

Serving Buyers & Sellers
Contact me for all real estate needs



Zanna Vaida
Licensed Real Estate Salesperson
Office: (716) 648-7700
Fax: (716) 648-7882
Cell: (716) 510-4978
E-mail: zvaida@realtyusa.com
<http://zannavaida.realtyusa.com>

Ukrainian National Association Inc.
Life Insurance, Coverdells & Annuities

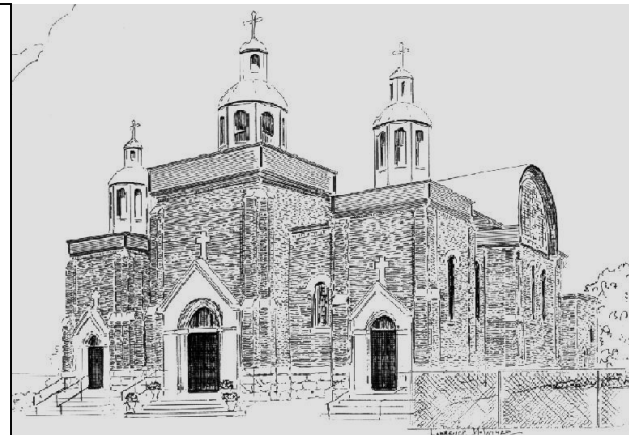


Judie Hawryluk
Fraternal Agent
Chairwoman Buffalo District

79 Southridge Dr West Seneca NY 14224-4442
Tel: 716-674-5185 Fax: 716-675-2238

www.unamember.com

**SAINT NICHOLAS
UKRAINIAN
CATHOLIC CHURCH**
**УКРАЇНСЬКА
КАТОЛИЦЬКА ЦЕРКВА
СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ
ПІД ОПІКОЮ ПРЕЧ.
ДІВИ МАРІЇ ОДІГІТРІЇ**



SLAVIS BAZZAR 1550 William Street
Buffalo, NY 14206
Euro Delicatessen Store Tel.: 895-1404

MIC MEEST 1550 William Street
Buffalo, NY 14206
Tel.: 895-1404

CHURCH BULLETIN
N° 01 – January 2 – 2011



ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК
2 Січня – 2011 – Ч. 01

Proud to Support
St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church



Buszka Funeral Home
DIRECTOR PETER D. STACHOWSKI

2005 Clinton Street at S. Ogden Buffalo New York 14206
(716) 825-7777 www.buszkafuneralhomeinc.com

Wilhelmina E. & Janine Klimeczko
Michael A. Klimeczko, Licensed Directors

Pietszak
FUNERAL HOME
and Orłowski-Pietszak Funeral Home
(716) 852-4499

2400 William St. Cheektowaga, NY 14206
806 Clinton St. Buffalo, NY 14210

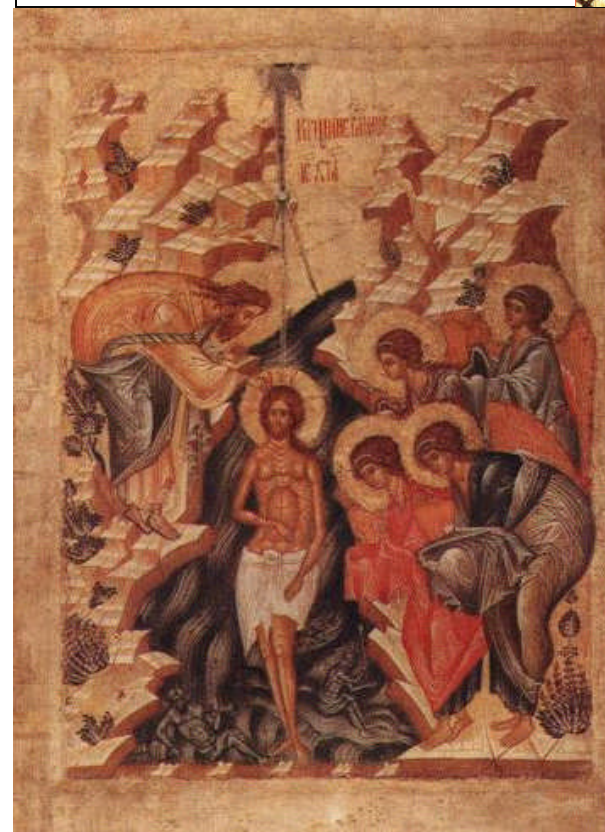


Kuhn's Monuments, Inc.
(ROLAND J. KUHN)

