

PARISH NEWS - March 22nd, 2020
4th Sunday of Lent / 4-та неділя Посту

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS / ПРОСИМ О МОЛИТВУ ЗА ЗДОРОВ'Я

... all our parishioners who are in the hospitals, care homes, shut-ins and those who are not able to join us actively due to health reasons. Remember, if you would like a hospital or home visit, please call the parish office and let us know. Due to privacy laws, all requests must come from the individual or the immediate family.

Divine Liturgy:

Sunday 9:30 a.m. (English & Ukrainian)
Weekdays & Holy Days: Please see bulletin

Your Return Gift to God:

Last Sunday's Offering: \$400.00 (13 envelopes)

Cash Offering: \$115.00

Special donation to the church: \$600.00

In memory of +Donald Vandentop: \$370.00

In memory of +Walter and +Maria Petryszyn: Anna Bej, Cathy Burke, Vera Petryszyn - \$1000.00

Thank You for Your Generosity! Дякуємо за вашу щедрість!

~ Parish and Community Announcement ~

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!
Слава Ісусу Христу! Слава на Віки!

Dear Rt. Reverend, Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers,

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Considering serious concerns of many medical professionals and Government Authorities regarding safety and wellbeing of our faithful due to COVID-19 pandemic, by the order of His Excellency Bishop Bryan Bayda CSsR, Apostolic Administrator of Eparchy of Toronto & Eastern Canada, **all public Divine Worship in our Eparchy is being suspended, effective immediately** and until further notice.

Most Holy Theotokos save us!

Prayer During the Coronavirus Outbreak:

Lord, Our God, we thank you for the life that is your gift, For the providence that sustains us, And for your wisdom that directs the course of our days. The threat of an infection of coronavirus is upon us today. This disease causes fear among us and has claimed lives. We humbly beg you, loving Lord, Dispel our fear and deliver us from this and other diseases. Heal those who are afflicted and stop the spread of the virus. Strengthen us in charity to care for one another. For You are a God of mercy, kindness, and love, and we glorify You Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Source: St Nicholas the Wonderworker Bulletin, Winnipeg MB, Bishop David

Passion and Resurrection Week - 2020

April 9th - HOLY THURSDAY - 6:00 PM - Holy Thursday Divine Liturgy

April 10th - GOOD FRIDAY - 3:00 pm - Vespers with Procession and the Laying of the Holy Shroud (Complete abstinence - no meat or dairy)

April 11th - HOLY SATURDAY - 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

April 12th - EASTER SUNDAY - 8:00 AM Service at the Holy Sepulchre; RESURRECTION MATINS; PASCHAL Divine Liturgy; Blessing of the Artos and Blessing of Paschal Food to Follow

April 13th - EASTER MONDAY - 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

SAVE THE DATE - 4TH ANNUAL KofC Spring Dinner Dance

Fundraiser for Coats for Kids, St Vincent de Paul and other charities. 7 pm - Sat, 25 April 2020 - Our Lady of Mercy Parish Hall.

Semi-Formal, 5-course sit down dinner by the Giresis.

DJ, Cash bar, Dancing, 50-50, Photo Booth, Gift Baskets and more. Details to follow.

Confession: Remember, God doesn't gain anything from it.

It is you who will benefit!

Even if you go to confession regularly, the idea of accusing yourself of all your wrongdoings is never appealing. In fact, that knot that forms in your stomach at the very idea of getting in the confessional line might be cause enough to put the sacrament off, again and again. But in this beautiful liturgical season as we prepare our hearts for God's grace, let this wisdom from the great Doctor of the Church, John Chrysostom, motivate you to open your hearts, and take advantage of the sacrament! God doesn't gain anything from it. It is you who will benefit!

Even if you do not confess, God is not ignorant of the deed, since he knew it before it was committed. Why then do you not speak of it? Does the transgression become heavier by the confession? No, it becomes lighter and less troublesome. And this is why he wants you to confess: not that you should be punished, but that you should be forgiven; not that he may learn your sin—how could that be, since he has seen it? — but that you may learn what favour he bestows. He wishes you to learn the greatness of his grace, so that you may praise him perfectly, that you may be slower to sin, that you may be quicker to virtue. And if you do not confess the greatness of the need, you will not understand the enormous magnitude of his grace.

Spiritual Communion Prayer

My Jesus,

I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen

Your own example has more power than thousands of words, thousands of reposts, leaflets and videos on YouTube.

This Sunday, the Church calls our attention to Saint John Climacus or in other words Saint John of the Ladder, because this Father, who lived in 7th century, realized in his own life the ideal of penitence on which we should fix our eyes during the Great Fast/ Lent. In his spiritual teaching and writing *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, which is a guide to ascetic persons who are living a spiritually disciplined life. In his book, Saint John writes about 33 rungs of the ladder we climb in our ascent to heaven. Each rung represents a different Christian virtue (obedience, repentance, love, humility, etc.). He teaches, “Prayer is a continuous ascension to heaven... Repentance is the daughter of hope and the denial of despair.” We might wonder what value and meaning there is personally for us, Christians living today, in depriving ourselves of something that in itself is good and useful for our bodily sustenance. The Sacred Scriptures, tradition and the entire orthodox teaching of the Catholic Church through all the centuries teach that fasting is a great help to avoid sin and all that leads to it. For this reason, the history of salvation is replete with occasions that invite fasting.

