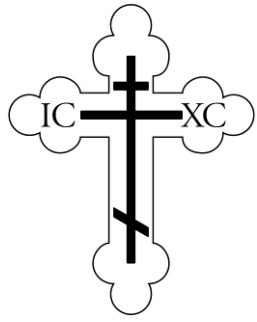
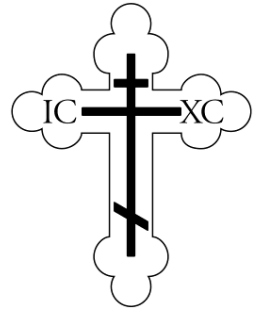


Protection of the Virgin Mary



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.**

July 7, 2019

Holy Fathers Thomas of Mt. Maleon and Acacius of Sinai

Saint Thomas of Mt. Maleon was a military commander before he became a monk. Strong and brave, he had participated in many battles, and brought victory to his countrymen, for which he gained glory and esteem. But, striving with all his heart towards God, Thomas abandoned the world and its honors, and he took monastic vows.

With great humility he visited monastic Elders, asking for guidance in the spiritual life. After several years Thomas received the blessing for solitary wilderness life and, led by a pillar of fire at night by the holy Prophet Elias, he settled on

Mount Maleon (on the eastern part of Athos). Dwelling in complete seclusion, St Thomas fought with invisible enemies with as much courage as he had displayed against the visible enemies of his country.

The life and deeds of St Thomas could not be concealed from the surrounding area. People began to flock to him seeking spiritual guidance, and even those suffering from sickness, since he received from God the blessing to heal infirmities.

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,
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 4 – Troparion for Sts. Thomas and Acacius

O God of our Fathers,
always act with kindness towards us;
take not Your mercy from us,
but guide our lives in peace//
through the prayers of Saints Thomas and Acacius!

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 4 – Kontakion for St. Thomas

Inflamed with divine love, you courageously showed us a great victory:

you spurned the mortal king and all earthy beauty.

You completed your worldly sojourn on Mount Maleon, from where you went up to Heaven to the King of kings.//

Unceasingly pray for us all, O Thomas!

Tone 2 – Kontakion for St. Acacius

Forsaking the world, you followed Christ from childhood.
emulating His voluntary humility, you cast down the prideful tyrant.

All-wise and venerable Acacius,

unceasingly pray for us all!

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: Romans 5.1-10

Therefore, brethren, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much

more than, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Gospel: Matthew 6.22-33

Jesus said to His disciples: “The lamp of the body is the eye. If, therefore, your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore, I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

“Therefore, do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Mat. Charlotte Conjelko
Ev.Mem. Phillip Lambo ('49)
John Strobazatic ('22)
Eudoky Niedbaljik ('56)

Mary Konowalik ('84)
Martha Rogers (2001)
Anatol Meuch

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Health & Salvation: | Carol | Melissa |
| Protopr. George | Tom | Jonathan |
| Mat. Anna | Elizabeth | Matthew |
| Archpr. Peter | Tina | Benjamin |
| Archpr. John | Adam | Shaun |
| Pr. John | Brittany | Gail |
| Pr. Christopher | Jennifer | Maria |
| Mat. Jennifer | Lennox | Snezana |
| Andrew | Laila | Barbara |
| Gideon | Paula | Thomas |
| Kevin | Alvin | Mary Ann |
| Jon | Kenneth | Carol |
| Tanya | Anna | Jessica |
| Jovan | Justin | Eduardo |
| Julia | Nika | Christine |
| Warren | Leo | |

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Fr Stojilko Kajevic! Fr Jacob returns from Ohio this evening.

There is no **Bible Study** this Wednesday.

The **women's book group** is holding a one-day lunch discussion on **Saturday, August 17**. The book is *Every Day Wonders: Stories of God's Providence* by Fr. Michael Oleksa, and it is now available in the bookstore for \$10. For more information, see Mat. Jenna.

