



THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF THE DORMITION

OF THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

ПАРАФІЯ УСПІННІА ПРЕСВ. БОГОРОДНИЦІ

A PARISH OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF EDMONTON

Address:

15608 -104 Avenue,
Edmonton, AB
T5P 4G5

Services:

Sunday Divine Liturgy
(Ukr & Eng) at 10 am
& Melkite (Arabic) D.L.
at 2 pm

Akathist or Molebyn
Most Wednesdays at 6 pm
(see calendar)

Parish Website:

<http://dormition.eeparchy.com>

Twitter:

@dormitionparish

[https://twitter.com/
dormitionparish](https://twitter.com/dormitionparish)

Eparchial Website:

www.eeparchy.com

Pastor:

Fr. Bo Nahachewsky

Fr. Bo's cell phone:

780-340-FR.BO (3726)

Fr. Bo's Email:

fr.bo.nahachewsky
@gmail.com

Sunday, November 17

- Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost (Tone 6);
- Our Holy Father Gregory the Wonderworker, Bishop of Neocaesarea (270-75);
- Passing into Eternal Life (1947) of Blessed Josaphat Kotsylovsky, Bishop of Peremyshl and Martyr

The Pre-Nativity Fast has begun.

Will you take the "New Testament Challenge?"

See inside for details.



JOIN US WEDNESDAYS OF NOVEMBER AT 7-9 PM FOR:

UNDERSTANDING THE DIVINE LITURGY

A Mini-Series with Fr. Bo

Sessions 1 & 2 went well. See our new catechetical display in the hall. And pictures inside this bulletin.

This Thursday is the Major Feast of the

Entrance of the Theotokos to the Temple

The second great feast of the Theotokos is the celebration of her entrance as a child into the Jerusalem Temple which is commemorated on the twenty-first of November. Like the feast of her nativity, this feast of Mary is without direct biblical and historical reference. But like the nativity, it is a feast filled with important spiritual significance for the Christian believer.

The texts of the service tells how Mary was brought as a small child to the temple by her parents in order to be raised there among the virgins consecrated to the service of the Lord until the time of their betrothal in marriage. According to Church tradition, Mary was solemnly ...



Saints of the Day (taken from OCA.org)



...received by the temple community which was headed by the priest Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. She was led to the holy place to be “nourished” there by the angels in order to become herself the “holy of holies” of God, the living sanctuary and temple of the Divine child who was to be born in her.

There is no doubt that the verses of the Old Testament Psalm 45, used extensively in the services of the feast, provided a great inspiration for the celebration of Mary’s consecration to the service of God in the Jerusalem Temple.

Hear, O Daughter, and consider and incline your ear; forget your people and your father’s house, and the king will desire your beauty. Since he is your Lord, bow to him ...

The princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven robes, in many-colored robes she is led to her king, with her virgin companions, her escort, in her train.

With joy and gladness they are led along, as they enter the palace of the king.

Instead of your fathers shall be your sons; you will make them princes in all the earth. I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations, therefore, the peoples will praise you forever and ever (Ps45.10–17).

The Church understands these words of the psalm to be a prophecy directly related to Mary the Theotokos. According to the Gospel of Saint Luke which is read at the Vigil of each of her feasts, Mary herself speaks the following words:

My soul magnifies the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for He has regarded the low estate of His handmaiden. For behold, hence-forth all generations shall call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me and holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation (Lk 1.47–50).

The main theme of the feast of Mary’s entrance to the Temple, repeated many times in the liturgical services, is the fact that

she enters the Temple to become herself the living temple of God, thus inaugurating the New Testament in which are fulfilled the prophecies of old that “the dwelling of God is with man” and that the human person is the sole proper dwelling place of the Divine Presence (Ezek 37.27; Jn 14.15–23; Acts 7.47; 2 Cor 6.11; Eph 2.18–22; 1 Pet 2.4; Rev 22.1–4).

