



Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Ukrainian Catholic Parish

Українська Католицька Парафія Воздвиження Чесного Хреста



Sundays:

- 9:30 am Rosary
- 10 am Divine Liturgy

Wednesdays:

- 9 am Divine Liturgy

Most Major Feasts*:

- 10 am or 7 pm Divine Liturgy

(* It's always best to check the calendar in this bulletin for upcoming special events & feasts.)

Pastor: Fr. Bo Nahachewsky

780-340-3726 (call or text)
fr.nahachewsky@eeparchy.com

Deacon John Lukey

johndebbielukey@yahoo.ca

Church Website:

EHCUCP.CA

Facebook: facebook.com/ehcucp

Church Email: office@ehcucp.ca

Pastoral

Emergencies: 780-340-3726

Church: 780-478-5260

Hall: 780-478-4275

Our New Toll Free Number:

1-866-886-3946

We no longer have a fax number.

Eparchy: 780-424-5496

Church Address:

9003 - 153 Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB

Church Mailing Address:

Londonderry P.O. Box 70029
Edmonton, AB T5C 3R6

More info on the next page.

Sunday, April 13, 2025

Palm Sunday: The Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem

Palm Sunday: A Celebration of Welcome and Betrayal

Palm Sunday, also known as Willow Sunday, commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when crowds joyfully welcomed him, waving palm branches and proclaiming, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Mark 11:9). Yet, within days, these same voices turned against him, shouting, "Crucify him!" (Mark 15:13). This drastic shift in the crowd's attitude offers us a profound lesson about human nature, loyalty, and faithfulness to God.



More on page 3

Our Complete Holy Week & Easter Schedule is on the following page.



Today after the liturgy we will have a Special General Meeting for all parishioners to decide **whether or not to host the St. Mary's Catholic Parish** within our parish building. Lots of information was shared in last week's bulletin, and is available again today as a handout in the hall.

Please come and vote.

Our Annual Bake Sale

Thank you to all the countless volunteers who have put countless hours into baking, pinching, rolling, and preparing goodies for our Bake Sale. Without you generous volunteers our parish would be a shadow of what it actually is.

And, extra special mention to **Judy Mydan** who spearheaded the entire effort. May God grant you many years!



More photos on page 6

Hall Rentals:

call Lisa at: 780-222-9155
or email: hallrental@ehcucp

Perohy Off Sales: 780-478-4275

Membership:

email: membership@ehcucp

Funeral Dinners:

Call Cheryl: 780-456-2828

Reminder: To receive member rates for funerals/memorials the deceased person must have been a fully paid up member of Holy Cross Parish for the past 22 consecutive months. Deceased children of fully paid up members are also entitled to member rates however child must be a dependant or under the age of 18.

For reasons of food safety and liability our policy regarding food in the hall is A> No outside food is permitted, B> All food is to be consumed in the hall, C> No leftovers are given out, D> No take-out food.

Parish Pastoral Council:

Parish Priest – Fr. Bo Nahachewsky
Deacon - Dcn. John Lukey
President – Mark Helmak
Past President – Peter Fedorak
1st Vice-President – Mark Ramsankar
2nd Vice-President – Deacon John Lukey
Secretary – _____
Treasurer – Dale Kluk
Archivist – Diana Horyn
Cultural – Ken Kozak
Fundraising – Terry Yackimec
Hall Rental – Lisa Borosuk & Gladys Woitas
Ladies' Club – Dianne Kluk
Knights of Columbus – Darrell Uchach
Men's Club President – Marc Chiasson
Youth Coordinator – Emmette Lysak
Maintenance – Larry Waye
Membership – Lorna Chiasson
Social – Edd Horyn
Spiritual – Debbie Lukey

Baptism, Chrismation & Eucharist:

- Contact Fr. Bo a month in advance

Weddings:

- Contact Fr. Bo a year in advance

Funerals:

- Contact Fr. Bo as soon as you are able.

Confessions:

- Sundays from 9 till 9:30 with Fr. Bo
- First Sundays of the month with Fr. Myron before and during the Liturgy
- or anytime, just call Fr. Bo to arrange it.

Holy Week & Easter Schedule 2025:**Sunday, April 13 - Palm Sunday**

- 10 am Festal Divine Liturgy with the blessing of Pussy Willows (English)
- Special Meeting to follow

Wednesday, April 16 - Holy Wednesday

- 7 pm Presanctified Liturgy with Anointing (English)

Thursday, April 17 - Holy Thursday

- 7 pm Matins of the Passion (12 Gospel Readings) (English)

Friday, April 18 - Good Friday

- 10 am Vespers "Shroud" Service - "Plaschanytsia" (English)

Saturday, April 19 - Holy Saturday

- 2 pm Vespers, Divine Liturgy of St. Basil (the Vigil Service) (mostly English, but a little Ukrainian),
- followed by blessing of Baskets (English)

Sunday, April 20 - PASCHA! EASTER!

- 8 am Resurrectional Matins (Bilingual),
- followed by Festal Divine Liturgy (Bilingual),
- followed by the Blessing of Baskets! (Bilingual)



Holy Cross
**BLESSED
BREAKFAST**
Sunday, April 27, 2025
(After 10:00 am Liturgy)
Adults \$20.00 (After April 20 \$25.00)
Children (6 - 12 yrs) \$10.00
Children (under 6) FREE
No returns on tickets.

You can get your tickets for our Blessed Breakfast after any Sunday Liturgy right here in the parish.
Don't wait, get yours now.