Our **mortgage burning party** will be on Saturday, July 27. We will celebrate a **Molieben of Thanksgiving** at 3pm, then move

to the hall and patio for food, drink, music, and fun until dark. This is a free event for members and friends of PTVM, but **we need RSVPs by July 14**. Write your name and number of adults and children coming on the list in the narthex, or email it to ptvmchurch@gmail.com.

Mark your calendars:

July 27: **Mortgage Burning party!**

July 28: **St. Clement name's day celebration**

Aug 1-14: **Dormition Fast**

Culture and Society

A reflection by His Beatitude, our Metropolitan Tikhon

When Abba Zosima first came upon Saint Mary of Egypt in the desert, one of the first questions she asked him was the state of the world that she had left 47 years before:

“Why have you come, man of God, to me who am so sinful? Why do you wish to see a woman naked and devoid of every virtue? Though I know one thing—the grace of the Holy Spirit has brought you here to render me a service in time. Tell me, father, how are the Christian peoples living? And the kings? How is the Church guided?”

Like other ascetics and monastics throughout the history of the Church, Saint Mary did not, as is perhaps commonly understood, flee a corrupt world in order to find perfection in the desert. Rather, uncovering the passions in her own heart, she left to pursue a path of repentance through love for God and desire for His mercy. Though she did not meet a single human soul (or even a wild beast) during her time in

the desert, she nevertheless was brought to a genuine communion with God, which in turn led her to feel deep compassion for the world and its salvation.

The Church has always had an ambiguous relationship with the cultures and societies within which she sojourns. The tension between the broad ways of the world and the narrow path of the Gospel is often intense, and made more acute by various political, economic, and philosophical currents that make it even more difficult for the Church to articulate a genuinely Christ-centered position on “hot button” topics. The list of such topics is endless: gun control, abortion, immigration, racism, privacy, the sexual revolution, gender identity, and poverty, among others. The difficult question is how to address these issues as Orthodox Christians without being swallowed up by predetermined and rigid public opinion. A broader question is: can the Church be involved politically without becoming politically involved?

Every stand that we take as a Church carries political implications. To walk in a nation’s capital, whether to promote the sanctity of life or to end racism, places us in the company of others with whom we might not share full theological agreement. And yet, to not participate removes from us the possibility of presenting or maintaining our position with humility, yet with charity. Such efforts are often highlighted on the global and national levels, but efforts on the local level are perhaps even more effective.

Ecumenical, Interfaith, and Civic Relations

“It sounds like a paradox, but the basic religion that is being preached and accepted as the only means of overcoming secularism is in reality a surrender to secularism.” With these words, Father Alexander Schmemmann identifies one of the key points of tension in the discussion of the degree to which Orthodox Christians should participate in ecumenical and interfaith dialogues. Some place great value on such dialogue, while others believe it to

be fruitless or even apostasy. Part of the weakness of the present state of ecumenical dialogue with other Christians and relations with other faiths is that it is understood to be a specific field in which only certain people engage. Our participation in ecumenical bodies cannot simply happen in order to have a presence, if that presence is limited to a superficial participation. Our presence must be a bold and substantial one, where we both encounter the other and remain firm in our proclamation of the authentic faith of our fathers.

External Relations are not simply a technical area of expertise, although we do have specialists in that area. It really refers to how we relate as a Church to our fellow Orthodox Christians, to other Christians and to those of other faiths. It also encompasses how we interact with the civil authorities, institutions and governments of the countries in which we sojourn here in North America: Canada, the United States and Mexico.

There are those among us who are referred to as progressives, who are eager for dialogue. And those who are regarded as conservatives, who generally reject contact with others. This is where the authenticity of our faith is decided: because we do not preserve the truth by cursing those who are in error, nor do we offer what the human soul is looking for through acts of phony compliments. Here we have need of the true heroes of the faith, who save their souls by losing them for the Lord's sake."

—Archimandrite Vasileios

Glory to God for all things!