Today is the preview of the good will of God, of the preaching of the salvation of mankind. The Virgin appears in the temple of God, in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all. Let us rejoice and sing to her: Rejoice, O Divine Fulfillment of the Creator’s dispensation (Troparion).

The most pure Temple of the Saviour, the precious Chamber and Virgin, the Sacred Treasure of the Glory of God, is presented today to the house of the Lord. She brings with her the grace of the Spirit, which the angels of God do praise. Truly this woman is the Abode of Heaven! (Kontakion).

The fortieth chapter of Exodus about the building of the tabernacle is read at Vespers, together with passages from the First Book of Kings and the Prophecy of Ezekiel. Each one of these readings all end with exactly the same line, “for the glory of the Lord filled the house [tabernacle] of the Lord God Almighty” (Ex 40.35; 1 Kg 8.11; Ezek 44.4).

Once again on this feast, the Old Testament readings are interpreted as symbols of the Mother of God. This “glory of the Lord” is referred to the Mother of Christ and it “fills” her and all people after her who “hear the word of God and keep it” as the Gospel of the festal liturgy proclaims (Lk 11.37–28). The epistle reading at the Divine Liturgy also proclaims this very same theme (Heb 9.1–7).

Thus, the feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple is the feast which celebrates the end of the physical temple in Jerusalem as the dwelling place of God. When the child Mary enters the temple, the time of the temple comes to an end and the “preview of the good will of God” is shown forth. On this feast we celebrate—in the person of Christ’s mother—that we too are the house and tabernacle of the Lord.

... We are the temple of the living God, as God said, “I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (2 Cor 6.16; Is 52.11).

– From “The Orthodox Faith” by Fr. Thomas Hopko

A Festal Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in our parish this Thursday at 7pm. Hopefully you can join us.

Are you up for the Nativity Fast

“New Testament Challenge”?

Beginning Nov. 15th (the beginning of the Nativity Fast), many of us will once again be embarking on our annual challenge event to read through the entire New Testament (aloud) by Christmas!

This is a great endeavour and exercise and you should join it! Read with your family as an Pre-Christmas discipline! Even children can do this, and they have. You can do it, too.

Join the many of us who do this every year and prosper your soul in the effort. You won't be the same.

The New Testament Challenge is kind of a tradition. We invite you to join us in this 40 day offering and make more time for the reading of Holy Scripture this period of preparation for Christ.

DAY	DATE	READINGS
1	Fri. Nov. 15	Matthew 1-7
2	Sat. Nov. 16	Sabbath: Rest up or Catch Up
3	Sun. Nov. 17	Lord's Day: Rest up or Catch Up
4	Mon. Nov. 18	Matthew 8-12
5	Tue. Nov. 19	Matthew 13-18
6	Wed. Nov. 20	Matthew 19-24
7	Thur. Nov. 21	Entrance into the Temple Feast Day: Rest Up or Catch Up
8	Fri. Nov. 22	Matthew 25-28
9	Sat. Nov. 23	Sabbath: Rest up or Catch Up
10	Sun. Nov. 24	Lord's Day: Rest up or Catch Up
11	Mon. Nov. 25	Acts 1:1 - 4:37
12	Tue. Nov. 26	Acts 5:1 - 15:41
13	Wed. Nov. 27	Acts 16:1 - 28:31
14	Thur. Nov. 28	Mark 1:1 - 11:33
15	Fri. Nov. 29	Mark 12:1 - 16:20
16	Sat. Nov. 30	Sabbath: Rest up or Catch Up
17	Sun. Dec. 1	Lord's Day: Rest up or Catch Up
18	Mon. Dec. 2	James, 1-2 Peter
19	Tue. Dec. 3	Galatians, Ephesians
20	Wed. Dec. 4	1,2 Thessalonians
21	Thur. Dec. 5	1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
22	Fri. Dec. 6	1 Corinthians 1:1 - 11:34
23	Sat. Dec. 7	1 Corinthians 12:1 - 2 Corinthians
24	Sun. Dec. 8	Sabbath: Rest up or Catch Up
25	Mon. Dec. 9	Lord's Day: Rest up or Catch Up
26	Tue. Dec. 10	Romans 1-8
27	Wed. Dec. 11	Romans 9-16
28	Thur. Dec. 12	Luke 1-7
29	Fri. Dec. 13	Luke 8-16
30	Sat. Dec. 14	Luke 17-20
31	Sun. Dec. 15	Sabbath: Rest up or Catch Up
32	Mon. Dec. 16	Lord's Day: Rest up or Catch Up
33	Tue. Dec. 17	Philippians, Colossians
34	Wed. Dec. 18	1,2,3 John, Jude, Hebrews
35	Thur. Dec. 19	John 1-11
36	Fri. Dec. 20	John 12-21
37	Sat. Dec. 21	Sabbath: Rest up or Catch Up
38	Sun. Dec. 22	Lord's Day: Rest up or Catch Up
39	Mon. Dec. 23	Revelation 1 - 11
40	Tue. Dec. 24	Revelation 12 - 22



