



Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church

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Celebration of the Holy Mysteries

RECITATION OF THE HOLY ROSARY AND CONFESSIONS: ½ HR BEFORE DIVINE LITURGY

BAPTISM & CHRISMATION / ANNOINTING OF THE SICK / COMMUNION CALLS & VISITATIONS:
CONTACT FR. IHOR TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS

MARRIAGE PREPARATION:
CONTACT FR. IHOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS PRIOR TO SETTING THE ACTUAL WEDDING DATE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN:
CONTACT MRS. CHRISTINA VOGEL AT (603) 686-2092 TO REGISTER YOUR CHILDREN

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE LITURGIES:
SUNDAYS: 10 AM (September thru May) MON THRU SAT: AS NOTED IN WEEKLY BULLETIN
 9 AM (June thru August) HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION: 7 PM

DIVINE LITURGY AND LENTEN SERVICES SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF FEBRUARY 18, 2024

Sunday, February 18th – First Sunday of the Great Fast

Divine Liturgy: 10 AM Propers: Tone 5
Epistle: Hebrews 11: 24-26, 32-40; 12: 1-2
Intention: For all Parishioners

Vestments: Bright
Gospel: St. John 1: 43-51

Wednesday, February 21st (7 PM): Moleben to the Holy Cross

Friday, February 23rd (7 PM): Presanctified Divine Liturgy for the Second Friday of Great Lent with Sorokousty

Saturday, February 24th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Divine Liturgy Intentions and Vespers Service Schedule for February and March

Sunday, February 25th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Wednesday, February 28th (7 PM): Moleben to the Holy Cross

Friday, March 1st (7 PM): Presanctified Divine Liturgy for the Third Friday of Great Lent

Saturday, March 2nd (7 PM): Vespers Service

Sunday, March 3rd (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Wednesday, March 6th (7 PM): Moleben to the Holy Cross

Friday, March 8th (7 PM): Presanctified Divine Liturgy for the Fourth Friday of Great Lent

Saturday, March 9th (10 AM): For the blessed repose of the soul of **+Alexander** Maksymowych with Panakhyda, offered by the Maksymowych Family

Saturday, March 9th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Sunday, March 10th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Wednesday, March 13th (7 PM): Moleben to the Holy Cross

Friday, March 15th (7 PM): Presanctified Divine Liturgy for the Fifth Friday of Great Lent

Saturday, March 16th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Sunday, March 17th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Wednesday, March 20th (7 PM): Moleben to the Holy Cross

Friday, March 22nd (7 PM): Presanctified Divine Liturgy for the Sixth Friday of Great Lent

Saturday, March 23rd (7 PM): Vespers Service

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday, March 24th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Holy Wednesday, March 27th (7 PM): Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts

Holy Thursday, March 28th (7 PM): Holy Thursday Vespers and Reading of the Twelve Passion Gospels

Good Friday, March 29th (7 PM): Good Friday Vespers with the Funeral of Jesus Christ and Procession with the Burial Shroud (Plashchanitsya) to the Tomb **with Confessions after Good Friday Services**

Holy Saturday, March 30th (10 AM): Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Holy Saturday, March 30th (5 PM): Blessing of Easter Baskets

Holy Saturday, March 30th (5:30 PM – 6 PM): Confessions

Easter Sunday, March 31st (8:45 AM): Prayer at the Tomb (Nadhrobne)

Easter Sunday, March 31st (9 AM): Resurrection Matins

Easter Sunday, March 31st (10 AM): Divine Liturgy for all Parishioners followed by blessing of Easter Baskets

Saturday Services

Fr. Ihor is celebrating Vesper services every Saturday at 7 PM. All parishioners are invited to attend this service. Those who wish to have a Divine Liturgy celebrated for a loved one whether living or deceased or for a private intention are still able to do so. Please request your Divine Liturgy by contacting Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357 or cantor Jaroslaw Maksymowych at (603) 627-2042. Please note that Saturday Divine Liturgies will now be celebrated only at 10 AM (9 AM June thru August) whenever they are requested. If no Divine Liturgy has been requested for a particular Saturday, then none will be celebrated on that day. The Divine Liturgy schedule in the bulletin will only show Divine Liturgies on Saturdays when they have been requested. If the bulletin does not show a Divine Liturgy for a given Saturday, then this means that particular Saturday is available for your request.

