

Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church

THE WEEKLY CHURCH BULLETIN

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www.stconstantinehelen.org

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2018

Κυριακή 4η Φεβρουαρίου 2018

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΣΩΤΟΥ

Αποστ: Α΄ Κορ. 6:12-20

Ευαγγ: Λουκα 15:11-32

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Today's Readings

Epistle: 1 Cor. 6:12-20

Gospel: Luke 15:11-32



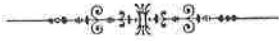
THE LONG ROAD HOME

Today's reading of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, offers us a reading that many of us know, but there is a reason that our Holy Orthodox Church gives us this very special lesson, each and every year on the Sunday after the beginning of Triodion. As this passage begins, we heard that there was once a man who had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, I want right now what's coming to me." So the father divided the property between them. It wasn't long before the younger son packed his bags and left. He wasted everything he had and had nothing to eat. He had to take a job feeding some pigs. That brought him to his senses. He said, I'm going back to my father. I'll say to him, "Father, I've sinned against God, I've sinned against you; I don't deserve to be called your son. Please hire me as a worker." And so he did. He took the long road home. While he was still a long way off, his father saw him. The father ran out and hugged him. His son kept his promise and started to ask forgiveness, but his father was so happy to see him that he called his servants, "Quick. Bring him a clean set of clothes and dress him. Put the family ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. We're going to feast! We're going to have a great time! My son is here—given up for dead and now alive!" And they began to have a great time. The other brother heard the festivities but he wasn't happy. His father explained that he should be happy because his brother was lost and now he was found. He was gone, now he is back. In just a few short words, Jesus shows us the selfishness and sinfulness of all of us sometimes.

Taking a look at the Prodigal Son, we can learn about the steps away from God and the steps that will take us back to God. He didn't just wake up one morning cleaning and feed the animals. He ended up there because he made some bad choices. He always had a good father - but he didn't appreciate it. The Bible simply says "he wasted all his money on wild living." He was free, he did what he wanted. That was...until he ran out of money. He found himself starving to death. He said to himself - Now what do I do? That's the problem with sin. Things might feel good for a while, but we are never truly satisfied. We might think we are happy for a second, but then we suffer. We allow ourselves to walk away from God's blessings and our lives end up a mess. The good news is: we can always come back home to the blessing that only God can give.

The son started the road back, when "he came to his senses." A real change happened, first he was saying "Give me money, give me my freedom." Now he was saying, "please, make me one of your hired servants." That's what it is to be sorry – this is what real repentance is – a complete change inside.

And with that change came the grand celebration that our Father is ready to give to all of us, His happiness when we return to Him. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, our Lord is saying "I love you and I want you to return home." Let us all get on that long road and walk back, just like the Prodigal Son, let's get that hug and be part of that celebration that God has waiting for all of us.



2018 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Let us all do our Best for Our Home...

Stewardship is giving to "Our Home" our best, which is a portion of the many gifts that our Lord gives to us. "Our Home" needs our support to maintain and grow its vital ministries. Stewardship is a spiritual offering that appeals to our generosity.

Our parish is committed to an open stewardship program, without minimums or dues. We ask that everyone search their hearts (those who are able) to increase our Stewardship 2018 Commitment which will enable us to expand our programs and address capital improvements.

Everything we have is a result of the many blessings from God. "Our Home" needs our support in many ways. The life and success of "Our Home" relies on everyone's commitment and participation to the many activities that we offer.

To make a One-Time Gift:

Online Giving: Via PayPal or Easy Tithe; go to www.stconstantinehelen.org

In Person: Stop into the Church Office and you may pay by Cash, Check or Credit Card;

Use the Kiosk located in the Lobby of the Church complex and pay by Credit Card

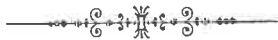
By mail: Mail your check or credit information to the Church office (do not mail cash!)

By phone: Call (708) 974-3400 and provide the necessary information

To set up Recurring Giving:

Online Giving:

Set up recurring contributions via Paypal or Easy Tithe; go to www.ssch.us; (Options include monthly intervals and selection of days of giving)



**Our Parish is hosting this year's
Sunday of Orthodoxy
PAN- ORTHODOX VESPERS
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2018
at 6:30 pm**

Please see the enclosed flyer for details



MESSAGE FROM FATHER TOM...

Let's all come together as a family for the big events of February. This afternoon, let's be here for the Super Bowl Party hosted by The Παρεα. Also in the coming week, our Korae Student Council sponsors a Family Trivia Night on Wednesday, February 7th and our St. Helen's Womens Philoptochos hosts Night With Bouzoukia on Saturday, February 10th. Check out the enclosed flyers in our bulletin for more information and please consider joining us for these big events!

