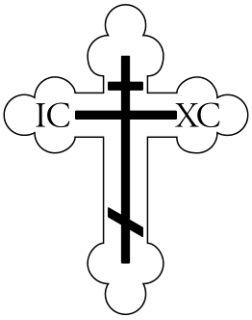
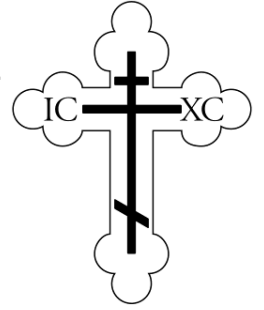


# Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago  
and the Midwest  
Orthodox Church  
in America



8600 Grand Blvd.  
Merrillville, IN  
(219)947-4748  
[www.ptvm.com](http://www.ptvm.com)

Rev. Dr. Jacob Van Sickle  
(219)384-6826 • [frjacobvansickle@gmail.com](mailto: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.

## July 20, 2025

# The Holy Prophet Elijah

The Holy Prophet Elijah is one of the greatest of the prophets and the first dedicated to virginity in the Old Testament. He was born in Tishba of Gilead into the Levite tribe 900 years before the Incarnation of the Word of God. The name Elijah (meaning “the Lord’s strength”) given to the infant defined his whole life. From the years of his youth, he dedicated himself to the One God, settled in the wilderness and spent his whole life in strict fasting, meditation and prayer. Called to prophetic service, which put him in conflict with the Israelite king Ahab, the prophet became a fiery zealot of true faith and piety.

The life of the holy Prophet Elijah is recorded in the Old Testament books 3 and 4 Kingdoms. At the time of the Transfiguration, the Prophet Elijah conversed with the Savior upon Mount Tabor.

Orthodox Christians of all times, and in all places, have venerated the Prophet Elijah for centuries. The first church in Russia, built at Kiev under Prince Igor, was named for the Prophet Elijah. After her Baptism Saint Olga (July 11) built a temple of the holy Prophet Elijah in her native region, at the village of Vibuta.

## 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 – Troparion of the Prophet Elijah**

An angel in the flesh and the cornerstone of the Prophets,  
the second forerunner of the coming of Christ,  
glorious Elijah sent grace from on high to Elisha,  
to dispel diseases and to cleanse lepers.//  
Therefore, he pours forth healings on those who honor him.

### **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 2 – Kontakion of the Prophet Elijah**

O Prophet Elijah of great renown,  
seer of the mighty works of God,  
by your command you held back the rain.//  
Pray for us to the only Lover of man!

### **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.

### **Tone 4 – Prokeimenon for the Prophet Elijah (Psalm 109)**

You are a priest forever / after the order of Melchizedek!

### **Epistle: Romans 12.6-14 (Sunday)**

Brethren: Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

### **James 5.10-20 (Prophet Elijah)**

My brethren, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed, we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord – that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No,” lest you fall into judgment.

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for

the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Confess your trespasses to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

### **Gospel: Matthew 9.1-8 (Sunday)**

At that time, Jesus got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."

And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!"

But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

### **Luke 4.22-30 (Prophet Elijah)**

At that time, all bore witness to Jesus and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"

He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'"

Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to

none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.”

So, all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath and rose up and thrust Him out of the city, and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Vernon Cayten	Sophia Gruber (1912)
John Dorrall	Konstantin Kokondov (1916)
Ev. Mem. Jonah Sereduk (1931)	Anna Kononovich (1954)
John Stupar (1997)	Nicholas Koleff (2007)

Health & Salv.	Janie	Marcietta
Archpr. Peter	Sharon	Charles
Mat. Cynthia	Tanya	Rosemary
Hierom. John	Renee	Nicholas
Archpr. Jonathan	Ashton	Natalie
Mat. Vera	Michael	Jovan
Mat. Anne	Carol	Joseph
Valer	Snezana	Thomas
Nun Theodora	Ryan	Christine
Rollie	Nathan	Meagan
Claudia	Kara	Minnie
Mary Ann	Moses	Richard
Raymond	Helena	Rosie
Edward	James	Sarah
Charlotte	Elijah	Milton
Klaudia	Lydia	Andrew
Maja	Nina	Carol
Gerald	Jamie	Lidia
Janet	Kyleigh	Julie
Gerald	Lauren	Dorothy
Rebecca	Kyle	Ann
Christopher	Matthew	Michael
Brianna	John	Betty
Logan	Erin	James
Olga	Aaron	Jacob