There will be a raffle at the Blessed Breakfast for two AMAZING Baskets of fabulous items.

This Raffle is being put together by Holy Cross' Men's Club.

Donations Collected at Holy Cross

April 6, Sunday Collection: \$2,765.⁰⁰

Week of April 6 E-Transfer Donations: \$145.⁰⁰

April 6, Candles: \$21.²⁰

April 6, Flowers for Easter: \$272.⁰⁰

April Building fund total: \$0.⁰⁰

February Expenses: \$23,830.⁰⁰

(Includes Utilities, Wages, Eparchy, & Maintenance)

Palm or Willow? Ukrainian and Canadian Traditions

In Roman Catholic and many Western Christian traditions, Palm Sunday is celebrated with palm branches, recalling the biblical event in which the people of Jerusalem laid palms before Christ as he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. However, in the Ukrainian Catholic tradition, willow branches (*verba*) are used instead. This adaptation arose because palm trees do not grow in Ukraine. Willow branches, which bud early in spring, are used instead as they are a fitting symbol of new life and renewal.

The blessing of the willow branches during the Palm Sunday Divine Liturgy is a cherished custom. Afterward, people gently tap one another with the branches, saying, “Не я б’ю, верба б’є, за тиждень – Великдень!” (“It’s not me who strikes, but the willow; in a week – Easter!”) This lighthearted tradition carries a deeper meaning – it is a reminder to stay awake spiritually and prepare ourselves for the resurrection of Christ.



A Reflection on Loyalty and Betrayal

Palm Sunday is not just about celebration; it is also a time of deep reflection. The same people who joyfully welcomed Jesus later demanded his crucifixion. This reminds us of our own tendencies to change, to falter in faith, and to turn away from God when faced with challenges or pressures.

How often do we, like the people of Jerusalem, waver in our faith? One day we are filled with devotion, and the next, we let routine, struggles, or worldly concerns pull us away from God. Palm Sunday calls us to be steadfast in our relationship with Christ, not just during the joyous moments, but even in the trials that inevitably come to us.

The Call to Forgiveness and Renewal

Jesus knew that he would be betrayed, yet he still entered Jerusalem, still loved, and still forgave. This is a powerful lesson for us. We, too, experience betrayal by friends, family, or even within ourselves when we fall into sin. Holding on to resentment and anger can fill our hearts with bitterness, leaving no room for God.

The Lenten journey leading up to Palm Sunday is an invitation to let go of grudges, seek reconciliation, and make room for Christ in our hearts. Just as Jesus forgave those who abandoned him, we are called to forgive, so that we can truly welcome his presence into our lives.



Preparing Our Hearts for Easter

Palm Sunday is not just about remembering an event – it is about preparing our hearts for the Resurrection. As we hold our willow branches, we should ask ourselves: Are we welcoming Jesus into our lives only for a moment, or are we inviting him to stay? Do we allow our faith to be shaped by emotion and circumstance, or is it rooted in true commitment to God?

To truly prepare for Easter, we must:

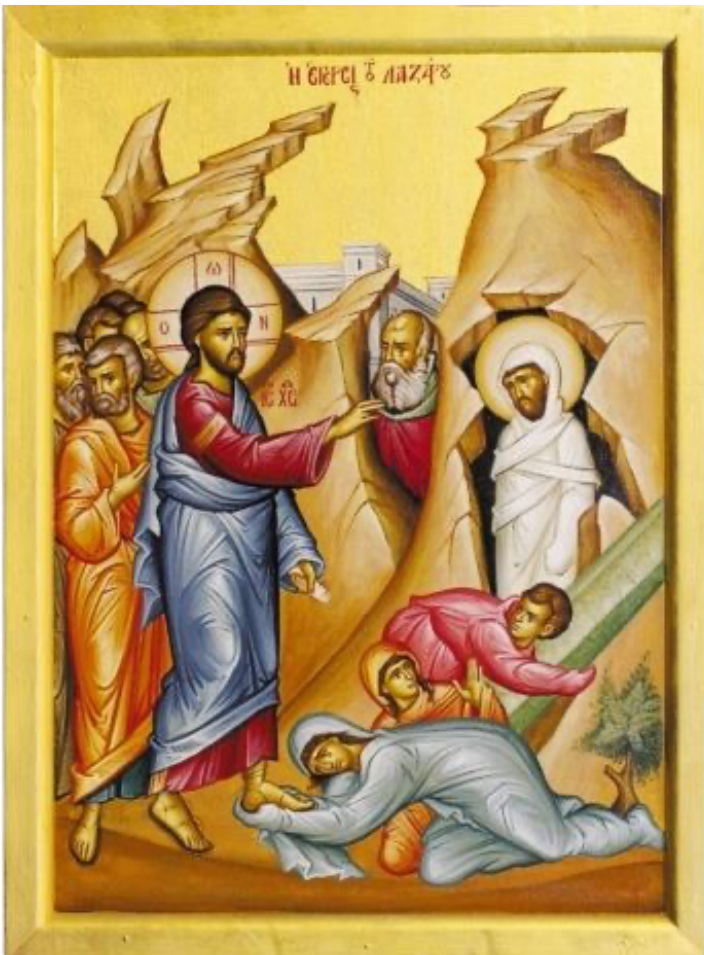
- Examine our hearts and seek reconciliation through the Holy Mystery of Repentance (confession).
- Strengthen our faith through prayer and reading scripture.
- Practice kindness, charity, forgiveness and selflessness.
- Commit to keeping Christ at the centre of our lives beyond Holy Week.

