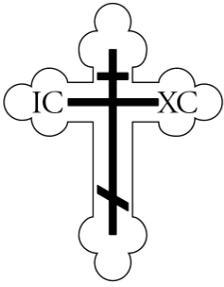
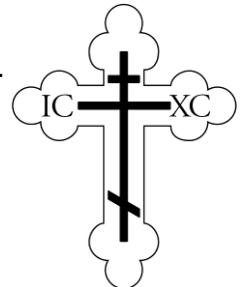


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



A Parish of the
Diocese of Chicago
and the Midwest
Orthodox Church in
America



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Rev. Dr. Jacob Van Sickle
(219) 384-6826 • frjacobvansickle@gmail.com

Great Vespers: 6pm Saturdays

Divine Liturgy: 10am Sundays

Confessions are heard before or
after Vespers or by appointment.

**Welcome visitors!
Please join us in the
parish hall after
Divine Liturgy for
coffee hour.**

July 1, 2018: The Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cosmos and Damien (martyred c. 284)

“Holy Unmercenaries” is an epithet applied to a number of Saints who did not accept payment for good deeds. Unmercenary Healers cared for the sick or aged in the spirit of Christ, without concern for gain. These physicians and other medical workers understood their skills in the spirit of St Paul’s teaching on spiritual gifts: “To each is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good (1 Cor 12.7).”

Cosmos and Damien adopted this teaching as the guiding principle of their professional lives to a heroic degree. In an age when health care, as rudimentary as it often was, was exclusively for those who could afford it, the Unmercenaries stood out by their compassionate attention to the sick poor. When Christians were still suspect in the pagan Roman Empire, the witness of Holy Unmercenaries led people to see that Christians were living by a higher standard than the leaders of their own culture. Not surprisingly, Cosmos and Damien took the occasion of caring for the sick as opportunities for preaching the Gospel as well. The ideal of physicians serving without pay for Christ inspired many in the Church to follow their example.



HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 4 – Resurrectional Troparion

When the women Disciples of the Lord learned from the Angel
the joyous message of the Resurrection,
they cast away the ancestral curse
and elatedly told the Apostles:
“Death is overthrown!
Christ our God is risen,//
granting the world great mercy!”

Tone 4 – Patronal Troparion

Today the faithful celebrate the feast with joy,
Illumined by your coming, O Mother of God.
Beholding your pure image we fervently cry to you:
Encompass us beneath the precious veil of your protection
And deliver us from every form of evil.
By entreating Christ, your Son and our God//
That He may save our souls.

Tone 8 – Troparion for Sts. Cosmos & Damien

Holy unmercenaries and wonderworkers, Cosmas and
Damian, visit our infirmities!//
Freely you have received; freely give to us.

Tone 4 – Resurrectional Kontakion

My Savior and Redeemer as God
rose from the tomb
and delivered the earth-born from their chains.
He has shattered the gates of hell,//
and as Master He has risen on the third day!

Tone 2 – Kontakion for Sts. Cosmos and Damian

Having received the grace of healing,
you grant healing to those in need.
Glorious wonderworkers and physicians, Cosmos and Damian,
visit us and put down the insolence of our enemies,
and bring healing to the world through your miracles.

Tone 3 – Patronal Kontakion

Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church,
And with choirs of saints she invisibly prays to God for us.
Angels and bishops worship.
Apostles and prophets rejoice together,//
Since for our sake she prays to the eternal God.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Romans 10.1-10

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Jews is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they have not submitted to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. About the righteousness that is based on the law Moses writes, "The person who does those things shall live by them." But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we preach): that if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses unto salvation.

Gospel: Matthew 8.28-9.1

And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us

away into the herd of pigs.” And he said to them, “Go.” So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region. And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Repose:

N.Dep. Priest Michael Prevas

Theodore Milenkoff

Ev.Mem.

