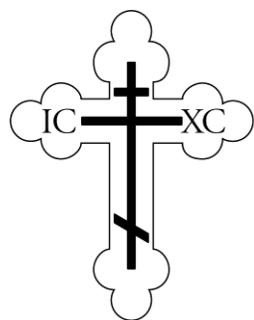
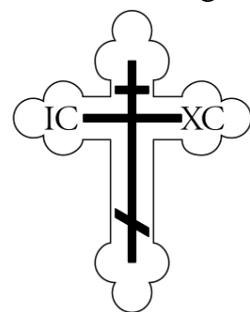


Protection of the Virgin Mary



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

Confession is available before or
after Vespers or by appointment

August 30, 2020

Afterfeast of the Beheading of

St. John the Baptist

Sts. Alexander, John, and Paul Patriarchs of Constantinople

Saints Alexander, John and Paul, Patriarchs of Constantinople, lived at different times, but each of them clashed with the activities of heretics who sought to distort the teachings of the Church. St Alexander (325-340) was a vicar bishop during the time of St Metrophanes, the first Patriarch of Constantinople.

Because of Metrophanes' extreme age, Alexander substituted for him at the First Ecumenical Synod at Nicea (325). Upon his death, St Metrophanes left instructions in his will to elect his vicar to the throne of Constantinople. During these times His Holiness Patriarch Alexander had to contend with the Arians and with

pagans. Once, in a dispute with a pagan philosopher the saint said to him, "In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ I command you to be quiet!" and the pagan suddenly became mute. When he gestured with signs to acknowledge his errors and affirm the correctness of the Christian teaching, then his speech returned to him and he believed in Christ together with many other pagan philosophers. The faithful rejoiced at this, glorifying God Who had given such power to His saint.

Saint John IV the Faster, is famed in the Orthodox Church as the compiler of a penitential Nomokanon (i.e. rule for penances). These are instructions for priests on how to hear the confession of secret sins, whether these sins have been committed, or are merely sins of intention.

Ancient Church rules address the manner and duration of public penances which were established for obvious and manifest sinners. But it was necessary to adapt these rules for the secret confession of things which were not evident. St John the Faster issued his penitential Nomokanon, so that the confession of secret sins, unknown to the world, bore witness to the good disposition of the sinner and of his conscience in being reconciled to God, and so the saint reduced the penances of the ancient Fathers by half or more. The main purpose of the Nomocanon compiled by the holy Patriarch consists in assigning penances, not simply according to the seriousness of the sins, but according to the degree of repentance and the spiritual state of the person who confesses.

Saint Paul became Patriarch of Constantinople during the reign of the Iconoclast Emperor Leo IV (775-780), and was a virtuous and pious, but timid man. Seeing the martyrdom which the Orthodox endured for the holy icons, the saint concealed his Orthodoxy and associated with the iconoclasts. After the death of the emperor Leo, he wanted to restore icon veneration but was not able to accomplish this, since the iconoclasts were still quite powerful. The saint realized that it was not in his power to guide the flock, and so he left the patriarchal throne and went secretly to the monastery of Saint Florus, where he took the schema.

He repented of his silence and association with the iconoclasts and spoke of the necessity for convening the Seventh Ecumenical Council to condemn the Iconoclast heresy. Upon his advice, Saint Tarasius (February 25) was chosen to the patriarchal throne. At that time, he was a prominent imperial counselor. The saint died as a schemamonk in the year 804.

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 2 – Troparion for St. John the Baptist

The memory of the righteous is celebrated with hymns of praise,
but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner.

You were shown in truth to be the most honorable of the Prophets,
for you were deemed worthy to baptize in the steams of the
Jordan Him Whom they foretold.

Therefore, having suffered for the truth with joy,

you proclaimed to those in hell God Who appeared in the flesh,

Who takes away the sin of the world//

and grants us great mercy.

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 5 – Kontakion for St. John

The glorious beheading of the Forerrunner became an act of divine dispensation, for he preached to those in hell the coming of the Savior. Let Herodias lament, for she entreated lawless murder, loving not the Law of God, nor eternal life, // but that which is false and temporal.

Tone 8 – Kontakion for Sts. Alexander, John, and Paul

Set a flame by the love of Christ, O glorious ones, you took up the yoke of His precious Cross, revealing yourselves as followers in His footsteps by your way of life, and you became parttakers of His divine glory, divinely-wise Alexander, with wonderful John and glorious Paul. As you stand before His throne, earnestly pray for our souls!

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

Tone 3 – Sunday Prokeimenon (Psalm 46)

Sing praises to our God, sing praises!
Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 15.1-11

Brethren: I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you – unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remains to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the

apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Gospel: Matthew 19.16-26

Now behold, one came to Jesus and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”

He said to Him, “Which ones?”

Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?”

Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?”

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Barbara Gregorash

James Petroff ('47)

Ev.Mem. Sloicitsa Mirchev ('17)

Rista Krstavich ('50)

Health & Salv.