Суботні Богослужіння

Отець Ігор святкує Вечірню кожної суботи у 7-мі годині вечером. Ласкаво просимо усіх парафіян до участі. Парафіяни які бажають замовити Божественну Літургію в суботу для померших або на особисті

інтенції можуть дзвонити до о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357 або до дяка п. Ярослава Максимовича на номер (603) 627-2042. Суботні Божественні Літургії будуть відслужені тільки о годині 10-тій ранком (9-тій ранку з червня по серпень) коли замовлені. Якщо Літургія в певну суботу не буде замовлена, то в цей день не буде жодна відправлена. Порядок Богослужінь в бюлетені покаже тільки ті суботні Служби Божі які є замовлені. Якщо в бюлетені не відображається Божественна Літургія на дану суботу, то це означає, що ця субота доступна на Ваше замовлення.

Liturgical Propers, Readings and Sermon for Sunday

Liturgical Propers for the First Sunday of the Great Fast

Resurrectional Tropar – Tone 5: Come, believers, let us praise and worship the Word. With the Father and the Spirit, He has no beginning. Though He was born of a virgin for our salvation, and He willingly ascended the Cross as a man and suffered death, He raised the dead by His glorious resurrection.

Tropar for the First Sunday of Great Lent – Tone 2: We bow low before Your most pure Image, O Good One, and beg You to forgive our failings. For You, the Christ-God, gladly chose to ascend the Cross so that we might be delivered from the grasp of the enemy. With gratitude for this, we cry out to You, our Savior: “You came to save the world and have filled all things with joy.”

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always, and forever. Amen.

Kondak for the First Sunday of Great Lent – Tone 8: The indescribable Word of the Father was inscribed into flesh through you, O Mother of God. He restored the image, which had been corrupted by reuniting it to the Divine. We reflect this through our words and deeds, giving thanks for our salvation.

Prokimen: Tone 4

Blessed are You, Lord, God of our fathers; may Your name be praised and glorified forever.

VERSE: You are just in everything You have done for us.

Blessed are You, Lord, God of our fathers; may Your name be praised and glorified forever.

ПЕРША НЕДІЛЯ ВЕЛИКОГО ПОСТУ

Апостол: До Євреїв послання св. апостола Павла читання. (Євр 11: 24-40; 12: 1-2)

Браття, вірою Мойсей, коли був виріс, відрікся зватися сином дочки фараона; волів радше страждати разом з людом Божим, ніж дознавати дочасної гріховної втіхи, бо, дивлячись на нагороду, вважав за більше багатство наругу вибраного народу від скарбів Єгипту.

І що ще скажу? Часу не вистане мені, коли заходжуся розповідати про Гедеона, про Варака, про Самсона, про Єфту, про Давида й Самуїла та пророків, що вірою підбили царства, чинили справедливість, обітниця осягнули, загородили пащі левам, силу вогню гасили, вістря меча уникали, ставали сильні, будши недолугі, на війні проявили мужність, наскоки чужинців відбивали. Жінки діставали назад своїх померлих, які воскресали. Інші загинули в муках, відкинувши визволення, щоб осягнути ліпше воскресіння. Інші наруг і бичів зазнали та ще й кайданів і в'язниці; їх каменовано, розрізувано пилою, брано на допити; вони вмирили, мечем забиті; тинялися в овечих та козячих шкурах, збідовані, гноблені, кривджені; вони, яких світ не був вартий, блукали пустинями, горами, печерами та земними вертепами. І всі вони дарма що мали добре засвідчення вірою, не одержали обіцяного, бо Бог зберіг нам щось краще, щоб вони не без

нас осягли досконалість.

Тому і ми, маючи навколо себе таку велику хмару свідків, відкиньмо всякий тягар і гріх, що так легко обмотує, і біжімо витривало до змагання, що призначене нам, вдивляючися пильно на Ісуса, засновника й завершителя віри, який замість радості, що перед ним була, витерпів хрест, на сором не звертаючи уваги, і який возсів праворуч Божого престолу.