Robert	Shaun	Marley
Courtney	Ryan	Miette
Sarah	Morgan	Jennifer
Ethan	James	Hunter
Rita	Michael	Tim
Carrie	Mary	
Cecilia	Kimberly	

*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 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, Russia, Israel, Palestine, and Iran. 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

After everyone has venerated the Cross, we will have the **annual blessing of vehicles** in honor of the Holy Prophet Elijah. Please proceed to the parking lot and open the doors of your vehicle for blessing with holy water.

For **Bible Study** this week, please read 1 John 3-5.

After Liturgy **next Sunday, July 27, is our annual summer picnic in honor of St Clement of Ochrid**. If anyone would like to help set up games or activities, please speak with Fr Jacob.

### Mark your calendars:

- July 21: **Bible Study @ 7pm**
- July 24: **Faith Enrichment @ 10am**
- July 25: **Red Cross Blood Drive 12-6pm**
- July 27: **St Clement Summer Picnic** after Divine Liturgy
- July 29: **Guy’s Night Out at Maxim’s @ 6pm**
- Aug 1: **Beginning of Dormition Fast** (until Aug 14)

**Last Week’s Gifts to the Lord:   \$5,082.69**

# Closing Remarks of His Beatitude, our Metropolitan Tikhon, at the 21<sup>st</sup> All-American Council

In the Gospel reading at the Akathist this morning, we heard how the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. Mountains have been a theme in my remarks during this 21st All-American Council, with mountains serving as an image of our spiritual ascent and descent. This ascent and descent have also been a way for us to reflect upon our present moment in the Orthodox Church in America.

In my initial reflections on what our present moment might mean, I was inspired by a liturgical image, the liturgical movement during the vigil for the feast of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross, when the bishop, standing in the center of his cathedral, lowers and elevates the Cross in the four cardinal directions to the singing of the 500-fold “Lord, have mercy.” Even more precisely, it seems to me that we find ourselves at the point where the bishop has lowered the Cross to its lowest point and is preparing to raise it up once more. In the familiar Lvovsky setting of the melody sung at this occasion, there is a point of pause, a certain hovering between the moment the bishop holds the Cross steady at the lowest point and is about to raise it up.

It seems to me that this point of hovering is a fitting expression of where we find ourselves as the Church today. In other words, we are at a moment of reflection, a moment when we recognize that, whether we are ascending or whether we are descending, we are always on the path of the Cross, the Cross is ever with us. Unlike the ups and downs of our daily life, unlike the back and forth of our polarized secular existence, our movements in the Church follow the path of the Cross. The Cross encompasses both the weight of our struggles and the glory of our victories. We find ourselves at a moment when we ought to reflect on this reality.

To be clear, this image of the downward and upward path of the Cross is not an image of the horizontal lows and highs of our past struggles. Rather, it is an image of our existence as Orthodox Christians and a reminder to us that the Cross is always at the center both of our struggles and our blessings.

Ascent and descent: this is our life as Christians. There are external ups and downs, but they are always internally grounded in Christ and rising towards him. And by remaining faithful to him (and to the Cross), we can navigate the storms and waves of this present life, according to the example the saints have given us.

The final image of our present moment was suggested to me as we prayed the Akathist this morning before the new icon of all saints of North America. Having glorified a new saint, the holy and righteous Olga of Kwethluk, Wonderworker, Matushka of All Alaska, we have added her to the company of the canonized saints, whom Christ has gathered for our benefit and for the blessing of the entire world. Some of us here may remember the days when there was only one saint, our first saint, the venerable Herman of Alaska. Now, we ask intercessions of 19 saints who have shone forth in North America. We do not, of course, depend on the quantitative aspect of this reality. Rather, it seems to me that our present icon is a fitting image of whence we have come and also whither we are going. We all know of the icons of all saints of the venerable and more ancient Orthodox Churches, whose numbers are even larger than ours. Even without the centuries of ascetical and martyric witness of which our sisters have the benefit, it seems to me that it is our calling and our mission, now that we have been gathered together by Christ, to heed the words that conclude the Gospel reading from this morning:

*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

Glory to God for  
all things!