To the right is the schedule.

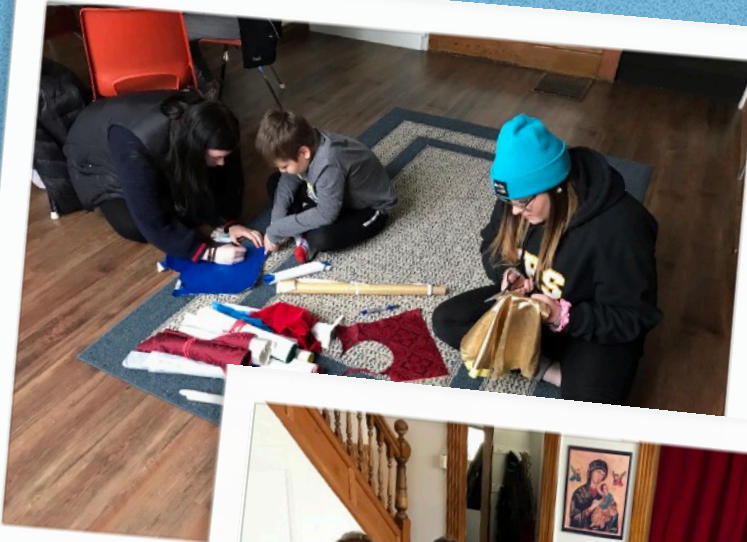
Yes, if you are hearing about it today for the first time you are technically one day behind, BUT... since today is a “Catch Up Day” anyway, you are right on pace! Start with Friday’s reading today.



Thank you for praying for the **Youth Pilgrimage** that went to Winnipeg and Saskatoon Last weekend.

Shrine

We had 7 youth and young adults (plus our Eparchial Youth Coordinator and myself) who all experienced the Welcome Home (a Ukrainian Catholic Inner city mission to the poor), the Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate, the Shrine of Blessed Bishop Martyr Vasyl Velechkovski, the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Eparchial Pastoral Centre in Saskatoon, the Museum of Human Rites and the of Sister Martyrs Olympia and Laurentia, the ashes of the Priest Martyr Omelian Kowch, and a lovely long van ride. This was a very spiritual, education, vocational and social trip where everything went well. Two of the youth on this pilgrimage were from our Dormition Parish. Below are a few pictures of our adventure.



☝ Pictures of us doing crafts with the children preparing for baptism at the Welcome Home

☞ Sr. Emily SSMI and me

Sera & me ☞





JOIN US WEDNESDAYS OF NOVEMBER AT 7-9 PM FOR:

UNDERSTANDING THE DIVINE LITURGY

A Mini-Series with Fr. Bo

The second of our four part series was fun and educational, just like the first one.

We have studied the second part of the Divine Liturgy (which most people think is the first part, because they don't normally see or participate in the "Liturgy of the Preparation").

We have another bulletin board, this time with the names of every part of the liturgy and we took lots of pictures so that we can illustrate the bulletin board. This is now on display in our hall, and will be expanded upon after next week's session.

