

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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23 Reader Service Hierarchical Liturgy and Ordination In NILES IL	24	25	26 Vespers+ Bible Study 6:30PM	27 Liturgy 9:30AM Thanksgiving Day	28	29
30 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM	December 1	2 Liturgy 9:30AM	3 Vespers And Book Study 6:30PM	4 Liturgy 9:30AM Feast of St Barbara and St. John D.	5. Social Club Open Church 4:30- 8PM	6 St. Nicholas Liturgy 9:00AM
7 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM	8	9 Liturgy 9:30AM	10 Vespers+ Bible Study 6:30PM	11	12	13
14 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM	15	16 Liturgy 9:30AM	17 Vespers 6:30PM Book S.	18	19	20 11AM Pirogi Day at Amber’s
21 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM Christmas Pageant	22	23 Liturgy 9:30AM	24 Compline 6:00PM	25 Nativity Feast Liturgy 9:30AM	26 Synaxis of Panagia Liturgy 9:30AM	27 Feast of St. Stephen Liturgy 9:00
28	29	30	31	Jan 1	2	3

NEW
PARISH
WEBSITE



Online
Stewardship
Offerings



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HOUR and
CLEANING



CHRIST THE SAVIOUR

ORTHODOX CHURCH

16 November 2025

1802 Pershing Ave. Rockford, Illinois 61108 - Father Jonathan Bannon
Father’s Cell Phone: 815-721-4952 e: jsbannon@gmail.com www.CTSRockford.org

Blessed is he, who did not permit his enthusiasm to cool down. - Elder Joseph of Vatopaidi

Schedule of Services

- Wednesday November 26th
Vespers 6:30PM
Bible Study to follow
(bi-weekly with Book Study)
- Thursday November 27th
Divine Liturgy 9:30AM
Thanksgiving Day

NOTE NEXT SUNDAY

+PASTORAL NEEDS, HOSPITAL CALLS, NURSING/REHAB AND HOME-BOUND PARISHIONERS:
If you have a pastoral need or emergency and would like to speak to Fr. Jonathan or know of someone who cannot make it to church and would like to schedule a pastoral visit, please contact Father by phoning at 815.721.4852

FASTING SEASON

NATIVITY FAST 2025
Speak with your Spiritual Father about fasting goals. Fasting is not refraining from food all day as some non-Orthodox churches may view it. Fasting is refraining from certain foods with the goal of controlling the passions and focusing ourselves on Christ. If we can control what we put in our stomachs then we can control what words come out of our hearts / mouths.

Traditional Fasting for the Nativity:
No Meat, No Dairy.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Pirogi Day! December 20th 2025
You are invited to learn how to make pirogies at Amber’s home.

Place orders to Amber by Sunday 14th
Potato and Farmer’s Cheese
12 count.
Donation to ingredients.



His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory's
NATIVITY FAST PRAYER CHALLENGE 2025
SPECIAL PETITION FOR THE DIVINE LITURGY

To Be Included in the Litany of Fervent Supplication at Divine Liturgies during the Nativity Fast

We praise, bless and give thanks to You, O Lord Jesus Christ, Eternal Son of the Father! Taking upon Yourself the redemption of the human race, You did not disdain the Virgin’s womb. You, the King of Glory, were humbly born amidst poverty in a stable to raise up fallen humanity and enrich it with Your grace. As a newborn Child, You were bound in swaddling clothes to release us from the bondage of sin and death. What can we give You, O Christ, for Your boundless love for us? Instead of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, accept the offering of our whole life to You. As we now prepare to joyfully remember Your Nativity, grant peace to the world, growth to Your Church, stability to our country, wisdom to all civil authorities, and unity to our families. Make us worthy to celebrate the coming feast and to join with the angelic choirs in singing and glorifying You. O Emmanuel—“God with us”—hear us and have mercy!

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has rung!!Why are we not eating of Eternal Life?! What is keeping us from joining Him? (These are challenging questions we can use check our faith.)

Largest Square piece of bread on the Paten is called the Lamb and represents the spotless Lamb of God Jesus Christ and this piece will become His very Body and very Blood while at the same time remaining wine and bread also.

the Largest Triangle to the right of the Lord but from our viewpoint on the left is for the Theotokos and why a TRIANGLE? With its three corners we remember and honor her virginity both before, during and after giving birth to Jesus Christ. There are three stars on her mantle in her icons that show this teaching as well.

