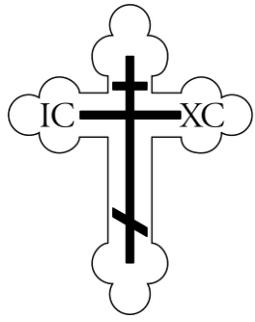
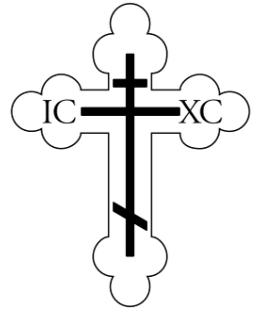


Protection of the Virgin Mary



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
www.ptvm.com

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 21, 2019

Holy Prophet Ezekiel (6th c. B.C.)

St. Simeon, the fool for Christ, and his companion John (6th c. A.D.)

The Holy Prophet Ezekiel lived in the sixth century before the birth of Christ. He was born in the city of Sarir, and descended from the tribe of Levi; he was a priest and the son of the priest Buzi. Ezekiel was led off to Babylon when he was twenty-five years old together with King Jeconiah II and many other Jews during the second invasion of Jerusalem by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar.

The Prophet Ezekiel lived in captivity by the River Chebar. When he was thirty years old, he had a vision of the future of the Hebrew nation and of all mankind. The prophet

beheld a shining cloud, with fire flashing continually, and in the midst of the fire, gleaming bronze. He also saw four living creatures in the shape of men, but with four faces (Ez. 1:6). Each had the face of a man in front, the face of a lion on the right, the face of an ox on the left, and the face of an eagle at the back (Ez. 1:10). There was a wheel on the earth beside each creature, and the rim of each wheel was full of eyes.

Over the heads of the creatures there seemed to be a firmament, shining like crystal. Above the firmament was the likeness of a throne, like glittering sapphire in appearance. Above this throne was the likeness of a human form, and around Him was a rainbow (Ez. 1:4-28).

According to the explanation of the Fathers of the Church, the human likeness upon the sapphire throne prefigures the Incarnation of the Son of God from the Most Holy Virgin Mary, who is the living Throne of God. The four creatures are symbols of the four Evangelists: a man (St Matthew), a lion (St Mark), an ox (St Luke), and an eagle (St John); the wheel with the many eyes is meant to suggest the sharing of light with all the nations of the earth. During this vision the holy prophet fell down upon the ground out of fear, but the voice of God commanded him to get up. He was told that the Lord was sending him to preach to the nation of Israel. This was the beginning of Ezekiel's prophetic service.

The Prophet Ezekiel announces to the people of Israel, held captive in Babylon, the tribulations it would face for not remaining faithful to God. The prophet also proclaimed a better time for his fellow-countrymen, and he predicted their return from Babylon, and the restoration of the Jerusalem Temple.

The holy Prophet Ezekiel received from the Lord the gift of wonderworking. He, like the Prophet Moses, divided the waters of the river Chebar, and the Hebrews crossed to the opposite shore, escaping the pursuing Chaldeans. During a time of famine, the prophet asked God for an increase of food for the hungry.

Ezekiel was condemned to execution because he denounced a certain Hebrew prince for idolatry. Bound to wild horses, he was torn to pieces. Pious Hebrews gathered up the torn body of the prophet and buried it upon Maur Field, in the tomb of Sim and Arthaxad, forefathers of Abraham, not far from Baghdad. The prophecy of Ezekiel is found in the book named for him in the Old Testament.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 4 – Resurrectional Troparion

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Your 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, 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 2 – Troparion for the Prophet Ezekiel

We celebrate the memory

of Your Prophet Ezekiel, O Lord;

through him, we beseech You://

save our souls!

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 4 – Kontakion for the Prophet Ezekiel

You have been revealed as a Prophet of God, wondrous Ezekiel,
proclaiming to all the incarnation of the Lord, the Lamb and
Creator,//
the Son of God, Who has ever revealed Himself.

Tone 2 – Kontakion for Sts Simeon and John

Let us praise the venerable Simeon
as an equal to the angels,
for he walked in the flesh upon the earth as a bodiless angel
shining forth to all as an example of the virtues;
and with him let us honor his companion,
the ever memorable and God-bearing father John,//
for they ceaselessly pray to the Lord for us with faith and love!

