

February 13, 2022
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 5, pp. 146 - 148, Prodigal Son: pg. 216

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN. FEB. 13 8:30 A.M.	SUNDAY of the PRODIGAL SON DIVINE LITURGY + Gordon Jn. Baptiste, offered by Sr. Mary Virginia
SAT. FEB. 19 9:00 A.M.	FIRST ALL SOULS SATURDAY DIVINE LITURGY, <i>Panachida, Hramoty</i>
SUN., FEB. 20 8:30 A.M.	MEATFARE SUNDAY, SUNDAY of LAST JUDGMENT DIVINE LITURGY + Philomena Rossi, offered by John Kubanda

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*)

Happy Birthday Greetings This Week:

None for the week

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

Ann Trombulak – **Rochester Manor:** (174 Virginia Ave., Rochester, PA 15074)

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

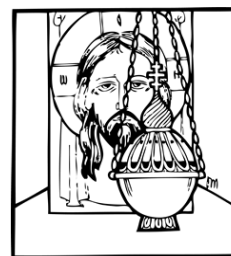
Betty Polas – **Apple Blossom Senior Living** (125 Apple Blossom Wy, #307, Moon Twp., PA 15108)

Carol Huchko – **Concordia at Villa St. Joseph** (1040 State St, Baden, PA 15005)

Epistle Readers – Feb. 13: Prudy Peya – Feb. 20: JoAnn Hersh

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – Feb. 13: J. Yurosky – Feb. 20: F. Hersh



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

February 13 - 19, 2022

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

The Parishioners

Excerpt from Christ our Pascha: The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God

The Announcement of the Kingdom: The Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7): The kingdom of God is a gift of God's love: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another" (Jn 13:34). When we receive divine love into our life, we begin to perceive others in a new way—as our neighbors (see Lk 10:25-37). The power of love even conquers hatred towards enemies:

You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy."
But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous (Mt 5:43-45). (#207)

All Souls Saturdays

The first All Souls Saturday is this **Saturday, February 19**. Divine Liturgy, Panachida with Hramoty, and Koliva will be at **9:00 A.M** On these All Souls Saturdays, it is tradition in our Holy Church to prayerfully remember our beloved departed family members, loved ones, etc. Amongst your offertory envelopes you have an envelope for the commemoration of departed souls marked “All Soul’s Saturdays Remembrance”. Please write the names of your deceased loved ones on this envelope and drop the envelope in the collection basket.

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!

Hramoty: 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’!

Koliva, or Kutia, is traditionally prepared for the All Souls Saturdays. Koliva is made of boiled wheat mixed with sugar and spices to be blessed during the All Souls Liturgy and distributed to the congregation. The offering of Koliva is an ancient custom. It symbolizes the eternal cycle. People, like wheat, must be buried to grow and have new life. We make it for memorial services in remembrance of those who have fallen asleep.



Church Mice



A Note from Father Geoff

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Although the memory of St. Valentine is rarely kept in the churches nowadays, our wider culture celebrates "Valentine's Day" this week each year. Of St. Valentine himself little is known other than that he was a clergyman and a martyr in 3rd century Rome. Today his commemoration in the wider world is rarely kept as a religious observance, but rather a social celebration of courtship and love.

While it may be tempting to bemoan the secularization of Christian feasts, I think it also provides us with an opportunity to think about love and relationships from a Christian standpoint. In the Creation account in Genesis, we learn that God made humanity - both male and female - in his own image. And we learn that "it is not good for the man to be alone" (Gen. 2.18) so God created Eve to be a "helper suitable for" Adam.

I don't know if you've ever thought of the meaning of this word, "helper," before. At first glance one might think it elevates men over women, women merely being "helpers" of men - as if they were servants or mere assistants. Not so! Far from devaluing women, the word in Hebrew that is translated as "helper" (*ezer*) is a word that is frequently used in the Old Testament for God himself!

In Exodus, Moses says, "My father's God was my *helper*; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh" (Exodus 18.4). In Hosea, the Lord exclaimed, "You are destroyed, Israel, because you are against me, against your *helper*" (Hosea 13.9). And the term appears for God many times in the Psalms, such as: "We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our *helper* and our shield" (Ps. 33.20) and "Our *help* is in the name of the LORD, who has made heaven and earth" (Ps. 124.8).

So if God himself is our "helper," what we notice is that Eve bears the image of God every bit as much as Adam does. And, as "it is not good for the man to be alone," men and women have, since the beginning of time, been called to make a life together and to "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1.28).