Epistle Reading for the First Sunday of Great Lent (Hebrews 11: 24-40; 12: 1-2)

Brethren: By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter; he wished to be ill treated along with God's people rather than enjoy the fleeting rewards of sin. Moses considered the reproach borne by God's Anointed greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

What more shall I recount? I have no time to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, did what was just, obtained the promises; they broke the jaws of lions, put out raging fires, escaped the devouring sword; though weak they were made powerful, became strong in battle, and turned back foreign invaders. Women received back their dead through resurrection. Others were tortured and would not receive deliverance, in order to obtain a better resurrection. Still others endured mockery, scourging, even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, sawed in two, put to death at sword's point; they went about garbed in the skins of sheep or goats, needy, afflicted, tormented. The world was not worthy of them. They wandered about in deserts and on mountains, they dwelt in caves and in holes of the earth. Yet despite the fact that all of these were approved because of their faith, they did not obtain what had been promised. God had made a better plan which included us. Without us, they were not to be made perfect.

Therefore, since we for our part are surrounded by this cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every encumbrance of sin which clings to us and persevere in running the race which lies ahead; let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who inspires and perfects our faith. For the sake of the joy that lay before Him, He endured the Cross, despising its shame, and has taken His seat at the right of the throne of God.

Alleluia: Tone 4

VERSE: Moses and Aaron were among His priests, and Samuel was among those who called upon His name.

Alleluia: Tone 4

VERSE: They called upon the Lord and He answered them.

Alleluia: Tone 4

VERSE: Мойсей і Арон між Його священиками, і Самуїл між тими, що Його ім'я прикликають.

Alleluia: Tone 4

VERSE: Вони Господа прикликали, і Він відповідав їм.

Alleluia: Tone 4

Євангелія: (Ів 1: 43-51)

У той час, Ісус вирішив піти в Галилею; і знайшовши Филипа, мовив до нього: "Іди за мною". А був Филип з Витсаїди, з міста Андрієвого та Петрового. Зустрів Филип Натанаїла і сказав до нього: "Ми знайшли того, про кого Мойсей у законі писав і пророки, - Ісуса, Йосифового сина, з Назарету." Натанаїл же йому на те: "А що доброго може бути з Назарету?" Мовив до нього Филип: "Прийди та подивися."

Побачивши Ісус, що Натанаїл надходив до Нього, сказав про нього: "Ось справжній ізраїльтянин, що нема в ньому лукавства." Натанаїл же йому: "Звідкіль знаєш мене?" Сказав Ісус, промовивши до нього: "Перше, ніж Филип закликав тебе, бачив я тебе, як був еси під смоковницею." Відповів же йому Натанаїл: "Учителю, ти - Син Божий, ти - цар Ізраїлів." Ісус відказав, мовивши до нього: "Тому, що я відповідав тобі:

Бачив я тебе під смоковницею, - то й віриш! Бачитимеш більш, ніж те." І сказав до нього: "Істинно, істинно кажу вам: Побачите небеса відкриті й ангелів Божих, як висходять та сходять на Сина Чоловічого."

Gospel Reading for the First Sunday of Great Lent (St. John 1: 43-51)

At that time Jesus wanted to set out for Galilee, but first He came upon Philip. "Follow me," Jesus said to him. Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the same town as Andrew and Peter. Philip sought out Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses spoke of in the law – the prophets too – Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth." Nathanael's response to that was, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" and Philip replied, "Come, see for yourself."

When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, He remarked: "This man is a true Israelite. There is no guile in him." "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked Him. "Before Philip called you," Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree." "Rabbi", said Nathanael, "You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel." Jesus responded: "Do you believe just because I told you I saw you under the fig tree? You will see much greater things than that." He went on to tell them, "I solemnly assure you, you shall see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

SERMON FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

This past Monday we began the season of Lent, which is our preparation for the Easter celebration of Jesus' resurrection. It is a time we should spend in imitation of Jesus' forty days in the desert. Jesus fasted in the desert and overcame the devil's temptations. Jesus never sinned but in the desert He was tempted, and during these forty days of Lent we remember Jesus in the desert as we try to overcome temptation in our own lives and try to overcome our own sinfulness.

Lent is a time to put our souls before a mirror and see ourselves as we really are. Lent is an invitation to allow our sin and darkness and wounds to come to the surface so that we can deal with them and allow them to be healed by the grace of Jesus. During these forty days of Lent, we do not hide from our sinfulness or prevent God from speaking to us or healing us during this holy time of the year. After all, it is only when we admit something that we can deal with it.

