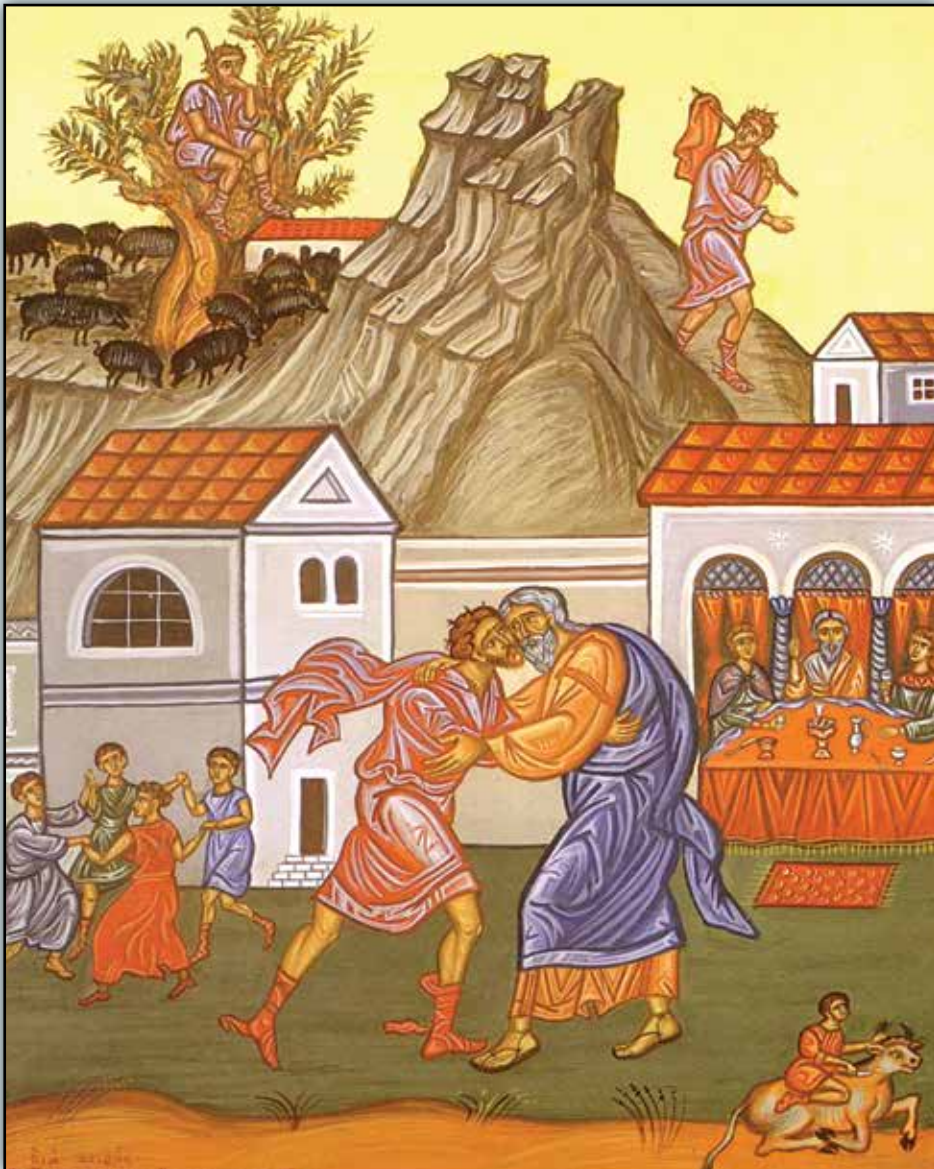


## SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON



*Icon of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)*

<b>February 5, 2023: Sunday of the Prodigal Son</b>		
Epistle: 1 Cor. 6: 12-20		Gospel: Lk. 15: 11-32
<b>Mon., Feb. 6</b>	9:00	Special Intention
<b>Tues., Feb. 7</b>	9:00	+ Olga E. Telep (Daughter, Lauren)
<b>Wed., Feb. 8</b>	9:00	+ Myron Krenitsky (Wife, Barbara)
<b>Thurs., Feb. 9</b>	9:00	+ Joseph Muchisky (Wife & Sons)
<b>Fri., Feb. 10</b>	9:00	+ Stephen & Amelia Malinchak (Jule Harris)
<b>Sat., Feb. 11</b>	<b>No Morning Divine Liturgy</b>	
	2:00	Confessions
	4:00	+ John Melnick (Wife, Janet)
<b>Sun., Feb. 12</b>	10:30	For Our Parishioners

## 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.

## **IDENTITY - PART 2**

How do we become a Prophet? A Prophet was a chosen person inspired to proclaim the teachings and the will of God. In doing so, he was not so much a person who foretells the future, but first and foremost a person

who was called to give an incredible witness to God to the point of death. That is why most Prophets in the Old Testament were martyred.

Since you and I are anointed in Baptism, our identity, therefore, is not

only that of being an adoptive son or daughter of God the Father, or a Jesus person, but also a Prophet, a witness to the teachings and person of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In the rite of anointing, the Priest anoints our forehead so that our mind may be opened to understand and accept the mysteries of the Faith of Christ, and to recognize his truth. He then anoints our breast so that we may

love the Lord, Our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind; and to love our fellowman as our self. The Priest then anoints the shoulders so that we may willingly take upon our self the easy yoke of Christ, and with glad heart carry His light burden; and that we shun all cravings of sensuality.

*WJW - Part 2 of 5*

## **CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**

Our Ukrainian Catholic Church in the United States participates in a Special Collection which supports the Church in Central and Eastern Europe. Communism in this region fell more than 30 years ago, but the Church still struggles to rebuild after decades of oppressive rule. Under communism, religion and religious practices were openly persecuted, and atheism was actively propagated and enforced.

