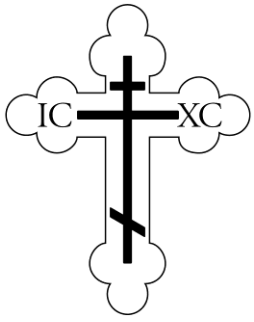
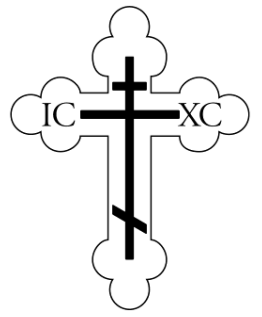


Protection of the Virgin Mary



Orthodox Church



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



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Rev. Dr. Jacob Van Sickle
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Great Vespers: 6pm Saturdays

Confession available before or
after services.

Divine Liturgy: 10am Sundays

June 28, 2020

Holy Unmercenaries

Cyrus and John

Saint Cyrus was a noted physician in the city of Alexandria, where he had been born and raised. He was a Christian, and he treated the sick without charge, not only curing their bodily afflictions, but also healing their spiritual infirmities. He would say, "Whoever wishes to avoid being ill should refrain from sin, for sin is often the cause of bodily illness."

Preaching the Gospel, the holy physician converted many pagans to Christ. During the persecution by Diocletian (284-305), St Cyrus withdrew into Arabia, where he became a monk. He continued to heal people by his prayer, having received from God the gift to heal every sickness.

In the city of Edessa at this time lived the soldier John, a pious Christian. When the persecution started, he went to Jerusalem and

there he heard about St Cyrus. He began to search for him, going first to Alexandria and then to Arabia. When St John finally found St Cyrus, he remained with him and became his faithful follower.

They learned of the arrest of the Christian woman Athanasia and her three young daughters. Theoctiste was fifteen; Theodota, was thirteen; and Eudoxia, was eleven. Sts Cyrus and John hastened to the prison to help them. They were concerned that faced with torture, the women might renounce Christ.

Sts Cyrus and John gave them courage to endure what lay before them. Learning of this, the ruler of the city arrested Cyrus and John, and seeing their steadfast and fearless confession of faith in Christ, he brought Athanasia and her daughters to witness their torture. The tyrant did not refrain from any form of torture against the holy martyrs. The women were not frightened by the sufferings of Sts Cyrus and John, but courageously continued to confess Christ. They were flogged and then beheaded, receiving their crowns of martyrdom. At the same place they executed the Holy Unmercenaries Cyrus and John.

Today we celebrate the transfer of the relics of Sts Cyrus and John from the Egyptian city of Konopa near Alexandria to the nearby village of Manuphin in the year 412. This village had been home to a notorious pagan temple, and evil spirits continued to plague its citizens. The holy Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria prayed fervently for a means of exorcising these demons, and an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a vision and commanded that the venerable relics of Sts Cyrus and John be transferred to Manuphin. Patriarch Cyril did the angel's bidding and built a church at Manuphin in the name of the holy martyrs. From that time, the place was purified of the Enemy's influence, and by the prayers of the holy Martyrs Cyrus and John there began to occur many miracles, healings of the sick and infirm.

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 5 – Troparion for Sts. Cyrus and John

You have given us the miracles of Your martyrs, Cyrus and John,
as an invincible rampart, O Christ God;
through their prayers, frustrate the plans of the heathens,
and strengthen the faith of the Orthodox Christians//
for You alone are good and the lover of man.

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 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 2 – Sunday Prokeimenon (Psalm 32)

The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation!

Epistle: Romans 5.1-10

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 then, 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 the Jews who came to Him: “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. Mark Gulab

John Sutko

Mat. Nadine Brown

Kostas Zissides

Ev.Mem. Joseph Plotsky ('37)

Theodore Yakimoff ('48)

Efimy Nepsa ('51)

John Prentoff ('76)

Martha Pachapa ('89)

Health & Salvation

Met. Theodosius	Barbara	Milka
Archpr. Peter	Thomas	Daniel
Pr. John	Jessica	Russell
Pr. Christopher	Eduardo	Brendan
Mat. Jennifer	Christine	Benjamin
Andrew	Nicholas	William
Gideon	Natalie	Kara
Kevin	Barbara	Nathan
Jon	Kristin	Sharon
Tanya	Linda	Michael
Jovan	Phyllis	Vern
Julia	Kay	Olga
Warren	Fred	Mark
Carol	Larry	Jerry
Tom	Rollie	Daniel
Elizabeth	Joseph	Joanna
Tina	Mark	Myah
Brittany	Alexa	Michael
Jennifer	Paula	Wanda
Lennox	James	Prudence
Laila	Joanne	Clay
Paula	Michael	Ann
Melissa	Joseph	Janice
Jonathan	Kathleen	Carl
Matthew	Paul	Victoria
Gail	William	Dushawna
Maria	Frederick	Daniel
Stacy	Janet	Elizabeth
Jeramie	Lea	Janet
Olivia	Hania	Claudia
Parker	James	N.Ill. Brandi
	Nadia	N.Ill. Aria

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We have entered “phase three” of **reopening the Church**. We can have up to 60 persons at one time, maintaining distance between groups. Our older members and those with complicating health conditions are still encouraged to take advantage of weekday Liturgies, which will continue. The next of these will be **tomorrow @ 10am for the feast of Sts Peter and Paul**.