ASK FOR TOM

PHONE 893-1025

2398 GENESEE ST.
BUFFALO, N.Y. 14225



Богоявлення - Theophany

One of the most comforting thoughts we have to take into the New Year is that Jesus loves us and cares for us. There is not a person upon the earth for whom He fails to love. No matter where we live, regardless of who we are, Christ has a place for each of us.

Wherever you may be, God is with us! So today and throughout this coming New Year, we pray you have enough happiness to keep you kind. Enough trials to keep you strong; Enough sorrow to keep you human; Enough hope to keep you happy; Enough weakness to keep you humble; Enough success to keep you thankful; Enough friends to give you comfort; Enough wealth to meet your needs; Enough enthusiasm to make you look forward to tomorrow, and enough determination to make each day better than the day before. May the peace, hope, and love of our Savior, Jesus Christ, be with you always.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE (gr)

January 2, 2011: Sun. Bef. Theophany **17**

12:00 PM +Julia Hrynczak (M. Hanuszcak)

Monday, January 3 – Пон., 3 Січня

8:15 AM +Ярослава Борачок (А. Паращій)

Tuesday, January 4 – Вів., 4 Січня

9:15 AM +Jaroslawa Petriwskyj & +Taras Sarachman (Marlene Bratach)

Wednesday, January 5 – Сер., 5 Січня

9:15 AM +Frانيا Bodnarsky (S. A. Chomyn)
St. Basil Liturgy – Св. Василя

Theophany – Богоявлення Г.Н.І.Х.

Thursday, January 6 – Чет., 6 Січня

9:30 AM For Parishioners &

Great Water Blessing

За парохіян і Велике Водосвяття

Friday, January 7 – П'ятниця, 7 Січня

10:00 AM see Julian

Saturday, January 8 – Субота., 8 Січня

10:00 AM see Julian

4:30 PM For Parishioners - За парохіян

Jan. 9: S. aft. Theophany – Н. По Бог. **18**

11:00 AM +Mychajlo Oros (wife)

Prosphora Dinner - Просфора

Вічне Світло в честь ПДМ горить за

+Мечиславу Ганицьку

По жертва: родина Святківських

Eternal Light burns for

+Olga Kolotylo

Requ. By: Jagodzinski Family

Your 2011 Church Envelopes and
2011 Gregorian & Julian calendars
are ready in the church.

ПОР'ЯДОК ЛІТУРГІЙ (юл)

2 Січня 2011: Неділя Пер. Різдвом **17**

10:00 AM +Володимир Ганицький
(Люба і Роман Хома)

Чет., 6 Січня – Свят Врчір.

10:00 PM Велике Повечеря і
Різдв'яна Літургія

Пят., 7 Січня – РІЗДВО Г.Н.І.Х.

10:00 AM За Парохіян (мировання)

Суб., 8 Січня – Собор Богородиці

10:00 AM Мечислава Ганицька
(родина Святківських)

9 Січня 2011: Неділя По Різдві **18**

11:00 AM +Михайло Орос (дружина)
Різдв'яний Обід (Просфора)



Можма набути

Опихану Куттю

Сьогодні по Св. Літургії

У церковній залі



Просимо забрати каляндарі (є по но-
вому і по старому) та церк. Коверти.



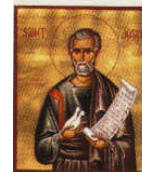
Просимо принести солодке на
другу неділю. Дякуємо!