The first stage in overcoming anything is to admit that we have a problem. If we remain in denial, we miss out on the grace of God to heal us and renew us and make us whole. During Lent we say "no" to the devil's temptations to continue committing sin, and instead we trust in our heavenly Father like Jesus did in the desert. The words of Jesus can be our words this Lent: "Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matt 4:4) Lent is not only about helping others, about doing something good and holy, it is also very much about the type of person we are and about the type of person we aspire to be.

Since the early centuries, the Church has suggested that we undertake three things during Lent: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. During Lent we need to pray more, fast regularly, and help the poor as much as possible.

Lent is a time for more prayer. We live busy lives and there is much emphasis on enjoying life but a life without prayer is a life without the joy of the presence of God. If we do not pray, we are not Christians at full potential; we are only walking when we could be flying. Martha was busy serving when Jesus came but Mary spent time with Him and Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried

about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, and it will not be taken from her." (Luke 10:41-42)

Lent is not only about helping others and doing something, but also very much about the type of person that we are. We pray because when we pray, we touch God. God is our loving Father who greatly desires that we allow Him to be close to us. So, we pray more this Lent to experience more of the joy of knowing God our Father.

Fasting is a penance the Church encourages us to undertake during Lent. From the spiritual point of view, fasting symbolizes our dependence on God. It expresses that we really are trying to put God first in our life. The Bible tells us that fasting from food must go together with fasting from violence and fasting from oppressing people (Isa 58:3-12). In other words, when we fast from food, it is to be accompanied by a loving and forgiving attitude towards others. We could say that fasting from food in itself is not what is important; it is what the fasting symbolizes that really matters.

So, to fast in a way that is genuinely pleasing to God, can we make an effort to forgive those who have hurt us and not harbor resentment toward them any longer? Why do we need to keep up grudges? Is it merely because we like to be in control? Perhaps to forgive, we also need to give up our need to dominate and control others. If we have a problem forgiving someone, we can share it with the Lord and ask His help and grace so that we may forgive. While we may not forget, we certainly do not want to live being dominated by past wounds. We want to live in the present free of the hurts of the past.

For almsgiving or helping the poor, the Church makes it easy for us by giving us the opportunity to contribute to Catholic aid agencies. Helping the poor during Lent brings the words of Jesus to mind: "Whatever you did to one of the least of these you did it to me." (Matt 25:45)

The word "Lent" is an old English word, which means "springtime." May this Lent really be a new springtime in the lives of each of us. Through prayer, through fasting from food accompanied by forgiving others and not bearing grudges, and through donating from our surplus to help the poor, may we like Jesus in the desert for forty days overcome temptation and thus be well prepared to celebrate Christ's resurrection from the dead on holy Pascha. Amen.

ПРОПОВІДЬ НА ПЕРШУ НЕДІЛЮ ВЕЛИКОГО ПОСТУ

Слава Ісусу Христу! Дорогі в Христі браття і сестри!

Кожна неділя Великого посту має свою тему для спогадів і роздумів. Але протягом історичного часу кожна неділя посту отримала другу додаткову тему. Першу неділю Великого посту присвятили перемозі Істинної Святої Православної Віри. Віра яка перемогла світ: "ця перемога, що перемогла світ, – віра наша" (1Ін.5:4). Таким чином православними називаємо всіх християн, які правильно вірять (тобто цей епітет вживаємо також до християн-католиків, а не лише до конфесійних православних християн). Така назва неділі пов'язана з торжеством православ'я (тобто правильної віри) над ерессю іконоборства. Ця ересь зародилась у перших віках Середньовіччя та проголошувала необхідність боротьби з іконопочитанням у Церкві.

Почитання ікон фальшиво трактувалось як поклоніння дереву та фарбам, тобто матеріалу, з якого виробляються ікони, тобто сприймалось як ідолопоклонство. Святі Отці сьомого Вселенського собору засудили іконоборство як ересь та на згадку про перемогу над ним постановили святкувати торжество православ'я в першу неділю Великого посту. Таким чином ця неділя пригадує нам справжню сутність і

роль ікони – зображення вказує на того, кого зображено, спонукає до діалогу з зображеною особою. Христос, Який прийняв на себе тіло, став видимим для людей, а отже зображуваним. Інакше ми не могли би зображувати Бога, хіба символічно. Також зображуємо Богородицю і Святих, Безтілесні сили. Почитаючи ікони, шануючи їх як святиню, не поклоняємося їм, але Богові, ними зображуваному. Також коли маємо перед собою ікони Богородиці чи Святих, поклоняємося через них завжди Богові, що прославив себе у їхньому житті.

