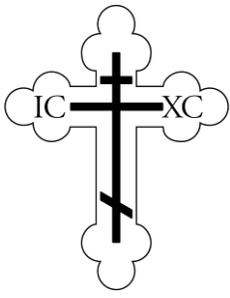
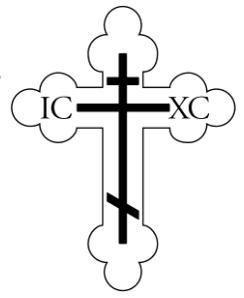


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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



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Rev. Dr. Jacob Van Sickle
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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 23, 2018 **The Conception of the Glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John**

An excerpt from St. Gregory Palamas' *Homily 40* on St. John:

The whole life of the greatest man born of woman was a supreme miracle. John was a prophet, and much more than a prophet, even before he was born. Not only did his entire life transcend all wonders, but so did everything concerning him, both long before his lifetime and long afterwards. The divine predictions of seers inspired by God described him as an angel rather than a man (Mt. 11:10; Ex. 23:20; Mal. 3:1), as a lampstand for the light (Jn. 5:35; Ps. 132:17), a divinely radiant star bringing in the morning (Jn. 1:8; 5:35), for he went before the Sun of Righteousness and was "the voice" of God's Word.

When the time for his conception drew near, an angel flew down from heaven and put an end to Zachariah's and

Elizabeth's barrenness, promising that the couple who had been childless from their youth would bear a child in extreme old age. The birth of this son would, he foretold, cause much joy, as it would be for the salvation of all. "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God, and he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Lk. 1:16-17). For he shall be a virgin as Elijah was, and dwell in the desert more than he did, and he shall censure kings and queens who transgress. What puts him above Elijah, however, is that he shall be the Forerunner of God, for the Scripture says, "He shall go before Him."

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 8 – Resurrectional Troparion

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!
You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

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 4 – Troparion for the Conception of St. John

Rejoice, O barren one, who formerly did not bear a child,
for you have conceived the Lamp of the Sun, Who is to illumine
the whole universe darkened by blindness!
Rejoice, O Zachariah,
and cry out with boldness:
"The Prophet of the Most High desires to be born!"

Tone 8 – Resurrectional Kontakion

By rising from the tomb You raised the dead and resurrected Adam.
Eve exults in Your Resurrection,
and the world celebrates Your rising from the dead, O greatly
Merciful One!

Tone 1 – Kontakion for the Conception of St. John

Great Zachariah rejoices with his wife, the far-famed Elizabeth,
for she has fittingly conceived John the [^]Forerunner,
whom an angel announced in gladness;
and whom we rightly honor//
as an initiate of the grace of God.

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 6:16-7:1

Brethren: What agreement has the temple of God with idols?
For you are the temple of the living God.

As God said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I
will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Therefore, “Come out from among them and be separate,
says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive
you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and
daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse
ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting
holiness in the fear of God.

Galatians 4.22-31

Brethren: It is written that Abraham had two sons: the one
by a slave woman, the other by a free woman. But the one born
of the slave woman was born according to the flesh, and the one
born of the free woman through promise. These things are
allegorical, for these women are the two covenants. The one
from Mount Sinai gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—for
this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the
Jerusalem of today, which is in bondage with her children. The
other—the Jerusalem above—is free, which is the mother of us
all.

For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, you who do not bear! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor! For the desolate one has many more children than she who has a husband."

Now we, brethren, as was Isaac, are children of promise. But as the one born according to the flesh then persecuted the one born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.

Nevertheless, what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman." So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

At that time, as the multitude pressed about Jesus to hear the word of God, He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

When Jesus had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless, at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Jesus.

Luke 1:5-25

There was in the days of Herod, king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of

the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking blameless in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. Now after those days his wife

Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying,
“Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked
on me, to take away my reproach among people.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Repose:	Michael
N.Dep. Mary Ann Meyer	Julia
Olive Leskow	Warren
Infant Isaac	Mary
Geraldine	Loretta
Marian Havrila	Gilbert
Ev.Mem. Dimitri Martin	Carol
John Mironenko	Peter
	Janie
Health & Salvation:	Tom
Protopresbyter George	Elizabeth
Matushka Anna	Adam
Archpriest Frederick	Shaun
Matushka Carol	Myah
Archpriest Peter	Margaret
Archpriest William	Diane
Matushka Jean	Madelin
Priest John	Villian
Priest Christopher	Deborah
Mat. Jennifer	Jovan
Andrew	Claudia
Gideon	John
Kevin	Joey
Jon	Carissa
Tanya	Natalia
Kimberly	Elizabeth
Gail	Roger
William	Tina
Jovan	Infant Benjamin
Charles	Infant Juliana
Barbara	Infant Lennox
Theodore	

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We will celebrate PTVM's **107th Anniversary** on September 30 after Liturgy with a dinner in leu of coffee hour. There will be no charge for the dinner, but donations will be accepted.

The **Fall Fashion Show**, our largest fundraiser of the year, is coming up on October 14th! Get your baskets in and ask Elizabeth Pederson how you can help make it a success.

Beginning in October we will have **Fellowship Night** at the Church on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month. We will share a meal and grow in our faith together.

Mark your calendars:

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

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

Oct 10: Our first **Fellowship Night** – Potluck @ 6pm followed by teaching and Small Compline @ 7:30pm

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

Oct 24: **Fellowship Night** – Potluck @ 6pm followed by teaching and Small Compline @ 7:30pm

Last Week's Offerings to the Lord:

General Fund: \$1,331

Mortgage: \$243

Today's prosphora bread was offered by Sherry Mizimakoski.

Finding Balance Through the Cross

A reflection by his Grace, our bishop Paul

Last week, I encouraged people to attend the services for the Great Feast of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross. As I reflect upon the message of the Cross in these days of the post-feast, I am reminded of a question often asked of me about family life: how does one balance one's time between school related commitments and the expectation to be in church? The nature of the question can result in opposing the church to the world, setting up a false dichotomy. Thus, I am not comfortable with answering this question the way it is presented.

Yet the issue of balance is important. I think we find balance in life when we do what our Lord commands, when we carry our Cross and follow Him so that, in losing our lives for the sake of the Gospel, we may gain them back. The Cross brings us balance and teaches us how to live in the world as we realize we are not of world. Caesarius of Arles and Saint Jerome offer some wonderful commentaries on this theme.

While there is much in the world to love, it is best loved in relation to the One Who made it. The world is beautiful, but much fairer is the One Who fashioned it. The world is glorious, but more delightful is the One by Whom the world was established. Therefore, let us labor as much as we can, beloved, that love of the world as such may not overwhelm us, and that we may not love the creature more than the Creator. God has given us earthly possessions in order that we may love him with our whole heart and soul – St. Caesarius of Arles

Christ's soldier marches on through good report and evil report, the one on the right hand and the other on the left. No praise elates him, no reproaches crush him. He is not puffed up by riches nor depressed by poverty. Joy and sorrow he alike despises – St. Jerome

It is only by embracing the Cross that our Lord commands us to carry that we can find this balance. That is why we have the sacraments of the Church to help us get to this place. Reflect upon the thoughts presented in the above citations; seek counsel from your parish priest. May we all come to experience the Cross of our Lord as the balance we need in order to live in the world, while not being of the world.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you,

+Paul

Glory to God for all things!