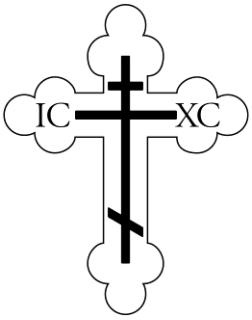
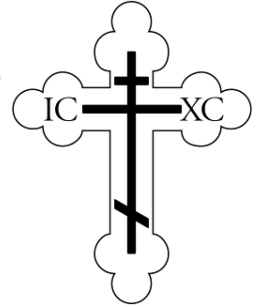


# Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago  
and the Midwest  
Orthodox Church  
in America



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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 4, 2024

### Afterfeast of the

## Meeting of the Lord

## St Isidore of Pelusium

**By Archbishop Dimitri of Dallas, of blessed memory:**

On February 2nd the Church celebrates the great feast of The Meeting of our Lord in the Temple. The Gospel lesson for that day relates how the mother of Jesus brought Him to the temple, as was the custom and requirement under the God-given Law of Moses, of Israel. When the righteous Simeon, who received Christ in his arms at the temple, saw the child, he knew immediately that this was the Redeemer promised by all of Israel's prophecies, for the elder was inspired by the Holy Spirit (Luke 2:26-27). Being inspired, he

himself uttered prophetic words which form the hymn sung or chanted at the end of every Vespers service: *“Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of Your people, a light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel”* (Luke 2:29-32).

This particular feast is part of the great celebration that began forty days prior, with the Nativity of Christ (Dec 25). Eight days later (Jan 1) we remembered the Circumcision of Christ and then His Baptism (Jan 6). The commemoration of these events in our Lord’s earthly life basically form one feast, the feast of the Incarnation of God the Word.

God literally entered the world, into time and history. He was physically present in the midst of His people, His creatures whom He loves. Our Lord took on human nature in order to reconcile unto Himself, man who had strayed far from the Source of his life.

In taking on the “form of a servant” God, at the same time, in the Person of Christ, fulfilled every requirement of the Law that He Himself had given to His people through Moses. He demonstrated, thereby, that everything that had happened in Israel’s history could not be described merely as a succession of unrelated events. Rather this was a history with a definite goal: the salvation of mankind. He identified Himself as the Director of that history and fulfilled its expectation.

When the righteous Simeon took the child into His arms and declared that this indeed was Salvation Incarnate, the “Light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of Israel,” a new era began; the era of God’s presence among His children.

To this day, all of the Church’s celebrations, no matter what the event commemorated may be, whether in the life of Christ, of the Theotokos, or of the saints, all are celebrations of Christ and the establishment on earth of the Kingdom of His presence. He initiated this Kingdom and promised its ultimate realization. And now, just as the Old Israel had awaited the beginning of God’s Kingdom, the New Israel (the Church) awaits the Second and Glorious Coming of Christ and the fullness of His Kingdom, revealed.

Although all of our celebrations are intimately rooted in the knowledge that we have been called for complete communion with Christ and to live in function of His Kingdom to which we already belong, we still live in a world that has for the most part rejected what Christ gave it, that is, authentic life “in abundance,” life with

real purpose and meaning. We Christians, despite having accepted what God's intervention in human affairs gave us, slip repeatedly and fall into the great temptation to convert the things of this world into gods. We are constantly attracted by ways of seeking happiness and fulfillment that exclude God. This, of course, always proves to be vain and futile. So, our lives vacillate, back and forth, between the assurance of salvation and indifference, between moments of real joy because we know that God is with us, and moments of boredom because we cannot give ourselves totally over to Him.

Every Christian celebration reaches its climax in the Divine Liturgy for the feast. In this sacred work, when God's people assemble in His name, we actually become participants in the Heavenly Kingdom to come. We are as literally present with Christ in His future Kingdom as the Apostles were with Him at the Last Supper. So, the Kingdom is initiated among us and we enjoy it before our time, by anticipation. This is what every Eucharist is; this is what our feasts and celebrations are all about, and that is why the Eucharist is the very center of all of them.

I will emphasize again, however, that although what we have said is true, we continually orient our lives towards everyday pursuits, often living as though we had never experienced this divine reality. That is why repentance and penitential seasons are in order. That is why in approximately one month we will enter the Great Fast or Lent during which time we are exhorted to repent of our sins.

What is important for us Christians is that we have really "seen the True Light, received the Heavenly Spirit, found the true faith" in this experience of the Kingdom of God. The question we must all ask ourselves sincerely, however, is "what are we like when we return into this world after this Heavenly experience?"

To Christ Who willed to be held in the arms of the righteous Simeon for our salvation be glory, honor and worship, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## 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 1 – Troparion of the Meeting of the Lord**

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!

