

The Prodigal Son



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2024 Alexandra Houck. Email is orthodoxchildrensword (at) gmail.com. Find it each week at myocn.net.

The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

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The joy of the Lord



Have you ever been so excited to get somewhere that you ran on your way? Imagine taking a walk to the playground and then taking off running when you saw the park. Sometimes it's just too hard to wait!

Today we hear the beautiful story of the Prodigal Son. We hear how the young man asks his father for his money. We hear how he wastes all that money. We hear how he feels awful about it, and we hear how he comes back to ask for his father's forgiveness. Then we hear how happy his father is to see his son again!

Do you know just how excited his father is? The Bible says, "But while he was still far away, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and hugged him and kissed him." Do you see how excited and happy his father was to see his son? He *ran* to meet him! He just couldn't wait.

Now we know this story is really a story about how God loves us, His children, too! When we make mistakes, we can always turn back to our Lord. We can always change the way we're acting or break the bad habits we have. We can turn back to the Lord, and we can ask for our Father's forgiveness. Then, He will be like the father in the Prodigal Son story today. He will meet us and welcome us back. God will have that same joy too!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- Father
- Forty
- Ice
- Joyful
- Martyrs
- Prodigal
- Repent
- Sebaste
- Wasteful
- Welcome

H U L E B F E Z E E F P L L W
 G V R Y Q T F C T M M U V A E
 A U J Z G O S H I N F M F G L
 D V E U R L R K P E B A G I C
 I Q I T K N I E T B T W S D O
 S R Y T R A M S P H D R E O M
 J O Y F U L A J E E V H B R E
 S H A U M W B R A K N B A P A
 L Q P R O D X I F R D T S C M
 P I T R L F X C D N G Q T B Q
 J V O L B T L M I Q B K E P M
 C R B A N F J E U D H Y R B O
 M O P N H N L G T V Q I V J J
 D C H U T W E G P P G D Q O N
 W V T E G D O X R R N Y P E F

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

This is a detail from the icon of the 40 martyrs of Sebaste.

How many crowns do you see? Who is giving them?

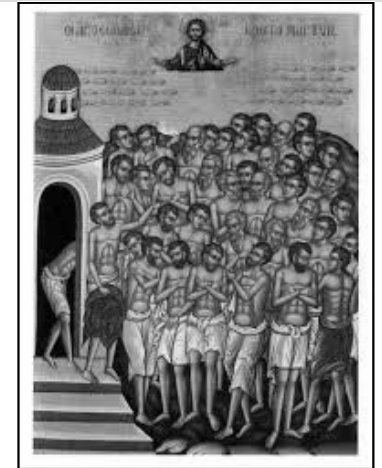
What do you think the crowns really mean?



40 CROWNS FOR 40 MARTYRS

THE 40 MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

Have you ever had to make a tough choice about something? Do you think you made the right decision?



Once there were 40 Christian soldiers in the Roman army. They told everybody they were Christians, even though they knew the emperor did *not* like Christians. They knew the emperor had even killed Christians in the past. In fact, one of the authorities found out about these 40 Christian soldiers, and sent them to stand, naked, in a frozen pond. Sadly, he wanted them to freeze to death there.

The pond was freezing cold, but next to it were some nice comfortable warm baths. The official tried to tempt these Christian men by telling them that if they would just say they were *not* Christian, they could come out of the pond and into these warm baths. But they stayed in the frozen pond, because they would rather die than to deny Christ. Finally, one of the soldiers *did* leave the frozen pond, but another soldier (who was not Christian) took his place. He saw how strong these 39 men were in their faith, and wanted to be like them.

Now here is the tough choice: What would YOU do? Would you leave the frozen pond? Or would you stay with the other 39 Christian soldiers?

We celebrate the 40 Martyrs on Saturday, March 9th (OC: March 22nd).