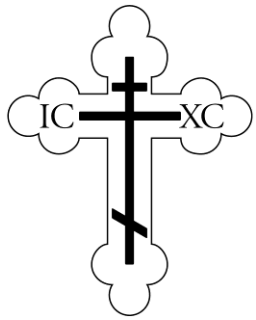
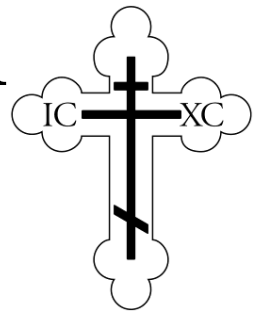


Protection of the Virgin Mary

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

February 14, 2021

Zacchaeus Sunday

St Auxentius of Bithynia

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is also preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about Zacchaeus the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man, and how his life was changed simply because he “sought to see who Jesus was” (Luke 19:3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through Lent towards Pascha. It is the first movement of salvation.

Our lenten journey begins with a recognition of our own sinfulness, just as Zacchaeus recognized his. He promised to make restitution by giving half of his wealth to the poor, and by paying to those he had falsely accused four times as much as they had

lost. In this, he went beyond the requirements of the Law (Ex. 22:3-12).

The example of Zacchaeus teaches us that we should turn away from our sins, and atone for them. The real proof of our sorrow and repentance is not just a verbal apology, but when we correct ourselves and try to make amends for the consequences of our evil actions.

We are also assured of God's mercy and compassion by Christ's words to Zacchaeus, "Today salvation is come to this house" (Luke 19:9). After the Great Doxology at Sunday Matins (when the Tone of the week is Tone 1, 3, 5, 7) we sing the Dismissal Hymn of the Resurrection "Today salvation has come to the world," which echoes the Lord's words to Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus was short, so he climbed a tree in order to see the Lord. All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). We are also short in our spiritual stature, therefore we must climb the ladder of the virtues. In other words, we must prepare for spiritual effort and growth.

Saint Auxentius, by origin a Syrian, served at the court of the emperor Theodosius the Younger (418-450). He was known as a virtuous, learned and wise man, and he was a friend of many of the pious men of his era.

Distressed by worldly vanity, St Auxentius was ordained to the holy priesthood, and then received monastic tonsure. After this he went to Bithynia and found a solitary place on Mount Oxia, not far from Chalcedon, and there he began the life of a hermit (This mountain was afterwards called Mt. Auxentius). The place of the saint's efforts was discovered by shepherds seeking their lost sheep. They told others about him, and people began to come to him for healing. St Auxentius healed many of the sick and the infirm in the name of the Lord.

In the year 451, St Auxentius was invited to the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon, where he denounced the Eutychian and Nestorian heresies. Familiar with Holy Scripture and learned in theology, St Auxentius easily bested those opponents who disputed with him. After the end of the Council, St Auxentius returned to his solitary cell on the mountain. With his spiritual sight, he saw the repose of St Simeon the Stylite (459) from a great distance.

St Auxentius died about the year 470, leaving behind him disciples and many monasteries in the region of Bithynia. He was buried in the Monastery of Saint Hypatius at Rufiananas, Syria.

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

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!

From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, ^Christ our God,
enlightening those who sat in darkness.

Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder,

you accepted in your arms the ^Redeemer of our souls,//

Who grants us the Resurrection!

Tone 1 – Troparion for St Auxentius

O dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body,

you were a wonderworker, O our God-bearing Father Auxentius.

You received heavenly gifts through fasting, vigil, and prayer,

healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to you by faith.

Glory to Him Who gave you strength!

Glory to Him Who granted you a ^crown!//

Glory to Him Who grants healing to all!

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 2 – Kontakion for St Auxentius

You delighted in abstinence,
restraining the desires of the flesh.
Divinely wise and holy Father Auxentius,
you were revealed to be shining with faith, //
blossoming like a plant in the midst of Paradise.

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 – Resurrectional Prokeimenon (Psalm 46)

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

Epistle: 1 Timothy 4.9-15

My son Timothy: This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. These things command and teach. Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

Gospel: Luke 19.1-10

At that time, Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So, he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.

And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."

Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."