Сьогодні можна забрати просфору
і заморозити її до Св. Вечора.



ЩАСЛИВОГО НОВОГО РОКУ!



St Joseph School For Boys
Bookstore

Ronda Doucette

574 333-3420

Specializing in Eastern Christian Gifts and Books
www.easterngiftshop.com

saintjoseph@roadrunner.com

There is still space for your ad.

Маємо місце для Вашого оголошення

DNIPRO  ДНІПРО

Ukrainian Cultural Center

562 Genesee St. Buffalo, NY 14204 856-4476

www.UkrainiansOfBuffalo.com

Hall and bar rentals are available.

See your old friends on Friday night.

Help rebuild our Ukrainian Home.

Please Contribute to the

\$100,000 Building Fund.

Donations are tax deductible.

EURO DELI AND GIFTS



4166 Union Road
(Airport Plaza)

Cheektowaga, NY 14225

Tel. 716-630-0131

2321 Millersport Hwy
(Getzville Plaza)

Amherst, NY 14068

Fax 716-630-0133 tel. 716-688-1495

Сердечна подяка усім спонзорам!

Просимо їх підтримати!

Ukrainian Home Dnipro
Federal Credit Union

562 Genesee St., Buffalo, NY 14204

(716) 847-6655 (716) 847-6988

www.uhdhfcu.com

info@uhdfcu.com



**“The credit union
with a heart”**

Free checking

Competitive rates on CD's and savings account

Low rates for Visa Credit cards

ATM Visa Debit cards

Direct Deposit and Online Banking

IRA Traditional and Roth accounts

Free Life Insurance (some restrictions apply)

We financially support Ukrainian causes

Свій До Свого По Своє

Join now and become a member of our
Ukrainian Credit Union Family!

Please support our sponsors!

ДЯКУЄМО – THANK YOU!

The Colonial Memorial Chapels, Inc.
of Ukrainian Heritage, Serving Western N.Y.

Simon Pasnik & Matthew Pasnik

3003 South Park Avenue

Lackawanna, New York 14218

(716) 824-3007

Melvin J. SLIWINSKI

FUNERAL HOME

85 George Urban Boulevard

Cheektowaga, N. Y. 14225

5090 Transit Rd, Depew, NY 14043

(716) 894-1772

**UPCOMING
CHURCH
EVENTS**

**Просимо звернути
увагу на дати:**



Sunday Coffee Hours: If any one would like to volunteer to host a Sunday, please contact Elaine, Dora, Emily, Mary (B.) or Anna.

- KITCHEN – is now open again. Thank you for your help and patronage.
- Every Sunday after Liturgy Coffee Hour - Church Hall. Please attend!
- Thanks are extended to all of you for all your good wishes and prayers on the occasion of my 30th Anniversary! God Bless!

TOP'S GIFT CARDS:

Please help us raise money for our Church by purchasing



Top's Gift Cards from us. If you buy in Tops anyway, why not help. You do not lose or gain anything by doing this, but our Church will benefit greatly. We receive back 5% of your spending. To take advantage of this program, see Mary Bodnar or call 655-3810, or call the rectory. Thank you and God Bless!

Please note: You can purchase gasoline with this card at Tops Gasoline Station.

У нас успішно продаються Карточки з крамниці "Топс". Купуючи їх ви помагате церкві. Для Вас не робить різниці чи ви платили грішми чи карточкою, але церква дістане від „Топс” 5%. На \$1,000 церква одержить \$50. Що б закупити слід звертатися до п. Марії Боднар, або до канцелярії. Дякуємо! Також можна цією карточкою купувати бензину

CHURCH BULLETIN is published weekly. Deadline for information is Tuesday Evening.

ЦЕРК. ВІСНИК видається тижнево
Інформації подавати до вівторка вечора.

