

HOLY SPIRIT BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2023 SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday, February 5: 10:20am Rosary, 10:45am 3rd Hour, 11:00am Divine Liturgy

for the health of Msgr. Russell Duker, by Cathy Warhola

4pm Confessions and 5pm Divine Liturgy through Campus Ministry

Monday, February 6: 10am Confessions through Campus Ministry

4:30pm Confessions, 5:30pm Vespers

Wednesday, February 8: 2pm Confessions through Campus Ministry

Friday, February 10: 4:30pm Confession, 5:30pm Vespers,

6:30pm ~ Vigil Divine Liturgy for the First All Souls Saturday

Saturday, February 11: 4:30pm Confession, 5:30pm Great Vespers

Sunday, February 12 10:20am Rosary, 10:45am 3rd Hour, 11:00am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
with Archbishop William Skurla

4pm Confessions and 5pm Divine Liturgy through Campus Ministry

Confessions are available before Divine Liturgy. All divine liturgies are open for intentions. Call the office or fill out the request form in the back of church and leave it in the sacristy.

Parish Server Celebrated at Hierarchical Divine Liturgy 2/12: Emmanuel Revilak has received his “Light is Life” Emblem through the Boy Scouts of America. Archbishop William Skurla will be present at our Liturgy on February 12 to celebrate with us and bestow the award.

Meatfare Sunday Pot Luck 2/12: We will be celebrating Fasingy after Liturgy on February 12. Please sign up to bring a dish to pass in the back of the church.

Forgiveness Vespers and Adult ECF Sat. 2/18: Please don’t miss the annual praying of Forgiveness Vespers at our usually scheduled time on Saturday, Feb. 18. After this, we will have our next Adult ECF lecture: “Preparing for the Great Fast.” We will repeat only the service of mutual forgiveness on Sunday after Divine Liturgy.

Blessed Candles from the Feast of the Presentation on 2/2 are available. There are tapers and glass vigil lights. A donation is suggested based on the type of candle.

First All Souls Saturday 2/11: Please remember to submit your intentions for the Necrologion (book of the dead). Any names you submitted last year are still in the book.

AS WE APPROACH THE LENTEN GREAT FAST... This is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son, which continues our preparatory period for the Great Fast. While fasting looks different for everyone based on their station in life, physical needs, and spiritual growth, now is a good time to begin discerning what the Great Fast will look like for you. Discuss with Fr. Michael or your spiritual father / mother what would be appropriate. You may choose to reduce certain foods or technology use, add to your prayer rule, or something else.

Important note regarding Liturgy intentions: If you are requesting a Divine Liturgy for the deceased, please note if the date requested is the anniversary of their death. If for the living, please specify if it is for a birthday, anniversary, etc. This will help schedule the Liturgy as accurately as possible, and will let Father know which setting to use. Thank you.

HOUSE BLESSINGS FOR THE THEOPHANY SEASON: Fr. Michael will be blessing homes as part of our Theophany Season tradition. Please sign up in the back of the church (narthex). This blessing can be done every year!

EPISTLE ~ 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

“Everything is lawful for me,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is lawful for me,” but I will not let myself be dominated by anything. “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food,” but God will do away with both the one and the other. The body, however, is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body; God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take Christ’s members and make them the members of a prostitute? Of course not! [Or] do you not know that anyone who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For “the two,” it says, “will become one flesh.” But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

Avoid immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body.

~~~~~In the world of twenty centuries past, the city of Corinth had a notorious reputation for its lewdness, loose-living, and promiscuity. In today’s holy epistle lesson, which is taken from his first letter to the Christians at Corinth, the Holy Apostle Paul warns them about the sins of sexual immorality. The Corinthians are warned sternly by Paul to remember that the Holy Spirit dwells within every Christian’s body. Thus an intimate relationship exists between Jesus and each one of His followers. We long to solidify permanently this union with the Lord; but because we are yet in this life, we somehow feel incomplete and unfulfilled. We are detached or exiled from a lasting union with God. Paul emphasizes that there are sinful acts through which we intensify our estrangement from the state and place that we should be, that is united with our Savior. When we perceive our alienation from God or sinfulness, then such a recognition should impel us to have SORROW for past sins. Through such contrition, we can experience true reunification with God our Father.

### **GOSPEL ~ Luke 15:11-32**

Then he said, “A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’ So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any.

Coming to his senses he thought, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.”’ So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.’

But his father ordered his servants, ‘Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.’ Then the celebration began.

Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, ‘Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, ‘Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.’

He said to him, ‘My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’”

~~~~~On this third pre-great fast preparatory Sunday, the Holy Apostle Luke recounts for us The Parable of the Prodigal Son. As Jesus tells this parable, we hear how the younger of two sons demanded that his father give him at once that inheritance which he normally would have received upon the father's death. The young man wanted "to live it up" without any restraint from anyone. Taking his money, the young son went to live in a distant country and became a prodigal, that is recklessly extravagant. He squandered his undeserved wealth, depleting his supply of monetary funds. And when a terrible famine arose in that land, this foolish young man found himself penniless and friendless. At the end of this stupid and ill-conceived period of independence from moral principles, the prodigal son became repentant, returning to his father from this self-imposed exile. He showed his sincere SORROW and sought forgiveness from his father. On this third Sunday of preparation, the Church asks us to reflect upon our own lives and to recognize any estrangement from God. Then as a prodigal child, we must return from the exiled state of sin and show our Heavenly Father that we are truly sorry. Like the father of the prodigal son, God similarly will welcome us back into His home.

THE THIRD PREPARATORY SUNDAY FOR THE GREAT FAST..... For the past two Sundays, we have been preparing for the season of the Holy Great Fast, the forty-day penitential period during which the Church calls us annually to repentance and to a spiritual renewal. The themes presented thus far have emphasized the first two requisites that are necessary for repentance, namely desire and humility. This Sunday of the Prodigal Son exemplifies the fact that any sincere act of repentance must entail a recognition of one's sinfulness and must enkindle an attitude of contrition or SORROW for having offended God, Who is our ever-loving Father. This parable should reshape our priorities and remind us that apart from God, we have nothing. With God, however, we have blessings on earth, and we have the promise of an eternal inheritance in the heavenly homeland. God the Father speaks to us the same words that the father of this gospel passage speaks to his older son: "You are with me always, and everything that I have is yours." Repentance rightfully is perceived as our return from having been exiled from God. In the act of repentance, it is necessary to show our sorrow to our merciful Father (God) for doing wrong and offending Him. When we do this, our compassionate Father will respond to us just as the prodigal son's father showed him mercy and loving forgiveness. Let us emulate the contriteness of heart and the sorrow displayed by the prodigal son as we now approach God, our clement Father, in the sacred act of repentance.

Please pray for the causes of our four Sainly Bishops and ask them to intercede for your specific intentions: O Almighty God, our Lord, we bless You, we praise You, and we thank you for all the graces which You, in Your infinite mercy have bestowed upon us. We are especially grateful for giving us four saintly and heroic Bishops: Bishop Theodore G. Romzha, Bishop Paul P. Gojdich OBSM, Bishop Basil Hopko, and Bishop Alexander Chira, who, by their courage, charity, and intrepid faith, inspired our Ruthenian people in the darkest moments of their history. By their great sufferings, humiliating imprisonment, and violent death they gave living witness to their Catholic faith and glorified Your exalted name. Therefore, O Gracious Lord, glorify them in return by Your divine power and inscribe their names in the book of Your Saints. For you are holy, our God, and we render glory to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever, Amen. With Ecclesiastical Approbation Acknowledgment of answered prayers: Postulator's office, 54 Riverview Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15214, U.S.A.

PRAYER FOR SEMINARIANS: Saints Cyril and Methodius, Venerable Apostles of the Slavs and Patrons of our Byzantine Catholic Seminary, we place our Seminarians in your loving care. Help them to grow in humility, meekness and prudence. Enkindle in them a burning zeal for souls. May their hearts be filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and may they learn to know and love the church so that they may always and everywhere think, speak and act with Her, the Glorious Spouse of Christ. May they become exemplars of generosity and detachment from the things of this world. But above all, O Venerable Patrons, help them to truly know, love and serve the Eternal High Priest, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose priests they aspire to be. Amen. St. Michael the Archangel, Defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray. And do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, By the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen