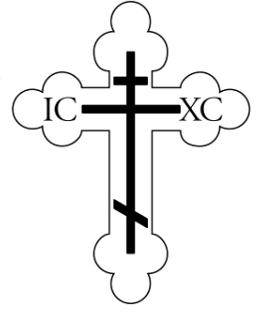
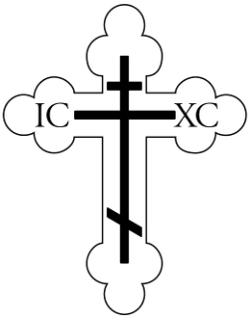


Protection of the Virgin Mary

Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago
and the Midwest
Orthodox Church
in America

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Merrillville, IN 46410
(219)947-4748
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.

January 15, 2023

St. Paul of Thebes

St. John the Hut-Dweller

Saint John the Hut-Dweller was the son of rich and illustrious parents, and was born in Constantinople in the early fifth century. He received a fine education, and he mastered rhetoric and philosophy by the age of twelve. He also loved to read spiritual books. Perceiving the vanity of worldly life, he chose the path that was narrow and extremely difficult. Filled with longing to enter a monastery, he confided his intention to a passing monk. John made him promise to come back for him when he returned from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and take him to his monastery.

He asked his parents for a Gospel so that he might study the words of Christ. John's parents hired a calligrapher to copy the text, and had the volume bound in a golden cover studded with gems. John read the Gospel constantly, delighting in the Savior's words.

The monk kept his promise to come back for John, and they went secretly to Bithynia. At the monastery of the “Unsleeping” he received monastic tonsure. The young monk began his ascetical labors with zeal, astonishing the brethren with his unceasing prayer, humble obedience, strict abstinence, and perseverance at work. After six years, he began to undergo temptations. He remembered his parents, how much they loved him, and what sorrow he caused them. He regretted leaving them, and was filled with a burning desire to see them again.

Saint John returned to Constantinople, not to resume his former life of luxury, but dressed as a beggar, and unknown to anyone. He settled in a corner by the gates of his parents’ home. His father noticed the “pauper,” and began to send him food from his table, for the sake of Christ. John lived in a small hut for three years, oppressed and insulted by the servants, enduring cold and frost, unceasingly conversing with the Lord and the holy angels.

Before his death, the Lord appeared to the monk in a vision, revealing that the end of his sorrows was approaching, and that in three days he would be taken into the Heavenly Kingdom. Therefore, he asked the steward to give his mother a message to come to him, for he had something to say to her.

At first, she did not wish to go, but she was curious to know what this beggar had to say to her. Then he sent her another message, saying that he would die in three days. John thanked her for the charity he had received, and told her that God would reward her for it. He then made her promise to bury him beneath his hut, dressed in his rags. Only then did the saint give her his Gospel, which he always carried with him, saying, “May this console you in this life, and guide you to the next life.”

She showed the Gospel to her husband, saying that it was similar to the one they had given their son. He realized that it was, in fact, the very Gospel they had commissioned for John. They went back to the gates, intending to ask the pauper where he got the Gospel, and if he knew anything about their son. Unable to restrain himself any longer, he admitted that he was their child. With tears of joy, they embraced him, weeping because he had endured privation for so long at the very gates of his parental home.

The saint died in the mid-fifth century, when he was not quite twenty-five years old. On the place of his burial his parents built a church, and beside it a hostel for strangers. When they died, they were buried in the church they had built.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 6 – Resurrectional Troparion

The angelic powers were at Your tomb;
the guards became as dead men.

Mary stood by Your grave,
seeking Your most pure body.

You captured hell,
not being tempted by it.

You came to the Virgin granting life.//

O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You!

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 4 – Troparion of Sts Paul and John

O God of our Fathers,

always act with kindness towards us;

take not Your mercy from us,

but guide our lives in peace//

through the prayers of the venerable Paul and John!

Tone 6 – Resurrectional Kontakion

When Christ God the Giver of Life,

raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,

He bestowed resurrection on the human race.//

He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 2 – Kontakion for St. John

Longing for poverty in imitation of Christ,

you abandoned your parents' wealth, O wise Father John;

grasping the Gospel in your hands, you followed Christ God,//

unceasingly praying for us all.

Tone 3 – Kontakion of St. Paul

Today we gather and praise you with hymns
as an unwaning ray of the spiritual Sun;
for you shine on those in the darkness of ignorance,
leading all ^mankind to the heights, //
venerable Paul, adornment of Thebes and firm foundation of the
fathers and ascetics.

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 6 – Resurrectional Prokeimenon (Psalm 27)

O Lord, save Your people, / and bless Your inheritance!

Epistle: 1 Timothy 1.15-17

Brethren: This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel: Luke 18.18-27

At that time, a certain ruler asked Jesus, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

So, Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’”

And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.”

So, when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?"

But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

New.Dep. Terry Tutterow

Archpr. Theodore Panchak

Tony Klassen

Thomas Martin

Ev.Mem. Evdokim Pogansky ('54)

Joseph Lewis ('58)

William Sterovsky ('60)

Katharine Fomko ('74)

Don Doneff ('97)

Health & Salv.

