

Sunday, February 28, 2021

17th Week of Luke - Sunday of the Prodigal Son

**Righteous John Cassian the Confessor; Basil the Confessor;
Kyranna the New Martyr of Thessaloniki**

WORSHIP SCHEDULE TODAY: Orthros: 8:00 a.m. & Divine Liturgy: 9:00 a.m.

The church will be opened to the first 225 parishioners who have phoned into the church this past week and registered to attend worship (please review church protocols). This service will be live streamed and found on our Ss. Constantine and Helen Facebook Page and You Tube Channel.

HYMNS FOR THE DAY: (Found in red hymnal book)

- # 5 – Τον συναναρχον Λογον Πατρι/The Word who with the Father and the Spirit
- # 134 – Του Σταυρου σου τον τυπον/The sign of the Cross in the sky
- # 230 – Της πατρως δοξης Σου/Foolishly I ran away, from your fatherly glory

READINGS: **Orthros Gospel:** Luke 24:13-28
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20
Gospel: Luke 15:11-32

(For further information go to Archdiocese website at: goarch.org or
The Metropolis of Chicago website at: chicago.goarch.org.)

THE NICENE CREED & LORD'S PRAYER are found on pages 52-54 and 71 of your blue service book. Everyone is encouraged to recite them out loud in both Greek & English.

PRE & POST-COMMUNION PRAYERS: The Pre-Communion prayers are found on pages 76-80 in your blue service book. The first four will be read in Greek and the next four in English. **Please recite them out loud as a congregation.** The Post-Communion prayers are found on pages 98-100 in Greek and pages 101-102 in English. These should be read by those who have received Holy Communion when they return to their seats.

COUNCIL DUTY: John Nikolaras & ALL Parish Council members and volunteers.

MEMORIALS

40 days	George Kazonis	7 years	Nikki Victoria Kavadas
3 months	Harilaos (Harry) Karahalios	25 years	Vasilios (William) G. Christy
2 years	Christos Dounoukos	26 years	Alexander (Alex) Avgeris
3 years	Argiro Petropoulos	40 years	Georgia (Jerr) Avgeris
3 years	Evangelos Petropoulos	45 years	Eftihios (Tom) Kavadas
6 years	Ioannis (John) Avgeris		

MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

SERVICE SCHEDULE: Saturday, March 6th – 1st *Saturday of Souls* – Divine Liturgy: 9:00 a.m. followed by the Trisagion Service.

ΘΗΣΚΕΥΤΙΚΟΝ ΗΜΕΡΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ: Σαββατο, 6 Μαρτιου – Α΄ Ψυχосαββατο – Θεια Λειτουργια με Τρισαγιο: 9:00 π.μ.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP UPDATE: With the easing of some of the COVID-19 restrictions in the state of Indiana, we are able to once again host a limited Coffee Fellowship Hour following worships services on Sunday. Mask wearing and social distancing are still required when attending. We are looking forward to seeing our parishioners and visiting with them after almost a year of no Coffee Fellowship.

Today's Coffee Fellowship is in memory of George Kazonis. Everyone is welcomed to attend.

PONDERING: Humility is a strange thing. The minute you think you have got it, you have lost it.

THE JOY OF REPENTANCE: We read the Parable of the Prodigal Son during the pre-Lenten period because one of its central themes is repentance. Through the example of the Prodigal Son, as well as the compassionate love of the Father, the Church seeks to inspire and guide us to true repentance, to the Sacrament of Holy Confession and to new life in Christ. Great Lent is not simply a period of external practices such as strict fasting from foods but it is above all **AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PRAYER, INWARD REFLECTION, CONFESSION OF SINS, CONVERSION OF THE HEART, AND RENEWAL OF THE MIND AND SPIRIT** – that's what **metanoia** (change) means.

