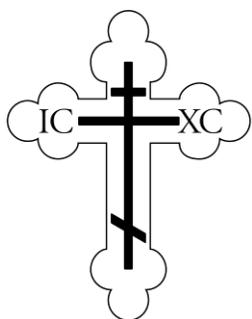
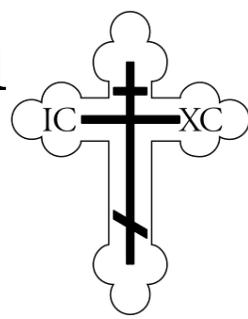


Protection of the Virgin Mary

Orthodox Church



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



8600 Grand Blvd.
Merrillville, IN 46410
(219)947-4748
Hall: (219)730-4698
www.ptvm.com

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.

March 21, 2021

First Sunday of Great Lent: The Sunday of Orthodoxy

*On the Sundays of Great Lent, we celebrate the Divine Liturgy
of St. Basil the Great*

The first Sunday of Great Lent is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy because it commemorates the triumph of the Orthodox Faith when the Holy Icons were restored to the Churches in 843 A.D. after a century of iconoclasm (forbidding and destroying icons). We paint and revere the physical image of our Lord and His Saints because He became flesh and blood just like us and He sanctifies the souls *and* bodies of those who flee to Him in faith.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 8 – Resurrectional Troparion

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!

You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//

O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

Tone 2 – Troparion of Orthodoxy Sunday

We venerate Your most pure image, O Good One;

and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God.

Of Your own will You were pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and deliver Your creatures from bondage to the Enemy.

Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to You:

“You have filled all with joy, O our Savior,//

by coming to save the world.”

Tone 8 – Kontakion of Orthodoxy Sunday

No one could describe the Word of the Father;

but when He took flesh from you, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described,

and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty.//

We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and images.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Tone 4 – Prokeimenon of the Fathers (Daniel 3)

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers,

and praised and glorified is Your Name forever!

Epistle: Hebrews 11.24-26, 32 – 12.2

Brethren: By faith Moses, when he came of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. He chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting release, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mocking and scourging, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned; they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, since God had provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus—the author and finisher of our faith—who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Gospel: John 1.43-51

At that time, Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.”

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found the One Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote about – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!”

Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Erin Brady

Nicholas Lile

Leo DuMoulin

Ev.Mem. John Pustik (2000)

Mary Kuzma (2000)

George Rubis ('74)

Michael Maijew ('67)

John Borisenko ('40)

Julia Kovalenko ('31)

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

Elizabeth

Snezana

Nathan

Kara

Ryan

Thomas

Carol

Christine

Jon

Zoey

Dominic

Declan

Hudson

Ayden

Hyland

Jason

Ted

James

Pamela

Erin

Alexander

Ronald

Theodore

Robert

Craig

Chuck

Scott

Mark

Christine

Dale

Pauline

Mary

Jessika & family

Timothy

Lisa

Lois

Michael

Ivanka

Janice

Ken

Debbie

Jacqueline

Dara

Cindy

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

Toward the end of Divine Liturgy, we will hold the **Triumph of Orthodoxy procession**. All are invited to borrow an icon from the walls of the Church and join the procession. After short litanies at the south, east, and north sides of the Church, we will return to the Nave and proclaim the **Synodikon of Orthodoxy**:

Priest: The Church of God has established that on this day we give yearly thanksgiving to God and reaffirm the dogmas of piety. Therefore, following the sayings of the prophets, honoring the exhortations of the apostles, and being instructed by the histories of the Gospels, we celebrate this day of consecration. For Isaiah says: "Be consecrated to God, you islands," by which he means the churches of the many nations, which are not the structures and embellishments of the temples, but rather the gathering of the faithful who serve God with hymns and praise. The Apostle also exhorts us "to walk in newness of life" and that the "new creation in Christ" be renewed. For He has delivered us who are unworthy from adversity, redeeming us from those who afflicted us. And He has established the free proclamation of piety, the veneration of icons, and this Festival which brings all of us salvation. For in the icons we see what our Master bore for us: the Cross, the grave, hell slain and pillaged; we see the trials of His witnesses and their crowns of salvation, which our First Prize-giver and Contest-master and Crown-bearer wrought in the midst of the earth. Today we celebrate this festival; we rejoice together with prayers and processions, and we cry out with psalms and hymns:

**Choir: Who is so great a God as our God?
You are the God, who alone does wonders!**

Priest: For You overthrew those who slighted Your glory and showed them to be cowards and fugitives who were disrespectful and impudent against the icons.

