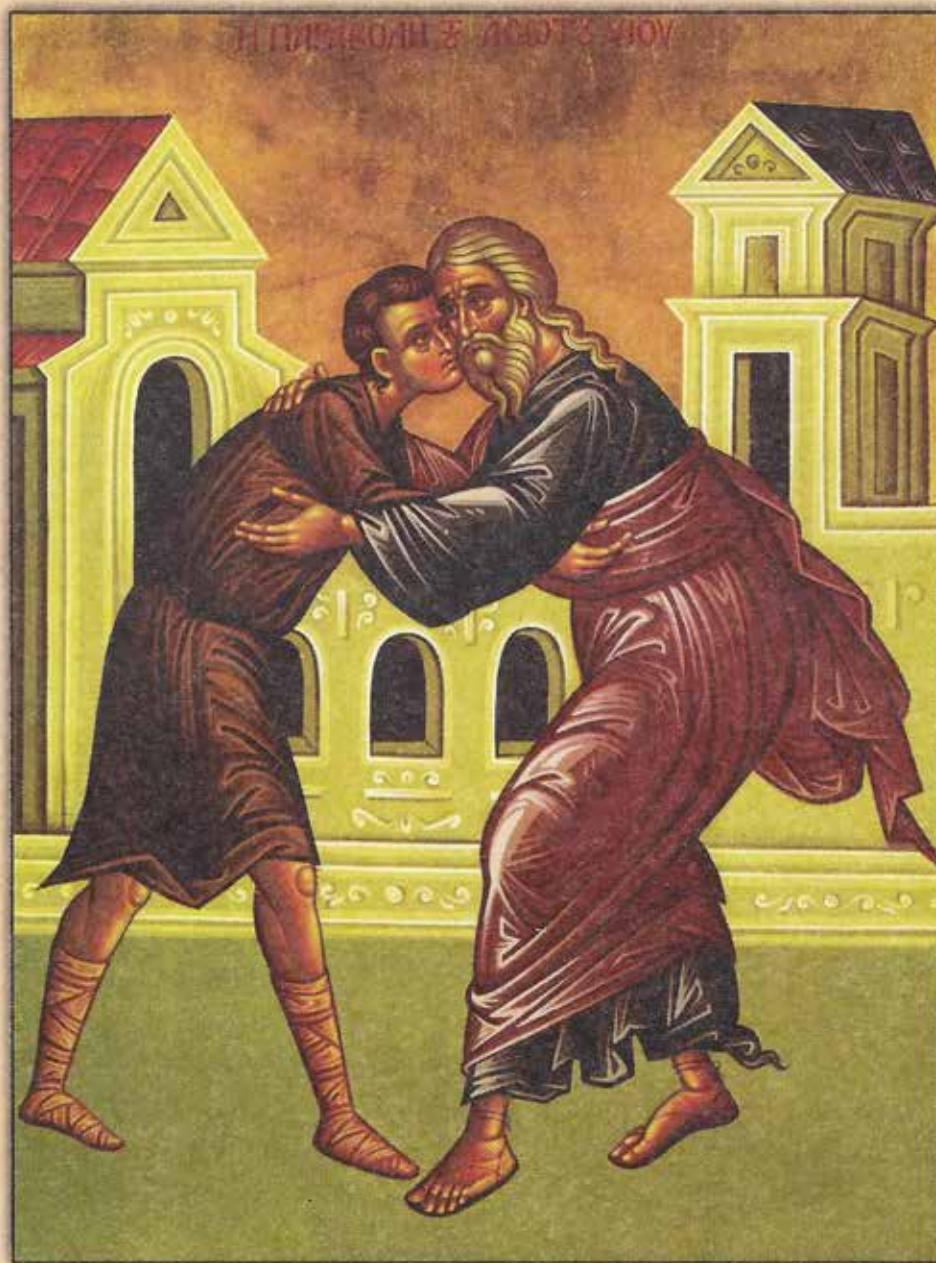


SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON



Icon of the Prodigal Son

Feb. 9, 2020: Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Epistle: 1 Cor. 6: 12-20

Gospel: Lk. 15: 11-32

Mon., Feb. 10

to

No Divine Liturgies

Fri., Feb. 14

Sat., Feb. 15

No Confessions Today

4:00 pm + Jacob & Ann Jablonski (Gloria Jablonski)

Sun., Feb. 16

9:00 For Our Parishioners

11:30 + Jerry Gawron (Sons)

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

Introduction

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son is the second Sunday of a three-week period prior to the commencement of Great Lent. 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 us to contemplate the necessity of repentance in our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

Biblical Story

The name for this Sunday is taken from the parable of our Lord Jesus Christ found in Luke 15:11-32. The parable is the story of a man and his two sons. The youngest of the sons asks his father to give him his inheritance. The father does this, and soon

after the son leaves and journeys to a distant country.

