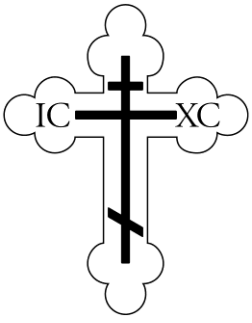
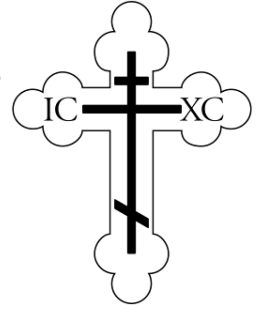


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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.

October 19, 2025

The Holy Prophet Joel

Holy Martyr Varus and his companions

The Holy Martyr Varus lived in Egypt during the period of several persecutions against Christians (late third to early fourth century). Varus was a military commander and secretly a Christian. He gave assistance to many of the persecuted and imprisoned Christians, and he visited the prisoners at night. He also brought food to the prisoners, dressed their wounds, and gave them encouragement.

Once, Varus spent a whole night talking with seven imprisoned monks. These men were Christian teachers who had been beaten

and starved. Varus marched with the teachers when they were led to their execution. The judge, seeing Varus' strong faith, had him fiercely beaten. Varus died during the beating. After his death, the monks were beheaded.

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 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 2 – Troparion for the Holy Prophet Joel

We celebrate the memory
of Your prophet Joel, O Lord;
through him we beseech You://
“Save our souls!”

Tone 4 – Troparion for St. Varus

Your holy martyr Varus, O Lord,
through his sufferings has received an incorruptible crown from
You, our God.
For having Your strength, he laid low his adversaries,
and shattered the powerless boldness of demons.//
Through his intercession, save our souls!

Tone 2 – Resurrectional Kontakion

Hell became afraid, O 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 to St. Varus

Following Christ, O Martyr Varus, you drank of His chalice;
you received the crown of martyrdom and now rejoice with the Angels,//
Pray for our souls unceasingly!

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 2 – Sunday Prokeimenon (Psalm 117)

The Lord is my strength and my song; / He has become my salvation.

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 11:31-12.9

Brethren: The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus, the governor under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago – whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows – such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows – how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities.

For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me. And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing, I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Gospel: Luke 8:5-15

The Lord spoke this parable: “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?”

And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’

“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Cana Papuckoski	Olga Tasseff (1998)
Dylan Anderson	James Ripley (2007)
Ev. Mem. Naum Petroff (1913)	George Svihra (2012)
Wasil Gordichik (1962)	Josephine Chestovich (2015)

Health & Salv.	Claudia	Gerald
Archpr. Peter	Mary Ann	Janet
Mat. Cynthia	Raymond	Gerald
Hierom. John	Edward	Rebecca
Mat. Anne	Charlotte	Christopher
Valer	Betsy	Moses
Nun Theodora	Klaudia	Helena
Rollie	Maja	James

Elijah	Kyle	Tiffany
Lydia	Gilbert	Yelena
Nina	Carolynn	Anastasia
James	Amelia	James
Rebecca	Aaron	Rita
Jesse	Marcietta	Alla
Autumn	Charles	Betty
Sarah	Rosemary	Mary Ann
James	Nicholas	Maria
John	Natalie	Londyn
Jacob	Jovan	Hattie
Carol	Meagan	Lisa
Snezana	Courtney	Isabella
Ryan	Marley	Alessandra
Nathan	Kimberly	Jennifer
Kara	Stephanie	Steven
Jamie	Robin	Sergei
Kyleigh	Leonardo	Heidi
Lauren	Daniel	Jennifer

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.

