





### ***Encounter-Meeting of Our Lord***

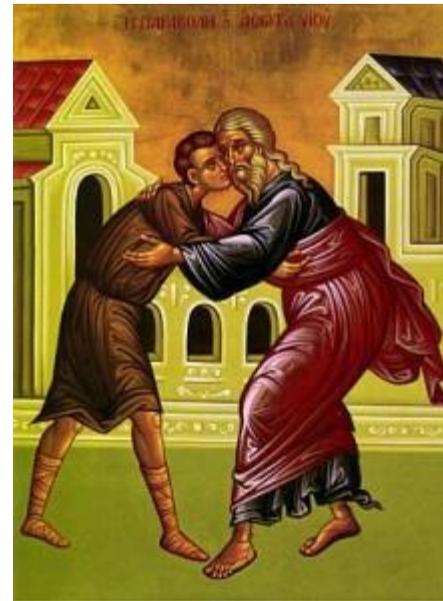
Many years before the coming of Christ there lived a very pious and saintly man called Simeon. He was one of the most intelligent Jewish scholars of his day. Simeon found himself praying for the day that the Savior would come and deliver all Israel (and the world) from sin. Simeon waited for many years, and finally one evening as he knelt in prayer, he heard the voice of God saying to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Simeon was filled with great joy and fervently prayed each day that the Messiah would come into the world. Holy Tradition tells us that Simeon was over 150 years old when the Promise of God

was fulfilled. Holy Scripture tells us that finally on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, forty days after the birth of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary brought the Christ child to the Temple for Presentation. It was common Jewish practice to bring the first-born male child to the Temple and offer him to the service of the Lord. It was here that Simeon waited patiently that day as he had done for so many years. The Virgin Mary presented the Christ child to Simeon, who took the infant child in his trembling hands and recited the following beautiful prayer which is chanted in the Eastern Church every evening during the Vesper services: *“Lord now let Your Servant go in peace according to Your promise, because my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared in the presence of all people, a light to the Gentiles, and for glory to 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.” When we see so many candles everywhere, we know that Christ is everywhere in the whole church, our homes, and He is in us, too. 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).



**Jan. 28, 2018**

Sunday of the Prodigal Son, Tone 1;  
Our Venerable Father Ephrem the Syrian (373);

**Changeable Part: Pages 2-3**

*In the Booklet of Changeable Parts (Small white book)*

## **Announcements:**

**Sincere Thanks** to those who helped to clean-up a Christmas decorations last week.

### **Encounter of Our Lord**

On February, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will celebrate the Feast of the Encounter-Meeting of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To celebrate this Feast day we will have Thursday evening, February 1st, Vespers Divine Liturgy with the Blessing of Candles at 7:00 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 Day that has been celebrated in the Eastern Church since the fourth century.

### **All Souls Saturday**

The 1<sup>st</sup> All Souls Saturday will be celebrated on Saturday, February 3rd, at 8:30 a.m. On these All Souls Saturdays it is tradition in our Holy Church to prayerfully remember our beloved departed family members, loved ones, etc. Divine Liturgy will be celebrated followed by a Panikhida when the names of all those deceased are commemorated out loud. Amongst your offertory envelopes you have a grey envelope for the commemoration of departed souls marked SOROKOUSTY (January 14). Please write the names of your deceased loved ones on this envelope and drop the envelope in the collection basket or bring them to the parish office.

Easter Candy Order forms are available. They are due February 25, 2018

Prayer in the Life of the Church Pastoral Letter of the synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in 2017 to Clergy, Monastics, and Laity in English and Ukrainian can be found in the church vestibule, or by following the link: <http://stjosaphateparchy.com/prayer-in-the-life-of-the-church-2017>

A Holidays Loan Special is being offered by Ukrainian Selfreliance of Western PA Federal Credit Union. Borrow \$1,000 at 1% for 1 year (minimum monthly payment \$83.79) or borrow \$2,000 at 2% for 2 year (min. monthly payment \$85.08). Completed application loan request is Mary Maleski Daniel Holowaty Chris Miller Tillie Volanski Ted Hritzko Helen Moskal Linda Warman required. For more information, call 412-481-1865. Limited time offer ends January 31, 2018.

**Prayer List:**

Make a point of praying for everyone on the prayer list. If you don't have one, contact the office and we'll send you one. In a special way, at this time, remember the following members of our parish family: **Alice Hooge, Eva Hlovchiec, Barbara Fedora, Thomas Orr, Patricia Della-Regione, Michael Pyptyk, Mary Senchesen, Jane Chulack, Helen Fedenko, Alexandra Kozak and Rose Shedno.**

**Pyrohy**

Our total income from last week's sale was \$375.00. Sincere thanks to all our dedicated pyrohy workers for their hard work and dedication. Thank you!

**Collection- May God bless you...**

The grand total for Sunday of January 21, 2017 was **\$1,400.00**  
(Collection: \$870.00, Loose & candles: \$35.00, Pyrohy: \$375.00, Theophany Dinner: \$120.00)

***Sincere thanks to all of you for your kindness and generosity!***



**Please remember the Ukrainian Eparchy of St. Josaphat in Parma and your parish of St. George in your will.**

***Sunday of the Prodigal Son***

The parable of the Prodigal Son speaks of many things including the terrible corrupting effects of sin, the unconditional love of God and the hard work and joy of REPENTANCE. Can repentance be joyful?

Repentance is much more than making a list and admitting our sins. It implies the willingness to make a radical transformation. Metanoia-μετάνοια, the Greek word for repentance, literally means to turn around, to change one's mind or direction.

Repentance cannot be merely a recognizing sin in our lives. We must also change the way we think about ourselves, about God, about life itself. The Prodigal Son came to believe he was invincible.

Notice, he did not change his mind on his own. Running out of money and into debt changed it for him, but a real transformation began in him when he realized the way to end his suffering: to return home. Facing the consequences at home, he reasoned, would be far better than continuing life in a pigpen. He changed his mind. He accepted that he was not invincible. I'll bet at some point he attempted to blame his father for his ill fortune while he ate those pods. Do we not usually look for someone else to blame when things don't go right? Eventually he came to know the truth. He came to understand that no one else was to blame. His understanding of himself changed at that moment. He came face to face with reality, with his stupid decision and irresponsible behavior. He stood and walked away not only from a pigpen, but from a lie.

If we want to make progress during this upcoming Great Fast-Lent we too must turn away from the lies around which we have built our lives. That is why the Church asks us to begin the Lenten journey by first seeking one another's forgiveness and giving it in the great ritual of Forgiveness Vespers. We must take responsibility for our actions and forgive any who have wronged us. Then we are instructed through one of the Church's holy prayers "to still all earthly and material thoughts." On this Sunday, together with the Prodigal Son let us also embrace the idea of repentance as embracing a new way of seeing and living life. Amen.

