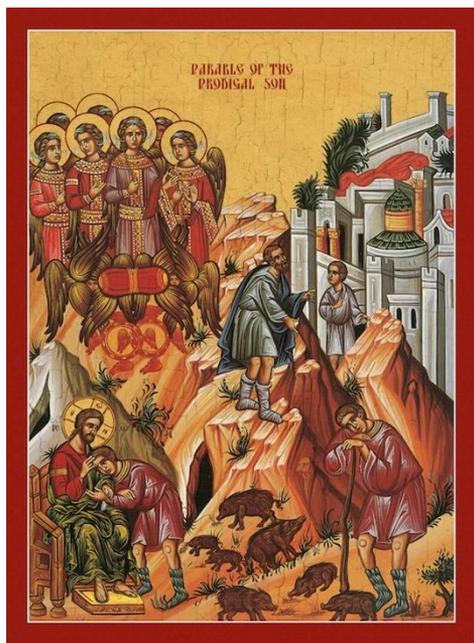


Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania + Wilkes-Barre Deanery

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



Sunday of the Prodigal Son

38th Sunday After Pentecost

February 28th, 2021

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Gospel: St. Luke 15:11-32

A warm welcome to everyone, and especially to our visitors and guests this morning! Please join us for some fellowship after in the Parish Hall!

Services, Events & Announcements

***Compline/Adult Ed. (Bible Study/St. Mark) – Wednesday, Mar 3rd @ 6pm**

***Great Vespers – Saturday, Mar 6th @ 5pm**

***Divine Liturgy – Sunday, Mar 7th @ 10am (Hours @ 9:40am)
Fellowship After in the Hall**

***Next Sunday is *Meatfare*, so we will be having a very “meaty” potluck. Bring your favorite meaty dish to share!**

***If you would like to have your home blessed, please see Fr. Seraphim to setup a day and time.**

Our Giving – January 21st, 2021

Tithes/Offerings - \$1,672.00

Candle Offerings – \$59.25

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by **fasting, prayer** [i.e., *Prayers Before Communion*], **recent confession**, and who were at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. *We should all be at peace with each other too.* If you have any questions about this, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

Parable of the Prodigal Son, by Archpriest Victor Potapov

Bishop Theophanes the Recluse, who had expertly studied spiritual life, compares the sinner with a man sunk into a deep sleep, and in his turning to God he notes three psychological moments that correspond to what is indicated in the parable: 1) awakening from the sleep of sin (Luke 15:17); 2) the ripening of resolve to forsake sin and to dedicate himself to pleasing God (Luke 15:17-21); and 3) investing the sinner with power from on high for this in the Mysteries of Repentance and Communion.

In this parable, which is multifaceted in its content and remarkable for the vividness of its colors, where, the image of the father of two sons stands for the Heavenly Father, the behavior of the Father - His goodness, which exceeds all human concepts, His love for the sinner and His joy on the occasion of the Prodigal Son's return to Him - virtually occupies the main place. ...when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, the Gospel says to us; and this means that the father had been waiting and perhaps each day had been looking to see whether his son was returning. He saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. The son started his confession, but the father did not even let him finish speaking; he already had forgiven and forgotten everything, and he receives the dissolute and starving swineherd as a beloved son. The father did not begin to require proofs of his son's repentance, because he saw that his son had overcome shame and fear in order to return home. He

commands his servants to give him the best robe, shoes and a ring on his hand. The ring is an indication of God's gift to the forgiven sinner - the gift of God's Grace, in which he is clothed for the salvation of his soul. According to the interpretation of Blessed Theophylact, the ring in the parable testifies to the restoration of the sinner's unity with the earthly Church and the Heavenly.

It is difficult to convey in words the fullness of the concept of God's love toward fallen sinners. Perhaps no one gives us a glimpse of God's love, which we read of in the parable of the Prodigal Son, better than the Apostle Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians: Charity suffereth long and is kind; ...charity vaunteth not itself, ..is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things (I Corinthians 13:4-7). It is appropriate here to mention that sin, every sin, is a transgression against love and that repentance really can be accomplished only before the face of Perfect Love, for God is love (I John 4:8).

<https://stjohndc.org/en/orthodoxy-foundation/parable-prodigal-son>

Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!

Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Archpriest Daniel (Kovalak), Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Mat. Theodora (Ressetar), Presbyteria Eva (Koutroulelis), Mary (Federoff) and the child to be born of her, Helen Maybo, Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Phoebe Davis, Newly Illumined Servant Ephraim Heller, Peter Georges

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

Mitred-Archpriest Daniel Ressetar (+1/20), Proto-Pres. Daniel Hubiak (+2/5), Archimandrite Alexander Cutler (+1/26), Archpriest Joseph Gibson (+1/20), Archpriest John Chupeck (+2/10), Archpriest John Tkachuk (+2/19), Protodeacon John Eby (+2/3)