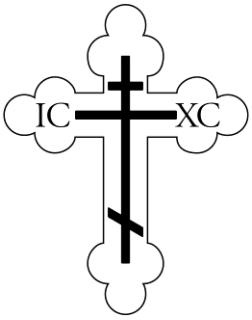


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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.

January 11, 2025 Afterfeast of Theophany St Theodosius the Great

Saint Theodosius the Great lived during the fifth-sixth centuries and was the founder of cenobitic monasticism in the Judean desert. He was born in Cappadocia of pious parents. Endowed with a splendid voice, he zealously toiled at church reading and singing. St Theodosius prayed fervently that the Lord would guide him on the way to salvation. In his early years he visited the Holy Land and met with St Simeon the Stylite, who blessed him and predicted future pastoral service for him.

Yearning for the solitary life, St Theodosius settled in Palestine into a desolate cave, in which, according to Tradition, the three Magi

had spent the night, having come to worship the Savior after His Nativity. He lived there for thirty years in great abstinence and unceasing prayer. People flocked to the ascetic, wishing to live under his guidance. When the cave could no longer hold all the monks, St Theodosius prayed that the Lord Himself would indicate a place for the monks. Taking a censer with cold charcoal and incense, the monk started walking into the desert.

At a certain spot, the charcoal ignited by itself and the incense smoke began to rise. Here the monk established the first cenobitic monastery, or Lavra. Soon the Lavra of St Theodosius became renowned, and up to 700 monks gathered at it. According to the final testament of St Theodosius, the Lavra rendered service to neighbor, giving aid to the poor and providing shelter for wanderers.

St Theodosius was extremely compassionate. Once, when there was a famine in Palestine and a multitude of people gathered at the monastery, the monk gave orders to allow everyone into the monastery enclosure. His disciples were annoyed, knowing that the monastery did not have the means to feed all those who had come. But when they went into the bakery, they saw that through the prayers of the abba, it was filled with bread. This miracle was repeated every time St Theodosius wanted to help the destitute.

At the monastery, St Theodosius built a home for taking in strangers, separate infirmaries for monks and laymen, and also a shelter for the dying. Seeing that people from various lands gathered at the Lavra, the saint arranged for services in various languages: Greek, Georgian, and Armenian. All gathered to receive the Holy Mysteries in the large church, where divine services were chanted in Greek.

During the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Anastasius (491-518) there arose the heresy of Eutychius and Severus, which recognized neither the sacraments nor the clergy. The emperor accepted the false teaching, and the Orthodox began to suffer persecution. St Theodosius stood firmly in defense of Orthodoxy and wrote a letter to the emperor on behalf of the monks, in which they denounced him and refuted the heresy with the teachings of the Ecumenical Councils. He affirmed moreover, that the desert-dwellers and monks would firmly support the Orthodox teaching. The emperor showed restraint for a short while, but then he renewed his persecution of the Orthodox. The holy Elder then showed great zeal for the truth. Leaving the monastery, he came to Jerusalem and in the church, he stood at the high place and cried out for all to hear: "Whoever does

not honor the four Ecumenical Councils, let him be anathema!” For this bold deed the monk was sent to prison, but he was soon released at the death of the emperor.

St Theodosius accomplished many healings and other miracles during his life, coming to the aid of the needy. Through his prayers he once destroyed the locusts devastating the fields in Palestine. Also by his intercession, soldiers were saved from death, and he also saved those perishing in shipwrecks and those lost in the desert.

Before his death, St Theodosius summoned to him three beloved bishops and revealed to them that he would soon depart to the Lord. After three days, he died at the age of 105. The saint’s body was buried with reverence in the cave in which he lived at the beginning of his ascetic deeds.

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 Theophany

When You, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan,
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.
For the voice of the Father bore witness to You,
and called You His beloved Son;
and the Spirit in the form of a dove
confirmed the truthfulness of His word.
O Christ our God, You have revealed Yourself //
and have enlightened the world, glory to You.

Tone 8 – Troparian to St Theodosius

By a flood of tears you made the desert fertile,
and your longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance.
By the radiance of miracles you illuminated the whole universe. //
Our Father Theodosius, pray to Christ God to save our souls!

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 8 – Kontakion to St Theodosius

Planted in the courts of your Lord, you blossomed beautifully with
virtue,
and increased your children in the desert, showering them with
streams of your tears,
O chief shepherd of the divine flock of God.
Therefore, we cry to you: Rejoice, O Father Theodosius!

Tone 4 – Kontakion of Theophany

Today You have shone forth to the world, O Lord,
and the light of Your countenance has been marked on us.
Knowing You, we sing Your praises:
“You have come and revealed Yourself,//
O unapproachable Light.”

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Tone 1 – Prokeimenon of the Afterfeast (Psalm 32)

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

Tone 7 – Prokeimenon for St Theodosius (Psalm 115)

Precious in the sight of the Lord / is the death of His saints.

