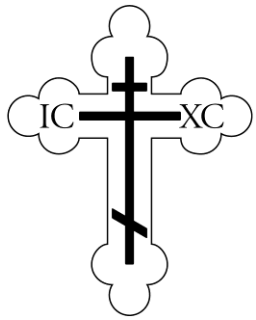
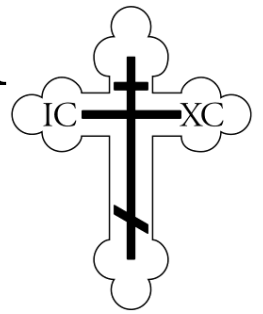


Protection of the Virgin Mary

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

Confession is available before or
after Vespers or by appointment

January 17, 2021

St. Anthony the Great (†356)

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 4 – Troparion for St. Anthony

You imitated the ways of zealous Elijah,
and followed the straight path of John the Baptist.
You became a desert-dweller,
strengthening the world by your prayers.//
O Father Anthony, intercede with Christ God that our souls may be saved!

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 St. Anthony

You rejected the tumult of this life
living your life to the end in solitude, imitating the Baptist in every way.
With him we honor you, most venerable Anthony,//
the foundation of the Fathers.

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 – Resurrectional Prokeimenon (Psalm 28)

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

Tone 7 – Prokeimenon for St. Anthony (Psalm 115)

Precious in the sight of the Lord / is the death of His saints!

Epistle: Colossians 1.12-18 (Sunday)

Brethren: Give thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Hebrews 13.17-21 (St. Anthony)

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 18.18-27 (Sunday)

At that time, a certain ruler asked Jesus, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

So, Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'"

And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth."

So, when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?"

But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

Luke 6.17-23 (St. Anthony)

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. Blythe

Rodney Veselica

Mildred Drozik

Mary Ann Caravana

Health & Salv.

Archpr. Peter

Mat. Margaret

Mat. Anne

Mat. Nancy

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

Ernst Pedersen

Ev.Mem. James Naidoff ('81)

Evdokim Tkatschon ('72)

Andrew Gnesevich ('46)

Tanya

Christopher

Nina

Renee

Carissa

Cynthia

John

Vern

Olga

Mark

Jerry

Michael

Janice

Anthony

Janet

Daryl

Diane

Carla

Susan	Carol	Ronald
Timothy	Christine	Theodore
William	Jon	Robert
Paul	Zoey	Lara
Joseph	Dominic	Craig
Linda	Declan	Chuck
Claudia	Hudson	Scott
Tom	Ayden	Mark
Beth	Hyland	Julie
Elizabeth	Jason	Christine
Snezana	Ted	Dale
Nathan	James	Ashley
Kara	Pamela	Abbey
Ryan	Erin	Hillary
Thomas	Alexander	

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please contact Fr Jacob if you would like to **schedule a house blessing this year**. Otherwise, I have prepared a short service of blessing that you may use to bless your own home with Holy Water from the Church. A service booklet may be picked up from the table in the Narthex.

2021 Calendars and Stewardship Envelopes are available for pick-up in the Narthex.

Wednesday evening **Bible Study** is back over Zoom at 7pm. This week, read **1 Kingdoms (a.k.a. 1 Samuel) 3-6**.

Reports and ballots for the **annual meeting on Feb 14** will be mailed out this week.

Mark your calendars:

Jan 19: **Hall Committee meeting @ 6pm**
Parish Council meeting @ 7pm

Jan 20: **Bible Study @ 7pm (Zoom)**

Jan 21: **Faith Enrichment @ 10am**

Feb 14: **Annual Parish Meeting** after Divine Liturgy

Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$4,551

“We Rejoice even in Tribulation”

An Encyclical of Hope from the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America (part 3)

ACCEPTING GOD’S PROVIDENCE

The psalms point the way for us from fear back to God. They take us from the first step of admitting our fear to the second step of submitting ourselves (again) to God. Our admission of fear cannot be an expression of anger: “I am suffering and afraid, God, and how dare You permit this!” Rather, we release our fear by turning to the Lord in humility and with trust in His goodness. We show Him our wound and ask for His healing mercy: “Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation” (Ps 37). If we still find rebellion in our hearts, then we humbly bring that before the Lord, again and again.

