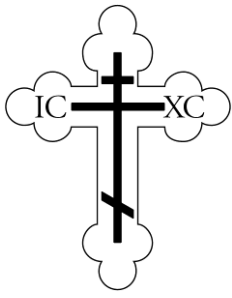
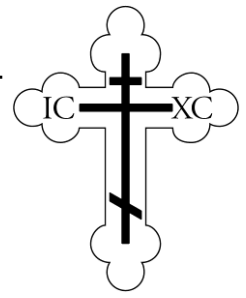


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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



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Merrillville, IN 46410
(219)947-4748
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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 9, 2018

**Afterfeast of the Virgin's Nativity; Ancestors of God
Joachim and Anna; Prefeast of the Exaltation of the Cross**

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. The Virgin Mary was chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God.

Her parents were Joachim of the tribe of the prophet-king David, and Anna from the tribe of the first priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since St Anna was barren. Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, wife of the Patriarch

Abraham. Sts Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation a divine punishment for sin, and so Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feast-days at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

St Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. St Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 6 – Resurrectional Troparion

The angelic powers were at Your tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Your grave,
seeking Your most pure body.
You captured hell,
not being tempted by it.
You came to the Virgin, granting life.//
O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You.

Tone 4 – Troparion for the Virgin's Nativity

Your nativity, O Virgin,
has proclaimed joy to the whole universe!
The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God,
has shone from you, O Theotokos.
By annulling the curse,
He bestowed a blessing.//
By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

Tone 1 – Troparion for Sts. Joachim and Anna

Since you were righteous under the law of grace, O Joachim
and Anna,

you gave birth to the God-given infant for our sake.

Therefore, the divine Church radiantly keeps feast today,

Joyfully celebrating your honorable memory and giving glory
to God, //

Who has raised up a horn of salvation from the house of David.

Tone 6 – Resurrectional Kontakion

When Christ God the Giver of Life,

raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His
mighty hand,

He bestowed resurrection on the human race. //

He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 2 – Kontakion for Sts. Joachim and Anna

Anna is now no longer barren

and nurses the All-Pure One.

She rejoices and calls us all to sing a hymn of praise to Christ, //

Who from her womb gave mankind the only ever Virgin Mother.

Tone 4 – Kontakion for the Virgin's Nativity

By your nativity, most pure Virgin,

Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness,

Adam and Eve, from the corruption of death.

And we, your people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and
sing to you: //

“The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher
of our Life.”

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18

Brethren: See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand! It is those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh who would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in

the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

2 Corinthians 4:6-15

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Gospel: John 3:13-17

Jesus said to His disciples, "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to

condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Matthew 22.35-46

At that time, one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?"

They said to Him, "The Son of David."

He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool"'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?"

And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Repose:

N.Dep. Infant Isaac

Geraldine

Marian Havrila

Ev.Mem. Kire

Michael

Tasia

Pearl Danko

John Czapko

Elzie Bertrand

Nicholas Posvenchuk

Prokopi Zadinets

Stephan Yonoff

Julia Matriashevich

Health & Salvation:

Protopresbyter George

Matushka Anna

Archpriest Frederick

Matushka Carol

Archpriest William

Matushka Jean

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

Sean
Myah
Margaret
Diane
Madelin
Villian
Infant Benjamin
Infant Juliana
Infant Lennox

Blessings for:

Jakob Delich
Bogoye Mizimakoski
John Lukas
Ryden Bork
Carol Kane
Branka Julovich
Alex & Melissa Sarafin
Anthony & Olga Frangella

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Women's Sodality meets this Tuesday @ 10am.

This Friday the Church celebrates the **Exaltation of the Cross**. We will have Vespers here on Thursday @ 6pm. Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at Descent of the Holy Ghost @ 10am.

This Saturday is our **Fall Church Clean-up**. Please come and help us beautify the Church grounds starting @ 9am.

Next Sunday before the start of Liturgy we will say prayers over Robert and Tina Blake to enroll them as catechumens.

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 to help cover the expense.

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

Mark your calendars:

Sept 14: Divine Liturgy for **Exaltation of the Cross @** Descent of the Holy Ghost, 10am.

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 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: \$2,080

Mortgage: \$593

Today's prosthora bread was offered by Ivanka Tanaskoski.

How Do We Start Fasting?

A reflection by his Grace, our bishop Paul

I have told this story many times, so forgive me as I repeat it. A number of years ago, I served as the priest of a parish of new converts who were not accustomed to fasting. Even the idea of fasting before receiving Communion on Sunday was new to them. A father relayed to me that his son, who would have been about eight or nine years old at the time, complained about fasting on Sunday morning. He said, "Dad, if I don't eat, I'm gonna die!" Well, he didn't die, and things worked out.

This implies to me that it takes time for people to adjust to the habit of fasting as a regular ongoing rule. I liken learning how to fast to adopting an exercise routine when one is trying to lose weight. If someone is 60 to 80 pounds overweight, they

are not going to start their exercise routine by running four miles, or doing 100 sit-ups, and so on. They may run a quarter of a mile (or walk it) and start with five sit-ups. As they get used to this routine, they then may add to it, little by little, so that in six months time they indeed will run four miles and do 100 sit-ups, provided that they continue to be consistent in maintaining the gradual increase of their routine.

I think fasting for people who have never done so works in a similar manner. Maybe one starts with fasting from meat on Wednesday and Friday. After a month, dairy products get added. Then, after a few months, the complete fasting rules are observed on Wednesday and Friday.

I think the same reasoning needs to be applied during the 40-day fasts. If this is the first time a family has observed such fasts in earnest, they could begin by refraining from eating meat Monday to Friday, and then allowing dairy products every day except Wednesday and Friday. (Saturday and Sunday would be fast free). At the next 40-day fast they could observe a complete abstinence from meat and dairy products, with dairy products allowed on Saturday and Sunday. At the third 40-day fast there would be a complete abstinence of meat and dairy products. Finally, at the fourth 40-day fast, the rules would be fully observed.

These are suggestions only for people for whom fasting is completely new. Before doing any of this, it would be wise for one to speak with his or her parish priest, who might propose a better way of approaching this than that which I offer here. It is interesting to note that during the Pre-Lenten cycle (when the Lenten Triodion begins), fasting is gradually introduced in a similar manner — step by step — during the weeks that precede Great Lent.

Next week I will speak on whether there should be rules that call for fasting from the countless modern technological gadgets and apps we have at our disposal.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you,
+Paul

Glory to God for all things!