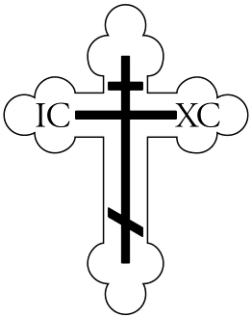


# Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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  
hall after Divine Liturgy  
for coffee hour.

## September 21, 2025

# Leavetaking of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross

The pagan Roman Emperors tried to obliterate the holy places where our Lord Jesus Christ suffered and rose from the dead, so that they would be forgotten. Emperor Hadrian (117-138) ordered that Golgotha and the Lord's Sepulcher be buried, and that a temple in honor of the pagan "goddess" Venus and a statue of Jupiter be placed there. Pagans gathered at this place and offered sacrifice to idols. Eventually after 300 years, by Divine Providence, the Christian holy places, the Sepulcher of the Lord, and the Life-giving Cross,

were discovered and opened for veneration. This took place under Emperor Constantine the Great (306-337).

In 313 Saint Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, by which Christianity was legalized and persecutions against Christians in the Western half of the Empire were stopped. Although Licinius had signed the Edict of Milan in order to oblige Constantine, he continued his cruel persecutions against Christians. Only after his conclusive defeat in 323 did the Edict of Milan extend also to the Eastern part of the Empire. The Holy Equal of the Apostles Emperor Constantine had seen the Sign of the Cross in the heavens. Written beneath were the words: "By this you shall conquer."

Ardently desiring to find the Cross upon which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, Saint Constantine sent his mother, the pious Empress Helen, to Jerusalem, providing her with a letter to Saint Makarios, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Saint Helen journeyed to the holy places connected with the earthly life of the Savior, building more than 80 churches, at Bethlehem the birthplace of Christ, and on the Mount of Olives where the Lord ascended to Heaven, and at Gethsemane where the Savior prayed before His sufferings, and where the Mother of God was buried after her Dormition.

Although the holy Empress Helen was no longer young, she set about completing the task with enthusiasm. In her search for the Life-giving Cross, she questioned both Christians and Jews, but for a long time her search remained unsuccessful. Finally, she was directed to a certain elderly Jew named Jude who stated that the Cross was buried beneath the temple of Venus. They demolished the pagan temple and, after praying, they began to excavate the ground. Soon the Lord's Tomb was uncovered. Not far from it were three crosses, and a board with the inscription ordered by Pilate, and four nails which had pierced the Lord's Body.

In order to discover on which of the three crosses the Savior had been crucified, Patriarch Makarios alternately touched the crosses to a corpse. When the Cross of the Lord touched the dead man, he was restored to life. After witnessing the raising of the dead man, everyone was convinced that the Life-giving Cross had been found. Christians came in a huge crowds to venerate the Holy Cross, beseeching Saint Makarios to lift the Cross, so that those far off could see it. Then the Patriarch and other spiritual leaders lifted the Holy Cross, and the people prostrated themselves before the Honorable Wood, saying "Lord have mercy." This solemn event occurred in the year 326.

During the discovery of the Life-giving Cross another miracle took place: a woman who was close to death was healed by the shadow of the Holy Cross. The elderly Jude and other Jews believed in Christ and were baptized. Jude was given the name Kyriakos, and later he was consecrated as the Bishop of Jerusalem. He suffered a martyr's death for Christ during the reign of Emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363).

Saint Helen took part of the Life-giving Wood and nails with her to Constantinople. Saint Constantine ordered a majestic and spacious church to be built at Jerusalem in honor of the Resurrection of Christ, also including under its roof the Life-giving Tomb of the Lord and Golgotha. The church was built in ten years and consecrated on September 13, 335. On the following day, September 14, the festal celebration of the Exaltation of the Honorable and Life-giving Cross was established.

## HYMNS OF THE DAY

### **Tone 6 – Resurrectional Troparion**

The Angelic Powers were at Your tomb;  
the guards became as dead men.  
Mary stood by Your grave,  
seeking Your most pure body.  
You captured hell, not being tempted by it.  
You came to the Virgin, granting life.  
O Lord, Who rose from the dead, //  
glory to You.

### **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 6 – Resurrectional Kontakion**

When Christ God, the Giver of Life,  
raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,  
He bestowed resurrection on the human race. //  
He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

## **Tone 4 – Kontakion of the Cross**

As You were voluntarily raised upon the Cross for our sake,  
grant mercy to those who are called by Your Name, O Christ God;  
make all Orthodox Christians glad by Your power,  
granting them victories over their adversaries//  
by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Your weapon of peace!

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

### **Tone 6 – Sunday Prokeimenon (Psalm 27)**

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

### **Tone 7 – Prokeimenon for the Cross (Psalm 98)**

Extol the Lord our God: worship at His footstool for He is holy!

