

January 31, 2021
Sunday of the Prodigal Son



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fighting the Good Fight with Faith

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! ~ Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na Viki!

Propers for this Sunday: Resurrectional Tone 2: pg. 130 and Prodigal Son pg. 216

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., JAN. 31
8:30 A.M.

SUNDAY of the PRODIGAL SON
DIVINE LITURGY
+ Mark Wooddell, 5th year after passing

MON., FEB. 1
6:00 P.M.

THE MEETING of OUR LORD HOLYDAY, *Anticipated*
VESPERAL DIVINE LITURGY, *Blessing of candles*

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord was first observed in the Eastern Church as "The Encounter." In the sixth century, it began to be observed in the West: in Rome with a more penitential character and in Gaul (France) with solemn blessings and processions of candles, popularly known as "Candlemas." This feast day concludes the celebration of the Nativity and with the offerings of the Virgin Mother and the prophecy of Simeon, the events now point toward Easter.

SAT., FEB. 6
9:00 A.M.

FIRST ALL SOULS SATURDAY
DIVINE LITURGY, *Panachida, Hramoty*

Members of the family are **encouraged** to attend these services on the All Souls Saturdays for by their presence and by their personal prayers and receiving Holy Communion they strengthen the bond of love with their departed loved ones and indeed keep their memory everlasting!

SUN., FEB. 7
8:30 A.M.

MEATFARE SUNDAY, SUNDAY of LAST JUDGMENT
DIVINE LITURGY
+ Lori Gilbert



"Let your prayer be completely simple. For both the publican and the prodigal son were reconciled to God by a single phrase."

Happy Birthday Greetings This Week:

February 5: Darlene Simunick

Wedding Anniversaries this Week:

None for the week

Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins

HOME – Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun, Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan, Mary Salamon, John Simunick

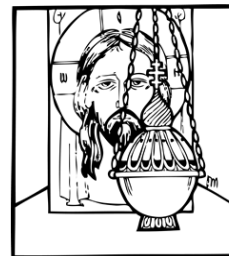
Hunter's Care Home (1916 Main St, Aliquippa, PA 15001) – Mary Poiarkoff

Beaver Elder Care (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001) – Josephine Maruhnich

Epistle Readers – Jan. 31: Prudy Peya – Feb. 7: Reaghan Cody

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders –Jan. 31: J. Yurosky – Feb. 7: R. Dzumba



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

January 31 – February 6, 2021

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

+ Ronald Huchko

(In loving memory)

Offered By:

Wife, Carol & family



Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel:

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the malice and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.

The Meeting of our Lord Holy Day, February 2 - Come, Receive Christ - the True Light –

The mystery of Christ had been prepared even before the very foundation of the world but was manifested in the last ages of time. It became a light for those who in darkness and error had fallen under the devil’s hand. These were they “who serve the creature instead of the Creator” (Rom 1:25) worshipping moreover the dragon, the author of evil, and the impure throng of devils, to whom they attach the honor due to God. Yet God the Father called them to the acknowledgement of the Son who is the true Light....

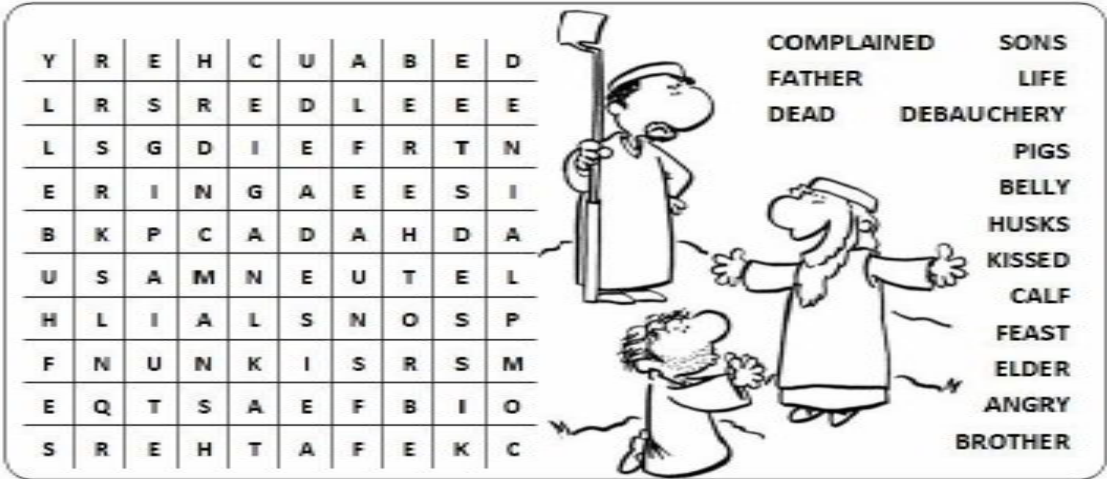
Christ therefore became the Gentiles’ light for revelation, but also for the glory of Israel. For even granting that some of them proved insolent and disobedient, and with minds that did not understand, yet there is a remnant there, saved and admitted to glory through Christ. The first fruits of these were the divine disciples, the brightness of whose renown lightens the whole world.

