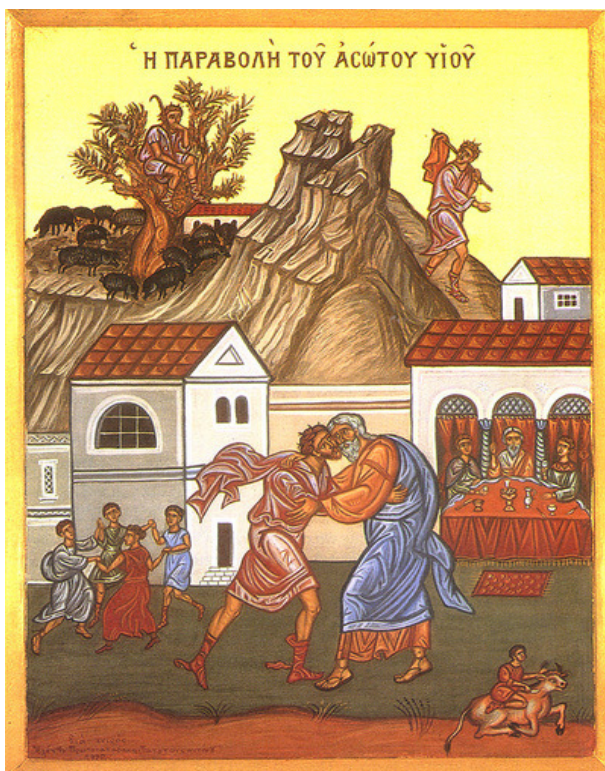


## February 24, 2019: The 34th. Sunday after Pentecost (The Parable of the Prodigal Son)

### Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20:

*All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.*

### Gospel: Luke 15:11-32:



*Then 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 falls to me.’ So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with 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, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.” “And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still 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 to him, ‘Father, I*

*have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ “But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here 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 older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.’ “But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.’ “And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’”*

Last Sunday, a new season started in the Orthodox Ecclesiastical year: the Triodion, the time to think about our spiritual renewal, the time of repentance, which will be the central theme of Great Lent, our spiritual journey to Pascha. The Publican from the gospel reading of last Sunday stood as a good example for all of us as to the kind of attitude we should have when praying. He acquired God's mercy and forgiveness because he displayed genuine humility and true repentance for his sins ("**God, be merciful to me, a sinner**").

Having spent foolishly all of the goods he had received from his father, the Prodigal son from this Sunday's gospel reading follows the same pattern and, having come to himself, in humility and with a contrite spirit, he prays and says: *“Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”* He recognizes the gravity of his sins and therefore he does not ask for a full reinstatement, for full sonship, which he had before, but, in humility he just wants to be accepted within his father's household, *like one of your hired servants.”*

The response of his father, who *had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him,* killed the fatted calf and prepared a great supper in honor of his return, speaks to all of us about the goodness of our loving God and the forgiveness which awaits all those who return to him with humility, repentance and true desire to re-establish our communion with Him.

**Fr. George Bazgan**

## **Sunday Fellowship**

**The following families are scheduled to look after  
this Sunday's fellowship:**

**Fufezan Dan & Cristina  
Cîmpean Constantin & Aurelia  
Corbu Adrian & Maria**

**Thank you all very much!**

## Altar boys for this Sunday:

Arsenie Gavriş  
Alexandru Mustea

## Spring Dinner and Dance

On March 2, 2019, there will be a Spring Dinner and Dance at the Romanian Centre. For tickets (\$40/adults and \$10/children 7-14 yrs old) and more information, contact: Luminița Ștefănescu at 780-298-2182 or Mariana Diaconu at 780-473-6711 or 780-660-4748 (texting only).

## ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

### THE CHURCH IS BORN FROM THE SIDE OF CHRIST

Do you wish to learn from another source as well the strength of His blood? Look from where it first flowed and where it had its source! It flowed down from the cross, from the Master's side. St. John says that, when Christ was dead but still on the cross, the soldier came and pierced His side with a lance, and straightaway there came out water and blood. The one was a symbol of baptism, the other of the mysteries. Therefore, he did not say: "There came out blood and water, but first water came forth and the blood, since first comes baptism and then the mysteries. It was the soldier, then, who opened Christ's side and dug through the rampart of the holy temple, but I am the one who has found the treasure and gotten the wealth...

Blood and water flowed from His side... Beloved, do not pass over this mystery without thought; it has yet another hidden meaning, which I will explain to you. I said that water and blood symbolized Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born: from baptism, - the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit, - and from the Holy Eucharist. Since the symbols of Baptism and the Eucharist flowed from His side, it was from His side that Christ fashioned the Church, as He fashioned Eve from the side of Adam... Do not understand, then, how Christ has united His bride to Himself and what food He gives us all to eat? By one and the same food we are both brought into being and nourished.