

February 1, 2026
Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Pre-festive Day of the Meeting of our Lord with Simeon and Anna



Veil of Protection
SAINT MARY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! - Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na Viki!
Слава Исусу Христу! Слава на вики!

Propers: See handout

St. Mary Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., FEB. 1 SUNDAY of the PRODIGAL SON,
Pre-festive Day of the Meeting of our Lord with Simeon and Anna
10:45 A.M. THIRD HOUR
11:00 A.M. DIVINE LITURGY
Intention: For the People of St. George, St. Mary, and St. Nicholas Chapel

MON., FEB. 2 MEETING of our LORD with Simeon and Anna **Solemn Holy Day**
6:00 P.M. DIVINE LITURGY, *Blessing of Candles*
Intention: + Mary Ellen Fellenstein, requested by Carol Fellenstein

WED., FEB. 4 POST-FESTIVE DAY of the MEETING of our LORD,
Venerable Father Isidore
5:45 P.M. Betrothal of Adam Marquart and Catherine Richthammer
6:00 P.M. DIVINE LITURGY
Intention: Special Intention, requested by Mike and Patty Costantino

SUN., FEB. 8 SUNDAY of MEAT-FARE
10:45 A.M. THIRD HOUR
11:00 A.M. DIVINE LITURGY
Intention: For the People of St. George, St. Mary, and St. Nicholas Chapel

Happy Birthday Greetings:

None for the week

Wedding Anniversaries:

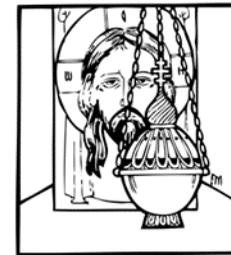
None for the week

Please Pray for Our Sick and Shut-ins:

HOME: Penny Furis, William Killian, Joyce Rose, Eleanor Soltis

Franciscan Manor (71 Darlington Rd., Beaver Falls, PA 15010) - George Cirka

Christ is among us! He is and shall be!
Christos posred' i nas! Jest' i budet!



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP
February 1 - 7, 2026

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

The Parishioners

Parish Offerings for January 25, 2026

Not Available

Fr. Anthony will be away until February 6th to 9th. Please call Fr. Joseph Raptosh our Protopresbyter, at St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church in Canonsburg at 724-745-7117 in case of a sacramental emergency.

Regular Confessions Offered

St. George 4:45-5:45 P.M. on Thursdays and **before** every Sunday Divine Liturgy
St. Mary: 4:45-5:45 P.M. on Wednesdays and **following** every Sunday Divine Liturgy
St. Nicholas 4:00-4:45 P.M. before Vigil Liturgy on Saturdays

Happenings...

ST. MARY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

FIRST STEPS OF THE JOURNEY TO EASTER

Come observe **Clean Monday**, the first day of the Great Fast. We've invited Fr. John Naugle to be a special guest homilist to share his insightful perspective on getting off to the right foot on your lenten journey.

MONDAY
FEB. 16TH

PRESANCTIFIED
DIVINE LITURGY
6:00 PM

**SAINT MARY BYZANTINE
CATHOLIC CHURCH**
624 PARK ROAD
AMBRIDGE, PA. 15003

FR. JOHN NAUGLE
GUEST HOMILIST



Reverend John F. Naugle, M.A., S.T.B. is a Roman Catholic priest serving as the Parochial Vicar at St. Augustine Parish in Beaver County, Pennsylvania. He was ordained in 2009 and has served in several parish assignments in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Fr. Naugle holds a B.S. in Economics and Mathematics from St. Vincent College, an M.A. in Philosophy from Duquesne University, and a Bachelor of Sacred Theology (S.T.B.) from The Catholic University of America. In addition to his parish ministry, he writes regularly on religious, cultural, and social topics for outlets like the Brownstone Institute and Alpha News.

2026 | Ambridge, PA

Blessing of Candles

The custom of blessing candles on the Feast of the Presentation was introduced to fill the "needs of the people." (I Prayer of the Blessing) Its introduction into our Rite was relatively recent, during the seventeenth century, but its roots reach venerable antiquity. As recorded in The Chronicle of St. Theophanes, Emperor Justinian I had issued an order in 541 A.D. that on the Feast of the Presentation, a candle-light procession be held throughout the city to implore Divine Protection against pestilence and the numerous earthquakes that plagued the city. And in answer to this holy gesture, God caused the pestilence and the earthquakes to subside. This gave rise to having similar processions on other occasions when the common welfare of the people was in danger.



