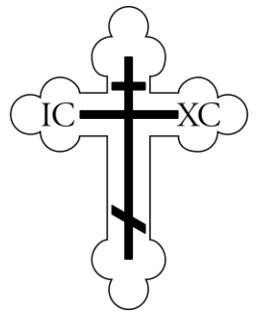


Protection of the Virgin Mary



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.**

December 15, 2019

Fifth Sunday of Advent

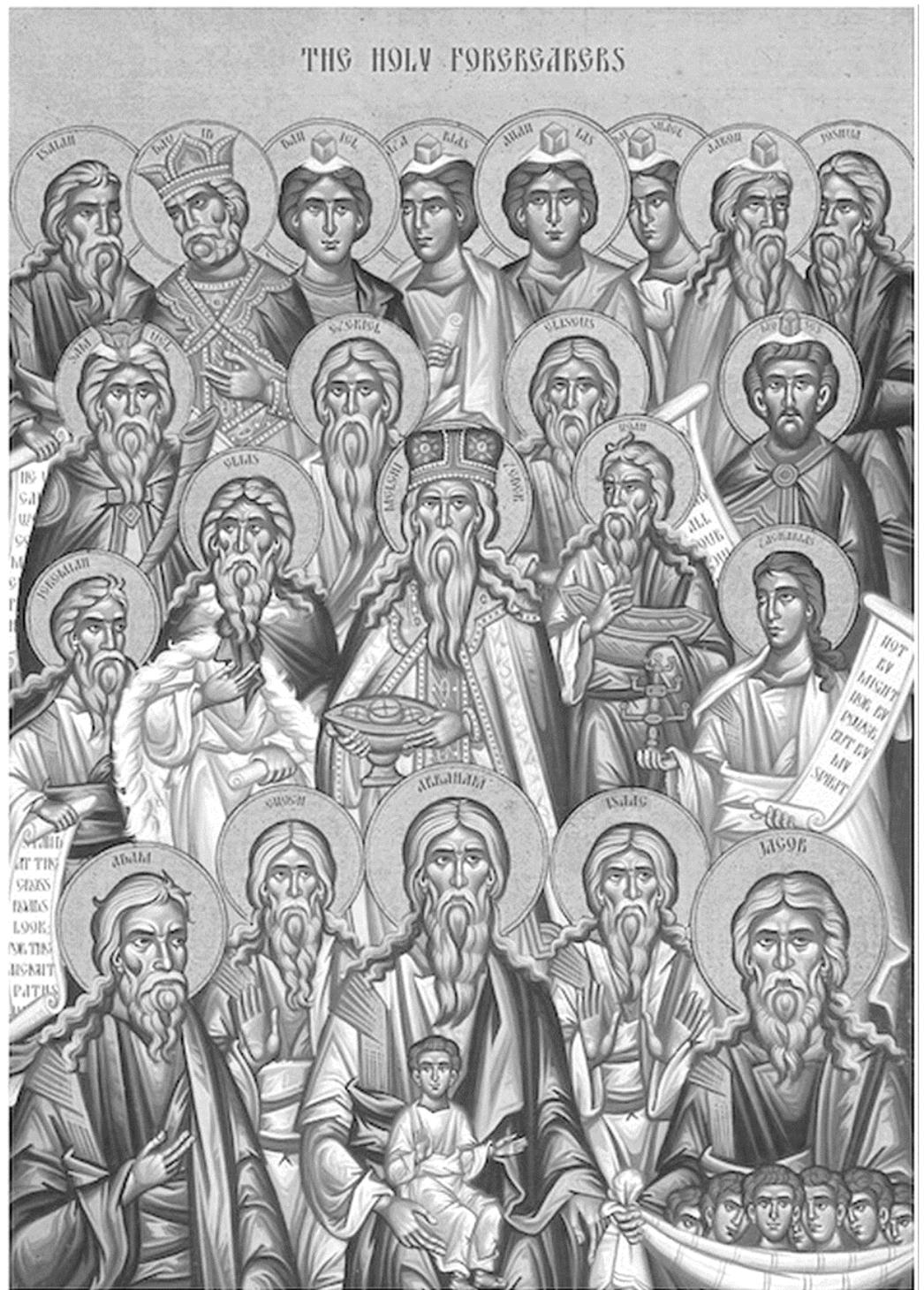
Sunday of the Holy Forefathers of Christ

On this Sunday the Church commemorates the Holy Forefathers, i.e. the earthly ancestors of our Lord Jesus Christ, beginning with the first man, Adam, and on through Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, King David, and others. These ancient people, separated from us by millennia, nevertheless have a direct and close bearing upon us, contemporary Orthodox Christians.