SAINT NICHOLAS

UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА ЦЕРКВА

**СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ
(ПІД ОПІКОЮ ПРЕЧИСТОЇ
ДІВИ МАРІЇ ОДІГІТРИЇ)**

V. Rev. Marijan Procyk, pastor
Rev. Raymond Palko, visiting priest

E-Mail: stnbuffalo@yahoo.com

Web Page: <http://stnbuffalo.com/>

Dioc. Web: <http://stamforddio.org/>

308 Fillmore Avenue, Buffalo, N. Y. 14206

Rect: (716) 852-7566 ~ **Hall:** (716) 852-1908

Fax: (716) 855-1319

Confession: Before Liturgies.

Сповідь: Перед Св. Літургіями

Baptism: By appointment

Хрещення: За домовленням

Marriage: Contact 6 months in advance

Вінчання: Голоситися 6 місяців скорше

Religion classes – Кляси Релігії

Starts Oct. 30 – Поч. 30 Жовтня

Ministry to the sick-Опіка над хворими:

Family members should call the Rectory.

Родина повинна повідомити священика

IN EMERGENCY CALL ANY TIME

В разі потреби завжди можна закликати

**Please call if you are hospitalized,
homebound and need a priest.**

**Просимо закликати якщо ви у
лічниці або приковані до ліжка!**

PLEASE SAVE THE DATES



**The 73 Annual Convention
of the League of Ukrainian
Catholics will be held in
Buffalo October 7, 8, 9, 2011
at the Airport Holiday Inn. We ask the
support of our local Ukrainian commu-
nity in this endeavor. We especially ask
that our organizations not schedule any
events that weekend. Thank you!**

The League of Ukrainian Catholics,
Niagara Frontier Council Cordially
invites you to a

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Sunday, January 23, 2011 - 11:30AM
St. Nicholas Church Hall

RSVP уу January 16, 2011 to:

Mary Beth Sukmann

824-1433

Elaine Nowadly

716-867-0981

Donation: \$12.00

**Просимо взяти участь в обіді
Ліги Українців Католиків,
У неділю 23 Січня о 11:30
Пожертва: \$12.00**

RETREAT - РЕКОЛЕКЦІЇ

**We will have 2011 Parish retreat-
mission from April 7 to 9**

**Ми будемо мати наші реколек-
ції-місії 7-9 Квітня 2011. р.**

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Христос Раждається! Славте Його!

Plast will have it's Annual Tra-
ditional Svichecka on Sunday
Jan 2after 10:00 am Liturgy.

Refreshments will be served!

Пластова Свічечка буде сьогодні, 2
Січня у церковній залі зара по Св. Лі-
тургії о 10 год. Просимо взяти участь!

**Our Prosphora will be Jan. 9.
Donations of baked goods would
be greatly appreciated.**

Наша Просфора буде 9 Січня.

Please visit St. Nicholas Web-Page:

<http://www.stnbuffalo.com>

We update often and put new materials.
Listen to readio on line, read the bulle-
tin, see the pictures from bazaar, 30th
anniversary and soon to be added 90th
Anniversary and other events in our
parish and other parishes.

Веб-Сторінка нашої церкви постійно
доповнюється. Там можна перечита-
ти нановіші вісті з парохії, послухати
радіо ітп. Просимо заглянути час до
часу і напишіть свої вражіння.

**Щоб довідатися більше інформа-
цій Про це що діється в громаді,
Просимо відвідати веб-сторінку:**

<http://www.ukrainiansofbuffalo.com>

**Is the the web-page to find
More information and events
In our Ukrainian Community.**



Pope's New Year's appeal

VATICAN CITY Pope Benedict XVI urged Christians to remain strong in the face of intolerance and violence in a New Year's appeal Saturday that came hours after a bomb blast outside an Egyptian church killed 21 people.

The pope condemned a widening campaign against Christians in the Middle East in his homily at St. Peter's Basilica, echoing comments last month in which he called a lack of religious freedom a threat to world security.

