

# Men of Worship

## Inspiring Men in the Ukrainian Catholic Faith

### ➤ Faith in Action: Taking Part in Community

Featured Article by  
Fr. Jim Nakonechny

### ➤ Brotherhood in Faith

A reflection by a  
Grand Knight

### ➤ Praying for Grandchildren

The Mighty Power of  
Prayer

### ➤ Building Strong Marriages

A Christ-Centered  
Guide for Catholic  
Men



# Thanksgiving, a Celebration of the Family

Thanksgiving Day, celebrated in the month of October, has its historical roots in religious and cultural traditions, giving thanks to God for the blessing of the harvest and graces received during the year.

While not a liturgical feast listed among the holy days of the Church, the spirit of thanksgiving underlies everything we do as Christians. Jesus said, “Give to others, and God will give to you... The measure you use for others is the one that God will use for you” (Luke 6: 38).

In other words, generosity is giving from the heart; and thanksgiving is gratitude for that generosity.

Thanksgiving is a celebration of the family. Whatever your family thanksgiving traditions are, thanksgiving is an opportunity for family to gather together, to feast and to enjoy each other’s company. And it is an occasion to show gratitude to God and to each other.

When I was younger, I found a special card for Father’s Day. Well, not exactly a Thanksgiving Card, but it expressed my sentiments of thanksgiving for my dad’s love, guidance, and nurturing throughout my childhood. It went something like this: On the cover of the card, “Dad, when I think of all the food you put on the table, the clothes on my back, and the roof over my head...”, and in the inside of the card, “Why did I ever leave home?!!” The card was my way of thanking my dad for giving me life and helping me to grow in his love and in the love of God into the person I’ve become.

As you gather this Thanksgiving, carry on your family traditions, or start some new ones. For example, in the time leading up to Thanksgiving, volunteer time as a family at a soup kitchen, visit a sick child or an elderly person, or invite a stranger or forgotten relative over for dinner. At the thanksgiving table, give everyone a chance to say one thing for which they are grateful. Include a prayer to God of thanksgiving.

Most importantly, attend Church as a family to show your gratefulness to God. After all, the word “thanksgiving” comes from the Greek word *eucharistia*, which literally means thanksgiving.

Eucharist. Thanksgiving. Imagine that.

In the Eucharist, God gives thanks for us by sharing the gift of God’s son, Jesus Christ, and, in turn, we give thanks to God by receiving God’s love in the Eucharist, which is Jesus’ body and blood.



+ David

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# Brotherhood in Faith

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# Praying for Grandchildren

## The Mighty Power of Grandparents' Intercessions



For Catholic grandparents, the arrival of grandchildren is a joyous blessing, bringing boundless love and a renewed sense of purpose. As spiritual pillars of the family, they play a vital role in nurturing the faith and well-being of their grandchildren. One of the most powerful tools at their disposal is prayer. We will explore the profound impact of prayer in the lives of Catholic grandparents and provide guidance on specific prayers and intercessions they can offer for the spiritual well-being of their beloved grandchildren.

### 1. The Power of Prayer

Prayer is a sacred and transformative act that connects us with the divine. As Catholic grandparents, it offers a direct line of communication with God, allowing them to seek His guidance, blessings, and protection for their grandchildren. The act of praying demonstrates their love and care, inviting God's grace into the lives of those they cherish.

### 2. Praying for Spiritual Guidance

Above all, Catholic grandparents desire the spiritual well-being of their grandchildren. They can pray for their little ones' faith to blossom and for God to grant them wisdom, discernment, and a deep understanding of His love. Grandparents can also seek intercession from saints, such as St. Monica, who fervently prayed for the conversion of her son, St. Augustine, and whose faith-filled example is an inspiration.

### 3. Invoking Guardian Angels

Encourage grandparents to pray for their grandchildren's guardian angels to watch over and protect them throughout their lives. These spiritual beings act as protectors and guides, offering strength and comfort in times of need.

