



# The Messenger

Sunday, March 3, 2023  
Κυριακή, 3 Μάρτιος

Sunday of the Prodigal Son  
Κυριακή τοῦ Ἀσώτου

## Weekly Worship Guide

The Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation • Atlanta, GA  
The Holy Martyrs Eutropius, Cleonicus, and Basiliscus, Theodoretos the Holy Martyr of Antioch,  
Nonnita, mother of Saint David

Today Sunday School students will leave the Liturgy immediately after Holy Communion (do not wait for the Prayer of Thanksgiving). Classes will be held for 30 minutes.

\*Please note: Any students signed up to volunteer will not be dismissed until ALL classes are dismissed.

## The Holy Prodigal and the Compassionate Father



In the Parable of the Prodigal, God the Father, amazingly respects human freedom and will. The father of the parable didn't care about his authority, about what others would say about him, that he would lose his support - his child who assisted him. He is saddened by the departure but did not want to prevent it, though he could have. Sometimes the great freedom of God scandalizes. We would like Him to have more limits on us. We do not know how to appreciate and enjoy freedom. The love of the father is very noble. He wants near him children who love him and not slaves without freedom; frightened and terrified. He allows him to abuse his freedom, a very dangerous game. The fruit of a carob tree, you know, is sweet in the beginning and bitter in the end, just like sin. Without God man hungers, thirsts and is alone. An insatiable hunger and thirst, terrible loneliness. The chase for pleasure brought unbearable suffering. But the great love of his father accompanied him always. It made him not forget and be disappointed. He was completely assured of the love of his father and this saved him. What saved him also was his restless journey and his non-deferment. The salvific thought immediately was put to action.

The father waited for him, so great was his love. The Holy Fathers say the following: if this Gospel passage alone was saved out of the entire Gospel, it would be sufficient for the salvation of humanity. The parable should not be named after the prodigal son, but after the compassionate father.

We then encounter the eldest son in the parable. He seeks a reward for his work, brags about his moral greatness and feels incomparably better than his brother. He has no desire to share in the joy of his father over the return of his lost brother. These events removed his mask, and presented him as naked of every virtue. Eventually we have two prodigal sons. The first is the youngest, who repents and returns with tears in his eyes. The second, surprisingly, is disclosed to be a prodigal even though he never left his house. He is a prodigal in the courtyard and in his thoughts, and in his heart he makes a robber's cave. Even though he enters his father's house he is a brutal and upright Pharisee, who requires of God the punishment of sinners and the justification of those like himself. Both the publican and the prodigal wept, but the Pharisee and the eldest brother didn't weep at all because they had egos that did not allow them to weep. Caution and prayer are needed that God enlighten us to discern our situation, because it is a tragedy for someone to live within the Church and yet be out of it like the eldest son.

Fathers and family leaders, parents and teachers, must tolerate children, to teach them to be lovers of honor, to teach them by their bright example; they ought to be patient, to be hopeful and to pray.

Eventually the venerable publican and the holy prodigal did this, since they spoke by their deeds of real repentance, while the "righteous" eldest son and the Pharisee required recognition and respect, and are thus unrepentant and hypocrites. They do not participate in the joy of others, and are terrible egomaniacs. Let us therefore imitate the publican and the prodigal in their repentance that we may live in paradise now.

*By: Monk Moses the Athonite*

# Order of Hymns Following The Small Entrance

## Ἀναστάσιμον Ἀπολυτίκιον. Ἦχος πλ. β'.

Ἀγγελικαὶ δυνάμεις ἐπὶ τὸ μνήμα σου, καὶ οἱ φυλάσσοντες ἀπενεκρώθησαν· καὶ ἴστατο Μαρία ἐν τῷ τάφῳ, ζητοῦσα τὸ ἄχραντόν σου σῶμα. Ἐσκύλευσας τὸν ἄδην, μὴ πειρασθεὶς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ· ὑπήνησας τῇ Παρθένῳ, δωρούμενος τὴν ζωὴν. Ὁ ἀναστάς ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

## Ἀπολυτίκιον τῶν Μαρτύρων. Ἦχος δ'.

*Ταχὺ προκατάλαβε.*

Οἱ Μάρτυρές σου Κύριε, ἐν τῇ ἀθλήσει αὐτῶν, στεφάνους ἐκομίσαντο τῆς ἀφθαρσίας, ἐκ σοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν· σχόντες γὰρ τὴν ἰσχύν σου, τοὺς τυράννους καθεῖλον, ἔθραυσαν καὶ δαιμόνων, τὰ ἀνίσχυρα θράση. Αὐτῶν ταῖς ἰκεσίαις, Χριστέ ὁ Θεός, σῶσον τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