Look down with a merciful eye upon Your servants in Alaska suffering from severe storms and flooding, O Master and Lover of man, and give ear to our prayer offered in faith, as You Yourself have said: “Whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.” Therefore, though unworthy, yet with hope in Your mercy, we beseech You: show Your mercy upon Your servants in danger and distress, fulfilling their good desires and preserving them in peace, health, and length of days. Let us all say: Quickly hearken and have mercy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For **Bible Study** this week, read 1 Chronicles 10-13.

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

November books for men's **book club** can be picked up in the bookstore for \$5 each. Please sign up in the narthex.

The **Ladies' Sodality annual Coat Drive** is on through October. Please leave new or gently used coats, hats, gloves, and scarves of all sizes in the bin near the Hall Entrance. Thank you!

The **O-Club** is collecting **cleaning products for the poor** in Northwest Indiana. They will be distributed through Catholic Charities. Needed items are listed on sticky notes, which you can take from the wall in the narthex as a reminder to bring them back to Church. We will collect items until the beginning of Advent (**November 14**).

The **annual chili cook-off** will be **Sunday, October 26**. If you plan to enter a pot of chili, please sign up in advance in the narthex.

There will be a **November Women's Event** on **Sunday, November 9th** following coffee hour until 3pm. Ladies of the church are all invited. There will be crafts, conversation, and lunch. Please sign up in the narthex if you plan to attend. You can direct any questions to Elizabeth Pedersen.

Mark your calendars:

Oct 20: **Bible Study @ 7pm**

Oct 23: **Parish Feast Liturgy at St. Iakovos in Valparaiso @ 10am**
Women's Book Club @6pm

Oct 25: **Memorial Saturday Panikhida at PTVM Cemetery @ 10am**
Catechism: Basics of the Spiritual Life @ 4:30pm

Oct 26: **Chili Cook-off** after Divine Liturgy
Great Vespers for St Olga of Alaska after the cook-off

Oct 27: **Divine Liturgy for St Olga of Alaska @ 9am**

Oct 31: **Divine Liturgy for St John of Chicago at Holy Trinity Cathedral @ 9:30am**

Nov 7: Fall Family Event @ 6pm

Nov 21: Red Cross Blood Drive 12-6pm

Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$2,981

A Reflection on Clergy Appreciation Month

by Fr Nicholas Solak

Director of the OCA's Office of Pastoral Life

October is recognized across the Christian world as Clergy Appreciation Month, a time to honor those who serve the Church in pastoral ministry. While not a designated observance within the Orthodox Church in America, it is an opportunity to pause, reflect, and give thanks for the sacrificial ministry of our clergy and their families.

The Gift of Clergy Life

Parish priests and their families carry a unique calling. Their lives are bound to the rhythm of the Church—celebrating the divine services, offering the sacraments, preaching the Gospel, and walking with the faithful in both joy and sorrow. This ministry touches every part of parish life.

Clergy families share in this vocation in profound ways. A priest's wife and children carry the demands and sacrifices of ministry alongside him, offering quiet support that is often unseen but always essential. To honor our priests rightly is also to honor their families, whose presence and patience make parish life possible.

Ways to Show Appreciation

Clergy Appreciation Month is best observed in the parish. Simple gestures can carry deep meaning:

- **Prayer** – Remember your priest and his family in prayer.

- **Gratitude** – A card, note, or word of thanks affirms that their ministry is seen and valued.
- **Care** – Share a meal, offer a gift card, or provide time for rest and renewal.

These small acts do not “repay” the priest for his service, but affirm his humanity, his vocation, and the shared faith that unites clergy and people.

A Word of Thanks

The Orthodox Church in America gives thanks to all clergy and clergy families for their steadfastness, sacrifice, and love. Their ministry is an icon of Christ’s self-offering and a gift to every parish.

To extend your gratitude further, please consider supporting the work of the Office of Pastoral Life, which strengthens and sustains clergy and their families across the Orthodox Church in America. Your gift makes possible programs, retreats, and resources that help our clergy flourish in their parish ministry.

To learn more or to make a donation, visit opl.oca.org.

Glory to God for
all things!