A highlight that was included is explaining the real meaning of phrases like "Lord, have mercy." This important prayer has a very different

meaning than most English speakers realize.

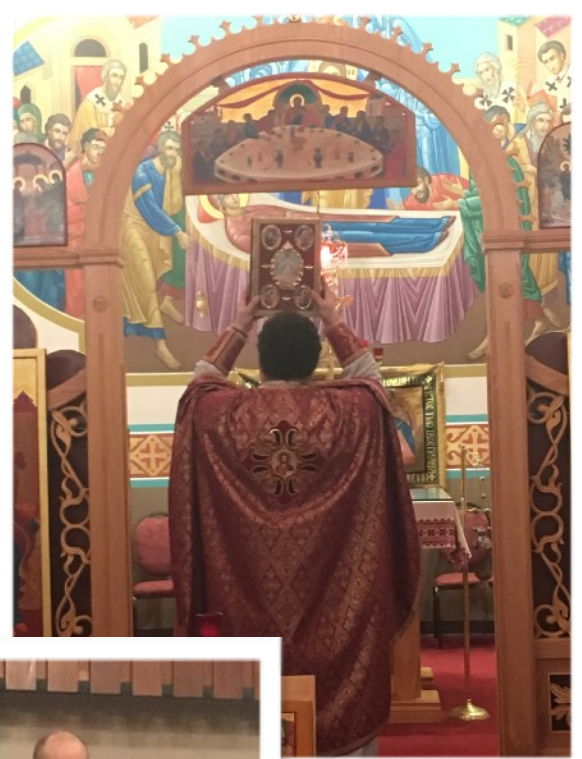
We will put things online, when Fr. Bo has some time to do it. Hopefully some this week.

Also, available for all of you, there are booklets near the bulletins called: "As We Join In Thanksgiving", by Fr. Peter Galadza. These great booklets are written in easy to understand language and give a lovely explanation of what the Liturgy is about.

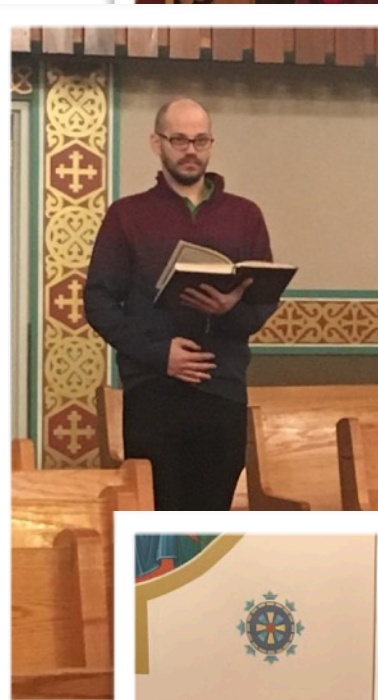
The more we understand the Liturgy, the more we will appreciate it.

Brian Greening Demonstrating how the Epistle is properly read

Last week's poster, that is on display in our hall. The new one is there too.



Fr. Bo explaining the Little Entrance



Fr. Bo demonstrating why and how we use incense



2019 Annual Eparchial

Children's Overnight Retreat

Following the Gifts of the Holy Spirit



For grades 1-6

November 23 & 24

For Details call the Youth Ministry Office at
780-424-5496 (ask for Millie)
and to register your child please go to:

<http://bit.ly/2Q3jISN>

2019 Eparchial

First Solemn Communion Camp



March 20 - 24

First Solemn Communion is an important step in the journey of every Catholic. It is all about receiving the Body and Blood of Christ on one's own, and learning how to prepare for it by the participation in the Mystery (Sacrament) of Reconciliation.

- This camp is for children (approx. grade 2) who are ready to receive their First Solemn Communion, but do not fit into their own parish's First Solemn Communion program.
- It is a full program condensed into 4 full days, where the child and their parent/adult both learn, have fun, grow in community and are prepared to return to their own parish to receive the sacraments in and with their community.
- This camp works WITH your parish. Your pastor needs to know that you are planning to participate in this camp, and will be receiving the sacraments in your parish when it is done. If you don't currently belong to a parish community, we will happily help you find one near you.

