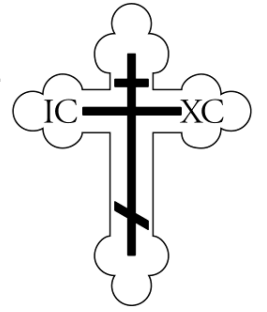
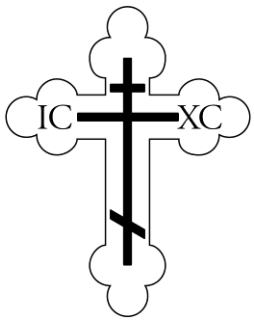


Protection of the Virgin Mary

Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago
and the Midwest
Orthodox Church
in America

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Merrillville, IN 46410
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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.

November 20, 2022

Forefeast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

Sts. Gregory of Decapolis & Proclus of Constantinople

Today we celebrate the Forefeast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple, and tomorrow is the Feast Day itself. A Forefeast is one or more days preceding certain major holidays, in order to prepare the faithful for the celebration of the actual Feast Day. In the Services, hymns describing the festive event are sung.

According to Holy Tradition, the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple took place in the following manner: The parents of the Virgin Mary, Sts Joachim and Anna, praying for an end to their childlessness, vowed that if a child were born to them, they would dedicate it to the service of God.

When the Most Holy Virgin reached the age of three, the holy parents decided to fulfill their vow. They gathered together their relatives and acquaintances, and dressed the All-Pure Virgin in her finest clothes. Singing sacred songs and with lighted candles in their hands, virgins escorted her to the Temple (Ps. 44/45:14-15). There the High Priest and several priests met the handmaiden of God. In the Temple, fifteen high steps led to the sanctuary, which only the priests and High Priest could enter. The child Mary, so it seemed, could not make it up this stairway. But just as they placed Her on the first step, strengthened by the power of God, she quickly went up the remaining steps and ascended to the highest one. Then the High Priest, through inspiration from above, led the Most Holy Virgin into the Holy of Holies, where only the High Priest entered once a year to offer a purifying sacrifice of blood. Therefore, all those present in the Temple were astonished at this most unusual occurrence.

After entrusting their child to the Heavenly Father, Joachim and Anna returned home. The All-Holy Virgin remained in the quarters for virgins near the Temple. The earthly life of the Most Holy Theotokos from Her infancy until she was taken up to Heaven is shrouded in deep mystery. Her life at the Jerusalem Temple was also a secret. "If anyone were to ask me," said St Jerome, "how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth, I would answer that that is known to God Himself and the Archangel Gabriel, her constant guardian."

But there are accounts in Church Tradition, that during the All-Pure Virgin's stay at the Temple, she grew up in a community of pious virgins, diligently read the Holy Scripture, occupied herself with handicrafts, prayed constantly, and grew in love for God. From ancient times, the Church has celebrated the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple.

Indications that the Feast was observed in the first centuries of Christianity are found in the traditions of Palestinian Christians, which say that the holy Empress Helen built a church in honor of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple in the fourth century. St Gregory of Nyssa also mentions this Feast in the fourth century. The Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple foretells God's blessing for the human race, the preaching of salvation, the promise of the coming of Christ.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 6 – Resurrectional Troparion

The angelic powers were at Your tomb;
the guards became as dead men.

Mary stood by Your grave,
seeking Your most pure body.

You captured hell,
not being tempted by it.

You came to the Virgin granting life.//

O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You!

Tone 4 – Troparion of the Forefeast

Today Anna bequeaths joy to all instead of sorrow,
by bringing forth her fruit, the only ever-Virgin.

In fulfillment of her vow,

today with joy she brings to the temple of the Lord//

the true temple and pure Mother of God the Word.

Tone 4 – Troparion for Sts Gregory and Proclus

The twofold lamps of divine gifts,

Proclus, shepherd of New Rome, and Gregory, scion of Decapolis,
guide us by the light of grace as divinely-inspired fathers.

Let us draw near and eagerly beseech them,//

that we may receive forgiveness and salvation of our souls!

Tone 6 – Resurrectional Kontakion

When Christ God the Giver of Life,

raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,

He bestowed resurrection on the human race.//

He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 6 – Kontakion for St. Gregory

The Church knows you to be a brilliant sun

enlightening all with the rays of healing and the beauty of virtue.

Therefore, as we celebrate your honored memory,

We glorify your struggles,//

ever-blest and all-wise Father Gregory.

Tone 4 – Kontakion of the Forefeast

Today the universe is filled with joy

at the glorious feast of the Mother of God,//

and cries out: “She is the heavenly tabernacle.”

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Tone 6 – Sunday Prokeimenon (Psalm 27)

O Lord, save Your people, / and bless Your inheritance!

Epistle: Ephesians 2.4-10

Brethren: God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Gospel: Luke 12.16-21

Jesus spoke this parable to His disciples: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.”’”

But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Ev.Mem. Sergie Dimchuk ('24)

Stephen Bosczenko ('70)

Wasil Fisuk ('58)

Health & Salv.