And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Nicholas Lile
Leo DuMoulin
Protopr. Daniel Hubiak
Vern Orr
Jeffrey Smith
Blythe
Darrell Hall

Pr. James Doyle
Rodney Veselica
Mildred Drozik
Ev.Mem. John Romanchak ('31)
Dorothy Christoff ('98)
Eugenia Shawkun (2006)

Health & Salv.
Archpr. Peter
Mat. Margaret
Mat. Anne
Pr. Christopher
Mat. Jennifer
Andrew
Gideon
Kevin
Jon
Tanya
Jovan
Julia
Warren
Tom
Tina
Jennifer
Gail

Stacy
Jeramie
Olivia
Parker
Christine
Larry
Rollie
Joseph
Nadia
Brendan
David
Sharon
Michael
Janie
Tanya
Christopher
Nina
Renee

Carissa
Cynthia
John
Olga
Mark
Jerry
Michael
Anthony
Janet
Daryl
Diane
Carla
Susan
Timothy
William
Paul
Joseph
Linda

Claudia	Hudson	Chuck
Elizabeth	Ayden	Scott
Snezana	Hyland	Mark
Nathan	Jason	Christine
Kara	Ted	Dale
Ryan	James	Pauline
Thomas	Pamela	Mary
Carol	Erin	Erica & family
Christine	Alexander	Timothy
Jon	Ronald	Lisa
Zoey	Theodore	Lois
Dominic	Robert	Michael
Declan	Craig	

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today is our parish **Annual Meeting**. Because we cannot have our usual meal due to the ongoing pandemic, we will hold the meeting in the nave immediately following the Divine Liturgy. In order to expedite the meeting, we will hear no business except to elect a parish council and approve a budget for 2021.

We continue to take precautions during the health crisis. Everyone except celebrants and choir must be masked and maintain distance between groups. Those seeking to limit their exposure to large groups are encouraged to take advantage of weekday Liturgies with lower attendance. The next will be this **Saturday, February 20**.

This evening at 7pm, Fr Jacob will assist Archbishop Paul with another **Family Life Livestream**. Tonight's topic: **"Who is God?"** Find the livestream at www.midwestfamily.org.

For **Bible Study** Wednesday, read **1 Kingdoms (1 Samuel) 14-16**.

Mark your calendars:

Feb 16: **Hall Committee Meeting @ 6pm**
Parish Council Meeting @ 7pm

Feb 17: **Bible Study @ 7pm (Zoom)**

Feb 19: **Red Cross Blood Drive 12p-6p**

Feb 20: **Divine Liturgy @ 10am**

“Who is God?”

A Reflection by His Eminence, our Archbishop Paul

This Sunday evening, we will be doing our livestream on this question. I am looking forward to it. I wanted to share a few preliminary thoughts on this, as unworthy as I am to do so.

In August of 1993, my father passed away. I had completed my second year at St. Vladimir’s Seminary. I was at the funeral home for visitation wearing my cassock. A four-year-old child, who was a family friend, approached me and asked, “Are you God?” I was startled by the question. I briefly mumbled “no.” Yet what was it that this child saw in me that caused him to ask that question? It wouldn’t surprise me if parents have been asked that question from their own children as they grow up. The wonderful thing about this brief exchange with this boy was that even at four years old he was dealing with the question of “Who is God?” To answer this, we can go the gospel of John as a start:

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. (John 14:5-9)

And finally, from Colossians 1:15: *“He (Jesus Christ) is the image of the invisible God.”*

From these verses we learn that we come to know God, who cannot be seen, by fixing our gaze on Jesus Christ, who has been seen. In Christ is revealed the image of the invisible God. This becomes reality at the feast of Theophany, where we sing in the Festal Troparion:

“When You O Lord were baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bore witness to You, calling You His Beloved Son, and the Spirit in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of your Word.”

Up until the baptism of our Lord, the question, “Who is God?” was a mystery and not clearly revealed. This changed with our Lord’s baptism. It was in the essence and nature of the Son to reveal God the Father to this world and the Holy Spirit. But all of us, like the four-year-old boy, seek to know the answer to the question “Who is God?” I think this question becomes a never-ending thirst given to us at our own baptism into Christ. This is what drives us to come to know the “Way, the Truth, and the Life.”

But that question and the drive to know needs to be nurtured and cultivated through our sacramental life in the Church, through our life at home as an icon of the little church, seeking to live by the Beatitudes of our Lord in Matthew 5:1-12, and seeking to acquire the gifts of the Holy Spirit as mentioned in Galatians 5:22-24. As we live the spiritual life and by grace acquire these fruits of the Spirit, this reveals the invisible God through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. By doing so, many will in time come to terms with the question, “Who is God?” See you this Sunday evening.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you,

Archbishop Paul

Glory to God for
all things!