If you are interested in coming to this camp with your child (yes, one adult must be present too) please go to
CampOselia.com
for more information and to enrol.



Tenth Annual Bishop's Gala



Tuesday,
December 3, 2019

Chateau Louis
Conference Centre
Edmonton

Cocktails 6:00 pm
Dinner 7:00 pm

Honourary Chair
Alicia Chichak
Extraordinary Disciple

Baptized and Sent
"Living the Missionary Spirit"

Tickets \$ 180.00
Available at the Ukrainian Catholic Pastoral Centre
780 424 5496 or chancery@edmontoneparchy.com

Theosis Studios & Camp Oselia Presents:
a 4 day Family Day Long Weekend

Icon Writing Workshop & Retreat



February 14-17, 2020

Icons are images of Christ and His saints that teach us about, and challenge us into, deeper union with Him.

This intensive, prayerful weekend workshop will allow all participants to complete a traditional Byzantine "egg tempera" icon of St. Photini (the Samaritan Woman at the well). It will take place at Camp Oselia.

This is a course for beginner (0-10 icons painted) and advanced (10+ icons) students. No previous experience is required. All materials are covered in the tuition including real 24K Gold. Limit 18 students.

Cost is \$525 per person for beginners and \$550 per person for advanced students, and covers all materials, supplies, meals and snacks.

Fr. Bo Nahachewsky, in addition to being a Ukrainian Catholic priest since 2003, has been writing (painting) icons since 1995. In 2002 he was consecrated an iconographer by Metropolitan (then Bishop) Lawrence Huculak. He has taught icon workshops in several locations across Canada.



For Details
Talk to Fr. Bo





CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23
10:30am - 3:30pm

FEATURING INDIGENOUS ARTISTS AT
Our Lady of Peace
Cree Language and Culture School
15911 - 110 Ave

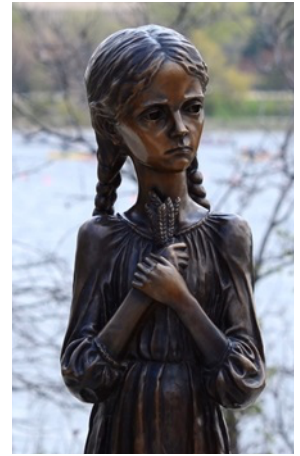
Come do your Christmas shopping early!

To book a vendor table (\$10 each) call: **780 489-1222** or email: Susan.Oreski@ecsd.net



There is a PANAKHYDA for the Peace and Blessed Memory of the Souls of the Victims of Famine in Ukraine, which will take place Friday, November 22, 2019

at St. Josaphat's Cathedral, 9645 - 108 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5H 1A3 . The Panakhyda (Prayer service) is organized by the Ukrainian Bilingual Staff of Edmonton Catholic schools in honour of Holodomor Memorial Day. All Grade 1 to 12 students and staff of our Ukrainian Bilingual program will be participating. The service will begin at **9:45 am** with a program to follow.



We are looking to HIRE a SNOW SHOVELER for our parish to start immediately.

We even provide a shovel and snowblower for you to use while cleaning our church.

If you are interested please contact Simon Pryma immediately at prymas@shaw.ca or at 780-902-4499. Because this job includes getting a set of church keys, the successful applicant will have to be willing to have a Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector so as to comply with our parish's "Working Together For Safer Environments Protocol".

Our parish's **"Little Friends of Jesus"** is doing a sock, mitts, toque, and other-warm-stuff drive for the kids at Our Lady of Peace School.

They would love you to donate as many socks, mitts, etc as you can.

Also they invite you to their **Concert in honour of St. Nicholas** which will take place on Sunday the 10th of December.



