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.

November 15, 2026

Holy Martyrs Gurias, Samonas, and Abibus of Edessa (†305 AD)

Catechumens will remain in the Church today.

Hymns of the Day

Tone 7 – Resurrectional Troparion
By Your Cross You destroyed death.
To the thief You opened Paradise.
For the Myrrhbearers You changed weeping into joy.
And You commanded Your disciples, O Christ God,
to proclaim that You are risen,//
granting 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 5 – Holy Martyrs
Christ our God, You have granted us the miracles of Your holy martyrs
Gúrias, Samónas, and Abíbus,
as a stronghold and protection.
Through their prayers, strengthen those in authority in every good deed,//
for You alone are merciful and the lover of mankind!

Tone 7 – Resurrectional Kontakion
The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive,
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers.
Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry:
"The Savior has come to those in faith;//
enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!"

Tone 2 – Kontakion for the Martyrs
You received grace from on high, O all-praised martyrs,
and you intercede for those in the midst of temptations.
Therefore, O saints, you freed a young woman from bitter death,//
and are indeed the glory of Edessa and the joy of the world

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 7 – Resurrection Prokeimenon (Psalm 28)

The Lord shall give strength to His people.
The Lord shall bless His people with peace.

Epistle: Ephesians 2:14-22

Brethren: Christ Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Gospel: Luke 10.25-37

At that time, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Jesus, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?"

So, he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'"

And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."

But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise, a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked and passed by on the other side.

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

“On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.’

“So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?”

And he said, “He who showed mercy on him.”

Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

We Remember in Prayer

N.Dep. Elisa Cox
Elizabeth Stanko
Mary Ann Witek
Ev. Mem. Simeon Georgieff (’16)
Lydia Bartosh (1918)
Fred Savedoff (1941)
Steve Barnacky (1961)
Christ Masoff (1976)
Michael Truchan (1981)
Max Hutka (1994)
Helen Poncek (2007)

Health & Salv.
Mat. Cynthia
Hierom. John
Mat. Anne
Valer
Nun Theodora
Claudia
Mary Ann
Raymond
Edward
Betsy
Klaudia
Maja
Gerald
Janet
Gerald
Rebecca
Christopher
Moses
Helena
James
Elijah
Lydia
Nina
Ezra
James
Rebecca
Jesse
Autumn
James
John
Jacob
Carol
Jamie
Kyleigh
Lauren
Kyle
Carolynn
Amelia
Aaron
Marcietta
Charles
Rosemary
Nicholas
Meagan
Stephanie
Robin
Leonardo
Yelena
Anastasia
Christine
Jaroslava
Cameron
Regina
Matthew
Cindy
Patricia
Charlette
Rita
Kenneth
Alla
Maria
Ethan
Logan
Joseph
Mamie
Mary
Kimberly
Michael
Anastasia
Michal
Carlos
Sarah
Anika
Gabriel

Kyle
Louis
Noni
Melissa
Solomon
Atlas
Katharine
Cody
Heidi
Elizabeth
Don
Michelle
Natalie
Vickie
Rhonda
Irina
Victoria
Cyan
Vitaly
Ilona-Maria
Katerina
Nadia
Derek
Lidia
Abigail
Marina
Colin
Gladiola
Angelia
Charlotte
Kaitlin
Jackson
Olga
Sergei
Jana
Veronica
Miriana
Charlie
Arianna & unborn
Kira & unborn
Cecilia
Patricia
Cynthia
Stacey

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

For **Bible Study tomorrow**, read **Genesis 4-7.**

The **Advent** season begins today. During this time, we rededicate ourselves to **prayer**, we make a **confession**, we **fast**, and we find opportunities to **give to those in need**. Over the coming weeks, opportunities for almsgiving will be made available at our parish. The annual **Angel Tree** is up in the Narthex. Please consider fulfilling a card for a local child in poverty. **Our Annual Winter Coat Drive** runs through next Sunday. A week from today is also **IOCC Sunday**, a day set aside each year to highlight the humanitarian work of **International Orthodox Christian Charities.** We will take a collection next week to support their work.

Coffee hour next week will be **potluck.** During the Advent fast, please avoid bringing meat, dairy, or egg products. This is a good opportunity to share and explore fasting dishes and recipes!

The Thanksgiving Bake Sale is next Sunday. Order forms are available in the Narthex. Orders must be placed by Wednesday with Elizabeth Pedersen. Bakers are asked to assist 10am-4pm this Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Donations of butter, sugar, eggs, walnuts, and all-purpose flour are welcome.

This is your annual reminder that the **Holy Synod of the OCA** has blessed the faithful to partake in the **traditional Thanksgiving meal** (though it falls during the fast), as we give thanks to God alongside our family, friends, and fellow-citizens of this God-protected land.

