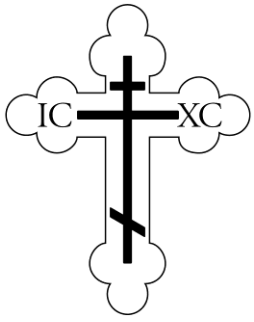
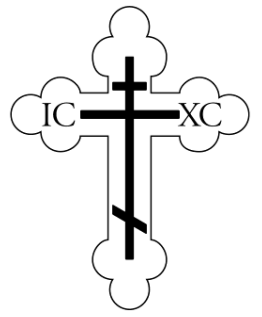


Protection of the Virgin Mary



Orthodox Church



A Parish of the
Diocese of Chicago
and the Midwest
Orthodox Church
in America



8600 Grand Blvd.
Merrillville, IN 46410
(219)947-4748
Hall: (219)730-4698
www.ptvm.com

Rev. Dr. Jacob Van Sickle
(219) 384-6826 • frjacobvansickle@gmail.com

Great Vespers: 6pm Saturdays
Divine Liturgy: 10am Sundays
Confessions are heard before or
after Vespers or by appointment.

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

October 7, 2018

Holy martyrs Sergius and Bacchus

According to legend, the Martyrs Sergius and Bacchus were appointed to high positions in the army by the emperor Maximian (284-305), who did not know that they were Christians. Envious people informed Maximian that his two trusted counsellors did not honor the pagan gods. This was considered a crime against the state.

The emperor, wanting to convince himself of the truth of the accusation, ordered Sergius and Bacchus to offer sacrifice to the idols. The martyrs replied, "O Emperor, we are obliged to render to you earthly service, but we have a true and eternal king in heaven, Jesus the Son of God, who is the commander of our souls, our hope and our refuge of salvation. We do not sacrifice to stones or wood, nor do we bow to them. Your gods have ears, but they do not hear your prayers;

just as they have noses but do not smell your sacrifices, have mouths but do not speak, hands but do not feel, feet but do not walk. And 'those who make them,' as the Scripture says, 'are made like them.'"

At this, Maximian grew furious and commanded that the martyrs be stripped of their belts, gold pendants, and rings, and dressed in women's clothing. They were then led through the city with iron chains around their necks, and the people mocked them. Then he summoned Sergius and Bacchus to him again and in a friendly manner advised them not to be swayed by Christian fables, but to return to the Roman gods.

The saints refuted the emperor's arguments and began to preach to him the Gospel, saying, "He whom you claim was born of adultery as the son of a carpenter, He is God, the Son of the True God, with and through whom was all made. He established the heavens. He made the earth, the abyss, and the great sea He bounded with sand. He adorned the heavens with the multitude of stars. The sun He invented for the illumination of the day, and as a torch in the night He devised the moon. He imposed measure on the day and limits on the night. In wisdom He brought all things into being. In these last days, He was born upon the earth for the salvation of mankind, not from the desire of a man, nor the desire of the flesh, but from the Holy Spirit and an ever-virgin girl. And living among us He taught us to turn from the error of vain idols and to know Him and his Father. He is true God of true God, and He died for the salvation of the human race. He plundered hell and rose on the third day in the power of His divinity, and He established incorruptibility and the resurrection of the dead to eternal life."

Enraged, the emperor commanded that they be sent to the governor of the eastern part of Syria, Antiochus, a fierce hater of Christians. Antiochus ordered Bacchus to be mercilessly beaten, and the holy martyr surrendered his soul to the Lord. They shod Sergius with iron sandals with nails in their soles and marched him to another city, where he was beheaded with the sword.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 2 – Resurrectional Troparion

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal,
You slew hell with the splendor of Your Godhead.
And when from the depths You raised the dead,
all the powers of heaven cried out://

“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

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
And deliver us from every form of evil.
By entreating Christ, your Son and our God//
That He may save our souls.

Tone 4 – Troparion for Sts. Sergius and Bacchus

Your holy martyrs Sergius and Bacchus, O Lord,
through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns
from You, our God.

For having Your strength, they laid low their adversaries,
and shattered the powerless boldness of demons.//
Through their intercessions, save our souls!

Tone 2 – Resurrectional Kontakion

Hell became afraid, almighty Savior,
seeing the miracle of Your Resurrection from the tomb!
The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and
rejoiced with You,//
and the world, my Savior, praises You forever.

Tone 2 – Kontakion for Sts. Sergius and Bacchus

Having courageously confronted the Enemy,
you brought an end to his guiles and received from on high
the crown of victory.
Illustrious martyrs, Sergius and Bacchus,
with one heart you cry aloud://
“How good and pleasant it is to dwell with God!”