In another sense, Christ is the glory of Israel, for he came out of Israel according to the flesh, though he is God over all, and blessed forevermore. Amen.

(St. Cyril of Alexandria)



Candles in our Holy Church - For the Feast of the Encounter-Meeting of Our Lord (Feb. 2) it is a pious and venerable tradition in our Holy Church to bless candles. It is impossible to imagine an Eastern Church without burning candles. Candles made of beeswax are used in our Holy Church as a form of sacrifice and devotion to God or Saints. They are used in various Divine Services and ceremonies and are symbolic of Christ, who is “the Light of the World.” When we see so many candles everywhere, we know that Christ is everywhere in the whole church, our homes, and He is in us, too. According to a different symbolism, the two elements of a candle represent the two natures of Christ: the Divine (the burning wick) and the Human (the wax body).



February First Friday Fellowship (Feb. 5): The Our Father

You pray it. But do you understand it? The Our Father has become so familiar to us that we don't think about what we're praying. It's a portrait of Jesus' heart. And in it Christians from different times, places, and traditions have been united. For our next **First Friday Fellowship** we will be hearing from the Rev. Dr. Wesley Hill, author of the recently-published book *The Lord's Prayer: A Guide for Praying to Our Father*. We will meet on **February 5 at 6:00 PM** in our St. George Hall.

News from our Friends at Uncommon Grounds

In December, our First Friday Fellowship speaker was Herb Bailey, the director of Uncommon Grounds Cafe on Franklin Avenue in Aliquippa. Uncommon Grounds is much more than a coffee shop; it seeks to be a ministry to "the least, the last, and the lost" among us. Starting in February they are beginning to have activities and events again, while taking measures to remain as safe as possible during the time of this pandemic. For information on their upcoming Open Mic Nights, Prayer Over Pancakes, take-out Valentine's Day meals, and more, visit their website at uncommongroundscafe.org. They are also in need of a new espresso machine and are fundraising for that -- if you'd be interested in donating to this cause, please see Fr. Geoff and he'll get you connected with them.

All-Souls Saturday Divine Liturgy and Hramoty: (February 6)

This venerable custom was transmitted to us by our ancestors as a part of our beautiful spiritual heritage. Every year, just before Meat-Fare Saturday, the families give the lists of their departed loved ones (Hramoty) to the pastor with the request that they be mentioned at the services held for the deceased on the All Souls Saturday. And St. John Chrysostom assures us that: *“It is a great honor to be worthy of mention, while the celebration of the Holy Mysteries is going on.”* (Homily on the Acts 21, 4)

“The Holy Fathers were convinced that the commemoration of the departed by alms and sacrifices (Divine Liturgies) brings great comfort and benefit to them.”

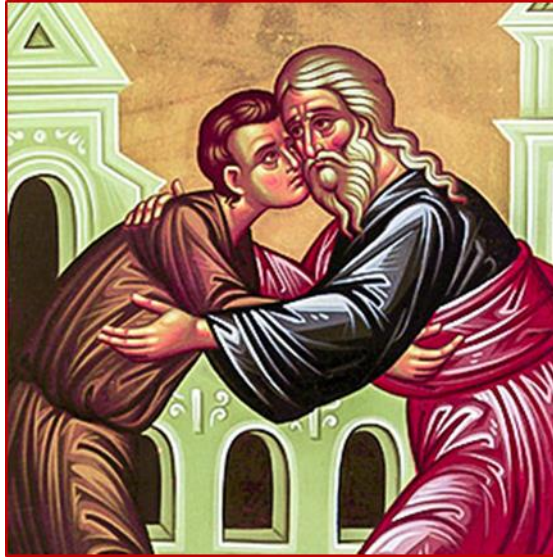
Eternal Memory! Vičnaja Pamjat’!

