

*February 12, 2017*

*Bulletin*

*St. Nicholas Orthodox Church*

*Orthodox Church in America*

*2143 S. Center Rd, Burton, MI 48519*

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## **The Gospel according to Saint Matthew 28:16-20 (1st Matins Gospel)**

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.

**SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON — Tone 1. St. Meletius, Archbishop of Antioch (381). St. Aleksy (Alexius), Metropolitan of Moscow and Wonderworker of All Russia (1378). St. Meletius, Archbishop of Kharkov (1840). Ven. Mary (who was called Marinus), and her father, Ven. Eugene, at Alexandria (6th c.). St. Anthony, Patriarch of Constantinople (895). St. Kristo the Gardener (Albania—1752). The “IVERON” (IBERIAN) Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos.**

### **TROPARIA**

**(Tone 1)** When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: “Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! // Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou Who lovest mankind!”

**(Tone 4)** In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith, a model of meekness, and teacher of abstinence, so you won the heights by humility, and riches by poverty, O Holy Father Nicholas, intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

## **KONTAKION**

**(Tone 3)** I have recklessly forgotten Thy glory, O Father; and among sinners I have scattered the riches which Thou gavest me. And now I cry to Thee as the Prodigal: / “I have sinned before Thee, O merciful Father; / receive me a penitent, and make me as one of Thy hired servants!”

*The Prokeimenon in the First Tone: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee.*

**v. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just!**

**THE READING FROM THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE HOLY APOSTLE 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.

### *Alleluia, Tone 1*

**v. God gives vengeance to me, and subdues people under me.**

**v. He magnifies the salvation of the king, and deals mercifully with His Christ, with David and his seed forever.**

**THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT LUKE (15:11-32)** And Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of 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.’”

## **COMMUNION HYMN**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

### **The Prodigal Son: “From a far country...”**

“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].

Before succumbing to the temptation of trying my hand at an updated melodramatic script that would luridly describe the sins of the wayward young man of the parable—replete with money, sex and drugs—together with all of the didactic apparatus meant to strengthen our resolve to protect our children (since we are now too old for all of that), I would rather more modestly pause at the words about a journey “into a far country.” The far country of the parable is geographical, for the young man of the parable ventured far from his home. Yet, a “far country” can also refer to a hidden place in our interior landscape; a “place” in which we can distance ourselves from God and right living to a frightening degree, even if slowly and unintentionally. At first, that interior far country can prove to be appealing. It can appease our vanity, protect our pride and/or feed “the passions” that we can nurture, even if hidden from the view and censure of others. This is initially stimulating and seems to promise endless delight—perhaps like the endless freedom that an unsupervised dorm may offer to an innocent college student away from the sheltering, but seemingly restrictive, atmosphere of home.

When the emptiness of such a landscape becomes evident, we too can desperately desire to “feed on the pods that the swine ate.” The self-serving (or “self-help!”) philosophies on which we squandered our “inheritance” from God will no longer satisfy us, but in a restless and hungry search for something else to replace these, we can even fall to the level of “swinish delights”—anything to relieve our boredom or frustrations. Without moving anywhere, and without changing the patterns of our lifestyle, we can still withdraw to a “far country” in that interior landscape that can prove to be as treacherous as any unknown environment of the exterior world. It is said of the prodigal son of the parable, that when at “rock bottom,” he “came to himself” [Luke 15:17]. This is certainly one of the key expressions found in this endlessly rich parable. The young man found his right mind, his sanity was restored, and basically he “got a grip on reality”—an undramatic, but perfect, way to describe “conversion,” or the process of turning back toward God and the warm embrace of our heavenly Father.

A certain clarity of thought is needed to find our way home when we drift off toward a far country. The short-lived rock band of the late 1960s, Blind Faith, had an intriguing song entitled “Can’t Find My Way Home.” Perhaps that was an honest and clear-sighted assessment of the band’s state of mind at that time (money, sex and drugs?) and a poignant recognition of being in a “far country.” Two other songs on the album, however—“In the Presence of the Lord” and “Sea of Joy”—may have pointed to more promising discoveries. Every year, through the lectionary of the

Church especially in this pre-lenten season of preparation, we are powerfully reminded of just how far away from “home” we may actually be in mind and heart. If we have been equally prodigal with the gifts bestowed upon us by God, then we can equally “come to ourselves” and return home to the embrace of our compassionate Father.