“...Open the doors of your hearts and your homes to Christ, allow His Holy Spirit to transform you, purify and strengthen you in God’s love!” - Pastoral Letter of His
Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk

“The Vibrant Parish”

Why is the Feast of the Annunciation so important, and why does it take precedence over Lent?

There is some evidence that the Feast of the Annunciation is the oldest of all Christian feasts, in fact the very calendar day on which Christ died. It is certainly one of the oldest feasts. There can be no question that the earliest Christians would have noted the anniversary of the crucifixion and remembered it. According to early beliefs, because Jesus was perfect, He would have been conceived on exactly the same calendar day that He died. So liturgists speculate that the early Christians would have commemorated his death and conception on the same day. As the Liturgical calendar expanded, and the crucifixion was Commemorated three days before Easter, March 25 came to be the commemoration of only the conception. If this is true, then Christmas would have been calculated as nine months from March 25, and therefore the date of Christmas was set by Christians, and not as a response to a pagan feast as is popularly believed nowadays. Because of the importance of the event celebrated and because of the ancient nature of the feast, the Annunciation takes precedence over almost any other feast.

How to Find Time in the Day for Lent

Our busy lives may seem to leave little time and energy for the traditional Lenten practices. But we can weave moments of spiritual awareness and service into the busiest of schedules.

Praying Daily ~ If you make a habit of saying a little prayer whenever someone irritates you, cuts you off in traffic, or makes life difficult; when someone does you a favour, you experience great and friendly service, or when something joyful happens to you—you will soon find yourself praying your way through the day.

A Different Type of Fasting ~ Why not fast from criticism, gossip, judging others, or passing on rumors? Why not abstain from unwarranted fear and anxiety? These are beautiful ways to observe the Lenten call to fasting and abstinence.

Give of Yourself ~ Give encouragement to the doubting, give a word of praise to the insecure, show kindness to someone who could use a friend, and offer a word of thanks to those whose service of others often goes unappreciated. Give the gift of your attention to someone who simply wants to be noticed. Don’t be stingy with your smiles—give them freely to everyone you meet. And most important, give your love to those close to you. Hug them, hold them, and tell them what they mean to you. In this way you open your heart to God and others.

Lenten Prayer of St. Ephrem

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk. (*Great Prostration, which is kneeling and touching the forehead to the floor, then standing and making the Sign of the Cross*). But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant. (*Making a prostration*). Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. Amen. (*Making a third prostration*)

Sunday, March 22, 2020

Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast - John Climacus

The Holy Priest-Martyr Basil, Presbyter of Ancyra (363);

Passing into eternal life (1924) of Fr. Isidore Dolnytsky, hymnographer, professor and spiritual father of L'viv and the Greek College in Rome

Great Fast Day 28

Troparion, Tone 8: You came down from on high, O Merciful One,* and accepted three days of burial* to free us from our sufferings.* O Lord, our life and our resurrection,* glory be to You.

Troparion, Tone 1: O John, our God-bearing father,* you were shown to be a citizen of the desert,* an angel in bodily form,* and a worker of miracles.* Through fasting, prayers and vigils you received heavenly gifts* to heal the sick and the souls of those who, in faith, run to you.* Glory to Him who gives you strength.* Glory to Him who crowned you.* Glory to Him who works healing for all through you.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Kontakion, Tone 4: On the heights of true abstinence,* the Lord established you as a reliable star,* giving light for guidance to the ends of the earth,* O father John, our teacher.

Prokeimenon, Tone 8

Pray and give thanks to the Lord our God.

verse: In Judea God is known; His name is great in Israel. (*Psalm 75:12,2*)

Prokeimenon, Tone 8

verse: The venerable ones will exult in glory* and they shall be joyful in their beds. (*Psalm 149:5*)

Epistle - Hebrews 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:9-19

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.

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.

Alleluia, Tone 8

verse: Come, let us rejoice in the Lord; let us acclaim God our Saviour.

verse: Let us come before His countenance with praise and acclaim Him with psalms. (*Psalm 94:1,2*)

verse: They who are planted in the hose of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. (*Psalm 91:14*)

Gospel - Mark 9:17-31; Matthew 4:25-5:12

At that time, one of the multitude came to Jesus, bowed before Him, 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.”

He 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 Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

So He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?”

And he said, “From childhood. And often he 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.”

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.

Hymn to the Mother of God

In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices: the angelic ranks and all the human race. Sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, virgins' pride and boast, from whom God is made flesh and became a little Child; and He who is our God before all ages, He made your womb a throne, and He made it wider than all the heavens. In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices. Glory be to you.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens;* praise Him in the highest. (*Psalm 148:1*)* The just man shall be in everlasting remembrance;* of evil hearsay he shall have no fear.* Alleluia, alleluia, * alleluia. (*Psalm 111:6*)

DIVINE LITURGIES THIS WEEK: