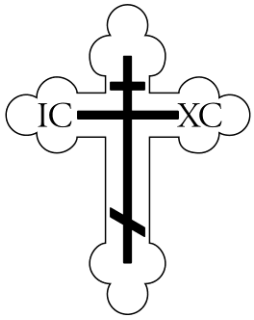


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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.

February 25, 2024

Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee

St Tarasios of Constantinople

Saint Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople was of illustrious lineage. He was born and raised in Constantinople, where he received a fine education. He was rapidly promoted at the court of the emperor Constantine VI Porphyrogenitos (780-797) and Constantine's mother, the holy Empress Irene, and the saint attained the rank of senator.

During these times the Church was agitated by the turmoil of Iconoclasm. The holy Patriarch Paul, although he had formerly

supported Iconoclasm, later repented and resigned his office. He withdrew to a monastery, where he took the schema. When the holy Empress Irene and her son the emperor came to him, St Paul told them that the worthiest successor to him would be St Tarasius (who at this time was still a layman). Tarasius refused for a long time, not considering himself worthy of such high office, but he then gave in to the common accord on the condition that an Ecumenical Council be convened to address the Iconoclast heresy.

Proceeding through all the clerical ranks in a short while, St Tarasius was elevated to the patriarchal throne in the year 784. In the year 787 the Seventh Ecumenical Council was convened in the city of Nicaea, with Patriarch Tarasius presiding and 367 bishops attending. The veneration of holy icons was confirmed at the council. Those bishops who repented of their iconoclasm were again received by the Church.

St Tarasius wisely governed the Church for twenty-two years. He led a strict ascetic life. He spent all his money on God-pleasing ends, feeding and giving comfort to the aged, to the impoverished, to widows and orphans, and on Holy Pascha he set out a meal for them, and he served them himself.

The holy Patriarch fearlessly denounced the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitos when he slandered his spouse, the empress Maria, the granddaughter of St Philaretos the Merciful, so that he could send Maria to a monastery, thus freeing him to marry his own kinswoman. St Tarasius resolutely refused to dissolve the marriage of the emperor, for which the saint fell into disgrace. Soon, however, Constantine was deposed by his own mother, the Empress Irene.

St Tarasius died in the year 806. Mourned by the Church, the saint was buried in a monastery he built on the Bosphorus. Many miracles took place at his tomb.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 5 – Resurrectional Troparion

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

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 5 – Resurrectional Kontakion

You descended into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
You have delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man,//
and we cry to You: “O Lord, save us!”

Tone 4 – Kontakion for the Publican and the Pharisee

Let us flee from the pride of the Pharisee!
Let us learn humility from the Publican's tears!
Let us cry to our Savior:
“Have mercy on us,//
O only merciful One!”

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 5 – Resurrectional Prokeimenon (Psalm 11)

You, O Lord, shall protect us
and preserve us from this generation forever!

Epistle: 2 Timothy 3.10-15

My son: You have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra – what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Gospel: Luke 18.10-14

Jesus spoke this parable: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men – extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’
“And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’
“I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Paul Pangrace	Maria Sergiena ('60)	
Roger Davidson	Traico Mitreff ('63)	
Ev.Mem. John Shokolida ('44)	Nicholas Voris ('72)	
Kiprian Levchuk ('51)	Spiro Turpa ('82)	
Alexy Boyer ('53)	Leon Kiriluk (2015)	
Health & Salv.	Pr. Gregory	Mat. Catherine
Archpr. Peter	Mat. Beverly	Kevin
Mat. Cynthia	Pr. Patrick	Jon
Hierom. John	Mat. Anne	Tanya

Jovan	Sharon	Betty
Rollie	Tanya	William
Claudia	Renee	Grace
Paul	Ashton	Janet
Carol	Michael	Sarah
Snezana	Chris	Angela
Ryan	Nina	Lauren
Nathan	Carissa	Jack
Kara	Duane	Melissa
Djuro	Elizabeth	Carolynn
Paula	Olga	Nicholas
Christopher	Klaudia	Natalie
Karen	Tom	Lissa
Alexandra	Diane	Elizabeth
Jonathan	Brandi	William
Christine	Joyce	Linda
Zoey	Galina	Margaret
Dominic	Thomas	Linda
Declan	Diane	Jennifer
Hudson	Stephanie	Diane
Ronald	Cindy	Chris
Mary Ann	Nathaniel	Erin
Dara	Tamara	Jude
Jaroslava	Dennis	Miriam
Andrew	Maria	Ephraim
Andrew	Elizabeth	Irina
Vadim	Jonah	Cyan
Hanna	Jamie	Alla
Viktor	Kyleigh	Gregory
Gerald	Lauren	N.Ill. Anna
Christine	Kyle	Ronald
Olga	Mark	
Janie	Christopher	

