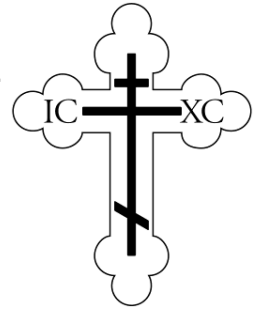
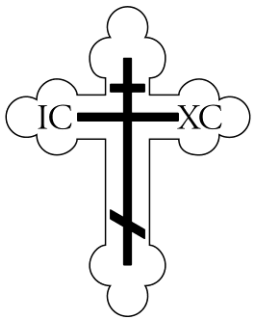


Protection of the Virgin Mary

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.

March 19, 2023

3rd Sunday of Great Lent:

Veneration of the Lifegiving Cross

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

On the Third Sunday of Great and Holy Lent, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Not only does the Sunday of the Holy Cross prepare us for commemoration of the Crucifixion, but it also reminds us that the whole of Lent is a period when we are crucified with Christ.

As we have “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Galatians 5:24), and will have mortified ourselves during these forty days of the Fast, the precious and life-giving Cross is now placed before us to refresh our souls and encourage us who may be

filled with a sense of bitterness, resentment, and depression. The Cross reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and by presenting to us His example, it encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice, being refreshed, assured, and comforted. In other words, we must experience what the Lord experienced during His Passion - being humiliated in a shameful manner. The Cross teaches us that through pain and suffering we shall see the fulfillment of our hopes: the heavenly inheritance and eternal glory.

As they who walk on a long and hard way and are bowed down by fatigue find great relief and strengthening under the cool shade of a leafy tree, so do we find comfort, refreshment, and rejuvenation under the Life-giving Cross, which our Fathers "planted" on this Sunday. Thus, we are fortified and enabled to continue our Lenten journey with a light step, rested and encouraged.

Or, as before the arrival of the king, his royal standards, trophies, and emblems of victory come in procession and then the king himself appears in a triumphant parade, jubilant and rejoicing in his victory and filling those under him with joy, so does the Feast of the Cross precede the coming of our King, Jesus Christ. It warns us that He is about to proclaim His victory over death and appear to us in the glory of the Resurrection. His Life-Giving Cross is His royal scepter, and by venerating it we are filled with joy, rendering Him glory. Therefore, we become ready to welcome our King, who shall manifestly triumph over the powers of darkness.

This feast has been placed in the middle of Great Lent for another reason. The Fast can be likened to the spring of Marah whose waters the children of Israel encountered in the wilderness. This water was undrinkable due to its bitterness but became sweet when the Holy Prophet Moses dipped the wood into its depth. Likewise, the wood of the Cross sweetens the days of the Fast, which are bitter and often grievous because of our tears. Yet Christ comforts us during our course through the desert of the Fast, guiding and leading us by His hand to the spiritual Jerusalem on high by the power of His Resurrection.

Moreover, as the Holy Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is placed in the middle of the Fast, as the ancient tree of life was placed in the middle of the garden of Eden. By this, our Holy Fathers wished to remind us of Adam's gluttony as well as the fact that through this Tree has condemnation been abolished. Therefore, if we bind ourselves to the Holy Cross, we shall never encounter death but shall inherit life eternal.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 7 – Resurrectional Troparion

By Your Cross You destroyed death.

To the thief You opened Paradise.

For the Myrrhbearers You changed weeping into joy.

And You commanded Your disciples, O Christ God,

to proclaim that You are risen,//

granting the world great mercy.

Tone 1 – Troparion of the Cross

O Lord, save Your people,

and bless Your inheritance!

Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians

over their adversaries;

and by virtue of Your Cross,//

preserve Your habitation!

Tone 7 – Kontakion of the Cross

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden;

it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross.

The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished;

for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell://

“Enter again into Paradise!”

Instead of the Trisagion:

Before Your Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Your holy Resurrection we glorify! (*3x with prostrations*)

Glory... Now and ever... And Your holy Resurrection we glorify!

Before Your Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Your holy Resurrection we glorify! (*prostration*)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Tone 6 – Prokeimenon of the Cross (Psalm 27)

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

Epistle: Hebrews 4.14 – 5.6

Brethren: Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses; He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.”

As He also says in another place: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

Gospel: Mark 8.34 – 9.1

When Jesus had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

New. Dep. Lucille Hojnacki
Anita Favretto
David May
Ratka Traycoff

Ev.Mem. Andrew Borisenko ('47)
Ksenia Carnehie ('56)
Moisey Paribew ('70)
Vernon Orr (2021)
Hugh Bertram (2022)

Health & Salv.

