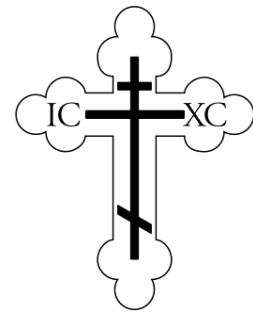
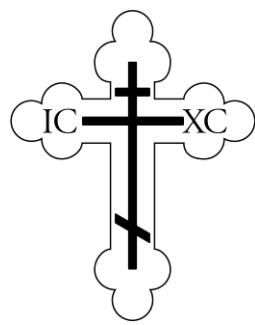


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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



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Great Vespers: 6pm Saturdays

Confessions heard before or
after services.

Divine Liturgy: 10am Sundays

March 22, 2020
Afterfeast of Ascension
Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical
Council in Nicaea

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 of Ascension

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God,
granting joy to Your Disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit.
Through the blessing, they were assured
that You are the Son of God, //
the Redeemer of the world.

Tone 8 – Troparion of the Holy Fathers

You are most glorious, O Christ our God!
You have established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth.
Through them You have guided us to the true Faith. //
O greatly compassionate One, glory to You!

Tone 8 – Kontakion of the Holy Fathers

The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established
one Faith for the Church.

Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology, //
It defines and glorifies the great mystery of piety.

Tone 6 – Kontakion for Ascension

When You had fulfilled the dispensation for our sake,
and united earth to heaven:

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God,
not being parted from those who love You,
but remaining with them and crying: //
“I am with you, and there is no one against you!”

SCRIPTURE READINGS

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

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

Acts of the Apostles 20.16-18, 28-36

At that time, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you. Therefore, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the

flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore, watch and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

“So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

Gospel: John 17.1-13

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

“I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

“I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Kostas Zissides
Archpr. Paul Lazor
Ev.Mem. Anna Baus ('30)
Tatiana Savich ('47)

Evdokia Shendrick ('51)
Michael Sherba ('57)
Kalenik Melnik ('58)

Health & Salv.			
Archpr. Peter	Matthew	Mark	Kara
Pr. John	Gail	Alexa	Nathan
Pr. Christopher	Maria	Paula	Sharon
Mat. Jennifer	Stacy	James	Michael
Andrew	Jeramie	Joanne	John
Gideon	Olivia	Michael	Miriana
Dn. Nicholas	Parker	Joseph	Vern
Kevin	Barbara	Kathleen	Olga
Jon	Thomas	Paul	Claudia
Tanya	Jessica	William	Mark
Jovan	Eduardo	Frederick	Jerry
Julia	Christine	Janet	Daniel
Warren	Nicholas	Lea	Joanna
Carol	Natalie	Hania	Myah
Tom	Barbara	James	Michael
Elizabeth	Kristin	Gerald	Wanda
Tina	Linda	Nadia	Prudence
Brittany	Phyllis	Charlene	Clay
Jennifer	Kay	Milka	Brandi
Lennox	Fred	Daniel	Ann
Laila	Larry	Russell	Janice
Paula	Rollie	Brendan	Carl
Melissa	Joseph	Benjamin	Victoria
		William	Dushawna

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

In place of “It is truly meet...” we sing this Theotokion from Ascension:

Magnify, O my soul, Christ the Giver of Life, Who has ascended from earth to heaven!

We magnify you, O Mother of God, who beyond reason and understanding gave birth in time to the Timeless One.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are currently in “phase two” of reopening of the Church. Thirty people under the age of 65 may now attend services. Also, we are offering extra Liturgies during the week for those over 65, with up to four households at a time. **Please contact Fr Jacob** if you want to attend, or if you have any questions about the precautions we are taking. Confession is available before and after services or by appointment.

For **Bible Study** on Wednesday read **Acts 8-9**. If you would like to participate but haven’t before, email Fr Jacob.

This **Saturday, June 6** will be our **Outdoor Clean-up morning** at the Church. We need help pulling weeds and trimming bushes. Work starts at 9am. Lunch is provided.

St. Mary's O-Club is partnering with our own Sergei Ely's Pierogi truck to bring meals to workers at local nursing homes during the health crisis. Our next delivery will be to Pines Village in Valparaiso this Friday. Anyone interested in volunteering should email ptvmchurch@gmail.com or contact Juli Grankowski or Sergei Ely.

The annual **Golf Outing** will not take place in June as usual. We are looking to schedule it for August or September. Stay tuned.

On June 17 we will host a **Red Cross blood drive** in our parish hall. If anyone would like to volunteer for a 2-3 hour shift at the registration table, please contact Fr Jacob.

If anyone in our community is suffering hardship, please contact Fr Jacob. The parish has established a **benevolence fund** to help those in need during this crisis.

