



The Meeting of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

February 2

The Feast of the Meeting of Our Lord Jesus Christ commemorates the Entrance of Our Lord into the temple 40 days after His Nativity. At that time, in fulfillment of the Old Testament Law, Christ Our Savior was carried by His Mother and the Holy and Righteous Joseph to the temple, where a Holy Prophet, Simeon the Just, received the Divine Savior into his arms and presented Him at the Holy of Holies.

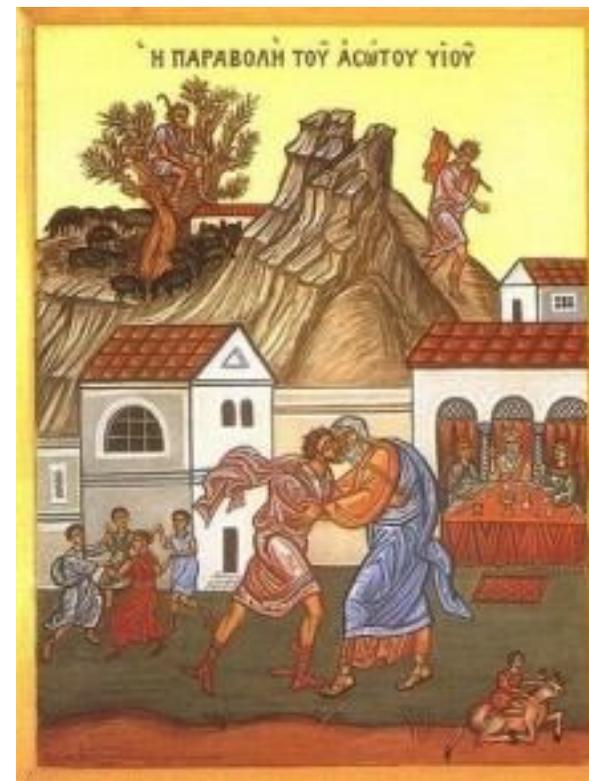
Liturgically this feast is called “The Meeting-The Encounter” for it was at this event that the Lord God, Our Savior Jesus Christ, first “encountered” the people of the Law in the Jewish Sanctuary. The Holy and Righteous Simeon had been promised that he would not die before he would behold with his own eyes the Messiah. When he received Our Lord, he joyfully prayed this prayer - which is properly sung at the time of Vespers:

“Now you shall dismiss your servant, O Lord, according to Your word in peace because my eyes have seen your Salvation, which you gave prepared before the face of all peoples: a Light of revelation for the gentiles, and the Glory of your people, Israel.”

Candles in our Holy Church

For the Feast of the Encounter-Meeting of Our Lord it is a pious and venerable tradition in our Holy Church to bless candles. It is impossible to imagine an Eastern Church without burning candles. Candles made of beeswax are used in our Holy Church as a form of sacrifice and devotion to God or Saints. They are used in various Divine Services and ceremonies and are symbolic of Christ, who is “the Light of the World.” According to a different symbolism, the two elements of a candle represent the two natures of Christ: the Divine (the burning wick) and the Human (the wax body).

According to our venerable father Simeon of Thessalonica (XV century), the pure wax symbolizes the purity and innocence of people offering it. The wax is offered as a sign of our repentance for our obstinacy and willfulness. The softness and malleability of the wax speak of our readiness to obey God. The flame of the candle shows the warmth of love to God. We should not put up a candle just for the sake of the ritual, with our hearts remaining cold. The outward action must be supported by a prayer, be it even a simple one expressed in your own words.



January 27, 2013

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Transfer of the Precious Relics of our Father among the Saints John Chrysostom

Octoechos Tone 2

Changeable Parts – Pages 31-32
in the Booklet of Changeable Parts
(Small white book)

Announcements:

Meeting of Our Lord

On Saturday, February 2nd, we will celebrate the Feast of the Meeting of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with Simeon and Anna. To celebrate this Feast day, Friday evening, February 1st, we will have Great Vespers, Litiya and Blessing of Candles at 6:30 p.m. If you wish to have your candles blessed, please place them on the Tetrapod in the center of our Church. Remember to come and to celebrate this Feast that has been celebrated in the Eastern Church since the 4th century.

