

The Prodigal Son



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian kids. Copyright 2026 Alexandra Houck. Email is [orthodoxchildrensword\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:orthodoxchildrensword(at)gmail.com). Find it each week at orthodoxchildrensword.org.

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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God gives us freedom

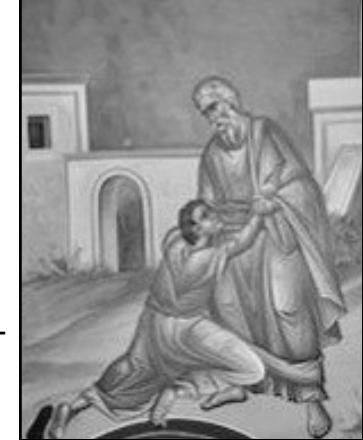
Can you think of a time your parents gave you a choice to do something? Maybe they let you decide whether to go somewhere, or what to eat, or what color to paint the walls. They probably knew the best way, but they still let you decide.

Today, we hear a story that tells us how our loving God gives us that kind of freedom. He gives us freedom, even for things that matter a lot more than what to have for dinner! He lets us decide, even though He knows the best way.

Do you remember the story of the Prodigal Son, the story about the young man who wasted all his money and lived with the pigs? Do you remember how he felt sorry for what he had done, and he came back to his father?

And...do you remember if his father forced him to come back? Or did he let him choose to come back? The story of the Prodigal Son shows us how God loves us so much that He grants us the great gift of freedom. God knows when we do wrong, but He lets us make our own choices—bad or good! God lets us decide when to come back to Him. God lets us decide if we want to say we are sorry. God lets us decide how close we want to be to Him.

This gift of freedom is a big one. God respects us and loves us. He knows the right way, but never forces us to follow Him. Let's thank God for freedom, and let's choose the right way!



WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

Anna
Brothers
Church
Freedom
Gift
Inheritance
Novgorod
Prodigal
Wasteful

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WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

Here is another icon of Saint Anna of Novgorod. Do you see what she is holding?

It's the same church you see on page 3—the one she helped build!



SAINT ANNA OF NOVGOROD THE RIGHT KIND OF PRINCESS

Almost every little girl likes to talk about princesses—where they live, who they marry, what kind of fancy things they have. Tomorrow, we will remember a princess who used all of these things to show her love for God.

Saint Anna was born in Sweden, and her name was Ingegard at first. When she grew older, she married the Great Prince Yaroslav. He lived in Kiev (a city in Ukraine today) and he was a strong Christian, too. Anna and Yaroslav wanted the great city of Kiev to be a Christian city.

They wanted the people to know about our one, true God. They built a huge and beautiful church called Saint Sophia's Cathedral. It is right in the middle of the city, so people can't miss it. Soon, lots of people were being baptized as Christians, too.

Saint Anna was a great mother too. She had 10 children and she taught them to love God, just like she loved Him, too. Later on, Saint Anna lived in another important city—Novgorod (which is now in Russia). She helped build a great church there too, along with her son, Prince Vladimir.



We celebrate Saint Anna on Tuesday, February 10th (OC: February 23rd).