After the younger son arrives, he squanders all of his possessions with “prodigal” living. Within a short period of time, he wastes everything. A severe famine comes, but he has nothing and falls into great need (vv. 13-14).

He is able to find work feeding swine, but this does not improve his situation. The Scriptures say, “He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, but no one gave him anything” (vv. 15-16).

The parable says that in the midst of his dire conditions, he came to himself. He realized that his father’s hired servants have enough to eat and

food to spare, while he perishes with hunger. He says, "I will arise and go to my father and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants'" (vv. 17-19).

He arose and returned to his father. But as he approached, his father saw him at a great distance. The father had compassion on his son, ran to meet him, embraced him, and kissed him. The son admitted his sinfulness and his unworthiness to be called a son, but in his joy at the return of his son, the father called his servants to bring the best robe, a ring for his son's finger, and sandals for his feet. He also called for the fatted calf to be killed for a feast. He exclaimed, "For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found" (vv. 20-24).

While they were feasting and celebrating the return of the prodigal son, the older son comes and inquires about what is happening. He is told that his brother had returned and that his father has received him with a feast. The older brother becomes angry and will not go in to the feast. The father comes out and pleads with him, but the older son answers by saying he has been faithful to his father for many years and yet

the father never gave him the opportunity for such feasting. He expresses his anger and jealousy over his brother who was received in such a manner after he squandered his inheritance (vv. 25-30).

The father responds by telling his oldest son, "You are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found" (vv. 31-32).

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. This is why in the Slavic tradi-

tion of the Eastern Church the reading of Psalm 137 is added to the Matins service for this and the following two Sundays. This nostalgic lament of the Hebrew exiles states: "By the streams of Babylon we sat and wept as we remembered Zion. On the willows we hung our harps, for how could we sing the Lord's song in a strange land" (Psalm 137).

Here we can see the challenge of life in this world and the alienation from God that can happen when sin reigns in our lives. 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.

ST. CYRIL'S HOLY NAME SOCIETY

St. Cyril's Holy Name Society will meet today (February 9th) will meet today following the 9:00 Divine

Liturgy. All members are invited and encouraged to attend this monthly meeting.

PARISH MEETING

There will be a Parish Meeting today (February 9th) following the 11:30 Divine Liturgy. All Parish Council and Finance Council members are requested to attend. Anyone else that is

interested is invited to attend. We need to discuss several maintenance issues and plan our calendar for the upcoming year.

PRE-LENTEN PORK AND SAUERKRAUT DINNER

Father Myron and his Parish Family of Scranton's St. Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Church cordially invite you to join them for their annual Pre-Lenten pork and sauerkraut/kapusta dinner on Sunday, February 16, 2020 beginning at 12:15 pm at St. Vladimir Parish Center, 428 N. Seventh Ave. - between West

Lackawanna Ave. and West Linden St.

Menu: slow roasted pork loin, gravy, Ukrainian kapusta (sweet and sour cabbage), mashed potatoes, vegetable, bread and rolls, dessert, coffee, tea, beverages.

Adults: \$13.00; Students: \$8.00 (age 6-12); Age 5 and under free.

MYASOPUSNA PRE-LENTEN DINNER IN NANTICOKE

Transfiguration of Our Lord Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is pleased to announce that dinner tickets are now available for their Annual Myasopusna Festival, to be held at the church's banquet hall at 240 Center Street, Nanticoke, on Sunday, February 16, from noon to 4 pm. The Myasopusna (Meatfare) Festival is the parish's pre-lenten celebration, preceding the Great Fast. Dinner (a platter of holuptsi,

kobasi, pyrohy, borscht, black bread and butter, and a homemade dessert) will be served from 12:30 to 2:00 pm, followed by live Ukrainian dance performances by Saint Mary's Ukrainian Dancers. A variety of Ukrainian crafts will be on display and for sale. Dinner tickets are \$13 if purchased by February 9th (\$15 at the door). Tickets can be purchased by calling Helen (735-4654) or Geri (824-3880).

DEANERY FORGIVENESS VESPERS IN BERWICK

Everyone is invited to participate in our Deanery Vespers on the Eve of the First Day of the Great Fast. This service will take place on Sunday,

February 23rd, 3 pm at Ss. Cyril and Methodius Parish, N. Warren St in Berwick, PA

PIGGIE /HOLUBTSI DINNER

“Saints Peter & Paul Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Wilkes-Barre will hold a take-out Piggie / Holubtsi Dinner on Sunday, February 23rd, 2020. Dinners may be picked up between 11:30 am and 2:00 pm at the Parish School Hall, corner of North River and West Chestnut Streets, Wilkes-

Barre. Dinner includes Piggies (meat stuffed cabbage), mashed potatoes, vegetable, bread and butter and dessert. Dinners will be \$12.00 for adults and \$7.00 for children (12 and under). Walk-Ins Welcome but Reservations are encouraged, call (570)829-3051.”