As we celebrate Palm Sunday, let it be more than a tradition. Let it be a renewal of our faith, a reminder of God’s unwavering love and mercy, and a commitment to walking with Christ – not just for a day, but for a lifetime.

A Reflection on Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday

Visible triumphs are few in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ. He preached a kingdom “not of this world.” At His nativity in the flesh there was “no room at the inn.” For nearly thirty years, while He grew “in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52), He lived in obscurity as “the son of Mary.” When He appeared from Nazareth to begin His public ministry, one of the first to hear of Him asked: “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46). In the end He was crucified between two thieves and laid to rest in the tomb of another man.

Two brief days stand out as sharp exceptions to the above—days of clearly observable triumph. These days are known in the Church today as Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday. Together they form a unified liturgical cycle which serves as the passage from the forty days of Great Lent to Holy Week. They are the unique and paradoxical days before the Lord’s Passion. They are days of visible, earthly triumph, of resurrectional and messianic joy in which Christ Himself is a deliberate and active participant. At the same time they are days which point beyond themselves to an ultimate victory and final kingship which Christ will attain not by raising one dead man or entering a particular city, but by His own imminent suffering, death and resurrection.



By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!

(Troparion of the Feast, sung on both Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday)

Lazarus Saturday

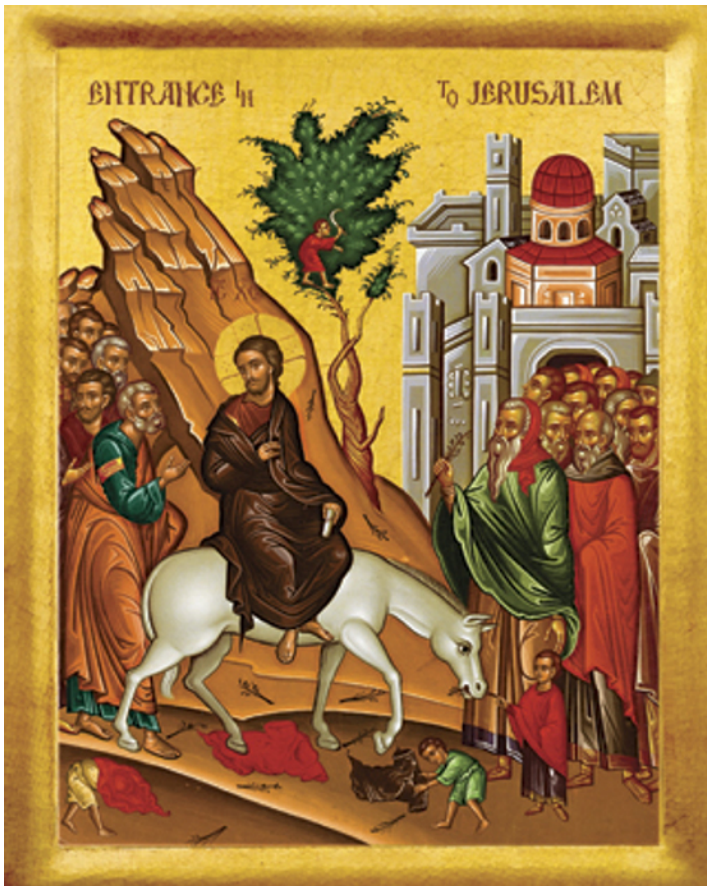
In a carefully detailed narrative the Gospel relates how Christ, six days before His own death, and with particular mindfulness of the people “standing by, that they may believe that thou didst send me” (John 11:42), went to His dead friend Lazarus at Bethany outside of Jerusalem. He was aware of the approaching death of Lazarus but deliberately delayed His coming, saying to His disciples at the news of His friend’s death: “For your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe” (John 11:14).

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, Lazarus was already dead four days. This fact is repeatedly emphasized by the Gospel narrative and the liturgical hymns of the feast. The four-day burial underscores the horrible reality of death. Man, created by God in His own image and likeness, is a spiritual-material being, a unity of soul and body. Death is destruction; it is the separation of soul and body. The soul without the body is a ghost, as one Orthodox theologian puts it, and the body without the soul is a decaying corpse. “I weep and I wail, when I think upon death, and behold our beauty, fashioned after the image of God, lying in the tomb dishonoured, disfigured, bereft of form.” This is a hymn of Saint John of Damascus sung at the Church’s burial services. This “mystery” of death is the inevitable fate of man fallen from God and blinded by his own prideful pursuits.

With epic simplicity the Gospel records that, on coming to the scene of the horrible end of His friend, “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). At this moment Lazarus, the friend of Christ, stands for all men, and Bethany is the mystical centre of the world. Jesus wept as He saw the “very good” creation and its king, man, “made through Him” (John 1:3) to be filled with joy, life and light, now a burial ground in which man is sealed up in a tomb outside the city, removed from the fullness of life for which he was created, and decomposing in darkness, despair and death. Again as the Gospel says, the people were hesitant to open the tomb, for “by this time there will be an odour, for he has been dead four days” (John 11:39).

When the stone was removed from the tomb, Jesus prayed to His Father and then cried with a loud voice: “Lazarus, come out.” The icon of the feast shows the particular moment when Lazarus appears at the entrance to the tomb. He is still wrapped in his grave clothes and his friends, who are holding their noses because of the stench of his decaying body, must

unwrap him. In everything stress is laid on the audible, the visible and the tangible. Christ presents the world with this observable fact: on the eve of His own suffering and death He raises a man dead four days! The people were astonished. Many immediately believed on Jesus and a great crowd began to assemble around Him as the news of the raising of Lazarus spread. The regal entry into Jerusalem followed.



Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday is the celebration of the triumphant entrance of Christ into the royal city of Jerusalem. He rode on a colt for which He Himself had sent, and He permitted the people to hail Him publicly as a king. A large crowd met Him in a manner befitting royalty, waving palm branches and placing their garments in His path. They greeted Him with these words: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel! (John 12:13).

This day together with the raising of Lazarus are signs pointing beyond themselves to the mighty deeds and events which consummate Christ's earthly ministry. The time of fulfillment was at hand. Christ's raising of Lazarus points to the destruction of death and the joy of resurrection which will be

accessible to all through His own death and resurrection. His entrance into Jerusalem is a fulfillment of the messianic prophecies about the king who will enter his holy city to establish a final kingdom. "Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass" (Zech 9:9).

Finally, the events of these triumphant two days are but the passage to Holy Week: the "hour" of suffering and death for which Christ came. Thus the triumph in a earthly sense is extremely short-lived. Jesus enters openly into the midst of His enemies, publicly saying and doing those things which mostly enrage them. The people themselves will soon reject Him. They misread His brief earthly triumph as a sign of something else: His emergence as a political messiah who will lead them to the glories of an earthly kingdom.

Our Pledge

The liturgy of the Church is more than meditation or praise concerning past events. It communicates to us the eternal presence and power of the events being celebrated and makes us participants in those events. Thus the services of Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday bring us to our own moment of life and death and entrance into the Kingdom of God: a Kingdom not of this world, a Kingdom accessible in the Church through repentance and baptism.

On Palm Sunday palm and willow branches are blessed in the Church. We take them in order to raise them up and greet the King and Ruler of our life: Jesus Christ. We take them in order to reaffirm our baptismal pledges. As the One who raised Lazarus and entered Jerusalem to go to His voluntary Passion stands in our midst, we are faced with the same question addressed to us at baptism: "Do you accept Christ?" We give our answer by daring to take the branch and raise it up: "I accept Him as King and God!"

Thus, on the eve of Christ's Passion, in the celebration of the joyful cycle of the triumphant days of Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday, we reunite ourselves to Christ, affirm His Lordship over the totality of our life, and express our readiness to follow Him to His Kingdom:

... that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead (Philippians 3:10-11).

By Very Rev. Paul Lazor,
as taken from oca.org

Photos from our Bake Sale yesterday.

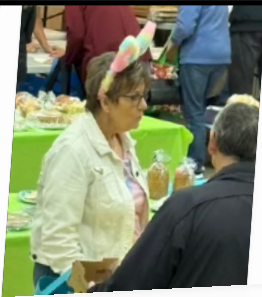


From the executive of the Ladies' Club:

A very big thank you to all volunteers involved in our very successful annual bake sale.

Also a special thank you to all who brought baking.

The little that is left will be on sale after Sunday's liturgy.





Fr. Bo's class at Newman Theological College has finished with the blessing of the students' icons. Now only the final exam remains.



Thank you to our lovely Man's Club parish pussy willow gatherers. Your work is beautiful and very appreciated.



TICKET OF HOPE

Слава Ісусу Христу! Glory to Jesus Christ!

The Holy Father has decreed that this is the Year of Jubilee of Hope and many opportunities of pilgrimage are being prepared from around the world. Further, I was recently appointed the chair for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Youth Patriarchal Commission.

Please find attached two posters regarding the TICKET OF HOPE project that the Patriarchal Youth Commission is running during the Jubilee Year of Hope. Its objective is to send up to 100 young adults from Ukraine (whose homes are on or near the front in Ukraine) to attend the celebrations in Rome from July 28- August 3, 2025. We predict \$750 CAD is sufficient to send one person by bus from Ukraine to Rome with food and accommodations for the time they are there.

To date we have over 2,000 other pilgrims from around the world belonging to UGCC churches attending the Rome event. Pilgrims from Ukraine will have an opportunity to unite with other Young Adults (particularly from our UGCC Church) to witness to Christ who accompanies them and gives them HOPE.

On the posters there are QR codes and weblinks to give you more information as well as make it easy to donate from a personal bank account or send an e-transfer. We have partnered with the Ukrainian Credit Union in Toronto to handle the transactions. Because of the nature of the transfers and intended recipients, income tax receipts will not be offered.

Thanks for your generosity.

+ Bishop Bryan

What is the Ticket of Hope?

The Ticket of Hope initiative provides an opportunity to sponsor Ukrainian youth and young adults living near the front lines of the war in Ukraine to attend the Jubilee Year pilgrimage to Rome.

What is the cost of the Jubilee Year pilgrimage?

Each sponsorship covers the full cost of the pilgrimage – \$750 CAD (\$500 USD, €490 EUR 2025-03-25) per youth, which includes travel expenses, accommodations, and program costs. Please note that income tax receipts will not be provided.

During the duration of the fundraiser, all donations will be deposited directly into the Ukrainian Credit Union bank account in Canada called "Campaign Ticket of Hope". At the end of the fundraiser, all funds will be sent to the St. Sophia Ukrainian Catholic Church bank account in Rome (Chiesa di S.Sofia). This is the main site for the jubilee Year pilgrimage in Rome.

Who are the pilgrims receiving your gift?

One-hundred youth and young people from eastern, central, and southern Ukraine who live near the front lines of the war will be the recipients of your generous donation. You can find more information about each pilgrim below.