### **Epistle: Galatians 2.16-20 (Sunday after Exaltation)**

Brethren: Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I, through the law, died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

### **Epistle: 2 Corinthians 4:6-15 (Sunday)**

Brethren: For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you.

And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I believed and therefore I spoke,” we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

### **Gospel: Mark 8.34-9.1 (Sunday after Exaltation)**

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.”

### **Gospel: Matthew 22.35-46 (Sunday)**

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?”

They said to Him, “The Son of David.”

He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying: ‘The LORD said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool’? If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?”

And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

**Instead of “It is truly meet ...,” we sing:**

Magnify, O my soul, the most precious Cross of the Lord!  
You are a mystical Paradise, O Theotokos,  
who, though untilled, have brought forth Christ;  
through Him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth.  
Now at its Elevation,  
as we bow in worship before it, we magnify you.

**Communion Hymn:**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!  
The light of Your countenance has been signed upon us, O Lord.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

**WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

<b>N.Dep.</b> Edward	Spiridon Kovalow (1955)
Eulalia Moore	Simeon Kostromin (1960)
Marcella Van Sickle	Steve Adamchuk (1960)
Ronald McClure	Stephen Kostoff (1976)
<b>Ev. Mem.</b> Elizabeth Vitalis (1938)	Gary Martin (2006)
Zinovy Sementsoff (1942)	

<b>Health &amp; Salv.</b>	Rebecca	Nathan
Archpr. Peter	Christopher	Kara
Mat. Cynthia	Moses	Jamie
Hierom. John	Helena	Kyleigh
Mat. Anne	James	Lauren
Valer	Elijah	Kyle
Nun Theodora	Lydia	Gilbert
Rollie	Nina	Carolynn
Claudia	James	Amelia
Mary Ann	Rebecca	Aaron
Raymond	Jesse	Marcietta
Edward	Autumn	Charles
Charlotte	Sarah	Rosemary
Betsy	James	Nicholas
Klaudia	John	Natalie
Maja	Jacob	Jovan
Gerald	Carol	Meagan
Janet	Snezana	Courtney
Gerald	Ryan	Marley

Kimberly	Anastasia	Londyn
Stephanie	James	Hattie
Robin	Rita	Lisa
Leonardo	Alla	Isabella
Daniel	Betty	Alessandra
Tiffany	Mary Ann	Jennifer
Yelena	Maria	Steven

*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:

### For Peace

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.

### For Seminarians (through September)

O Lord our Savior, bless us, Your entreating people, with an increase in vocations to the priestly order and the monastic life in service of Your holy Church: We pray You, hearken and have mercy.

O Lord, who love mankind, protect and preserve in holiness those who have responded to Your call to service in Your Church and have given themselves to Your Gospel: We pray You, hearken and have mercy.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

For **Bible Study** this week, please read **Revelation 18-20**.

**Feeding the Flock** will hold their **Fashion Show Luncheon** fundraiser on Saturday, September 27, 11am-2:30pm. Janet Andrus has tickets for sale at coffee hour. Luncheon is \$40/plate. 50/50 Raffle Tickets are 6 for \$5. You do not have to be present to enter the raffle.

Our parish feast, **the Protection of the Virgin Mary**, is Wednesday, October 1. We will serve **Festal Vespers Tuesday night at 6pm**, followed by a toast and hors d'oeuvres. **Divine Liturgy will be at 10am Wednesday morning**, with lunch afterward for all present.

On the following **Sunday, October 5**, we will hold our **annual anniversary banquet after the Divine Liturgy**. Members, newcomers, and friends of the parish are all welcome to join the celebration! There will be no tickets sold, but we ask that you pitch in what you can. \$25 per adult is suggested.

We are preparing a **new edition of the parish directory**. Please see Mary Morsovillo during coffee hour if you need to check and/or update your listing.

**MAKS**, a local foster child ministry co-run by our own Elizabeth Wysocki, will be hosting its second annual Gala on October 17<sup>th</sup> at The Inn at Aberdeen in Valparaiso. The Gala includes dinner, drinks, dancing, baskets and more. Tickets available at [www.maksgala.org](http://www.maksgala.org) Please see Elizabeth with any questions.

The new **Reserved Parking Spots** are for those who, for any reason, need to park closer to the door. Please feel free to use them if you have reason to do so.

**Coffee hour** is a team effort. Please make sure you are cleaning up after yourself and your children. If you are able, please pitch in and help the coffee hour crews that work so hard to provide food for our fellowship. Thank you!

### **Mark your calendars:**

Sept 22: **Bible Study @ 7pm**

Sept 25: **Men's Reading Group @ 6:45pm**

Sept 30: **Parish Feast Vespers @ 6pm, with reception**

Oct 1: **Divine Liturgy for the Parish Feast @ 10am, with lunch**

Oct 5: **114<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet** following Divine Liturgy

**Last Week's Gifts to the Lord:    \$4,117**

# Glory to God for all things!