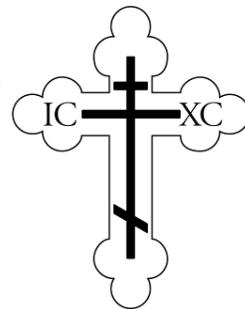
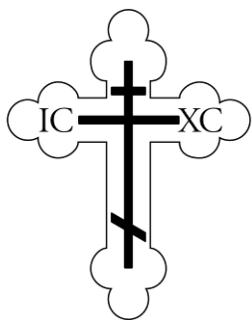


Protection of the Virgin Mary

Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago
and the Midwest
Orthodox Church
in America

8600 Grand Blvd.
Merrillville, IN
(219)947-4748
www.ptvm.com

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 15, 2026

Meatfare Sunday

The Last Judgment

Every man will stand for judgment before God for his life in this world. Each person will be judged according to his words and his works.

I tell you, on the day of judgment men will render account for every idle word they utter; for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned (Mt 12.36). For the Son of Man is to come with His angels in the glory of His Father, and then He will repay every man according to his works (Mt 16: 27, cf. Rev 2.23).

The judge will be Christ Himself, for He is the one who, by His suffering and death, has received the power to judge. It is the Crucified One who will call men to account at the end of the ages. He has won this right as a man through the perfection of His human life. *For the Father . . . has given Him the authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man* (Jn 5.27).

Christ will judge all men exclusively on the basis of how they have served Him by serving all men—the least of the brethren. That is the teaching of today’s Gospel reading, the parable of the sheep and the goats. All spiritual life is fulfilled in this one parable of Christ, for the heart of it is love, both for God and for man.

In commenting on this teaching about the final judgment, St Augustine has said that Christ Himself is truly the one who is found in all of these conditions, just as He is the one who is the Savior in each of them. He Himself was hungry; who is the “bread of life,” which if a man eats of it, he will never hunger again (Jn 6.35). He Himself was thirsty, crying out “I thirst!” (Jn 19.28); who gives the “living water,” which, if a man drinks of it, he will never thirst again (Jn 4.13). He Himself was a stranger with “no place to lay His head” (Mt 8.20), who “came to His own home, and His own people received Him not” (Jn 1.11); who brings all men home to the heavenly house of the Father (Jn 14.1–2). He Himself was naked, in the manger in Bethlehem, in the streams of the Jordan, and on the cross of Golgatha; who clothes all men with Himself (Gal 3.27), and with the “robes of salvation” (Rev 6.11). He Himself was sick, “wounded for our transgressions” and “bruised for our iniquities,” left alone hanging on the cross (Is 53.5, Mt 26.56); who Himself heals all the wounds of men, for “with His wounds we are healed” (Is 53.5). He Himself was in prison, arrested as a criminal and thrown into jail, forsaken by His disciples (Mt 26.56); who Himself proclaims “liberty to the captives” (Lk 4.18), setting men free from everything that binds them, and forgiving their crimes.

Since Christ has identified Himself wholly with every man, in every one of his sad and most sorrowful states, the person who “does it to the least of his brethren” does it to Christ Himself—not “as if” to Christ, but to Christ in reality, for Christ is most truly within every man, and every man is the bearer of Christ, the “image of the invisible God” (Col 1.15).

It is also the teaching of the spiritual masters that what must be given to all men is Christ Himself: the Bread of Life, the Living Water, the Home of the Father, the robes of salvation, the healing of

wounds, the liberation and forgiveness of all sins. In this sense every man, no matter how rich or how righteous, is poor, hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, sinful and imprisoned by evil and death. Thus to “do it to the least of the brethren” is to offer Christ to all men, to give them the eternal and unending satisfaction of all their needs and desires: bread which is never consumed, water which eternally satisfies, a home which is never lost, garments which do not grow old, healing which never suffers again, liberation which can never revert to captivity. Thus, “to do it to the least of the brethren” is to bring them the Kingdom of God. In doing this one offers to all men and so to Christ Himself what already belongs to them from God; as in the liturgy of the Church we offer to God that which already is His. In every case, this is Christ Himself.

