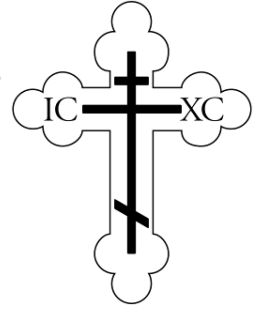
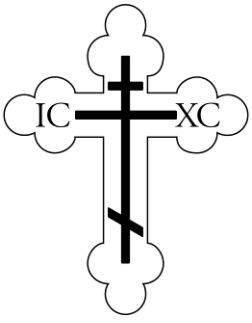


Protection of the Virgin Mary

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.

April 19, 2026

St Thomas Sunday

Antipascha

The Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas was born in the Galilean city of Pansada and was a fisherman. Hearing the good tidings of Jesus Christ, he left all and followed after Him. The Apostle Thomas is included in the number of the holy Twelve Apostles of the Savior.

According to Holy Scripture, the holy Apostle Thomas did not believe the reports of the other disciples about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe" (John 20:25).

On the eighth day after the Resurrection, the Lord appeared to the Apostle Thomas and showed him His wounds. "My Lord and my God," the Apostle cried out (John 20:28). "Thomas, being once weaker in faith than the other apostles," says St John Chrysostom, "toiled through the grace of God more bravely, more zealously and tirelessly than them all, so that he went preaching over nearly all the earth, not fearing to proclaim the Word of God to savage nations."

Some icons depicting this event are inscribed "The Doubting Thomas." This is incorrect. In Greek, the inscription reads, "The Touching of Thomas." In Slavonic, it says, "The Belief of Thomas." When St Thomas touched the Life-giving side of the Lord, he no longer had any doubts.

According to Church Tradition, the holy Apostle Thomas founded Christian churches in Palestine, Mesopotamia, Parthia, Ethiopia and India. Preaching the Gospel earned him a martyr's death. For having converted the wife and son of the prefect of the Indian city of Meliapur, the holy apostle was locked up in prison, suffered torture, and finally, pierced with five spears, he departed to the Lord. Part of the relics of the holy Apostle Thomas are in India, in Hungary, and on Mt. Athos.

This Sunday is also called Antipascha (meaning "in the stead of Pascha," not "in opposition to Pascha") because beginning with this day, the first Sunday after Pascha, the Church consecrates every Sunday of the year to the commemoration of Pascha, that is, the Resurrection.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 7 – Troparion of Thomas Sunday

From the sealed tomb, You shone forth, O Life!
Through closed doors You came to Your Disciples, O Christ God.
Renew in us, through them, an upright spirit,//
by the greatness of Your mercy, O Resurrection of all!

Tone 8 – Kontakion of Thomas Sunday

Thomas touched Your life-giving side with an eager hand, O Christ God,
when You came to Your Apostles through closed doors.//
He cried out with all: "You are my Lord and my God!"

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Tone 3 – Prokeimenon of Thomas Sunday (Psalm 146)

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

Epistle: Acts 5.12-20

At that time, through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also, a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."

Gospel: John 20.19-31

Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."

When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So, Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord."

So, he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Michael McCune

Patriarch Ilia (of Georgia)

Ev. Mem. Gabriel Nush (1923)

Stavre Petroff (1956)

John Melnikow (1957)

Evdokia Basalay (1958)

Mary Krochta (1959)

Priest Thomas Brown (1991)

Mka. Ann Rozdelsky (2002)

Health & Salvation

Archpr. Peter

Mat. Cynthia

Hierom. John

Mat. Anne

Valer

Nun Theodora

Rollie

Claudia

Mary Ann

Raymond

Edward

Charlotte

Betsy

Klaudia

Maja

Gerald

Janet

Gerald

Rebecca

Christopher

Moses

Helena

James

Elijah

Lydia

Nina

Ezra

James

Rebecca

Jesse

Autumn

James

John

Jacob

Carol

Snezana

Ryan

Nathan

Kara

Sarah

Jamie

Kyleigh

Lauren

Kyle

Carolynn

Amelia

Aaron

Marcietta

Charles

Rosemary

Nicholas

Natalie

Meagan

Kimberly	Cameron	Cecilia
Stephanie	Regina	Mat. Katherine
Robin	Matthew	Rita
Leonardo	Cindy	Kenneth
Daniel	Aisha	Alla
Tiffany	Don	Maria
Yelena	Patricia	Ethan
Anastasia	Charlette	Logan
Christine	Elias	Joseph
Mira	Sara	Mamie
Joseph	Thomas	Mary
Jaroslava	Shaun	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, Iran and the Middle East. 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.

Paschal Theotokion (Instead of “*It is Truly Meet...*”)

The Angel cried to the Lady, full of grace:
 “Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again, I say: Rejoice,
 your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb!
 With Himself He has raised all the dead.”
 Rejoice, O you people!

Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem!
 The glory of the Lord has shone on you.
 Exult now, and be glad, O Zion!
 Be radiant, O pure Theotokos,
 in the Resurrection of your Son!

Communion Hymn:

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

After venerating the cross, we will serve the **24-year memorial for Mka. Ann Rozdelsky**. We will also include our **former priest, Fr. Thomas Brown (†1991)** in honor of his name day.

A big thank you to the O-Club for hosting another great **Trivia Night Fundraiser for Mommy's Haven** maternity home in Lowell last night. It was our largest turn-out to date!

The **O-Club** will meet today during coffee hour.

There will be no **Bible Study** tomorrow.

On Saturday, May 16, **Sts Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church** in Merrillville will host a **retreat with Fr Barnabas Powell**. Schedule and other information are in the narthex. This event is free, but registration is required, which you can do through this QR code:



The Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church **Jan Hughes Memorial Golf Outing** is scheduled for **Saturday, May 30th**, at Indian Ridge Country Club in Hobart. The proceeds will be used for the continuation, support, and development of various Church projects. Golfers (\$95) Hole sponsors (\$125) other monetary or prize donations would be greatly appreciated. Those wishing to help in any way (including making desserts or appetizers), or to purchase banquet tickets (\$20 each), please see Rich or Linda Svihra or Lara Richards. This is a major fundraiser for our church and we thank you in advance for your support, The Golf Committee.

Mark Your Calendars

Apr 23: **Parish Council @ 7pm**

Apr 24: **Catechism: Sacraments @ 4:30 pm**

May 16: **Retreat with Fr Barnabas Powell @ Sts Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Merrillville**

May 20: **Vigil for the Feast of Ascension @ 6pm**

May 21: **Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Ascension @ 9am**

May 30: **Golf Outing at Indian Ridge Country Club @ 8am**

Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$9,781.00

Resurrection of Christ 2026

Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, beloved in the Lord:

Christ is risen! Indeed he is risen!

A week ago, we heard the holy Martha express her faith in the resurrection of the dead when she said: “I know that my brother will rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (Jn. 11:24). But our Lord replied to her, “I am the Resurrection and the Life,” and that very day he called Lazarus forth from the tomb (Jn. 11:25, 43–44).

He did this by the power of his third-day Resurrection, a power that cannot be contained by time or place. The Pascha of the Lord is not an event like other events, one more link in a chain of causality or knot in a string of happenstance. Through Christ’s Passion and Resurrection, divine eternity breaks into time; mortality encounters life everlasting. Christ’s Pascha is not just the resurrection of the dead at the end; it is the end of time itself. In the light of Pascha, all other events are bathed in the endless radiance of the unceasing and immeasurable age to come.

The uncontainable, all-encompassing power of the Lord’s Resurrection is reflected in the way that we celebrate the Paschal event. There is one day a year we call Pascha. And yet, all of Bright Week is also considered one day, a single celebration of Pascha. Then again, the feast actually continues until its Leavetaking on the eve of the Ascension. And even after that, we renew our Paschal celebration each Sunday, adorning our weekly observance of the Lord’s Day with a grand cycle of hymns in honor of the Resurrection.

Liturgically, then, we see that Pascha cannot be contained; its power cannot be circumscribed by a single day or even a whole season. This is also true in each of our lives. Christ is risen, and therefore each and every moment offers us the possibility of a new beginning. By the power of Christ’s Pascha, our entire life becomes a continuous opportunity to renew ourselves, to start again.

This means that the joy of this Paschal morning, the rejoicing we experience when we discover the empty tomb in the deep dawn, need never cease. Yes, Martha was right: the Lord will raise us up on

the last day. But he is also ready to raise us up today, tomorrow, and every day of our lives. He suffered the consequences of our sin on the Cross so that he might free us from our bondage to its power. The joy of liberation need not come only at the end, or only once a year: Christ's Pascha is with us always, in our hearts and in our lives.

It is my prayer that this experience of Pascha remain with each of you throughout this week, throughout these forty joyous days of celebration, and throughout all the days of your life. I pray that, finding joy in his victory, you may experience that victory again and again each time you turn back to him and start anew. If we remain faithful to him—not by our instant moral perfection, but by our steadfast repentance and willingness always to begin again—he who is called Faithful and True will surely remain faithful to us, and we will know the happiness and power of his Pascha both now and throughout the age to come (Rev. 19:11; cf. 2 Tim 2:12–3).

To him who passed through the darkness of hell in order to lift us up to the unfading light of his heavenly kingdom, henceforth and always, Christ our true God, the Paschal Lamb who lives forever, be all glory and adoration, together with his Father and his All-holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Christ is risen! Indeed he is risen!

Yours in the Risen Christ,

+ TIKHON

Archbishop of Washington

Metropolitan of All America and Canada

**Glory to God for
all things!**