Раз і назавжди Вселенський Собор затвердив вчення про шанування святих ікон і молитовне поклоніння їм. У постанові святих отців говориться, що честь, яку ми віддаємо святим іконам, відноситься не до самої матерії, а до зображеного на ньому святого лику, що молитовне поклоніння належить самому первообразу, тобто, поклоняючись святій іконі, ми поклоняємося тому небесному покровителю і молитвенику, котрий зображений на ній.

Вчення про святі ікони було завершенням формулювання православних християнських вірувань, заснованих на божественному одкровенні, на вченні апостолів, на переданні святих отців. Ікона об'являє нам Бога. Першою іконою, котра з Божої волі з'явилася серед людей, було Воплочене Слово, Ісус Христос, Син Божий, образ слави Предвічного Отця. В Христі Бог об'явив себе найповніше. Це ж сам Ісус сказав до Филипа: «Хто бачив Мене, той бачив Отця». Шануючи ікони, ми шануємо зображених на них святих, підносячись думкою до неба, і до того угодника Божого, нашого молитвеника й заступника, що живе там. Ми католики вклоняємося і служимо не самим іконам, а тільки перед іконами. Ми молимося і покладаємо надію не на ікони, а на Бога, Який на них зображений.

Сьогоднішній день, перша постова неділя, знаменує для нас триумф тієї справжньої Церкви, яка зуміла не скоритися і вести всіх нас до спасіння. Заклик Ісуса Христа: "Іди за Мною!" звернений до усіх, хто його чує. Час Великого Посту – це час слідування за Ісусом, який готував Себе на діло спасіння роду людського. Він і сьогодні кличе нас іти за Ним, через Святий Піст слідувати за Ним, бо це час не тільки молитви, посту, але й одночасно час добрих вчинків, закликає нас поглянути у глибину нашої душі, викинути із серця все, що лукаве, стрясти гріховний пил та через покаяння очистити нашу душу і воскреснути до нового життя з Богом, щоб ми вміло користали з цієї Божої присутності в іконах, а відтак робили крок за кроком до того Божого обличчя, яке для всіх нас приготоване у вічності.

Постараймося: молитвою, покаянням і умертвінням наших тілесних пристрастей, очистити нашу душу і серце, щоб наша подібність до Всевишнього засяла чистим Божественним світлом. Примирившись із Господом у таїнстві покаяння і прийнявши Його в пречистих таїнствах, почнімо труд свого життя, який урешті допровадить нас до світла й до повноти духовних благ, які свідчать, що Господь перебуває в нас, а ми — в Ньому. Нехай же Дух Святий, Утішитель і Скарбник усього доброго, просвітить наш розум, щоб ми достойно провели цей Священний Піст з користю для нашого тіла і на спасіння душі нашої! Амінь!

Hymn to the Mother of God: Toboyu raduyet'sya, Blahodatnaya, vsyaka tvar, anhel's'kiy sobor ee choloveeches'kiy reed, osvuyashchenniy Khrame ee rayu slovesniy, Deewstvenna pokhvalo, shcho eez neyee Boh voplotiwsya ee mladentsem staw, pered veekami sushchiy Boh nash. Lono bo Tvoye prestolom sotvoriw ee utrobu Tvoyu prostoreeshoyu nebes uchiniw. Toboyu raduyet'sya, Blahodatnaya, vsyaka tvar, slava Tobee.

Hymn to the Mother of God: All creation praises you, for you are full of grace. The angelic choirs and all the races of men, sing of you the glorious temple of the Lord, the mystical paradise, and the glory of all virgins from whom the eternal God was born a Child. Your body became a throne, and your womb was more spacious than heaven. All creation praises you, for you are full of grace. Glory to you!

Communion Verse: Хвалить Господа з небес, хвалить Його на висотах. Радуйтеся, праведні, у Господі, бо правим належить похвала. Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest. Rejoice in the Lord, you just ones, for praise is fitting from the righteous. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Parish Announcements

We Welcome You!

