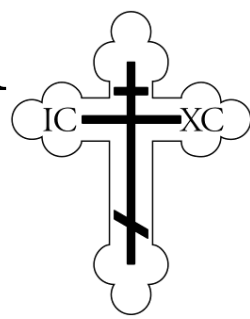
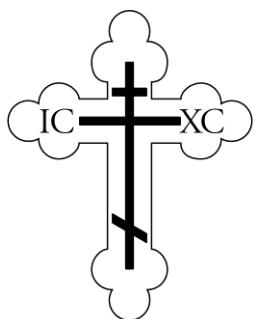


# Protection of the Virgin Mary

## 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](http://www.ptvm.com)

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

Great Vespers: 6pm Saturdays

Divine Liturgy: 10am Sundays

Confession is available before or  
after Vespers or by appointment.

## December 6, 2020

### St Nicholas of Myra in Lycia

Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia is famed as a great saint pleasing to God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of modern Turkey), and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God.

From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Bishop Nicholas of Patara rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his nephew. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the priesthood, making him his assistant and entrusting him to instruct the flock.

In serving the Lord the youth was fervent of spirit, and in his proficiency with questions of faith he was like an Elder, who aroused the wonder and deep respect of believers. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas

displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor.

There was a certain inhabitant of Patara, whom St Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in desperation he planned to sell their bodies so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man's poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. St Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, St Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds.

The Bishop of Patara decided to go on pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem, and entrusted the guidance of his flock to Saint Nicholas, who fulfilled this obedience carefully and with love. When the bishop returned, Nicholas asked his blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. When he reached the ancient city of Jerusalem and came to Golgotha, St Nicholas gave thanks to the Savior. He went to all the holy places, worshiping at each one. One night on Mount Sion, the closed doors of the church opened by themselves for the great pilgrim. Going round the holy places connected with the earthly service of the Son of God, St Nicholas decided to withdraw into the desert, but he was stopped by a divine voice urging him to return to his native country. He returned to Lycia, and yearning for a life of quietude, the saint entered into the brotherhood of a monastery named Holy Sion, which had been founded by his uncle. But the Lord again indicated another path for him, "Nicholas, this is not the vineyard where you shall bear fruit for Me. Return to the world, and glorify My Name there." So he left Patara and went to Myra in Lycia.

Upon the death of Archbishop John, Nicholas was chosen as Bishop of Myra after one of the bishops of the Council said that a new archbishop should be revealed by God, not chosen by men. One of the elder bishops had a vision of a radiant Man, Who told him that the one who came to the church that night and was first to enter should be made archbishop. He would be named Nicholas. The bishop went to the church at night to await Nicholas. The saint, always the first to arrive at church, was stopped by the bishop. "What is your name, child?" he asked. God's chosen one replied, "My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant."

After his consecration, St Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness and love for people. This was particularly precious for the Lycian Church during the persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked up in prison together with other Christians for refusing to worship idols, sustained them and exhorted them to endure the fetters, punishment and torture. The Lord preserved him unharmed. Upon the accession of St Constantine as emperor, St Nicholas was restored to his flock.

In the year 325, St Nicholas participated in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicæan Symbol of Faith, and he stood up against the heretic Arius. St Nicholas, fired with zeal for the Lord, assailed the heretic Arius with his words, and also struck him upon the face. For this reason, he was deprived of the emblems of his episcopal rank and placed under guard. But several of the holy Fathers had the same vision, seeing the Lord Himself and the Mother of God returning to him the Gospel and omophorion. The Fathers of the Council agreed that the audacity of the saint was pleasing to God, and restored the saint to the office of bishop.

Even during his life, the saint worked many miracles. One of the greatest was the deliverance from death of three men unjustly condemned by the Governor, who had been bribed. The saint boldly went up to the executioner and took his sword, already suspended over the heads of the condemned. The Governor, denounced by St Nicholas for his wrong doing, repented and begged for forgiveness. Witnessing this remarkable event were three military officers, who were sent to Phrygia by the emperor Constantine to put down a rebellion. They did not suspect that soon they would also be compelled to seek the intercession of St Nicholas. Evil men slandered them before the emperor, and the officers were sentenced to death. Appearing to St Constantine in a dream, St Nicholas called on him to overturn the unjust sentence of the military officers.

He worked many other miracles and struggled many long years at his labor. Having reached old age, St Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. His venerable relics were preserved incorrupt in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087, his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now.

# HYMNS OF THE DAY

## Tone 1 – Resurrectional Troparion

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews,  
while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure body,  
You rose on the third day, O Savior,  
granting life to the world.

The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life:  
“Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ!

Glory to Your Kingdom!//

Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of mankind!”

## 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 St. Nicholas

In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith,  
an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence;

your humility exalted you;

your poverty enriched you.