So this St. Valentine's Day, we can give thanks for the love of God which is found - among other ways - in the love of wives and husbands. This love is both fruitful and an image that the Scriptures use for Christ's relationship with the Church: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Eph. 5.25)

Let us pray for all married couples, that God would increase their love for one another; that their marriages might be pure and undefiled; and that their love for one another would be a sign to the world of Christ's love for his Bride, the Church. And let us also ask the Lord to comfort all those whose spouses have passed away and to grant eternal memory to their departed loved ones.

Yours in the Love of Christ,
Fr. Geoff

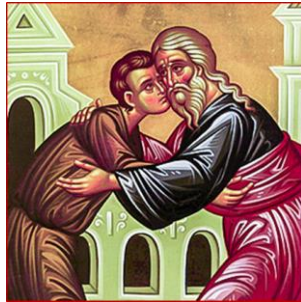
Christ is Among us! He is and Shall be! ~ Christos posred’i nas! Jest’ i budet!

A Prayer for Married Couples

Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in sending Jesus Christ to come among us, to be born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to make the way of the Cross to be the way of life. We thank you, also, for consecrating the union of man and woman in his Name. By the power of your Holy Spirit, we ask you to pour out the abundance of your grace upon all wives and husbands. Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their heads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; in their sleeping and in their waking; in their joys and in their sorrows; in their life and in their death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that table where your saints feast forever in your heavenly home; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, forever and ever.
Amen.

Pre-Lenten Sundays

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son is the second Sunday of pre-Lent, the weeks of preparation preceding Great Lent. It is the Sunday after the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee and the Sunday before Meatfare Sunday. This pre-Lent is the start of the Easter cycle of worship in the Byzantine Catholic Church. On this Sunday in the preparation for Great Lent, Eastern Christians are read Christ's parable about God's loving forgiveness (Luke 15:11-24). They are to see themselves as being in a foreign country far from the Father's house and to make the movement of return to God, where we truly belong. The parable gives assurance that the Father will receive them with joy and gladness in their journey through Great Lent, their journey home.



Jacob led out his sheep and brought them to his father's home; a symbol for those with discernment, a parable for those with perception is to be found in this homecoming: Let us too return to our Father's house, My brothers, and do not become captivated with desire for this transient earth — for your true city is in Eden.

- St Ephrem the Syrian

We are all prodigals in our own way, but let us be like the younger prodigal Son, let us realize that we live in a strange land full of sin, and we need to return and live in our Father's kingdom where love and peace rule. Remember the hymn for this Sunday: "Therefore before the end cry out to Christ our God: receive me as the Prodigal Son, O God, and have mercy upon me."

- James Iliou

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

The parable of the Prodigal Son speaks to us not only of sin and repentance but also of the forgiveness that God gives us. When the prodigal son had come to his senses he set out to his father's house. The Gospel tells us that love, tenderness, and pity filled his heart, "His son was dear to him" and without waiting for his son's arrival, the old man who had been deeply hurt by the young man's sins and heartlessness, ran to meet him, fell on his neck, embraced, and kissed him. Is that how we meet each other when we see from a distance someone coming from that "far country" to which all of us at some moment, frequently perhaps, get drawn by sin, a former friend, relation or acquaintance returning to us? Is that how we meet him? To begin with, is it often that our love is so unshakeable that we constantly go to the door of the house and look into the distance hoping for his return? And when we do see a person who once was close but has become estranged moving our way, are we often pierced to the heart by the old love and tenderness and pity? Do we not in fact more often behave like the son who had nothing to reproach himself with before his father? When that one returned from work in the fields and heard sounds of rejoicing in the house he asked a servant what it was about, and hearing that his younger brother who was starving had returned, he was unwilling to go in.



The father did not allow his son to ask to become a servant; he could not take him as a servant but only as a son returned. He ordered to bring his original robe, not the best garment in the house, but the one he used to wear before he became a stranger. When the son put on his former robe instead of his rags, he felt it fit him snugly, and his father ordered then to bring him the ring, not just a ring, but the ring with which in older times a man sealed his letters. The father put complete trust in him. Why? Why did he not first demand proofs of his repentance? Because he knew that if his son had overcome shame and fear in order to come home. But when a person, formerly a friend but who has hurt either us or someone dear to us, approaches us, are we ready to entrust ourselves to him, give him the old affection? No, and therefore the reconciliation is not permanent. That is why a person is so afraid of seeking reconciliation; he knows he will not meet the father, but only false, humiliating virtue which says "You are not my brother even if my father does acknowledge you as his son." Let us consider this question of forgiveness because soon it will be Forgiveness Sunday and it might catch us unprepared. Amen.

"Let your prayer be completely simple, for both the publican and the prodigal son were reconciled to God by a single phrase."
St. John Chrysostom

He was lost and has been found

SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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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



 *"I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another."* -John 13:34