[Click here to see the individuals who will be sponsored](#) (assuming you are looking at this bulletin digitally).

What is the impact of your donation?

Your donation helps a young person from Ukraine share the hope of Jesus Christ with people in Rome and beyond. Specifically, your support empowers...

Continued on the following page.



Ticket of Hope

Give hope to others! Donate for "Ticket of Hope"

JUBILEE YEAR 2025 JULY 28 - AUGUST 3

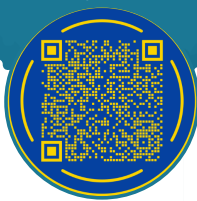
Join the UGCC Patriarchal Commission of Youth Affairs to send 100 young adults from Ukraine to Rome. They are called to witness to the world about Our Hope, Jesus Christ, walking with them in Ukraine.

You can be Hope for them!

CONTACT US:
ticketofhope@gmail.com

DONATE

LEARN MORE
<https://ucet.ca/ticket-of-hope/>



Ticket of Hope Continued

... them to grow in faith, find healing, and bring renewal to others.

The war in Ukraine has had a profound impact on young people. Your donation will provide vital support to the pilgrims in the following ways:

- **PERSONAL REASONS** : The personal mental and spiritual health of each person can be addressed. They long for a short break from air sirens that interrupt a peaceful sleep, from adjusting to life with no heat, constant interruptions in life with no electricity. Personally, they want to meet Jesus Christ in others from around the world and this meeting in a peaceful environment for even one week is a concrete step toward HOPE.
- **WITNESS and ACCOMPANIMENT** : Their witness of spiritual strength during 3 years (actually 11 years since the invasion in Crimea) is invaluable to other young adults from around the world. To accompany each other during this war helps those in Ukraine and millions of people elsewhere in the world as a tangible sign of communion, solidarity, and participation in the Trinity.
- **A CHANGE OF HEART AND DISPOSITION** : A change of heart and disposition is a result of meeting Jesus in Prayer, through reading Scripture, and meeting Him face to face in each other. On February 1, 2025, an online meeting took place as a foreshadowing of the summer meeting in Rome for youth from the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church with each other as well as with the Holy Father, Pope Francis. All of us are called to meet HOPE incarnate, who is the person of Jesus Christ.

How long does the "Ticket of Hope" Sponsorship Program run?

We will accept your gifts from April 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025.

When does the Jubilee Year pilgrimage take place?

From July 28, 2025 till August 3, 2025

Invigorated by this faith and Christian hope, we are already now, in the midst of trials and suffering, proclaiming the good news of salvation to the whole world in the words of the Apostle of the Nations: "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor 4:8-11).

Posters for Ticket of Hope can be found on our church's bulletin boards.

Who should fast and when? Who is exempt?

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus discusses the most basic spiritual practices of His day: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. He tells us to "pray to your Father in secret" (Matthew 6:6) and to act in such a way that "your almsgiving may be secret (Matthew 6:4). And He also tells us how to fast:

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

Jesus Himself fasted for forty days before beginning to teach, as Moses fasted for forty days before proclaiming the Ten Commandments to the people. The Church continued the...

Continued on the next page



Curious about your faith?

Throw your questions into our Question Box, and Fr. Bo will try to answer it in an upcoming bulletin.



Continued from previous page...

... practice from its earliest days. The Apostles fasted before appointing presbyters (Acts 14) and people were directed to fast before baptism: "Before a baptism, let him who baptizes and him who is baptized fast, and any others who may be able to do so. And command him who is baptized to fast one or two days beforehand" (Didache 7:4). This second-century instruction also instructs all believers to fast twice each week on Wednesdays and Fridays.

What is Fasting?

Fasting simply consists of not eating or drinking anything for a specific period of time. Christians fast before a special encounter with God, as in the Eucharist.

During fasting seasons, people may fast for a certain part of the day - until noon, for example - and then when they do eat, eat only the "Food of Paradise" (the fruits of the earth given for our use according to Genesis 1:29) and avoid animal products (meat, fish, dairy, eggs) and alcohol, which appear only later in Biblical history.

- ▶ Fasting becomes a burden when people focus on the negative elements: not eating, or avoiding certain foods.
- ▶ Fasting becomes uplifting when people concentrate on its positive aspects:
 - ▶ It anticipates encounter with God, saying that "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4)
 - ▶ It affirms that our true nature and purpose is communion with God, given in Paradise along with the fruits of the earth. "Let us enter a second Paradise, full of the virtues of the holy Ascetics. Let us taste with joy the living and life-giving fruits which grow there, and with faith let us sing their praises." (Matins, Saturday of Cheesefare)

When Should we Fast?

From the earliest days of the Church, Christians have fasted before Pascha, as well as on every Wednesday and Friday, remembering the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ. Traditionally our church observes the following fast periods.

- ❖ Every Friday, and recommended every Wednesday (except during the weeks immediately following Pascha, Christmas, Theophany, the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, and Pentecost);

- ❖ The Great Fast (forty days before Great and Holy Week);
- ❖ Great and Holy Week (commemorating the Lord's Passion);
- ❖ The Christmas Fast (November 15 through December 24)
- ❖ The Fast of the Theotokos (August 1 to August 14); and
- ❖ The Fast of Sts. Peter and Paul (the day after All Saints Sunday through June 28)

Some of these Fasts are marked by special liturgical services that convey the spirit of the season. Attending them helps us acquire the spirit of the fasts for which they prepare.

How Should We Fast?

In the Ukrainian Catholic Church the Synod of Bishops informs us that all healthy faithful should try abstain from meat and other animal products on the above mentioned days.