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 Israel 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 God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them."

But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "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 which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Gospel: Matthew 8.28-9.1

At that time, when Jesus had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine.”

And He said to them, “Go.”

So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region. So, He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Michael Marchuk

Mary Wysoki

Alice Radivan

Ev.Mem. Sonia Rast ('98)

John Moroz ('72)

Vasil Hutka ('60)

Christine Grisuk ('51)

Health &

Salvation:

Protopr. George

Stanislava Shakala ('51)

Vasili Tranoff ('41)

Anna Koval ('31)

Theodore Pachapa ('30)

Anatol Meuch

Leon Timothy Barich

Mat. Anna

Archpr. Peter

Archpr. John

Pr. John

Pr. Christopher

Mat. Jennifer

Andrew	Lennox	Maria
Gideon	Laila	Snezana
Kevin	Paula	Barbara
Jon	Alvin	Thomas
Tanya	Kenneth	Mary Ann
Jovan	Anna	Carol
Julia	Justin	Jessica
Warren	Nika	Eduardo
Carol	Leo	Christine
Tom	Melissa	Tom
Elizabeth	Jonathan	Nicholas
Tina	Matthew	Natalie
Adam	Benjamin	Barbara
Brittany	Shaun	
Jennifer	Gail	

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This past week **Michael Marchuk, Alice Radivan, and Mary Wysoki** (Ken's mother) fell asleep in the Lord. Mike's funeral will take place here tomorrow @ 11am, visitation from 8am. Visitation for Mary is 3-8pm at Krueger Funeral Home, 13050 S. Greenwood Ave., Blue Island, IL. Alice is having a graveside service at Calumet Park this Thursday. Meet in the Funeral Chapel parking lot (7535 Taft St in Merrillville) @ 11:15am. We will proceed together to the grave and begin service at 11:30am.

The **O-Club meets** today during coffee hour.

For **Bible Study** this Wednesday please read Genesis 24-27.

Today we are **blessing vehicles**. After venerating the cross, please gather in the narthex (vestibule). There we will pray the blessing, then we will go out into the lot and sprinkle each vehicle with holy water. Open at least one door, so that the inside and outside of your car can be blessed.

The **women's book group** is holding a one-day lunch discussion on **Saturday, August 17** beginning at 10:30am. The

book is *Every Day Wonders: Stories of God's Providence* by Fr. Michael Oleksa, and it is now available in the bookstore for \$10. For more information, see Mat. Jenna.

Our mortgage burning party is this Saturday, July 27. We will begin with a **Molieben of Thanksgiving** at 3pm. **If you have not already RSVP'd, we can still update our count for the caterer.** Let us know today that you are coming!

Mark your calendars:

July 24: **Bible Study @ 7pm**

July 27: **Mortgage Burning party! @ 3pm**

July 28: **St. Clement name's day celebration**

Aug 7: **Supplication to the Theotokos @ 6pm**

Aug 13: **Lamentations for the Theotokos @ 6pm**

Aug 14: **10am Divine Liturgy for the Dormition of the Theotokos**

Last week's offerings to the Lord: \$3,455

Making the Invisible Visible

A reflection by His Grace, our Bishop Paul

Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new. So Paul, standing in the middle of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. And he made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of

us, for “In him we live and move and have our being;” as even some of your poets have said, “For we are indeed his offspring” (Acts 17: 21-23, 26-28).

These wonderful words from the Acts of the Apostles serve to remind us of the following:

- We have been baptized and chrismated to come to know the “unknown God” who has been revealed to us in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Yet there are times in our lives during which we may feel that God is not there and invisible and unknown to us.
- That one of the major tasks of parents in the family as an icon of the little church is to make the invisible and unknown God visible to their children. What an awesome responsibility this is.
- That our witness to our children is that “He is not far from each one of us.”
- That the Athenians mentioned above hungered for “hearing something new.” May parents also instill in their children the desire to know God in the person of Jesus Christ as a new, eternal, ever-growing reality in their lives.
- Finally, this journey is founded on Jesus Christ laying down His life on the Cross in order to make the invisible God visible to us.
- As parents you can be that same icon of Jesus laying down His life for His sheep in that you love your children with a love that only He can give.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you.

The unworthy +Paul

Glory to God for all things!