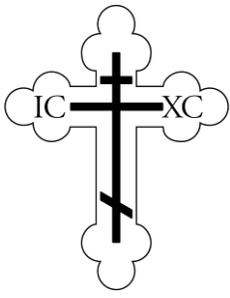
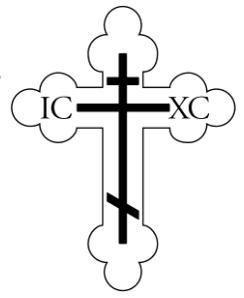


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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.**

September 2, 2018

Holy Martyr Mamas († c. 275); St. John the Faster († 595)

**Excerpts from the *Homily on the Holy Martyr Mamas*
by St. Basil the Great:**

The Church is founded upon such fathers of truth [as Mamas]. Do you see how in keeping this feast people are honoring virtue and not riches? The Church honors those who formerly led us forward so that they might continue to exhort us in the present. “Let us not aspire to wealth for ourselves,” the martyr says, “or to the unreliable wisdom of the world, or to passing glory. Such things vanish with this life. Be a holy laborer, for this is what you will take with you to heaven, leaving behind an immortal memory and acquiring permanent fame.”

So then, if such is the memorial of a shepherd, let us not worship wealth. For we have gathered to praise one who had no wealth at all. Let us not go home marveling at one who was rich, but at one who had both poverty and piety.



A shepherd is of virtually no significance. He has no appreciable skill. Wouldn't you be insulted if someone provoked you by asking, "Are you a shepherd?" A shepherd possesses nothing

more than his daily food, a leather satchel, a staff, and whatever he needs for that day, with no thought for the next. He shuns crowds, flees legal entanglements, knows nothing of flattery, business, or wealth. He has no roof over his head, living out under the open sky, gazing up to heaven at night and learning to know the Creator from the wonder of the stars.

A shepherd: let us not be ashamed of the truth, nor imitate the pagan myth-makers who embellish the truth with elegant trappings. We have here a humble man, a poor shepherd, the pride of Christians. If our father in faith is such as this, a teacher of those who seek piety, well then, so were the disciples—fisherman and tax collectors. No one was rich. No one was illustrious. All were of no account in the eyes of the world. This is the kind of person we celebrate today—one we are delighted to honor, one we love so much that we alter our lives for his sake.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 5 – Resurrectional Troparion

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 4 – Patronal Troparion

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

Tone 4 – Troparion for St. Mamas

Your holy martyr Mamas, O Lord,
through his suffering has received an incorruptible crown from
You, our God.
For having Your strength, he laid low his adversaries,
and shattered the powerless boldness of demons.//
Through his intercessions save our souls!

Tone 4 – Troparion for St. John

In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith,
an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence;
your humility exalted you;
your poverty enriched you.
Hierarch Father John,
entreat Christ our God//
that our souls may be saved!

Tone 5 – Resurrectional Kontakion

You descended into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
You have delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man,//
and we cry to You: “O Lord, save us!”

Tone 3 – Kontakion for St. Mamas

Holy Mamas, lead your people as a flock to life-giving pastures
with the staff God has given you;
crush the invisible and fierce enemies beneath the feet of those
who honor you!
For all of those who are in danger//
have received you as their fervent intercessor.

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: 2 Corinthians 1.21-2.4

Brethren: It is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also sealed us and given us His Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. But I call God as witness against my soul, that it was to spare you that I refrained from coming again to Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but we are fellow workers with you for your joy; for by faith you stand.

But I determined for myself that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is there to make me glad when you who would have done so are saddened by me? And I wrote as I did to you so that when I came, I would not have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy would be your joy. For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

Gospel: Matthew 22.1-14

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come.

Again he sent other servants, saying, “Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”” But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them.

The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

"But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Repose:

N.Dep. Geraldine

Marian Havrila

Ev.Mem. Ben Savka

Kathryn Parks

Mary Lescisin

Harry Melnick

Anton Dorochoff

Health & Salvation:

Protopresbyter George

Matushka Anna

Archpriest Frederick

Matushka Carol

Kevin

Jon

Tanya

Kimberly

Gail

Gerald

William

Jovan

Charles

Barbara

Theodore

Olive

Michael

Julia

Warren

Mary

Loretta

Willy

Gilbert

Carol

Peter

Janie

Diane

Tom

Elizabeth

Adam

Infant Benjamin

Infant Juliana

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

After Liturgy today, Fr. Christopher and Mat. Jen Moore of the **Orthodox Christian Mission Center** will give a brief presentation about their work as missionaries in Mongolia and soon in South Korea. A special collection will be taken to support their work.