The **O-Club** has begun assisting a new ministry: **MAKS Bags** was cofounded by our own Liz Wysocki to provide newly-placed **foster children with backpacks** full of essential and comfort items to help them adjust on their first night away from home. You can support this effort with an alms donation and/or by bringing in items from the list posted in the Narthex.

In September, **iconographer John Jurewicz** will begin work on a series of frescos in our Church of scenes from the Life of the Theotokos. This project is being sponsored by the **St. Clement's group**. The first icon will be **our feast-day, the Protection of the Virgin Mary**, on the west wall of the nave above the door. It has been the intention of the parish council for some years to have this icon done **in memory of Fr. Thomas Brown**, our former rector, as a token of our parish's appreciation for all of **Mat. Nadine's** work for our parish in the years since his passing. In the wake of her own recent passing, the council has decided to dedicate it to the both of them. Donations in any amount toward the icon may be made in their memory.

There will be **no Bible Study for the next two weeks**.

The next O-Club meal delivery will be to Clarendon of Schererville retirement community this Thursday, July 2. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Juli Grankowski or Sergei Ely.

The annual **Golf Outing** has been scheduled for August 22. Information is available in the narthex.

Our **Fashion Show** has been rescheduled for Sunday, August 9. Lunch will be served at 12pm. Please contact Elizabeth Pedersen, Sherry Mizimakoski, or Nada Bucek if you need to return tickets or buy new ones.

Mark your calendars:

Jun 29: Divine Liturgy for the **Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul @ 10am**

July 4: **Divine Liturgy @ 10am** for at-risk parishioners

Aug 9: **Fashion Show** at Avalon Manor @ 11pm

Aug 22: **Annual Golf Outing**

Last week's offerings to the Lord: \$2,220

Some Lights are Out There

a reflection by His Eminence, our Archbishop Paul

I saw a brief video on Facebook earlier in the week that showed two children—one black, the other white—and they appeared to be three years old. They joyfully ran to each other and embraced each other. It reminded me of our Lord’s teaching:

Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” (Luke 18:5-17)

Young children have an amazing ability to accept things as they are with no prejudgments. In fact, my bias is revealed when I described this interaction as being between a white child and black child. I highly doubt those two kids would have thought in those terms. To see the image of Christ in another is what young kids do without being aware of it, until some begin to learn differently, and that purity becomes compromised.

The other image I saw this week was a video of my home parish that used to be in Detroit, Michigan. I grew up in that temple. Seeing the video of the temple and what has happened to it brought tears to my eyes. As with many urban churches, my home parish left the city and moved to the suburbs and built a new temple. The old temple was sold and used by two different churches between 1986 and 2011. Since then it has been vacant. But a Detroit ministry called “The Good News Gang” entered into the picture in 2015. They are using the school building for ministry to youth and looking to restore the church. Good work is being done through this ministry.

What allowed many churches (not just Orthodox) to become alienated from the communities they were established in? Why could they not adapt and respond to the changing community instead of becoming an island disconnected from that community? The answers to this are not simple, but I have to think that some form of racism was behind it. So what do we need to do about this?

I think each of us, starting with myself, need to come clean and admit to that fact we have prejudged people on the basis of the color of their skin. But this process of coming clean has to happen in an atmosphere of understanding, love, and forgiveness. We need to be

allowed to acknowledge our biases without immediately being condemned for them. We need to work through those biases by being educated through dialogue, so that we can repent of them and have a true change of mind and heart. There is a spirit today of immediate condemnation of anything that doesn't go along with the program. The sin of racism is condemned in the secular world with such severe judgment that repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation and love are not possible. We end up exposing the speck in someone else's eye without looking at the plank in our own eye, as Jesus teaches. This is where the Church needs to witness and be an image of understanding, love, repentance and forgiveness. The secular world knows nothing of repentance. We as the Church need to take the lead in this area and be this very icon we are called to be.

That being said, there are already some good things going on in our Diocese when it comes to breaking down barriers. Not all of our parishes have left the inner city to flee to the suburbs. We have at least five parishes in particular that have made conscious commitments to redefine their mission and work with the local community that they were previously alienated from, through works of kindness and mercy. This is not just about doling out food. It is an active attempt to get to know the neighbors where the church is. When this happened, the neighborhoods began to embrace the churches and appreciate their presence. This did come with a price. A few members ended up leaving the parish because of this change in focus. But attitudes can be changed when we embrace the Gospel and love those that God brings into our midst, irrespective of the color of their skin.

You are also aware of the ministries of FOCUS Minnesota, Detroit, St. Louis, and Cleveland (St. Herman's House). They have taken the work of some of our parishes to another level. I would encourage families to get involved with a local FOCUS chapter if one is near where you live. If you are not close to any such ministries, then be a force in your local parish to break barriers. Find organic ways you can involve yourselves in ministry to various people of color that is consistent with what the Church teaches. Just be aware, you might encounter resistance. But as we get to know people for who they really are and not who we think they are, salvific changes can happen.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you,

The unworthy Archbishop Paul