Each of the faithful, clergy included, should all consult with their Spiritual Directors, so that they can determine how to make the fasts most fruitful for their current condition.

In addition to fasting from food, we are called to fast spiritually also. This means that we should put aside resentments and hurtful attitudes towards others.

Prayer and intention is also a very important part of fasting also. We are not doing it without reason, but rather to glorify God, help our neighbours and strengthen ourselves.

Who should not fast? Who is exempt?

Everyone should fast within their abilities. Obviously if fasting is going to physically hurt a person they should not do it. This can include the aged, children, the sick, those doing hard physical labour, and even those travelling.

It is important however, not to simply make excuses to avoid fasting. For example; driving in the car for 10 minutes, and saying "I fit into the category of those traveling, therefore I am exempt" is not a good reason to ignore fasting.

Regardless of age or condition, everyone should fast from evil attitudes and actions, and are called to do spiritual exercises that orient them towards God and their neighbours.

Confession in the Bible - Why Do We Confess to a Priest?



A common question among Christians is: If we can pray directly to God, why do we need to confess our sins to a priest? Some cite passages like Matthew 23:9—“And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven”—to suggest that no human should stand between us and God. However, the Bible itself gives strong evidence that Jesus intended for his apostles and their successors to have the authority to forgive sins on his behalf.

Christ Gave His Apostles the Authority to Forgive Sins

One of the clearest examples of this is found in John 20:21-23, after Jesus' resurrection:

“Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.’ And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.’”

Here, Jesus explicitly grants His apostles the power to forgive or retain sins. This is not a general command to all believers but a direct commission to his chosen disciples, who would later become the leaders of the Church. If confession were meant to be only between the individual and God, why would Jesus give this power to his apostles?

The Practice of Confessing to the Church in Early Christianity

The early Church understood confession as something to be done before a person of spiritual authority, not just privately. James 5:16 reinforces this:

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.”

While this passage encourages mutual accountability among believers, it also aligns with the Church's practice of confessing sins within the Christian community, particularly to those in spiritual authority.

Additionally, in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, Paul speaks of the apostolic ministry of reconciliation:

“All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation... We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

Paul describes this ministry as an active role entrusted to the Church's leaders, not just a private act between individuals and God.

The Role of the Priest as a Mediator of God's Mercy

Confession is made before a priest, who is a witness of the sinner's repentance and a mediator of God's forgiveness. This is why the priest says in the prayer of absolution:

“May our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, by the grace and compassion of His love for humankind, forgive you, my child, all your transgressions. And I, an unworthy priest, through His power given to me, do forgive and absolve you from all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

This reflects Christ's words in Matthew 16:19 when he tells Peter:

“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

This authority was later extended to all the apostles in Matthew 18:18, showing that Christ established a clear, continuous practice for the Church to carry out reconciliation.

Why Confessing to a Priest Helps Us Spiritually

Beyond the biblical foundation, the Mystery of Repentance also serves a vital role in our spiritual growth:

- It provides accountability – We often minimize our sins when we confess only in our minds. Saying them out loud before a priest forces us to confront them honestly.
- It offers spiritual guidance – The priest, acting as a spiritual father, can give us counsel and encouragement to grow in holiness.
- It brings us tangible reassurance – Hearing the words of absolution reminds us that God's mercy is real and complete.

Confession is a gift, not a burden. It allows us to experience God's forgiveness in a personal and sacramental way, just as Christ intended.

Regular Meetings and Events:

- **Every Sunday at 9:30 am:** the Rosary
- **Every Sunday at 10 am:** Divine Liturgy, alternating English one week, and Bilingual English and Ukrainian the next week.
- **Every Sunday at 10 am:** Sunday School, for children up to grades 2. They begin and end their sessions during the Liturgy.
- **Last Sunday of each month at 10 am:** Children's Liturgy, on these days we try to make the Divine Liturgy more welcoming and active for our children and youth. They get a special homily with Marilyn the Catechetical Puppet and children also are encouraged to participate in the service by leading the "Our Father", singing, serving at the altar, reading the epistle, helping with the collection and/or other active ways.
- **Every Sunday* at 11:15 (+/-) am:** Coffee Hour (* unless otherwise stated in this bulletin, and during the summer months)
- **Every Monday at 10 am:** Monday Morning's Bible Study Group in the Board Room.
- **Almost Every Monday Evening:** Some sort of Parish Meeting, including but not limited to: Ladies' Club (typically the 1st Monday at 7), Knights of Columbus (typically the 2nd Monday at 7:30), Men's Club (typically the 3rd Monday at 7), and Parish Pastoral Council (typically the last Monday at 7). Check this Bulletin below to confirm the date of the next meeting for your group(s)
- **Every Wednesday at 9 am:** Divine Liturgy, (unless otherwise stated in this bulletin)
- **Most Wednesdays:** Fr. Bo stays at the Church and tries to do office work including the bulletin and various meetings with individuals. Always phone or text if you would like to come and see me, in case I have other appointments to go to.
- **Wednesdays:** Fr. Bo also tries to start the bulletin. If you wish to put something into this week's bulletin, please try to have it in by Wednesday. (Yes, most of the time he is still working on it on Saturday... but he wants to get most of it done mid week.)
- **Every Second Wednesday* at 6 pm:** Bible Study, Everyone Welcome (* unless otherwise stated in this bulletin, and September through June)
- **Every Second Wednesday* at 6 pm:** Youth Ministry, 2 groups grades 3-6, and grades 7-12 (* unless otherwise stated in this bulletin, and during the summer months)
- **Every Second Wednesday* at 7:30 pm:** Young Adult Ministry (YAM), Those who are 18 to 49-ish are welcome to join us (* unless otherwise stated in this bulletin, and during the summer months)

- **Every Thursday:** is Fr. Bo's Day off... at least in theory. Please call him if you need to, but don't if you don't.

