



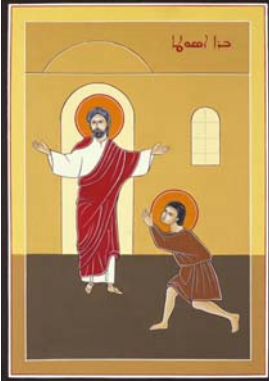
St. Michael the Archangel Maronite Catholic Church

806 Arsenal Avenue
Fayetteville, NC 28305
Office: 910 - 484 - 1531



Email: stmikeoffice@gmail.com website: stmichaelsmaronite.net March 3, 2024

PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON



Reflection Lk 15:11-32

When we view a conflict in hindsight we often think about the gravity of the offense – what was done, how much damage was caused, who was hurt. And we should be mindful of the effects of our offenses, especially when they are sins directed at God. In today’s Gospel, we see the Prodigal Son makes clear that he wished his father was dead, asking for his inheritance in advance and then going away to waste it all – truly a serious offense. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son it would seem that the Prodigal Son deserves nothing but punishment in our estimation of justice and rightfully so – previously he could not have cared about his father or family and left to enjoy himself, only to return when things went wrong. But the offense of this misbehaving son only receives a couple verses out of the entire story, and Christ does this one purpose. The story of salvation is not focused on the offenses of humanity against God, though great they may be, but on the infinite generosity of God’s mercy to the contrite person.

Why does Christ present us with this parable, and why does the Maronite Church read it during the Fast of Lent? Sin is our death, and every time we stray towards sin we choose our own interests in spite of the abundant generosity of God – essentially saying we care that God neither lives nor dies, but we shall go our own way from the generous Father to see to our own lives. But it is not simply enough to react to sin, and to disavow sin; if we are reacting to sin, sin remains the center of our lives. The way to return back from death to life is through Life Himself, our Lord, who said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). The means to return to Christ is through constant repentance from our sin. When the older son is outraged that the father so warmly greeted the Prodigal, he responds, “We had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again” (Luke 15:32) reminiscent of when God spoke through the prophet Ezekiel, “For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God. Repent and live!” (Ez. 18:32).

Repentance is not to despair in our depraved we are because of our sins, but the acknowledgment of how much greater God is than our sin and His ability to wipe them away. Sin and death killed Adam in the Garden, but, by His cross, our Lord killed sin and death. If He did not intend to make available for us the forgiveness of sins, He would not have taught us in the Our Father to say, “Forgive us our trespasses” (Matt. 6:12). But Christ in His infinite mercy has made forgiveness available to those who simply and sincerely ask for it, in spite of their offense like the father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

But how can we repay God for all He has given us in His generosity? Just like the Prodigal Son, we cannot now nor ever repay Him, but the first step begins with trying not to repeat the repayable offense – not because our relationship with God is some kind of transaction, but because we love God and do not wish to repeatedly harm those we love. By Christ’s live, death and resurrection, He destroyed the sin we could never overcome ourselves. But out of our love, though our praise or fasting adds nothing to His greatness, we must offer Him our best, just like the widow who deposits the two coins in the Temple and her offering is more pleasing to God than the large donations of the wealthy (Luke 21:1-4).

God has no need for our fasting nor is He magnified by our praise, but we offer both of these during Lent because, like a child making gifts for his parents from construction paper of little monetary value, we love the Lord and He loves us. Let all we do be for the reunification with the generous father who welcomes us prodigal sons back in spite of our offenses.

CLERGY

Fr. Paul Damien,
Pastor

Fr. Jack Morrison
(retired)

PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday, Thursday,
Friday

10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

LITURGY / MASS :

Tues - Fri: 9:00 am

Saturday: 5:00 PM

Sunday: 10:30 AM

Office Email:

stmikeoffice@gmail.com

Facebook:

Saint Michael the
Archangel Maronite
Catholic Church

“The Prodigal Son Sunday”

Saturday Mar 2 - 9:00 AM : (1st Saturday) : prayers for Eudora Ferry

Saturday Mar 2 - 5:00 PM: All Souls in Purgatory by Thanh & Han Vo

Sunday Mar 3 - 10:30 AM: for Queenie Jabbour (Easton) by the family

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------|---------|---|--|
| Tuesday | Mar 5 | 9:00 am | St. Albert the Great, Doctor of the Church, | Thanh & Han Vo intentions |
| Wednesday | Mar 6 | 9:00 am | St. Conan of Isuria, M | Kim Ngan Nguyen intentions by Thanh & Han Vo |
| Thursday | Mar 7 | 9:00 am | The 7 Young Men of Ephesus, M | For the Sherman family intentions By Mrs. Sherman |
| Friday | Mar 8 | 9:00 Am | St. Frances of Rome, C | Thanh & Han Vo intentions |

“Healing of the Paralytic”

Saturday Mar 2 - 5:00 PM: Marjorie Barry by Kathy Criminger

Sunday Mar 3 - 10:30 AM: Thien An’s birthday by Thanh & Han Vo

EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Sign up today, at the church entrance for a Holy Hour!



