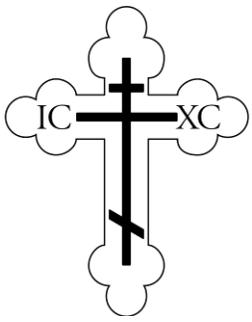
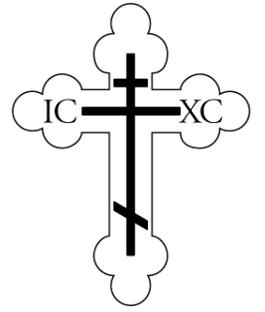


Protection of the Virgin Mary

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.

February 20, 2022

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

St. Leo of Catania in Sicily

Saint Leo was bishop of the city of Catania, in Sicily. He was famed for his benevolence and charity, and his Christian love for the poor and the vagrant. The Lord granted him the gifts of healing various illnesses and working miracles.

When St Leo was Bishop of Catania, there was a certain sorcerer named Heliodorus, who impressed people with his fake miracles. This fellow was originally a Christian, but then he rejected Christ and became a servant of the devil. St Leo often urged Heliodorus to repent of his wicked deeds and return to God, but in vain. Once, Heliodorus impudently entered the church where the bishop was serving, and tried to create a disturbance, sowing confusion and temptation by his sorcery.

Seeing the people beset by devils under the sorcerer's spell, St Leo realized that the time for gentle persuasion had passed. He calmly emerged from the altar and, tying his omophorion around the magician's neck, he led him out of the church into the city square. There he forced Heliodorus to admit to all his wicked deeds. He commanded that a fire be lit, and jumped into the fire with the sorcerer. Thus, they stood in the fire until Heliodorus got burnt. St Leo, by the power of God, remained unharmed. This miracle brought St Leo great renown during his lifetime.

When he died, a woman with an issue of blood received healing at his grave. The body of the saint was placed in a church of the Holy Martyr Lucy, which he himself had built. Later on, his relics were transferred into the church of St Martin the Merciful, Bishop of Tours

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 2 – Resurrectional Troparion

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal,
You slew hell with the splendor of Your Godhead.
And when from the depths You raised the dead,
all the powers of heaven cried out://
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

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 1 – Troparion for St. Leo

You were shown forth as a resplendent priest,
a teacher of godliness and a wonderworker, blessed hierarch Leo.
By the light of heavenly virtue you were enriched with the power of
the Spirit,
and heal the souls and bodies of those who hasten to you.
Glory to Christ who has glorified you!
Glory to Him who has ^crowned you!
Glory to Him who through you works healing for all!

Tone 2 – Resurrectional Kontakion

Hell became afraid, almighty Savior,

seeing the miracle of Your Resurrection from the tomb!

The dead arose! Creation with Adam beheld this and rejoiced with You, //
and the world, my Savior, praises You forever.

Tone 3 – Kontakion for the Prodigal Son

I have recklessly forgotten Your glory, O Father;

and among sinners I have scattered the riches which You gave me.

And now I cry to You as the Prodigal:

“I have sinned before You, O merciful Father;

receive me as a penitent, //

and make me as one of Your hired servants!”

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 2 – Sunday Prokeimenon (Psalm 117)

The Lord is my strength and my song; / He has become my salvation!

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6.12-20

Brethren: All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your

own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Gospel: Luke 15.11-32

Jesus spoke this parable to His disciples: "A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.

"But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

"But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.'"

"And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

"But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

"Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' But he was angry and would not go in.

"Therefore, his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has

devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'

"And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'"

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

New Dep. Milica Djankovich

Joseph Exl

Barbara Krieg

Julia Rubel

Ev.Mem. Vasili Fomkin ('42)

Andrew Chisnak ('46)

Leanelda Mosak ('71)

Michael Barancyk ('98)

John Gruszyk ('99)

Bill Komanecki (2005)

Anna Vahary (2019)

Health & Salv.

Archpr. Peter

Archpr. Theodore

Mat. Margaret

Mat. Anne

Pr. Christopher

Mat. Jennifer

Andrew

Gideon

Kevin

Jon

Tanya

Jovan

Julia

Tom

Tina

Jennifer

Stacy

Jeramie

Olivia

Parker

Christine

Larry

Rollie

Joseph

Nadia

Brendan

Tanya

Christopher

Nina

Renee

Carissa

Cynthia

John

Olga

Janie

Michael

David

Sharon

Mark

Jerry

Michael

Anthony

Daryl

Diane

Carla

Susan

Timothy

William

Paul

Joseph

Linda

Claudia

Elizabeth

Carol

Snezana

Ryan

Nathan

Kara

Christine

Jon

Zoey

Dominic

Declan

Hudson

Ayden

Hyland

Jason

Ted

James

Pamela

Alexander

Ronald

Theodore

Robert

Craig

Chuck

Scott

Mark
Christine
Dale
Pauline
Mary
Janice
Ken
Debbie
Jacqueline
Cindy
Daniel
Laura
Dorothy
Vasiliy
William
Wanda
Cindy
Mary
Linda
Ivanka