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

- **Saturday - Saturday, April 12 - 19:** Holy Week. See schedule on page 2.
- **Next Sunday, April 20:** Pascha - Easter
- **Sunday, April 27:** Blessed Breakfast (with Raffles)
- **Monday, April 28:** Bingo
- **Wednesday, April 30 at 10 am:** Paschal Liturgy with the Bilingual Schools at St. Basil's Parish.
- **May 2-4:** Pilgrimage to Bishop Velechkovsky Shrine in Winnipeg with Bishop David. Learn more about it on the bulletin board in the Entrance of the Church or at the Eparchial Website.
- **Tuesday, May 20 at 6 pm:** - Men's Club Meeting
- **Tuesday - Friday, May 20-23:** Clergy Retreat
- **Saturday May 24:** Fr. Bo does Iconography with "Ridna Shkola"
- **Thursday, May 29:** Probable St. Matthew's School Graduation Liturgy and Dinner
- **Wednesday June 4 at 7:30 am:** Bishop's Prayer Breakfast at Saint Josaphat's Cathedral Hall - Verkhovyna (9637 - 108 Avenue), Edmonton. Tickets are \$25.00 per person. \$200 for a table of 8 persons. For tickets and more information, contact the Chancery Office at (780) 424-5496; chancery@edmontoneparchy.com.
- **Sunday, June 29 - Friday, July 4:** Week 1 of Camp Oselia & Camp St. Basil: Summer 2025. For Children 8-14 year old, at Camp St. Basil's, Pigeon Lake. Registration opens May 1st! To join the email list, contact oselia.stbasil@eeparchy.com.
- **Sunday, July 6 - Friday, July 11:** Week 2 of Camp Oselia & Camp St. Basil: Summer 2025. For Children 8-14 year old, at Camp St. Basil's, Pigeon Lake. Registration opens May 1st! To join the email list, contact oselia.stbasil@eeparchy.com.
- **August 4 to 9, 2025:** The Eparchial Altar Boy Camp at Camp St. Basils for boys ages 7 years and older. The camp provides an opportunity for the boys to further develop their knowledge of serving and their Ukrainian Catholic Faith while interacting with others from the Eparchy. For further information contact Ken Stelmach at kenstelmach@hotmail.com.
- Holy Cross kitchen volunteers **Food Handling Certificates** are up for renewal. Please sign up with Dianne Kluk by April 30th to update your certificates. There will be an academic session and it will be completed within that day. Anyone from Ladies Club, Men's Club, and K of C who are involved in the kitchen please see Dianne (or call 780 242-1534) to get your name on the list.

