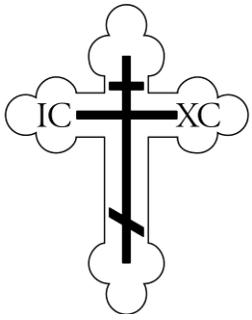
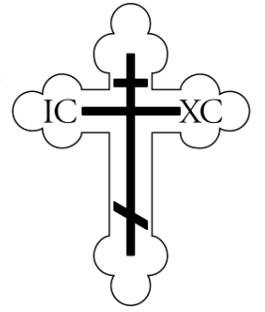


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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.

July 18, 2021

Synaxis of the Holy Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils

As the Church progressed through history, it was faced with many difficult decisions. The Church always settled difficulties and made decisions by reaching a consensus of opinion among all the believers inspired by God who were led by their appointed leaders, first the apostles and then the bishops.

The first church council in history was held in the apostolic church to decide the conditions under which the gentiles, that is, the non-Jews, could enter the Christian Church (see Acts 15). From that time on, all through history councils were held on every level of church life to make important decisions. Bishops met regularly with their priests, also called presbyters or elders, and people. It became the practice very early in church history that bishops in given regions should meet in councils held on a regular basis.

At times in church history, councils of all of the bishops in the church were called. All the bishops were not able to attend these councils, of course, and not all such councils were automatically approved and accepted by the Church in its Holy Tradition. In the Orthodox Church only seven such councils, some of which were actually quite small in terms of the number of bishops attending, have received the universal approval of the entire Church in all times and places. These councils have been termed the Seven Ecumenical Councils.

The dogmatic definitions (dogma means “official teaching”) and the canon laws of the ecumenical councils are understood to be inspired by God and to be expressive of His will for men. Thus, they are essential sources of Orthodox Christian doctrine. The Seven Ecumenical Councils are as follows:

- I. First Council in Nicaea in 325 A.D. - Formulated the First Part of the Creed, defining the divinity of the Son of God.
- II. First Council in Constantinople in 381 A.D. - Formulated the Second Part of the Creed, defining the divinity of the Holy Spirit.
- III. Council in Ephesus in 431 A.D. - Defined Christ as the Incarnate Word of God and Mary as Theotokos.
- IV. Council in Chalcedon in 451 A.D. - Defined Christ as Perfect God and Perfect Man in One Person.
- V. Second Council in Constantinople in 553 A.D. - Reconfirmed the Doctrines of the Trinity and of Christ against newer heresies.
- VI. Third Council in Constantinople in 680 A.D. - Affirmed the Full Humanity of Jesus by insisting upon His human will and action.
- VII. Second Council in Nicaea in 787 A.D. - Affirmed the propriety of icons as genuine expressions of the Christian Faith

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 8 – Troparion of the Holy Fathers

You are most glorious, O Christ our God!
You have established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth.
Through them You have guided us to the true Faith.//
O greatly compassionate One, glory to You!

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 8 – Kontakion of the Holy Fathers

The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established
one Faith for the Church.
Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology,//
It defines and glorifies the great mystery of piety.

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!

Tone 4 – Prokeimenon of the Holy Fathers (Daniel 3)

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers,
and praised and glorified is Your Name forever!

Epistle: Romans 6.18-23

Brethren: Having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness (I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh). For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 13.7-16 (for the Holy Fathers)

Brethren, remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you. Follow their faith, considering the outcome of their conduct. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore, Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore, let us go forth to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore, by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Gospel: Matthew 8.5-13 (Sunday)

Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented."

And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith,

not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.” And his servant was healed that same hour.