These solemn processions, which eventually developed into Litija services in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, were later discontinued and limited only to the churches. The faithful, however, continued to use the candles as the means of Divine protection. This prompted the blessing of candles on the Feast of the Presentation/Meeting which then were distributed to the faithful.

"Let us celebrate the feast (of the Presentation) in a solemn way, illuminating the mystery of the day with lights." St. Cyril of Alexandria

St. George Divine Services for the Week:

WED., FEB. 4POST-FESTIVE DAY of the MEETING of our LORD,
Venerable Father Isidore
7:00 A.M.FIRST & THIRD HOUR

THUR., FEB. 5POST-FESTIVE DAY of the MEETING of our LORD,
Holy Martyr Agatha
6:00 P.M.DIVINE LITURGY with Panachida
First All-Souls Commemoration (transferred)
Intention: + All Souls

SUN., FEB. 8 SUNDAY of MEAT-FARE
8:15 A.M.FIRST HOUR
8:30 A.M.DIVINE LITURGY
Intention: + Joanne Futato, requested by Richard Mudron

St. Nicholas Chapel Divine Services for the Week:

SAT., FEB. 7SUNDAY of MEAT-FARE
5:00 P.M.DIVINE LITURGY
Intention: For the sanctification of all priests and an increase in priestly vocations, requested by Carol Fellenstein

The Meeting of our Lord Holy Day, February 2

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord was first observed in the Eastern Church as "The Encounter." In the sixth century, it began to be observed in the West: in Rome with a more penitential character and in Gaul (France) with solemn blessings and processions of candles, popularly known as "Candlemas." This feast day concludes the celebration of the Nativity and with the offerings of the Virgin Mother and the prophecy of Simeon, the events now point toward Easter.



Pre-Lenten Sundays

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son is the second Sunday of pre-Lent, the weeks of preparation preceding Great Lent. This pre-Lent is the start of the Easter cycle of worship in the Byzantine Catholic Church. On this Sunday in the preparation for Great Lent, Eastern Christians are read Christ's parable about God's loving forgiveness (Luke 15:11-24). They are to see themselves as being in a foreign country far from the Father's house and to make the movement of return to God, where we truly belong. The parable gives assurance that the Father will receive them with joy and gladness in their journey through Great Lent, their journey home.

A Note from Fr. Anthony

Dear parishioners,

The schedule is a bit out of the ordinary this week. **Monday is one of the 12 Great Feasts, the Encounter of our Lord with Simeon and Anna.** We will have a 6:00pm Divine Liturgy at St. Mary's followed by a small social.

On Wednesday, Seminarian Adam Marquart and Catherine Richthammer will be betrothed at St. Mary's at 5:45pm prior to the 6:00pm liturgy. A betrothal is a traditional Catholic practice that had fallen into disuse but has been making a return in recent years. It is a solemn blessing of a couple's engagement dedicating their time of engagement to God. The couple's wedding rings are blessed, and they begin to wear their wedding rings after this service! It is understood as a formal declaration of the couple's intent to marry and a betrothed couple can only separate for a serious reason. All are welcome to witness this beautiful ceremony.

I am unavailable to celebrate our First All Souls' Saturday at the proper time, so I am transferring its celebration to 6:00pm Thursday at St. George. **A final reminder to submit the list of the names of any deceased that you would like to be commemorated.**

Please give a warm welcome to Fr. Thomas More Sikora, OSB who will be celebrating our Divine Liturgies next weekend. He is a wonderful priest, and I am excited that he is coming to our parishes.

A reminder that the Great Fast begins in two weeks! Below are the guidelines. As I discussed in today's homily, do not view choosing between the Traditional Guidelines and the Minimum Requirements as an all or nothing choice! **It is perfectly acceptable if you only feel capable of doing the minimum, and if you have health concerns please speak to me if you need a dispensation.** However, for those of us who are healthy, adding abstinence from meat on Monday or even abstaining from meat Monday to Friday can be a very spiritually profitable practice. **Any sacrifices done with love during the Great Fast draw us closer to God!**

Great Fast Traditional Guidelines:

No meat or dairy for all the fast. Fish with a backbone permitted only on Annunciation, Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday (shellfish allowed). Wine and Olive Oil allowed only on Weekends and Feast Days

Great Fast Minimum Requirements from the Archeparchy:

Simple Abstinence: The law of simple abstinence forbids the use of meat but permits the use of eggs and dairy products. All faithful of the Archeparchy who receive the Eucharist are obliged to observe simple abstinence when prescribed. Abstinence is obligatory on all Wednesdays and Fridays of the Great Fast.

