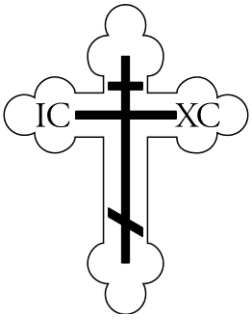
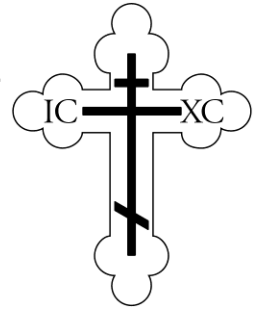


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



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

Welcome visitors!
Please join us in the
parish hall after Divine
Liturgy for coffee hour.

January 16, 2022

Veneration of the Chains of St. Peter Sunday of the Sanctity of Life

The Veneration of the Honorable Chains of the Holy and All-Praised Apostle Peter: In about the year 42, on the orders of Herod Agrippa, the Apostle Peter was thrown into prison for preaching about Christ the Savior. In prison he was held secure by two iron chains. During the night before his trial, an angel of the Lord removed these chains from the Apostle Peter and led him out from the prison. Christians who learned of the miracle took the chains and kept them as precious keepsakes. For three centuries the chains were kept in Jerusalem, and those who were afflicted with illness and approached them with faith received healing. Patriarch Juvenal presented the chains to Eudokia, wife of the emperor Theodosius the Younger, and she in turn transferred them from Jerusalem to Constantinople in either the year 437 or 439.

Eudokia sent one chain to Rome to her daughter Eudoxia (the wife of Valentinian), who built a church on the Esquiline hill dedicated to the Apostle Peter and placed the chain in it. There were other chains in Rome, with which the Apostle Peter was shackled before his martyrdom under the emperor Nero. These were also placed in the church. On January 16, the chains of St Peter are brought out for public veneration.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 5 – Resurrectional Troparion

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

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 to St. Peter

You came to us without leaving Rome
through the precious chains that you wore.
First-enthroned of the Apostles,
we bow down to them in faith and pray://
“Through your prayers to God grant us great mercy!”

Tone 5 – Resurrectional Kontakion

You descended into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
You have delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man,//
and we cry to You: “O Lord, save us!”

Tone 2 – Kontakion for St. Peter’s Chains

Christ the Rock radiantly glorifies the Rock of Faith,
the first-enthroned of the disciples;

He calls us to honor the miracles wrought through Peter’s chains, //
so that He may grant us forgiveness of our sins.

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 5 – Sunday Prokeimenon (Psalm 11)

You, O Lord, shall protect us
and preserve us from this generation forever!

Epistle: Colossians 3.12-16

Brethren: As the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Gospel: Luke 18.18-27

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."

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

New Dep. Thomas Reibly

Presv. Tulla Poteres

Michael Heady

Selma Zorka

Ev.Mem. Nicholas Olhovik ('19)

Helen Dorohov ('22)

Julia Molchan ('30)

Blaguna Taneff ('48)

Marie Wagner ('49)

Dionisy Polischuck ('50)

Anton Popka ('61)

Health & Salv.

Archpr. Peter

Archpr. Theodore

Mat. Margaret

Mat. Anne

Pr. Christopher

Mat. Jennifer

Andrew

Gideon

Kevin

Jon

Tanya

Jovan

Julia

Tom

Tina

Jennifer

Stacy

Jeramie

Olivia

Parker

Christine

Larry

Rollie

Joseph

Nadia

Brendan

Tanya

Christopher

Nina

Renee

Carissa

Cynthia

John

Olga

Janie

Michael

David

Sharon

Mark

Jerry

Michael

Anthony

Daryl

Diane

Carla

Susan

Timothy

William

Paul

Joseph

Linda

Claudia

Elizabeth

Carol

Snezana

Ryan

Nathan

Kara

Christine

Jon

Zoey

Dominic

Declan

Hudson

Ayden

Hyland

Jason

Ted

James

Pamela

Alexander

Ronald	Laura	Sandra
Theodore	Dorothy	Linda
Robert	Vasiliy	Stephen
Craig	William	Megan
Chuck	Wanda	William
Scott	Cindy	Jim
Mark	Mary	Camille
Christine	Linda	John
Dale	Ivanka	Martha
Pauline	Susan	Mark
Mary	Denise	Michelle
Timothy	Valerie	Irene
Lisa	Jeffrey	Robert
Lois	Aaron	Rebecca
Michael	William	Robert
Janice	Jamie	April
Ken	Karen	Margaret
Debbie	Dale	Kiersten
Jacqueline	Jack	Michelle
Cindy	Joyce	Joseph
Daniel	Anna	

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For **Bible Study** this week, read **Jonah 1-4**.

Every year at this time, **Orthodox Christian homes are blessed with the new holy water of Theophany**. Make an appointment with Fr Jacob to have your home blessed. The Church teaches us to sanctify everything: dwellings, places of work, all our pursuits, and the fruits of our labor. The home blessing at Theophany represents a renewal of our lives in Christ. Washed in the baptismal waters, our homes become temples of the Holy Spirit for the fulfillment of the will of our Heavenly Father. This is why the Church blesses everything found in a Christian home; if something is not worthy of being blessed, then it should not be in the home of a Christian.

