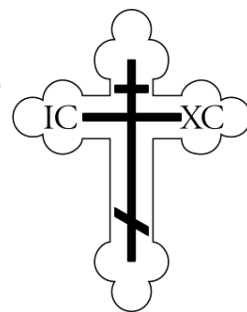
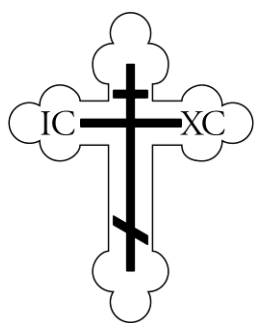


Protection of the Virgin Mary

Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago
and the Midwest
Orthodox Church
in America



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Merrillville, IN
(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
hall after Divine
Liturgy for coffee hour.

February 16, 2025

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son is the second Sunday of a three-week period prior to the commencement of Great Lent. On the previous Sunday, the services of the Church began to include hymns from the Triodion, a liturgical book that contains the services from the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the tenth before Pascha (Easter), through Great and Holy Saturday. As with the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the theme of this Sunday is repentance, and the focus on the parable of the Prodigal Son leads Orthodox Christians to contemplate the necessity of repentance in our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

The parable of the Prodigal Son forms an exact icon of repentance at its different stages. Sin is exile, enslavement to strangers, hunger. Repentance is the return from exile to our true home; it is to receive back our inheritance and freedom in the Father's house. But repentance implies action: "I will rise up and go..." (v. 18). To repent is not just to feel dissatisfied, but to make a decision and to act upon it.

Starting tomorrow, the weekday readings summarize the events of Holy Week. On Monday we read Saint Mark's account of the Entry into Jerusalem. On Tuesday we read how Judas went to the chief priests and offered to betray the Lord. On the night before His death Christ tells His disciples that one of them will betray Him. He also predicts that they will desert Him, and that Peter will deny Him three times. On Wednesday the Gospel describes how Judas betrayed the Savior with a kiss. Thursday's Gospel tells how Jesus was questioned by Pilate. On Friday we read the narrative of Christ's crucifixion and death.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 1 – Resurrectional Troparion

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!

You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, 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 3 – Kontakion of the Prodigal Son

I have recklessly forgotten Your glory, O Father;

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

Therefore I cry to You like the Prodigal:

"I have sinned before You, O compassionate Father; //

receive me 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 1 – Resurrectional Prokeimenon (Psalm 32)

Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us /as we have set our hope on You!

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: “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

N.Dep. Tiana West

Valentina Metulynsky

Archbp. Anastasios of Albania

Jon Bertram

Galina Meuch

Kathleen Long

Ev.Mem. Vasili Milovsky ('19)

Anna Stacevich ('27)

Antony Pommers ('60)

Murtza Hassan ('69)

John Gruszyk ('99)

Alice Erbesti (2018)

Anna Vahary (2019)

David May (2023)

Health & Salv.	Ashton	Alla
Archpr. Peter	Michael	Elizabeth
Mat. Cynthia	Chris	Samuel
Hierom. John	Nina	Joseph
Archpr. Jonathan	Carissa	Dwight
Mat. Vera	Carol	Renee
Pr. Patrick	Snezana	Dominik
Pr. Gregory	Ryan	Monica
Mat. Beverly	Nathan	Charles
Mat. Anne	Kara	Kimberly
Nun Theodora	Karen	Abigail
Brendan	Alisa	Charles
Rollie	Michael	Rosemary
Claudia	Moses	Nicholas
Mary Ann	Helena	Natalie
Raymond	James	Jovan
Edward	Elijah	Michael
Charlotte	Lydia	Abram
Joseph	Nina	Zoë
Janice	George	Brenda
Klaudia	Linda	Lisa
Maja	Kimberly	Mazzy
Raymond	Steven	John
Anne	Jamie	Terry
Desiree	Kyleigh	Angie
Robb	Lauren	Irina
Gerald	Kyle	Elizabeth
Janet	Linda	Vitaliy
Gerald	Denise	Maria
Rebecca	John	Viktoria
Christopher	Cindy	Rebecca
Brianna	Ron	Pauline
Logan	Matthew	Meagan
Olga	John	Minnie
Janie	Erin	Richard
Sharon	Aaron	Rosie
Tanya	Marcietta	Sarah
Renee	Maria	

To add the name of a loved one recently departed or on the anniversary of their repose, or someone living and in particular need of prayer, please speak 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 the victims in Ukraine, Russia, 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, hearken and have mercy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today's Coffee Hour has been sponsored to highlight **CrossRoad Summer Institute**: a ten-day academic summer institute that prepares high school juniors and seniors to make big life decisions and invites them to connect with the Orthodox Christian theological and spiritual tradition in a deep and meaningful way. CrossRoad offers a space for young people to form authentic and lifelong friendships, ask hard questions, and explore their calling as an Orthodox Christian in the 21st century. Talk to Erin Gray, an alumna of the program, for more information.

For **Bible Study tomorrow**, read Hebrews 5-9.

The annual Parish Meeting has been postponed to February 23. Annual reports are available in the narthex. The meeting will take place after the **Meatfare potluck**. All parish stewards should bring something to share and plan to stay, so that we can conduct this important business.

The text for the next **Men's Reading group meeting on February 20** is now available in the bookstore.

To begin Great Lent, the O-Club has organized a new charitable drive to support the **Women's Care Center (a Crisis Pregnancy Center) in Hammond**. It is designed to work like an angel tree: Take a note from the wall in the narthex, which will list a needed baby-care item, purchase the item, and deposit it in the pack & play.

Every year, **Orthodox Christian homes are blessed with the new holy water of Theophany**. A schedule has been prepared with Fr Jacob's availability through February, which was emailed to the parish and can be viewed in the Narthex. Days have been designated for certain areas/towns. This week, he will be in Lake County on Wednesday and Friday.

Mark your calendars:

Feb 17: Bible Study @ 7pm

**Feb 18: Divine Liturgy @ 8:30am
Parish Council meeting @ 7pm**

Feb 20: Men's Reading Group @ 6:45pm

**Feb 22: Divine Liturgy and banquet at Holy Trinity Cathedral for
the 100th anniversary of the repose of St Tikhon @ 9:30am**

Feb 23: Meatfare Potluck & Annual Meeting after Divine Liturgy

Mar 2: Forgiveness Vespers after coffee hour

**Mar 3: Clean Monday: Beginning of Great Lent
Great Canon of St Andrew, part 1 @ 7pm**

Mar 4: Great Canon of St Andrew, part 2 @ 7pm

**Mar 5: Presanctified Liturgy @ 10am
Great Canon of St Andrew, part 3 @ 7pm**

Mar 6: Great Canon of St Andrew, part 4 @ 7pm

Mar 7: Presanctified Liturgy @ 10am








Mar 15: Pysanki making: Decorated Pascha Eggs (time TBD)

Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$1,788

Glory to God for all things!

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2025

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 9th	 <i>TRIODION 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 FEBRUARY 16th	 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 FEBRUARY 23rd 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 2nd 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 9th	 <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 16th	 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 MARCH 23rd	 VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHAI</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 MARCH 30th	 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 6th	 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 13th 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 APRIL 18th	 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! APRIL 20th NO FASTING!	 <i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHAI (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!