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

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 11.31-12.9

Brethren: The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago – whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows – such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows – how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me.

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Gospel: Luke 7.11-16

At that time, it happened that Jesus went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep."

Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."

So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us," and, "God has visited His people."

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Repose:	Kevin
N.Dep. Edward Nachoff	Jon
Mary Ann Meyer	Tanya
Olive Leskow	Kimberly
Infant Isaac	Gail
Geraldine	William
Ev.Mem. Peter Zhikich	Jovan
	Charles
Health & Salvation:	Barbara
Protopresbyter George	Theodore
Matushka Anna	Michael
Archpriest Frederick	Julia
Matushka Carol	Warren
Archpriest Peter	Mary
Archpriest William	Loretta
Matushka Jean	Gilbert
Priest John	Carol
Priest Christopher	Peter
Mat. Jennifer	Janie
Andrew	Tom
Gideon	Elizabeth

Adam
Shaun
Myah
Margaret
Diane
Madelin
Villian
Deborah
Jovan
Claudia
John
Joey

Carissa
Natalia
Elizabeth
Tom
Alexander
Roger
Tina
Infant Benjamin
Infant Juliana
Infant Lennox
Infant Laila

*If you know someone who needs prayer, please give their name to Fr Jacob

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fellowship Night on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays starts October 10th. After a potluck dinner at 6pm, kids and adults will break out for separate instruction in the faith. We will finish with Small Compline, the Church's "bedtime prayer."

The **Fall Fashion Show** is next Sunday! There will be no Sunday School. If you can help bake this week, please see Elizabeth Pedersen

After coffee hour on Sunday, October 28, the PTC will sponsor a trip for our Sunday School kids to **Harvest Tyme Pumpkin Patch** in Lowell.

The O-Club continues to collect canned and dried foods for the needy. This month's collections will go to the **South Haven Food Pantry**. Please leave your donation in the narthex.

Mark your calendars:

Oct 10: Our first **Fellowship Night** – Potluck @ 6pm followed by teaching and Small Compline @ 7:30pm

Oct 14: **Fall Fashion Show** at Avalon Banquet Hall after Liturgy

Oct 24: **Fellowship Night** – Potluck @ 6pm followed by teaching and Small Compline @ 7:30pm

Oct 28: Sunday School trip to the **pumpkin patch**.

Last Week's Offerings to the Lord:

General Fund: \$1,637

Mortgage: \$383

Today's prosphora bread was offered by Sherry Mizimakoski.

Teen Relationships, the Realities

A reflection by his Grace, our Bishop Paul

This Sunday — October 7, 2018 — I will be hosting my third live stream on YouTube at 7pm CST on the topic of teen relationships. To watch, visit www.midwestfamily.org and follow the link to our channel. I have painted a very wide stroke of the brush, encompassing many facets of this rather broad topic. Today I would like to talk about the LGBTQ phenomenon that has appeared in the last few years.

For all the attention this topic has been receiving, everything I have read indicates LGBTQ people comprise a very small percentage of the total school population. Yet this is getting so much attention in the media, especially in Hollywood. When it comes to our Orthodox teens attending public schools, we might ask: how often are they really faced with this? I hear stories of our teens having friends who are gay or transgender. How should we view this? On the one hand, I believe our teens often handle this issue better than us grown-ups, who seem more conflicted about it. I think it is a good thing that teens have friendships with people who are gay, lesbian, or transgender. This demonstrates how one can relate to people who live lifestyles the Church doesn't bless without hanging that "Scarlet Letter" on them.

But the minute I say that, I am sure I will get in trouble with others who think I am going too far and "sanctioning" the lifestyle. This raises the question: By being friendly, or calling someone Jane who used go by John, does that mean one sanctions a lifestyle that the Church doesn't bless? We bishops often say in our letters and encyclicals that we should not hate someone who is gay or transgender or who has had

an abortion. We are always called to speak the truth in love when called to do so. But when people live a life that is contrary to what the Church teaches, how are we to love them? What does that love look like then? Saint Paul had to address the issue of sexual immorality (among others) in the Church of Corinth. Perhaps the following Scripture will shed some light on answering the questions I posed:

I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with immoral men; not at all meaning the immoral of this world, or the greedy and robbers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But rather I wrote to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber—not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. “Drive out the wicked person from among you”

– 1 Corinthians 5:9-13

I will further discuss this topic in next week’s reflection. May the blessing of the Lord be upon you.

With love in Christ,

The unworthy, +Paul

Glory to God for all things!