Parish & Eparchial & Beyond News:

- We **pray for the health and well-being** of all the servants and handmaidens of God who need our prayers: **Mary** Orysiuk, **Jean** Miskew, **Sarah** Komar, **Marge** Woitas, **Katie** Bunio, **John** Puto, **Ann** Horsman, **Annie** Polack, **Louis** Pewar & **Rosa** Maria Santos. (If you know any other people who should be on this list: please email me.)
- In addition to the above we are also praying today for the people on the list (which is available to fill out at the door when you walk in, we are praying for Mary Hrycyk, and the recently departed servant of God + Eleanor Ruff.
- The Diaconal ordination of **Roman Kobyletsky** by Bishop David, will take place today, at the 10:00 am, Divine Liturgy at Saint Josaphat Cathedral.
- Pope Francis accepted the resignation of **Bishop Stephen Chmilar**. Bishop Stephen, who is in his 75th year of age, served the Eparchy of Toronto for the past 16 years. At the same time, the Holy Father appointed **Bishop Bryan Bayda** as Apostolic Administrator of the Eparchy of Toronto. Bishop Bryan remains as the Bishop of the Eparchy of Saskatoon.
- We wish God's blessings and **happy birthday** to our parishioner: **Christopher** Hundt and **Fr. Stephen** Wojcichowski who celebrate their birthdays this week. God grant you many years!
- If we don't have **your birthday**, or if we have your birthday info wrong... please send an email (or at least a piece of paper) with your corrected birthdate and name.
- The First Communion Camp at Camp Oselia will be our parish's FSC program. If your child is in or near grade 2 and ready to receive their sacraments, please contact Fr. Bo
- On Thursday Nights "**Liturgical Singing with Namisha**" will take place every couple weeks at 7:30 pm. The first one will take place on **November 28**. ALL ARE WELCOME.
- **Attention Parish Pastoral Council:** The next parish Pastoral Council will be on Wednesday, December 4th.
- The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, through its **Commission for Justice and Peace**, issued a **statement** entitled **Poverty in Canada: Ensuring Safe, Secure and Affordable Housing**. The statement provides a brief overview of the state of poverty in our country, with a focus on the current housing crisis, and also provides a helpful list of some key Catholic organizations engaged in the alleviation of poverty in Canada. The statement also calls for collaboration between charitable organizations, all levels of government, and dioceses/eparchies, as well as local parishes, in the effort to provide charitable assistance to individuals who are in need. This statement is being issued on the occasion of the **Third World Day of the Poor**, marked on **November 17**.
- **Red Wednesday**, which seeks to **raise awareness about the persecution experienced by some 327 million Christians worldwide**, will be marked on **November 20**. Aid to the Church in Need Canada, promoter of Red Wednesday, reminds us that the situation of oppressed and persecuted Christians, serves not only as a reminder of discrimination and persecution involving members of other religions too, but also the erosion of and attacks against freedom of conscience and religion in the Western world, including Canada. On Red Wednesday, we can draw attention to the plight of persecuted Christians by: illuminating a church with red light; organize a Divine Liturgy to pray for persecuted Christians; organize a vigil or a moment of prayer; pray a rosary; invite people to wear red, etc. For more information, visit <https://acn-canada.org/red-wednesday/>.
- The **Tenth Annual Bishop's Gala** will take place on **Tuesday, December 3** at the Chateau Louis Hotel and Conference Centre, beginning with a cocktail reception and silent auction at 6:00 pm, followed by dinner and an exciting live auction. This festive gala raises funds to support the operation and programming of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton. Tickets are \$180 each or \$1440 per table of eight. A charitable tax receipt for \$85 will be issued per ticket. Contact the Pastoral Centre to purchase tickets: 780 424 5496 or chancery@eeparchy.com.
- The **Annual Bishop's Appeal Collection** "What Gift Have I, Worthy of a King?" takes place on Sunday, **December 8**. The Appeal coincides with the Feast of Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra. Saint Nicholas is uniquely tied to Christmas, the celebration of Jesus' birth. Early stories about Saint Nicholas carry with them the Nativity themes of love and justice. He is characterized as a generous and pious servant of God, caring for children and families, and providing gifts for their spiritual and physical well-being. And that's what the Ukrainian Catholic Church is all about. Caring and providing for the faithful throughout the Province of Alberta. Help Bishop David in spreading the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by supporting our Eparchial ministries and offices, including: Youth Ministry, Family Life Ministries, Religious Education, Liturgy Office, Vocations, Ecumenism, Social Outreach, and Marriage Tribunal. With Christmas on our doorstep, one of the holiest times of the year, and in the spirit of Saint Nicholas, what gift do you bring now to the infant Jesus, who lays quietly and peacefully in a manger? Thank you for your generosity! May God bless you and your families!
- The **National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples** will be celebrated on **December 12**, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Latin calendar), Patroness of the Americas. In view of this day of prayer, please find attached