What connection is there between them and us? In general, the Church brings them to our attention now, right before Christmas, because of their faith—their belief in the promise given by God to Adam during his expulsion from the

garden of Eden, that in the end a Savior will come into the world and will redeem mankind from sin and death. All of the forefathers, who lived on earth long before the birth of Christ, lived and burned with this faith, never allowing it to be extinguished.

They are a shining example to us, who are living on earth after the incarnation of our Lord. Just like those ancient people, we too have not actually seen Christ in the flesh: they only knew that He **would come** into the world, while



we know that He **did come** into the world. But they firmly believed in His coming and their faith was justified.

We should have even greater faith. The Lord was, and is, and will be. He lived on earth as a man, in His Church He remains with us constantly, and He will again return to earth to judge mankind. When Jesus Christ appeared before the doubting Apostle Thomas, who could not believe in the Lord's resurrection unless he actually touched Christ's wounds, upon touching them he cried out: "My Lord and my God!" Then, speaking both of the fathers who came before *and* us who have come after, the Lord said to the apostle: "Because you have seen Me, you have believed; but blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 1 – Resurrectional Troparion

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews,
while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure body,
You rose on the third day, O Savior,
granting life to the world.

The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life:
“Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ!

Glory to Your Kingdom!//

Glory to Your dispensation, O You who love mankind!”

Tone 2 – Troparion of the Holy Forefathers

Through faith You justified the Forefathers,
betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles.

These saints exult in glory,

for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit:

she who bore You without seed.//

So, by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

Tone 1 – Resurrectional Kontakion

As God, You rose from the tomb in glory,
raising the world with Yourself.

Human nature praises You as God, for death has vanished.

Adam exults, O Master!

Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to You://

“You are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!”

Tone 6 – Kontakion of the Holy Forefathers

You did not worship the graven image,

O thrice-blessed ones,

but armed with the immaterial Essence of God,

you were glorified in a trial by fire.

From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God, crying:

“Hasten, O compassionate One!

Speedily come to our aid,//

for You are merciful and able to do as You will!”

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Tone 4 – Prokeimenon of the Holy Forefathers (Daniel 3)

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers,
and praised and glorified is Your name forever!

Epistle: Colossians 3.4-11 (Forefathers)

Brethren, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore, put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things, in which you once walked when you lived in them, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. But now you must put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language from your mouth; do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with its deeds and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Gospel: Luke 14.16-24 (Forefathers)

At that time Jesus spoke this parable saying, “A certain man gave a great supper, and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’

But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’

And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to examine them. I ask you to have me excused.’

Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’

So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’

And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.'

Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'"

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Archiman. Ephraim

Margaret Vogrin

Martin Svihra

Pr. George Pappas

Madeline Petri

Ev.Mem

Andrew Fedorenko ('33)

George Shevchenko ('56)

Radion Yacuk ('61)

Nicholas Martin ('61)

Spasa Danaeff ('69)

Paul Nepsha ('83)

Victor Kay (2003)

Mary Shocaroff (2018)

Anatol Meuch

Alekzander Niedbajlik

Luba Sarafin

Boris Sarafin

Health &

Salvation:

Mat. Anna

Archpr. Peter

Pr. John

Pr. Christopher

Mat. Jennifer

Andrew

Gideon

Kevin

Jon

Tanya

Jovan

Julia

Warren

Carol

Tom

Elizabeth

Tina

Brittany

Jennifer

Lennox

Laila

Paula

Stacey

Jeramie

Olivia

Parker

Melissa

Jonathan

Matthew

Shaun

Gail

Maria

Barbara

Thomas

Carol

Jessica

Eduardo

Christine

Tom

Nicholas

Natalie

Barbara

Kristin

Linda

Phyllis

Kay

Fred

Larry

Rollie

Joseph

Martin

Mark

Alexa

Paula

Alexandra

James	Kathleen	N.Ill. Tasia
Joanne	Paul	Jeffrey
Ronald	William	Greta
Michael	Michael	Michael
Joseph	Frederick	Courtney
Rachel	Janet	Lea

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome Fr. Danial Doss, and thank you for serving today! Fr Jacob returns from vacation this Friday, December 20.

