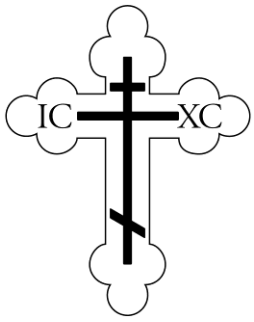
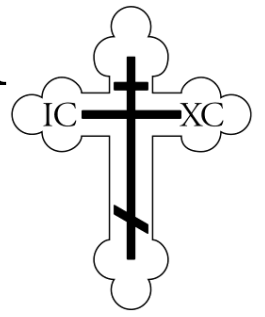


Protection of the Virgin Mary

Orthodox Church



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



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Merrillville, IN 46410
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Rev. Dr. Jacob Van Sickle
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Great Vespers: 6pm Saturdays

Divine Liturgy: 10am Sundays

Confession is available before or
after Vespers or by appointment

February 7, 2021

Afterfeast of the Meeting of the Lord St Parthenius of Lampsacus

St Parthenius was a native of northwestern Asia Minor, where his father Christopher served as deacon. The youth did not receive adequate schooling, but he learned the Holy Scripture by attending church services. He had a good heart, and distributed to the poor the money he earned working as a fisherman. Filled with the grace of God, St Parthenius from age eighteen healed the sick in the name of Christ, cast out demons and worked other miracles. Learning of the young man's virtuous life, Bishop Philetus of Melitoupolis educated him and ordained him presbyter.

In 325, during the reign of Constantine the Great, Archbishop Achilles of Cyzicus made him bishop of the city of Lampsacus (also in Asia Minor). In the city were many pagans, and the saint fervently began to spread the faith in Christ, confirming it through many miracles and by healing the sick. The people began to turn from their pagan beliefs, and the saint went to the emperor

Constantine seeking permission to tear down the pagan temple and build a Christian church in its place. The emperor received the saint with honor, gave him a decree authorizing the destruction of the pagan temple, and provided him with the means to build a church. Returning to Lampsacus, St Parthenius had the pagan temple torn down, and built a beautiful church of God in the city.

The saint was so kind that he refused healing to no one who came to him, or who chanced to meet him by the wayside, whether he suffered from bodily illnesses or was tormented by unclean spirits. With the great power of the name of Christ, the saint banished a host of demons from people, from their homes, and from the waters of the sea.

Once, the saint prepared to cast out a devil from a certain man, who had been possessed by it since childhood. The demon began to implore the saint not to do so. St Parthenius promised to give the evil spirit another man in whom he could dwell. The demon asked, "Who is that man?" The saint replied, "You may dwell in me, if you wish." The demon fled as if stung by fire, crying out, "If the mere sight of you is a torment to me, how can I dare to enter into you?"

Having shown people the great power of faith in Christ, the saint converted a multitude of idol-worshippers to the true God. St Parthenius died peacefully and was solemnly buried beside the cathedral church of Lampsacus, which he built.

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 1 – Troparion of the Feast

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!
From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, ^Christ our God,
enlightening those who sat in darkness.
Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder,
you accepted in your arms the ^Redeemer of our souls, //
Who grants us the Resurrection!

Tone 4 – Troparion for St Parthenius

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 Parthenius,
entreat Christ our God//
that our souls may be saved!

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 – Kontakion for St Parthenius

You received divine grace to work miracles/
wise and holy God-bearing wonderworker Parthenius.
You cleansed the passions of all the faithful
and drove out evil spirits.//
Therefore, we praise you as a great initiate of the grace of God.

Tone 1 – Kontakion of the Feast

By Your Nativity You sanctified the Virgin's womb
and blessed Simeon's hands, ^O Christ God.
Now You have come and saved us through love.
Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians,//
O only Lover of Man!

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Tone 2 – Resurrectional Prokeimenon (Psalm 117)

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

Tone 3 – Prokeimenon for the Feast (Luke 1)

My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!

Epistle: 1 Timothy 1.15-17

My son Timothy: This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel: Matthew 15.21-28

At that time, Jesus departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."

But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."

But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Leo DuMoulin

Protopr. Daniel Hubiak

Vern Orr

Jeffrey Smith

Blythe

Darrell Hall

Pr. James Doyle

Rodney Veselica

Mildred Drozik

Ev.Mem. John Romanchak ('31)

Dorothy Christoff ('98)

Eugenia Shawkun (2006)

Health & Salv.

