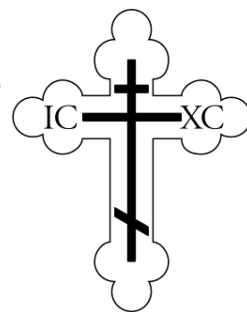
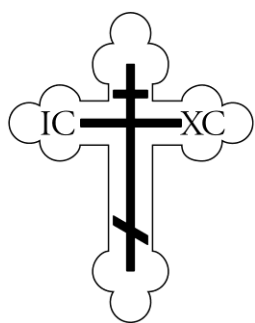


# Protection of the Virgin Mary

## Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago  
and the Midwest  
Orthodox Church  
in America



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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.

## March 30, 2025

### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Great Lent

## St John Climacus (of the Ladder)

*During Great Lent, we celebrate the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (on page 101 of the black Liturgy books)*

Saint John Climacus is the author of the spiritual classic *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. St John was born around the year 525, the son of devout and wealthy parents. He received a very good education, but at the age of sixteen, he forsook the world and went to Mount Sinai, subjecting himself to the spiritual guidance of Elder Martyrios. When he was nineteen years of age, his elder reposed. Then St John entered the arena of hesychasm, visiting the monastic communities of Skete and Tabennise in Egypt. For another forty years, he lived in a cell at Thora in the Sinai Desert, which was a two hour walk from the Monastery of Saint Catherine.

Aflame with indescribable longing for God, he ate everything that was permitted by the monastic Rule, but only in very small quantities, and not unto satiety. By so doing, he overcame the vice of pride; and by eating just a little food, he humbled the stomach, which always wants more. He raised his body from death and paralysis by the remembrance of death, and he overcame the tyranny of anger with the sword of obedience.

Who can describe the fountain of his tears, which is now to be seen in very few individuals? He slept only as much as was necessary to prevent his mind from being distracted. Before going to sleep he prayed a great deal, and he also wrote books. This was how he subdued despondency.

After writing *The Ladder* at the request of Igoumen John of Raithu Monastery, and leading a God-pleasing life, St John fell asleep in the Lord when he was about seventy-five years old (ca. 603).

## HYMNS OF THE DAY

### **Tone 7 – Resurrectional Troparion**

By Your Cross You destroyed death.  
To the thief You opened Paradise.  
For the Myrrhbearers You changed weeping into joy.  
And You commanded Your disciples, O Christ God,  
to proclaim that You are risen,//  
granting the world great mercy.

### **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 1 – Troparion to St John Climacus**

O dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body,  
you were a wonderworker, O our God-bearing Father John.  
You received heavenly gifts through fasting, vigil and prayer,  
healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to you by faith.  
Glory to Him Who gave you strength!  
Glory to Him Who granted you a ^crown!//  
Glory to Him Who grants healing to all!

### **Tone 7 – Resurrectional Kontakion**

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden;  
it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross.  
The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished;  
for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell://  
“Enter again into Paradise!”

### **Tone 4 – Kontakion to St John Climacus**

The Lord truly set you on the heights of abstinence,  
to be a guiding star, showing the way to the universe,//  
O our father and teacher John.

### **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 7 – Sunday Prokeimenon (Psalm 28)**

The Lord shall give strength to His people.  
The Lord shall bless His people with peace!

### **Tone 7 – Prokeimenon for St John Climacus (Psalm 149)**

Let the saints exult in glory; / let them sing for joy on their couches!

### **Epistle: Hebrews 6.13-20 (Sunday)**

Brethren: when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, “Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.”

And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

### **Ephesians 5.9-19 (St John Climacus)**

Brethren: The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth, finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore, He says: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

### **Gospel: Mark 9.17-31 (Sunday)**

At that time, one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So, I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."

Jesus answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me."

Then they brought him to Jesus. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

So, Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?"

And he said, "From childhood. And often it has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

Immediately, the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: “Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!”

Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, “He is dead.”

But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?”

So He said to them, “This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.”

Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. For He taught His disciples and said to them, “The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day.”

### **Matthew 4.25 – 5.12 (St John Climacus)**

At that time, great multitudes followed Him – from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan. And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him.

Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

## **WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

**N.Dep.** James Hammang

John Hiatt

Joyce Krochta

**Ev.Mem.** John Gasak ('17)

Nicholas Makarevich ('29)

Michael Bikoff ('54)

Anastasia Kira ('55)

Wassil Kadish ('88)

Olga Denysenko (2017)

<b>Health &amp; Salv.</b>	Christopher	Steven	Natalie
Archpr. Peter	Brianna	Jamie	Jovan
Mat. Cynthia	Logan	Kyleigh	Michael
Hierom. John	Olga	Lauren	Abram
Archpr. Jonathan	Janie	Kyle	Zoë
Mat. Vera	Sharon	Linda	Brenda
Pr. Patrick	Tanya	Denise	Lisa
Pr. Gregory	Renee	John	Mazzy
Mat. Beverly	Ashton	Cindy	Terry
Mat. Anne	Michael	Ron	Angie
Nun Theodora	Chris	Matthew	Irina
Brendan	Nina	John	Elizabeth
Rollie	Carissa	Erin	Vitaliy
Claudia	Carol	Aaron	Maria
Mary Ann	Snezana	Marcietta	Viktorina
Raymond	Ryan	Maria	Rebecca
Edward	Nathan	Alla	Pauline
Charlotte	Kara	Elizabeth	Meagan
Joseph	Karen	Samuel	Minnie
Janice	Alisa	Joseph	Richard
Klaudia	Michael	Dwight	Rosie
Maja	Moses	Renee	Sarah
Raymond	Helena	Dominik	Milton
Anne	James	Monica	Andrew
Desiree	Elijah	Charles	Carol
Robb	Lydia	Kimberly	Lidia
Gerald	Nina	Abigail	Daisy
Janet	George	Charles	Julie
Gerald	Linda	Rosemary	Dorothy
Rebecca	Kimberly	Nicholas	Ann

*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 Petition 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.

## **Instead of “It is Truly Meet...”**

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace:

the assembly of angels and the race of men.

O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins,  
from whom God was incarnate and became a Child –  
our God before the ages.

He made your body into a throne,

and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens.

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace.

Glory to you!

## **Communion Hymn for St John:**

The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear  
evil tidings. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

During Great Lent, Orthodox Christians **make more time for prayer, fast from rich and satisfying foods,** and find opportunities to **help those in need.** They also examine their consciences and repent of their sins before the Lord in the **Sacrament of Confession.** Confession is available before or after evening services. You can also make an appointment with Fr Jacob, including before Sunday Liturgy or after coffee hour, if necessary.

Once again this Lent, PTVM will deliver **72 Easter ham dinner baskets to the Ross Township food pantry** for local families in need. **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.

The **church school** is organizing a viewing of the movie **“The King of Kings”** at Emagine Theaters in Portage on April 11 at 4:15pm. Please let Elizabeth Wysocki know if you would like to come.

### **Mark your calendars:**

Apr 2: **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts @ 6pm**

Apr 3: **Great Canon & Life of St Mary of Egypt @ 10am**  
**Men’s Reading Group @ 6:45pm**

Apr 4: **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts @ 10am**  
**Young Adult dinner at Alladin Pita @ 5:30pm**

Apr 5: **Church Spring Cleaning @ 9am**

Apr 11: Church School outing to see the “**The King of Kings**” @ 4pm

Apr 12: **Lazarus Saturday Liturgy, pancakes, and palms @ 10am**

**Last Week’s Gifts to the Lord: \$1,690**

## **Proclamation concerning the Anniversary of the Repose of St Tikhon from the Synod of Bishops of the OCA**

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, beloved children in the Lord,

This year, the Orthodox Church in America marks the 100th anniversary of the repose of Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and Enlightener of North America. It is now a full century since this great missionary and churchman fell asleep in the Lord on the feast of the Annunciation (March 25/April 7, 1925), dying as a confessor for the faith under the Soviet yoke.

In celebration of this centennial, the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America has blessed a churchwide celebration of St. Tikhon on the day customarily observed as his feast in many places, October 9, 2025. Under the supervision of the diocesan hierarch, one or more cathedrals in each of our dioceses should mark this occasion with All-night Vigil, Liturgy, and other festive services as may be possible, using whatever accustomed texts may be available. Clergy from throughout each diocese should make every effort to attend such services, and the faithful should be invited and encouraged to join their clergy and hierarchs in common prayer to St. Tikhon, tireless archpastor of North America, architect of our Church, and powerful intercessor before the Lord.

Through the prayers of the holy hieroconfessor Tikhon of Moscow, may we continue to find guidance in his legacy and example.

# **Glory to God for all things!**