## Ἀπολυτίκιον τοῦ Ναοῦ. Ἦχος δ'.

Σήμερον τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν τὸ Κεφάλαιον, καὶ τοῦ ἀπ' αἰῶνος Μυστηρίου ἡ φανέρωσις, ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, Υἱὸς τῆς Παρθένου γίνεται, καὶ Γαβριὴλ τὴν χάριν εὐαγγελίζεται. Διὸ καὶ ἡμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ τῇ Θεοτόκῳ βοήσωμεν· Χαῖρε Κεχαριτωμένη, ὁ Κύριος μετὰ σοῦ.

## Κοντάκιον. Ἦχος γ'.

*Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον.*

Τῆς πατρῴας, δόξης σου, ἀποσκοπήσας ἀφρόνως, ἐν κακοῖς ἐσκορπίσα, ὃν μοι παρέδωκας πλοῦτον· ὅθεν σοι τὴν τοῦ Ἀσώτου, φωνὴν κραυγάζω· Ἥμαρτον ἐνώπιόν σου Πάτερ οἰκτίρμον, δέξαι με μετανοοῦντα, καὶ ποιήσόν με, ὡς ἓνα τῶν μισθίων σου.

## Resurrectional Apolytikion. Mode pl. 2.

The Angelic powers appeared at your tomb, the soldiers guarding it became like dead men, and Mary stood at your grave seeking, seeking your most pure body. But you made hades a captive; you were untouched by its might. You came to the virgin and granted life. O Lord, who rose from the dead, glory to you.

## Apolytikion of the Martyrs. Mode 4.

*Come quickly.*

Your Martyrs, O Lord, were worthily awarded by You \* the crowns of incorruption, in that they contested for You our immortal God. \* Since they possessed Your power, they defeated the tyrants, \* dashing the demons' powerless displays of defiance. \* O Christ God, at their fervent entreaties, save our souls.

## Apolytikion of the Church. Mode 4.

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the mystery which was hidden from eternity. The Son of God becomes the Virgin's Son, and Gabriel announces the grace of this Good News. Let us also join with him, calling to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Woman full of grace; the Lord is with you.

## Kontakion. Mode 3.

*On this day.*

I revolted 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.

## Epistle (St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 6:12-20)

Reader: Julianna Esper

**PROKEIMENON:** O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance.

**VERSE:** To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.

**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 (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 filled his belly 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, 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.'"

DIVINE LITURGY CONTINUES ON PAGE 51 OF THE DIVINE LITURGY BOOK

### Reminders for Receiving Holy Communion

Holy Communion is offered in the Orthodox Church only to those individuals baptized and/or chrismated (confirmed) in the Orthodox Faith. To participate in Holy Communion one must be in good standing with the Church spiritually (for example, married people must have had their marriage blessed in the Church; and, all must be without grave sin on their hearts). For all Orthodox Christians, the proper preparation for Holy Communion must be observed: that is, examination of conscience, confession, reading the prayers for Holy Communion, and the proper fasting. If you have any further questions about this, please speak with the clergy. Women should remove all lipstick when approaching for Holy Communion.

Thank you.

# Support our Cathedral

Welcome, everyone!

We extend a warm welcome to our visitors worshipping with us today in our Cathedral. You are invited to join us for our fellowship, following the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy in Carlos Hall next to the Church. Thank you for your visit! Please stop by our hospitality table and sign the register in the Narthex.

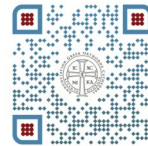
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Remy Hughes  
Anna Sophia Laszlo  
Helen Laszlo  
Sophia Moura  
Mina Papadopoulos  
Eleni Starks

### Parish Council

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Chris Adams  
Ted Kipreos  
Peter Poolos  
Stacie Nefos  
Athanasios Tiliakos

## Contact us

2500 Clairmont Road NE  
Atlanta, GA 30329

[office@atlgoc.org](mailto:office@atlgoc.org)  
(404) 633-5870  
Fax (404) 633-6018

Rev. Fr. Paul A. Kaplanis, Dean  
Rev. Fr. Christos P. Mars, Protopresbyter  
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