Fr. Jacob & Mat. Jenna are hosting a **Labor Day open house** cook-out tomorrow from 12-8pm for parishioners and friends. 10343 Nicklaus St., Winfield. Please stop by if you can.

This Saturday, Sept 8, we celebrate the **Nativity of the Virgin** with Divine Liturgy @ 10am followed by a luncheon courtesy of the Women's Sodality.

Following lunch on Saturday will be a **Choir Retreat** with our new director, Matt Wells. Please let Matt know if you will attend. New choir members are welcome!

Church School begins next week. Please help us plan by registering your children in the narthex.

The **women's book group** begins a week from tomorrow. Books are in. Make sure you pick yours up from the bookstore before you leave.

The parish council has set Saturday, Sept 15 as the date of our **Fall Church Clean-up**. Please come and help us beautify the Church grounds in time for our 107th Anniversary celebration.

Mark your calendars:

Sept 3: Labor Day **open house** @ Van Sickles', 12-8pm

Sept 7: Great Vespers @ 6pm for the **Nativity of the Virgin Mary**

Sept 8: Divine Liturgy @ 10am for the **Nativity of the Virgin Mary**; Choir retreat following lunch

Sept 9: First day of **church school**.

Sept 15: **Fall clean-up** @ Church, 9am start

Sept 30: Parish **Feast-Day celebration** (moved from Oct 1)

Oct 1: Divine Liturgy @ 10am for the **Protection of the Virgin Mary**

Oct 14: **Fall Fashion Show** at Avalon Banquet Hall after Liturgy

Last Week's Offerings to the Lord:

General Fund: \$3,149 Mortgage: \$181 Fundraiser: \$3,185

Today's prosphora bread was offered by Ivanka Tanaskoski.

How Do We Fast?

A reflection by his Grace, our bishop Paul

About 20 years ago, a parishioner asked me if her family could keep the fast on Tuesdays and Thursdays instead of Wednesdays and Fridays. When I asked why she made this request, she replied that it was easier to fast on those days. The simple response on how to fast is to just follow the rules. In doing so, fasting can be liberating and freeing. We don't need to make up our own rules. Fasting is a sacrifice and, as such, it is not meant to be easy.

However, when I lived at Saint Gregory Palamas Monastery in Ohio for a year, I learned something fascinating about fasting. It was easy! How so? There is something about living the rhythm of the daily services, work, prayer in one's room, and observing the fast that made a great deal of sense. The fasting got to the point that even on strict fast days, I had grown accustomed to being grateful for those meals (and I enjoyed them) just as much as the festal meals served on Sundays. Mind you, we did not eat meat at all during the year. With the work of the monastery, the daily services, and the fasting, Sunday truly became a day of rest, a festal day, and a Paschal day. We had the best meal of the week on Sundays. We even got into the habit of having pizza and a beer on Sunday evenings! Within the context of living the monastic daily cycle, fasting was not so difficult. It even taught me how to become joyful and grateful for the gifts given to me by our Lord. Some may think of rules as being confining and limiting. However, in a monastic setting, I found freedom as I obeyed the rule.

Fasting becomes difficult in a world in which families and individuals face endless choices with regard to how to spend their time. Family life is not monastic life, and the home is not a monastery. Parents have jobs, and increasingly both parents work. Children go to school and study with people who most likely have different faith values and live different lifestyles. After-school activities keep parents on the run. So how does one fast in this context? Here are some points to consider:

- Follow the rules as faithfully as you can. Have children and teens pack “fasting lunches” to enjoy on fast days.
- It is important to understand that some people can observe a stricter fast than others. Those who engage in manual labor may require more sustenance than others.
- Those with health issues should follow their doctor’s orders.
- When you encounter difficulty in keeping the rules, speak with your parish priest, who can guide you as to how the fast might be adapted to your situation. Don’t adjust the rules on your own.
- Fasting is not as difficult when the family cook determines the menu. Eat what is put on the table.

I would like to write more on this next week, focusing especially on how to introduce fasting to those with no prior experience of it.

The Lord’s blessing be upon you,

+Paul

Glory to God for all things!