

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON



Icon of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)

Mercy and Forgiveness

All that God looks for from us is the slightest opening and He forgives a multitude of sins. ... There were two brothers: they divided their father's goods between them and one stayed home, while the other went away to a foreign country, wasted all he had been given, and then could not bear the shame of his poverty. The son who went away represents those who fall after baptism. This is clear from the fact that he is called a son, since no one is called a son unless he is baptized. Also, he lived in his father's house and took a share of all his father's goods. Before baptism no one receives the Father's goods or enters upon the inheritance. We can therefore take all this as signifying the state of believers.

What does he say after falling into the depths of evil? I will return to my father. The reason the father let him go and did not prevent his departure for a foreign land was so that he might learn well by experience what good things are enjoyed by the one who stays at home. For when words would

not convince us God often leaves us to learn from the things that happen to us. When the dissolute returned after going to a foreign country and finding out by experience what a great sin it is to leave the father's house, the father did not remember past injuries but welcomed him with open arms. Why? Because he was a father and not a judge. And there were dances and festivities and banquets and the whole house was full of joy and gladness.

Are you asking: "Is this what he gets for his wickedness?" Not for his wickedness, but for his return home; not for sin, but for repentance; not for evil, but for being converted. What is more, when the elder son was angry at this the father gently won him over, saying: You were always with me, but he was lost and has been found; he was dead and has come back to life. "When someone who was lost has to be saved," says the father, "it is not the time for passing judgment or making minute inquiries, but only for mercy and forgiveness."



Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Parish

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Pastor: Fr. Thomas J. Loya, STB, MA
Deacon: J. Timothy Tkach

February 1, 2026 Sunday of the Prodigal Son Schedule of Services

Sunday	1	<u>Sunday of the Prodigal Son</u> 9:00 AM Matins 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy - Health & Salvation of Parishioners <u>Pre-festive of the Feast of the Encounter of Our Lord with Simeon</u> 6:00 PM Vespers (<i>satisfies the obligation-see insert</i>)
Monday	2	<u>Encounter of Our Lord with Simeon</u> 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy - +Abbot Nicholas Zachariadis by Margaret Klos
Tuesday	3	10:00 AM Rite of Christian Burial for +Richard Adamowski
Thursday	5	7:00 PM Divine Liturgy - +Mary Gaydos by Jim Forkal & family
Saturday	7	<u>1st All Souls Saturday</u> 8:00 AM Divine Liturgy - For deceased members of our families 5:00 PM Vespers
Sunday	8	<u>Sunday of Meat Fare</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	Francis Hughes
Gary Dorencz	Michele Lewis	Kim Hughes	Ken Hrusosky
James Forkal	Marianne Horvath	Katelyn Fuentes-wc	Joel Super

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.

EPARCHY OF PARMA FOUNDATION'S
2025-2026
STEWARDSHIP
APPEAL




TIME. TALENT. TREASURE.
THIS YEAR'S APPEAL WILL RUN FROM NOVEMBER 1, 2025 TO MAY 31, 2026

Donations to the Bishop's Stewardship Appeal help to support the activities of parishes, outreaches, missions, and eparchial events.

The goal for this stewardship drive is to increase the number of participants giving to the fund. The Bishop is therefore suggesting a one-time donation of \$175 per household.

2025-2026
STEWARDSHIP
WEBINAR

Faith & Finances with Laura Ieraci
Making Spiritual Sense Out of Dollars & Cents

Join us for an uplifting conversation with Laura Ieraci—award-winning Catholic journalist, founder of AVIVA Ministries and Coaching, and wife of Father Andrew Summerson, parish priest of St. Mary of Whiting, Indiana and St. Nicholas of Munster, Indiana. Laura brings years of experience in Catholic media and ministry—from Vatican Radio to ONE Magazine—and has been helping individuals align their faith and finances in practical, transformative ways, since 2018.

Discover how a deeply faithful approach to money can:

- Help you see money the way God intended
- Let your values manage your money, so your money doesn't manage you.
- Bring peace and confidence into your home
- Align your financial choices with your spiritual and temporal goals in simple, practical ways
- Strengthen your trust in God's providence while building a life of confidence, freedom, and peace



4 February 2026 at 7:30PM EST

Registering helps us prepare and lets you submit questions in advance!




The Meeting of Our Lord with Simeon and Anna

The Presentation of the Lord is celebrated on February 2nd by both Catholics and Orthodox. In the East it is called the Meeting of the Lord because of Jesus' coming to meet his people Israel in the persons of Anna and Simeon. It celebrates the end of the time required by the Law for Mary's purification and Jesus' presentation into the temple, so it comes 40 days after Christmas. In the Old Testament, God demands, "Consecrate to me all the first-born; whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel...is mine" (Exodus 13:2).

We see in this icon the passing from the Old Testament to the New with the Incarnation of Jesus. The temple of the Old Covenant becomes the Church of the New Covenant. In this context, it is no wonder that Jesus seems to have been handed *over* the altar to Simeon, to whom the true Bread of Life and not the manna from the desert is given. We do not see in this icon that Jesus needed to come to be presented but to usher in the New Covenant and the true and perfect worship of God. He came not be purified but to purify those present - Simeon, Joseph, Anna, and us.

Explanation of Vespers only this evening for the Feast of the Encounter of Our Lord

In the Byzantine Catholic tradition the complete rhythm of prayer for Sundays and Feast days is as follows: Vespers on the evening before the feast, Matins in the morning followed by Divine Liturgy. Although attending Liturgy is the maximum way of observing our obligation on a Feast or Sunday, this can also be done by attending the Vespers and/or Matins of the Feast.

Please remember the Adamowski family in your prayers after the passing of Richard Adamowski. His funeral will be held this week.

Eternal Memory
Vicnaja Pamjut



Mary's Helpers Announces New Ministry

Under the patronage of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Mary's Helpers will meet quarterly to pray for the sick of our parish. These quarterly meetings will take place on the second Wednesday of the month at 11:00AM and will be followed by a light lunch. Anyone is welcome to join in this prayer meeting.

Wednesday, Feb 11
11:00AM

Jesus Christ our Hope

A catechetical study

Sunday, February 15th

Feb - The Liturgical Year &
The Christian Meaning of Time



SAVE THE DATE



THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC
EPARCHY OF PARMA

October 17th - 19th, 2026

2026 Eparchial Assembly

Columbus, OH

ST. NICHOLAS APOSTOLATE PRESENTS

SOUP & SALAD

FUNDRAISER

St. Michael's Church in Merrillville
557 W 57th Ave, Merrillville, IN

FEBRUARY 15, 2026

ALL YOU CAN EAT!
11:30 AM - 2:30 PM

ADULTS \$15 CHILDREN 12 AND UNDER \$7 (5 AND UNDER FREE)