## 4. Seeking Blessings for Special Occasions

Grandparents can offer heartfelt prayers on special occasions like birthdays, first communions, confirmations, and graduations. These prayers can invoke God's blessings upon their grandchildren as they reach significant milestones in their faith journey and life.

## 5. Praying for Health and Safety

Catholic grandparents can fervently pray for their grandchildren's physical and emotional health, seeking God's healing touch and protection from harm. By entrusting their grandchildren's well-being to God, they show their unwavering love and faith in His providence.

## 6. Interceding in Difficult Times

Life is full of challenges, and children may face various trials along their journey. Grandparents can intercede for their grandchildren during difficult times, praying for strength, courage, and resilience to navigate life's obstacles while remaining grounded in their faith.

## 7. Gratitude and Thanksgiving

Prayer need not always be about asking; it can also be an expression of gratitude. Encourage grandparents to offer prayers of thanksgiving for the gift of their grandchildren,

thanking God for the joy and blessings they bring into their lives.

## 8. Setting an Example of Prayer

Lastly, the act of praying sets a powerful example for grandchildren to follow. When children witness their grandparents' devotion to prayer, they are more likely to understand its significance and incorporate it into their own lives.

The power of prayer knows no bounds, and for Catholic grandparents, it is a cherished gift to bestow upon their beloved grandchildren. Through heartfelt intercessions, they can invite God's grace, blessings, and protection into the lives of the young souls they hold dear. By praying for their spiritual guidance, invoking guardian angels, seeking blessings, and expressing gratitude, grandparents become spiritual warriors for their grandchildren, nurturing their faith and fostering a deep connection with God. Let us celebrate the invaluable role of Catholic grandparents in the lives of their grandchildren and encourage them to continue lifting their little ones in prayer, knowing that the love and devotion they invest in their intercessions hold immeasurable power in shaping the spiritual journey of the next generation.



# Why

## Am I Ukrainian Catholic?

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# Building Strong Marriages: A Christ-Centred Guide for Catholic Men

Marriage is a sacred bond, a union of two souls embarking on a lifelong journey of love, support, and spiritual growth. For Catholic men, building a strong and Christ-centered marriage is not only a commitment to their partner but also a dedication to honoring God's plan for the sanctity of matrimony. We will explore essential guidance and advice for Catholic men on fostering communication, sacrificial love, and spiritual unity to create a foundation for a thriving and enduring marriage.

## 1. Communication: The Key to Connection

Open and honest communication is the cornerstone of a successful marriage. As a Catholic man, it's vital to cultivate effective communication skills and actively listen to your spouse's thoughts, feelings, and needs. Set aside time to engage in meaningful conversations, express gratitude, and share both joys and challenges. By fostering open communication, you strengthen the emotional bond with your partner and demonstrate the love that Christ teaches.

## 2. Embracing Sacrificial Love

Christ's love for His Church is

the ultimate model of sacrificial love. Catholic men are called to emulate this selfless love in their marriages. Sacrificial love means putting your partner's needs before your own, supporting them in their dreams and aspirations, and being present during difficult times. This kind of love is not based on mere feelings, but a conscious decision to give of oneself entirely for the well-being of the spouse.

## 3. Prayer: The Foundation of Spiritual Unity

To build a Christ-centered marriage, prayer must be at the core of the relationship. As a Catholic man, lead your spouse in prayer and seek God's guidance together. Attend Divine Liturgy as a couple, study the Scriptures, and pray the Rosary. By nurturing a shared spiritual life, you create a profound unity in Christ that will sustain your marriage through any trials that may come your way.

## 4. Embracing Forgiveness and Mercy

No marriage is without its challenges, and conflicts are inevitable. As a Catholic man, practice forgiveness and mercy



towards your spouse. Remember the importance of the Mystery of Repentance and the power of forgiveness in healing wounds. By offering and seeking forgiveness, you create a loving and compassionate environment where both partners can grow and thrive.

