

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Mission

1635 Shaffer Road
Atwater, California 95301

Sunday February 8th 2026 **Sunday of the Prodigal Son** Greatmartyr Theodore Stratelates Prophet Zechariah

Activities and Events this Week

Tuesday 10	Tuesday Morning Book Study	10:30am
	Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm

Wed Night Adult Education Class – Canceled – start up in the Fall

Announcements

Welcome to Archpriest Damian Kuolt – a good friend for over 20 years!

Thank you to everyone who has looked after me – food, company, prayers even changing my front porch light! I know that I am blessed to be in this community. I have requested a three week release from my priestly duties from Bishop Vasily. I will try to be back in action sometime during the first week of lent or perhaps sooner.

WE WELCOME ALL VISITORS – PLEASE BE SURE TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF – Fr. Lawrence would very much like to meet you!

St. Eugene Camp is on track for June 21-27 at the Armenian Camp in Dunlap. Sunday February 1st and 8th we will take a collection to defray the cost for the camp counselors. Counselors often times take a week vacation and drive long distances at their expense to help at the camp. This is the only youth focused event in our mission and in the Central Pacific Deanery. Your generous contribution allows you to be a part of the great experience for the kids.

Theophany is house blessing season. Please sign up in the narthex if you would like your home blessed. **House Blessing put on hold – we will get them done even if we need to go into lent – a good time to get the house blessed!**

Sign up in the hall if you would like to sponsor flowers to beautify our church. See Diane Holmes for any questions.

The Joseph Czyzowsky Bookstore construction continues as we will be ordering more books and gift items. We are hoping the grand opening will be soon.

Great Lent Confessions – Everyone, whether you confess regularly or only once per year, will need to make a confession during the Lenten season. I am giving a time window from Sunday of Zacchaeus to Friday April 3rd. Please avail yourself to this huge window to make a confession as part of our season of repentance. Please do not ask me to hear confessions after April 3rd and until after Pascha, as I am likely to say no.

The Parable of the Prodigal Son – this beautiful parable is found only in Luke's Gospel ((15:11-32). The Pharisees and Scribes condemned the Lord Jesus Christ because He welcomed sinners and ate with them. For this reason the Lord Jesus spoke this parable as well as a few preceding this one, parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15:1-7) and the parable of the lost drachma (Luke 15:8-10). These parables express the joy of one who found which was lost. In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the Lord compares the joy of God after the repentance of a sinner to the joy of a loving father to whom his profligate son has returned. "A certain man" had two sons. The man is God, while the sons are a sinner on the one hand, and so-called righteous men on the other, the Scribes and Pharisees on the other. The younger son asks for his share of his inheritance (1/3 according to (Deut 21:17). He goes off and lives a profligate life – as following God can be burdensome for some and they go off and live a licentious lifestyle. "There arose a famine in the land." Sometimes God send us external calamities to those of us who are mired in a sinful life to force us to become sober. "And so he came to himself" – a very expressive phrase. The heavy consequence of sin and external calamities have a way of waking us up! "I will arise and go to my Father" – this is a decision of the sinner to leave his sin and repent. "I have sinned against heaven," that is, before the holy place of God's presence and the pure sinless spirit, "and before you," by disdaining his loving Father, "and I am no longer worthy to be called your son." This is an expression of profound humility and a confession of his unworthiness both of which always accompany true repentance in a sinner. Listen carefully in the Gospel the reaction of the so called righteous son, the Scribes and Pharisees and how the Father deals with him.

Please feel free to contact Fr. Lawrence for questions or to visit. 719-347-1211
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Welcome to all visitors!