Strict Abstinence: The law of strict abstinence (fast) forbids the use and consumption of all meat, eggs and dairy products. All faithful of the Archeparchy who receive the Eucharist are obliged to observe strict abstinence when prescribed. **Strict abstinence (fast) is to be observed in 2026 on Clean Monday, February 16th (the first day of the Great Fast), and on Great and Holy Friday, April 3rd.**

In Christ,
Fr. Anthony

He was lost and has been found

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

In today's Gospel (Luke 15:11-32), we hear Christ's beloved parable of the Prodigal Son, a story that reveals the boundless mercy of the Father and the dignity to which each of us is called. The younger son's journey into "a far country" shows what happens when we try to live apart from God: we lose ourselves, our purpose, and our peace. Yet the moment he "came to himself" and turned homeward, the Father ran to meet him, embraced him, and restored him with a robe, a ring, and a feast.

For Byzantine Catholics, this Sunday prepares our hearts for the Great Fast (beginning February 16) by reminding us that repentance is not humiliation but homecoming. The Father does not merely forgive, He restores. He clothes us again in the robe of baptismal grace and invites us to the banquet of His Kingdom. Whether we identify with the prodigal or the older brother, Christ calls us to rediscover the joy of being His sons and daughters.

Living the Gospel as Missionary Disciples:

1. Return to prayer each day, even briefly, as a way of "coming to yourself" and turning toward the Father.
2. Seek reconciliation, with God or with someone in your life, before the Great Fast begins.
3. Practice mercy by refusing resentment and choosing compassion, especially when you feel like the older brother.
4. Remember your dignity by living as one who has been welcomed home, not as one defined by past failures.

This week, may we rise and go to the Father, confident that He runs to meet us with love.



SAINT MARY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

624 Park Rd.- Ambridge, PA 15003

PRIEST: FATHER ANTHONY COSTANTINO



Deacon Thomas J. Klacik

Fr. Anthony's Cell #: (878) 226-0878

OFFICE PHONE: 724-266-2030

CHURCH FAX: 724-266-1834

CHURCH HALL: 724-266-8642

PARISH WEBSITE: www.stmaryambridge.org



Cantors: Alex Broussard, Tasney Broussard, Naedia McCann, Catherine Richthammer

E.C.F. coordinator: Jonathan Dohanich

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation..... Wednesdays 4:45-5:45 P.M. & after Sunday Liturgy.

Holy Mysteries of Initiation.....Contact the church office.

Holy Mystery of AnointingAsk prior to surgery or serious illness.

Holy Mystery of MarriageContact the church office eight months prior to wedding.

Religious Education Classes.....September through May.

Pirohi Sales Every Friday

“Let your prayer be completely simple. For both the publican and the prodigal son were reconciled to God by a single phrase.”

ST. MARY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH PRESENTS:

BYZANTINE LENT 101

EXPLAINING WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO AS
BYZANTINE CATHOLICS DURING THE GREAT FAST

FEB 25

7:15 - 8:15 PM

WHY & HOW WE FAST



Differences between
Roman & Byzantine Lent

MARCH 4

7:15 - 8:15 PM

PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY



Walkthrough and
explanation

MARCH 11

7:15 - 8:15 PM

PRAYING PRIVATELY



The Jesus Prayer & forms
of personal prayer

MARCH 25

7:15 - 8:15 PM

PREPARING FOR EASTER



Our Holy Week &
Easter services

MARCH 18TH @ 6PM – GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE WILL BE PRAYED

SIGN-UP AT BACK OF CHURCH OR EMAIL STMARYAMBRIDGE@PROTONMAIL.COM

▶▶▶▶▶ 624 PARK RD. AMBRIDGE, PA ◀◀◀◀◀

Weekly Schedule for THE GREAT FAST

SUN	8:15AM ST. GEORGE 1 ST HOUR 8:30AM ST. GEORGE DL OF ST. BASIL 10:45AM ST. MARY 3 RD HOUR 11AM ST. MARY DL OF ST. BASIL
TUE	6PM ST. GEORGE PRESANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGY
WED	7AM ST. GEORGE 1 ST & 3 RD HOUR 6PM ST. MARY PRESANCTIFIED DL 7:15PM ST. MARY ADULT EDUCATION
THU	6PM ST. MARY PRESANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGY
FRI	9AM ST. MARY 6 TH & 9 TH HOUR 6PM ST. GEORGE PRESANCTIFIED DL
SAT	9AM ST. GEORGE DL OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM 5PM ST. NICHOLAS DL OF ST. BASIL

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

Wednesday, March 18th 6:00pm St. Mary Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Wednesday, March 25th Annunciation 12:00pm St. George and 6:00pm St. Mary
Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom