

## The Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32

And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.( KJV)

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son has arrived in God's Holy Church. This is an opportunity for all believers having distanced themselves from the Lord God to return and be welcomed.

We are all Prodigal Sons and Daughters. We all move away from the Lord God in portions of our lives. We all squander time, talents and gifts from God. Now is the time for personal self-examination and honesty.

God's Holy Church is moving with certainty toward Great Lent. Believers are expected to increase their consciousness of the condition of the soul. Now is the time to increase care. of the soul and seek improvement.

The Lord God welcomes with joy and love believers choosing to draw near. The Lord God celebrates the return of believers having separated themselves in various ways from the Church.

The Lord knows when believers have wasted time, talents and gifts from God in their daily lives. The Lord knows when believers hunger in the soul for the nourishment, peace and security from God.

The father in the present Gospel celebrated the return of his Prodigal Son. God celebrates and welcomes Sons and Daughters drawing near in earnest. God knows every thought and deed of each person.

Today is an opportunity for believers to rejoice. God's Holy Church is open and welcomes each person entering with faith and seeking God's forgiveness and love. The Sunday of the Prodigal Son is a new beginning for believers every year.

We do not thank God enough for the new beginnings possible in earthly life. We sin often. We waste time and blessings from God more than we realize. God is always ready for us to repent, return and begin anew in the life in Christ.

At Baptism we give our whole selves to Jesus Christ. We are immersed in the Baptismal font and put on Christ. We enter the life in Christ. We begin the journey on the narrow path to the Heavenly Kingdom.

In our Christian journey, too often we depart from the narrow path. Too often we take side roads expending valuable time and wasting valuable talents. Too often we find ourselves where our souls are hungry and not happy.

The gentle call from the God speaks to us each year on the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. The Gospel tells us our soul does not need to continue to hunger. God is present to welcome and nourish us if we draw near.

The Church is ever-present to instruct and guide believers along the narrow path to God's Kingdom and eternal life. The Gospel serves as the constant guide for believers choosing to be attentive.

Believers have a responsibility to be active in the journey to the Heavenly Kingdom and eternal life. The Prodigal Son eventually came to himself in honesty. The Prodigal Son chose to return to his father.

If we look deep in our hearts, minds and souls, we will realize how distant we are from God and how much we are suffering in poverty. The life in Christ offers nourishment that exceeds all nourishment.

The life in Christ satisfies the hunger of the soul. The life in Christ provides peace and security. The Cross is an integral part of the life in Christ. The Cross of Christ offers hope, light and resurrection.

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The Sunday of the Prodigal Son. Holy Righteous Simeon the God-receiver and Anna. St. James of Serbia. February 3/16, 2025. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.

Father Rodney Torbic