## 5. Supporting Each Other's Spiritual Journey

Recognize that each partner's



## 7. Seek Support and Mentorship

Don't hesitate to seek support and mentorship from other Catholic couples who have strong, Christ-centred marriages. Surround yourselves with couples who inspire and uplift you, and who can offer guidance and advice from their own experiences. Together, you can strengthen your faith and commitment to building a lasting and loving marriage.

For Catholic men, building a strong and Christ-centred marriage is a lifelong journey of love, sacrifice, and spiritual growth. By fostering open communication, embracing sacrificial love, and prioritizing prayer and spiritual unity, you create a foundation that can weather any storm. Cherish the Mystery of Marriage and seek support from fellow Ukrainian Catholic couples to continually strengthen your faith and commitment to each other. Remember that with God as your guide and Christ at the centre of your relationship, your marriage can be a shining beacon of love and hope, reflecting the beauty of God's plan for matrimony.

spiritual journey is unique. Support your spouse in their pursuit of faith and personal growth. Encourage them to engage in spiritual activities and seek ways to grow together in Christ. By respecting and fostering each other's spiritual path, you strengthen the spiritual unity in your marriage.

## 6. Cherishing the Mystery of

## Marriage

A Catholic marriage is a sacred mystery, a visible sign of God's love in the world. As a Catholic man, honour and cherish this gift from God. Continually strive to deepen your understanding of the mystery and its significance in your lives. By embracing the Mystery of Marriage with reverence, you fortify the foundation of your relationship with Christ at its centre.

# Smooth Sailing to Church: Tips and Ideas for Parents to Get Kids Ready on Time

For parents, getting the entire family ready and out the door on Sunday mornings can sometimes feel like an uphill battle. Waking up late, finding misplaced shoes, and dealing with breakfast spills can cause unnecessary stress and lead to arriving late for church. But fear not! With some preparation and a touch of creativity, you can make Sunday mornings a seamless and enjoyable experience for the whole family.



## 1. Plan Ahead

The key to a successful Sunday morning is proper planning. Set aside time on Saturday evening to ensure everything is ready for the next day. Lay out your children's church outfits, pack diaper bags, prepare snacks, and organize any necessary documents, such as Divine Liturgy booklets or offering envelopes. Having everything ready in advance will significantly reduce last-minute stress.

## 2. Create a Morning Routine

Establish a consistent morning routine that begins at the same time each Sunday. A predictable schedule can help children understand what to expect and minimize resistance. Include time for breakfast, dressing up, brushing teeth, and bathroom breaks. Sticking to a routine will make the process more efficient over time.

## 3. Set Alarms

It's not just adults who benefit from alarms; children can also respond positively to gentle reminders. Use playful alarms, such as a favourite song or a cheerful tune, to signal the start of the morning routine. This will encourage kids to transition smoothly from one task to another.

## 4. Make Dressing Up Fun

Getting dressed for church can be a delightful experience for children. Allow them to pick out their Sunday clothes the night before or even have a mini fashion show to decide on their outfit. This involvement gives them a sense of





independence and excitement for the day ahead.

## 5. Offer Rewards and Incentives

Motivate your children to get ready on time by introducing a reward system. Create a chart with stickers for each successful Sunday morning. After accumulating a certain number of stickers, they can earn a small treat or extra playtime. Positive reinforcement can be a great way to encourage timely behaviour.

## 6. Have a To-Go Breakfast

Preparing breakfast in advance can save valuable time on Sunday mornings. Opt for easy-to-make and healthy breakfast options that can be enjoyed on the go, like granola bars, yogurt cups, or fruit slices. This way, even if you're running a bit behind, your children can still have a nutritious meal before heading to church.

## 7. Get Everyone Involved

Assign age-appropriate tasks to each family member to foster a sense of responsibility and teamwork. Younger children can help gather their belongings, while older ones can assist with setting the table or packing the car. The collective effort will make the morning routine more enjoyable for everyone.

## 8. Practice Punctuality

Be a role model for your children by consistently showing up on time for church. Demonstrate the importance of punctuality and the respect it shows for the faith community and the sacredness of Divine Liturgy.

