



## ***Sunday of Prodigal Son***

**Our Venerable Father Martinian** – Martinian was born in the 4<sup>th</sup> century in Caesarea of Palestine. He was a hermit who spent his life in prayer and asceticism.

**Aquila & Priscilla, Apostles** – Priscilla & Aquilla, husband & wife team, were close co-workers of St. Paul. They are mentioned often in the New Testament (Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19, 2 Tim. 4:19).

**\*\* Sunday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022\*\***

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### ***This Week's Parish Liturgical Services***

**Sunday, Feb. 13 \*\* 9:30 a.m. Rosary \*\* 10:00 a.m. \*\*\* Div. Lit. (Eng./Ukr.): God's blessings for all parishioners**

**Monday, Feb. 14 \*\* 9:00 a.m. Div. Lit.: God's blessings & good health for Wilma Clements**

**Tuesday, Feb. 15 \*\*\* 9:00 a.m. Div. Lit.: God's blessings to Olga Pinczak & her family**

**Thursday, Feb. 17 \*\* 9:00 a.m. Div. Lit.: God's blessings & good health to Knights of Columbus Members & their families**

**Friday, Feb. 18 \*\* 9:00 a.m. Div. Lit.: God's blessings & good health to Rob E.**

*Saturday, Feb. 19 - 9:00 a.m. Div. Lit.: Souls of our beloved deceased ones (1<sup>st</sup> Sorokouste service)*

**Sunday, Feb. 20 \*\*\* 9:30 a.m. Rosary \*\* 10:00 a.m. \*\*\* Div. Lit. (Eng./Ukr.): God's blessings to all parishioners**



*Troparion, Tone 5:* Let us the faithful acclaim and worship the Word,\* co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,\* and born of the Virgin for our salvation.\* For He willed to be lifted up on the cross in the flesh, to suffer death\* and to raise the dead by His glorious resurrection.

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

*Kontakion, Tone 3:* Foolishly have I fled from Your glory, O Father,\* wasting the wealth You gave me on vices.\* Therefore, I offer You the words of the Prodigal:\* Loving Father, I have sinned before You.\* Take me, for I repent, and make me as one of Your hired hands.

*Prokeimenon, Tone 5 -* You, O Lord, will guard us and will keep us\* from this generation and for ever.

*verse:* Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer left a just man.

*Epistle - 1 Corinthians 6:12-20*

*A reading from the First Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Corinthians.*

Brothers and Sisters, “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are beneficial. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food,” and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ

and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, “The two shall be one flesh.” But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

**Alleluia, Tone 5** - Your mercies, O Lord, I will sing for ever; from generation to generation I will announce Your truth with my mouth.

*verse:* For You have said: Mercy shall be built up for ever; in the heavens Your truth shall be prepared. (*Psalm 88:2,3*)

**Gospel - Luke 15:11-32**

The Lord told this parable: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then 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 slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

***Communion Hymn*** - Praise the Lord from the heavens;\* praise Him in the highest.\* Alleluia, alleluia,\* alleluia. (*Psalm 148:1*)

***Commentary on the Sunday Gospel Reading:***

<https://godwithusonline.org/reflections/the-sunday-of-the-prodigal-son-ukrainian/>

**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 North 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 on 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.

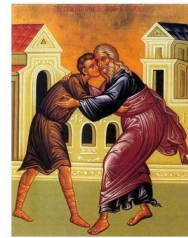
From the important biblical concept of spiritual dependence, we can understand the need for us to live a life in conformity with him from whom we received it, and on whom we depend for everything.

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.



## Sunday of the Prodigal Son

*"Look, O Christ, upon the sorrow of my heart, look upon my conversion and my tears, O Saviour, and do not reject me!" (Ode 9 in the Canon of Matins of the Prodigal Son)*



In preparing us for the Great Fast, holy Church pointed out in the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee that the first step to conversion is humility. On this Sunday, she sets before us the example of the Prodigal Son to show us how one is converted to God. Where there is humility and sorrow of heart, there the door to God's mercy is opened.

Scripture scholars call the parable of the Prodigal Son the pearl of all the parables. It is unique for its deep moral content. Its dramatic story is being constantly repeated in the souls of millions throughout the world.

The Prodigal Son is the symbol of every sinful soul. This parable clearly demonstrates that nothing on earth can satisfy our biting hunger and parching thirst for happiness. True happiness and peace is to be found only in God, our loving Father.

Some exponents of the spiritual life also call this parable, the parable of God's love.