John 17.1-13 (Holy Fathers)

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

“I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Loretta Molchan
Erik Tjaden
George Samardzija
Warren Rubel
Helen Korotky

Ev.Mem. Tikhon Shabaltai ('19)
Claudia Alexeychuk ('31)
Stephan Kozlowski ('46)
John Efimenko ('51)
Catherine Frentzko ('95)

Health & Salv.	Anthony	Mark
Archpr. Peter	Daryl	Christine
Mat. Margaret	Diane	Dale
Mat. Anne	Carla	Pauline
Pr. Christopher	Susan	Mary
Mat. Jennifer	Timothy	Timothy
Andrew	William	Lisa
Gideon	Paul	Lois
Kevin	Joseph	Michael
Jon	Linda	Janice
Tanya	Claudia	Ken
Jovan	Elizabeth	Debbie
Julia	Snezana	Jacqueline
Tom	Nathan	Dara
Tina	Kara	Cindy
Jennifer	Ryan	Daniel
Gail	Thomas	Laura
Stacy	Carol	Dorothy
Jeramie	Christine	Vasiliy
Olivia	Jon	William
Parker	Zoey	Wanda
Christine	Dominic	Cindy
Larry	Declan	Mary
Rollie	Hudson	Linda
Joseph	Ayden	Ivanka
Nadia	Hyland	Susan
Brendan	Jason	Denise
Tanya	Ted	Valerie
Christopher	James	Jeffrey
Nina	Pamela	Aaron
Renee	Erin	William
Carissa	Alexander	Jamie
Cynthia	Ronald	Karen
John	Theodore	Dale
Olga	Robert	Jack
Mark	Craig	Joyce
Jerry	Chuck	Mary Ann
Michael	Scott	Artemis

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Following veneration of the cross, please go to your cars and open a door to prepare for the blessing, which will take place immediately.

The **O-Club** will hold its monthly meeting during coffee hour today.

For **Bible Study** this week, read 3 Kingdoms (a.k.a. 1 Kings) 5-8.

We are still looking for help rebooting coffee hour since the COVID restrictions have been lifted. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex where you can let us know if you are willing to sponsor coffee hour on an upcoming Sunday.

Mark your calendars:

July 20: **Divine Liturgy** for the **Holy Prophet Elijah** at Descent of the Holy Ghost in Merrillville @ 10am

Hall committee meeting @ 6pm

Parish council meeting @ 7pm

July 21: **Bible Study @ 7pm**

July 22: **Faith Enrichment @ 10am**

July 27: **Divine Liturgy @ St. Panteleimon Orthodox Church** in Summit, IL for their parish feast day @ 10am

Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$3,960

Making Up Our Minds

A Reflection by His Eminence, our Archbishop Paul

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, ... You cannot serve God and mammon. ... Do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? (Matthew 6:24-25)

Therefore, whoever wishes to love God and to beware of offending Him, let such a one cleanse the upright intention of his heart from all duplicity. In this way he will "think of the Lord in goodness and seek him in simplicity of heart." (Wisdom 1:1)

- St Augustine on Matthew 6:24-25

These words from the gospel of Matthew ring with such truth. We are often divided over where to place our loyalty in life, and this can be a real impediment to seeking the Kingdom of Heaven. “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other...you cannot serve God and mammon.” St. Augustine goes on to comment on these verses stating that if one does not want to offend God but to love God, it is important that the upright intention of one’s heart be cleansed from all duplicity. What is duplicity? How do we cleanse ourselves from it?

The Webster Dictionary describes duplicity in the following manner: *Duplicity* comes from a Latin word meaning “double” or “twofold,” and its original meaning in English has to do with a kind of deception in which you intentionally hide your true feelings or intentions behind false words or actions. If you are being duplicitous, there are two yous: the one you’re showing and the one you’re hiding. And—key to the idea of duplicity—you’re hiding yourself in order to make a person believe something that’s not true.

The way we overcome duplicity in ourselves is by being transparent. We reveal the “you” we are seeking to hide by taking off the outer mask we wear in life. We take off the mask by remembering the Lord’s humility in His suffering on the Cross. There is a point in life where you come to the end of yourself like the prodigal son in the parable from Luke. The prodigal son, once he took the inheritance his father gave him, wasted it on the false masks he donned in his many journeys, that only took him further away from who he was. When he found himself feeding on the food of swine and swimming in their mud, he came to his senses. He remembered what he had and what he had lost in taking leave of his father. He made his journey back home expecting nothing, only hoping that his father would hire him as a servant. In this journey back home, we renounce the false masks we don seeking only to come back to our true selves. We do so by heeding the teaching of Christ: “apart from me you can do nothing.”

The blessing of the Lord be upon you.

With love in Christ,
Archbishop Paul

Glory to God for all things!