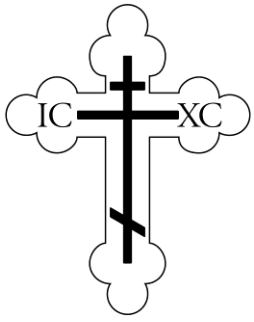
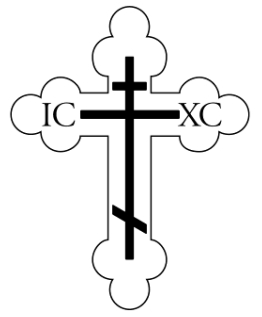


Protection of the Virgin Mary



Orthodox Church



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



8600 Grand Blvd.
Merrillville, IN 46410
(219)947-4748
Hall: (219)730-4698
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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.**

December 9, 2018

Conception of the Theotokos by Sts. Joachim and Anna Holy Prophetess Hannah († 11th cent. B.C.)

Saint Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, was the youngest daughter of the priest Nathan from Bethlehem, descended from the tribe of Levi. She married Saint Joachim (September 9), who was a native of Galilee.

For a long time, like her Old Testament namesake Hannah, who would give birth to the prophet Samuel, Anna was childless. But after twenty years, through the fervent prayer of her and her husband, an angel of the Lord announced to them that they would be the parents of a daughter, who would bring blessings to the whole human race.

The Orthodox Church does not accept the Roman teaching that the Mother of God was exempted from the consequences of ancestral sin at her conception by virtue of the future merits of Her Son. Only Christ was born perfectly holy and sinless.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 3 – Resurrectional Troparion

Let the heavens rejoice!

Let the earth be glad!

For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.

He has trampled down death by death.

He has become the first born of the dead.

He has delivered us from the depths of hell,

and has granted to the world//

great mercy.

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:

Encompass 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 the Virgin's Conception

Today the bonds of barrenness are broken:

God has heard the prayers of Joachim and Anna.

He has promised them beyond all their hopes to bear the

Maiden of God,

by whom the uncircumscribed One was born as mortal Man;

He commanded an Angel to cry to her:

“Rejoice, of full of grace,//

the Lord is with you!”

Tone 3 – Resurrectional Kontakion

On this day You rose from the tomb, O Merciful One,

leading us from the gates of death.

On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices

with the Prophets and Patriarchs//

They unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Your power.

Tone 4 – Kontakion for the Virgin’s Conception

Today the universe rejoices,

for Anna has conceived the Theotokos through God’s dispensation, //
for she has brought forth the one who is to bear the ineffable Word.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Colossians 1.12-18

Brethren: Give thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Galatians 4.22-31

Brethren: It is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a slave woman, the other by a freewoman. And the one born of the slave woman was born according to the flesh, but the one of the freewoman was born through promise, and these things are symbolic. For these women are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai, which gives birth to bondage, is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the Jerusalem of today, which is in bondage with her children. But 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 she who was desolate has many more children than she who has a husband.”

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But, as the one born according to the flesh at that time

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 freewoman."

So then, brethren, we are not children of the slave woman but of the free.

Gospel: Luke 17.12-19

At that time, as Jesus entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

When he saw them he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed.

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.

Then said Jesus, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has saved you."

Luke 8:16-21

The Lord said: "No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a pot or puts it under a bed; rather, he sets it on a lampstand that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. Therefore, take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him."

Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. And it was told Him by some, who said, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You."

