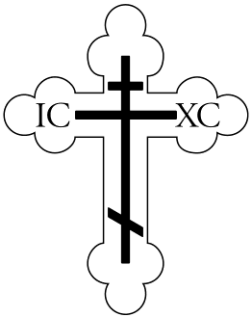
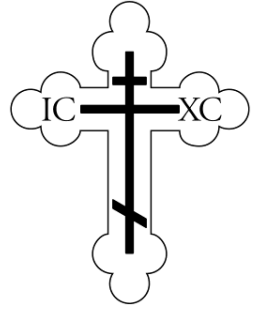


# Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago  
and the Midwest  
Orthodox Church  
in America



8600 Grand Blvd.  
Merrillville, IN 46410  
(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 after  
Vespers or by appointment

**Welcome visitors!**  
**Please join us in the**  
**parish hall after Divine**  
**Liturgy for coffee hour.**

## August 30, 2026

Afterfeast of the Beheading of  
**St. John the Forerunner**

**Sts. Alexander, John, and Paul of Constantinople**

*Today Catechumens will remain in the Church.*

### **HYMNS OF THE DAY**

#### **Tone 4 – Resurrectional Troparion**

When the women disciples of the Lord  
learned from the angel the joyous message of Your Resurrection,  
they cast away the ancestral curse  
and elatedly told the apostles:

“Death is overthrown!

Christ God is risen, //

granting the world great mercy!”

### **Tone 4 – Patronal Troparion**

Today the faithful celebrate the feast with joy,  
illuminated 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 to St. John**

The mememory of the righteous is celebrated with hymns of praise,  
but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner.  
You were shown in truth to be the most honorable of the Prophets,  
for you were deemed worthy to baptize in the streams of the Jordan  
Him Whom they foretold.  
Therefore, having suffered for the truth with joy,  
you proclaimed to those in hell God Who appeared in the flesh,  
Who takes away the sin of the world//  
and grants us great mercy.

### **Tone 4 – Resurrectional Kontakion**

My Savior and Redeemer  
as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earthborn from their chains.  
He has shattered the gates of hell,  
and as Master,//  
He has risen on the third day!

### **Tone – Kontakion for St. John**

The glorious beheading of the Forerunner  
became an act of divine dispensation,  
for he preached to those in hell the coming of the Savior.  
Let Herodias lament, for she entreated lawless munder,  
loving not the Law of God, nor eternal life,//  
but that which is false and temporal.

### **Tone 8 – Kontakion to Sts. Alexander, John, and Paul**

Set a flame by the love of Christ, O glorious ones,  
you took up the yoke of His precious Cross, revealing yourselves as  
followers in His footsteps by your way of life,  
and you became partakers of His divine glory,  
divinely-wise Alexander, with wonderful John and glorious Paul.//  
As you stand before His throne, earnestly pray for our souls!

### **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 4 – Sunday Prokeimenon (Psalm 103)**

O Lord, how manifold are Your works;  
in wisdom have You made them all.

### **Epistle: 1 Corinthians 16.13-24**

Brethren: Watch! Stand fast in the faith! Be brave; be strong. Let all that you do be done with love. I urge you, brethren – you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints – that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us. I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied. For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore, acknowledge such men.

The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

The salutation with my own hand – Paul’s. If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema. Maranatha! (Lord, come!) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

### **Gospel: Matthew 21.33-42**

Jesus spoke this parable: “There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another.

“Again, he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’

“But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his

inheritance.’ So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

“Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?”

They said to Him, “He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.”

Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

|                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>N.Dep.</b> John Ely | Lisa Marie Exl           |
| Natalie Orloff         | <b>Ev. Mem.</b>          |
| Priest John Charest    | Sloicitsa Mirchev (1917) |
| Archpr. Howard Sloan   | James Petroff (1947)     |
| Elias Ponziano         | Rista Krstavich (1950)   |

|                           |          |           |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Health &amp; Salv.</b> | Elijah   | Aaron     |
| Archpr. Peter             | Lydia    | Marcietta |
| Mat. Cynthia              | Nina     | Charles   |
| Hierom. John              | Ezra     | Rosemary  |
| Mat. Anne                 | James    | Nicholas  |
| Valer                     | Rebecca  | Natalie   |
| Nun Theodora              | Jesse    | Meagan    |
| Claudia                   | Autumn   | Kimberly  |
| Mary Ann                  | James    | Stephanie |
| Raymond                   | John     | Robin     |
| Edward                    | Jacob    | Leonardo  |
| Charlotte                 | Carol    | Yelena    |
| Betsy                     | Snezana  | Anastasia |
| Klaudia                   | Ryan     | Christine |
| Maja                      | Nathan   | Jaroslava |
| Gerald                    | Kara     | Cameron   |
| Janet                     | Sarah    | Regina    |
| Gerald                    | Jamie    | Matthew   |
| Rebecca                   | Kyleigh  | Cindy     |
| Christopher               | Lauren   | Patricia  |
| Moses                     | Kyle     | Charlette |
| Helena                    | Carolynn | Sara      |
| James                     | Amelia   | Thomas    |

|                  |           |                  |
|------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Shaun            | Anika     | Vickie           |
| Cecilia & unborn | Gabriel   | Rhonda           |
| Rita             | Kyle      | Doug             |
| Kenneth          | Louis     | Terri            |
| Alla             | Noni      | Irina            |
| Maria            | Erin      | Victoria         |
| Ethan            | Melissa   | Cyan             |
| Logan            | Solomon   | Vitaly           |
| Joseph           | Atlas     | Ilona-Maria      |
| Mamie            | Katharine | Katerina         |
| Mary             | Cody      | Nadia            |
| Kimberly         | Heidi     | Derek            |
| Michael          | Mary Ann  | Miranda & unborn |
| Anastasia        | Elizabeth | Lidia            |
| Michal           | Don       | Abigail & unborn |
| Carlos           | Michelle  | Colin            |
| Sarah            | Natalie   | Gladiola         |

*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.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

After venerating the cross, we will serve a **memorial** for the newly departed **Natalie Orloff** and **John Ely**, along with the 40-days for **Lisa Exl** and **Elias Ponziano**.

**Parent Meeting** today during coffee hour. All regular attenders with children ages 2-17 should come to learn more about church school for the 2026-2027 school year.

For **Bible Study tomorrow**, read Proverbs 9-12.

PTVM O-Club has organized an **August Diaper Drive** to support the work of Women’s Care Center in Hammond. Sizes 5 and 6 are their biggest need. Thank you!

**Feeding the Flock Luncheon and Fundraiser** tickets for September 26 are available. Janet Andrus will be selling both luncheon and 50/50 raffle tickets at Coffee Hour. **Luncheon Tickets:** \$45 per person and **50/50 Raffle Tickets:** \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Note that the date has been changed from September 19 to 26. See Janet if you need a refund.

## **Mark Your Calendars**

**Aug 31: Bible Study @ 7pm**

**Sept 1: Church New Year**

**Men's Breakfast @ 7:15a at Bob Evans - Valparaiso**

**Sept 7: No Bible Study**

**Vigil for the Nativity of the Theotokos @ 6pm**

**Sept 8: Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of the Theotokos @ 9am**

**Sept 13: First Day of Church School**

**Oct 3 & 4: Archbishop Daniel pastoral visit to PTVM, with Diaconal Ordination of Daniel O-Day at Divine Liturgy**

**Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$1,415**

# **Archpastoral Letter at the Beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year 2026 from His Eminence, our Archbishop Daniel**

**Beloved Clergy, Venerable Monastics, and dearly Beloved Faithful in Christ:**

**Glory to Jesus Christ!**

As we approach the beginning of the new Ecclesiastical Year on September 1, the Holy Church once again invites us to enter the sacred rhythm of her liturgical life. Unlike the passing measures of secular time, the Church's year is not merely a succession of days and months. It is an unfolding season of grace, in which the saving works of our Lord Jesus Christ are made present to us through prayer, worship, fasting, feasting, repentance, and thanksgiving.

