

SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



FEBRUARY 12, 2012

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

The Sunday after the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. This parable of God's forgiveness calls us to come to ourselves" as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves as being "in a far country" far from the Father's house, and to make the journey of return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that our heavenly Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only "arise and go," confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that "home" where we truly belong (Luke 15:11-24).

Saint Meletius, Archbishop of Antioch, was Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia (ca. 357), and afterwards he was summoned to Antioch by the emperor Constantius to help combat the Arian heresy, and was appointed to that See. St Meletius struggled zealously against the Arian error, but through the intrigues of the heretics he was thrice deposed from his cathedra. Constantius had become surrounded by the Arians and had accepted their position. In all this St Meletius was distinguished by an extraordinary gentleness, and he constantly led his flock by the example of his own virtue and kindly disposition, supposing that the seeds of the true teaching sprout more readily on such soil. St Meletius was the one who ordained the future hierarch St Basil the Great as deacon. St Meletius also baptized and encouraged another of the greatest luminaries of Orthodoxy, St John Chrysostom, who later eulogized his former archpastor. After Constantius, the throne was occupied by Julian the Apostate, and the saint again was expelled, having to hide himself in secret places for his safety. Returning under the emperor Jovian in the year 363, St Meletius wrote his theological treatise, "Exposition of the Faith," which facilitated the conversion of many of the Arians to Orthodoxy. In the year 381, under the emperor Theodosius the Great (379-395), the Second Ecumenical Council was convened. In the year 380 the saint had set off on his way to the Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople, and came to preside over it. Before the start of the Council, St Meletius raised his hand displaying three fingers, and then withdrawing two fingers and leaving one extended he blessed the people, proclaiming: "We understand three hypostases, and we speak about a single nature." With this declaration, a fire surrounded the saint like lightning. During the Council St Meletius fell asleep in the Lord. St Gregory of Nyssa honored the memory of the deceased with a eulogy. St Meletius has left treatises on the consubstantiality of the Son of God with the Father, and a letter to the emperor Jovian concerning the Holy Trinity. The relics of St Meletius were transferred from Constantinople to Antioch.

AT THE SMALL ENTRANCE WE SING

ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΜΟΝ. ΑΠΟΛΥ. ΗΧΟΣ Β.

Οτε κατήλθες πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, ἡ Ζωὴ ἢ ἀθάνατος, τότε τὸν ἄδην ἐνέκρωσας τῇ ἀστραπῇ τῆς Θεότητος· ὅτε δὲ καὶ τοὺς τεθνεώτας ἐκ τῶν καταχθονίων ἀνέστησας, πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν ἐπουρανίων ἐκραύγαζον· Ζωοδότα Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν δόξα σοι.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΝΑΟΥ. ΠΛ. Α΄.

Λουκάν τον πανύμνητον καὶ ἅγιον ἀπόστολον, τὸν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας γνωστὸν συνθέτην τῶν Πράξεων τῶν Αποστόλων, τὸν τε σεμνὸν τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου Χριστοῦ ὑπομηματιστήν, ἀξίως τιμήσωμεν ὑμνοῖς ὁσίοις, ὡς νοσημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ φυσικῶν ἀσθενειῶν θεραπευτήν, τὸν καθαίροντα πληγὰς τοῦ πνεύματος, καὶ ἀδιαλείπτως πρεσβεύοντα ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν.

ΚΟΝΤΑΚΙΟΝ. ΗΧΟΣ Γ.

Τῆς πατρώας δόξης σου, ἀποσκορτίσας ἀφρόνως, ἐν κακοῖς ἐσκόρπισα, ὄν μοι παρέδωκας πλοῦτον· ὅθεν σοι τὴν τοῦ Ἀσώτου φωνὴν κραυγάζω· Ἥμαρτον ἐνώπιόν σου Πάτερ οἰκτίρμων· δέξαι με μετανοοῦντα, καὶ ποιήσόν με, ὡς ἓνα τῶν μισθίων σου.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION. MODE 2.