This Friday marks the beginning of St. Philip's Fast

The Shopping Season is at hand. Some people will spend it jostling for bargains; others will pass the time lamenting the commercialization of Christmas. The Eastern Churches, on the other hand, encourage their faithful to prepare for this feast by fasting. Each of these Churches has a pre-Nativity Fast, but each Church observes it to a different degree.

Like the feast of Christ's Nativity itself, this fast originated in the West. In ad 380 the Council of Saragossa in Spain mandated daily church attendance beginning on December 17. Pope St Leo the Great (400-461) described four Fasts, one in each season, "so that over the course of the year we might recognize that we are constantly in need of purification." He indicated that the "winter fast" was to begin when the "ingathering of the crops was complete." In France it was specified in the next century that this Fast begin on November 11, the feast of St Martin; the Fast was called "St Martin's Lent."

The Eastern Churches began observing this Fast between the 6th and 8th centuries. Originally it lasted one week, as in the Armenian Church today. In the eleventh century Pope Christodoulos lengthened it to forty days for the Coptic Church. The Byzantine Church followed suit in the next century. The Syrian Churches (Chaldeans, Indians, etc.) keep it for three to four weeks in December.

WHY DO WE FAST?

St Simeon of Thessalonika, writing in the fifteenth century, explained the purpose of this Fast in terms of its length. "The Nativity Forty-day Fast represents the fast undertaken by Moses, who—having fasted for forty days and forty nights—received the Commandments of God, written on stone tablets. And we, fasting for forty days, will reflect upon and receive from the Virgin the living Word—not written upon stone, but born, incarnate—and we will commune of His Divine Body." As Moses received the Law after his forty-day fast, we will receive the living Word incarnate at the end of this Fast.

One thread running through this Fast is the remembrance of the time before the Incarnation. Mankind was in one sense disconnected from God, having lost the intimacy with Him which we were meant to have because we were created in His image. Fasting is our way to express our sorrow at man's loss of fellowship with God.

The process of recovering this intimacy with God climaxed with the Incarnation, but was prepared for centuries by the Old Testament prophets. During the Nativity Fast we commemorate the prophets Nahum (12/1), Habakkuk (12/2), Zephaniah (12/3), Daniel and the Three Young Men in the Furnace (12/17). On the second Sunday before the feast we remember all those in sacred history who came before Christ and prepared the way for Him—His ancestors and ours.

WHEN AND HOW DO WE FAST?

Each patriarchate and other local Byzantine Church has a slightly different way of keeping this Fast. According to one tradition a person should fast from meat and dairy for the forty days, but

only need fast from fish after December 17. Another tradition holds that fish may be eaten throughout the Fast, but only on Saturdays and Sundays.

In Greece and the Middle East it is customary to limit the fast to Tuesdays and Thursdays until December 12 (Greece) or December 19. In the Melkite Church the fast has been shortened to begin on December 10 but to continue uninterrupted after then.

The number of feast days at the beginning of the forty days may account for these practices. Besides the Great Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (November 21 to 25), we observe feasts in honor of these popular saints: the Apostles Matthew (11/16) and Andrew (11/30), Sts Catherine of Alexandria (11/25), Barbara, and John of Damascus (12/4), Sabbas the Sanctified (12/5) Nicholas the Wonder-worker (12/6), the Maternity of St Ann (12/9), and St Spyridon the Wonderworker (12/12). In addition, of course, those in the U.S. also have the national holiday of Thanksgiving during this time. That doesn't leave much time for fasting!

