

The Weekly Messenger – February 16, 2020
St. John Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church
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Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32

Sunday of Prodigal Son: And He said, ‘There was a man who had two sons....’”

This is how Christ begins what is perhaps the greatest of his parables, the one we know as the Parable of the Prodigal Son, but which could easily be titled the “Parable of the Two Sons” or the “Parable of the Compassionate Father.” With this parable, which we will hear at the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 28, we are invited to enter the “school of repentance”—Great Lent—and sit at the feet of the Master, so that we can hear the words of eternal life and “keep them.”

After receiving his portion of the inheritance, even before his father had died, the younger of the two sons “gathered all that he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living” [Luke 15:13]. This one sober understatement does not demand a great deal of imagination to yield its meaning. We know that *loose living* refers to a web of wrong choices, bad company, unrestrained satisfaction of “the passions,” and forgetfulness of God. This spiritually suicidal combination leads to bankruptcy on a further series of interrelated levels: the material, moral/ethical and spiritual. In no time, the prodigal son is forced to feed “on the pods that the swine ate” [Luke 15:16].

Read more: <https://oca.org/reflections/fr.-steven-kostoff/the-prodigal-son-from-a-far-country>

Commemorations for the Departed: Archbishop Nikon, Sara Dimitri, Sue Doukas-Plasari, Andi Steffa (3 yrs.), Nancy Gregory (5 yrs.) Deacon Stephen Stefani and those servicemen and women who have fallen asleep in the Lord in the service of their Country. *If you have a name to add to the Commemorations for the departed or the living please email info@stjohnsphila.org*

Commemorations for the Living: Betty Subashi, Roxane Ghicondey, Lee Constantine Elia, Janice Leyden, Lisa Kosta Bowser, Erin Thack, Sara, Paul, Lee Gedremenc, Diane Mallios, Evangeline Prifti, Lisa Kelley, Donna Hlavcek, George Robos, Virginia Daka, Haretina (Papa) Milo, Dhimiter Ndrecka, Pandeli, Jorgaq, Lefteri, and the men and women serving in the Armed Forces.

Monthly Giving for February: 8 or 16 oz water bottles

If you have information to share in the Weekly Messenger please send it to info@stjohnsphila.org

Thank-you Father Dennis for serving today!

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America will visit our parish and our sister parish, Ss. Peter & Paul Albanian Orthodox Church the weekend of Feb. 22-23. We are asking our parishioners to bring something to share at coffee hour – as we do for our Nameday Celebration!

OCMC Donations: As we have done in the past, our Parish donated \$500.00 to each of the 5 missionary families serving in Albania: Anastasia Pamela Barksdale, Georgia Gilman-Bendo, Nathan & Gabriela Hoppe, Dr. Jeffery & Caryn Macdonald, Dcn. Stephanos & Alexandria Risti. We also donated \$500.00 to Steve & Theophani Sarigianis who are preparing to go to Albania as missionaries. May God bless them as they work in Albania helping to spread the teaching of Jesus Christ!

Many thanks to those who made a 2019 Pledge: A list is attached containing the names of our parishioners who made a pledge last year. We are very grateful for your financial support to our parish. Pledges are used to pay the day to day bills incurred by the church, (electric, gas, insurance, water, etc.) Our goal (budgeted amount) for 2019 was \$60,000.00. We received 87 pledges totaling \$52,108.00. Our goal in 2020 is \$60,000. Please make a pledge (which is different from Icon, Pascha and Christmas donations). We now accept credit cards at the candle stand and online. Click [2020 Pledge](#)

Coffee Hour Sponsors: *if you are sponsoring coffee hour it would be greatly appreciated if you could stay after to assist with the clean-up - thank you!*

Feb 16th Pandeli & Haretina Milo in memory of Zaharula Milo

Feb 23rd Parishioners will bring various items (as we do at our Nameday Celebration)

March 1st and 8th No Sponsors

March 15th Stephanie Kosta March 22nd & 29th No Sponsors

Upcoming Events:

Feb 16th 3 yr. Memorial Zaharula Milo

Michael Gregory (Lay Vice Chair of the Albanian Archdiocese) will visit

Feb 22 & 23 Metropolitan Tikhon will visit our parish and Ss. Peter & Paul

Feb 23rd Sunday of the Last Judgement – Meatfare

March 1st Sunday of Forgiveness - Cheesefare

March 2nd Great Lent Begins

Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18 Presanctified Liturgy @ 7:00 PM

March 15th Semi Annual Parish Meeting during coffee hour.

March 25th Annunciation

April 5th Clergy Brotherhood Service @ 4:00 pm

Welcome to our visitors. Our church community thanks you for celebrating the Divine Liturgy with us. We invite you to join us for coffee hour and fellowship in the church hall following the Divine Liturgy.