



Українська Католицька Едмонтонська Єпархія

Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton

PASTORAL CENTRE - COMMUNICATOR

April 7, 2020

Слава Ісусу Христу! Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

We pray that you are in good health and adapting to the new reality of daily routines in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. With the cancellation of Divine Liturgies celebrated within our parish communities, our parish life has changed significantly, particularly as we prepare for Easter. We must remember however, that our Church is OPEN, maybe not in the physical sense, but truly in our hearts. Your pastors continue to serve you, by celebrating the Divine Liturgy and other services on behalf of all faithful, and through their ministry are reaching out to their parishioners, including the elderly, sick and those in need.

At the Pastoral Centre, we are receiving many telephone calls and emails from individuals asking about ways they can support their parishes. They also share their concerns of cancelled services, lower donations and the challenge of meeting all parish expenses in the coming months. Government response in the form of subsidies and other financial aid is becoming available and eligibility requirements are being clarified. As the Eparchy acts as the legal employer for all pastors under one payroll number, any application for wage subsidies from any level of government would be submitted by the Eparchy on behalf of the parishes. At the Eparchial level, we are reviewing these programs and will forward information to the parish pastoral councils, specifically the pastor, council chair and treasurer.

This is the first communication which will provide information on some initial financial relief to the parishes. As a first step, beginning **April 1, 2020**, Bishop David announced a number initiatives to **ease the financial strain on parishes**:

1. **Suspend the collection of the 10% Cathedraicum** from parish collections for the next 3 months (April 1 through June 30, 2020). Parishes will not be required to pay Cathedraicum for this period. The situation will be evaluated should the COVID-19 Pandemic continue past June 2020.

2. Allow parishioners to make **online donations to their parish using the Eparchial Website**. Donations will be applied to the parish account or sent to the parish directly. The procedure is attached along with a template that a parish can use to add their own information with instructions for online giving. This feature is available through *Canada Helps*. Funds are deposited to the eparchial bank account every two weeks less a nominal fee of 3% taken by *Canada Helps*. *Canada Helps* immediately issues the donation receipt online. We have already received a steady number of donations and encourage you to share this information with your parishioners.
3. Payments made to the Eparchy for the **clergy stipends and substitutions** will be reduced as follows (April through June 30, 2020):
 - The **travel allowance will change**. As there are lesser requirements for travel by the clergy the current allowance will change from a specified amount to a reimbursement by kilometre at a rate of \$0.55 / km. Your pastor will submit his mileage directly to the parish or district council for payment.
 - **Remove the substitution levy**: the \$100 per pastor per month will be deducted from the remuneration invoice as there are currently no services.

These adjustments will be made on the April, May and June invoices, copies of which will be forwarded to the parishes. If your parish has already submitted post dated cheques, we will process the April cheque and credit any excess to the next month. Otherwise, if you would like to reissue the cheques for the three months, please call the office and ask for Sheila.

4. For parishes who have **loans outstanding**, the Eparchy will waive loan interest for the next 3 months (April through June 2020).
5. The Eparchy will continue to provide **online resources and video-streaming** of liturgical services through our website. If you have any suggestions, please forward them by email to chancery@edmontoneparchy.com.

We will continue sharing information in the coming weeks as more is known and clarified. As always, we welcome your input and feedback. Thank you for your patience and prayers during these unusual times. God Bless.

Iryna Laschuk

Chancellor and Director of Finance - email: accounting@edmontoneparchy.com

His Excellency Bishop David and the entire Pastoral Centre staff and volunteers extend to the clergy, religious, monastic, and faithful of the Eparchy of Edmonton a blessed Holy Week and joyous celebration of the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord.

Христос Воскрес! Воістину Воскрес! Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!