The Next Couple Weeks at Holy Cross						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
13  ☩ Palm Sunday: The Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem. Feast of our Lord. Philippians 4:4-9; John 12:1-18. 9:30 am Rosary 10 am Divine Liturgy (English) with the blessing of Pussy Willows Yes Sunday School, and Yes coffee Followed by a Special General Meeting to make a decision about the rental of our Church.	14  Great and Holy Monday; Our Holy Father Martin the Confessor, Pope of Rome; The Newly Revealed Martyrs Anthony, John, and Eustathius. Matins - Matthew 21:18-43; Sixth Hour - Ezekiel 1:1-20; Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts - Exodus 1:1-20; Job 1:1-12; Matthew 24:3-35. 10 am Bible Study 11 am Nursing Home Visit 7:30 pm Knights of Columbus Meeting	15  Great and Holy Tuesday; The Holy Apostles Aristarchus, Pudens, and Trophimus. Matins - Matthew 22:15-23:39; Sixth Hour - Ezekiel 1:21-2:1; Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts - Exodus 2:5-10; Job 1:13-22; Matthew 24:36-26:2. No 9 am Liturgy	16  Great and Holy Wednesday; The Holy Virgins and Martyrs Agapia, Irene, and Chionia. Matins - John 12:17-50; Sixth Hour - Ezekiel 2:3-3:3; Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts - Exodus 2:11-22; Job 2:1-10; Matthew 26:6-16. No 9 am Liturgy 8:30 am Confessions at St. Matthew School 7 pm Presanctified Liturgy with Anointing No Bible Study	17  Great and Holy Thursday; Our Venerable Father Simeon of Persia; Our Venerable Father Acacius, Bishop of Melitene. Matins - Luke 22:1-39; Vespers with Liturgy - Exodus 19:10-19; Job 38:1-23; 42:1-5; Isaiah 50:4-11; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32; Matthew 26:2-20; John 13:3-17; Matthew 26:21-39; Luke 22:43-45; Matthew 26:40-27:2. 12:15 pm Appointment 5:30 Appointment 7 pm Matins of the Passion (12 Gospels)	18   Great and Holy Friday. <small>Matins - John 13:31-18:1; John 18:1-28; Matthew 26:57-75; John 18:28-19:15; Matthew 27:3-32 Mark 15:16-32; Matthew 27:33-54; Luke 23:32-49; John 19:25-37; Mark 15:43-47; John 19:38-42; Matthew 27:62-66; First Hour - Zechariah 11:10-13; Galatians 6:14-18; Matthew 27:1-56; Third Hour - Isaiah 50:4-11; Romans 5:6-11; Mark 15:16-41; Sixth Hour - Isaiah 52:13-54:1; Hebrews 2:11-18; Luke 23:32-49; Ninth Hour - Jeremiah 11:18-23; 12:15, 9-11, 14, 15; Hebrews 10:19-31; John 18:28-19:37; Vespers - Exodus 33:11-23; Job 42:12-16; Isaiah 52:13-54:1; 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2; Matthew 27:1-38; Luke 23:39-43; Matthew 27:39-54; John 19:31-37; Matthew 27:55-61.</small> 10 am Vespers "Shroud" Service (Plaschanytsia) Possible Church rental	19  Great and Holy Saturday. <small>Matins - Ezekiel 37:1-14; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Galatians 3:13-14; Matthew 27:62-66; Vespers - Genesis 1:1-13; Isaiah 60:1-16; Exodus 12:1-11; The Book of Jonah; Joshua 5:10-15; Exodus 13:20-15:19; Zephaniah 3:8-15; 1 Kings 17:8-24; Isaiah 61:1-9; 2 Kings 4:8-37; Isaiah 63:11-64:5; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Daniel 3:1-23 and the Song of the Holy Children (Apocrypha); Liturgy - Romans 6:3-11; Matthew 28:1-20.</small> 2 pm Vespers & Divine Liturgy of St. Basil followed by the blessing of Baskets Possible Church rental
20 Pascha: The Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Acts 1:1-8; John 1:1-17. 8 am Resurrectional Matins followed by the Paschal Divine Liturgy (Bilingual) Blessing of Easter Baskets There is NO 10 am service No Sunday School, Nor coffee	21 Bright Monday; The Holy Hieromartyr Januarius and those with him; The Holy Martyr Theodore of Pergia. Acts 1:12-17; 21-26; John 1:18-28. ? 10 am Bible Study ?	22 Bright Tuesday; Our Venerable Father Theodore of Syceum. Acts 2:14-21; Luke 24:12-35. No 9 am Liturgy	23 Bright Wednesday; ☩ The Holy and Glorious Great-Martyr, Victory-bearer and Wonderworker George. All-Night Vigil Feast. Acts 2:22-36; Acts 12:1-11; John 1:35-51; John 15:17-16:2. 9 am Divine Liturgy 2 pm Sacred Orders Commission Meeting No Bible Study	24 Bright Thursday; The Holy Martyr Sabbas Stratelates. Acts 2:38-43; John 3:1-15. Fr. Bo's Day off 11 am Writing the Light 5:30 Appointment	25 Bright Friday; ☩ The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark. Polyeleos Feast. Acts 3:1-8; 1 Peter 5:6-14; John 2:12-22; Mark 6:7-13. 9 am Appointment 5:30 Appointment	26 Bright Saturday; The Holy Hieromartyr Basil, Bishop of Amasia. Acts 3:11-16; John 3:22-33. Prep for the Blessed Breakfast
27 Second Sunday of Pascha: Thomas Sunday; ☩ The Holy Hieromartyr Simeon, Relative of the Lord; Our Venerable Father Stephen, Bishop of Volodymyr in Volhynia. Saint with Six Sticheria. Acts 5:12-20; John 20:19-31. 9:30 am Rosary 10 am Divine Liturgy (English) Yes Sunday School, no Coffee Blessed Breakfast to follow the Liturgy. 2 pm Possible Rental	28 The Holy Apostles Jason and Sosipater; The Holy Martyrs Dadas, Maximus, and Quintilianus; Our Father among the Saints Cyril, Bishop of Turau. Acts 3:19-26; John 2:1-11. 9 am Possible Icon workshop with St. Matthew's School grade 5's 10 am Bible Study	29 The Nine Holy Martyrs of Cyzicus; The Venerable Memnon the Wonderworker. Acts 4:1-10; John 3:16-21. 2:30 pm Appointment	30  ☩ The Holy Apostle James, Brother of Saint John the Theologian. Polyeleos Feast. Acts 4:13-22; Acts 12:1-11; John 5:17-24; Luke 5:1-11. No 9 am Liturgy due to Fr. Bo being at... 10 am Divine Liturgy with the Ukrainian Bilingual School Students at St. Basil's Church. 6 pm Bible Study	May 1 The Holy Prophet Jeremiah; Blessed Hieromartyr Clement Sheptytsky, Archimandrite of Univ. Acts 4:23-31; John 5:24-30. Fr. Bo's Day off 11 am Writing the Light 5:30 Appointment	2  ☩ Our Father Among the Saints Athanasius the Great. Abstinence from meat and foods that contain meat. Acts 5:1-11; John 5:30-6:2. 9 am Possible Icon workshop with St. Matthew's School grade 5's 5:30 Appointment	3 ☩ The Repose of our Venerable Father Theodosius, Hegumen of the Monastery of the Caves at Kyiv and Organizer of the Cenoebitic Life in Rus; The Holy Martyrs Timothy and Maura. Polyeleos Feast. Acts 5:21-33; Hebrews 13:7-16; John 6:14-27; Matthew 11:27-30. 8:30 am ? AMA Shredding Event in the Church Parking Lot 11 am Baptism Afternoon Hall Rental
4 Third Sunday of Pascha:	5 The Holy and Glorious	6 The Holy, Just, and Long-	7  ☩ Commemoration of the	8 ☩ The Holy Apostle	9  ☩ The Transfer of the Relics	10 12 ☩ The Holy Apostle