When You descended unto death, O Lord who yourself are immortal Life, then did You mortify Hades by the lightning flash of Your Divinity. Also when You raised the dead from the netherworld, all the Powers of the heavens were crying out: O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory be to You.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ. ΜΟΔΕ 5.

The holy Apostle, the All-hymned Luke, * who is acknowledged by the Church of Christ * as the recorder of the Acts of the Apostles, * and the splendid author of the Gospel of Christ. * Let us praise with sacred hymns as a physician, * who heals the infirmities of man, * and the ailments of nature, * who cleanses spiritual wounds, and prays unceasingly for our souls.

ΚΟΝΤΑΚΙΟΝ. ΜΟΔΕ 3.

Irevolted senselessly out of Your fatherly glory; I have squandered sinfully all of the riches You gave me. Hence to You, using the Prodigal's words, I cry out, I have sinned before You, merciful loving Father. O receive me in repentance, I pray, and treat me as one of Your hired hands.

“Of You, O Lord, of Your grace it is that in our nature we should become good. From You is righteousness, that we from men should become righteous. From You is the mercy and favour, that we from the dust should become Your image. Give power to our will, that we be not sunk in sin! Pour into our heart memory, that at every hour we may know Your honor! Plant Your truth in our minds, that we perish not among doubts! Occupy our understanding with Your law, that it wander not in vain thoughts! Order the motions of our members, that they bring no hurt upon us! Draw near to God, that Satan may flee from you.

THE READINGS OF THE DAY

EPISTLE READING

THE FIRST LETTER OF 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” -- and 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 belong to God.

GOSPEL READING

LUKE 15:11-32

The Lord said 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 the 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

UPCOMING CHURCH SERVICES:

February 18, Saturday of the Souls, Orthros / Div. Liturgy 8:30am

February 18, Saturday, Great Vespers, 5pm

WELCOME FR. DOUG

We welcome Fr. Doug Papulis, proistamenos of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in St. Louis, who is substituting for Fr. Michael today.

DINNER DANCE

Our annual Dinner Dance fundraiser will be held on February 19, 2012 at 5pm. The cost will be \$30 for adults (\$35 at door) and \$15 for kids 5-12 (\$20 at door). Your support of the event is very important. Please plan on joining us.

GIVE A MONTH TOWARDS OUR FUTURE

Our land purchase was finalized on January 23rd. With this great blessing comes added responsibility. Our total indebtedness, including both the new property and current property, is \$200,000. The purchase of this land will increase our monthly expenses by \$640. If you would like to sponsor one month for the upcoming year, please contact Fr. Michael. Thus far we have received commitments for 5 or 12 months. We would like to find **7 additional donors** who will each sponsor a month to cover the additional expenses for 2012. As always, your geneorsity is a blessing to our community!

SILENT AUCTION

We need Auction Items for the Greek Dinner Dance. Do you have a long-standing relationship with a local retailer or service provider? Please consider asking them to make a donation to our upcoming fundraiser with a material gift or gift certificate for service.

WINTER / SPRING CATECHISM CLASS

The next meeting of the Winter / Spring Catechism class will be Thursday February 16, at 6:30pm.

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS

Due to recent privacy law legislation (HIPAA), Fr. Michael will not be notified of hospital admissions, even if religious / parish affiliation is declared upon registration at the hospital. This is also true for nursing homes. Therefore, if you want Fr. Michael to visit during a hospitalization or a stay at a nursing home, please have an *immediate family member* call him at 573-823-7272. The hospital WILL NOT give him any information.

“*Let us attend to what is good, pleasing, and acceptable in the sight of Him who formed us. Let us look steadfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious that blood is to God, which, having been shed for our salvation, has set the grace of repentance before the whole world.*”

—ST. CLEMENT OF ROME

(? - 99)