UKRAINIAN EASTER EGG WORKSHOP

Ss. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church in Olyphant will again be offering Pysanky Classes. At this time there will be three dates, March 1, 15, & 22, 2020, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The beginner class is approximately two hours

long. The cost will be \$20 and includes the supplies needed to make your egg. For more information or to sign up for the class, please call Sonia Maslar at 570-489-9608 or Tammy Budnovitch at 570-766-1919 (after 5 pm).

2020 L.U.C. LENTEN RETREAT

The League of Ukrainian Catholics of America has sponsored and held their Annual Lenten Retreat at Sloatsburg’s St. Mary’s Villa Educational and Retreat Center the week-end before Palm Sunday for 42 years, providing all faithful attending the opportunity to spend time in prayer and to have the chance to satisfy their Easter confession obligations.

This year’s Lenten Retreat might be the last retreat held at The Villa as the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate are selling this property.

For the past forty-two years we have been so fortunate to be able to come on Retreat to Sloatsburg’s St. Mary’s; have been fortunate

to enjoy the quiet and comfort of St. Mary’s, away from our everyday cares and chores to leave all behind and spend a few days in prayer and in friendship.

We have been blessed with the many graces received while on retreat and are thankful for the many clergy who have given their time to enrich our spiritual life year after year.

For this year celebrating our Retreat at St. Mary’s, Msgr. Martin Canavan has accepted the position of Retreat Director. The theme for this year’s retreat is “Standing at the Cross with the Mother of God”. As we come to the close of the Great Lent and the beginning of the Great and Holy Week, we

pause, gathered together in Jesus' name to reflect on Mary's (the first disciple) place at the Cross. In the light of her "Let it be done to me according to your word" at the Annunciation for Jesus's word from the Cross, "It is accomplished!" we attempt to better understand our place in the Love and

Mercy of God poured out on us each and every day.

The dates for year's retreat are March 27, 28 and 29th. The Lenten Retreat is scheduled for beginning Friday evening at 7:30 pm. The retreat is open to all faithful of all Eparchies.

SPRINGTIME BUS TRIP

The North Anthracite Council of the League of Ukrainian Catholics is sponsoring a bus trip to New York City on Saturday, May 16, 2020. The itinerary includes the 44th Annual Ukrainian Street Festival sponsored by New York's St. George Ukrainian Greek Catholic parish and the 14th Annual Multi-Ethnic Parade and Dance Festival both on the Lower East Side plus a ride on the Staten Island Ferry. Participants are free to do their own thing in the City for all or part of the day if they so wish. Bus will pick up

at Edwardsville's St. Vladimir Church, 70 Zerby Avenue at 8:00 am and at Scranton's St. Vladimir Church, 428 North Seventh Avenue at 8:45 am. Departure for home will be at 8:00 pm. Cost is \$45.00 per person. Full nonrefundable advance payment reserves a seat. For further information and reservations call Paul at 570 563-2275 or Dorothy at 570 822-5354. Early reservations are recommended as this is a very popular trip and the 55 passenger bus is expected to fill quickly.

COLLECTION PROCESSING TEAM

The Collection Processing Team for the month of February 2020 is Team #2: Eu-

gene Zinsky, John Turko, Jr. Leonard Mitchko, and Michael Shumek.

Altar Boy and Lector Schedule for February 15 & 16, 2020

| | Altar Boys | Lectors |
|----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 4:00 pm | Brett Lowe -- Hunter Wegforth | Michael Shumek |
| 9:00 am | Patrick Marcinko | Pat Marcinko |
| 11:30 am | Nicholas Muchisky -- Tyler Muchisky | Frank Lesnefsky |

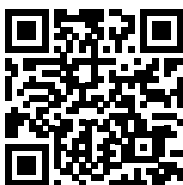
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Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

Who Art in Heaven

These words I think have a very deep meaning. They remind us of the homeland we have abandoned, of the citizenship we have lost. In the parable of the young man who left his father's house, went off the rails and was reduced to living with pigs, the Word of God shows us human wretchedness. That young man did not find his one-time happiness again until he had realized his moral degradation, had looked into his own heart and had pronounced the words of confession. These words almost agree with the Lord's Prayer, because the prodigal son says: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you." [Luke 15:21] He would not confess himself to be a sinner against heaven

if he were not convinced that the homeland he had left at the time of his going astray were not in actual fact heaven.

By this confession of his he makes himself worthy once again to stand in the presence of his father who runs towards him, embraces him, and kisses him. The conclusion is this. To return to heaven there is only one route and that is to admit one's sinfulness and seek to avoid it. To make the decision to avoid it is already to be perfecting one's likeness to God.

*St. Gregory of Nyssa
On the Lord's Prayer*