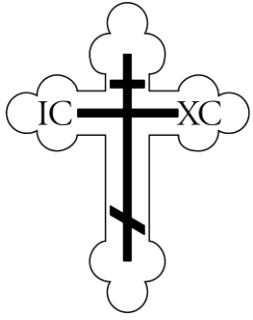
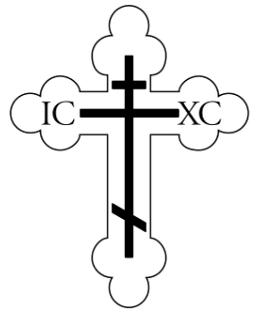


Protection of the Virgin Mary



Orthodox Church



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



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Great Vespers: 6pm Saturdays
Divine Liturgy: 10am Sundays

Confession is available before or
after Vespers or by appointment

September 20, 2020

Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross

Holy Greatmartyrs

Eustathius, Theopistes, and their children

The Holy Great Martyr Eustathius (Eustace) was named Placidus before his Baptism. He was a military commander under the emperors Titus and Trajan. Even before he came to know Christ, Placidus performed acts of charity, helping the poor and destitute. Therefore, the Lord did not leave the virtuous pagan in the darkness of idolatry.

Once while hunting in a forest, he saw a stag which would stop now and then to look him right in the eye. Placidus pursued it on horseback, but could not catch up. The stag leaped over a chasm and stood on the other side facing him. Placidus suddenly saw a radiant Cross between its antlers. In surprise, the commander heard a voice coming from the Cross saying, "Why do you pursue Me, Placidus?"

“Who are You, Master?” asked Placidus. The Voice replied, “I am Jesus Christ, Whom you do not know, yet you honor Me by your good deeds. I have appeared here on this creature for your sake, to capture you in the net of My love for mankind. It is not fitting that one as righteous as you should worship idols and not know the truth. It was to save mankind that I came into the world.”

Placidus cried out, “Lord, I believe that You are the God of Heaven and earth, the Creator of all things. Master, teach me what I should do.” Again the Lord replied, “Go to the bishop of your country and receive Baptism from him, and he will instruct you.”

Placidus returned home and joyfully recounted everything to his wife Tatiana. She in turn told him how the evening before, in a mysterious dream, she had been told, “Tomorrow you, your husband and your sons shall come to Me and know that I am the true God.”

The spouses hastened to the local bishop, who baptized all their family, and communed them with the Holy Mysteries. Placidus was renamed Eustathius, his wife was called Theopistes, and their children, Agapius and Theopistus.

On the following day, St Eustathius set out to the place of his miraculous conversion and in fervent prayer he offered up thanks to the Lord for having called him onto the path of salvation. Again, Eustathius received a miraculous revelation. The Lord Himself foretold his impending tribulations: “Eustathius, you shall suffer many misfortunes, as did Job, but in the end you will conquer the devil.”

Soon St Eustathius was plunged into misfortune: all his servants died of the plague and his cattle perished. Brought to ruin, but not despairing in spirit, Eustathius and his family secretly abandoned their home, to live unknown, humble and in poverty. They went to Egypt to board a ship sailing for Jerusalem. During the voyage, the ship’s owner grew covetous of Theopistes’ beauty, and he set Eustathius and the children ashore, keeping his wife for himself. In great sorrow, the saint continued on his way. Coming to a tempestuous river, he went to carry his two sons across in turn. When he had brought one across, the other was seized by a lion and carried off into the wilderness. As he turned back towards the other, a wolf dragged that child into the forest. Having lost everything, St Eustathius wept bitterly, but he realized that Divine Providence had sent him these misfortunes to test his endurance

and devotion to God. In the village of Badessos he found work and spent five years in unremitting toil. Eustathius did not know then that through the mercy of God, shepherds and farmers had saved his sons, and they lived right near him. He also did not know that the impudent shipowner had been struck down with a terrible disease and died, leaving St Theopistes untouched. She lived in peace and freedom at the place where the ship landed.

After many years, the emperor Trajan sought out St Eustathius to raise an army for Rome to deal with a rebellion. Eustathius was found. He returned to Rome and again became a general. He did not know that two young soldiers who served him, and whom he loved for their skill and daring, were actually his own sons. They did not know that they were serving under the command of their own father, nor that they were brothers by birth.

While on campaign, the army led by Eustathius halted at a certain settlement. The soldier-brothers were talking in their tent. The elder one spoke about his life, how he had lost his mother and brother, and how in a terrifying way he had been parted from his father. The younger brother then realized that before him was his very own brother, and told him how he had been rescued from the wolf. A woman overheard the soldiers' conversation, since their tent was pitched right next to her house, and this woman realized that these were her sons. Still not identifying herself to them, but not wanting to be separated from them, she went to their commander, St Eustathius, to ask him to take her to Rome with him. She said she had been a prisoner, and wanted to go home. Then she came to recognize the commander as her husband, and with tears she told him about herself and about the two soldiers who were actually their sons. Thus, through the great mercy of the Lord, the whole family was happily reunited.

