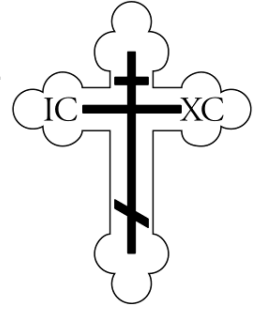
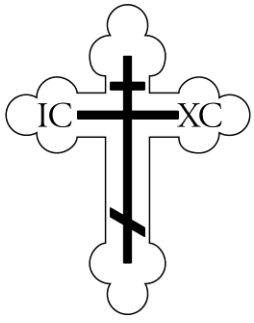


Protection of the Virgin Mary

Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago
and the Midwest
Orthodox Church
in America

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Merrillville, IN 46410
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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.

March 12, 2023

2nd Sunday of Great Lent: St. Gregory Palamas

*On Sundays in Great Lent, we celebrate the Divine Liturgy of
St. Basil the Great.*

Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, was born in the year 1296 in Constantinople. St Gregory's father became a prominent dignitary at the court of Andronicus II Paleologos (1282-1328), but he soon died, and Andronicus himself took part in the raising and education of the fatherless boy. Endowed with fine abilities and great diligence, Gregory mastered all the subjects which then comprised the full course of medieval higher education. The emperor hoped that the youth would devote himself to government work. But Gregory, barely twenty years old, withdrew to Mount Athos in the year 1316 and became a novice in the

Vatopedi monastery. There he was tonsured and began on the path of asceticism. A year later, the holy Evangelist John appeared to him in a vision and promised him his spiritual protection.

St Gregory spent several years learning the ascetic life on the holy mountain at both Vatopedi and the Lavra of St Athanasius. Eventually he settled in the small skete of Glossia, striving for a greater degree of spiritual perfection. The head of this monastery began to teach the young man the method of unceasing prayer and mental activity, which had been cultivated by monastics, beginning with the great desert ascetics of the fourth century. The experienced use of mental prayer (or prayer of the heart), requiring solitude and quiet, is called "Hesychasm" (from the Greek "hesychia" meaning calm, silence), and those practicing it were called "hesychasts." During his stay at Glossia the future hierarch Gregory became fully imbued with the spirit of hesychasm and adopted it as an essential part of his life. In the year 1326, because of the threat of Turkish invasions, he and the brethren retreated to Thessalonica, where he was ordained to the holy priesthood. In 1331 the saint withdrew again to Mt. Athos and lived in solitude at the skete of St Savva. In 1333 he was appointed Igumen (abbot) of the Esphigmenou monastery, but in 1336 the saint returned to the skete of St Savva, where he devoted himself to theological works, continuing with this until the end of his life.

About the year 1330 the learned monk Barlaam arrived in Constantinople from Calabria, Italy. He was the author of treatises on logic and astronomy, a skilled and sharp-witted orator, and he received a university chair in the capital city. Soon Barlaam visited Mt. Athos, where he became acquainted with the spiritual life of the hesychasts. Saying that it was impossible to know the essence of God, he declared mental prayer a heretical error. Barlaam entered into disputes with the monks and attempted to demonstrate the created, material nature of the light of Tabor (at the Transfiguration). He ridiculed the teachings of the monks about the methods of prayer and about the uncreated light seen by the hesychasts.

Towards the year 1340 the Athonite ascetics, with the assistance of St. Gregory, compiled a response to the attacks of Barlaam, called the "Hagiorite Tome." At the Constantinople Council of 1341 St Gregory debated with Barlaam, focusing on the nature of the light of Mount Tabor. The Council accepted the position of St Gregory, that God, unapproachable in His Essence, reveals Himself through His energies, which are directed towards the world and are

able to be perceived, like the light of Tabor, but which are neither material nor created. The teachings of Barlaam were condemned.

In 1347 St Gregory was made Archbishop of Thessalonica, where he performed many miracles before his death, healing those afflicted with illness. St Gregory Palamas fell asleep in the Lord on November 14, 1359.

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 – 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 8 – Troparion for St. Gregory Palamas

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation,

O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians,

O wonderworking Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of
grace,//

always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved!

Tone 4 – Kontakion for Great Lent

Now is the time for action!

Judgment is at the doors!

So let us rise and fast,

offering alms with tears of compunction and crying:

“Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea;

but forgive us, O Master of all,//

so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!”

Tone 8 – Kontakion for St. Gregory

Holy and divine instrument of wisdom,

joyful trumpet of theology,

together we sing your praises, O God-inspired Gregory.

Since you now stand before the Original Mind, guide our minds to

Him, O Father,//

so that we may sing to you: “Rejoice, preacher of grace!”

