

My Beloved Ones,

I ask you to join me in giving glory to Almighty God, who once again allows us the opportunity to enter into the period that we call Triodion, in order for us to prepare ourselves to celebrate the “Feast of Feasts” that is Pascha.

Every Sunday during the Triodion, the Church gives us messages that are meant to direct us in the proper manner of preparation for the upcoming Lenten period. Last week, if you remember, we began the four Sundays of Triodion with the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee.

This reading was intentionally chosen to help us examine our hearts, as well as to clearly demonstrate the way we are meant to open a prayerful conversation with God: through humility.

Everything we have comes from Above and is a gift from God. If we are rich, it is a gift from God! If we are intelligent, it is a gift from God! Even our poverty is a gift from God! We must use everything given to us in such a way that we consider our relationship with our Father, whom we know from this parable, listens to the person who humbles him or herself.

That being said, the Church also understands that the Devil seeks to make us feel as though we are so sinful and bad, that we often go to extremes. Many times, we feel so pessimistic and broken that we believe God does not listen to us, or that we are unworthy to approach Him.

That is why the Church has devoted this Sunday to the parable of the Prodigal Son. This Sunday, we will be especially reminded that no matter how bad we are, no matter what we have done, God is the Father of Love, and He is waiting for us to take the initiative to meet him in a humble way—like both the Publican and as the Prodigal Son—and ask to rejoin Him, in the Kingdom of Heaven.

I humbly ask that you pray for us, the clergyman, as we pray for all the Orthodox faithful—not only this week and the remainder of Triodion, but through Great Lent, as we approach the Great Homecoming: the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

+ALEXIOS

Metropolitan of Atlanta