Kevin

Larry

Archpr. Peter

Jon

Rollie

Mat. Cynthia

Tanya

Joseph

Archpr. John

Jovan

Nadia

Mat. Anne

Tom

Mark

Dn. Nicholas

Jennifer

Jerry

Joseph	Mark	Ashton
Linda	Michelle	Doris
Claudia	Irene	Laura
Carol	Michelle	Duane
Snezana	Erika	Elizabeth
Ryan	Luke	Karen
Nathan	Jo	Alexa
Kara	Stephanie	Miriana
Djuro	Mary Ann	Olga
Dominic	Robb	Richard
Declan	Desiree	Klaudia
Hudson	Hanna	Nicodemus
Ayden	Jaroslava	Nada
Hyland	Andrew	Mark
Jason	Andrew	Catherine
Ted	Vadim	Aaron
James	Hanna	Ebony
Pamela	Alex	Peggy
Alexander	Carl	Sue
Ronald	Laura	Victoria
William	Chrisan	Janet
Wanda	Janice	Tom
Ivanka	Gerald	Wilma
Aaron	Olga	Jerry
Karen	Janie	Penelope
Sandra	David	Cora
Linda	Sharon	Brandi
Jim	Tanya	Joyce
John	Renee	
Martha	Carissa	

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

Special Petitions at the Augmented Litany:

We pray, O Lord our God, for all those who suffer from acts of war, especially for the victims in Ukraine. We pray for Your peace and Your mercy in the midst of the great suffering of Your people. Vouchsafe to accept the prayers of the Church, so that by Your goodness, peace may return to all peoples; O Lord, hear us and have mercy.

We also pray You, O Lord our God, to remember and have mercy on our Orthodox brothers and sisters in Russia and Ukraine, who are involved in violent conflict. Remove from their midst all hostility, confusion and hatred. Lead everyone along the path of reconciliation and peace, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For **Bible Study** tomorrow night, read **Wisdom of Solomon 1-4**.

Thank you to our many bakers who worked tirelessly this week. **Thanksgiving Bake Sale** pick-up is during coffee hour today.

The **Advent** season of preparation for our Lord's birth began on **Tuesday November 15**. During this time, we rededicate ourselves to **prayer**, especially by making a **confession**, we keep the **fast**, and we find opportunities to **give to those in need**. Over the next several weeks, a number of opportunities will be made available at our parish. Our annual **Angel Tree** is up in the Narthex. Please consider fulfilling a card for a local child in poverty. This Sunday is the annual collection for **International Orthodox Christian Charities**. The following two Sundays (Nov 27 & Dec 4) we will collect towards our Church School effort to buy and wrap presents for two local families as part of its **St. Nicholas celebration** on December 10.

Some parishioners have expressed a desire to **visit Fr. Peter and Mat. Cynthia** to show them support in the aftermath of Fr Peter's diagnosis with Sundowners Dementia. They have said they would love to see old friends from PTVM. To this end, **we are considering a 3-day/2-night weekday trip to Marshfield, MO** in either the first or second full week of December for interested parishioners. Marshfield is an 8-hour drive away. The Church would provide transportation. We would stay in a local hotel. Please let Fr Jacob know if you are interested and able to come. If there is enough interest, perhaps we could split ourselves into two trips.

The **Women's Book Club** will start its next book in January of 2023. Sign-up begins now, however, to give plenty of time to order copies of the book. A Sign-up sheet is in Narthex, which includes more information including dates, time, and the title of the book.

For Angel Tree and other holiday shopping, you can help support our parish by **ordering gift cards** through the **Scrip** program (find Lara Richards' table during coffee hour). And if you do any shopping through Amazon, if you begin at www.smile.amazon.com and select "Protection of the Virgin Mary Church" as your charity of choice, a small percentage of every purchase also comes back to PTVM.

Mark your calendars:

Nov 21: Divine Liturgy for the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple @ 10am
Bible Study @ 7pm

Nov 24: Thanksgiving Day Divine Liturgy @ 9am

Dec 3: Choir Masterclass with Diocesan instructors 2-5pm

Dec 4: Church Decorating after Coffee Hour

Dec 5: Festal Vespers for the feast of St. Nicholas @ 6pm

Dec 6: Divine Liturgy for the feast of St. Nicholas @ 10am

Dec 10: Church School St. Nicholas Celebration @ 9am

Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$1,958

Archpastoral Message at the beginning of the Nativity Fast 2022 **from His Eminence, our Archbishop DANIEL**

Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, Venerable Monastics, and Beloved Faithful,

The Nativity Fast, the liturgical season which begins today, invites us to prepare our hearts to welcome our Lord Jesus Christ as we celebrate His birth in the flesh on Christmas Day. During these weeks of preparation we do not live in anticipation of Christmas alone: we are also called to rekindle our anticipation of the glorious return of Christ—when He will return at the end of time—preparing ourselves, with piety and devotion, to remember the Lord's Nativity, to await His glorious return, and to ready ourselves for the day on which the Lord will call us to Himself.

During these special grace-filled weeks of preparation, we are called to leave behind the routine way of our usual daily lives. In the midst of everything that might sidetrack us at this time of the year, we are called to be *mindful* and to *pray*. To be mindful and to be prayerful is the attitude with which we should approach every day. Unfortunately, at this time of the year we are often distracted. The holiday season as observed in society invites us to enter into a spirit of fantasy. The Nativity Fast, however, invites us to attentiveness, to look beyond ourselves, and to open our minds and hearts to the needs of our brothers and sisters who find themselves in so many types of hardship. This is a favorable time to open our hearts, to ask ourselves concrete questions about how and for whom we reach beyond ourselves and the focus our lives.

The second attitude to have in order to best experience this time of awaiting the Lord is that of *prayer*. “Look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near,” the Gospel of Luke cautions (Luke 21:28). This special time is about entering more deeply into prayer, turning our thoughts and our hearts to the Lord who is about to come. We await Him in prayer and vigilance. Praying, waiting upon Jesus, opening our hearts to others, being mindful, and not focused upon ourselves.

As we prepare to celebrate the Lord’s Nativity, be assured of my prayers and best wishes for you, your families and friends, and all your dear ones.

With love in the One Who comes to save us,

† DANIEL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

Glory to God for
all things!