"In the face of the threatening tensions of the moment, especially in the face of discrimination, of abuse of power and religious intolerance that today particularly strikes Christians, I again direct a pressing invitation not to yield to discouragement and resignation," he said.

Pope recalled his speech last month in which "I stressed that religious freedom is the essential element of a state of law — you cannot deny it without, at the same time, undermining all rights and fundamental freedoms."

The new year, he said, is an opportunity to reflect "on the great challenges that our epoch poses to humanity," calling the threats to religious freedom urgent.

"Wherever religious freedom is effectively recognized, the dignity of the human person is respected to its root, and through a sincere search for truth and good, moral consciences are shored up and institutions and civil coexistence are reinforced," the pope said. "That's why religious freedom is the privileged way to build peace." (*The Associated Press*)

Шановні громадяни М. Боффало і околиці Український Конгресовий Комітет Америки - Відділ Боффало пригадує, що цьогорічна Традиційна Осіння Збірка на Український Народний Фонд – УККА, буде проводитися в нашій Українській Громаді міста Боффало і околиці.

Просимо ласкаво про Ваші ширі датки!

Централя Українського Конгресового Комітету являється нашим представником перед Американським Урядом. Та його важлива праця потребує фінансової допомоги, яка в основному надходить від української-американської громади та українських фінансових установ.

Заздегідь дякуємо всім, хто підтримує Український Народний Фонд, а тим самим підтримуємо працю централі УККА. Датки можна складати на руки збірщиків:

др. Андрій Дякун – Голова боффалівського відділу УККА,
Василь Середюк, Дмитро Пітолай і
Володимир Тупіцький.

Are you listening "Good Samaritan"
Ukrainian Radio Program
on WJL 1440 AM
Every Sunday at 2:00 PM?
Thank you for your donations!

Чи ви слухаєте нашу радіо передачу
«Милосердний Самар'янин»
Неділя, 2 год. на WJL 1440 AM?



**ОСЕРЕДОК СУМ Ім. ЛЕСИ
УКРАЇНКИ в Боффало Н. Й.**

Влаштовує

ТРАДИЦІЙНУ МАЛАНКУ

**яка відбудеться в суботу
22-го січня 2011 р.**

**в залах Українського
Дому «Дніпро» при 562
Дженесі вул. Боффало Н.Й.**

**Щиро запрошуємо все ук-
раїнське громадянство
міста Боффало і околиць
до участі.**

**До танців приграватиме:
Оркестра
«ЗБРУЧ»**

**Забави о год. 9:00 до 1:00
Вечеря від 10:00**

"Champagne Toast"

Білеті: \$30

\$25 для студенти до 18р.

До замовлення білетів:

Галя Турик 697-0807

Василь Середюк 821-0711

Осип Грега 604-4798



The Ukrainian American Youth Association of Buffalo, New York
Lesia Ukrainka Branch
is pleased to announce their annual

**TRADITIONAL UKRAINIAN
NEW YEAR'S DANCE
MALANKA**

Which will take place on
Saturday, January 22nd, 2011
at the Ukrainian Cultural Center
"DNIPRO" hall located at: 562
Genesee Street, Buffalo, N. Y.

All are invited to come
and join the celebration!

Music will be provided by:
"ZBRUCH"

Music from 9:00 pm to 1:00 am
Buffet starting at 10:00pm
Champagne Toast

Tickets are \$30.00 and
\$25 for students to 18 years

For Tickets Please Contact:
Helen Turyk 697-0807
William Serediuk 821-0711

З радія "Милосердний Самарянин"

Учора святкували ми Новий Рік. Маємо надію, що минулий не завдав нам багато клопотів, невдач, розчаровань або ран. Господь зберіг нас для нових подвигів у цьому році. Дає нам нагоду далі змагатися до кращого.

Цікаво, що цей Новий Рік нам принесе, а що забере від нас?

Надіюся, що принесе спокій у наше серця, і у наше відношення у родині і до ближніх і між народами, а забере смуток, і ненависть і все це, що нам стоїть на перешкоді.