Therefore, as the prophets have seen, as the apostles have taught, as the Church has received, as the teachers have set forth in dogmas, as has been made known to the whole world, as Grace has shone forth, as the truth was demonstrated, as falsehood has been banished, as wisdom emboldened, as Christ has awarded: thus we believe, thus we speak, thus we preach Christ our true God and His saints, honoring them in words, in writings, in thoughts, in sacrifices, in temples, and in icons, worshipping and respecting Christ as God and Master and honoring the Saints with

relative adoration, because of our common Master, for they are His genuine servants.

People: This is the Faith of the apostles! This is the Faith of the fathers! This is the Faith of the Orthodox! This is the Faith that has established the world!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 services** with lower attendance.

Order forms for our annual **Pascha Bake Sale** (available in the narthex) are due this Wednesday. Baking starts tomorrow!

Thank you to those who donated items toward our **Easter dinner baskets for local families** in need. We have everything we need! Of course, we continue to collect non-perishable food on a weekly basis for the local pantries.

Now that **coffee hour** is back, we need volunteers to make it happen on a consistent basis. Table & chair set-up and coffee making is covered, but we need people to sign up to bring food. For now, we are going to keep it simple. No meat or dairy because of Lent, and everything must be “grab and go” because of Covid. If you are willing to contribute food on a given Sunday, please let Mary Ann Bertram know, and she will put a schedule together.

During Great Lent, Orthodox Christians **make more time for prayer, deny themselves rich and satisfying foods** (meat, dairy, and fish), and find opportunities to **help those in need** (this is almsgiving). They also examine their consciences and repent of their sins before the Lord in the **Sacrament of Confession**. Confession is always available before or after evening services. You can also make an appointment with Fr Jacob any time, including before Sunday Liturgies, if necessary.

Thank you to Elizabeth Wysocki for reorganizing our **parish bookstore**. Great Lent is a perfect time to cut back on television and read an edifying book.

The parishes of the Chicago deanery each year usually collaborate to host a series of **Lenten Sunday Vespers** services. These Sunday Vespers are back again this year, but because of the pandemic, parishioners from other Churches are asked to remain home and participate via livestream. **Pick up a flyer** in the Narthex for information about when Sunday Vespers are happening this year and where you can find the Livestreams.

Mark your calendars:

Mar 23: **Hall Committee meeting @ 6pm**
Parish Council meeting @ 7pm

Mar 24: **Presanctified Liturgy @ 6pm**

Mar 25: **Vespereal Liturgy for the Feast of Annunciation @ 6pm**

Mar 26: **Presanctified Liturgy @ 10am**

Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$6,381

The Importance of Reconciliation and Love During the Fast

A Reflection by His Eminence, our Archbishop Paul

*As long as we live self-centered lives, we cannot forgive our neighbor, our ego will not allow it. Once our lives are God-centered, however, we are able to forgive others as God forgives us. Let us remember that God's mercy and forgiveness to us is often hidden in our mercy and forgiveness to others. Our Lenten journey is not an isolated or an individual affair but a family event.
(Forgiveness Sunday reading from the Synaxarion)*

I can't think of any better words for family members to pray and meditate on as they begin the Great Fast leading us to the Holy Pascha of our Lord. This above text is based on the Gospel reading from Matthew read on Forgiveness Sunday. If our fasting and praying do not lead us to being reconciled with one another and extending mercy to one another, then we are not fasting and praying for the right reasons.

So how can we get to the point that we fast and pray for the right reasons? Hear some further thoughts about this:

WHEN YOU FAST (NOT IF YOU FAST):

- Don't make a public display of it
- *“I know some, well – actually I know many – who, even while neglecting to fast, yet still wear the garments of those who fast. They cloak themselves with a false exoneration worse than their actual sin.” – St John Chrysostom*
- Vainglory is just not rooted in having fine dress and want to look good in the eyes of man; it can also mean wanting to look and act piously just so that people will notice external facades and commend you for being something you are not.
- *“I would like to urge you to forsake everything, but that I do not presume to do. Yet, if you cannot give up everything of this world, at least keep what belongs to the world in such a way that you yourself are not kept prisoner of the world. Whatever you possess must not possess you; whatever you own must be under the power of your soul; for if your soul is overpowered by the love of this world's goods, it will be totally at the mercy of its possessions.” - St Gregory the Great*

If we have this attitude about fasting, we will be able to enter into a right relationship with what God gives us as stewards. We will be able to use what we have been entrusted with for the well-being of others and not just of ourselves. Lord, free us from the things that possess us, so that we use what you give us in extending compassion to others. Free us from the grudges we hang onto, so that we can forgive those who have wronged us. Forgive me a sinner.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you,

+Paul

Glory to God for
all things!