Every Thursday
9:30 am - 2:00pm
Rosary for Peace @ 9:30 am

CATHOLIC SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Place your donation of Peanut butter & jelly in the basket next to the Confessional.

**Jan Donations :
183 lbs**

READERS

| | | | |
|------|-----------------|------|------------------|
| 3/2 | Christian Lupo | 3/3 | Annika Nesbitt |
| 3/9 | Kathy Criminger | 3/10 | Betty Gurney |
| 3/16 | Rick Criste | 3/17 | Meredith Blalock |
| 3/23 | MJ Hahn | 3/24 | Travis Blalock |

SCRIPTURE

Parable of the Prodigal Son

2 Cor 13:5-13/Lk 15:11-32

Healing of the Paralytic

1 Tim 5:24-6:5/Mk 2:1-12

Healing of the Blind Man

2 Cor 10:1-7/Mk 10:46-52



To be listed as Reader, please text Kim Phelan @ 352-317-8529 or email consecrated2021@gmail.com or the church office

GIFTS OF THANKSGIVING

Offer the Incense, Candles and Wine for one month in memory/honor of someone for a \$25 donation.

MARCH 2024
In remembrance of
SAM ZAHRAN
By Lucy Zahran

Thank You



| | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Collection (February 25) | \$ 1394.00 |
| Candles | \$ 35.00 |
| Bishop's Appeal (to Date) | \$ 1526.00 |
| Souper Bowl (final) | \$ 950.50 |
| Easter Lilies offering | \$ 85.00 |
| Ladies Guild | \$ 00.00 |

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Premade Rosaries, as well as a complete list of all available styles, are in the social hall by the Ladies Guild gift counter!

All proceeds benefit the

ONLINE GIVING



PRAYER CHAIN

Please contact Lucy Zahran or call church office to **join the prayer chain** or with prayer

2nd Collection:

Lent February 12-March 31:
Eparchial Charities Appeal
\$ 4500.00

VOCATION CHALICE

- 3/2: Volunteer
- 3/3: Chris Cooper
- 3/9: Volunteer
- 3/10: Ray Miller



If your family would like to volunteer to pray for Vocations to Religious Life, please text or email Kimberly P. @ (352)317-8529 or consecrated2021@gmail.com

During the Holy Season of Lent, the Stations, and the Adoration of the Holy Cross will take place on Fridays at 6:30 pm. The service will be followed by a meager meal in the social hall. Kindly use the signup sheet provided in the church vestibule in case you want to bring food with you for the meal.



SEVEN SISTERS

- The Apostolate is calling for 19 more women who would be willing to pray for 1 hour, 1 day a week for Bishop Gregory.

Contact sferry84@verizon.net for details.

FROM THE LADIES GUILD



- Our next meeting is on 10 March at Noon.
- March 9th Lenten day of reflection in Raleigh at St. Sharbel from 10-5.

Presenter will be the Vice Rector of the seminary in DC. Lunch is provided RSVP to sferry84@verizon.net/540-455-9941 (Email or text). Contact Kim Nesbitt for babysitting options kimberlymarienes-bitt@gmail.com

- Our focus in March, other than spiritual preparation for Easter Liturgies, is sorting and pricing items for our Good Stuff Sale. Many hands make light work. Please contact MJ to volunteer.



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Congratulations to St. Michael Archangel
Ladies Guild, established in 2013,
celebrating 11 years of service. Committed
to "promoting the work of the Church &
building a spiritual community of faith
within the Parish." AD BY: MJ

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Upcoming Events

Saturday March 9th

Lenten Retreat

Saint Sharbel Church, Raleigh NC

Contact Stacie Ferry for retreat details:

sferry84@verizon.net

Contact Kim Nesbitt for childcare options:

stmikeccd@gmail.com

Sunday March 17th

Candle Workshop

Join us in the social hall immediately after Divine Liturgy to prepare the children's candles for Hosannah Sunday. Hosted by MYC. Materials provided. Donations accepted!

Thursday March 28th

Washing of Feet

Abouna needs 12 volunteers. If your son is available,

Please email the office: Stmikeoffice@gmail.com.

Sunday March 31st

Easter Egg Hunt

Immediately after Divine Liturgy. Hosted by MYC.

Please bring a basket!

Candy and egg donations will be received in the hall starting March 17th.

Mark Your Calendars!

Friday April 19th, we are having a celebration! Details to TBA!