"I HAVE SINNED": The Prodigal Son in today's Gospel lesson was honest with himself. It was when he admitted the wrong in himself and said, *"I have sinned,"* that he came to his true self. A new chapter of his life began that very day. A new chapter can begin for us if, bidding good-by to self-excuse, self-pity, self-defense, we will face the facts about ourselves and say, "Yes, that's the kind of person I am; that is the sort of thing I am capable of doing and have done, but, by the grace of God, I can be different, and I will be different."

WISDOM OF THE FATHERS: For to despise the present age, not to love transitory things, unreservedly to stretch out the mind in humility to God and to our neighbor, to preserve patience against offered insults and, with patience guarded, to repel the pain of malice from the heart, to give one's property to the poor, not to covet that of others, to esteem the friend in God, on God's account to love even those who are hostile, to mourn at the affliction of a neighbor, not to exult in the death of one who is an enemy, this is the new creature whom the Master of the nations, seeks with watchful eye amid the other disciples, saying: **"If, anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new"** (2 Corinthians 5:17).

– St. Gregory the Great

NOTICE OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY: The first regular General Assembly of our parish for the year 2021 will be held on Sunday, March 7th, immediately following the Divine Liturgy. All members of our Cathedral are invited to attend. However, protocol directs that only members in good standing, both canonically and financially, have the right to make motions or vote. We encourage our Cathedral membership to be in attendance and take part in this highest level of parish administration. The agenda is as follows:

1. Opening Prayer.
2. Election of Assembly Presiding Officer.
3. Reading Minutes of Previous General Assembly.
4. Pastor's Report.
5. Committee Reports.
6. Report of Audit Committee.
7. Election of Election Committee.
8. Old Business.
9. New Business.
10. Closing Prayer.

SATURDAY OF SOULS: The Church sets aside certain days when we are encouraged to remember our dear ones who have fallen asleep in the Lord. The two Saturdays preceding Great Lent and the first Saturday of Lent are known as the Saturdays of Souls – Psychosavata (Memorial Saturdays). Orthodox Christians are requested to attend Liturgy on these days, worship God, partake of Holy Communion and offer names of loved ones to the priest to be remembered in prayer. A small bowl of kolyva, prosforo, wine and oil may also be submitted, along with a monetary donation to assist those in need. The prayers offered are for the repose, forgiveness and eternal rest of the departed ones. Proper baptismal names of those deceased to be commemorated should be written clearly, in Greek or English, and submitted to the Altar prior to the start of the Liturgy. The first Saturday of Souls this year is March 6th.

**ATTENTION FAITHFUL MEMBERS OF SAINTS
CONSTANTINE AND HELEN CATHEDRAL**

**OUTLINE OF SAFETY PROTOCOLS
BEFORE ATTENDING CHURCH**

- The church (or areas used for worship) will be sanitized before each service.
- The church will only be allowed to hold as many people (225) as can maintain social distancing (6 feet distance).
- Due to the limited seating available, every person who is planning on attending worship services will need to register through the church office (219-769-2481) between 11am–1pm, Monday through Friday. Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - According to the directives of the Metropolis of Chicago, the high-risk population and those caring for them should not attend services. Our parish will be using a system of self-reporting. We will not be verifying your age or medical history at the door.
- Those who have tested positive for COVID-19, or who are in the same household as someone positive for COVID-19, or who are feeling sick should not attend services.
- Worship Services will continue to be lived streamed on our Cathedral's Facebook Page and You Tube Channel for those who cannot or may not feel safe to attend.

COMING TO CHURCH

- Every person attending worship will need to check in upon arrival at the designated area in the Exo-Narthex. There will be a brief screening process (verbal questions and a temperature check) at the sign-in table.
- Every attendee will need to wear masks (you must provide your own mask) at all times while they are in the physical area of worship, except when receiving Holy Communion.
- Use non-contact greetings (waving, a bowing of the head) with fellow parishioners instead of the traditional hugging, kissing or shaking of hands. Social distancing must be maintained. No walking about the church to greet, talk or visit with one another.