May we search our hearts to renew our commitment to our Parish in our Stewardship 2018 campaign. Let us all do our best for Our Home.

Let us all join together this month for the needy of our greater Palos community and support the Sunday Church School who have organized a Food Drive that will be collecting canned and non-perishable items the entire month of February

Please remember that whatever your pastoral need - **I am at your service** - please contact me in the Church Office at (708) 974-3400 or email at Tomdemed@aol.com

13th District AHEPA Scholarship Foundation

Applications for 2018 Awards are available in the church office or by visiting the District webpage at www.ahepa.org/ and follow the prompts to District 13. Application deadline is March 15, 2018.



FEBRUARY FOOD DRIVE

Organized by our Sunday Church School

"If you can't feed a hundred people, then just feed one."

-Mother Theresa



Our parish is sponsoring a Food Drive (non-perishable items) for the entire month of February.

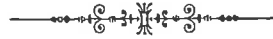
Food may be dropped off at the Church or East Room lobbies at any time.





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΣΩΤΟΥ

Ευαγγ. ανάγνωσμα: Λουκ. 15, 11-32



Στο σημερινό Ευαγγελικό ανάγνωσμα, ακούσαμε την παραβολή του ασώτου υιού. Η παραβολή αυτή αντικατοπτρίζει την ανθρώπινη κατάσταση. Με την αμαρτία, έχουμε χάσει την στενή εκείνη σχέση με τον Θεό για την οποία δημιουργηθήκαμε. Έχουμε χαράξει δική μας πορεία, η οποία μας οδήγησε μακριά από τον Θεό και την ζωή μας στην πτώχευση. Μπορούμε όμως να επιστρέψουμε.

Αν αναγνωρίσουμε την κατάσταση στην οποία βρισκόμαστε, έχουμε ήδη πάρει τον δρόμο της επιστροφής. Ο Θεός, όπως ο πατέρας της περικοπής, αναμένει. Κι όταν μας δει από μακριά, τρέχει να μας συναντήσει, να μας αγκαλιάσει, να μας καλωσορίσει.

Η παραβολή του ασώτου παρουσιάζει την επιστροφή του ανθρώπου από την εξορία. Ο άσωτος, λέει το Ευαγγέλιο, πήγε σε μια μακρινή χώρα και εκεί σπατάλησε την περιουσία του στις ασωτείες. Μια μακρινή χώρα, ένας μοναδικός ορισμός της ανθρώπινης κατάστασης που πρέπει να αποδεχτούμε καθώς αρχίζουμε την προσέγγισή μας στο Θεό.

Αν νοιώθουμε άνετοι σ' αυτόν τον κόσμο, στη ζωή του κόσμου, στην κατάσταση αυτή της πνευματικής πτώχευσης, δεν θα καταλάβουμε ποτέ τι σημαίνει μετάνοια – επιστροφή.

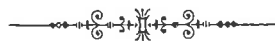
Η μετάνοια δεν είναι η απαρίθμηση αμαρτιών. Είναι το αίσθημα της αποξένωσης από τον Θεό, από την χαρά της κοινωνίας μαζί Του, από την αληθινή ζωή όπως την δημιούργησε και μας την έδωσε Εκείνος. Είναι να παραδεχτούμε ότι έχουμε λερώσει, έχουμε χάσει την πνευματική μας ομορφιά, ότι είμαστε πολύ μακριά από το πραγματικό μας σπίτι. Μετάνοια είναι η βαθιά επιθυμία επιστροφής, να αποκτήσουμε ξανά το χαμένο μας σπίτι.

Λάβαμε από τον Θεό θαυμαστά πλούτη. Πρώτα απ' όλα τη ζωή και τη δυνατότητα να τη χαιρόμαστε, να την ομορφαινουμε με νόημα, αγάπη και γνώση. Με το Βάπτισμα λάβαμε νέα ζωή εν χριστώ, τη δωρεά του Αγίου Πνεύματος, την ειρήνη και τη χαρά της ουράνιας Βασιλείας, τη δύναμη να είμαστε τέκνα Θεού. Όλα αυτά τα χάσαμε και τα χάνουμε διαρκώς, όχι μόνο με συγκεκριμένες αμαρτίες, αλλά με την μεγαλύτερη αμαρτία, την απομάκρυνση της αγάπης μας από τον Θεό, προτιμώντας την «μακρινή χώρα» από το όμορφο σπίτι του πατέρα.