This now leads us to the 9 ranks or 9 Triangles to the left the Lamb and to our Right: These ranks go in an order that reflects how God revealed Himself to the world which can also be seen in the tiers or the levels of iconography found in traditionally Byzantine Orthodox domes.

- 1) The Angels - the first created.
 - 2) The Prophets - The Word of God spoke through the Prophets
 - 3) The Apostles - After the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles on Pentecost they went to all the Earth the four corners of the world to share the good news, both Male and Female followers of Christ assisted in this great cause.
 - 4) Now we commemorate the hierarchs, the Bishops, the Fathers who guided the Church throughout the ages.
 - 5) The Martyrs - Without their blood their lives dying for the Faith we would be without heroes to inspire us and encourage us in every age. We have the relics of a great martyr Euphema sewn into the Antimension upon our altar. Within the altar we have the relics of a “Doctor/Physician Saint” Pantelemon, Monastics Saints the unnamed monks slaughtered at a monastery in Sinai, and a child saint who was thrown down a flight of stairs by an emperor after the three year old defended the Holy Trinity in the face of a heretic.
 - 6) Monastics both monks and nuns.
 - 7) Wonder-workers are great saints... (Further explanation to come!)
 - 8) The Grandparents of Jesus, the Mom and Dad of the Virgin Mary, Saints Joachim & Anna.
 - 9) The Saint(s) of the day.
- The Next two smaller Triangles represent our hierarchs His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople and His Eminence the Most Reverend Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa.
- The 1st group of commemorations closest to the Lamb is for the living.
- The 2nd group of commemoration furthest from the Lamb is for the dead.
- The Last commemoration is a crumb for the priest in between the Living and the Dead.



"The Price of One Particle".

An instructive story from the life of St. Basil the Great -

One pious priest, a contemporary of St. Basil the Great, for various reasons got into debt, and these debts grew over time, and creditors began to bother the priest about the debt, which forced him to ask for help from one neighbor, a merchant friend who, having listened to his request, hands the priest 500 gold coins, with which he paid his

debt, and in satisfaction of the merchant the priest promised to commemorate his name and relatives for health and repose at the proskomedia for the rest of his life.

The merchant expected that the priest would live a long time and pray for him and his relatives at every liturgy and thus satisfy his money.

The priest, however, managed to serve only one liturgy, at which he commemorated his benefactor and his relatives, and soon after this he fell ill and died after a long illness.

The merchant, having learned of the death of the priest, was very saddened and grieved over the loss of money, for only one liturgy was performed by the priest, which the merchant did not expect, for he counted on the many years of life of the priest and his prayers, for which he handed him 500 gold coins.

The merchant began to bother the deceased priest's mother to return the money to him, keeping it for herself for one liturgy.

The mother replied that she had no money, and if she had any, she had spent it during the priest's illness and now there was nothing left.

The merchant, not paying attention to the words of the mother, persistently demanded money and threatened to sue.

She turned to Basil the Great and told the saint what had happened. Having listened to her, Basil the Great said: "I will serve the liturgy tomorrow, come to me together with the merchant and the scales, we will weigh one particle taken from the prosphora for the health and salvation of his relatives, and how much the particle weighs on the scales, that much gold the merchant will put on the other half of the scales and with that gold he will pay you for one liturgy celebrated by the deceased priest."

