

The Return of the Prodigal Son

"He arose and went to his father." He arose from the wreckage of his conscience and body alike. He arose from the depths of hell and touched the heights of heaven. Before the heavenly Father, a child rises higher because of pardon than he fell low because of guilt.

"He arose and went to his father." He went not by the motion of his feet but by the progress of his thought. Being afar off he had no need of an earthly journey, because he had found short cuts along the way of salvation. He who seeks the divine Father by faith soon finds Him present to himself, and has no need to seek Him by traversing roads.

"He arose and went to his father. But when he was yet a long way off." How is he who is coming a long way off? Because he has not yet arrived. He who is coming is coming to do pen-

ance, but he has not yet arrived at grace. He is coming to his Father's house but he has not yet reached the glory of his former condition, appearance, and honor.

"But when he was yet a long way off, his father saw him." That Father saw, he "who dwells on high; and looks down on the low things," "and the high he knows afar off." "His father saw him." The father saw him, in such a way that the son could also behold his father. The father's countenance illumined the face of the approaching son in such a way that all the dark aspect was dispelled which his guilt had previously cast about it.

St. Peter Chrysologus

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON



Icon of the Prodigal Son



Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Parish

14610 S. Will-Cook Road Homer Glen, IL 60491
Office: (708) 645-0241 Fax:(708) 645-0243
Email: AnnuncByzChurch@aol.com
Pastor: Fr. Thomas J. Loya, STB, MA
Parochial Vicar: Fr. Bruce Riebe
Deacon: J. Timothy Tkach

February 16, 2025 Sunday of the Prodigal Son Schedule of Services

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|-----------------|----|--|
| Sunday | 16 | <u>Sunday of the Prodigal Son</u> 9:00 AM Matins 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy - Health & Salvation of Parishioners |
| Thursday | 20 | 7:00 PM Divine Liturgy - Health & Salvation of the McManigal family by the Reinhardt family |
| Saturday | 22 | <u>1st All Souls Saturday</u> 8:00 AM Divine Liturgy - Divine Liturgy for deceased members of our families 5:00 PM Vespers |
| Sunday | 23 | <u>Sunday of Meatfare</u> 9:00 AM Matins 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy - Health & Salvation of Parishioners |

We pray for the sick and homebound of our parish, especially:

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Dot Wochok | Mary Ann Baran | Mary Ann Horne | Mike Sheedy |
| Francis Hughes | Gary Dorencz | Michele Lewis | Kim Hughes |
| Frank Miko | Ken Hrusosky | Fr. Bernard Danber | Linda Tkach |
| Gary Paczkowski | Aida McManigal-wc | Anna Chagnon-wc | Mitchell Stachnik |

Annunciation of the Mother of God Byzantine Catholic Parish

In all decisions regarding parish membership and Sacramental life, the pastor exercises the final decision and the confidentiality of the persons involved must be respected.

Parish Membership is determined by three things:

1. Being registered in the parish for a sufficient amount of time
2. Faithful and consistent participation in the liturgical life of the parish especially on Sundays and Holy days.
3. Regular financial support of the parish. Use of offertory envelopes by parish members is required for weekly donations

The Sacred Mysteries of Baptism, Chrismation and Matrimony are available only to those persons who comply with the above requirements of parish membership.

A Biblically based stewardship is part of the vision of Annunciation parish. Parishioners are encouraged to practicing tithing and also to consider Annunciation parish in planned giving such as trust funds, etc.

Couples who are planning to be married at Annunciation parish must be free to be married in the Church and must contact the pastor at least six months prior to their proposed wedding date. Persons applying for annulments of a previous marriage should not set a Church wedding date unless their annulment has been granted.

Couples who are cohabitating or involved in same sex civil unions or so-called same sex "marriages," as well as couples who are contracepting are asked to seek the pastor's help in understanding the Church's teaching and in conforming their lives to the moral teaching of the Church. Such persons **cannot receive Holy Communion** until their lives are reconciled with the Church.

Parish members entering the hospital or who are home-bound should contact the pastor or parish business office.

Prior to undergoing surgery or going under anesthesia parish members should contact the pastor.

No eulogies or public addresses by laity are permitted during funeral services.

Cremation is permitted but not encouraged. Ashes are not permitted in the church. Funeral services with the body of the deceased in the church must take place prior to cremation. Ashes are to be buried according to the burial rite of the Church. Ashes cannot be scattered or kept in homes.

Appropriate behavior and dress are required for all liturgical services. No audible conversations, or waving across the church. Electronic devices must be turned off. No food, candy, or gum chewing. Dress code is formal and modest for all services.

Abstinence from meat is to be observed every Friday. If this is not possible an equivalent penitential practice is to be observed.