I was Lost but Now I am Found

As we draw closer to the Great Fast, today we hear the parable of the Prodigal Son. Hearing Christ’s parable about God’s loving forgiveness, we are called to “come to ourselves” as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves in a “far country” far from the Father’s house, and to make the movement of return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that the Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only “arise and go”, confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that “home” where we truly belong.

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

I have recklessly forgotten Your glory, O Father; and among sinners I have scattered the riches which You had given me. Therefore, I cry to You like the Prodigal: "I have sinned before You, O compassionate Father; receive me a penitent and make me as one of Your hired servants."



On the third Sunday of preparation for Lent, we hear the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). Together with the hymns on this day, the parable reveals to us the time of repentance as man's return from exile. The prodigal son, we are told, went to a far country and there spent all that he had. A far country! It is this unique definition of our human condition that we must assume and make ours as we begin our approach to God. A man who has never had that experience, be it only very briefly, who has never felt that he is exiled from God and from real life, will never understand what Christianity is about. And the one who is perfectly "at home" in this world and its life, who has never been wounded by the nostalgic desire for another Reality, will not understand what repentance is.

Repentance is often simply identified as a cool and "objective" enumeration of sins and transgressions, as the act of "pleading guilty" to a legal indictment. Confession and absolution are seen as being of a juridical nature. But something very essential is overlooked - without which neither confession nor absolution have any real meaning or power. This "something" is precisely the feeling of alienation from God, from the joy of communion with Him, from the real life as created and given by God. It is easy indeed to confess that I have not fasted on prescribed days, or missed my prayers, or become angry. It is quite a different thing, however, to realize suddenly that I have defiled and lost my spiritual beauty, that I am far away from my real home, my real life, and that something precious and pure and beautiful has been hopelessly broken in the very texture of my existence. Yet this, and only this, is repentance, and therefore it is also a deep desire to return, to go back, to recover that lost home....

- Excerpt from Great Lent, by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

ECF Reflection, Sunday of the Prodigal Son

"You are not your own."

"Independence" is one of the great "rights" of man that is held to be sacred and inviolable for Americans. The Epistle proclaimed in the Church today, however, challenges our modern notion of independence when it proclaims St. Paul's teaching that we were "purchased with a price" and that we are not our own, but we belong to the Lord.

On the day of our baptism, each one of us was incorporated into the Church and made members of Christ's body, and sharers of His eternal life. Just as the parts of the body are interdependent, and ultimately totally dependent on the soul and spirit for life, so it is for Christ and the members of His Church. Each of us derives our spiritual life from Christ and receives that life through other members of the body of the Church. As such, none of us is "independent," but rather we are totally dependent upon one another, and all of us are dependent on Christ.

From the important Biblical concept of spiritual dependence, we can understand the need for us to live a life in conformity with Him from whom we received it, and on whom we depend for everything.

Applying the parable of the prodigal son to the above explanation helps this truth take flesh in our imagination and allows us those we teach to better understand what life is like away from our source of life, and what it is like to return in our hearts to our King and or God.

Get up and Run

Christ chooses those who stand. **Rise and run to the Church.** Here is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He who hears you pondering in the secret places of the mind runs to you. When you are still far away, He sees you and runs to you. He sees in your heart, He runs, perhaps someone may hinder and He embraces you. His foreknowledge is in the running, his mercy in the embrace and the disposition of fatherly love. He falls on your neck to raise you when you are prostrate and burned with sins. He brings you back when you have turned from the earth to heaven. Christ falls on your neck to free your neck from the yoke of slavery and He hangs his sweet yoke upon your shoulders. (*St. Ambrose*)

The Master is Coming!

Are you ready? Is your heart and mind fixed on Jesus? Consider the words of the Prophet Isaiah: *From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides You, who works for those who wait for Him. (Is 64:4)*

Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner!

SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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**Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, David Klacik,
Louisa Hersh**

**E.C.F. coordinator: Jo Ann Hersh
Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff**

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation Before and after Liturgies
Holy Mysteries of Initiation Contact the church office
Holy Mystery of Anointing Ask prior to surgery or serious illness
Holy Mystery of Marriage Contact the church office eight months prior to wedding
Religious Education Classes September through May, following Sunday Divine Liturgy
St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club Everyone welcome to participate

***Why have blessed candles in the home?** It is good and laudable to light candles at home when we pray, when the priest visits for a house blessing with Holy Water or Holy Unction, and even light a candle when we visit the grave of a loved one.*