SYNAXARION

Saint Maria and her father Eugene lived at the beginning of the sixth century in Bithynia (north-western Asia Minor). After the death of his wife, Eugene decided to withdraw to a monastery, but his daughter did not want to be separated from him, and so she accompanied him, dressed as a man. Together they entered a monastery not far from Alexandria, and the daughter received the name Marinus. Marinus became accomplished in virtue, and distinguished by humility and obedience. After several years, when her father died, she intensified her ascetical efforts and received from the Lord the gift to heal those afflicted by unclean spirits. One time the “monk” Marinus was sent with other monks to the monastery gardens, and along the way they had to spend the night at an inn. The inn-keeper’s daughter, having sinned with one of the lodgers, denounced the Marinus and named “him” as the father of her child. The girl’s father complained to the igumen of the monastery, who expelled the “sinful brother.” The saint spoke not a word in her defense and began to live outside the monastery wall. When the hapless girl gave birth to a boy, the inn-keeper brought it to Marinus. Without a word he put his grandson down before her and left. The saint took the infant and began to raise him. After three years the brethren begged the igumen to take back the “monk” Marinus into the monastery. The igumen, who very reluctantly gave in to their requests, began to assign Marinus very difficult obediences, which she fulfilled with the greatest of zeal, while also raising her foster child. Three years later the saint peacefully reposed in her cell. The brethren saw the deceased “monk” and the boy crying over “him”. As they began to dress the saint for burial, her secret was revealed. The igumen of the monastery tearfully asked forgiveness of the

departed, and the inn-keeper followed his example. The body of St Maria was reverently buried in the monastery. The inn-keeper’s daughter came to the grave of the saint and openly confessed her sin. Immediately, she was freed from the evil spirit which had been tormenting her. The boy whom the saint was raising later became a monk. The relics of the saint were transferred to Constantinople, and were carried off to Venice in 1113.

Saint Anthony, Patriarch of Constantinople, was a native of Asia, but lived in Constantinople from his youth. He was born around 829 of rich and pious parents. After the death of his mother, he entered a monastery at the age of twelve, where following the example of the igumen, he spent his nights in prayer and led a strict monastic life. With the passage of time, and against his will, he was ordained to the holy priesthood. Later, at the insistence of the Patriarch, he was made an igumen. Serving in this rank, he tonsured his own father into monasticism. St Anthony was distinguished by his mercy, by his love and concern for the destitute, and he provided generous help to them. Elevated to the Patriarchal throne at Constantinople in 893, St Anthony intensified his care for the destitute, and especially for their spiritual condition. With the assistance of the emperor Leo the Wise, Patriarch Anthony did much good for the Church, and encouraged piety in the people. He also built a monastery over the relics of St Kallia (February 12). Despite being stooped over with age, he went around all the churches, fulfilling the command of the Savior to be the servant of all the brethren.

In the year 895, advanced in age, St Anthony went peacefully to the Lord.

**ON THE MYSTERIES:
EUCCHARIST AND THE HOLY LITURGY**

*From the Catechetical Lectures of
St. Cyril of Jerusalem (313 – 386)*

I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread... 1 Cor. xi. 23.

I. Even of itself the teaching of the Blessed Paul is sufficient to give you a full assurance concerning those Divine Mysteries, of which having been deemed worthy, ye are become of the same bread and blood with Christ. For you have just heard him say distinctly, That our Lord Jesus Christ in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks He brake it, and gave to His disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is My Body: and having taken the cup and given thanks, lie said, Take, drink, this is My Bloods. Since then He Himself declared and said of the Bread, This is My Body, who shall dare to doubt any longer? And since He has Himself affirmed and said, This is My Blood, who shall ever hesitate, saying, that it is not His blood?

2. He once in Cana of Galilee, turned the water into wine, akin to blood, and is it incredible that He should have turned wine into blood? When called to a bodily marriage, He miraculously wrought that wonderful work; and on the children of the bride-chamber, shall He not much rather be acknowledged to have bestowed the fruition of His Body and Blood?

3. Wherefore with full assurance let us partake as of the Body and Blood of Christ: for in the figure of Bread is given to thee His Body, and in the figure of Wine His Blood; that thou by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, mayest be made of the same body and the same blood with Him. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, because His Body and Blood are distributed through our members; thus it is that, according to the blessed Peter, we became partakers of the divine nature.