Archpr. Peter
Mat. Cynthia
Archpr. John
Pr. Patrick
Mat. Anne
Kevin
Jon
Tanya
Jovan
Tom
Jennifer
Rollie
Joseph
Nadia
Joseph
Linda
Claudia
Carol
Snezana
Ryan
Nathan
Kara
Djuro
Paula
Christopher
Karen
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
Dara
Jaroslava
Andrew
Andrew
Vadim
Hanna
Viktor
Alex
Carl
Laura
Chrisan
Gerald
Olga
Janie
Sharon
Tanya
Renee
Michael
Chris
Nina
Carissa
Ashton
Doris
Laura
Duane
Elizabeth

Karen
Alexa
Miriana
Olga
Richard
Klaudia
Nicodemus
Nada
Mark
Catherine
Aaron
Dale
Ebony
Peggy
Sue
Victoria
Janet
Tom
Diane
Wilma
Jerry
Penelope
Cora
Brandi
Joyce
Paul
Galina
Helen
Kathleen
Rachel
Martha
Stephanie
Thomas
Diane
Michael
Linda
Stephanie
Rdr. Paul
Nathan
Cindy

*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.

Communion Hymn for the Cross (Psalm 4)

The light of Your countenance has shone on us, O Lord!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

After venerating the Cross, we will serve the **1-year memorial for Hugh Bertram** and the **2-year memorial for Vernon Orr**.

The **O-Club will meet** today during coffee hour.

Order forms for the **Pascha Bake Sale** are available in the Narthex. Orders are due Wednesday, March 29. Pick up will be Sunday, April 2. Donations of flour, sugar, butter, eggs or walnuts are welcome!

The **Chicago Deanery Lenten Vespers** return at 6pm on Sundays:

Tonight at St. Nicholas Church in Joliet, IL

March 26 at St. George Cathedral in Chicago, IL

April 2 at St. Elizabeth's Church in Chesterton, IN

April 9 at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Chicago, IL

During Great Lent, Orthodox Christians **make more time for prayer, deny themselves rich and satisfying foods** (meat, dairy, fish), and find opportunities to **help those in need** (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.

Once again this Lent, PTVM will deliver **Easter dinner baskets to the Ross Township food pantry** for local families in need. This year we have increased our goal to ***75 ham dinners***, which the trustee's office tells us is the number of families currently frequenting the pantry. **There is a posterboard in the narthex with more details**, where you can sign up to bring the various shelf-stable foods that are needed. We will take a **special collection today** and next week (if necessary) to cover the cost of the hams, which we will purchase in bulk during Western Holy Week.

Mark your calendars:

Mar 21: Parish Council @ 7pm

Mar 22: Presanctified Liturgy @ 6pm; Lenten potluck after

**Mar 24: Presanctified Liturgy (Vespers of Annunciation) @ 10am
Blood Drive 12pm-5pm**

Mar 25: Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Annunciation @ 10am

Mar 30: Canon of St. Andrew & Life of St. Mary of Egypt @ 10am

Apr 1: Church Spring Cleaning @ 9am; lunch after

Apr 2: Bake Sale pick-up after Divine Liturgy

Apr 8: Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday @ 10am, followed by a pancake breakfast and preparing Palms and Pussywillows.

Apr 21: O-Club Trivia Night for women's shelter @ 6pm

Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$4,099

Statement on the Kiev Caves Lavra of His Eminence, our Archbishop Daniel

Faithful Orthodox Christians have now come to the third week of Great and Holy Lent. During this solemn period, each Christian examines their conscience and heart before Almighty God, falling down before Him in repentance. It is also during this time that we are called to heighten our love and attention to the needs of our neighbor. And, as our Lord has taught us, anyone in need is our neighbor. I have learned with great sadness that the monastics of the brotherhood of the Holy Dormition-Kiev Caves Lavra are being removed from their monastery as a result of political unrest in

Ukraine. The Kiev Caves Lavra is the cradle of monasticism and spirituality of Kievan Rus and has been for over one thousand years. These very monks that are being removed are the stewards of this sacred place who helped restore the monastery in 1988, after they were allowed to return and restore monastic life and, finding the Lavra ravaged by war and suffering neglect at the hands of the Soviet government.

I want to reaffirm my continuing support and prayers, along with the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest, for His Beatitude Metropolitan Onuphry of Kiev and All Ukraine, His Eminence Metropolitan Pavel of Vyshgorod, the abbot of the holy monastery, and all of the monastics and faithful who dwell there.

I call upon the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest to increase their prayer and fasting during this time, entreating the Lord to have mercy on the brotherhood of the Lavra and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

It is before the most Holy Gifts that the celebrant recites the prayers of St. Basil the Great asking the Lord to remember those who serve in governments and all civil authorities. We continue this prayer and ask the Lord to inspire the elected leaders of Ukraine and of all nations, “grant them a secure and lasting peace; speak good things into their hearts concerning thy Church and all Thy people, that we, in their tranquility, may lead a calm and peaceful life in all godliness and sanctity.”

In Christ,

†DANIEL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

Glory to God for all things!