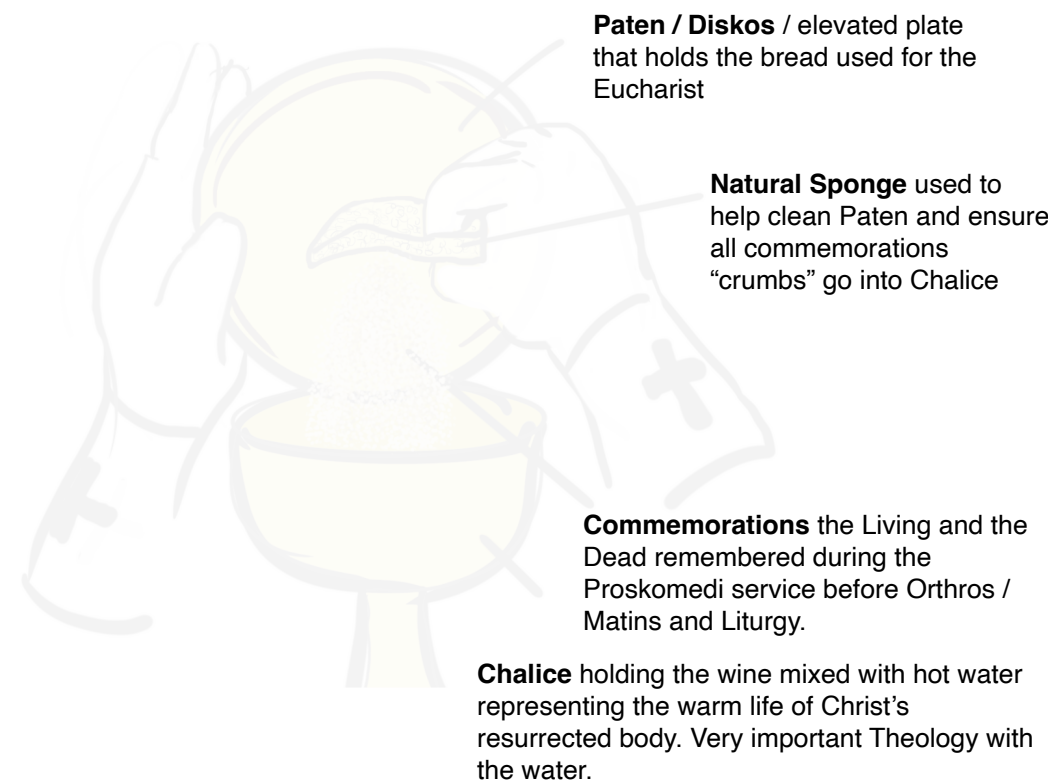
The mother went to the merchant and conveyed the words of Saint Basil. The merchant rejoiced and went to the church the next morning, taking with him the scales and the gold. St. Basil, performing the proskomedia, took out one particle for the health and salvation of the servants of God... and placed it on the scales, and ordered the merchant to place the gold on the other half of the scales.

No matter how much gold the merchant put in, one small particle outweighed everything, and the more gold the merchant put on the scales, the lower and lower sank the half on which the particle taken out by St. Basil the Great from the prosphora during the proskomedia was placed.

The merchant, seeing the great and gracious miracle, was overcome with fear and emotion and then asked forgiveness from St. Basil and the mother of the priest who had reposed in God and no longer demanded the debt.

A Question from an Altar Server

“Fr. Jonathan, what were the crumbs you poured into the chalice and what did you use to do that?”