Your support of this collection aids those affected by the war in Ukraine and renews vital aspects of Church life throughout the region. You support Seminary programs, promote ministries and education for children and families, rebuild Churches, and renew community life. Please be generous and prayerfully consider how you can support this collection.

## **JUST A LITTLE REMINDER...**

During this time of Covid-19, if you are sick, or not feeling well, **please stay home**. If you are sick, you are dispensed of the Obligation to

attend the Divine Liturgy. Please be considerate of your fellow Parishioners and not spread any germs. Let's keep everyone healthy.

## **MYASOPUSNA (MEAT-FARE) DINNER**

Transfiguration of Our Lord Church, 240 Center Street, Nanticoke, will

hold it's Annual Myasopusna (Meat-Fare) Dinner Celebration on Sunday,

February 12, 2023. This event combines a delicious Ukrainian meal (Ham, kobasi, Halupki, pyrohy, kapusta, bosch, & dessert) with Ukrainian dance, singing and art. This year the program will feature the St. Mary's Ukrainian Dancers and Kazka. Ukrainian Beer and wine will be available. Ticket price is \$20 in advance, children \$10 and \$22 at the door. Doors open at noon. Cocktail 1/2

hour is noon-12:30. Serving starts at 12:30PM and stops approximately at 2:00PM. Tables are not reserved ahead of time. The Entertainment Program will start approximately 1:30PM. DEADLINE FOR ADVANCE TICKETS IS FEBRUARY 8, you can call 570-735-4654 or 570-735-1901 (leave message) to order advance tickets. Take-outs are available.

### **PIGS IN THE BLANKET DINNER**

Shopa-Davey VFW Post #6082 at 123 Electric Street, Peckville, Pa is sponsoring the "Pigs in the Blanket" Dinner on Sunday, February 19, 2023, Serving from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. available "TAKE OUT" or "EAT IN."

Raffle tickets are available to purchase. Open to the Public and dinner tickets are \$12.00 each, tickets are available also during the week at the VFW Post on Electric Street, Peckville.