Archpr. Peter

Mat. Margaret

Mat. Anne

Pr. Christopher

Mat. Jennifer

Andrew

Gideon

Kevin

Jon

Tanya

Jovan

Julia	John	Zoey
Warren	Olga	Dominic
Tom	Mark	Declan
Tina	Jerry	Hudson
Jennifer	Michael	Ayden
Gail	Anthony	Hyland
Stacy	Janet	Jason
Jeramie	Daryl	Ted
Olivia	Diane	James
Parker	Carla	Pamela
Christine	Susan	Erin
Larry	Timothy	Alexander
Rollie	William	Ronald
Joseph	Paul	Theodore
Nadia	Joseph	Robert
Brendan	Linda	Craig
David	Claudia	Chuck
Sharon	Elizabeth	Scott
Michael	Snezana	Mark
Janie	Nathan	Christine
Tanya	Kara	Dale
Christopher	Ryan	Ashley
Nina	Thomas	Abbey
Renee	Carol	Hillary
Carissa	Christine	Pauline
Cynthia	Jon	Mary

*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.

Next Sunday is our parish **Annual Meeting**. Because we cannot have our usual meal due to the ongoing pandemic, we will hold the meeting in the nave immediately following the Divine Liturgy. In order to expedite the meeting, we will hear no business except to elect a parish council and approve a budget for 2021.

For **Bible Study** Wednesday, read **1 Kingdoms (1 Samuel) 11-13**.

Mark your calendars:

Feb 10: **Bible Study @ 7pm (Zoom)**

Feb 12: **Friday Faith Enrichment @ 10am**

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

Livestream with Archbishop Paul: **“Who is God?” @ 7pm**

Feb 19: **Red Cross Blood Drive 12p-6p**

“We Rejoice even in Tribulation”

**An Encyclical of Hope from the Holy Synod of Bishops
of the Orthodox Church in America (part 4)**

CONCLUSION

Beloved, we have just come through the Nativity season, in which we celebrated the Birth in the Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is with us! He condescends to us with ineffable love, precisely so that He may take all the suffering of the world into Himself upon the Cross. He shares our life, filled with tribulation, so that we may share in His life. This is our hope! This is our joy! Because He is with us, we need not be afraid. Our burdens are His burdens; He will not remove them from us, but He makes us able to bear them by dwelling within us. When Our Lord and Savior lives in us, we can do all things through Him, Who strengthens us (Phil 4:13). What were the words of the Archangel to the Theotokos at the Annunciation (Lk 1:30)? “Do not be afraid.” What were the words of Gabriel to Joseph the Betrothed in his dream (Mt 1:20), and the exclamation of the angels to the shepherds in the fields (Lk 2:10)? “Do not be afraid.” Christ Himself says to us, “In this world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (Jn 16:33).

As we begin the New Year, the Year of Our Lord 2021, we will celebrate the Feast of Theophany, in which Christ descends into the chaotic waters and transforms them into the waters of life. One of the prophecies read at the Great Blessing of the Waters says, “Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree” (Is 55:13). Dear

children of God, this is not a promise that God will remove tribulation from our temporal lives. Rather, it is a promise that God will transform the tribulation we encounter into the means by which we enter the Kingdom. This is the way of the Cross: a scandal and foolishness to many, but the power of God to those of us who believe (I Cor 1:23). Thus the briar becomes the myrtle; the tribulations become the crosses we take up in order to follow Christ into the Resurrection. By His grace, no longer will they be heavy burdens, but the light yoke for which we give thanks and by which we enter into everlasting life.

Let us rejoice! Let us bear one another's burdens, let us give aid to those who are suffering or oppressed, let us not judge one another. Pray for one another. Pray for us, your bishops; we pray for you earnestly, with great tenderness. You are our joy in the Lord, because Christ is manifest among you! At Theophany, Christ sanctifies the waters by which we receive the Holy Spirit; we receive His light so that we may in turn shine forth as spiritual lights in the world. This is our calling in 2021, and every day of our lives: to enthrone Christ in our hearts, so that it is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us (Gal 2:20). This is our hope, this is our joy! Let this be a year of our renewal, a year we will remember as one in which we received great grace. Remembering our membership in the Body of Christ, the unshakable Church, let us "be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:6-7). Amen.

+ TIKHON

Archbishop of Washington,
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

+ NATHANIEL

Archbishop of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate

+ BENJAMIN

Archbishop of San Francisco and the West

+ MARK

Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania

+ ALEJO

Archbishop of Mexico City and Mexico

+ MELCHISEDEK

Archbishop of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania

+ IRÉNÉE

Archbishop of Ottawa and the Archdiocese of Canada

+ MICHAEL

Archbishop of New York and New York and New Jersey

+ ALEXANDER

Archbishop of Dallas, the South and the Bulgarian Diocese

+ PAUL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

Glory to God for all things!