Anyone who alienates himself from God by sin and seeks happiness outside of God, sooner or later, will be forced to say with the Prodigal Son: "I shall rise and go to my father." (Luke 15, 18) and with St. Augustine, who was a prodigal son for many years, "Our heart is restless, O God, until it rests in you."

### **Highlights of the Parable**

In the parable, Jesus Christ chooses the life of a wealthy family for His theme. The youngest of two sons wishes to leave his father's house to enjoy absolute freedom, to live a life according to the desires of his heart. And so, taking the portion of the inheritance that fell to him, he journeyed into a far-off country.

Under Jewish law, the first-born or elder son received two thirds of the family estate, while the remaining third was divided among the other sons. In the parable there were only two sons; consequently, the youngest son received one third of the estate.

His first days of complete independence away from his family home were merry and happy ones. Unlimited freedom, a pocket full of money, many friends who are always present where there is money, continuous merrymaking caused him to become intoxicated with pleasure. Scarcely had he begun enjoying this unlimited freedom when his possessions, his friends and parties began to melt away like the spring snow, and soon he was reduced to abject poverty. In addition to all this, a famine devastated the country, and he was forced to become a swineherd. Among the Jews, to tend pigs was a sign of utter degradation because the Jews considered swine as ritually unclean animals. Thus the rich young man who wished to live according to the desires of his heart, becomes a despicable swineherd.

Reflecting upon his misery and hunger, he decides to return to his father's house. He is even prepared to become his father's hired servant. However, when his father sees him while he is still a long way off, he is moved with pity. He runs to the boy, takes him into

his arms and kisses him. He restores to him his former dignity as son, presenting him with a festive robe, a ring and sandals.

In the East, to present a man with a festive robe was a sign of special honor. The ring with the signet was the symbol of authority, worn by kings and high officials. The Bible relates that when Pharaoh made Joseph governor of Egypt, "he took the ring from his hand, and put it on Joseph's. He clothed him in fine linen and put a gold chain round his neck." (Gen. 41 ,42) Sandals were worn by the wealthy while the poor and slaves went barefoot.

### **The Prodigal Son — Symbol of God's Mercy Towards the Sinner**

The parable of the Prodigal Son has a deep symbolic meaning. When we ponder it, we spontaneously perceive that the Prodigal Son is none other than every person who through a sinful life has become estranged from God. For this reason, the parable is very real to us; it is the story of our lives. It is a symbol of our infidelity to God. But it is also the symbol of God's unbounded mercy toward us. Today, as the world teems with prodigal sons and daughters, this parable is dramatized in countless millions. Every person is either that older son who is ever faithful to his father, or that younger son who only through hard and painful experience becomes convinced that outside the father's house there is no happiness.

The parable teaches us that God forgives and mercifully receives even the greatest sinners, if they repent and are sorry for their sins. The history of the human race is nothing but the history of God's mercy. "The mercy of the Lord is from eternity to eternity upon them that fear him." (Psalm 103, 17)

## **\*\* ANNOUNCEMENTS \*\***



**A warm welcome** - to all parishioners who join us today in our church for the Divine Liturgy and those who continue to pray at home. We wish you a healthy & blessed week!



**Please Pray for health of ...** All those affected by the coronavirus, and: Wilma C., Rob E., Elsie K., Billie M., Peter O., Rob R., Bishop Stephan Ch., Zbigniew K., Pat B., Anne D., Margaret M., Ernie P., Ambrose S., Dave & Betty C., Matt D., Miroslaw G., T.W., Bill P., Thomas H., Lawrence & Ping B., Gladys O., Zonia K., Brian K., Mary & Dave E., Sharon & Al L., Joe S., Jeanne R., Lisa M., Michael L., Melynda S., Suzanne C., Clay B., all sick brothers and sisters in our families and parish community. Please let Fr. Andrzej know if you would like to add names to the prayer list and also notify him about any sick and/or hospitalized parishioners and family members.



**Thank you to all our Supporters & Volunteers – Дякуємо** – Many thanks to



everyone for your support of our parish community. Our gratitude to Mrs. Olga Collins for donating an electrical keyboard for our parish. God bless you all!

**1<sup>st</sup> All Souls Saturday (Задушна Субота)** – our 1<sup>st</sup> prayers for our beloved deceased ones will take place this coming **Saturday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022**. Please let Fr. Andrzej know if you need to add additional names to the list of deceased in your family

**Blessed Candles** – as a part of celebrating the feast of the Encounter of Our Lord we blessed candles. They are to be lit in times of special need. For those who have not receive a blessed candle yet, they are available for pick up at the back of the church.