4. Christ on a certain occasion discoursing with the Jews said, Except ye eat My flesh and drink My blood, ye have no life in you. They not having heard His saying in a

spiritual sense were offended, and went back, supposing that He was inviting them to eat flesh.

5. In the Old Testament also there was shew-bread; but this, as it belonged to the Old Testament, has come to an end; but in the New Testament there is Bread of heaven, and a Cup of salvation, sanctifying soul and body; for as the Bread corresponds to our body, so is the Word appropriate to our soul.

6. Consider therefore the Bread and the Wine not as bare elements, for they are, according to the Lord's declaration, the Body and Blood of Christ; for even though sense suggests this to thee, yet let faith establish thee. Judge not the matter from the taste, but from faith be fully assured without misgiving, that the Body and Blood of Christ have been vouch-safed to thee.

7. Also the blessed David shall advise thee the meaning of this, saying, Thou hast prepared a table before me in the presence of them that afflict me. What he says, is to this effect: Before Thy coming, the evil spirits prepared a table for men, polluted and defiled and full of devilish influence; but since Thy coming. O Lord, Thou hast prepared a table before me. When the man says to God, Thou hast prepared before me a table, what other does he indicate but that mystical and spiritual Table, which God hath prepared for us over against, that is, contrary and in opposition to the evil spirits? And very truly; for that had communion with devils, but this, with God. Thou hast anointed my head with oil. With oil He anointed thine head upon thy forehead, for the seal which thou hast of God; that thou mayest be made the engraving of the signet, Holiness unto God. And thy cup intoxicateth me, as very strong. Thou seest that cup here spoken of, which Jesus took in His hands, and gave thanks, and said, This is My blood, which is shed far many for the remission of sins.

8. Therefore Solomon also, hinting at this grace, says in Ecclesiastes, Come hither, eat thy bread with joy (that

is, the spiritual bread; Came hither, he calls with the call to salvation and blessing), and drink thy wine with a merry heart (that is, the spiritual wine); and let oil be poured out upon thy head (thou sees he alludes even to the mystic Chrism); and let thy garments be always white, far the Lord is well pleased with thy works; for before thou camest to Baptism, thy works were vanity of vanities. But now, having put off thy old garments, and put on those which are spiritually white, thou must be continually robed in white: of course we mean not this, that thou art always to wear white raiment; but thou must be clad in the garments that are truly white and shining and spiritual, that thou mayest say with the blessed Esaias, My soul shall be joyful in my God; far He hath clothed me with a garment of salvation, and put a robe of gladness around me.

9. Having learn these things, and been fully assured that the seeming bread is not bread, though sensible to taste, but the Body of Christ; and that the seeming wine is not wine, though the taste will have it so, but the Blood of Christ; and that of this David sung of old, saying, And bread strengtheneth man's heart, to make his face to shine with oil, "strengthen thou thine heart," by partaking thereof as spiritual, and "make the face of thy soul to shine." And so having it unveiled with a pure conscience, mayest thou reflect as a mirror the glory of the Lord, and proceed from glory to glory, in Christ Jesus our Lord:--To whom be honour, and might, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

1. By the loving-kindness of God ye have heard sufficiently at our former meetings concerning Baptism, and Chrism, and partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ; and now it is necessary to pass on to what is next in order, meaning to-day to set the crown on the spiritual building of your edification.

2. Ye have seen then the Deacon who gives to the Priest water to wash, and to the Presbyters who stand round God's altar. He gave it not at all because of bodily defilement; it is not that; for we did not enter the Church at first with defiled bodies. But the washing of hands is a symbol that ye ought to be pure from all sinful and unlawful deeds; for since the hands are a symbol of

action, by washing them, it is evident, we represent the purity and blamelessness of our conduct. Didst thou not hear the blessed David opening this very mystery, and saying, I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will compass Thine Altar, O Lord? The washing therefore of hands is a symbol of immunity from sin.

3. Then the Deacon cries aloud, "Receive ye one another; and let us kiss one another." Think not that this kiss is of the same character with those given in public by common friends. It is not such: but this kiss blends souls one with another, and courts entire forgiveness for them. The kiss therefore is the sign that our souls are mingled together, and banish all remembrance of wrongs. For this cause Christ said, If thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift upon the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. The kiss therefore is reconciliation, and for this reason holy: as the blessed Paul somewhere cried, saying, Greet ye one another with a holy kiss; and Peter, with a kiss of charity.