But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Repose:

N.Dep. Joseph Huddleston
Kadee Huddleston
Brandi Vail
Swayzee Hite
Rhylie Hite
Marshall Hite
Daniel Hite

Theodore Parkevich
Archpr. Joseph Martin
Vaso Popovich
Ev.Mem. John Dibin
Timothy Tomashko
Theodosia Semchuk
Stefan Storschenko
George Glagola

Health &

Salvation:

Protopr. George
Mat. Anna
Archpr. Peter
Archpr. William
Mat. Jean
Pr. John
Pr. Christopher
Mat. Jennifer
Andrew
Gideon
Kevin
Jon
Tanya
Kimberly
Gail
William
Jovan
Charles
Barbara
Theodore

Michael
Julia
Warren
Loretta
Gilbert
Carol
Peter
Janie
Tom
Elizabeth
Tina
Adam
Myah
Margaret
Diane
Madelin
Villian
Deborah
Jovan
Claudia
John
Joey

Carisa
Natalia
Elizabeth
Tom
Alexander
Darlene
Mira
Kristin
Mitchel
Brittany
Jennifer
David
Roger
Tina
Chris
Sheila
Brandon
Benjamin
Juliana
Lennox
Laila

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to the newly-illuminated Sophia, her parents, and her godparents!

We will celebrate the 40-day memorial for Theodore Parkevich, Victoria Mitrovich's cousin, following the veneration of the cross.

Thank you to everyone who contributed and helped yesterday with the St. Nicholas gifts. It was a wonderful time.

Make a plan to have confession this Advent season. On Christmas day, you will be glad you did.

The year is coming to a close. Make your end of year stewardship gift and support the ministry of PTVM.

Remember to **purchase your holiday gift cards through Scrip** (available during coffee hour). Also, if you shop on Amazon, start at **smile.amazon.com** and select "Protection of the Virgin Mary Church" as your charity of choice.

The 2019 parish directory is being finalized. Last call to update with your new contact info. Forms are in the narthex.

Mark your calendars:

Dec 12: **Fellowship Night @ 6pm**

Dec 13: **Faith Enrichment @ 10am**

Dec 20: **Caroling and fellowship** at Descent of the Holy Ghost Orthodox Church in Merrillville @ 6:30pm

Dec 23: **Anointing for Healing** after Liturgy

Dec 24: **Vesperal Christmas Liturgy @ 9am;**
Christmas Vigil @ 6pm

Dec 25: **Christmas Divine Liturgy @ 9am**

Dec 30: **Church School Yolka** during coffee hour

Last Week's Offerings to the Lord:

General Fund: \$2,057

Mortgage: \$595

“Family Life”

A reflection by His Grace, our Bishop Paul

My first job after earning my bachelor’s degree in Psychology in 1976 was as a childcare worker in a home for physically, sexually, and emotionally abused children. And after I received my Master of Social Work degree in 1980, I worked for four years as a residential caseworker, offering individual therapy with families and children in the same type of setting. I saw kids for individual therapy once a week for forty-five minutes. What struck me is that if children were going to make any behavior gains in their treatment, the other 23 hours of the day were crucial in the home environment they lived in with the child care workers.

Most of our families have their children enrolled in some type of Church school in their parishes that runs about forty-five minutes every week. The point is to learn the Orthodox Christian faith and its practice. Realistically, however, forty-five minutes each week is akin to seeing a child in therapy for the same amount of time. The real impact of anything a child learns in Church school will be measured in how the Faith is lived out in their family life, not unlike children in a residential environment with his or her childcare workers the other twenty-three hours in a day. So this reflection is about the other 23 hours in the lives of our Orthodox Christian youth in their families.

Years ago, a mother asked me how to get her children prepared for church on Sunday mornings. “It starts with what you do on Monday,” I responded. “You don’t wait until Saturday night or Sunday morning.” In other words,

- If we don’t pray, we are doing something else instead.
- If we don’t practice almsgiving, we are doing something else instead.
- If we don’t read Scripture, we are reading something else instead.

- If we want to witness Christian formation happen in our children, that formation needs to happen in the home.

I would like to see us begin to embrace the concept of the family as the little Church that it is. I think this is where real Christian formation takes place. The home, as the little Church, should be a place of prayer, family meals, Scripture reading, engaging in family charitable activities. The home should be a place where repentance and forgiveness are experienced.

With love in Christ,

+Paul

Glory to God for all things!