Archpr. John

Pr. Christopher

Met. Theodosius

Mat. Margaret

Mat. Jennifer

Archpr. Peter

Mat. Anne

Andrew

Gideon	George	Carl
Kevin	Diane	Victoria
Jon	Linda	Dushawna
Tanya	Larry	Daniel
Jovan	Rollie	Anthony
Julia	Joseph	Janet
Warren	Nadia	Daryl
Tom	Daniel	Diane
Tina	Brendan	Carla
Brittany	Sharon	Susan
Jennifer	Michael	Timothy
Gail	Janie	William
Stacy	John	Paul
Jeramie	Vern	Joseph
Olivia	Olga	Claudia
Parker	Mark	Tom
Christine	Jerry	Beth
Nicholas	Michael	Elizabeth
Natalie	Janice	N.Ill. Lauren

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We continue to take precautions during the present **health crisis**. Everyone except celebrants and choir must be masked and maintain distance between groups. Our older members and those with complicating health conditions are encouraged to take advantage of weekday Liturgies. The next will be this Saturday, Sept 5, for the **Righteous Zachariah and Elizabeth**.

For **Bible Study** this week, read Acts 27-28.

St. Mary's O-Club delivered meals to the **Merrillville Police Department** last Friday. This Saturday, we deliver meals to **Feed the Flock**, a free meal service in Merrillville. Please see Mary Ann Bertram or Fr Jacob if you can help prepare and/or serve meals on Friday or Saturday. Donations marked "alms" continue to support the ministries of the O-Club.

Newly updated **parish directories** are available in the Narthex. Those available last Sunday had a few serious errors. Please pick up a new one this week.

The Hall Committee is looking for a **new manager for the Orthodox Center** to begin January 2021. Nick Rozdelsky is retiring after years of faithful service. This is a paid position, requiring weekend flexibility. Please let Nick or Fr Jacob know if you are interested.

On Sept 7, **iconographer** John Jurewicz will begin work on a series of frescos in our Church of scenes from the Life of the Theotokos. This project is being sponsored by the St. Clement's group. The first icon will be our feast-day, the Protection of the Virgin Mary, on the west wall of the nave above the door, **in memory of Fr. Thomas and Mat. Nadine Brown**. Donations in any amount toward the icon may be made in their memory.

Mark your calendars:

Sept 1: **Orthodox Church New Year!**

Sept 2: **Bible Study** via Zoom @ 7pm

Sept 5: **Divine Liturgy @ 10am for Sts. Zechariah and Elizabeth**, the parents of John the Baptist
Feed the Flock @ 11am at First Presbyterian Church in Merrillville

Sept 7: Great Vespers @ 6pm for the **Nativity of the Theotokos**

Sept 8: Divine Liturgy @ 10am for the **Nativity of the Theotokos**

Sept 13: **First Sunday of Church School**

Sept 14: Divine Liturgy @ 10am for the **Exaltation of the Cross**

Last week's offerings to the Lord: \$2,272

Why the Orthodox Church Celebrates the New Year on the First of September

by Gabriel Martini

The first day of September is celebrated as the Ecclesiastical or Church New Year by Orthodox Christians. It is also a day marked by prayers for the environment, reminding us to be good stewards of the world around us. The old Roman term for this day is *Indictio*, meaning "definition" or "order." This day marked the beginning of each year in a fifteen-year cycle. At the end of each cycle tax obligations for Roman citizens were reassessed, likely from the time of Caesar Augustus. By marking the start of a new

year in September, the Empire—and later, the Orthodox Church—associated the new year with harvesting crops. As preparations for winter were being made, so too were preparations for the upcoming year.

For Christians, it was a time of thanksgiving, remembering the good weather and abundant rain the Lord provided for that year's harvest—something we pray for at every Divine Liturgy. By marking the new year at harvest time, we remind ourselves annually of our dependence on both hard work and the blessings of God. Going beyond material blessings and healthy crops, this applied (as do many of our hymns) to Imperial concerns, including prayers for protection from our enemies.

And if one considers the increasing natural disasters, droughts, floods, wildfires, hurricanes, and famines, we should be all the more mindful in this modern era of technology and abundance to pray for such things—not less so. We have not engineered our way out of dependence on God. If anything, the more our abilities increase, the more we have shown need for God's favor and mercy.

The Ecclesiastical New Year is now also a day marked by prayers for the care of the environment. Patriarch Demetrios of Constantinople issued an encyclical on the environment in 1989, calling all Orthodox Christians to both pray for and protect the world around us. His encyclical established September 1—the beginning of the new Church year—as “a day of prayer for the protection of the environment,” something adopted soon after by the rest of the canonical Orthodox churches, and even the Vatican.

The beginning of the New Year is a day for giving thanks to God for plentiful harvest. It is a day that recognizes God's protection over and providence for the world, along with our responsibility and stewardship towards the same. This all goes back naturally to the story of Creation itself, and a story where mankind—represented by Adam and Eve—is given the awesome responsibility of caring for every living creature. A restoration of peace between mankind and the created order lies at the heart of redemption and deification, and that is ultimately what the Ecclesiastical New Year is all about.

Glory to God for all things!