IN THE CHURCH

- There will be hand sanitizer stations at the entry of the church, at the candle stands, at the entry into the Nave, and at the Solea.
- There will be no veneration (kissing) of icons, sacred objects, or the priest's hand.
- Parish Council members will distribute candles for the faithful to light, as well as place the 3-hour votives and 5-day red votives in their designated areas of the church. After lighting candles you will be asked to sanitize your hands before entering the church.
- No paper bulletins, monthly newsletters or other items will be distributed to those attending worship.
- Due to the need to socially distance, a Parish Council member or a designated usher will escort you to your seat. Please do not insist on sitting in "your spot," as the Parish Council's only concern will be in maintaining social distancing to maximize safety.
- Every other pew will be available for seating with six feet in between each worshiper. People living in the same household can sit together.
- There will be no liturgical books in the pews.
- At the time for Holy Communion, the Parish Council will direct people to approach the Chalice and observe social distancing. Sanitize your hands before approaching the Chalice (sanitizer stations will be available on the Solea).

**Please remember: It is YOUR CHOICE whether to ATTEND CHURCH or not.
It is YOUR CHOICE whether to RECEIVE Holy Communion or not.
DO NOT BE JUDGMENTAL of those who do or don't.**

STEWARDSHIP - HOW COSTLY WILL IT BE? A bishop spoke of the Christian way of life being costly. "It will cost you something to be a Christian." An engineer said: "After hearing the bishop and hearing the message on the naturalness of the Christian way, my gut reaction was, 'How costly it will be not to live a Christian life!'" To be a Christian you may have to give up some things, but not to be a Christian you have to give up everything – everything worthwhile. In giving up things for Christ, I gave up nothing but what subtracted from me, and when I got Him, I got everything that added to me allowing me to find the true way to God.

In this context, the test of living a Christian life, of being in Christ, is a humble, virtuous life lived in communion with the Church.

This year of 2021 our parish faces a reduced budget of \$800,000, without major repairs or costly renovations. To meet our financial obligations, we have set a goal of at least \$800,000 for our Stewardship Program to reach in pledges (average pledge \$1500). It is only with your love and generosity that this goal will be reached. Please remember that this goal is what our community needs to operate at and be vital in the lives of all our members.

If you haven't already submitted your 2021 Stewardship Pledge form to the church office, please do so today. When considering your pledge, please do not view it as "How little can I give?" but rather "How much can I offer to God and His Church?" 2021 Pledge forms are being mailed to those who haven't pledged for 2021 and are available in the church office as well.

As of February 16th, the church office has received 317 pledges for a total of \$263,709, which averages out to \$831 a pledge. Even though we show some improvement in our giving, we are still below the goals set by the Stewardship Committee. Remember that \$200 from every pledge goes to the support of the Archdiocese and the Metropolis of Chicago. Without our personal love and commitment of time, talent and resources – THERE IS NO CHURCH – and without the Church, then who will preach the Good News of Salvation in Jesus Christ?

If you are one of the 78 members who have failed to pay their 2020 stewardship that has resulted in a total unpaid balance over \$16,592, please do so today! If you haven't pledged for 2021 as yet, please do so today! In addition to the monetary pledge, just as importantly, the personal involvement and participation by all is needed not only in time of worship but in every affair of the Church.

EVERY PARISHIONER of a Greek Orthodox parish, 18 years and older, single or married according to Archdiocese regulations should be a supporting member, a steward, of a parish. Everyone should contribute their fair share to the financial support to their parish. We all need to have the willingness to make a commitment of faith and to "go on record" as being a believer and a supporter of God's work through His Church. Since the Coronavirus Pandemic hit, the income of our parish has been cut by 90% (loss of revenue from worship services, especially Holy Week and Easter, no Annual Summer Greek Fest, no banquet rentals, just to name some). To make giving easier for all our faithful, we have established an online program called [Tithe.ly/give](https://tithe.ly/give). This will allow those who have internet accessibility to continue to make offerings for stewardship payments, candles, Helping Hand, Food Pantry and other donations that help cover the costs of operating our parish with just a click of your computer keys. Look below and check out the link listed. It is a profession of faith when we all work together and help our church to better plan for its various financial needs and expenditures. Thank you!