Новий рік нагода до нових постанов. Які зміни рішили ми запровадити у наше життя, щоб воно хилилося у більш позитивну сторону. Які рішення принесли ми на початку цього року.

Господь зберіг нас для того, щоб ми продовжували робити добрі діла. Дає нам чергову нагоду досягнути своє щастя. А у чому полягає це щастя і як до нього дійти? Щастя для нас у свідомості, що Господь є з нами, що Він з нами бориться, і ніколи не залишить нас, навіть якщо ми можливо на хвилику не звернемо на нього уваги? Важним є завжди старатися не шукати свого щастя там де його не можна знайти...

На порозі Нового Року постановім цей рік провести у вірі, в мирі, в надії, в любові. Зі щирого серця бажаємо усім вам щоб Новий Рік приніс Вам багато радості і щастя в Христі Господі.

Постараймося шукати щастя у прив'язанню до Господа, якого можемо бачити у всіх тих що мають яку небудь потребу, що хворіють, що не знають

якою дорогою їм іти. У інших добавимо Христа і для інших будемо Христом. Покажимо їм дорогу до спасіння. Самі ідімо нею, і інших туди провадимо, щоб ми усі були з Господом з'єднані, щоб ми усі брали участь у небесній трапезі, на яку нас усіх закликає. „З нами Бог, розумійте народи і покоріться бо ось з нами Бог”.

Подякуймо Господеві за всі дари, що ми їх одержали в цьому році, що вже проминуло. Можливо не все нам подобалося, можливо ми мали труднощі, нестачі, може хворіли, може хтось з ченів нашої родини, або наші приятелі постраждали. Все ж таки все проминуло. Нові труднощі прийдуть, але з Господом ми все можемо подолати. Він нас скріплює, Він провадить, Він нами опікується. Ідучи за Ним ми не будемо спотикатися. Він нам освітлює дорогу.

Хтось колись сказав: "Життя є це що стається у той час коли ти маєш пляни робити щось іншого." На порозі наступаючого року постановім своє життя вести з вірою, надією, і любов'ю. Перед нами багато справ до поладження. Багато є тих, що нас потребують, і Господь нас посилає передати їм Його любов.

Зі щирого серця бажаємо усім вам, щоб Новий Рік приніс багато радості і щастя в Христі Господі, щоб ми завжди були іншим на службі, щоб труднощі які прийдуть привели нас до співчутливості з іншими, і до зрозуміння потреби Господа в нашому житті. Щасливого Нового Року!

From the desk of Fr. Ray Palko

Dear _____,
(Your name here, for your very own personal letter)

If you celebrate Christmas according to the Julian (old) calendar, Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! May you be blessed as you continue with your preparations and fasting for "the Big Day."

To you, who have 'been there, done that' (new calendar), and who have now begun to celebrate this beautiful time of our Lord's Nativity: CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM! And a great big Happy New Year!

IT WAS THE BEST CHRISTMAS EVER! Our family was all together, not actually physically, but certainly in spirit. Christmas really began for us on Thanksgiving night, about a month ago. Daughter Presbytera Laryssa, Father Eli, and their children Jonah and Nathanael came home for that holiday, and since we knew we wouldn't be seeing them at Christmas, there was an exchange, and OPENING, of gifts then. It was early for Christmas, and even early for St. Nicholas, but we wanted especially to see the delight of the children (and there was a lot of delight!) as they opened their presents. We were glad to have them home with us!

