

RUTHENIAN RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

Parents: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.

Response: Amen.

Parents: Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, everywhere present and filling all things, Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life, come and dwell within us, cleanse us of all stain, and save our souls, O gracious One.

Children: Holy ✠ God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. *(Three times)*

Glory be to the Father ✠ and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; Lord, cleanse us of our sins; Master, forgive our transgressions; Holy One, come to us and heal our infirmities for your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy! *(Three times)*

Glory be to the Father ✠ and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE 5

O faithful, let us praise and adore the Word eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
and born of the Virgin for our salvation.

For he chose to ascend the cross in the flesh and to suffer death,
and to raise the dead by his glorious resurrection.

EPISTLE: 1 CORINTHIANS 6:12 - 20

Brethren, all things are lawful for me, but not all things are fitting. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of anyone. Food is for the belly, and the belly for food, but God will destroy both the one and the other. Now, the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. For God has raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of a prostitute? By no means! Or do you not know that one who cleaves to a prostitute becomes one body with her? *For the two, it is said, shall be one flesh* (Gn 2:24).

But he who cleaves to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee immorality. Every sin a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God and that you are not your own? For you have been bought at a great price. Glorify God therefore in your body and in your soul which both are God's.

GOSPEL: LUKE 15:11 - 32

The Lord told this parable: "A man 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 possessions between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered up all his wealth and traveled to a far country; and there he squandered his fortune in loose living.

And after he had spent all, there came a severe famine over that country, and he began to suffer from it. And he went and joined one of the local landowners, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. And he longed to fill himself with the pods the pigs were eating, but no one offered to give them to him.

But when he had come to his senses, he said, 'How many hired men in my father's house have bread in abundance, while I am perishing with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."' "

And he got up and went to his father. But while he was yet a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion and ran and fell upon his neck 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, 'Fetch quickly the best robe and put it on him, and give him a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet; and bring out the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; because this my son was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry.

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

"You are not your own."

"Independence" is one of the great "rights" of man that is held to be sacred and inviolable for Americans. The Epistle proclaimed in the Church today, however, challenges our modern notion of independence when it proclaims Saint Paul's teaching that we were "purchased with a price" and that we are not our own, but that we belong to the Lord.

On the day of our baptism, each one of us was incorporated into the church and made members of Christ's body, and sharers in his eternal life. Just as the parts of the body are interdependent, and ultimately totally dependent the soul and spirit for life, so it is with Christ and the members of his Church. Each of us derives our spiritual life from Christ and receives that life through other members of the body of the Church. As such, none of us is "independent," but rather we are totally dependent upon one another, and all of us are dependent upon Christ.

From the important biblical concept of spiritual dependence, we can understand the need for us to live a life in conformity with him from whom we received it, and on whom we depend for everything.

Applying the parable of the prodigal son to the above explanation helps this truth take flesh in our imagination and allows us and those whom we teach to better understand what life is like away from our source of life, and what it is like to return in our hearts to our King and our God.