

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 Gospel verifies God's welcoming love and joy for those choosing to draw near. We all waste a certain amount of what God has given us in our lives. God welcomes our return to His embrace to begin anew.

The Church proclaims this Gospel as preparation for the coming Great Lent and journey to Pascha. Repentance is an important theme in the Gospel today. Repentance is necessary for Christians throughout life.

The younger son squandered the wealth given to him by his father. God gives each person life, talents and treasures. Life, talents and treasures are to be used for God's glory and in God-pleasing ways.

We are in some ways like the younger son. We have not always made the best use of our lives, talents and treasures. The Gospel encourages believers to draw near to God's welcoming embrace and begin life anew.

God is waiting and welcoming each person choosing to repent of sinful ways. God is present in the Church to guide and nourish each person along the narrow path to the Kingdom and eternal life.

God is joyful when believers put their erroneous ways behind. God welcomes all seeking to begin life anew. The father in the Gospel celebrated when his younger son returned home. The son was considered alive again.

The older brother did not initially share in the joy of his younger brother's return. Healthy parishes imitate the loving father when welcoming a person entering the church seeking love and a new beginning in life.

Every person is a sinner and has certain failings in life. The Church is where to address personal failings. The Church is where to start life anew. The Divine services are where to experience God's love.

The father did not hold it against his younger son for squandering his inheritance. The father rejoiced in the younger son's intention to return home. Joy arose in the father when he saw his returning son.

Each parishioner does well by imitating the love of the father in the current Gospel. Parents with wayward sons or daughters can learn from the father in the current Gospel.

Jesus Christ preached about and exemplified love. Prodigal sons and daughters benefit when returning home to loving and welcoming parents. Loving parents make a difference when wayward sons and daughters return.

Christian love is shown best by actions. Christian love is expressed in healthy attitudes shown toward each person entering the parish church. Christian love is manifested by reaching to out to suffering neighbors.

The father in the Gospel today was delighted with his younger son's return. The father took action to draw near to the returning son. Believers in church taking action to repent will feel the Lord's genuine embrace.

Today is the time for serious personal reflection. Now is the time to acknowledge life and the use of talents and treasures will improve by drawing closer to God.

The Church teaches and shows the way to the Heavenly Kingdom. Love and joy await each person choosing to repent and return to the way of Jesus Christ. The Prodigal Son's return is proof of God's love and joy.

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son. Venerable Father Xenophont and Mary and Their Sons. January 26/February 8, 2026.

Father Rodney Torbic