Last week we began our real celebration of this special and glorious day, the Lord's Birthday. We were blessed again to gather for Holy Supper at our house and await that first star in the evening sky. We remembered our family in Middleport, and Cohoes (Yeah, I know the big shots live in Clifton Park, but it'll always be Cohoes ☺), who would also be gathering at their tables. We remembered our family and friends with that special setting for those who would not be with us that night, those who are away in other places of this world, or already with the Lord. We remembered our parishioners and friends everywhere, who would be having "Holy Supper"

with their loved ones. And we came together in His Body and were one family. After the blessing of the Christmas tree, the singing of "Boh Predvichny-God Eternal," blessing of the food and passing around the prosphora we all enjoyed the wonderful Lenten foods of the twelve dishes. One good thing about the twelve dishes is that there is something there for everybody. I never quite understand it, but there are people who don't like some of those foods. Do you believe it? How can somebody not like garlic or herring?!!

After the church services of Christmas morning, Presbytera Joanne, Elaina and I had our Christmas breakfast and then opened up our presents. Later in the day we went to Chrystyna's for a Christmas turkey dinner. She is only a few days away from giving birth, so it was much easier to do it that way, when everybody can lend a hand. And there were more presents, and tiny tots, with giggles that came all the way from their little bellies, to tell us what this day is all about. Thanks God for His blessings to us as we truly had a beautiful day. Thanks to family and friends who stay together in His love. IT WAS THE BEST CHRISTMAS EVER!

Right now it's a little after 6am on Thursday morning, which means I'm getting a late start this week. Something really unusual is about to happen in Western New York today...the sun is predicted to shine!! We haven't had sun for days, and it's been well over a month since the temperature was above freezing. Today the sun will shine and we might reach 40 degrees. We'll take it! We're getting to see more and more of our driveway these days. It's been a mess since that 39 in. snowfall we had a few weeks ago.

And guess what! I got a seed catalogue today from a place called Gurney's Seed and Nursery Co. out of Indiana!!! I don't like rushing the seasons, but a seed catalogue in

January is a beautiful thing!! Ahhh, there is hope! ☺ ☺

I've been busy this week baking prosphora for our Liturgies, as well as for use at the Old Calendar "Holy Suppers." If you took home a prosphora for your Holy Supper, you should put it in the freezer until Christmas Eve, January 6th. The 'church bread' is made of flour, water and a touch of salt. These ingredients have no chemicals or preservatives so the bread will get very hard, very quickly, if left out. It is better to keep it frozen until you need it. By the way, those letters stamped on the bread: IC XC NI KA are abbreviations for: "Jesus Christ Conquers or Victory in Jesus Christ."

If you need any information about our five churches here on the Niagara Frontier, remember to go to the new web-site: <http://www.stnbuffalo.com> where Fr. Procyk has a wealth of information and links to other sites. It is really a beautiful site! And, when you are there, don't forget to click on the Niagara Falls link. We're celebrating our 90th anniversary this year and there are some beautiful pictures of the October church service when the Bishop came to celebrate the Liturgy with us, as well as other pictures and info.

So having said that about the web-site, it's a reminder for "the locals" to check your bulletins and that site for all the activities, THE CHURCH SERVICES and the other events that are listed there. There's a lot going on these days! This coming week we will have Theophany with the Great Blessing of Water, and the next day is Christmas according to the Julian calendar. Every weekend has some kind of event, and the weekdays will be filled with the office work of reconciling "the things



of Caesar" as we get to our year end reports for Caesar and for the Bishop.

I must leave you for another week, but I have a BIG request from you, Dear Prayer Warrior. Would you especially remember in your prayers Chrystyna and her unborn child as we pray for a safe and healthy delivery for both Mom and baby?

(May the Lord Bless you, Chrystyna, and your child, soon to be born, as well as the rest of your Family! Fr. Marijan and parishioners of Saint Nicholas)

It's been a really wonderful and blessed 2010 and we thank God for all His blessings throughout the whole year, as there have been many. There were many wonderful, special and blessed days and events, but I must mention that my five week/fifteen Liturgy substitution in St. Nicholas in Elmira, NY was the icing on the cake for this year. It was such an excellent and positive experience and I still fondly recall those days of late summer as I traveled there each weekend, The priest, deacon and his family, and all the parishioners couldn't have been more welcoming, friendly, prayerful or helpful. May God reward them a hundred-fold for all they did for us. It was a special time in 2010 with some very special people. God bless the people of St. Nicholas in Elmira for many happy and blessed years!