Η Εκκλησία όμως μας θυμίζει τι έχουμε εγκαταλείψει, τι έχουμε χάσει. Και καθώς μας τα υπενθυμίζει, αισθανόμαστε βαθιά αυτά που εκφράζονται στο κοντάκι της ημέρας: «Της πατρώας δόξης σου, αποσκιρτήσας αφρόνων, εν κακοίς εσκόρπισα, ον μοι παρέδωκας πλούτον, όθεν σοι την του Ασώτου φωνήν κραυγάζω. Ήμαρτον ενώπιόν σου, ουκέτι ειμί άξιος κληθήναι υιός σου, ποιήσόν με ως ένα των μισθίων σου.»

Καθώς αναλογιζόμαστε αυτά, βρίσκουμε μέσα μας την επιθυμία της επιστροφής και «αναστάς πορεύσομαι προς τον Πατέρα μου και ερώ αυτό, Πάτερ, ήμαρτον εις τον ουρανόν και ενώπιόν σου, ουκέτι ειμί άξιος κληθήναι υιός σου, ποιησόν με ως ένα εκ των μισθίων σου.»

Στο ταξίδι αυτό είμαστε όλοι συνοδοιπόροι. Όλοι έχουμε ανάγκη μετανοίας. Ο Πατέρας ο ουράνιος περιμένει να πάρουμε τον δρόμο της επιστροφής, περιμένει με ανοιχτή αγκαλιά να μας δεχτεί. Πηγή: <http://www.orthodoxos.com.gr>

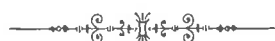


Σαββατο 10η Φεβρουαρίου - Α΄ ΨΥΧΟΣΑΒΒΑΤΟ

Ώρα 9:00 π.μ - Θεία Λειτουργία Επιμνημόσυνη Δεησις

Κυριακή 11η Φεβρουαρίου - ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΗΣ ΑΠΟΚΡΕΩΣ

Ώρα 8:00 π.μ - 11:15 π.μ Ορθρος και Θεία Λειτουργία



ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK

Today, Sunday, February 4:

4 – 11 p.m. Super Bowl Party see details below

Monday, February 5:

7:30 p.m. GOYA

Tuesday, February 6:

7:00 p.m. High School Boys B-Ball Practice

Wednesday, February 7:

3:30 p.m. Youth Choir

6:00 p.m. Koraes Trivia Night

Thursday, February 8:

6:00 p.m. Girls / Biddy / Grade School
B-Ball practice

Friday, February 9:

5:30 p.m. JOY B-Ball Rookies Camp /
Awards & Pizza Party

6:30 p.m. JOY B-Ball Mighty Mights Game #10

7:30 p.m. JOY B-Ball Minors Game #10

8:30 p.m. JOY B-Ball Majors Game #10

Saturday, February 10:

1st Saturday of Souls

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy / Memorials

7:00 p.m. St. Helen Philoptochos
Nite With Bouzoukia

GOAL B-Ball Playoff Games

Dates and Locations to be announced

Sunday, February 11:

Meatfare Sunday

8:00 – 11:15 a.m. Orthros / Divine Liturgy

SUPER BOWL PARTY

Sponsored by

The Παρεα

Men's Fellowship

In our East Room

TONIGHT!!!

4pm – 11pm

Adults \$35 (12 & Over) * Kids \$10 (4 & over)

* Kids 3 & under free

Open Gym & Jumpies for the kids

Games & Food for all

MEMORIALS

40 Day Ioannis Spatharakis

3 Month Nikolaos Kapsaskis

3 Years Magdaline Pappas

6 Years Ioannis Psarakis

† May their memory be eternal. †

FUNERALS

The following funerals were held recently.

Constantinos (Gus) Lukis – January 29th

Maria Papadakis – January 29th

† May their memory be eternal. †

KORAES FAMILY TRIVIA NIGHT

Wednesday, February 7th

In the East Room

Doors open at 6:00pm * Event begins at 6:30pm

For additional information please call

(708) 974-3402 or email galikakos@koraes.org

A Nite with the Bouzoukia

Saturday February 10, 2017

At 7 pm In the East Room

Music by Rythmos

Adults: \$45.00

Children up to 16 years of age \$20.00

Sponsored by our

St Helen Women's Philoptochos

Reservations must be made by February 2,

by contacting Penny Vitogiannis at 708-289-9004

or pvitogiannis@comcast.net

TODDLER GROUP

Please note that our Toddler Group
will NOT be meeting in the month of February.

The program will resume in March.

See you...



...Next SUNDAY!