



## Press Release

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Event: 124th Annual Novena

Date: July 24, 2004

Time: 9:00am - 3:00pm

**FREE ADMISSION**

Location: St Anne Catholic Church,  
230 North Sixth  
St Anne, IL 60964

Each year in July, the St. Anne Roman Catholic Church holds a novena. It all began around 1873, when Father Michel Letellier built a new Catholic church. During Letellier's tenure an annual novena to St. Anne began to be celebrated. For nine days in July, morning and evening, services filled the new church with worshippers. This year novena begins on Friday, July 16, 2004 and ends July 24, 2004.

In 1866, Achille Bergeron, pastor of Notre Dame in Chicago, led a band of pilgrims to the St. Anne shrine. They brought a finger bone fragment of St. Anne. It was a gift from Montreal's Bishop Fabre. The Saint's relic became the centerpiece of the novena service. Each St. Anne Feast Day the faithful carried the relic in colorful procession through the streets of St. Anne.

Fire destroyed Lettelier's church in 1893; however, church and relic were replaced within a year. St. Anne's novena attracted trainloads of pilgrims from many countries. The church became known as the "Original Shrine of St. Anne in the United States." A few miraculous cures are attributed to the novenas. A discarded crutch or two and other reminders of these healings can be seen in the church. The annual novena is still celebrated.

It is a privilege to invite you to the 124th annual novena. The St Anne Church believes this to be the longest running novena honoring St Anne in the United States, and its longevity is a tribute to the town's support. Each day Mass will be celebrated at 8:00am, and repeated at 7:00pm. The St. Anne's Day program will begin with a tour of the church and comments on the history of the novena and the parish at 9:00am in the church. At 10:30am, Mass of Anointing on the south lawn, under the pavilion. At this Mass all those seriously impaired by sickness or old age are invited to receive Christ's sacrament of Anointing, and to pray for strength and healing through the intercession of good St Anne. Following this Mass, the Blessed Sacrament and the relic of St. Anne will be carried among the people for blessing. The procession will parade through the village while reciting the rosary.

A chicken dinner will be served in the parish hall from 10:30am to 1:30pm. At 1:00pm in the church we will present a new play on the life of St Anne, complete with lovely Marian hymns. The festival Mass in honor of St Anne will be celebrated at 2:00pm in the church, to close the day's program. The St Anne community welcomes all visitors, especially families, there will be a special program for children from 12:15pm until 1:30pm on the north side of the church.

### **Schedule of Events**

July 16, 2004 - 8:00am Mass, Beginning Novena  
7:00pm Mass

\*\*Mass held everyday and night at these times until July 24, 2004.

### **St. Anne's Day - July 24, 2004, Saturday**

8:00am - Mass

9:00am - Tour of Church and history of Novena

10:30am - Mass of Anointing on the south lawn, procession through village begins after Mass  
Chicken Dinners available in parish hall

12:15pm - Children's Program begins on the north side of church

1:00pm - Life of St Anne, play presented by church members

1:30pm - Chicken Dinners will stop being served in parish hall

Children's Program ends

2:00pm - Festival of Mass, honoring St Anne