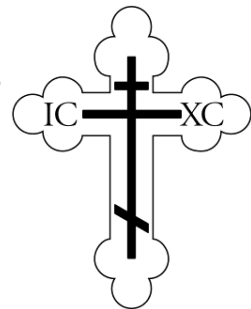
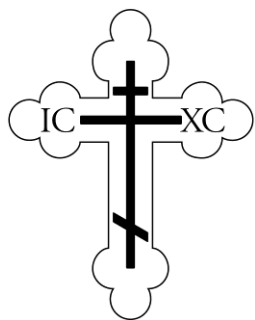


Protection of the Virgin Mary

Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago
and the Midwest
Orthodox Church
in America



8600 Grand Blvd.
Merrillville, IN
(219)947-4748
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
hall after Divine
Liturgy for coffee hour.

January 26, 2025

Sanctity of Life Sunday

Holy New Martyrs of Russia

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 – Our 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 for the New Martyrs

Today the Church of Russia forms a chorus in joy,
praising her new martyrs and confessors;
hierarchs and priests, royal passion-bearers, right-believing princes
and princesses,
venerable men and women, and all Orthodox Christians.
Having laid down their life for faith in Christ during the days of
godless perecution,
they preserved the truth by the shedding of blood.//
By their protection, O long-suffering Lord, preserve our land in
Orthodoxy till the end of the age.

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 3 – Kontakion for the New Martyrs

Today the new martys of Rus' stand in white robes before the
Lamb of God,
and with the angels they sing to God the hymn of victory:
“Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and praise, and honor,
and power, and strength be to our God//
unto the ages of ages. Amen.”

Tone 4 – Our 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 6 – Resurrectional Prokeimenon (Psalm 27)

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

Tone 7 – Prokeimenon for the New Martyrs (Psalm 45)

God is our refuge and strength,
a help in afflictions that severely befall us!

Epistle: 1 Timothy 1.15-17 (Sunday)

Brethren: 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.

Romans 8.28-39 (New Martyrs)

Brethren: We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, for those who are the called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, those whom He predestined He also called; those whom He called He also justified; and those whom He justified He also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 15.21-28 (Sunday)

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.

Luke 18.35-43 (New Martyrs)

Jesus said to His disciples: "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore, do not go after them. But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately."

Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be great earthquakes in various places and famines and pestilences, and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.

"Therefore, settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But not a hair of your head shall be lost. By your patience possess your souls."

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Valentina Metulynsky
 Archbp. Anastasios of Albania
 Jon Bertram
 Galina Meuch
 William Harbison
 Faryn Valdez
Ev.Mem. Dimitri Ormakov ('17)
 Gregory Shavruk ('27)

Anthony Perstenok ('43)
 William Cidylo ('53)
 Kornilia Samosuk ('63)
 Trajan Mitrovich ('74)
 Mary Kuzmanoff ('78)
 Nadja Titow ('90)
 Mary Markowicz (2010)
 Eugenia Kiriluk (2018)

Health & Salv.	Janet	Nina	Charles
Archpr. Peter	Gerald	George	Kimberly
Mat. Cynthia	Rebecca	Linda	Abigail
Hierom. John	Christopher	Kimberly	Charles
Archpr.	Brianna	Steven	Rosemary
Jonathan	Logan	Jamie	Nicholas
Mat. Vera	Olga	Kyleigh	Natalie
Pr. Patrick	Janie	Lauren	Jovan
Pr. Gregory	Sharon	Kyle	Michael
Mat. Beverly	Tanya	Linda	Abram
Pr. Nicholas	Renee	Denise	Zoë
Mat. Anne	Ashton	Sergei	Brenda
Nun Theodora	Michael	John	Sergei
Brendan	Chris	Cindy	Connie
Rollie	Nina	Ron	Lisa
Claudia	Carissa	Matthew	Mazzy
Mary Ann	Carol	John	John
Raymond	Snezana	Erin	Terry
Edward	Ryan	Aaron	Angie
Charlotte	Nathan	Marcietta	Irina
Joseph	Kara	Maria	Elizabeth
Janice	Karen	Alla	Vitaliy
Klaudia	Alisa	Elizabeth	Maria
Maja	Michael	Samuel	Viktoria
Raymond	Moses	Joseph	Rebecca
Anne	Helena	Dwight	Pauline
Desiree	James	Renee	Kathie
Robb	Elijah	Dominik	L.A. Fire
Gerald	Lydia	Monica	Victims

To add the name of a loved one recently departed or on the anniversary of their repose, or someone living and in particular need of prayer, please speak 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 the victims in Ukraine, Russia, Israel, and Palestine. 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, hearken and have mercy.