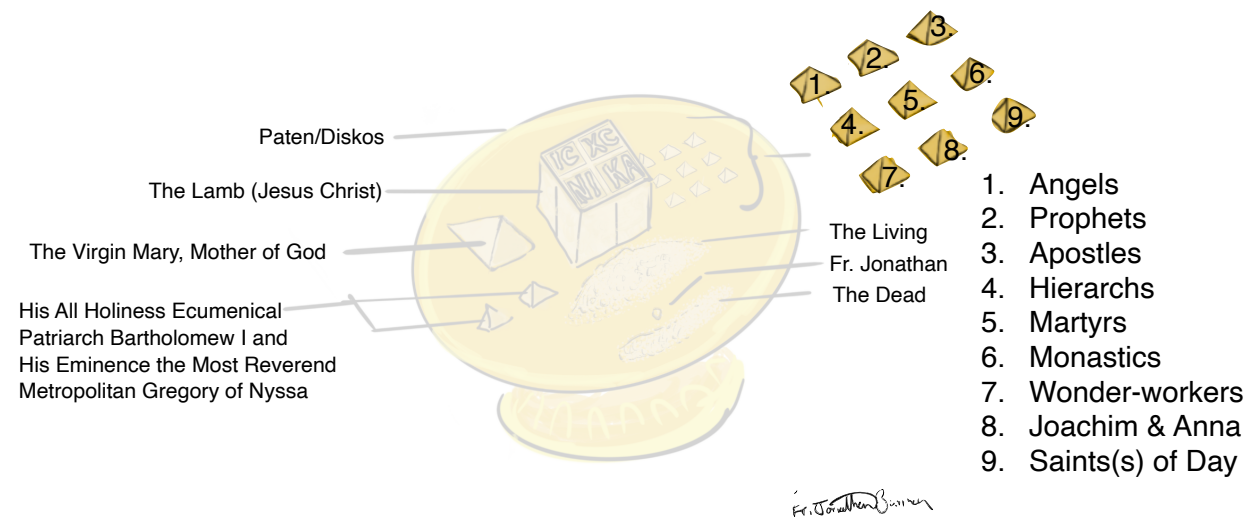


“After the clergy and faithful have communed of the Body and Blood of our Lord, the chalice is returned to the altar and all the particles, offered in the name of the saints and of the faithful living and departed, are wiped from the paten into the chalice, being suffused with God’s Blood (God’s life!) and united with God’s Body. This is done with the words “Wash away, O Lord, the sins of all those remembered here, by Thy precious Blood, and through the prayers of Thy saints.” - Fr. John Strickland

It is important to submit names for prayer of both the living and the dead to be remembered in proskomedi. They are so beneficial there are saints who would read names for hours before their daily liturgies.

A Question from a Parishioner

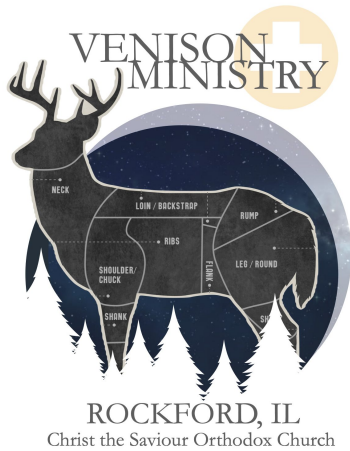
“Fr. Jonathan, What does proskomedi translate to in english and what do all the different pieces signify??”



Proskomedi is the service of preparation of the bread and wine/water that will be offered as a sacrifice in the Holy Divine Liturgy. It is a powerful service with many stories of how the prayers of proskomedi aids in the lives of the living and the departed.

The Bread used in the Proskomedi service is called Prosfora and what is cut from it and placed on the diskos becomes Holy Communion / Holy Eucharist offered for those who have prepared themselves to receive on Sunday morning. . Leftover bread that is offered to everyone that is NOT sanctified and is NOT the Body and Blood of Christ is called Antidoron.

Antidoron literally means “Instead of the (Eucharistic) Gift” The Gift being what we call the Holy Gifts, the Eucharist. At the very beginning of the Church at the time of the Apostles, the Eucharist was offered to everyone participating in the Divine Liturgy. It actually was offered after the agape meal which is what we now call coffee hour. After some time this custom stopped and the Divine Liturgy became an independent gathering where all present were receiving the Holy Gifts of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. It was considered the Lord’s Dinner and the same way that someone invited to a dinner goes to participate and not observe it, the same way all Christians were receiving communion responding to the Lord's invitation to Eat and Drink His body and blood. Imagine if someone invited you for dinner and they arrive but do not eat anything from your table. Offensive! Now consider that we do the same when we come to God's dinner in God's house and do not respond to the call, “In the fear of God, with faith and with love, DRAW NEAR!” That is not a question, that is a command! Dinner is served! The Dinner Bell has rung!!Why are we not eating of Eternal Life?! What is

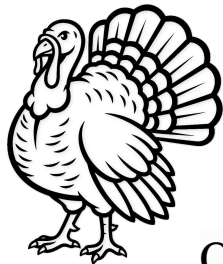


PARISH NEWS:

Introducing a new ministry from a kind offering today! Venison from a recently caught buck from bow hunting is being donated to our parish for future coffee hour breakfasts and to be a blessing to those who may be in need offered at the discretion of the priest. A humble and kind offering from those who wish to remain anonymous and offer all to the glory of God. Indeed a kind blessing!



