

Holy Trinity Hellenic Orthodox Church

Lowell, Massachusetts

Rev. Fr. Nikolaos D. Pelekoudas, Presbyter

February 4, 2018

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

SUNDAY READINGS

Epistle Reading	I Corinthians 6:16-20	Page 130
Gospel Reading	Luke 15:11-32	Page 130
Creed		Pamphlet
The Lord's Prayer		Page 26
Communion Prayers (Before receiving)		Pages 29-30
Thanksgiving Prayers (After receiving)		Pages 33-34
Memorial Service		Page 164

Note: All are welcome to receive the Blessed Bread (Antidoron), but only practicing Orthodox Christians can receive Holy Communion.

Today's Calendar

- There will be no Coffee Hour until further notice due to hall construction.
- Parish Council members on duty: Charles Hondros, Paris Karahalios, Lawrence Rocha, Daniel Routsis

This Week

Thursday, February 8 – Parish Council Meeting – 6:30 pm – Hellenic Cultural Center
Saturday, February 10 - 1st Saturday of the Souls – 9:00 am Orthros; 10:00 am Divine Liturgy

For Our Edification

Spaghetti Luncheon Next Sunday

The Philoptochos will be selling tickets for next week's Spaghetti Luncheon following today's Divine Liturgy at the Church entrance. Admission is \$12 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. This event will take place in the Hellenic Cultural Center.

Women Wear Red Today

In support of the American Heart Association's campaign, the National Philoptochos Society has designated today, February 4, as Go Red Sunday. Women across the country have been asked to join the movement and wear red today at Church service.

Snow Tubing Sunday

Once again the Sunday School is organizing a Snow Tubing Family Outing on Sunday, February 18, 2:00 pm, at Nashoba Valley. The group will receive a discounted two hour rate of \$26 per person. Tubes will be provided by Nashoba Valley. For reservations, contact Jennifer at Jennifer_Hardy@hotmail.com or (978) 551-6306 by February 5.

Return from Exile

As we continue to prepare for the beginning of Great Lent, our Holy Orthodox Church places before us today the Parable of the Prodigal Son. It is the story that graphically points out the impetuosity of youth through the character of the youngest son, who impatiently demanded his inheritance and consequently lost everything. It is a tale of unconditional mercy, as the father – symbolizing God himself – lovingly welcomes home his humbled, repentant offspring.

More importantly, however, the Prodigal can be likened to each of us. In effect, this is a story about *all of us*. At one time or another, every one of us has given in to the same temptations as the Prodigal Son. We have abandoned our Father's house and have strayed from the path that has been set for us. We have all foolishly felt that we can make it through life doing things "our way."

Inevitably, we must realize that seeing a life of *pleasure* cannot bring us true happiness, for this can only be found when we are in communion with God.

It is never too late to "rise and go to our Father." He waits for all of us to return to Him! He offers us something far more valuable than a robe, ring and sandals when we repent. He promises us a place in His Heavenly Kingdom.

Saturday of the Souls (Psychosavato)

Traditionally, Orthodox Christians remember the dead on a Saturday, the day Christ lay in His tomb. Four times a year, the congregation assembles to pray for all its deceased loved ones. These general memorial services, known as Saturday of Souls, take place on the two Saturdays that precede the beginnings of Great Lent, the first Saturday of Great Lent, and the Saturday before the Feast of Pentecost.

If you would like to offer prayers for the deceased, write their first name(s) on a list and submit it to the priest. You may want to bring a small dish of Koliva (boiled wheat) as well. The wheat kernels express belief in everlasting life. Jesus said, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (John 12:24) Just as new life rises from the kernel of wheat, so we believe the one buried will rise one day to a new life with God.