Soon thereafter the rebellion was crushed, and St Eustathius returned to Rome with honor and glory. The emperor had since died, and his successor Hadrian (117-138) wanted to celebrate the event of victory with a solemn offering of sacrifice to the gods. To the astonishment of everyone, St Eustathius did not show up at the pagan temple. By order of the emperor they searched for him.

“Why don't you want to worship the gods?” the emperor inquired. “You, above all others, ought to offer thanks to them. They not only preserved you in war and granted you victory, but also they helped you find your wife and children.” St Eustathius

replied: "I am a Christian and I glorify and give thanks to Him, and I offer sacrifice to Him. I owe my life to Him. I do not know or believe in any other god than Him."

In a rage, the emperor ordered him to take off his military belt and brought his whole family before him. They did not persuade the steadfast confessors of Christ to offer sacrifice to idols. The family of St Eustathius was sentenced to be torn apart by wild beasts, but the beasts would not touch the holy martyrs. Then the cruel emperor gave orders to throw them all alive into a red-hot brass bull, and St Eustathius, his wife Theopistes, and their sons Agapius and Theopistus endured a martyr's death. Christians then buried the bodies of the saints.

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 1 – Troparion of the Cross

O Lord, save Your people
and bless Your inheritance!

Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians
over their adversaries;

and by virtue of Your Cross,//
preserve Your habitation!

Tone 4 – Troparion for the Greatmartyrs

Your holy martyrs Eustáthius, Theopistes, and their sons, O Lord,
through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns from
You, our God.

For having Your strength, they laid low their adversaries,
and shattered the powerless boldness of demons.//

Through their intercessions, save our souls!

Tone 6 – Resurrectional Kontakion

When Christ God the Giver of Life,
raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.//
He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 2 – Kontakion for the Greatmartyrs

Having openly imitated the Passion of Christ,
and having eagerly drunk of His cup, O Eustáthius,
you became a partaker and fellow-heir of His glory,//
receiving divine forgiveness from on high from the God of all.

Tone 4 – Kontakion for the Cross

As You were voluntarily raised upon the Cross for our sake,
grant mercy to those who are called by Your Name, O Christ God;
make all Orthodox Christians glad by Your power,
granting them victories over their adversaries//
by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Your weapon of peace!

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Tone 7 – Prokeimenon for the Cross (Psalm 98)

Extol the Lord our God: / worship at His footstool for He is holy!

Epistle: Galatians 2.16-20 (for the Cross)

Brethren: Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For through the law I died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

2 Corinthians 4.6-15 (Sunday)

Brethren: The God who commanded light to shine out of darkness has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge

of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then, death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Gospel: Mark 8.34 – 9.1 (for the Cross)

When Jesus had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

Matthew 22.35-46 (Sunday)

At that time, one of the Pharisees, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?"

They said to Him, "The Son of David."

He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The LORD said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?"

And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Ev.Mem. Joseph Traikoff ('23)
Alexei Zubrica ('40)

Anthony Vanovich ('54)

Health & Salv.

Met. Theodosius

Archpr. Peter

Archpr. John

Mat. Margaret

Mat. Anne

Pr. Christopher

Mat. Jennifer

Andrew

Gideon

Kevin

Jon

Tanya

Jovan

Julia

Warren

Tom

Tina

Brittany

Jennifer

Gail

Stacy

Jeramie

Olivia

Parker

Christine

Linda

Larry

Rollie

Joseph

Nadia

Daniel

Brendan

David

Sharon

Michael

Janie

Tanya

Christopher

Nina

Renee

Carissa

Cynthia

John

Vern

Olga

Mark

Jerry

Michael

Janice

Dushawna

Daniel

Anthony

Janet

Daryl

Diane

Carla

Susan

Timothy

William

Paul

Joseph

Claudia

Tom

Beth

Elizabeth

Snezana

Nathan

Kara

Ryan

Barabara

Thomas

Carol

Christine

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 26, for St. John the Theologian**.

For **Bible Study** this week, read Revelation 5-6.

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.

Progress has begun on our feast-day icon, 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. **Archbishop Paul** will be here to **bless the icon at our feast-day Vespers** the evening of Sept. 30th. He will also serve Liturgy on Oct. 1.

Mark your calendars:

Sept 23: **Bible Study** via Zoom @ 7pm

Sept 26: **Divine Liturgy** @ 10am for **St. John the Theologian**

Sept 30: **Great Vespers for the Feast of Protection (Pokrov)** with Archbishop Paul and the blessing of our new icon @ 6pm, followed by an outdoor reception.

Oct 1: **Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Protection (Pokrov)** with Archbishop Paul @ 10am

**Glory to God for
all things!**