Archpr. Peter

Mat. Cynthia

Archpr. John

Mat. Anne

Dn. Nicholas

Kevin

Jon

Tanya

Jovan

Tom

Jennifer

Rollie

Joseph

Nadia

Joseph

Linda

Claudia

Carol

Snezana

Ryan

Nathan

Kara

Djuro

Dominic

Declan

Hudson

Ayden

Hyland

Jason

Ted

James

Pamela

Alexander

Ronald

Ivanka

Karen

Sandra

Linda

Jim

John

Martha

Mark

Michelle

Irene

Michelle

Erika

Luke

Jo

Stephanie

Mary Ann

Robb

Desiree

Jaroslava

Andrew

Andrew

Vadim

Hanna

Alex

Carl

Laura

Chrisan

Gerald

Olga

Janie

David

Sharon

Tanya

Renee

Carissa

Ashton

Doris

Laura

Duane

Elizabeth

Karen	Sue	Kathleen
Alexa	Victoria	Rachel
Miriana	Janet	N.III. Bradley
Olga	Tom	Courtney
Richard	Wilma	Marley
Klaudia	Jerry	Caleb
Nicodemus	Penelope	Miette
Nada	Cora	Iris
Mark	Brandi	Charlotte
Catherine	Joyce	Solomon
Aaron	Paul	Rafael
Dale	Galina	Gabriel
Ebony	Michael	
Peggy	Helen	

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

Special Petitions at the Augmented Litany:

We pray, O Lord our God, for all those who suffer from acts of war, especially for the victims in Ukraine. We pray for Your peace and Your mercy in the midst of the great suffering of Your people. Vouchsafe to accept the prayers of the Church, so that by Your goodness, peace may return to all peoples; O Lord, hear us and have mercy.

We also pray You, O Lord our God, to remember and have mercy on our Orthodox brothers and sisters in Russia and Ukraine, who are involved in violent conflict. Remove from their midst all hostility, confusion and hatred. Lead everyone along the path of reconciliation and peace, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For **Bible Study** tomorrow night, read **1 Ezra 5-7**.

Every year, **Orthodox Christian homes are blessed with the new holy water of Theophany**. Make an appointment with Fr Jacob to have your home blessed. Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex.

A **Choir master class** will be held next Sunday, January 22 from 2-5pm, with dinner after in the parish hall. All current and aspiring choir members are encouraged to attend!

Stewardship envelopes for 2023 are now available. If you want to become a steward but do not have a box, please tell Mike Gruszyk, our treasurer, and he will get you one.

Mark your calendars:

Jan 16: Bible Study @ 7pm

Jan 17: Divine Liturgy for St. Anthony the Great at St. Elizabeth's Orthodox Church in Chesterton @ 10am
Parish Council @ 7pm

Jan 22: Choir Master Class @ 2pm with dinner after

Jan 26: Women's Book Group @ 6pm

Jan 27: Blood Drive 12 – 6pm

Jan 29: Festal Vespers for the Feast of the Three Hierarchs @ 1pm

Jan 30: Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Three Hierarchs @ 10am

Feb 1: Festal Vespers for the Meeting of the Lord @ 6pm

Feb 2: Divine Liturgy for the Meeting of the Lord @ 10am

Feb 8: Guys' Night Out @ 6pm (location TBD)

Feb 12: Annual Parish Meeting & potluck lunch after Divine Liturgy

Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$6,235

Having Your House Blessed

The homes of Orthodox Christians are blessed with the holy water of Theophany each year. The Church teaches us to sanctify everything: dwellings, places of work, all our pursuits, and the fruits of our labor. The home blessing at Theophany represents a renewal of our lives in Christ. Washed in the baptismal waters, our homes become temples of the Holy Spirit for the fulfillment of the will of our Heavenly Father. Make an appointment with the priest to come to your house.

The priest will bring holy water and a sprinkling brush. The family supplies a bowl, a candle, and an icon (any icon of Christ will do). The family may also make a list of living and departed family, who will be remembered during the service. The bowl and icon should be placed on a clean table with a cloth on it. Lights

throughout the house should be turned on, floors should be cleared for walking throughout the house, and radios and televisions should be turned off. All who reside in the household should make every effort to be present for the blessing.

The priest begins the service with the Trisagion prayers (all are welcome to pray along) and a short prayer of blessing. After this, a member of the family takes the candle and leads the priest and everyone else in procession through the home. As they go, the priest sprinkles holy water and all sing continuously the Troparion of Theophany ("When You, O Lord, were baptized..."). After the entire home is blessed, the procession returns again to the table and icon, and a short litany is said for the welfare of the family (here the listed names will be mentioned).

Sometimes the family wants to give the priest a little something to eat; depending on the time the priest has, he may stay and visit. It is NEVER expected that the family will give him money. The scripture tells us "Freely you have received, freely give". The priest comes to the home because he wants God's blessing to be upon it and to know those in his flock better and to be available to them.

Glory to God for
all things!