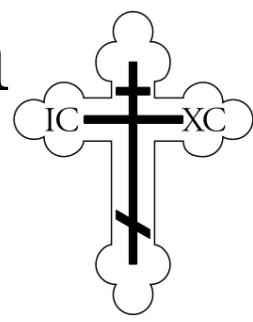
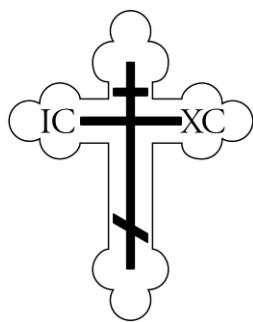


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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

Welcome visitors!
Please join us in the
parish hall after Divine
Liturgy for coffee hour.

November 1, 2020

Holy Unmercenary Healers Cosmas and Damian

The Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenary Physicians Cosmas and Damian and their mother Saint Theodota were natives of Asia Minor (some sources say Mesopotamia). Their pagan father died while they were still quite small children. Their mother raised them in Christian piety. Through her own example, and by reading holy books to them, Saint Theodota preserved her children in purity of life according to the command of the Lord, and Cosmas and Damian grew up into righteous and virtuous men.

Trained and skilled as physicians, they received from the Holy Spirit the gift of healing people's illnesses of body and soul by the

power of prayer. They even treated animals. With fervent love for both God and neighbor, they never took payment for their services. They strictly observed the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Freely have you received, freely give." (Mt. 10:8). The fame of Saints Cosmas and Damian spread throughout all the surrounding region, and people called them unmercenary physicians.

Once, the saints were summoned to a grievously ill woman named Palladia, whom all the doctors had refused to treat because of her seemingly hopeless condition. Through faith and through the fervent prayer of the holy brothers, the Lord healed the deadly disease and Palladia got up from her bed perfectly healthy and giving praise to God. In gratitude for being healed and wishing to give them a small gift, Palladia went quietly to Damian. She presented him with three eggs and said, "Take this small gift in the Name of the Holy Life-Creating Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Hearing the Name of the Holy Trinity, the unmercenary one did not dare to refuse.

When Saint Cosmas learned what had happened, became very sad, for he thought that his brother had broken their strict vow. On his deathbed he gave instructions that his brother should not be buried beside him. Saint Damian also died shortly afterward, and everyone wondered where Saint Damian's grave should be. But through the will of God a miracle occurred. A camel, which the saints had treated for its wildness, spoke with a human voice saying that they should have no doubts about whether to place Damian beside Cosmas, because Damian did not accept the eggs from the woman as payment, but out of respect for the Name of God. The venerable relics of the holy brothers were buried together at Thereman in Mesopotamia.

Many miracles were worked after the death of the holy unmercenaries. There lived at Thereman, near the church of Cosmas and Damian, a certain man by the name of Malchus. One day he went on a journey, leaving his wife all alone for what would be a long time. He prayerfully entrusted her to the heavenly protection of the holy brothers. But the Enemy of the race of mankind took on the appearance of one of Malchus' friends, and planned to kill the woman. A certain time went by, and this man went to her at home and said that Malchus had sent him to bring her to him. The woman believed him and went along. He led her to

a solitary place intending to kill her. The woman, seeing that disaster threatened her, called upon God with deep faith.

Two fierce men then appeared, and the devil let go of the woman and fled, falling off a cliff. The two men led the woman home. At her own home, bowing to them deeply she asked, "My rescuers, to whom I shall be grateful to the end of my days, what are your names?"

They replied, "We are the servants of Christ, Cosmas and Damian," and became invisible. The woman with trembling and with joy told everyone about what had happened to her. Glorifying God, she went up to the icon of the holy brothers and tearfully offered prayers of thanksgiving for her deliverance. And from that time the holy brothers were venerated as protectors of the holiness and inviolability of Christian marriage, and as givers of harmony to conjugal life. From ancient times, their veneration spread also to Russia.

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, illumined 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 8 – Troparion for Sts Cosmas and Damian

Holy Unmercenaries and Wonderworkers, Cosmas and Damian,
heal our infirmities.//
Freely you have received; freely you give to us.

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 2 – Kontakion for Sts Cosmas and Damian

Having received the grace of healing,
you grant healing to those in need.

Glorious wonder-workers and healers, Cosmas and Damian,
visit us and put down the insolence of our enemies,//
and bring healing to the world through your miracles!

