

:: St. Cyril of Alexandria ::
On the Parable of the Prodigal Son

For we also sometimes experience something of this sort. For some there are who live a perfectly honourable and consistent life, practising every kind of virtuous action, and abstaining from every thing disapproved by the law of God, and crowning themselves with perfect praises in the sight of God and of men: while another is perhaps weak and trodden down, and humbled unto every kind of wickedness, guilty of base deeds, loving impurity, given to covetousness, and stained with all evil. And yet such a one often in old age turns unto God, and asks the forgiveness of his former offences: he prays for mercy, and putting away from him his readiness to fall into sin, sets his affection on virtuous deeds. Or even perhaps when about to close his mortal life, he is admitted to divine baptism, and puts away his offences, God being merciful unto him. And perhaps sometimes persons are indignant at this, and even say, 'This man, who has been guilty of such and such actions, and has spoken such and such words, has not paid unto the judge the retribution of his conduct, but has been counted worthy of a grace thus noble and admirable: he has been inscribed among the sons of God, and honoured with the glory of the saints.' Such complaints men sometimes give utterance too from an empty narrowness of mind, not conforming to the purpose of the universal Father. For He greatly rejoices when He sees those who were lost obtaining salvation, and raises them up again to that which they were in the beginning, giving them the dress of freedom, and adorning them with the chief robe, and putting a ring upon their hand, even the orderly behaviour which is pleasing to God and suitable to the free.

It is our duty, therefore, to conform ourselves to that which God wills: for He heals those who are sick; He raises those who are fallen; He gives a helping hand to those who have stumbled; He brings back him who has wandered; He forms anew unto a praiseworthy and blameless life those who were wallowing in the mire of sin; He seeks those who were lost; He raises as from the dead those who had suffered the spiritual death. Let us also rejoice: let us, in company with the holy angels, praise Him as being good, and loving unto men; as gentle, and not remembering evil. For if such is our state of mind, Christ will receive us, by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Wednesday each week to Fr. Andrew, by email or phone.



St. George Orthodox Church of Spring Valley

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February 16, 2014 – Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Martyr Pamphilos, priest of Caesarea in Palestine and his companions; Venerable Flavian the hermit;
Venerable-martyr Romanos from Solovak of Carpenision

Orthros Morning Prayers, 9:00 am :: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am
TODAY: Holy Bread and Coffee Hour offered by Sally Favia and family

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 1):

While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life. Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ, glory to Thy kingdom, glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind.

Troparion for St. George the Great-Martyr (Tone 4):

Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and succour of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among martyrs, the victory-clad George: Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

Kontakion for the Prodigal Son (Tone 3):

When I disobeyed in ignorance Thy Fatherly glory, I wasted in iniquities the riches that Thou gavest me. Wherefore, I cry to Thee with the voice of the prodigal son, saying: I have sinned before Thee, O compassionate Father, receive me repentant, and make me as one of Thy hired servants.

St. George is a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
The Most Reverend Metropolitan PHILIP, primate
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY, Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest
www.antiochian.org

Epistle Reading for the Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.
The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (6:12-20).

Brethren, all things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything. Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food; but God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Gospel Reading for the Sunday of the Prodigal Son

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (15:11-32).

The Lord spoke this parable: "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything.

But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants."' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry.

Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and services at St. George, consult the calendar on our website, www.stgeorgeorthodox.org.

Today after Liturgy, we will have a brief **Church Council meeting**. All council members and officers should plan to attend.

This coming Saturday, February 22, is the Saturday of Souls, and so we will have Divine Liturgy that morning at 10:00 am to remember all of our parishioners, family members, friends, and loved ones who have passed on. All of the names of the departed on your lists will be read at that service. (If you need to update your family's prayer list, this would be a good time to do it!)

Children's Sunday School Resumes! Sunday, March 2, at 9:15am, we will kick off with a month of lessons pertaining to the Parish Life Conference theme verse (Luke 10:27) and begin working on Creative Arts Festival entries, to be submitted at the end of the month. For the present, we will have classes for children ages 3 through Grade 5. Older youth are welcome to attend as helpers. Younger children are also welcome with a parent to guide them. All other parents are free to attend Matins.

On **Sunday March 9**, we have the great privilege of welcoming **Bishop Anthony of the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest**. His Grace will celebrate the Divine Liturgy with us, and we will have a potluck meal in his honor afterwards. Everyone should plan to attend!

Sunday of Orthodoxy Pan-Orthodox Vespers will take place Sunday evening, March 9, at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Des Plaines, IL. Our own Bishop Anthony of the Diocese of Toledo will be the homilist.

A note on home blessings: The Orthodox Church recommends that each home be blessed by a priest with prayer and Holy Water each year. As soon as my family gets settled into our new home in Spring Valley, it will be my great joy to visit all of you, spend time with your families, and bless your homes with the blessing of the Jordan River. More information and a sign-up sheet will be available in the coming weeks. Nothing elaborate is required on your part, and even a meal is not necessary. Feel free to ask if you have any questions.