Fr. Steven Kostoff

February 12, 2017



**CANDLE INTENTIONS FOR THE HEALTH AND BLESSINGS OF**

Noah and Alexander Gonser	Their Parents
Health & Blessings for Matushka Lisa, Allen Adams, Anna Branoff, Gloria Zelenko, Nik Evanenko, Alyson Wilhelm, Kate Stevens, Dorothy Goodman, Noah Gonser, Jake Kusluski, Jim Henry and Reggie Jehnsen	Adams Family

**ETERNAL LIGHT AT THE ALTAR (May, 8)**

Blessed Repose, Anne Smith – 1 year	Diane Zambito
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**CANDLE INTENTIONS FOR ALL THOSE IN BLESSED REPOSE**

Blessed Repose Ielita Daba & Sandra Henry-Memory Eternal	Adams Family
In memory of Evanka Elieff on her 89 <sup>th</sup> Birthday	Her Family



Welcome all of our friends and visitors to St. Nicholas! Please join us for fellowship, coffee and donuts in our fellowship hall following the Divine Liturgy.

**THANK YOU** to Tom Batzos, Janja Beslach, Calvin & Ruth Conrad, Connie & Nick Maxim, Fred Paul and Stojan Prusac for coming to take down all of the Christmas Decorations in the church.

**TODAY IS GODPARENT SUNDAY** Thank you to all who submitted the names of their godparents and godchildren for remembrance at today’s Divine Liturgy.

**CHARITY MINISTRIES**

**HOPE IN A BOX** is collecting shampoo for the month of February. Place the items in the Blue Box in the hall. Catholic Charities Community Closet will distribute the items.

**FOOD DRIVE** Place non-perishable food items in the other blue box in the hall.

**NORTH END SOUP KITCHEN** We serve Thursday, March 2 from 9 am to 1 pm. Please mark your calendar and plan to be there if you can. Our numbers have been dwindling and it makes it difficult to get all of the work done when so few are there to help.

**THE FIRST MEMORIAL SATURDAY** is Saturday, February 18. The forms to list the names of the departed are located at the candle stand. Please let those know that do not attend on a regular basis. The forms were not included in the February bulletin.

**MEATFARE LUNCHEON** will be held on Sunday, February 19 following the Divine Liturgy. The Menu will include roasts, ćevapi, baked potato bar and desserts. Free-will offerings will be accepted.

**CHEESEFARE LUNCHEON** will be held on Sunday, February 26 following the Divine Liturgy. The menu consists of Deviled Eggs, Blintz, Pierogi and Mac n Cheese. We will collect a free will offering. Please be generous. If you would like to help with the Cheesefare Luncheon, please see the sign-up sheet in the hall or any member of the parish council.

**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** has been postponed to next Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:45 pm. If you are unable to attend, please contact the parish office.

**MEMORY ETERNAL**

+Alexandros (Alex) Georgopoulos, father of Mark and Nicco, brother of Mary Batzos and Bill Georgopoulos fell asleep in the Lord on Tuesday, February 7. May God grant his servant +Alexandros blessed repose and rest among the saints.

+Vlado Kocovski, husband of Nancy (Evanka) Kocovski. fell asleep in the Lord on Wednesday, February 8. May God grant his servant +Vlado blessed repose and rest among the saints.

+Thomka (Thomai) Brayannis, fell asleep in the Lord on Sunday, February 12. She was the widow of Tony Brayanis, who fell asleep in the Lord seven years ago (2/12/2010). May God grant his servant +Thomka blessed repose and rest among the saints.

***Schedule of services and events for the week of February, 12<sup>th</sup> :***

**Monday, February 13**

12-3 pm	Communion Calls in Caro & Bay City
5-8 pm	+Alex Georgopoulos viewing at Swartz Funeral Home
7 pm	Viewing
	Parastas

**Tuesday, February 14**

10 am	+Alex Georgopoulos viewing at church
11 am	Burial Service at church followed by interment at Evergreen Cemetery
5-8 pm	+Thomka (Thomai) Brayanis viewing at Swartz Funeral Home
6-8 pm	Book Club @ St. George
7 pm	Parastas

**Wednesday, February 15**

	No Divine Liturgy
10 am	+Thomka (Thomai) Brayanis viewing at church
11 am	Burial Service at church followed by interment at Evergreen Cemetery

**Saturday, February 18**

4:45 pm	<b>MEMORIAL SATURDAY (ZADUŠNICA)</b>
5 pm	Trisagion for all our departed
	Vespers

**Sunday, February 19**

9:30 am	<b>MEATFARE</b>
10 am	Third Hour
	Divine Liturgy
	No Church School

**Offerings for the week February 5, 2017**

<i>Weekly Offerings</i>	\$1,916.00
<i>Estimated Average Weekly Expenses</i>	\$4,034.03
	-\$2118.03

*83 people were in attendance on  
Sunday, February 5, 2017*