Preparing and getting kids to church on time is entirely achievable with a little planning, creativity, and patience. Establishing a morning routine, involving the children, and offering positive incentives will help foster a stress-free and enjoyable Sunday morning. Embrace the process as an opportunity to strengthen family bonds and nurture your children's love for their faith community. By implementing these tips and ideas, you'll not only arrive on time but also set the tone for a peaceful and spiritually fulfilling day ahead.

# Exploring Red Deer

## Family Adventures for Fathers and Children

Red Deer is the perfect destination for fathers looking to create lasting memories with their children. From exciting outdoor adventures to educational museums and delightful parks, this vibrant city has something for everyone.



### Red Deer Public Library

Rainy days or quiet moments can be spent at the Red Deer Public Library, where fathers can encourage a love for reading in their children. Enjoy storytimes, participate in children's activities, or borrow a collection of books to read together.



### Bower Ponds

Enjoy a leisurely walk around the pond, rent paddleboats to explore the water, or relax in the picnic areas. During the winter months, the ponds transform into an ice-skating wonderland, providing even more opportunities for bonding.



### Alberta Sports Hall of Fame

Fathers can share stories of legendary athletes with their children and engage in interactive exhibits that celebrate the province's sports heritage. From virtual sports experiences to memorabilia displays, this museum offers an exciting and educational outing.



### Discovery Canyon

Fathers can splash around with their children, build sandcastles, and enjoy a thrilling ride down the canyon, creating cherished memories that will last a lifetime.



## Sunnybrook Farm

Step back in time at the Sunnybrook Farm Museum, a living history museum that showcases early 20th-century rural life in Alberta. Wander through heritage buildings, interact with costumed interpreters, and experience hands-on activities that offer a glimpse into the past.



## Kin Canyon Park

Enjoy quality family time by bringing your kids to Kin Canyon Park for a delightful picnic adventure. Nestled in nature's beauty, the park offers serene walking trails and captivating playgrounds, ensuring both relaxation and excitement. Create lasting memories as you share a delicious picnic amidst lush greenery, while your children explore and play in this idyllic setting.

# Finding Stillness: The Art of Praying the Jesus Prayer Using a Prayer Rope



Praying the Jesus Prayer with a prayer rope is a deeply contemplative and meditative practice that fosters a sense of spiritual connection and inner peace. Holding the prayer rope, begin by taking a deep breath and allowing yourself to enter a calm and centered state of mind. As you move from one bead to the next, softly repeat the words, *"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."* The gentle rhythm of the prayer rope aids in focusing your thoughts and bringing your attention to the present moment. With each repetition of the prayer, let the words sink into your heart, inviting a sense of humility, repentance, and a longing for divine mercy. As you progress along the rope, the repetitive nature of the prayer creates a soothing cadence, gradually quieting your mind and opening you to a deeper connection with the divine presence. The prayer rope serves as a tangible reminder of your spiritual journey, guiding you through the prayer and helping you engage more fully with its profound meaning. Through this practice, you can experience a profound sense of communion with God and a transformative inner stillness.

# Tips for Creating a Prayer Routine

## Set Clear Intentions:

Define your purpose for establishing a prayer routine, whether it's seeking guidance, finding inner peace, or deepening your faith.

**Start Simple:** Begin with a manageable timeframe, like 5-10 minutes, to make it easier to commit to daily prayer.

**Choose a Time:** Select a consistent time of day that suits your schedule and energy levels, such as mornings, lunch breaks, or evenings.

## Create a Sacred Space:

Dedicate a peaceful corner for prayer. Purchase or print off Ukrainian Catholic icons in your corner.

**Use Scripture:** Prepare passages from your religious texts to guide and enrich your prayers.



## Embracing Solitude for Prayer: A Ukrainian Catholic Perspective

In the heart of the Ukrainian Catholic tradition lies the profound practice of seeking solitude for prayer. As Christ Our Pascha eloquently reminds us, our Lord's teachings emphasize the significance of withdrawing into our inner selves during prayer, a concept echoed in the Sermon on the Mount where Christ urged us to *"go into our room and shut the door."* In line with this wisdom, Ukrainian Catholics have long recognized the transformative power of solitude in deepening our connection with the Divine.