Susan
Denise
Valerie
Jeffrey
Aaron
William
Jamie
Karen
Dale
Jack
Joyce
Anna
Sandra
Linda
Stephen
Megan
William
Jim
Camille
John

Martha
Mark
Michelle
Irene
Robert
Rebecca
Robert
April
Margaret
Kiersten
Michelle
Erika
Luke
Jo
Stephanie
Mary Ann
Robb
Desiree

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tomorrow begins **Meatfare week**, the last week of eating meat before Great Lent. The following week is Cheesefare, and then the **strict fast begins on Monday, March 7.**

For **Bible Study** this week, read **1 Maccabees 7-9.** This will be our last Bible Study until after Pascha.

This Saturday is the First **Saturday of Souls** for the year. Memorial Liturgy will be served at the Church at 10am. Please bring the names of your departed loved ones for commemoration.

Mark your calendars:

Feb 15: **Parish Council** meeting @ 7pm

Feb 23: **Bible Study** @ 7pm

Feb 24: **Iconography Lecture** (organized by Dn. Nicholas) @ 6:30pm

Feb 26: **Saturday of Souls Memorial Divine Liturgy** @ 10am

Mar 6: **Forgiveness Vespers** following coffee hour

Mar 7: **Clean Monday** (beginning of Great Lent)

Mar 7-10: **The Great Canon of St Andrew** in four parts, 6p nightly

Mar 9: **Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 10am**

Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$2,567

Reflection on the Prodigal Son

by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom

As often happens, we destroy the deep, full importance and meaning of relationships, because we are used to a loving person giving to us—giving generously, giving constantly, never thinking of himself: just giving; and how easily we gradually forget the one who gives, remembering just the gifts. It happened with the Prodigal Son, but it so happens constantly in our human relationships...

The Prodigal Son said to his father: "Give me what will be mine when you die;" in other words: "Let's agree that you no longer exist for me; I only need what you can give me..." And as the Prodigal Son, we then for a while live off these gifts; our heart is yet warmed with the warmth given to us, our mind yet lives on the riches of our bygone association... As long as we are able to live on these gifts, we are surrounded by people who want to live off of that which we received: we are, like the Prodigal Son, surrounded by the people that swarmed around him while he was yet rich from the riches of his father. But when nothing of the riches remained, they fell away. And impoverishment entered his life again: he renounced one human relationship, and now he himself is renounced by others; he remained alone...

Life is possible only in relation to God, and in relation to others people, as if in an ongoing mutual exchange, when we are as much givers as receivers of the generosity of men and God.

And then the time comes for us to deeply and closely reflect upon ourselves, and understand that we have sinned against Heaven, sinned against our father, against our brother, against our loved ones, against our sister—against everyone around us. We have sinned—meaning we severed the tie, desiring to be free of them... And then the time comes to return: back home, there to

where they fed us, gave generously to us, cared for us, and in the end, to God, the Font of all blessings.

But so often, trying to return, we meet not the father of the wayward son, but the older brother, who never had a real relationship of love or friendship, neither with us nor with our father. We meet him who can boast that he was always diligently, honestly “working” in his father’s home, doing everything necessary—but indifferently—he fulfilled his duties as those who cannot escape, or as a transaction, as work for money. We must reflect on this, because in our experience of human relations we are not always just the Prodigal Son—we so often are the older brother. Another comes to us and says, “It was my fault that I fell out of contact with you, I behaved as a parasite, I want to be different!” and we meet them with the words (or gesture), “There was a time when I saw you differently! There was a time when we lived in fellowship, which was precious to me, but you broke it! My wounds have healed, I don’t want to open more!” How often are we the older brother?

And we behave so unlike the father, who never stopped loving his wayward son, even when this lost one renounced him, rejected him, waiting for the time “when he would die,” to take control of everything he had accumulated through years of labor, wisdom, and sacrificial love...

But the father runs forward to meet his lost son. Have we ever acted this way?... Would we be ready to give him our best clothes, that is, to envelop him with our former relationship? Would we be ready, when he squandered our treasure, disparaged us, and robbed us, to entrust him with our ring, giving him power over our identity, our property, and our honor?

All of these elements of this tragic and wondrous parable are interweaved within every one of us. But it is not enough to discover this; having discovered who we are, we must do something; we must make a decision, we must denounce that identity which we had until now, return, and beseech forgiveness and mercy. It is easy to ask forgiveness from God, because God visibly and palpably never sends us away from Himself empty; He never says to us, “Depart from Me!” But to ask forgiveness from those whom we abused, and who offended us...

Glory to God for all things!