RUN TO THE POT O' GOLD
 IN SUPPORT OF OUR STUDENTS!

SHAMROCK SHUFFLE 5K

SATURDAY, MARCH 15 | 9:00AM
 EVEREST ACADEMY LEMONT
 11550 BELL RD | SCAN TO RSVP ->



Sunday of the Prodigal Son

The parable of the Prodigal Son forms an exact icon of repentance at its different stages. Sin is exile, enslavement to strangers, hunger. Repentance is the return from exile to our true home; it is to receive back our inheritance and freedom in the Father's house. But repentance implies action: "I will rise up and go..." To repent is not just to feel dissatisfied, but to make a decision and to act upon it.



In the words of our Lord, we also learn of three things through this parable: the condition of the sinner, the rule of repentance, and the greatness of God's compassion. The reading of this parable follows the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee so that, seeing in the person of the Prodigal Son our own sinful condition, we might come to our senses and return to God through repentance. For those who have fallen into great despair over their sins thinking that there is no forgiveness, this parable offers hope. The Heavenly Father is patiently and lovingly waiting for our return. There is no sin that can overcome His love for us.

Finally, this parable offers us insight into the world in which we live. It is a world where the activities of people are disconnected and not ordered toward the fulfillment of God's divine purpose for life. It is a world of incoherent pursuits, of illusory strivings, of craving for foods and drinks that do not satisfy, a world where nothing ultimately makes sense, and a world engulfed in untruth, deceit and sin. It is the exact opposite of the world as created by God and potentially recreated by his Son and Spirit. There is no cure for the evils of our age unless we return to God. The world in which we live is not a normal world, but a wasteland. This is why in the Slavic tradition of the Eastern Church the reading of Psalm 137 is added to the Matins service for this and the following two Sundays. This nostalgic lament of the Hebrew exiles states: "By the waters of Babylon we sat and wept as we remembered Zion. On the willows we hung our lyres, for how could we sing the Lord's song in a strange land."

Here we can see the challenge of life in this world and the alienation from God that can happen when sin reigns in our lives. As a result of sin in our lives, we lose the joy of communion with God, we defile and lose our spiritual beauty, and we find ourselves far away from our real home, our real life. In true repentance, we realize this, and we express a deep desire to return, to recover what has been lost. On this day the Church reminds us of what we have abandoned and lost, and beckons us to find the desire and power to return. Our Heavenly Father is waiting and ready to receive us with His loving forgiveness and His saving embrace.

The 12th Annual Women's Retreat

*Our Lord Jesus Christ:
The Path to the Father*

Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center
Fremont, Ohio

March 7, 2025 - March 9, 2025

Retreat Master: Fr. Jan Maturkanic

Contact Joan Washburn for further information
stmarybhdwomensretreat@gmail.com
865-696-7809

Brochures are available in the Narthex
Sponsored by:
St Mary Byzantine Catholic Church

The Fourth Annual Men's Retreat

The Beatitudes: The Way of Life

Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center
Fremont, Ohio

March 14, 2025-March 16, 2025

Retreat Master: Fr. Lukas Mitro

Contact Karl Busam for further information
karl.busam.77@gmail.com
419-626-6811

Brochures are available in the Narthex
Sponsored by:
St Mary Byzantine Catholic Church

Photos from 25 Years of Annunciation

We plan to create a video to celebrate our 25th Anniversary and want to showcase photos of parish life and liturgy over the past 25 years.

Please share your photos from baptisms, weddings, holy days, and events like Prairie Fest and Christmas on the Prairie.

Ways to Share:

Physical Photos

We will scan your photos and get them back to you as soon as possible.

Place multiple photos together in a ziploc bag. Attach a post-it and note:

- Your name
- Phone number or email
- Information about the photos: who is in the photo, about what year it was taken, and any other helpful information (for example, what parish event the photo was taken at)

Online Form

Upload photos to an online form at bit.ly/4g2xsjW or scan QR code:



Email

Email photos to Lea at la.rodbarry@yahoo.com. Include the info listed above.

Other

Call or text Lea (630-589-2069) and we'll arrange something!

Please keep Kathleen Andrews and her family in your prayers after the sudden passing of her husband, Robert Andrews.

Eternal Memory and Blessed Repose

Soup and Salad Luncheon Sunday, February 16th, 2023

11:30AM - 2:30PM

Cost

Adult Menu - \$15

Children - \$7.50
(12 - 6)

*5 & under are FREE

**All you can eat
Soup & Salad**



Proceeds from this meal will support the work done by the St. Nicholas Apostolate at St. Michael's Byzantine parish in Merrillville, IN

St. Michael Byzantine Parish
557 W 57th Ave - Merrillville, IN 46410