**Knights of Columbus 4<sup>th</sup> Degree Monthly Meeting** – will take place this coming **Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup>**, at 7:00 p.m. in the OLPH Centre.



**Great Fast (Lent) 2022** – will begin on **Monday, Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>**.

**Parish Council Meeting** – will take place on **Monday, Feb. 28 at 10:00 a.m.**

**Society of St. Vincent De Paul Members Meeting** – will take place on Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:00 a.m.

**Kamloops Pro-Life** – will be holding a **First Friday Vigil** this coming **Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**, on Columbia Street between 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. near First Baptist Church, **from 10:00 am until 11:00 am**. This is a silent, prayerful event with signs available.



**Diocesan Clergy Mass** - to be celebrated by His Excellency Joseph Nguyen, Bishop of Kamloops on **Sunday, March 6 at 1:00 p.m.** at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Cathedral.

**“Christmas Candle” Project Announcement** - On behalf of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of New Westminster and myself, we would like to thank all who took part in our global fundraising program, **“Christmas Candle/Різдвяна свічка”**, for Caritas Ukraine. Because of all your generous donations, we were able to help needy, disadvantaged, disabled and orphaned children in Ukraine. This year we raised **\$1,930**, bringing us to a total of **\$35,278** collected for Caritas Ukraine since our appeal started in 2012. Щиро дякуємо всім тим що взяли участь і нехай Бог благословить Вас. Thank You and God Bless -- Dana Koren Lupynis. For more information, please contact Dana Koren Lupynis, Natalia Lupynis or Emelia Lupynis at [nweparchy.christmascandle@gmail.com](mailto:nweparchy.christmascandle@gmail.com) and follow us on Facebook at *Caritas “Christmas Candle/Різдвяна свічка” Campaign, sponsored by NWEparchy.*

**Special Collection for Ukraine -  
Emergency Humanitarian Aid To  
The People In Ukraine** -



In recent months, the threat of a large-scale escalation of military conflict in Ukraine by Russia advances. Yet we oftentimes forget the “Forgotten War,” the already eight-year conflict brought about by Russia in eastern Ukraine with some 2.9 million people impacted by the existing conflict and already in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. The immediate threat of escalated potential military action only highlights the need for an emergency humanitarian response on our part towards the purchase of food, water, basic hygiene, medicine, psychological support, shelter, evacuation, protection, and so on. Can you help your brothers and sisters in need?

*- Dear parishioners, when making your donation, please indicate on the envelope that this is a donation for Ukraine.*

**The Board of Directors of the Catholic  
Independent Schools of the Kamloops Diocese**



**JOB POSTING – SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

The CISKD Board of Directors takes pride in the quality of Catholic Education in the Kamloops Diocese. The Board of Directors is searching for a dynamic individual for the position of Superintendent of Schools, with duties to commence on August 1, 2022. Our six schools, located in Quesnel, Williams Lake, Kamloops and Vernon, provide education for approximately 1,500 students. ASCEND Online, our Distributed Learning School, serves students and families across British Columbia.

We are seeking a practicing Catholic who will lead with visionary impact; guide our schools with a strong Catholic identity and provide a superior academic environment.

To request an application package and pastor's reference form, please contact Fr. Fred Weisbeck at [fred@rcdk.org](mailto:fred@rcdk.org) or Telephone: 250-376-3351 ext. 222. Completed applications will be accepted until noon Friday, February 18th, 2022.

<https://www.rcdk.org/employment-opportunities>

Current Job Postings can be found at [www.ciskd.ca](http://www.ciskd.ca) under the CAREERS tab: <https://www.makeafuture.ca/bc-schools-and-districts/catholic-independent-schools-kamloops-diocese/>

**The Most Holy Trinity Parish Stewardship:** Sunday, Feb. 6 - \$ 913.00 (Sunday collection \$553 & Ukraine \$360) \*\*\*\*\*  
*May God bless and reward you for your generosity & support.*



### **Prayer During the Coronavirus Outbreak**

Lord, Our God, We thank you for the life that is your gift,  
For the providence that sustains us,  
And for your wisdom that directs the course of our days. The threat of an infection of coronavirus is upon us today. This disease causes fear among us and has claimed lives.

We humbly beg you, loving Lord, dispel our fear and deliver us from this and other diseases.

Heal those who are afflicted and stop the spread of the virus.

Strengthen us in charity to care for one another.

For You are a God of mercy, kindness, and love, and we glorify

You Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.  
Amen.



### ***Prayer of Spiritual Communion***

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in these Holy Gifts!  
I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my  
soul.