Here is how to prepare for your house blessing: All who reside in the household should make every effort to be present for the Blessing. We gather in the dining room. On your dining room table or family icon corner, set 1) A lit candle, 2) An icon of Christ, and 3)

A list of the names of family members living and departed you wish to pray for. Also please remember to turn off any televisions or other noisy electronics. When the priest arrives everyone in the house should gather around the table/family altar and join in prayer and singing. If there are children, they usually carry the icon and a candle to lead the priest from room to room. If not, the head of the household will lead the priest. After the blessing, we all gather back around the icon for the concluding prayers.

Last week, **we discovered the source of the theft** from some weeks ago. It was our hired cleaning person of over three years. So, we have had to let them go. If anyone has a recommendation for a trusted cleaner, please let parish leadership know.

Mark your calendars:

Jan 19: **Bible Study @ 7pm**

Jan 21: **Blood Drive** at St. Mary's Hall @ 12-6pm

Feb 1: Great Vespers for the **Meeting of the Lord @ 6pm**

Feb 2: Divine Liturgy for the **Meeting of the Lord @ 10am**

Feb 13: **Annual Parish Meeting & Lunch** after Divine Liturgy

Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$2,200

2021 March For Life Address **of his Beatitude, our Metropolitan Tikhon**

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

I greet you all in a spirit of peace, brotherhood, and unity as we march together this day. This year is, of course, different. Usually, we gather together in person for this march and we draw strength and encouragement from each other's presence. With the current health crisis, we still march, albeit virtually, and we do so with no less firm conviction or common purpose. And it is this common purpose which brings all of us here from so many different backgrounds and walks of life: because we wish to protect the most vulnerable among us.

The children destroyed by abortion have no actions they can take or voice to speak with. They have done nothing right or wrong.

They have committed no crimes. They have no power. They are truly the most vulnerable among us and so it is up to us to act and speak for their protection.

This is a good task. It is a sacred task. It is sacred because God Himself is a protector: the “Father of the fatherless and protector of widows” (Ps 68:5). He is a rescuer, a savior, especially of the vulnerable. Joseph, unjustly sold into slavery, was rescued from his brother’s treachery. When God’s people were groaning in their oppression in Egypt, they cried out to Him, and He rescued them from their condition. Throughout the Holy Scriptures, God tells His people to avoid oppression of others, to act justly, help the afflicted, and rescue those who cannot rescue themselves. It is a strong message: God is patient but will not tolerate the victimization of the defenseless.

And so, protecting those who cannot protect themselves is a task God asks of us all. It is a difficult task with a long road ahead. Nevertheless, we have been shown “what is good” and what “the Lord require[s] of [us]... to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God” (Mic 6:8).

How do we do such a thing? How can we hold justice in one hand and mercy in the other? We certainly cannot minimize the destruction that abortion has caused. The ending of every life is tragic, and God’s will for all people is that they “may have life and to have it abundantly” (Jn 10:10).

We understandably want justice when we see the catastrophe of abortion and how it perpetuates a culture of death. We naturally come to this march in order to speak for life to the men and women in government. To the ones who do justice in our nation to bring the death to an end.

But what of mercy? Are we willing to love mercy as much as doing justice? We only need to look at the last year to see what great lengths we have gone to protect the most vulnerable during the pandemic. We have completely changed our lives out of loving concern for the elderly, the immuno-compromised, and those most at-risk for COVID-19. Are we here today willing to go to such lengths to reduce another death toll?

Are we willing to go as far out of our way to support the many people working tirelessly to care and support those families in crisis? Or to save the life of a child by being the support they know they can count on? I know for you here today the answer is “yes”. Because life is precious and sacred and a gift from our creator. You

and I cannot control the destruction the decision to abort a child causes, as hard as that might be to face. But what we can do is become the people that our family, friends, and neighbors know will love them and help them if they face that situation. We cannot make the decision to keep the baby for them, but we can make it easier for them to make the right choice.

And so, I call on you and ask you to work together to bring options, real options, to mothers so they don't turn to abortion. We have many excellent charities which need our support: our crisis-pregnancy centers, adoption agencies, and women's support organizations. We can, and should, apply our God-given creativity to create pathways out of the difficult situations these young, scared mothers find themselves in. After all, they are looking for alternatives. Let's be the ones to provide them.

I also ask you to encourage the fathers who are themselves often young and scared and needing courage. Support them to take responsibility and not push the mother to take the easy way out. Be the people that others can rely on to help them and be with them if they find themselves with an unplanned pregnancy.

It will be the thousands of little acts of help and mercy that will change minds and allow the tide to turn. Because as powerful as words might be, our actions are more powerful still. We don't want our voice to become one more noisy voice in an already noisy world. Our deeds will match our words because we want what the Prophet Jeremiah wants: to "do no wrong or violence to the alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood" (Jer. 22:3).

So today, as we march, amidst justice and mercy, let us not forget "to walk humbly with your God." We march for life, not for death, we march for peace, never destruction. With every step have a merciful heart towards all: the unborn, mothers, fathers, and all people who are made in God's image and likeness. Have mercy upon us all, O God, and breathe Your Holy Spirit upon us and give us strength, as the Righteous Judith prays: "For thy power depends not upon numbers, nor thy might upon men of strength; for thou art God of the lowly, helper of the oppressed, upholder of the weak, protector of the forlorn, savior of those without hope" (Judith 9:11). May the God of peace, justice, mercy, and love be with us today and guide us all throughout the rest of our lives.

Glory to God for all things!