This year, I embarked with fellow

parishioners from Red Deer's St. Valdimir Parish to go on a hike to Ha Ling Peak. Since then, I have been to Tunnel Mountain, Siffleur Falls, Crescent Falls, Horseshoe Canyon, and Maligne Canyon to name a few. Amidst the breathtaking landscapes of Alberta, I found myself enveloped in solitude, and truly having an opportunity to enjoy silent reflection in prayer. With a prayer rope in hand, I trekked along the trails, the rhythmic motion of the prayer rope harmonized with the rhythm of nature, offering a unique opportunity for individualized prayer and introspection.

# Central Alberta Spotlight: The Badlands Passion Play

For those seeking a spiritually enriching experience, the Drumheller Passion Play is an event that should not be missed. This remarkable portrayal of Christ's journey, His passion, and His ultimate sacrifice offers a profound opportunity for reflection and connection.

For over 29 years, hundreds of thousands of audience members like you have experienced an epic story of faith, hope & love on Canada's largest outdoor stage. This is a 3 hour outdoor performance (including a 30 minute intermission).

The Drumheller Passion Play is a testament to the power of live theater in conveying the profound message of Christ's sacrifice. The attention to detail and the dedication of the performers make the events of Holy Week come alive, igniting a sense of awe and reverence that mirrors the liturgical celebrations

of our faith surrounded by the ambience that the Albertan badlands has to offer.

As the performers take on the roles of key biblical figures, it prompts us to contemplate our own relationship with Christ and the profound impact of His sacrifice on our lives.

From its moving portrayal of Christ's journey to the dedication of its performers, the Drumheller Passion Play is a must-see event. This immersive experience not only offers a vivid depiction of the Gospel narrative but also prompts attendees to delve into their own faith journey. Do note that this performance does not permit babies and children under 6 to attend the Badlands Passion Play.

With no distractions or sirens often found in the city, this experience not only reaffirmed the teachings of our tradition but also underscored the truth that in embracing solitude, we can find profound connection and renewal.



# Faith in Action: Ways Catholics Can Impact Their Community

Explore practical ways that Catholics can make a difference in their local communities, such as volunteering at shelters, organizing food drives, participating in clean-up initiatives, and supporting local charities.

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## Leading with Catholic Values: Business Leadership Lessons From Our Faith

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In the realm of leadership, the tenets of our Catholic faith offer wisdom that can transform the way we lead and inspire others going beyond mere management.

### **Servant Leadership:**

At the heart of Catholic leadership lies the concept of servant leadership, a paradigm where leaders prioritize the well-being and growth of their team members. This approach mirrors the life of Jesus Christ, who humbly served others and encouraged his disciples to do the same. A servant leader places others' needs above their own, nurtures talent, and empowers those they lead to achieve their fullest potential.

**Empathy:** By empathizing with team members' challenges, triumphs, and personal journeys, leaders create a workplace culture of understanding and support. Christ's teachings remind us of the importance of loving

our neighbours as ourselves, a principle that resonates profoundly in the leadership arena.

### **Fostering Community:**

Leaders who prioritize community-building create an environment where each member feels valued and contributes to a collective purpose.

### **Leadership Role Models:**

In the business world, Jim Sinegal, co-founder of Costco, is recognized for his emphasis on treating employees well, offering fair wages, and fostering a positive work environment. His approach resonates with the concept of servant leadership, nurturing employee well-being for the greater good of the organization.

By infusing our leadership styles with our Catholic values, we can create workplaces that not only thrive but also uphold the principles that lie at the core of our faith.

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men to live their faith  
at home, in their parish,  
at work and in their  
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countless corners of  
the world. Join us as  
we celebrate real role  
models in a world that  
needs men who lead,  
serve, protect and  
defend.

## Knights of Columbus

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