2020 Calendars from St. Tikhon's are available in the Narthex. Please take only one per adult until they have been out for a few weeks and everyone has had a chance at them.

The **O-Club** will meet today during coffee hour.

There is no **Bible Study** this week. We resume on January 8.

This Wednesday is the 10th anniversary of the **falling asleep of Archbishop Job**. There will be a **Memorial Divine Liturgy** in his memory at Sts. Peter and Paul in Burr Ridge, IL @ 9:30am.

Consider making a **flower donation** to help us beautify the Church for Christmas. Envelopes are in your stewardship box.

This Sunday is your last chance to **order gift cards** through our **Scrip** program and have them by Christmas. Also, if you do any shopping through Amazon, you can begin at www.smile.amazon.com and select "Protection of the Virgin Mary Church" as your charity of choice.

On Sunday, Dec 29, after Divine Liturgy we will have our annual **Christmas Yolka and potluck**. Please let us know on the sign-up sheet in the narthex what you can bring to share.

Mark your calendars:

Dec 18: Memorial Divine Liturgy for Archbishop Job at Sts. Peter and Paul in Burr Ridge, IL @ 9:30am

Dec 19: **Christmas Caroling** at Descent of the Holy Ghost @ 6:30pm

Dec 24: **Vesperal Liturgy of the Nativity of Christ @ 10am**
Vigil of the Nativity of Christ @ 6pm

Dec 25: **Divine Liturgy of the Nativity of Christ @ 9am**

Dec 29: **Christmas Yolka and pot-luck luncheon** after Liturgy

Dec 31: **Great Vespers for the Circumcision of Christ @**
Descent of the Holy Ghost @ 6pm

Jan 1: **Divine Liturgy for the Circumcision of Christ @ 10am**

Jan 5: **Vespers of Theophany with the Great Blessing of Water** after coffee hour

Jan 6: **Divine Liturgy for the Theophany of our Lord @ 10am**

Last week's offerings to the Lord: \$5,366

What Do We Mean by Unity in Diversity?

by His Grace, our Bishop Paul

"...eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:3)

In the body it is the living Spirit that holds all members together, even when they are far apart. So it is here. The purpose for which the Spirit was given was to bring into unity all who remain separated by different ethnic and cultural divisions: young and old, rich and poor, women and men. (John Chrysostom on Ephesians 4:3)

I share this verse from last Sunday's epistle reading and the brief quote from St. John Chrysostom because he answers the question I posed in my title. What is so wonderful is that

in the Church we can be who we are, and yet still be united as one soul, one mind, and one spirit.

What I love about our Orthodox Church in America is that we are slowly becoming a diverse church that is becoming less “Slavic” in its demographics. In my visits to churches in the diocese, I encounter a greater number of people from different ethnic backgrounds. I was at the Cathedral in Minneapolis on Sunday and met at least five Greeks who came to venerate the cross, whom I believe are members there. We are emerging as a great tasting salad of different ingredients that is changing the image of who we are. This is not just in the OCA, but it is happening elsewhere as well. These are baby steps that are beginning to manifest the kind of unity that John Chrysostom describes.

We still order our church life in most “jurisdictions” according to nationalistic identities. We are “separate but equal” when it comes to the way church life is organized here in America. The more that local churches (on a Pan Orthodox level) work together in the building up of our unity around our faith, eventually we bishops will get the message and act.

But what does this have to do with family life? Parents: encourage your children as they meet people to be good listeners and to learn about the backgrounds of the people they come to meet. Encourage your children to participate in a summer camp that is multi-Orthodox in make up. It is amazing to see the bonds that get forged in these camps. With the diversity of these cultural expressions there is a wonderful unity that is emerging.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you,

The unworthy +Paul

Glory to God for all things!