If you are visiting our church today, our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Thank you and God bless you for visiting with us today! We welcome all our visitors and guests who worship at our parish. We invite families and individuals who wish to become members to register by calling Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357.

Вітаємо Вас!

Якщо Ви відвідуєте нашу церкву сьогодні, наша парафіяльна громада рада вітати Вас тут! Щире спасибі Вам, і нехай Бог благословить Вас за Ваші відвідини з нами сьогодні! Ми запрошуємо сім'ї та осіб, які бажають стати членами, зареєструватися у нас по телефоні о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357.

Please Pray for our Sick and Homebound Parishioners, Family Members and Friends

Fr. Ihor Papka, Fr. Zbigniew Brzezicki, Oleh and Valentina Babski, Michaelle Baker, Rick Barr, Marylou Blaisdell, Tracy Crews, Carmel Horangic, Josephine Housty, Christine Kolagji, Helen Kucman, Martha and Ray Majkut, Karen and Jaroslaw Maksymowych, Jean Mandych, Sherri Martel, Katherine Masso, Jennifer McMillan, Katharine McNaughton, Jackie Morales, Lauren Morales, Jonathan Morales, Tanya and Ronald Morales, Elizabeth Mozina, Dean and Terri Nilson, Alan Pasicznyk, Lina Puciw, Billie Sheesley, Derek Stanley, Pauline Stanley, John Terninko, Elisha Wallace, Cindy Wilson, Dr. Mark Windt, Lenora Zelenski. Please contact Fr. Ihor if you would like to add a friend or loved one to this prayer list.

2023 Donation Letters

Please pick up your donation letter at the back of the church, which summarizes how much you donated to our parish during 2023. If you do not see an envelope with your name on it, please ask a Trustee. Thank you.

February Birthdays

The following parishioners are celebrating a birthday and Fr. Ihor is celebrating the 32nd anniversary of his priestly ordination this month:

Feb. 1 – Denise B.

Feb. 7 – Gage Y.

Feb. 9 – Diana H.

Feb. 15 – Fr. Ihor (Ordination Anniversary)

Feb. 15 – John H.

Feb. 15 – Oleh R.

Feb. 17 – Nazar Z.

Feb. 22 – Carmel H.

Feb. 24 – Phil B.

Our parish community wishes Fr. Ihor and this month's birthday celebrants peace, joy, love and good health on their special day as well as throughout the coming year. May our dear Lord grant all of you many more healthy, happy and blessed years. Happy Anniversary, Happy Birthday and На Многая літа! (Na Mnohaya Lita!).

Lenten Regulations 2024

By the threefold discipline of fasting, prayer and almsgiving, the Church keeps the Great Fast/Lent, which begins this year on Monday, February 12th and lasts through Holy Saturday, March 30th. The following Great

Fast/Lenten regulations apply, in general, to all Ukrainian Catholics of the Stamford Eparchy between the ages of 14 to 60:

- **Abstinence from meat and dairy products is to be observed on the first day of Lent, February 12th, and on Good Friday, March 29th.**
- **Abstinence from meat is to be observed on all Fridays of the Great Fast and on Holy Saturday.**
- Abstinence from meat is encouraged on all Wednesdays of the Great Fast.
- The following are exempt from abstinence: 1) convalescents who are returning to their strength; 2) the poor who live on alms; 3) the sick and the frail; 4) pregnant women and women who are nursing their children; 5) persons who perform hard labor.
- Meat is to be understood as including not only the flesh, but also those parts of warm-blooded animals that cannot be rendered, i.e. melted down, including but not limited to organ meats, blood, etc. Meat gravy or soup made from meat and any other food containing meat is also included in this prohibition.
- Dairy products are to be understood as comprising of products derived from mammals and birds, but not regarded as meat, including but not limited to cheese, lard, butter, milk, eggs, cream, etc.
- **Eucharistic Fast: A fast of one hour from food (prior to the service starting time) should be kept by those receiving the Holy Eucharist at the evening celebration of the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts as well as at all Divine Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great. NOTE: This Eucharistic fast applies throughout the entire Liturgical year not just during the Great Fast/Lent.**

Moleben to the Holy Cross

Deacon Jon is celebrating the Moleben to the Holy Cross each Wednesday of Great Lent at 7 PM. Please join him for this beautiful service.