THIS SUNDAY November 23rd
HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN GREGORY WILL BE
AT OUR SISTER PARISH IN NILES, IL.
Hierarchical Divine Liturgy 10:00AM
- Priestly Ordination - Tonsuring of a Reader



THANKSGIVING DAY LITURGY
Thursday. Nov. 27
9:30AM Give thanks with the Divine Liturgy

OFFERING THANKS:

Thank you Manal, Mirna, Maurice, Nya, Mya, Jessie, Grace and Caroline for making the Nov. 15th Setting Up the Tree event such a success. From kindness and food to hard work and making the parish beautiful. Seeing everyone interact with the young parishioners helping them feel at home is always a blessing and joy.

Thank you Sara for helping Amber H. with learning about running the bookstore. We are grateful for your kindness and look forward to the good work Amber cultivates along with those who may assist her.

Ministries of our Parish

- PROSFORA:** Pani Marianna
 - Offered today by Pani Marianna Family
- CHOIR:** Caroline Erber
- ATRIUM (Montessori):** Laura Warmke
- SCRIPTURE CLASS:** Kevin Shedd
- LIBRARY & BOOK STORE:** Amber Hathcock
- HOSPITALITY/ COFFEE HOUR:**
Manal and Maurice AlMassad, Curtis Barnes
- SISTERHOOD WOMEN’S GROUP:**
President: Sophie Brucki
Vice President: Jenna Shedd
Treasurer: Irena Larson
- Candle Ministry:** Curtis Barnes
A day for making candles will be scheduled. Share your interest with Curtis!
- Incense Ministry:** forthcoming. This is looking promising, Ask Ben if you want an update.
- MEAL TRAINS:** Jenna Shedd, Savannah Diaz
- OCLife Sanctity of Life Group:**
Dan Daub, Tyler and Savannah Diaz
- Venison Ministry!** Deer Meat locally bow-hunted and offered to care for others.
- College Student Ministry:**
OCF Chapter: Rockford Region
Spiritual Advisor: Fr. Jonathan
Are you a college student and seeking fellowship and the programs OCF provides? Speak with Fr. Jonathan and check out OCF.net
- Serving Our Neighbor Food Pantry:**
Non-Perishable Food Care for our immediate neighborhood: Naomi Reid, Curtis and Pam Barnes, Gerhard and Nicole Meier, and all who would like to join the conversation with designing the cross / container that will hold the items for those in need.
- PARISH BOARD / COUNCIL:**

Parish Priest: Fr. Jonathan Bannon
Parish Board President: Maurice AlMassad
Parish Board V. President: Curtis Barnes IV
Treasurer: Jenna Shedd
Financial Secretary: David Shinn
Recording Secretary: Amber Hathcock
- Coffee Hour Set Up and Clean Up?
Sign Up Online.

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

We are happy you have joined us today. It is our pleasure to have you in our presence this morning and we wish God’s Blessings to all who visit with us today & hope you stop in again soon!

You have just experienced the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. It is our ordinary service of worship on regular Sundays in the Orthodox Church. The Liturgy - as experienced this morning- stems from the 4th century though its practices were inherited from the time of the Apostles in the book of Acts. It also represents a time when all Christians worshipped in One Undivided Church. If you have any questions in regards to our worship or the Orthodox Church in general please see Fr. Jonathan and he will gladly answer any of your questions to the best of his ability. He looks forward to meeting you.

At our best, we are known for our welcoming attitude, hospitality generosity and compassion. At our worst, we are sinners, but we’re working out our salvation together and could use your help. If you are looking for a church home, and a church where we work on our own hearts first we hope you prayerfully consider making Christ the Savior’s that place. Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory Be Forever!

ORTHODOX PROFESSIONALS:

We are blessed to know professionals who are loving and have an Orthodox understanding of the heart and mind near Chicago. Please consider Dr. Arey Christofidis, and or Dr. Randa Anderson. The Orthodox Christian Counseling Institute (OCCI) is a professional network of Orthodox psychologists, counselors, and marriage and family therapists. It was founded in 2004 by Dr. Ary Christofidis as a referral resource in the Chicago metropolitan area, including Northwest Indiana. Dr. Sofie Azmy is an Orthodox psychologist and wife of a Coptic Orthodox priest. She was our keynote speaker for the Lenten Mission in 2023. Her website is: <https://lightchoicepsych.com/>