There are no penitential services appointed for this Fast like those we know during the Great Fast. Greeks, who do not generally do so otherwise, have the custom of serving the Divine Liturgy daily during these forty days. This practice echoes the idea that the Nativity Fast is a joyous fast, celebrating the immanent coming of Christ. Other Churches may serve the Akathist or the Paraclisis to the Theotokos during these days.

CHARACTER OF THE NATIVITY FAST

Many contemporary Eastern writers have encouraged the observance of the Nativity Fast in contrast to the popular Western "pre-celebration" of Christmas, which focuses on decorating, spending, and partying. They emphasize preparation for the feast in quietness and a simplified way of life. Instead of a harried pursuit of gifts and cards for people who will likely "re-gift" them for the next Christmas party, the Fast enables believers to focus on the mystery of the Incarnation, the "reason for the season."

Many see this Fast as essential for us at this time of the year, to shift our focus from ourselves to others, spending less time worrying about our appearance, our cuisine and our home decor in order to use our time in increased prayer and caring for the poor.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, John X, emphasized the Nativity as the "feast of almsgiving" in which we celebrate and perpetuate Christ's love for mankind. "The Nativity of Christ is primarily the feast of divine dispensation—the feast of charity and of almsgiving... Through acts of mercy, extended to one another and to everyone, no matter what race we belong to, we implore the tender mercies of the divine Child, whose springs of mercies and bounties we will never be able to surpass. As the pious Augustine says, "the lamp of our love toward our neighbors causes the divine compassion to abide in this creation."

Source: [Eparchy of Newton](#)

Changeable Parts for Today's Divine Liturgy

Troparion: Angelic powers were upon Your tomb* and the guards became like dead men;* Mary stood before Your tomb* seeking Your most pure body.* You captured Hades without being overcome by it.* You met the Virgin and granted life.* O Lord, risen from the dead,* glory be to You!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Kontakion: With His life-giving hand* Christ our God, the Giver of life,* raised all the dead from the murky abyss* and bestowed resurrection upon humanity.* He is for all the Saviour,* the resurrection and the life, and the God of all.

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Theotokion: Undaunted patroness of Christians,* O steadfast intermediary with the Creator,* turn not away from the suppliant voices of sinners,* but in your kindness come to help us who cry out to you in faith.* Be quick to intercede, make haste to plead,* for you are ever the patroness of those who honour you, O Mother of God.

Prokeimenon:

Save Your people, O Lord, * and bless Your inheritance.

verse: Unto You I will cry, O Lord, my God, lest You turn from me in silence.

Epistle Ephesians 2:4-10

Brothers and Sisters: God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Alleluia:

verse: He who lives in the aid of the Most High, shall dwell under the protection of the God of heaven.

verse: He says to the Lord: You are my protector and my refuge, my God, in Whom I hope.

Gospel Luke 8:26-39

Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. When

he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me”— for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” He said, “Legion”; for many demons had entered him. They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, “Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.” So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

Communion Hymn:

Praise the Lord from the heavens;* praise Him in the highest.* Alleluia, alleluia,* alleluia.

As we celebrate the 75th year of the passing of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Bishop David has asked us to pray the following prayer at the end of each liturgy this month.

Prayer for the Beatification of the Servant of God Metropolitan Andrey

Our Lord Jesus Christ – You always reward Your faithful servants, not only with special gifts of Your love, but also with the eternal reward of the saints in heaven, and in many cases You grant them the recognition of sanctity by Your Church here on earth.

We humbly pray: grant that Your faithful servant Metropolitan Andrey be numbered among the saints. Throughout his just life, “full of suffering and trials,” he was a good shepherd for his flock and a great labourer for Christian unity. And through his beatification and intercession, grant our entire people the great gift of unity and love. Amen.