Simeon Daviduk (1930)

Simeon Bobka (1953)

Mary Mudrich (1968)

Anne Pete (1977)

Sam Katsampolis (2011)

Health & Salvation:

Protopresbyter George

Archpriest Frederick

Priest Phillip

Matushka Anna

Matushka Carol

Khouria Kathryn

Kevin

Jon

Tanya

Kimberly

Gail

Gerald

William

Jovan

Charles

Barbara

Theodore

Nada

Olive

Mary

Michael

Sophie

Julia

Warren

Mary

Loretta

Willy

Gilbert

Charlene

Joseph

Carol

Infant Adam

Infant Benjamin

Infant Juliana

Vigil offerings for:

Tasia Koveck

Blessings for:

Paul and Janice Scherer

Helen Campbell

*If you know someone who needs prayer, please give their name to Fr Jacob

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We need someone to take over organizing **Feed the Flock for next year**. Talk to Bogy and Sherry if interested. Remaining dates for helping out this year are Aug 18 & Nov 3.

Women's Sodality is selling canned peppers again this year. There is a sign-up sheet in the vestibule to claim yours. Their next meeting will be July 10 at 11am @ Pappas Restaurant, Crown Point.

If you love this Church and want to show it off to new-comers, tell Fr Jacob you are interested in becoming a **Greeter**.

Please, if you haven't already, take a moment before you leave to update your contact information by filling out the form in the vestibule.

Mark your calendars:

The annual **Rummage Sale** will be Friday, August 10 in the parish hall. Item drop-off begins August 5.

This year's **Fashion Show** will take place at the Avalon Banquet Hall on October 14.

On Accepting Others

by His Grace, our Bishop Paul (continued from last week)

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them [Genesis 1:26-27].

Many may be familiar with these words from Genesis. They are important words that offer some answers to how we approach and address "sinners" with acceptance and unconditional love. Every human being is created in the image of God and after His likeness. The image of God in us speaks to what is there to begin with, while "after the likeness" implies something that

has yet to mature, something in which we are called to grow: into the likeness of God. We are all a “work in progress.” No matter what we do in our lives, however sinful we are, we cannot totally eradicate that image. All of us seek to know where we came from and to understand the Source of our existence. To know the One Who made us is a desire that is in all of us from birth.

Whenever we encounter people with the various scarlet letters they bring with them, we need to lay that aside and seek the one common denominator all of us share—the desire to know the One Who made us, the Creator whose very image we bear in us. It is never eradicated, regardless of how scarred and damaged it may be as a result of our actions. This is where we start. We strive not to see someone as “such and such a person,” but as someone to whom we are united, seeking to discover who they are in relationship to the One Who made them. We can begin by listening to their stories and their experiences. We can even discuss how they came to arrive at the choices they have made in their lives without judging them in our initial desire is to listen and seek to understand. Doing so does not mean that we approve of their choices. We do not compromise our Orthodox Christian faith when we love a sinner. We all want to be loved, to be heard, and to be understood. When we can convey this to the people we encounter in daily life, we begin a process of building a bridge instead of a wall.

Jesus began His public ministry proclaiming, “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” These words lie at the heart of living our Orthodox Christian Faith. The call to “repent” is not a one-time event we experience, or have experienced, at one point in our life. It is a call to change our minds, to turn from how we had previously understood our life. It is an ongoing call that challenges us to embrace a reality that is beyond what we see, hear, smell, feel, or touch. It is the challenge to rethink how these five senses, through which we learn about the world around us, can be reoriented to point us to a world beyond. It is the challenge to bring something of that world beyond and manifest it here and now. The words of the Lord’s Prayer call

us to this: "...Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." This is what it means to be a saint; by the grace of the All-holy Spirit, we sanctify and make something of heaven present in the place where we live.

The idea of building bridges is fulfilled in this Gospel call of Christ to "repent." This is the bridge that calls our attention to another reality and dimension that all of us seek. Many do so without realizing it. Until we cross that bridge, there is little we can say about how people should live their lives. But once we cross that bridge, we meet and are confronted with Jesus of Nazareth. He is the game changer. He is the God-Man Who comes to make Himself known to us. He is the icon of what it means to be a true human being. To stand in the presence of Christ is to stand in His light. Light reveals what has been hidden in the darkness. What does that do to us? Read Luke 5:1-11 and Mark 10:17-27. These readings will be the focus of next week's reflection.

Glory to God for all things!