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 4 – Resurrection Prokeimenon (Psalm 103)

O Lord, how manifold are Your works;
in wisdom have You made them all!

Epistle: Galatians 2.16-20

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.

Gospel: Luke 8.26-39

At that time, Jesus and His disciples sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house, but in the tombs.

When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!" For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

When those who fed them saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. They also who had seen it told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned.

Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Met. Theodosius
Gary Tincher
Gene Lukas

Mary Tinney
Ev.Mem. Vasili Brancyk (2017)

Health & Salv.	Daniel	Claudia
Archbp. David	Brendan	Tom
Archpr. Peter	David	Beth
Archpr. John	Sharon	Elizabeth
Mat. Margaret	Michael	Snezana
Mat. Anne	Janie	Nathan
Pr. Christopher	Tanya	Kara
Mat. Jennifer	Christopher	Ryan
Andrew	Nina	Barabara
Gideon	Renee	Thomas
Kevin	Carissa	Carol
Jon	Cynthia	Christine
Tanya	John	Jon
Jovan	Vern	Zoey
Julia	Olga	Dominic
Warren	Mark	Declan
Tom	Jerry	Hudson
Tina	Michael	TaQuana
Brittany	Janice	Gene
Jennifer	Dushawna	Ayden
Gail	Daniel	Hyland
Stacy	Anthony	Jason
Jeramie	Janet	Ted
Olivia	Daryl	Daniel
Parker	Diane	Tiffany
Christine	Carla	James
Linda	Susan	Pamela
Larry	Timothy	Erin
Rollie	William	Alexander
Joseph	Paul	Jerome
Nadia	Joseph	Ronald

*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, November 7.

For Bible Study this week, read Revelation 14-15.

Mark your calendars:

Nov 4: Bible Study (on Zoom) @ 7pm

Nov 5: Faith Enrichment @ 9:30am

**Nov 7: Clean-up/prep for Fire Marshall inspection @ 9am
Divine Liturgy @ 10am**

Nov 26: Thanksgiving Liturgy @ 9am

Last week's offerings to the Lord: \$970

Final Thoughts on Politics, Polarization, and Ephesians 2

A reflection by His Eminence, our Archbishop Paul

I started these notes on voting and polarization about 5 weeks ago. I want to leave you with a few final thoughts as I wrap up this series. Whatever issues we talk about, whether they be moral issues like LBGTQ, abortion rights, gun control, school violence or issues like immigration, health care and refugees, we need to understand that these problems and controversies exist because we live in a fallen world. Any attempt to address them through a political process will always fall short of what is needful.

What point is there even to discuss these concerns if people have no interest in hearing the initial call of our Lord to "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand? Or, to heed the call to sell all that we have and to follow Christ and have riches in Heaven? All of the above concerns can only be properly understood in the context of following Christ and seeking His Kingdom and His righteousness. Our beliefs and values as a Church arise from this reality.

When we discuss the problems of the world as ends in themselves, I think we end up with the polarization we have today. It is not that Jesus did not see worldly concerns as of no importance. I mentioned last week that he came as a physician for those who were sick. He came to conquer sin and death and to fulfill the law of the Old Covenant.

We live now according the New Covenant our Lord instituted at the Last Supper. We live according the new commandment our Lord gave his disciples that they love one another as he has loved them. We all know this love involved voluntarily laying down His life on the Cross. He became the *scandalon* ("scandal" or "stumbling block"), the one who was cursed because he hung on a tree (Gal. 3:13). That curse was intended for us. But He took that curse and our sins upon Himself. This is the New Covenant of love that changes people's hearts. It is this new commandment that leads to the new person created out of two in Ephesians 2.

My dear families and loved ones, live your lives within the liturgical rhythm of the Church. Let the Church calendar be your defining reality and not the school calendar or November 3rd. It is in the life of the Church that we can come to know the new person spoken of in Ephesians 2; where bitterness and hostility are put to an end. By living in the Church we receive a new law written in our hearts. There will be no need for government laws and policies to define what is right.

There will be no need to define parties by whether they are Christian or not. Neither party has a monopoly on Christianity. So when you vote, base your vote on the party's platform and what the candidates say. I end with the following words from the Prophet Jeremiah:

"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

(Jeremiah 31:31-34)

The blessing of the Lord be upon you,
The unworthy Archbishop Paul

Glory to God for all things!