This annual cycle of fasts and feasts is a precious gift. Through it, the Church gathers our scattered lives and directs them toward

the Kingdom of God. We celebrate the Nativity of Christ, His Holy Theophany, His life-giving Passion and Resurrection, His glorious Ascension, and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. We honor the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, the holy Apostles, Martyrs, Hierarchs, Monastics, and all the Saints. Their commemorations remind us that holiness is not an abstract ideal but the true vocation of every Christian.

The fasts of the Church likewise call us back to what is essential. By abstaining from certain foods and indulgences, we learn to restrain the passions, deepen our prayer, give generously to those in need, seek reconciliation, and hunger more earnestly for God. Fasting is never an end in itself, nor is it merely a matter of dietary observance. Joined to repentance, mercy, and participation in the sacramental life, it becomes a path toward spiritual freedom and renewed communion with Christ.

The feasts teach us to receive life with gratitude and joy. Yet Christian joy is not an escape from suffering. It is the fruit of Christ's victory over sin and death. Every feast reveals some aspect of this victory, while every fast prepares the heart to receive it. Together, the fasts and feasts form a school of discipleship, shaping us gradually into the likeness of our Savior.

I therefore urge the clergy, monastics, and faithful of our Diocese to begin this Ecclesiastical Year with renewed dedication. Let us order our homes and daily schedules according to the life of the Church. Let us participate faithfully in the Divine Liturgy and the appointed services, observe the fasts with discernment, receive the Holy Mysteries with proper preparation, read the Holy Scriptures, and establish a consistent rule of daily prayer.

Let our spiritual and churchly practice also bear visible fruit in works of mercy. May every parish and mission community within our God-protected Diocese strengthen its care for the poor, the lonely, the grieving, the displaced, and all who struggle in body or soul. A calendar filled with holy days profits us little if our hearts remain closed to our neighbors. The grace we receive in worship must extend into our families, workplaces, communities, and the whole creation entrusted to our stewardship.

To my beloved clergy, my brothers and co-laborers in this Vineyard: teach the faithful the meaning of the liturgical cycle with patience and pastoral sensitivity. Invite them not only to know the calendar but to live by it and keep it. Make the divine services

accessible, beautiful, and prayerful. Encourage frequent confession and worthy reception of Holy Communion. Above all, lead by your own example of humility, fidelity, hospitality, and love.

To parents and families: make your homes little churches. Mark the feasts with prayer, give places of honor to the holy icons, sing the Church's hymns, share meals, and live your family lives with acts of kindness and generosity. Teach children that the Church's seasons are not burdens imposed upon life but gifts that reveal life's deepest meaning. In this way, the faith will be handed on not merely as information, but as a living inheritance.

Beloved in Christ, each new Ecclesiastical Year is both a gift and a summons. The time given to us is precious, and its fulfillment is found in Christ. Let us not allow this year to pass without bearing spiritual fruit. May every fast soften our hearts, every feast enlarge our joy, every divine service deepen our communion, and every day become an offering of thanksgiving to God.

At the beginning of this new Church year, I ask you to join me in praying:

*O Lord, bless the crown of the year with Thy goodness. Grant peace to Thy Church, strength to Thy people, wisdom to our leaders, healing to the afflicted, consolation to the sorrowful, peace to the world, and mercy to us all. Guide us through every season of fasting and feasting, that we may grow in repentance, faith, hope, and love, and at last enter the unending Day of Thy Kingdom.*

Through the prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos, specially venerated in her sacred Tikhvin icon, of our holy fathers and mothers, and of all the saints, may the blessing of the Lord rest upon the clergy, monastics, faithful, parishes, missions, institutions, and families of the Diocese of the Midwest throughout the coming Ecclesiastical Year.

With my archpastoral love and blessings in Christ,

**DANIEL**

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

# Glory to God for all things!