### **UKRAINIAN PYSANKY CLASSES**

Ss. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church in Olyphant will be offering Ukrainian Pysanky classes in March 2023. The two-hour beginner class will teach the basics to create a traditional Ukrainian pysanky egg. The cost of the class is \$25 for each person. Supplies are included. Classes will be held at 207 River Street, Olyphant, St. Cyril's Parish Hall, with plenty of free parking. Classes will be held on Sunday, March 12th, starting at Noon., and the 2nd class on March

12th at 3:00 p.m. On Sunday, March 26th, starting at noon and the 2nd class on March 26th will begin at 3:00 p.m.

Class size is limited and you must call for a reservation to register. Call Tammy Budnovitch at 570-766-1919.

This is a fundraiser for the church. Available for purchase are individual Pysanky eggs created by Tammy Budnovitch. Other items available for purchase are jewelry, mosaic art, books, and additional pysanky egg supplies.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

It is very rare that the Divine Liturgy is canceled, especially on a Sunday. I want to encourage those of you who must walk further or more importantly, who drive to church, to PLEASE USE COMMON SENSE, when making a determination about attending the Divine Liturgy on the snowy, icy, inclement

weekend or even more so on the weekday. If attendance means putting yourself and others at risk, I am sure the Lord understands if you should decide to pray at home. Please use common sense and a well-informed conscience when making such a decision.

## **COLLECTION PROCESSING TEAM...**

The Collection Processing Team for the month of February 2023 is Team #2: Eugene Zinsky, John Turko, Jr, Leonard Mitchko, and Michael Shumek.

## **Sunday Collection for Jan. 21 & 22, 2023: \$**

## **New Parish Tradition**

We would like to begin the practice of honoring everyone in our Parish Family on their Birthday or Wedding Anniversary We need your help with this new tradition. Please fill in your information below and drop it in the collection box. PRINT PLAINLY and indicate if it is a birth or wedding anniversary. One form per family is okay. Also, don't forget to put down your name

**January:**

**July:**

**February:**

**August:**

**March:**

**September:**

**April:**

**October:**

**May:**

**November:**

**June:**

**December:**



## Ss. Cyril & Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church

135 River St., Olyphant, PA 18447-1435

Telephone: 570-291-4451 Fax: 570-489-6918

Web Site: [stcyrils.weconnect.com](http://stcyrils.weconnect.com)

E-Mail: [sscyrilandmethodius@comcast.net](mailto:sscyrilandmethodius@comcast.net)



Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

### *Mercy and Forgiveness*

All that God looks for from us is the slightest opening and He forgives a multitude of sins. ... There were two brothers: they divided their father's goods between them and one stayed home, while the other went away to a foreign country, wasted all he had been given, and then could not bear the shame of his poverty. The son who went away represents those who fall after baptism. This is clear from the fact that he is called a son, since no one is called a son unless he is baptized. Also, he lived in his father's house and took a share of all his father's goods. Before baptism no one receives the Father's goods or enters upon the inheritance. We can therefore take all this as signifying the state of believers.

What does he say after falling into the depths of evil? I will return to my father. The reason the father let him go and did not prevent his departure for a foreign land was so that he might learn well by experience what good things are enjoyed by the one who stays at home. For when words would

not convince us God often leaves us to learn from the things that happen to us. When the dissolute returned after going to a foreign country and finding out by experience what a great sin it is to leave the father's house, the father did not remember past injuries but welcomed him with open arms. Why? Because he was a father and not a judge. And there were dances and festivities and banquets and the whole house was full of joy and gladness.

Are you asking: "Is this what he gets for his wickedness?" Not for his wickedness, but for his return home; not for sin, but for repentance; not for evil, but for being converted. What is more, when the elder son was angry at this the father gently won him over, saying: You were always with me, but he was lost and has been found; he was dead and has come back to life. "When someone who was lost has to be saved," says the father, "it is not the time for passing judgment or making minute inquiries, but only for mercy and forgiveness."