Our **Fashion Show** has been rescheduled for Sunday, August 9. Lunch will be served at 12pm. Please contact Elizabeth Pedersen, Sherry Mizimakoski, or Nada Bucek if you need to return tickets or buy new ones.

Mark your calendars:

June 6: Outdoor Clean-up at the Church @ 9am

June 7: Pentecost

June 17: Blood Drive: 12-6pm

Sermon on Holy Ascension

by His Beatitude, our Metropolitan Tikhon

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

I greet you all in the joy of the feast of the Ascension of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ! Indeed, the Ascension is a feast of inexpressible joy. We celebrate an awe-inspiring event today: Jesus Christ, a human being like us, ascends into heaven, and is enthroned forever at the right hand of the Father. The hymns of our Church tell us that “Angels marvel to see a Man high above them”, and “were amazed with the wonder, and beside themselves with fear.” For truly, the Son of God’s Ascension to Heaven is the Ascension of our one common human nature to Heaven. Angels marvel at this, because they never expected it. Who would expect that the Son of God would become a Man, and as a man, in a weak human form, would conquer death? And after that, who would expect Him to return to Heaven in His resurrected human body? Angels are amazed, and we too should be amazed. We have nothing to fear now, for humanity has been saved!

This amazement expressed by the angels was found earlier in the amazement and even disbelief of the Apostles when beholding the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. During His Passion, they all denied Him, fled away, or hid. After His resurrection, they were all slow to belief, questioning, and even doubtful. These reactions can certainly be ascribed to their human weakness, but they also point clearly to the cataclysmic and humanly incomprehensible changes that were wrought by Christ: who had ever heard of someone overcoming death by his own death? Who had ever heard of a buried man rising on the third day? Who among the disciples would have expected to be walking with the Lord as they walked into the country? And now, even the angels are amazed at the ascension. But the point is not simply for us to be amazed, but to recognize the significance of these events.

As Father George Florovsky reminds us: “In the Ascension resides the meaning and the fullness of Christ’s Resurrection. The Lord did not rise in order to return again to the fleshly order of life, so as to live again and commune with the disciples and the multitudes by means of preaching and miracles. Now he does not even stay with them, but only “appears” to them during the forty days, from time to time, and always in a miraculous and mysterious

manner. ‘He was not always with them now, as He was before the Resurrection,’ comments Saint John Chrysostom. ‘He came and again disappeared, thus leading them on to higher conceptions. He no longer permitted them to continue in their former relationship toward Him, but took effectual measures to secure these two objects: That the fact of His Resurrection should be believed, and that He Himself should be ever after apprehended to be greater than man.’ There was something new and unusual in His person (cf. John 21:1-14).”

This is a great consolation to us today because, “by His Ascension the Lord not only opened to man the entrance to heaven, not only appeared before the face of God on our behalf and for our sake, but likewise ‘transferred man’ to the high places. As Saint John Chrysostom says: “We who seemed unworthy of the earth, are now raised to heaven. We who were unworthy of earthly dominion have been raised to the Kingdom on high, have ascended higher than heaven, have come to occupy the King’s throne, and the same nature from which the angels guarded Paradise, did not stop until it ascended to the throne of the Lord.” God quickened and raised us together with Christ, as Saint Paul says, “and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6). Heaven received the inhabitants of the earth. “The First fruits of them that slept” sits now on high, and in Him all creation is summed up and bound together. “The earth rejoices in mystery, and the heavens are filled with joy.”

Forty days have passed since Pascha. For us today, this has been another 40-day quarantine. We rejoice that some of our parishes are now able to open, and we long for the day when all our communities can safely reopen with all deliberate care. Just as our Lord has ascended to Heaven, we look to “ascend” to the fullness of Church life again, bit by bit. We long to be in Church, and to be with God and with one another, for the Church is the foretaste of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The hosts of angels were amazed seeing Christ as he ascended in glory, but let this world be amazed, and quake with fear as it beholds the Church, the very Body of Christ, united in faith and hope, and having love for one another, as our Lord commanded us. Let each of us seek only unity and peace. Let each of us shun division. Let each of us seek only to maintain the bonds of love and charity. Let each of us flee from the destructive comments or actions that would tear at these bonds.

My beloved children in the Lord, let us remain strong in faith, assured in the hope that Christ who ascended into heaven will come again.

May we all continue forward in this hope and our eager expectation for a resumption of full Church life in patience, peace, love, and charity, knowing that the current circumstances are in no way an obstacle to this life of patience, peace, love, and charity. Like the Apostles and the Angels before us, let us be amazed in beholding Christ's great love for us, taking hold of that amazement to love one another. Like the Apostles and the Angels before us, let us marvel at Christ's mighty works for us, not standing still as we marvel, but in turn doing whatever good works we can for one another. This is the work that we have before us. This is the work of the Church, within which we are lifted up to heaven as the Lord Himself ascends today. May we all continue to sing and glorify His saving ascension. Amen.

**Glory to God for
all things!**