To add a name to our parish prayer list, please give it to Fr Jacob

Special Petition at the Augmented Litany:

We pray, O Lord our God, for all those who suffer from acts of war, especially the victims in Ukraine, Israel, and Palestine. 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Ladies Sodality will be holding a Soup Sale today during coffee hour. To-Go quarts of soup may be purchased for \$7 for vegetarian soups and \$8 for meat soups, or 3 quarts for \$20. Cash or Check will be accepted. Lots of great choices will be available and the proceeds will help sodality to fund specific needs within the parish as they arise. Thank you in advance for your support!

O-Club will meet in the library during coffee hour today.

For **Bible Study tomorrow**, read **Romans 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. 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.

Here is how to prepare for your house blessing: All who reside in the household should make every effort to be present for the blessing. We gather in the dining room or home altar. On your dining room table or family icon corner, set 1) A lit candle, 2) An icon of Christ, and 3) A small bowl. You may also prepare a list of the names of family members living and departed you wish to pray for. Also please remember to turn off any televisions or other noisy electronics. When the priest arrives everyone in the house should gather around the table/family altar and join in prayer and singing. If there are children, they usually carry the icon and a candle to lead the priest from room to room. If not, any member of the household will lead the priest. After the blessing, we gather back around the icon to commemorate family names and for the dismissal.

Mark your calendars:

Feb 26: Bible Study @ 7pm

Feb 27: Divine Liturgy for St. Raphael of Brooklyn at St. Elizabeth's Church in Chesterton @ 9am

Mar 1: Family Night @ 6pm (doors open at 5pm)

Mar 2: PTVM serves Feed the Flock at First Presbyterian Church kitchen in Merrillville @ 11am

Women's Group Lunch at Four Corners Winery @ 11am

Mar 7: Men's Reading Group @ 6:30pm

Mar 17: Forgiveness Vespers @ 1pm after coffee hour

Mar 18: Clean Monday (start of Great Lent)

Mar 18 – 21: Great Canon of St Andrew in four parts, 6pm nightly

Mar 20: Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 10am; Lenten potluck

Mar 22: Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 10am; Lenten potluck

Mar 24: Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers @ 5pm, dinner after






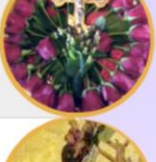





Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$4,500

Reflection on the commemoration of the First and Second Finding of the Head of the Forerunner (Feb 24) by His Eminence, our Metropolitan Tikhon

Today's feast may seem quaint, confusing, or even off-putting, but in the Middle Ages, the commemoration of the finding of the Forerunner's head was a major celebration. There is a lesson for us here. The Forerunner's head was so precious and holy that it merited, not one, but two feast days (the Third Finding of the Head is celebrated on May 25). The spiritual life is an incarnate life; the saints become saints in the flesh, and even the flesh is sanctified. The holier the life, the holier the flesh—this is why we dedicate two days of the year to celebrating the decapitated head of the “greatest born of woman.” In our attempt to lead a spiritual life, a faithful life in Christ, are we making a genuine effort to sanctify our flesh unto God? Or do we let the flesh follow after its own base appetites? Through the prayers of the Forerunner, may we bridle the passions of the flesh and, by ascetic effort, fashion our bodies into more fitting temples of the Holy Trinity.

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2024

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS		THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 25th		<i>TRIDION WEEKS</i> Publican and the Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week MARCH 3rd		The Prodigal Son Returns! Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare MARCH 10th FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY		The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare MARCH 17th FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY		Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent MARCH 24th		<i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 31st		ST GREGORY PALAMAS Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent APRIL 7th		VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4th Sunday of Lent APRIL 14th		ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent APRIL 21st		ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! APRIL 28th GREAT WEEK BEGINS		<i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY MAY 3rd		GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! MAY 5th NO FASTING!		<i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

Glory to God for all things!