From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, ^Christ our God,  
enlightening those who sat in darkness.

Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder,

you accepted in your arms the ^Redeemer of our souls, //

Who grants us the Resurrection!

### **Tone 8 – Troparion for St Isidore**

The image of God was truly preserved in you, O Father,

for you took up the Cross and followed Christ.

By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh for it passes away;

but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal. //

Therefore, your spirit, venerable Isidore, rejoices with the angels.

### **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 4 – Kontakion for St. Isidore**

Finding you to be another morning star, O glorious one,

the Church is illumined by the brilliance of your words. //

She cries out to you: “Rejoice, all-blessed and divinely-wise Isidore!”

### **Tone 1 – Kontakion of the Meeting of the Lord**

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 – Resurrectional Prokeimenon (Psalm 117)**

The Lord is my strength and my song;

He has become my salvation!

### **Tone 3 – Song of the Theotokos (Luke 1)**

My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!

## **Epistle: Colossians 3.12-16**

Brethren: As the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

## **Gospel: Matthew 25.14-30**

The Lord spoke this parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them and made another five talents. And likewise, he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money.

“After a long time, the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So, he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

“He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’

But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed. So, you ought to have deposited my

money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore, take the talent from him and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

<b>N.Dep.</b> Roger Davidson	Theodore Storozhev (’16)
Archpr. Moses Berry	Nicholas Pappas (’46)
Nadia Konowalik	Vangel Kristoff (’47)
Katherine Harbison	Theodore Sayka, Jr. (’54)
<b>Ev.Mem.</b> Mile Gvozdanovich (’13)	Vinka Haraminac (’59)
Dusan Klyich (’13)	John Denesuk (’69)

<b>Health &amp; Salv.</b>	Jonathan	Carissa
Archpr. Peter	Christine	Duane
Mat. Cynthia	Zoey	Elizabeth
Hierom. John	Dominic	Olga
Pr. Gregory	Declan	Klaudia
Mat. Beverly	Hudson	Tom
Pr. Patrick	Ronald	Diane
Mat. Anne	Mary Ann	Brandi
Mat. Catherine	Dara	Joyce
Kevin	Jaroslava	Galina
Jon	Andrew	Thomas
Tanya	Andrew	Diane
Jovan	Vadim	Stephanie
Rollie	Hanna	Cindy
Claudia	Viktor	Nathaniel
Paul	Gerald	Tamara
Carol	Christine	Dennis
Snezana	Olga	Maria
Ryan	Janie	Elizabeth
Nathan	Sharon	Jonah
Kara	Tanya	Jamie
Djuro	Renee	Kyleigh
Paula	Ashton	Lauren
Christopher	Michael	Kyle
Karen	Chris	Mark
Alexandra	Nina	Christopher

Betty	Carolynn	Jennifer
William	Nicholas	Diane
Grace	Natalie	Chris
Janet	Lissa	Erin
Sarah	Elizabeth	Jude
Angela	William	Miriam
Lauren	Linda	Ephraim
Jack	Margaret	
Melissa	Linda	

*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.

### Theotokion of the Feast (instead of “It is Truly Meet...”):

O Virgin Theotokos, hope of all Christians,  
 protect, preserve, and save those who hope in you!

In the shadow and letter of the Law,  
 let us the faithful discern a figure:  
 every male child that opens the womb is holy to God.  
 Therefore, we magnify the firstborn Word of a Father Who has no  
 beginning, //  
 the Son firstborn of a Mother who had not known man.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

After venerating the cross, we will serve the **40-day memorial for Nadia Konowalik and Katherine Harbison.**

**2023 Contribution Statements** are available in the Narthex.

For **Bible Study tomorrow**, read Nehemiah 10-13.

On Saturday, February 10, our neighbors across the street **St. Andrew Anglican Church** are hosting Prof. Roslie Levinson, J.D., who will speak about **her parents’ experience surviving the Holocaust.** Her talk will be at 11am with refreshments to follow.



Next Sunday, we will serve the **Baptismal Liturgy for Bella Parrish.**

The **2024 annual meeting will be held next Sunday, February 11** after a potluck lunch. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex to please indicate what you plan to bring for sharing. The agenda and reports are available on the parish website:

[www.ptvm.com/annual-reports](http://www.ptvm.com/annual-reports). Printed report packets are available in the Narthex.

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 all gather back around the icon for the dismissal.

### **Mark your calendars:**

Feb 5: **Bible Study @ 7pm**

Feb 6: **Men's Breakfast Meetup** at Maxim's @ 7:15am

Feb 10: **Holocaust Talk at St. Andrew's @ 11am**

Feb 11: **Annual Parish Meeting** after Divine Liturgy

**Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$2,106**

# **Glory to God for all things!**