God willing, and the creek don't rise, I'll write to you "next year." May God continue to bless us as we turn the page to 2011. May He cause His face to shine on us and give us His Peace! May our Holy Lady keep us beneath the Holy Veil of her heavenly protection! Happy New Year!

With Much Christmas Love,

Fr. Ray

From "Good Samaritan" Ukr. Radio pr.

There once lived an old shoemaker, loved and honored by all his neighbors, who affectionately called him "Father Martin." One Christmas, he sat alone in his little shop, reading of the visit of the wise men to the infant Jesus, and of the gifts they brought, and he said to himself, "If tomorrow were the first Christmas, I know what I would give Jesus!" He arose and took from a shelf two little shoes of softest snow-white leather, with bright silver buckles. "I would give Him these, my finest work. How pleased his mother would be! But I'm a foolish old man", he thought, smiling. "The Master has no need of my poor gifts." Replacing the shoes, he blew out the candle and retired to rest. Hardly had he closed his eyes, when it seemed he heard a voice call his name. "Martin!" Intuitively, he felt aware of the identity of the speaker. "Martin, you have longed to see me. Tomorrow I shall pass by your window. If you see me and bid me enter, I shall be your guest and sit at your table." Martin did not sleep that night for joy. Before it was yet dawn, he arose and tidied up his little shop. Fresh sand he spread on the floor, and green boughs of fir he wreathed along the rafters. On the table he placed a loaf of white bread, a jar of honey, a pitcher of milk; and over the fire he hung a hot drink. His simple preparations were complete. When all was in readiness, he took up his vigil at the window. He was sure he would know the Master. As he watched the driving sleet and rain in the cold, deserted street, he thought of the joy that would be his when he sat down and broke bread with his Guest. Presently, he saw an old street sweeper pass by, blowing upon his thin, gnarled hands to warm them. Poor fellow! He must be half frozen, thought Martin. Opening the door, he called out to him, "Come in, my friend, and get warm, and drink something hot." No further urging was needed, and the man gratefully accepted the invitation. An hour passed, and Martin next saw a poor, miserably clothed woman carrying a baby. She paused,

warily, to rest in the shelter of his doorway. Quickly, he flung open the door. "Come in and get warm while you rest," he said to her. "Are you not well?" he asked. "I am going to the hospital. I hope they will take me and my baby in," she explained. "My husband is at sea, and I am ill, without a soul to whom I can go." "Poor child!" cried the old man. "You must eat something while you are getting warm. Let me give a cup of milk to the little one. Ah! What a bright, pretty little fellow he is! Why, you have no shoes on him!" "I have no shoes for him," sighed the mother. "Then he shall have this lovely pair I finished yesterday." And Martin took down the soft little snow-white shoes he had looked at the evening before, and slipped them on the child's feet. They fit perfectly. Shortly, the young mother went her way full of gratitude, and Martin went back to his post at the window. Hour after hour went by, and many needy souls shared the meager hospitality of this old shoemaker, but the expected Guest did not appear. At last, when night had fallen, Martin retired to his cot with a heavy heart. "It was only a dream," he sighed. "I did hope and believe, but He has not come." Suddenly, so it seemed to his weary eyes, the room was flooded with a glorious light, and to Martin's astonished vision, there appeared before him, one by one, the poor street sweeper, the sick mother and her baby, and all the people whom he had aided during the day. Each one smiled at him and said, "Have you not seen me? Did I not sit at your table?" and then they vanished. And softly out of the silence he heard again the gentle voice, repeating the old, familiar words, "Who so shall receive one such little child in My name, receives Me" (Matt. 18:5). For I was hungry, and you gave me eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in...

Trust in the goodness of people and allow yourself to be overwhelmed... Remember: it only takes one person to make a difference in someone's life and you could be the one.