4. After this the Priest cries aloud, "Lift up your hearts." For truly ought we in that most awful hour to have our heart on high with God, and not below, thinking of earth and earthly things. In effect therefore the Priest bids all in that hour to dismiss all cares of this life, or household anxieties, and to have their heart in heaven with the merciful God. Then ye answer, "We lift them up unto the Lord:" assenting to it, by your avowal. But let no one come here, who could say with his mouth, "We lift up our hearts unto the Lord," but in his thoughts have his mind concerned with the cares of this life At all times, rather, God should be in our memory but if this is impossible by reason of human infirmity, in that hour above all this should be our earnest endeavour.

5. Then the Priest says, "Let us give thanks unto the Lord." For verily we are bound to give thanks, that He called us, unworthy as we were, to so great grace; that He reconciled us when we were His foes; that He vouchsafed to us the Spirit of adoption. Then ye say, "It is meet and right:" for in giving thanks we do a meet thing and a

right; but He did not right, but more than right, in doing us good, and counting us meet for such great benefits.

6. After this, we make mention of heaven. and earth, and sea; of sun and moon; of stars and all the creation, rational and irrational, visible and invisible; of Angels, Archangels, Virtues, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Thrones; of the Cherubim with many faces: in effect repeating that call of David's Magnify the Lord with me. We make mention also of the Seraphim, whom Esaias in the Holy Spirit saw standing around the throne of God, and with two of their wings veiling their face, and with twain their feet, while with twain they did fly, crying Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Sabaoth. For the reason of our reciting this confession of God, delivered down to us from the Seraphim, is this, that so we may be partakers with the hosts of the world above in their Hymn of praise.

7. Then having sanctified ourselves by these spiritual Hymns, we beseech the merciful God to send forth His Holy Spirit upon the gifts lying before Him; that He may make the Bread the Body of Christ, and the Wine the Blood of Christ; for whatsoever the Holy Ghost has touched, is surely sanctified and changed.

8. Then, after the spiritual sacrifice, the bloodless service, is completed, over that sacrifice of propitiation we entreat God for the common peace of the Churches, for the welfare of the world; for kings; for soldiers and allies; for the sick; for the afflicted; and, in a word, for all who stand in need of succour we all pray and offer this sacrifice.

9. Then we commemorate also those who have fallen asleep before us, first Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, that at their prayers and intercessions God would receive our petition. Then on behalf also of the Holy Fathers and Bishops who have fallen asleep before us, and in a word of all who in past years have fallen asleep among us, believing that it will be a very great benefit to the souls(3), for whom the supplication is put up, while that holy and most awful sacrifice is set forth.

10. And I wish to persuade you by an illustration. For I know that many say, what is a soul profited, which departs from this world either with sins, or without sins,

if it be commemorated in the prayer? For if a king were to banish certain who had given him offence, and then those who belong to them should weave a crown and offer it to him on behalf of those under punishment, would he not grant a remission of their penalties? In the same way we, when we offer to Him our supplications for those who have fallen asleep, though they be sinners, weave no crown, but offer up Christ sacrificed for our sins, propitiating our merciful God for them as well as for ourselves.

To be Continued...

“*When we sin, He does not straight-way visit the transgression, but lets it pass, giving us space for repentance, in order that we may be amended and converted. But if, because we have not paid the penalty, we suppose that the offence too is blotted out, and make light of it; then somewhere, where we think not of it, we are sure afterwards to be punished. And this takes place in order that, when we sin and are not punished, we may not be free from fear, unless we amend, knowing that we shall certainly fall into punishment where we do not expect it. So that if thou sinnest, beloved, and art not punished, do not grow presumptuous, but for this very cause be the more alarmed, knowing that it is an easy matter with God to recompense again when he pleases. For this reason then he hath not punished thee, that thou mightest receive space for repentance*”

—ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

(347 - 407)