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 – Prokeimenon for the 2nd Sunday (Psalm 11)

You, O Lord, shall protect us

and preserve us from this generation forever!

Tone 1 – Prokeimenon for St. Gregory (Psalm 48)

My mouth shall speak wisdom;

the meditation of my heart shall be understanding!

Epistle: Hebrews 1.10 – 2.3 (Sunday)

Brethren: God says of the Son, “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.”

But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? Therefore, we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him?

Hebrews 7.26 – 8.2 (St. Gregory)

Brethren: Such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.

Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

Gospel: Mark 2.1-12 (Sunday)

At that time, Jesus entered Capernaum, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

John 10.9-16 (St. Gregory)

Jesus said to His disciples: "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The

thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.”

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

New. Dep. David May

Ratka Traycoff

Ev.Mem. Julia Matsueff ('31)

Stephan Saganovich ('24)

Health & Salv.

Archpr. Peter

Mat. Cynthia

Archpr. John

Pr. Patrick

Mat. Anne

Dn. Nicholas

Kevin

Jon

Tanya

Jovan

Tom

Jennifer

Rollie

Joseph

Nadia

Joseph

Linda

Claudia

Carol

Snezana

Ryan

Gregory Luzik ('54)

Catherine Janowski ('55)

Archpr. Spiro Tanaskoski ('95)

Nathan

Kara

Djuro

Paula

Christopher

Karen

Dominic

Declan

Hudson

Ayden

Hyland

Jason

Ted

James

Pamela

Alexander

Ronald

Ivanka

Karen

Sandra

Linda

Jim

John

Martha

Mark

Michelle

Irene

Michelle

Erika

Luke

Jo

Stephanie

Mary Ann

Dara

Jaroslava

Andrew

Andrew

Vadim

Hanna

Viktor

Alex

Carl

Laura

Chrisan

Gerald	Olga	Penelope
Olga	Richard	Cora
Janie	Klaudia	Brandi
Sharon	Nicodemus	Joyce
Tanya	Nada	Paul
Renee	Mark	Galina
Michael	Catherine	Helen
Chris	Aaron	Kathleen
Nina	Dale	Rachel
Carissa	Ebony	Martha
Ashton	Peggy	Stephanie
Doris	Sue	Thomas
Laura	Victoria	Diane
Duane	Janet	Michael
Elizabeth	Tom	Linda
Karen	Diane	Stephanie
Alexa	Wilma	Rdr. Paul
Miriana	Jerry	

*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

Order forms for the **Pascha Bake Sale** are available in the Narthex. Orders are due Wednesday, March 29. Pick up will be Sunday, April 2. Donations of flour, sugar, butter, eggs or walnuts are welcome!

The **Chicago Deanery Lenten Vespers** return at 6pm on Sundays:

Today, March 12, at St. Nicholas Church in Kenosha, WI

March 19 at St. Nicholas Church in Joliet, IL

March 26 at St. George Cathedral in Chicago, IL

April 2 at St. Elizabeth's Church in Chesterton, IN

April 9 at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Chicago, IL

During Great Lent, Orthodox Christians **make more time for prayer, deny themselves rich and satisfying foods** (meat, dairy, fish), and find opportunities to **help those in need** (almsgiving). They also examine their consciences and repent of their sins before the Lord in the **Sacrament of Confession**. Confession is always available before or after evening services. You can also make an appointment with Fr Jacob any time, including before Sunday Liturgies, if necessary.

Once again this Lent, PTVM will deliver **Easter dinner baskets to the Ross Township food pantry** for local families in need. This year we have increased our goal to ***75 ham dinners***, which the trustee's office tells us is the number of families currently frequenting the pantry. **There is a posterboard in the narthex with more details**, where you can sign up to bring the various shelf-stable foods that are needed. We will take a **special collection next two Sundays** (if necessary) to cover the cost of the hams, which we will purchase in bulk during Western Holy Week.

Mark your calendars:

Mar 15: **Presanctified Liturgy @ 6pm; Lenten potluck after**

Mar 17: **Presanctified Liturgy @ 10am; Lenten potluck after**

Mar 24: **Annunciation Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts @ 10am
Blood Drive 12pm-5pm**

Mar 25: **Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Annunciation @ 10am**

Mar 30: **Canon of St. Andrew & Life of St. Mary of Egypt @ 10am**

Apr 1: **Church Spring Cleaning @ 9am; lunch after**

Apr 2: **Bake Sale pick-up after Divine Liturgy**

Last week's gifts to the Lord: \$4,385

Glory to God for all things!