Since I cannot receive You now,  
I place before You my whole life and hope, O loving Master;  
and I ask, pray, and entreat You: Make me worthy to partake in a  
mystical way and with a pure conscience of Your awesome and  
heavenly Mysteries:  
for forgiveness of sins, for the pardon of offenses, for communion  
of the Holy Spirit, for the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven,  
for confidence before You, and not for judgment or  
condemnation.

I embrace You as You enter and abide in me, and I unite myself  
completely to You. Permeate my soul and body, and never permit  
me to be separated from You. Amen.

### **Prayer for Preparation for Holy Communion (St. John of Damascus)**



“O Master, Lord Jesus Christ our God, You alone  
have authority to forgive people their sins, for You are good and  
love all. Forgive my transgressions committed in knowledge or  
ignorance. Make me worthy to receive Your divine and glorious,  
all-pure and life-giving Mysteries without condemnation,  
incurring neither punishment, nor the increase of my sins. Let me,  
instead, receive cleansing, sanctification, and a pledge of life and  
kingdom to come. Let Your Mysteries be a rampart, a help, a  
routing of my adversaries; and let them wipe away my many  
transgressions. For You are a God of mercy, compassion, and  
love for all, and to You we render glory, with the Father and the  
Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

### ***Prayer for the Afflicted People of Ukraine in Time of War***

O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, we entreat You to hear the earnest prayer of Your beloved Church of Kievan Rus' for her deeply afflicted children abiding in the land of Ukraine. Behold their grave sorrow and grievous plight, and speedily come to their aid. Deliver Your vulnerable people from unjust aggressors, foreign invasion and the terror of war. Strengthen courageous defenders of the nation to fight virtuously, inspired more by love of those they protect than hatred of the enemy. O compassionate Lord, shelter the displaced, heal the wounded, console the orphan, protect the widow, comfort those who mourn, and mercifully receive into Your Kingdom those who have nobly died guarding their homeland against every aggression. Quickly make cease the spilling of blood of friend and foe alike, yet stir many to bravely struggle for that true justice which alone can bring lasting peace. O kind-hearted Lord, as You are our peace, soften the hearts of the unmerciful and convert those who promote hostilities toward reconciliation, so that Your beloved children of the land of Ukraine may abide in that tranquility, justice and freedom which reflects your Kingdom, where You reign with Your eternal Father, and Your most holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now, and forever and ever. *Amen.*

**Pastoral Ministry and Sacraments:**

**Reconciliation:** on Sundays and Holy Days: before Divine Liturgies and other days, by appointment.

**Holy Communion:** for the sick, by appointment, any time.

**Baptisms:** by appointment.

**Marriages:** six months' notice should be given to the parish priest, and he should be contacted before any other arrangements are made.

**Funerals and Memorials:** by appointment.

**Anointing of the Sick (Holy Unction):** Those anticipating surgery, hospitalization or treatments and who would like to receive anointing or to meet with parish priest, please call or email Fr. Andrzej in advance to arrange a time and a day.



## ***ON-LINE SERVICES***

**Please join Holy Eucharist Cathedral (New Westminster) live-streamed coverage of liturgical services**

**\*\*\* Sundays \*\*\*** at 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy (Eng.) and at 10:30 a.m. Божественна Літургія (Укр.).\*\*\*

<https://www.facebook.com/holyeucharistcathedral/>

**Youtube** [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPp1JaDotIj\\_4h3aAJq0Srg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPp1JaDotIj_4h3aAJq0Srg)

Telus TV channel by tuning to channel 876 on TELUS Optik.



St. George's parish in Prince George at 10:00 a.m.

<https://www.facebook.com/ParishPG>



**Pope: Death can't separate us; our way of being together only changes**

*Kathleen N. Hattrup*



*Pope Francis explained the Communion of Saints in his catechesis. Do you know how to define this concept? He shared how he used to explain it as a boy!*

Pope Francis broadened his teaching series on St. Joseph to reflect this February 2 on the **Communion of Saints**. He laughed about how the concept can be difficult to understand. Though we profess we believe in this Communion each Sunday in the Creed, if we're asked what it is, we might not know. "I remember as a child I used to answer immediately, 'Ah, the saints receive Communion.' It's something that... we don't understand what we are saying. What is the communion of saints? **It's not the saints**

**receiving Communion, it's not that. It's something else,"** the Pope said.

### **Don't be pagan**

Pope Francis warned that sometimes even Christians can fall into forms of devotion to saints that reflect a more pagan than Christian mentality.

But there's a fundamental difference, he said: devotion to the saints is not based on "trust in a human being or an image or object."