Again we pray that You will grant to the people of this nation the will to do good, to flee from evil, and to practice all righteousness, making us respectful of life and sharers of Your blessings, caring for one another in mercy and truth.

Again we pray that You will banish all evil from our hearts and wickedness from our laws, enabling us to be servants of Your holy will and performers of Your love.

Again we pray that You will kindle in our hearts the will to care for the needy, to show kindness to the poor, to aid the homeless and help the helpless.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For **Bible Study** tomorrow, read **Hebrews 1-4**.

Next Sunday is the feast of the **Presentation of the Lord**. We will serve a **Baptismal Liturgy** for Everett Gray.

On **Sunday, February 9**, we have our **annual Parish Meeting** to elect a new parish council and approve a budget for 2025. This year we will also consider a proposal, recommended by our existing council, to **repave the church's parking lot**. The meeting will take place after a quick potluck lunch/coffee hour. All parish stewards should bring something to share and plan to stay, so that we can conduct this important business.

Every year, **Orthodox Christian homes are blessed with the new holy water of Theophany**. A schedule has been prepared with Fr Jacob's availability through February, which was emailed to the parish and can be viewed in the Narthex. Days have been designated for certain areas/towns. This week, he will be in the Merrillville and Hobart areas on Wednesday and Friday.

Mark your calendars:

Jan 27: Bible Study @ 7pm

Jan 29: Festal Vespers for the Feast of the Three Hierarchs @ 6pm

Jan 30: Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Three Hierarchs @ 10am

Feb 9: Annual Parish Meeting after Divine Liturgy and Lunch

Feb 14: Young Adult Game Night @ 6pm

Feb 15: Prospora Baking Tutorial @ 10am

Catechism @ 4:30pm

Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$3,481

On the Sanctity of Human Life from His Beatitude, our Metropolitan Tikhon

To the Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, My Beloved Children in the Lord,

As we mark our annual Sanctity of Life Sunday, I would like to speak to you about martyrdom. Specifically, by understanding martyrdom, which we might consider the most pure, fundamental realization of the Christian vocation, we understand just why we hold life sacred.

At first, this may appear paradoxical. Martyrdom, after all, is willingly surrendering one's life for the sake of the Christian faith. Martyrdom teaches us that life in this world is not to be compared with the glorious and everlasting life that awaits us in the world to come. As the Lord says, "Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it" (Mk. 8:35).

Christ promises us in his Beatitudes that "blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven" (Matt. 5:11–12). When we are rejected by the world because we accept the Gospel—when we reject the world in order to take up our Cross—then we display the Christian faith in all its truth and power and glory. Martyrdom, etymologically and in fact, always means "bearing witness," and the greatest and most fundamental way to bear witness to the Gospel is to die for the sake of the Gospel.

However, martyrdom, even when it points us towards the next life, also testifies to the immeasurable sacredness of our mortal life in this world. Here, in this life, it is possible for us to bear witness; here, in this life, we have the possibility of accepting Christ's gift of salvation. This is true for the literal martyrs, but it is also possible for every Christian through the bloodless martyrdom of asceticism. Whenever we die to our fleshly desires for the sake of the Gospel, we suffer a little martyrdom. Whenever we forgo power or wealth or gratification for the sake of Christ's commandments, we are bearing witness, in a small way, to the truth of the Christian faith.

In other words, martyrdom proper, as well as the ascetic martyrdom to which we are all called, are a way of "redeeming the time" (Eph. 5:16). Through Christ's Incarnation and Passion, the fallen world and passing present age have become an arena of spiritual struggle and the place where salvation is accomplished.

Seen from this perspective, life in this world is not something cheap and utilitarian, but incredibly dear. The Lord gives us this life that we might offer it back to him, fulfilling our primordial role as priest and mediator of creation: man is called to commend himself and his fellow-men and all his life to Christ our God.

All life comes from God; all life belongs to God; and through the saving work of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, biological life in this world is now open to the possibility of true and everlasting life in the world to come.

Thus, on this Sanctity of Life Sunday, we bear witness to the truth that all human life, from conception to natural death, is sacred. We pray that the scales will fall from the eyes of our countrymen who do not recognize this basic truth, and we beseech the Lord that all violations of this holy principle—abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, and the rest—would come to a swift end in our age and our land. Finally, we pray that we might find the strength to live in accordance with this teaching, showing forth the sanctity of life by devoting our own life to the pursuit of sanctity, thus bearing witness in our flesh to the truth of the holy Orthodox Christian faith.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Tikhon

Archbishop of Washington

Metropolitan of All America and Canada

Glory to God for all things!