O Hierarch Father Nicholas,

entreat Christ our God//

that our souls may be saved!

## Tone 1 – Resurrectional Kontakion

When Gabriel announced to you, O Virgin, “Rejoice!”

with that word the Master of all was incarnate in you, O holy Ark.

As the righteous David said,

your womb became more spacious than the heavens, bearing your Creator.

Glory to Him Who took abode in you!

Glory to Him Who came <sup>^</sup>from you!

Glory to Him Who freed us by being born of you!

## Tone 3 – Kontakion for St. Nicholas

You appeared as a priest in Myra, O Saint Nicholas,  
fulfilling the Gospel of Christ, O venerable one;

you laid down your life for your people

and rescued the innocent from death.//

Therefore, you have been blest as a great initiate of the grace of God.

#### **Tone 4 – 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 1 – Resurrection Prokeimenon (Psalm 32)**

Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us  
as we have set our hope on You!

#### **Tone 7 –Prokeimenon for St. Nicholas (Psalm 63)**

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord, / and shall hope in Him!

#### **Epistle: Ephesians 5.9-19 (Sunday)**

Brethren: The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth, finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore, He says: “Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.”

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

#### **Hebrews 13.17-21 (St. Nicholas)**

Brethren: Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably. But I especially urge you to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

### **Gospel: Luke 17.12-19 (Sunday)**

At that time, as Jesus entered a village, He was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving Him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.

Then said Jesus, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"

And He said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has saved you."

### **Luke 6.17-23 (St. Nicholas)**

At that time, Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all.

Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets."

# WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

**N.Dep.** Barbara Kurth  
Mary Ann Behnke  
Mitch Bright  
Archbishop David

Sue McCune  
**Ev.Mem.** Elias Talovich ('44)  
Mary Panchak ('45)  
William Panchak ('45)

## **Health & Salv.**

Archpr. Peter  
Archpr. John  
Mat. Margaret  
Mat. Anne  
Pr. Christopher  
Mat. Jennifer  
Andrew  
Gideon  
Kevin  
Jon  
Tanya  
Jovan  
Julia  
Warren  
Tom  
Tina  
Brittany  
Jennifer  
Gail  
Stacy  
Jeramie  
Olivia  
Parker  
Christine  
Linda  
Larry  
Rollie  
Joseph  
Nadia  
Daniel  
Brendan  
David  
Sharon

Michael  
Janie  
Tanya  
Christopher  
Nina  
Renee  
Carissa  
Cynthia  
John  
Vern  
Olga  
Mark  
Jerry  
Michael  
Janice  
Dushawna  
Daniel  
Anthony  
Janet  
Daryl  
Diane  
Carla  
Susan  
Timothy  
William  
Paul  
Joseph  
Linda  
Claudia  
Tom  
Beth  
Elizabeth  
Snezana  
Nathan

Kara  
Ryan  
Barbara  
Thomas  
Carol  
Christine  
Jon  
Zoey  
Dominic  
Declan  
Hudson  
TaQuana  
Ayden  
Hyland  
Jason  
Ted  
James  
Pamela  
Erin  
Alexander  
Ronald  
Theodore  
Robert  
Richard  
Linda  
Mary Ann  
Lara  
Cheryl  
Craig  
Chuck  
Len  
Denise  
Scott

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

After venerating the cross, we will serve a **panikhida** for the newly departed Barbara Kurth, sister to Carol Kane and cousin of Helen Campbell and Olga Atzhorn.

**Thank you** to the many people who came yesterday to decorate the Church for Christmas. It looks beautiful!

We continue to take precautions during the health crisis. Everyone except celebrants and choir must be masked and maintain distance between groups. Those seeking to limit their exposure to large groups are encouraged to take advantage of weekday Liturgies with lower attendance. The next will be for the feast of the Conception of the Theotokos on **Wednesday, December 9**.

This Advent season we are participating in a **Christmas toy drive for foster children**. There is a flyer with more information in the Narthex, as well as a drop-box to leave your gifts.

There are **tables set up in the hall with many old books and other items free for the taking**. This is the last week they will be out.

For **Bible Study** this week, read Revelation 18-19.

### Mark your calendars:

Dec 8: **Great Vespers for the Conception of the Virgin Mary @ 6pm**

Dec 9: **Divine Liturgy for the Conception of the Virgin Mary @ 9am**  
**Bible Study (on Zoom) @ 7pm**

Dec 11: **Red Cross Blood Drive 12-6pm**

Dec 24: **Vesperal Liturgy of Christmas @ 10am**  
**Christmas Vigil @ 6pm**

Dec 25: **Festal Divine Liturgy @ 9am**

**Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$2,791**

# Glory to God for all things!