This, therefore, is perfect love; the love of God and the love of man, the love for God and the love for man, becoming one and the same love. It is accomplished in Christ and is Christ. To love with this love is to love with the love of Christ and to fulfill His “new commandment” to “love one another even as I have loved you” (Jn 13.34–35, 15.12). In this is the whole of spiritual life. In this, and this alone, man will be finally judged. It is the crown of all virtue and prayer, the ultimate and most perfect fruit of God’s Spirit in man.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 3 – Resurrectional Troparion

Let the heavens rejoice!

Let the earth be glad!

For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.

He has trampled down death by death.

He has become the first born of the dead.

He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
and has granted to the world//

great mercy.

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 1 – Kontakion for the Last Judgement

When You, O God, shall come to earth with glory,
all things shall tremble,
and the river of fire shall flow before Your judgment seat;
the books shall be opened, and the hidden things disclosed;
then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, //
and make me worthy to stand at Your right hand, O Righteous Judge!

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 3 – Prokeimenon for the Last Judgement (Psalm 146)

Great is our Lord, and abundant in power,
His understanding is beyond measure.

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8.8-9.2

Brethren: Food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 25.31-46

Jesus spoke this parable: "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will

separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

“Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’

“And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’

“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’

“Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’

“Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Richard Mirr
Dalton Richards
Bp. Seraphim (Sigrist)
Nickolas Resunenکو
Jovan Savich
Lori Shaffer

Ev. Mem. Joseph Obar (1947)
Anastasia Pilnock (1961)
Wassil Mihaluk (1961)
John Honchar (1975)
Irene Adams (2006)
Edward Hrischuk (2008)
Alice Erbesti (2018)

Health & Salvation

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

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.

O Lord our God, who are rich in mercy and compassionate in Your love for mankind, look down with kindness upon Your servants. Remove from our hearts all bitterness, wrath, and remembrance of wrongs. Quench every spark of hatred, dissolve every bond of enmity, and plant within us the spirit of peace and mutual understanding. Grant that we may not seek our own will but learn to bear one another's burdens in humility and truth. Heal those divided from one another, reconcile those at odds, and make us instruments of Your peace. O You who are the Giver of concord and the Savior of our souls, hearken and have mercy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The parish annual meeting will take place today in the parish hall after our Meatfare potluck. Hard copies of the reports are available in the narthex.

For **Bible Study** tomorrow, read 2 Chronicles 33-36.

This is the **last week to have your home blessed** before Great Lent. Please make an appointment with Fr Jacob.

Next Sunday we serve **Forgiveness Vespers** following coffee hour. This is an important service. We begin Great Lent together by forgiving one another and receiving forgiveness. It is already a taste of Pascha, which we set ourselves to prepare for.

Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers will be at **Sts Peter & Paul Macedonian Orthodox Church in Crown Point at 6pm on March 1** with Bishop Andrei of the OCA Romanian Archdiocese presiding. A free dinner will follow in their banquet hall. **Please let Fr Jacob know if you plan to stay for the dinner**, so that he can RSVP for our parish.

Mark your calendars:

Feb 16: Bible Study @ 7pm

Feb 17: Parish Council @ 7pm

**Feb 21: Catechism: The human body, soul, and spirit @ 4:30pm
Choir Rehearsal @ 5pm**

Feb 22: Forgiveness Vespers after coffee hour

Feb 23: Great Canon, part 1 @ 7pm

Feb 24: Great Canon, part 2 @ 7pm

**Feb 25: Presanctified Liturgy @ 9am
Great Canon, part 3 @ 7pm**

Feb 26: Great Canon, part 4 @ 7pm

Feb 27: Presanctified Liturgy @ 9am

**Mar 1: Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers at Sts Peter and Paul in
Crown Point @ 6pm**

Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$2,626

**Glory to God for
all things!**