This attitude of admission and submission — or as we more commonly call it, confession and repentance — allows us to accept all of the difficult circumstances of our life with gratitude. We need not pretend that such circumstances are good in themselves. Yet these collisions with our broken world bring us to our senses. They show us our separation from God and our utter powerlessness without Him. The great Apostle Paul himself admits:

Concerning this thing [the thorn in the flesh], 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. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong (2 Cor 12:8-10).

God arranges for us precisely those tribulations that will move us forward on our spiritual journey by showing us our own weakness and God’s strength. If we open our hearts to Him in honest confession and repentance, He meets us in those tribulations with a grace and strength we could not have imagined.

To those outside the Faith, the assertions that God arranges tribulations and that we would “take pleasure in infirmities” and

“glory in tribulations” may sound as though we seek to inflict harm on ourselves. Is God seeking vengeance on us for our sins? Are we seeking to expiate our sins with pain? No, beloved in the Lord: God is our Father, and He seeks to heal us. A cancer patient rejoices in a surgery that excises the cancer. Does the surgery hurt? Absolutely. The pain from the incisions may linger for a long time. But each twinge or even stab of pain from those wounds reminds the patient that the cancer in those places is gone. He can rejoice in the pain that renews his gratitude. God is not the source of tribulations — He created a good world, and we are the ones who broke it — but in His almighty providence He permits us to experience some of the consequences of our rebellion in order to help us. The Apostle Paul reminds us in the Epistle to the Hebrews,

Brethren, whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chastens not? But if you be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we were not put to shame. Shall we not far rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and live? For they chastened us for a few days as it pleased them, but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. For no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby. Therefore, lift up the hands which hang down and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed (Heb 12:6-13).

God is our loving Father, Who knows precisely what tribulations will ultimately be to our benefit. Although no chastening seems joyous in the moment of tribulation, we can rejoice in the assurance that God is knocking on the door of our hearts (Rev 3:20); He is seeking us as the Shepherd searches for the lost sheep (Lk 15:4). We can cry out to Him in admission and submission, and find peace and joy in that very act; peace and joy that will continue to grow as we open our hearts more and more to the grace of God. When we lift up our hands and fall to our knees, when we make our paths straight by returning to Him, He grants us “the peaceable fruit of righteousness,” peace and joy.

Beloved, this is the process by which “we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope” (Rom 5:3-4). Yes, we glory in our tribulations, knowing that by the grace of God, they are working the transformation of our hearts! But this transformation takes time; St. Paul does not write that tribulation immediately produces hope, but that “tribulation produces perseverance, and perseverance, character, and character, hope.” Let us not be downcast at the prospect of a slow transformation, but thankful for the Lord’s condescension in teaching us so patiently, so tenderly. Parents and teachers, it is never too early to begin this lesson with our children. We suffer acutely when they suffer — the heart of the Theotokos was pierced when her Son hung on the Cross — but our greatest task is not to remove every tribulation from them (which we are unable to do), but to teach them how to accept difficulties with faith and perseverance that produce hope and joy. Our children depend upon us for this example, and we will find that they will also teach and encourage us.

In addition to bringing our own fear and pain to God, however, we may also find ourselves deeply troubled by the suffering endured by others, particularly the deep injustices and intense suffering experienced by entire groups of people. Dearly beloved, in such circumstances there are two things for us to remember: first, that God loves those who are oppressed and suffer with innocence more than we or they can comprehend, and He will not abandon them; second, that in their suffering, He draws them to Himself on the Cross, and prepares great glory for them in the Resurrection. What is essential for us is to ask how we can serve those who are suffering, and then to do what the rich man in the gospel failed to do (Lk 16:29-31). How can we help those in need? How can we help those who are oppressed? Dear ones, you have already begun to do this, so do not slacken your efforts! Peace and joy are to be found here, as well — not earned by our good works, but bestowed upon the helpers and those who are being helped, by the grace of God.

Glory to God for all things!