



South Side St. Patrick's Day Parade upsets Catholic Church

By GoPride.com News Staff

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Priest says parade committee should have followed the lead of Chicago's Gay Pride Parade

CHICAGO, IL -- A South Side priest is criticizing organizers of Sunday's South Side Irish St. Patrick's Day Parade for starting the event at 11 a.m. instead of noon, an argument similar to that made against the Chicago Gay Pride Parade in December.

The annual parade on Chicago's South Side returns for the first time in 2 years, but Father Bob Kyfes of the St. John Fisher Catholic Church in the Beverly community is upset over the parade's new start time.

"Since the parade will likely go forward on Sunday, March 11, with no apparent regard for the far more important task of giving praise and thanks to God on a Sunday in Lent, we will go ahead with our plan to add an extra mass on Saturday," Kyfes posted on the Parish's website.

The church cancelled Sunday's 10 a.m. and noon Masses and added a 6 p.m. Saturday service to accommodate parishioners.

Other churches in the area also cancelled or rescheduled services.

Kyfes argued that the parade committee should have followed the lead of Chicago's Gay Pride Parade.

"The Gay Pride Parade folks on the North Side were considerate enough to move their parade to noon," he said.

Pride parade organizers moved the 10 a.m. start time back to noon because it could potentially conflict with Sunday Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Lakeview.

The compromise, which was made in December, was mired in controversy.

Cardinal Francis George, the head of the Catholic Conference of Illinois and the Archbishop of Chicago, made [disparaging remarks](#) about the pride parade and its organizers by comparing them to the Ku Klux Klan.

"You don't want the gay liberation movement to morph into something like the Ku Klux Klan, demonstrating against Catholicism," George told Fox Chicago News in December.

After public outcry, George subsequently [apologized](#) a month later for the comparison.

Kyfes said he sent a two-page letter to the Cardinal about the St. Patrick's Day Parade. George has not commented and calls to the Archdiocese of Chicago have not been returned.