Epistle: Ephesians 4.7-13 (Sunday after Theophany)

Brethren: To each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive and gave gifts to men.”

Now this, “He ascended” – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4.6-15 (St Theodosius)

Brethren: 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: Matthew 4.12-17 (Sunday after Theophany)

At that time: Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, and He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 11.27-30 (St Theodosius)

The Lord said to the Jews who came to Him: "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Nikolay Kostromin	Victor Barancyk (1962)
Gilbert Rodriguez	Paul Markowicz (1982)
Edna Hudacin	Anna Vargo (1985)
Ev. Mem. Naum Vasil (1916)	Christ Proff (1988)
Jacob Vaskevich (1950)	Mike Svihra (2007)

Health & Salvation	Snezana	Hattie
Archpr. Peter	Ryan	Lisa
Mat. Cynthia	Nathan	Isabella
Hierom. John	Kara	Alessandra
Mat. Anne	Sarah	Jennifer
Nun Theodora	Jamie	Steven
Rollie	Kyleigh	Sergei
Claudia	Lauren	Heidi
Mary Ann	Kyle	Jennifer
Raymond	Carolynn	Ethan
Edward	Amelia	Logan
Charlotte	Aaron	Tanya
Betsy	Marcietta	Christopher
Klaudia	Charles	Olga
Maja	Rosemary	Michael
Gerald	Nicholas	Ivanka
Janet	Natalie	Christine
Gerald	Jovan	Sara
Rebecca	Meagan	John
Christopher	Kimberly	Kirby
Moses	Stephanie	Loretta
Helena	Robin	Alex
James	Leonardo	Trudi
Elijah	Daniel	Michal
Lydia	Tiffany	Anika
Nina	Yelena	Sarah
James	Anastasia	Richard
Rebecca	James	Christine
Jesse	Rita	Mira
Autumn	Alla	Joseph
James	Betty	Jaroslava
John	Mary Ann	Cameron
Jacob	Maria	Regina
Carol	Londyn	

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, 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

For **Bible Study** tomorrow, please read 2 Chronicles 11-15.

2025 stewardship receipts are ready for pick-up in the Narthex.

Every year, **Orthodox Christian homes are blessed with the new holy water of Theophany**. House blessings will continue until the start of Great Lent. The digital schedule to book an appointment was emailed to the parish last week. A paper version is also available in the narthex.

To kick off house blessing season this year, **everyone is invited to Fr. Jacob and Mat. Jenna's home today at 2pm**. We will start with the house blessing and continue the open house until 5pm. Food and drink are provided. Please bring nothing with you!

PTVM is partnering with the **Telos Project** (a CrossRoad initiative) to grow our young adult ministry. On **Saturday, January 24 at 4:30pm** the whole parish is encouraged to attend a meeting led by our Telos Project coach to learn about and help us kick off this endeavor. Food will be provided. Join us as we strengthen our parish through intergenerational conversation and fellowship.

It is time again for the various committees and ministries to submit your **annual reports for the parish meeting**. Please submit them either to Fr Jacob or to Council President Melody Rozdelsky no later than January 18. **The annual meeting will be February 15.**

Mark your calendars:

Jan 12: **Bible Study @ 7pm**

Jan 15: **Faith Enrichment @ 10am**

Jan 17: **Catechism: The Holy Scriptures @ 4:30pm**

Jan 20: **Men's Breakfast** at Bob Evans in Valpo @ 7:15am

Jan 23: **Blood Drive** 12-6pm

Jan 24: **TELOS meeting** for young adult ministry @ 4:30pm

Feb 15: **Annual Meeting** after Liturgy

Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$5,753

Having Your House Blessed

The homes of Orthodox Christians are blessed with the new holy water of Theophany each year. Make an appointment with the priest to come to your house. He will bring holy water and a sprinkling brush. The family supplies a bowl, a candle, and an icon (any icon of Christ will do). The family should also make a list of living and departed family, who will be remembered during the service. The bowl, candle, and icon should be placed on a clean table. Lights throughout the house should be turned on, paths should be cleared for walking through the house, and radios and televisions should be turned off.

The priest begins the service with the Trisagion prayers (all are welcome to pray along) and a short prayer of blessing. After this, a member of the family takes the candle and leads the priest and everyone else in procession through the home. As they go, the priest sprinkles holy water and all sing continuously the Troparion of Theophany ("When You, O Lord, were baptized..."). After the entire home is blessed, the procession returns again to the icon, and a short litany is said for the welfare of the family.

Sometimes the family wants to give the priest a little something to eat; depending on the time the priest has, he may stay and visit. It is NEVER expected that the family will give him money. The scripture tells us "Freely you have received, freely give". The priest comes to the home because he wants God's blessing to be upon it and to know those in his flock better and to be available to them.

Glory to God for all things!