Even when we rely fully on the intercession of a saint, or even more so that of the Virgin Mary, our trust **only has value in relation to Christ**. As if the path toward this saint or toward Our Lady does not end there, no. Not there, but in relationship with Christ. He is the bond, Christ is the bond that unites us to him and to each other, and which has a specific name: this bond that unites us all, between ourselves and us with Christ, it is the "communion of saints."

### **They aren't miracle workers**

While the Church recognizes miracles in the process of canonizing a saint, Catholics don't believe that it's saints who work miracles. Instead it is God who works the miracle, with the saint's intercession. The Pope explained this:

It is not the saints who work miracles, no! "This saint is so miraculous..." No, stop there. The saints don't work miracles, but only the grace of God that acts through them. Miracles are done by God, by the grace of God acting through a holy person, a righteous person. This must be made clear. There are people who say, "I don't believe in God, I don't know, but I believe in this saint." No, this is wrong. The saint is an intercessor, one who prays for us and we pray to him, and he prays for us and the Lord gives us grace: The Lord, through the saint.

### **This Communion is the Church**

The Pope quoted the definition of the Communion of Saints given by the Catechism.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church affirms: “The communion of saints is the Church” (no. 946). See what a beautiful definition this is! “The communion of saints is the Church.” What does this mean? That the Church is reserved for the perfect? No. It means that it is the community of *saved sinners* [It: peccatori salvati]. The Church is the community of saved sinners. It’s beautiful, this definition. No one can exclude themselves from the Church, **we are all saved sinners**. Our holiness is the fruit of God’s love manifested in Christ, who sanctifies us by loving us in our misery and saving us from it.

### **One body**

Pope Francis used St. Paul’s definition, that form “one single body in which Jesus is the head and we are the members (cf. 1 *Cor* 12:120),” saying that this image “immediately makes us understand what it means to be bound to one another in *communion*.”

Dear brothers and dear sisters, the joy and sorrow that touch my life affect everyone, just as the joy and sorrow that touch the life of the brother and sister next to us also affect me. I cannot be indifferent to others, because we are all in one body, in communion. In this sense, even the sin of an individual person always affects everyone, and the love of each individual person affects everyone. In virtue of the communion of saints, this union, every member of the Church is bound to me in a profound way. But I don’t say “to me” because I am the Pope; [I say] to each one of us he is bound, we have been bound, and bound in a profound way.

### **Death can’t separate us**

Pope Francis explained the strength of this union in the Communion of Saints.



This bond is so strong that it cannot be broken even by death. Even by death. In fact, the Communion of Saints does not concern only those brothers and sisters who are beside me at this historic moment, or who live in this historic moment, but also those who have concluded their journey, the earthly pilgrimage and crossed the threshold of death. They too are in communion with us.

Let us consider, dear brothers and sisters, that in Christ no one can ever truly separate us from those we love because the bond is an existential bond, a strong bond that is in our very nature; only the manner of being together with one another them changes, but nothing and no one can break this bond.

### **My friends in Heaven**

Pope Francis said that our relationship with the saints is basically a friendship.

The relationship of friendship that I can build with a brother or sister beside me, I can also establish with a brother or sister in heaven. The saints are friends with whom we very often establish friendly relations. What we call *devotion* to a saint — “I am very devoted to this or that saint” — what we call devotion is actually a way of expressing love from this very bond that unites us. Also, in everyday life one can say, “But this person has such devotion for his elderly parents”: no, it is a manner of love, an expression of love.

And we all know that we can always turn to a friend, especially when we are in difficulty and need help. And we have friends in heaven. We all need friends; we all need meaningful relationships to help us get through life.

Jesus, too, had his friends, and he turned to them at the most decisive moments of his human experience.

### **Special love for Mary and Joseph**

The Holy Father noted that in the whole history of the Church,

there has been a special affection for and bond with Mary, the “Mother of God and our Mother.” But there has also been “special honor and affection” for St Joseph. “After all, God entrusts to him the most precious things he has: his Son Jesus and the Virgin Mary.”

### **Love for our patron saints**

The Pope also had a word for our patron saints.

It is always thanks to the communion of saints that we feel that the men and women saints who are our patrons — because of the name we bear, for example, because of the Church to which we belong, because of the place where we live, and so on, as well as through personal devotion — are close to us. And this is the trust that must always animate us in turning to them at decisive moments in our lives.

### **This isn't magic or superstition**

It's not some kind of magic, it's not superstition, it's devotion to the saints. It's simply talking to a brother, a sister, who is in the presence of God, who has led a righteous life, a model life, and is now in the presence of God. And I talk to this brother, this sister, and ask for their intercession for the needs that I have.