Lenten Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy

Fr. Ihor is celebrating the Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts each Friday during Great Lent at 7 PM. Please join him as we journey through the season of Lent.

Sorokousty – Lenten Memorial Services for the Deceased

Fr. Ihor is also celebrating Sorokousty on the Fridays of Great Lent, which are memorial services for the deceased. If you would like to have your loved ones who have passed into eternity remembered at these services, please provide their names to Fr. Ihor or to the cantor, Jaroslaw Maksymowych. Sorokousty services are held each Friday of Lent after the 7 PM Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy.

January, 2024 Financial Summary

Total Income from January Donations: \$2,615.00

Total Expenditures for January: \$4,934.44

Deficit for January: \$2,319.44

Average attendance in January: 42

Thank you and God bless you for your generous support of our parish.

Weekly Reflection:

Learning about our Catholic Faith – Temptation is Real and Painful

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. Luke 4:1–2a

What a painful experience for Jesus. If you really think about this, it can be difficult to understand...at least at first. Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah, the Creator of the Universe, the great I AM, the second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, is in the desert, suffering for forty days while He is tempted by the devil and living among the wild beasts. Why in the world would He do this and why would God the Father allow it to happen? And what's more, it says that it was actually the Holy Spirit who drove Jesus into the desert to experience this painful forty days!

Perhaps we rarely reflect upon all that Jesus endured and all that He suffered in His human life. Sure, we think about the Crucifixion at times, but even that is often overshadowed by our knowledge that He rose. It is easy to miss the suffering He experienced throughout His life. And it is easy to miss the reason He went through all that He did go through in His humanity.

So what's it all about? It's about love for us all. It's about God loving us so much that He was willing to endure every form of hardship and human suffering that enters into our lives. It's about God being able to look us squarely in the face and say, "Yes, I do understand what you're going through...I really do." This is love. It's a love so deep that God Himself was willing to experience our weaknesses and pain so that He would be able to meet us there, console us in the midst of whatever we are going through, and gently lift us out of it to the new life He has in store for us. Again, this is Love!

The Spirit "led" (Matthew's and Luke's versions) and even "drove" (Mark's version) Jesus out into the desert. This was a way of telling us that this experience was the plan and will of God. It wasn't something imposed upon Jesus by some strange happenstance. It wasn't bad luck or an unfortunate and meaningless human suffering. No, it was suffering for a purpose. It was suffering with an intention. And the intention was, in part, to experience and embrace all that we experience and must embrace.

Temptation in life is real. It's the result of our fallen human nature. It comes from our weakness but also from the evil one. Temptation can be a heavy burden and cause heavy emotional and psychological pain. And when the temptation is given in to, it causes an even deeper spiritual pain. Jesus never gave in to the temptations in the desert, nor did He give in to temptations at any other time in His life. But He endured them and suffered through them all.

This tells us that He can be our strength and inspiration in the midst of whatever we are tempted with each and every day. Some days we may feel the loneliness and isolation of one who is driven into the desert of our sins. We may feel as though the wild beasts of our disordered passions are getting the best of us. We may feel as though the evil one is having his way with us. Well, Jesus felt this way, also. And He freely allowed Himself to experience this in His humanity. It was the will of the Father and the working of the Holy Spirit that drove Him to this experience.

For these reasons, it is Jesus Himself who is able to meet you in this desert within. He is there, waiting for you, looking for you, calling to you. He is there in the midst of anything and everything you may be going through. And it is He, the One who defeated this desert temptation, who will gently guide you out of your particular situation. He went to the desert to meet you and to bring you back home to Himself. And just as the angels ministered to Jesus in this desert, so also does He send those angels to minister to you.

So whether your “desert” is only a slight agitation in life right now, or if it’s a struggle against complete despair, Jesus wants to meet you and bring you out of it. He conquered the desert once and for all, and He is able to conquer any desert in your life, also.

Let us pray: *Lord, I acknowledge Your perfect love for me. I believe that You love me enough to endure all suffering, to understand all suffering, and to bring me out of my own interior dryness and pain. May I let you be driven into the desert of my own soul; and there, as I encounter You, may I allow You to lead me to the cool and refreshing waters. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*