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=1385847>

CHUCKLE: A man died and left his great wealth to his secretary. Naturally, his wife was furious. She went to have the inscription on his tombstone changed, but was too late. To change it now, she would need to buy a new stone. She thought for a moment. She didn't want to spend any more of her money, so she said, "Right after 'Rest in Peace' I want you to chisel in these words: 'Till We Meet Again.'"

YOUTH MEETING DATE: GOYA, Jr. GOYA, HOPE & JOY will be meeting Monday, March 1st, 6:30-7:30pm. These programs are open to the youth of our parish. GOYA: 8th-12th grade; Jr. GOYA: 5th-7th grade; HOPE & JOY: Kindergarten-4th grade.

BIBLE STUDY: Bible Study will be held via Zoom this Tuesday, March 2nd, 7:00 p.m. Fr. Dimitri will lead the discussion on the topic of the Gospel according to St. John. Everyone is welcomed to tune-in live and review it afterwards on Facebook or You Tube.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE: Registration for the March/April Faith Box is now open. Sign up at tinyurl.com/lentfaithbox.

Each month, families will have the opportunity to register to receive a box packed with activities, readings, discussion questions and games for the whole family! Families can pick up their box after church on Sunday, at the monthly Youth Night, or during the week and complete the different elements at their own pace. That way, everybody can have a few no-stress, faith-centered family nights each month focused on a particular Christian virtue. Just open the box, and the work is done! Contact Fr. Dimitri if you have any questions.

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE: Along with our usual needs of canned goods, boxed foods, and cleaning items, our Food Pantry is seeking donations of hams for Easter. Donations may be brought to church on Sundays or left at the church office during the week. Ham donations should be brought to church by March 31st. For more information regarding our Food Pantry, contact Karen Petalas at the Ross Township Office or Patty Makarounas through the church office.

Please note that the Meijer's Simply Give program is currently running thru April 10th. The Double Match days are Saturday, March 13th and Saturday, April 3rd.

JC'S CLOSET is in need of donations of new & packaged underwear and socks, new or gently used coats (all sizes) for men, women & children, as well as new or gently used sweatpants for men and women (sizes large to 3XL). Items may be dropped off at the church office. JC's Closet will be held on Friday, March 5th & 12th, 9:00-11:00 a.m. For details, see Eva Kostidis.

LENTEN FOOD SALE: Our Ladies Philoptochos will be selling homemade taramosalata, skordalia and laganas (Lenten Bread) on Sunday, March 14th, after worship services in the lobby of the Cultural Center. Cost is \$10.00 a container for Taramosalata, \$8.00 for Skordalia and \$6.00 per Lagana.

GOYA FUNDRAISER: On Sunday, March 7th, which also happens to be Meatfare Sunday, our GOYA will be holding a **Gyro Sale** as a fundraiser to benefit their scholarship fund. Each gyro plate will come with pita, a side of chips, and a cookie. Tomatoes, onions, and tzatziki will be served on the side. The cost for each plate will be \$10. Sales will begin after church and continue until 3pm or until we run out of food. You can preorder using our event page at: <https://tithelty/event-registration/#/3214540>.

Please support the efforts of our GOYA and enjoy a gyros before we start the fast of Great Lent.

METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO FANARI YOUTH LENTEN RETREAT: Our Cathedral has been chosen as one of the host sites for the Metropolis of Chicago Lenten Retreat taking place on Saturday, March 13th from 2:00-8:00 p.m. The retreat is open to all campers currently in grades 5-12, and registration is \$30 per camper. We are also in need of adult chaperones and hosts. Please join us and the Metropolis youth for a day of building up our faith together! With questions or to learn more, visit fanari.camp/retreat or contact Fr. Dimitri through the church office 219-769-2481.