Last Call: House Blessing

This week I will complete the blessing of homes in our parish. If you still wish to have your house blessed, **please fill out the form**, which is available in the Church vestibule. Once the form has been received, you will be contacted by phone to schedule this pastoral visitation. Thank you.

Easter Candy Order forms are available. They are due February 17, 2013

Chinese Auctions

Easter comes early this year, March 31. That means that our Svyachene or Easter Dinner will be early as well. As a parish fundraiser, we usually have various items or gift cards available for auction at the dinner. Please consider donating all or part of a basket or a gift card. Ideas for baskets include bath items, snack items, puzzles and puzzle books, candy, wine, etc. Gift cards can be purchased for restaurants, grocery stores, bookstores, etc. Please consider making a donation. Please see Father Ihor or Olga Perkun if you want to make a donation or want more information.

Donations

With the cold weather, our utility costs are increasing. Please consider making an additional donation to assist in paying these large bills. Thank you for considering making an additional donation.

Mardi Gras Party

Here in our local community, Brighton Heights Lutheran Church (3830 California Avenue) invites us to their annual Mardi Gras, which will take place on Sunday, February 10th from 12:30-4 p.m. Music will be by the Blue Orphans Band. Delicious food and coffee & desserts will be served. There is a Free Will offering to benefit various ministries. You can make your reservations by calling 412-761-8545.

Pyrohy

Thanks to all our dedicated women and men that come faithfully to be part of this parish activity. **Help is very much needed with our pyrohy activity!** The upcoming Lenten season is our busiest time of the year and with this being the busiest time, we also generate income for our parish. I ask that you PLEASE consider helping with this activity. Help is very much needed now on Wednesday (7:00 a.m.) when the potatoes and sauerkraut are being prepared. On Thursday (7:00 a.m.) we need more help with the production itself. Please come and give us a hand with this fundraiser that helps with the expenses of the parish.

Collection- May God bless you...

Total for Sunday, January 20, 2013 was **\$1206.00**

(Collection - \$1171.00, Loose & candles - \$55.00)

Sincere thanks to all for your kindness and generosity to our Holy Church!



Sunday of the Prodigal Son

In today's Gospel reading we heard one of the most familiar yet most moving of the Lord's parables – the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Like many of the Lord's parables, this wonderful story of repentance and reconciliation can and should be understood on a variety of levels.

First, we see the Prodigal Son representing the entire human race: a race created in the image and likeness of God and therefore destined to inherit all the good things of the Heavenly Father, but also a race who chose to use its God-given freedom to depart from the Lord's House, from Paradise, and to journey into a far

country – a country subject to sin, corruption, and death – all in search of autonomy and freedom from God.

And in a second way, on the historical level, we see the Prodigal Son representing the Gentile people, a people who, unlike the Jews who can be likened to the older more faithful son in the parable, wandered about in profligate living, giving themselves up to pleasure-seeking and the worship of idols, feeding upon irrational pleasures as the pigs in the parable fed on their pods. In both of these cases, we see the Prodigal Son as the one who chose to leave God in order to live according to his own ways and ideas, according to his own agenda, according to what he wants rather than what the Lord knows is best. And in both cases, we see the pitiful state to which this ungodly freedom leads. In the first case, the human race found itself subject to sin, the devil, and death. And in the second case, the Gentile people found themselves subject to their passions and under the influence of false gods.

Yet, we know that in Christ, God has called back both the Gentiles and the entire human race, giving all the opportunity to be cleansed of their sins in the waters of baptism and to be adopted as children of God through the descent of the Holy Spirit. So for us Christians, this parable of the Prodigal Son is something of a recap of salvation history: through sin we departed from God into the far country of sin, death, and corruption, but then later through Christ we were granted reentrance to His Father's house, not as slaves but as adopted sons and daughters, joint heirs of the riches of heaven.