All are warmly invited to a **Thanksgiving meal in the parish hall** on Thanksgiving Day, shortly after the Divine Liturgy. The parish O-Club will provide the turkey, and those attending are encouraged to bring a side dish or dessert to share. To help us plan, please RSVP as soon as possible, preferably by Sunday, November 22, to Nicholas Revak. 312-593-8278 or nmrevak78@gmail.com.

Ancient Faith & IOCC Gifts of Hope service project will be on December 3rd 6:30 pm at the Ancient Faith Headquarters in Chesterton. Come help assemble school kits for children in need.

Join us December 5 at **10:00 AM** as we celebrate **Saint Nicholas** with an Akathist, a children's craft, a pancake breakfast, and decorating the church in preparation for Nativity! Please let us know if your family plans to attend so we can have plenty of food and craft supplies ready for all the children. Visit the BAND app for more details and to RSVP!

Women's Christmas Meetup will be December 12th from 1-4pm at Melissa Sarafin's house. Please sign up in the Narthex.

Mark Your Calendars

Nov 16: **Bible Study** @ 7pm

Nov 20: **Red Cross Blood Drive,** 11am-5pm
Vigil for the Entrance of the Theotokos @ 6pm

Nov 21: **Divine Liturgy for the Entrance of the Theotokos** @ 9am
Catechism @ 4:30pm

Nov 26: **Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving** @ 9am
O-Club Thanksgiving Dinner (approx. 12pm)

Dec 5: **St Nicholas celebration & Church decoration** @ 10am

Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: $3,751

Beginning of the Nativity Fast 2026

a message from His Beatitude, our Metropolitan Tikhon

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

Christ is in our midst!

We have now entered into a season of growing darkness. For weeks now, the sun has been retreating earlier and earlier, and the cool darkness has descended upon us. This darkness is for some of us a welcome respite from the heat and activity of the warmer months. For others, it is an unwelcome, oppressive invasion into our already complicated and difficult lives.

In our culture, the newly descended darkness is accompanied by a flurry of consumption of all things new and shiny. We engage in a frantic search for meaning and depth, looking to new gadgets and prepackaged experiences to fill the dark void of meaninglessness. We are also regularly reminded of the losses and gaps within our homes and hearts. This season is one where families are expected to gather together. The expectation carries with it the possibility of great bonds of communion and levity. But for many of us, those relationships can be fraught with fractures and reverberate with anxiety. Instead of the warmth of a table full of familiar faces, we find ourselves surrounded by more than a few empty chairs.

My beloved children in the Lord, the darkness is not destined to remain, and the light is just on the horizon!

The darkness that currently prevails is an invitation to kindling an eager expectation for the light which comes into the world at our Lord's nativity in the flesh. The Lord offers us an invitation to step into the light and to hear his offer of relief. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). We are weary from the vanity of the world and we are burdened by the strained and fractured relationships all around us. And it is precisely in the midst of that the light of our Lord's face shines upon

us. Vanity and loss are not the end of the story because Christ Himself has entered into the world ushering in a reign of grace and truth (John 1:14). In Christ we find ourselves truly seen and loved by God in all of our complexities and struggles. This is the sweet taste of grace and the victory of truth.

In light of the gift of our Lord's advent we ask what can we offer to Him? We are given by our mother, the Church, in this season the spiritual disciplines of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving to help cleanse and reset our bodily appetites, to refocus and cleanse our mind's eye, and to unburden and direct our hearts towards the light. These ascetical tools are not given to us in order to increase our to-do list and overwhelm us. Rather, these tools are given to us to give us a deeply needed reset in order to embrace and rest in the light of God. We lighten our load by lessening our excessive dependence upon food, focusing our wandering and forgetful minds upon God, and loosening the anxious grip that material goods have upon us. This is how the light may more brightly shine within our hearts.

In addition to these spiritual disciplines I also suggest renewing the light of friendship and fellowship. Unsubscribe, log off, and put the screens away. Help someone in your neighborhood with a practical need, like raking their lawn. Sit with a loved one over tea and coffee and just listen to them with no other agenda than that. Try making your gifts for Christmas rather than just buying them. Remember and pray for those whom we have lost. Write a handwritten note of encouragement or thanks to someone. Make a good meal for someone in need and share it with them. In the light of Christ, we can find truth and grace abounding everywhere, especially in the small things that bring us closer to one another and, therefore, to God.

May God bless us as we enter into these shorter days filling our hearts with an eager expectation of our Lord's coming in the flesh at His Nativity. Glory to Him who has shown us the light!

With my primatial prayers and blessing for these holy days of anticipation,

+ Tikhon
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

Glory to God for all things!