TIME CHANGE: On Sunday, March 14th we spring forward with our time one hour. So make sure you turn your clocks ahead Saturday night before going to bed so you won't be late for church on Sunday.

SAINT OF THE DAY – JOHN CASSIAN THE CONFESSOR: This Saint was born about the year 350, and was, according to some, from Rome, according to others, from Dacia Pontica (Dobrogea in present-day Romania). He was a learned man who had first served in the military. Later, he forsook this life and became a monk in Bethlehem with his friend and fellow-ascetic, Germanus of Dacia Pontica, whose memory is also celebrated today. Hearing the fame of the great Fathers of Scete, they went to Egypt about the year 390; their meetings with the famous monks of Scete are recorded in Saint John's **Confferences**. In the year 403 they went to Constantinople, where Cassian was ordained deacon by Saint John Chrysostom; after the exile of Saint Chrysostom, Saints Cassian and Germanus went to Rome with letters to Pope Innocent I in defense of the exiled Archbishop of Constantinople. There Saint Cassian was ordained priest, after which he went to Marseilles, where he established the famous monastery of Saint Victor. He reposed in peace about the year 433.

The last of his writings was **On the Incarnation of the Lord, Against Nestorius**, written in 430 at the request of Leo, the Archdeacon of Pope Celestine. In this work he was the first to show the spiritual kinship between Pelagianism, which taught that Christ was a mere man who without the help of God had avoided sin, and that it was possible for man to overcome sin by his own efforts; and Nestorianism, which taught that Christ was a mere man used as an instrument by the Son of God, but was not God become man; and indeed, when Nestorius first became Patriarch of Constantinople in 428, he made much show of persecuting the heretics, with the exception only of the Pelagians, whom he received into communion and interceded for them to the Emperor and to Pope Celestine.

The error opposed to Pelagianism but equally ruinous was Augustine's teaching that after the fall, man was so corrupt that he could do nothing for his own salvation, and that God simply predestined some men to salvation and others to damnation. Saint John Cassian refuted this blasphemy in the thirteenth of his **Confferences**, with Abbot Chairemon, which eloquently sets forth, at length and with many citations from the Holy Scriptures, the Orthodox teaching of the balance between the grace of God on one hand, and man's efforts on the other, necessary for our salvation.

Saint Benedict of Nursia, in Chapter 73 of his Rule, ranks Saint Cassian's **Institutes** and **Confferences** first among the writings of the monastic fathers, and commands that they be read in his monasteries; indeed, the Rule of Saint Benedict is greatly indebted to the **Institutes** of Saint John Cassian. Saint John Climacus also praises him highly in section 105 of Step 4 of the **Ladder of Divine Ascent**, on Obedience.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Saturday of Souls – March 6th, 13th & 20th

Great Lent begins – Monday, March 15th

Vespers for St. Savvas of Kalymnos – April 17th

Palm Sunday – Sunday, April 25th

Orthodox Easter (Pascha) – Sunday, May 2nd

Ss. Constantine & Helen Vespers – Thursday, May 20th

Ss. Constantine & Helen Feast Day – Friday, May 21st

Grecian Festival – Friday, Saturday & Sunday, July 9th, 10th & 11th

Memorials will not be celebrated on the following Sundays in 2021: March 21st, April 4th & 25th, May 2nd & 9th, June 20th, August 15th, and November 21st

DONATIONS FOR THE FLOWERS FOR THE ICON OF THE VIRGIN MARY:

Each Friday evening during the Great Lent Period (March 19th & 26th, April 2nd, 9th & 16th), the Salutations to the Virgin Mary are offered. It is tradition that the icon of the Virgin Mary be adorned with flowers for these services. We ask families or individual parishioners wishing to contribute toward these flowers to contact the church office. Costs of the flowers are \$150 each week. Please be generous in your support.