



- 1. "Mission" with Fr. Ilie Babota
- 2. "Prayergroup" with Fr. Milovan
- 3. "Pierogi for Peace Fundraiser"



✠ N O 1 4 ✠ A P R I L 0 5 ✠ 2 0 1 5

SAINT NICHOLAS
 UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА
 ЦЕРКВА СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ



№
 14

ПІД ОПКОЮ
 ПРЕЧИСТОЇ ДІВИ
 МАРІЇ ОДІТРИЇ
 UNDER THE
 PROTECTION OF
 MOTHER OF GOD



CHURCH BULLETIN
 April 5 – 2015 – 5 Квітня
 ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК



Осанна в вишніх, благословен, хто йде в ім'я Господнє.
 Квітня Н. Візд в Єрусалим - Entry into Jerusalem. Palm S.



Resurrection - Воскресіння Христове

CHURCH BULLETIN

April 5 – 2015 – 5 Квітня
ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК



Saint Nicholas Church
Церква Св. Миколая
(Під Опікою П.Д.М.)

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

ПОР'ЯДОК СВ. ЛІТУРГІЙ

April 5 EASTER - ВЕЛИКДЕНЬ

7:00 AM Nadhrobne - Надгробне
7:15 AM Matins – Воскр. Утрення
8:00 AM Easter Liturgy – Літургія
12:00 PM For Parishioners - За Парохіян

5 Квітня: Квітна Неділя

10:00 p. +Юлія і Володимир Білоус
(Роман Войчак)

Вівторок, 7 Квітня, БЛАГОВІЩЕННЯ

10:00 p. За мамів і дітей

Великий Четвер, 9 Квітня,

6:00 PM Утреня Страстей

Велика П'ятниця, 10 Квітня,

5:30 PM Виставлення Плащаниці

Субота, 11 Квітня

3:45 PM {Blessing of the Baskets} &
6:00 PM {Благословення Кошиків}
4:30 PM Літургія Св. Василя

12 Квітня: ВЕЛИКДЕНЬ

7:00 AM Nadhrobne - Надгробне
7:15 AM Matins – Воскр. Утрення
8:00 AM Easter Liturgy – Літургія

Bible meetings, Mon., April 6 at 7 PM.

We will alternate between Monday and Thursday. Our discussion is New Testament from historical point of view and its importance for us. N. T. is about teaching of our Lord, but He came into certain historical setting, and it is important for us to understand the time and circumstances surrounding beginning of our Faith.

У понеділок, 6 Квітня дискусія на тему Нового Завіту в історичній перспективі. Пів години послухаємо доповідь Проф. Ермана а опісля дискусія.

Просимо до участі.

The Eternal Light burns in mem.
Of Fallen Soldiers in Ukraine.

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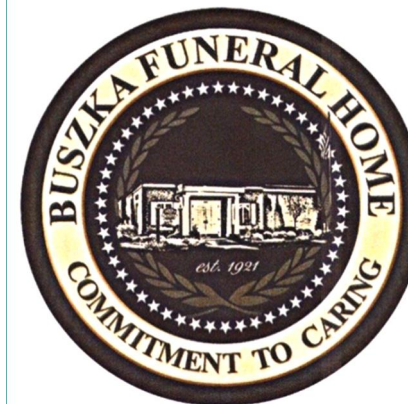
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DONATIONS TO SAINT NICHOLAS

- In Memory of Lucas, Verostko & Chort Families

\$2,500.00 Marianne Chort

With the note: Dear Father Procyk,

As always, thinking of you and St. Nicholas during Holy Week – so many memories! I wanted to tell you that we got a “care package” sent by our cousin Elizabeth Verostko, prepared by the parish ladies last Friday. The food was heavenly. Elizabeth said she was very impressed by the entire kitchen operation and also appreciates the beauty of the church and its care by you and all the Parish.

Thank You, Marianne!

- Healing Service
(with Fr. Milovan & Fr. Milan)
\$120.00 Prayergroup
- In Memory of +Stepan Balaban
(On the occasion of Funeral)
\$100.00 Jadwiga Balaban & Family

“Special Appeal”

- IMO Sophia Pucak
Pereyma Family - \$100.00
Mykola & Tania Paslawsky - \$50.00
Pedro & Luba Joven - \$40.00
- IMO Irene Tschip
Emily Swiatkiwsky - \$25.00
- IMO Stepan Balaban
Andrew & Gertrud Diakun - \$30.00
- IMO Mary Beth Sukmann
Elaine Barkowski - \$25.00

Donations Towards Coffee Hour Yearly Communication Assessment Fee

Ihor Gill

Mykola & Tania Paslawsky

Donations will be gladly accepted.
The cost for food for each Sunday is about \$50.00 Using the Coffee Hour Fund money to buy supplies lets us put the entire weekly profit toward the yearly Communication Fee of \$3600.00. Thank you for your help. Elaine

2015 LUC dues are now payable.
Please make checks (\$7.00) payable to League of Ukrainian Catholics, Niagara Frontier Council.
Dues can be sent to Ihor Pereyma, 38 Lester St., Buffalo, NY 14210.

The Parish Friday Kitchen will be closed Friday, April 10th and will reopen Friday, April 17th.

The Parish Easter Dinner will be Sunday, April 19 after the 10:00 Liturgy. There will be no Noon Liturgy that Sunday. Donations of Baked Goods will be greatly appreciated. Donation \$10.00



Happy Easter to all who celebrate according to Gregorian! Christ is Risen! Христос Воскрес!

We had a very successful Pierogi for Peace fundraiser on March 29 thanks to the amazing Ukrainians and their friends in Buffalo and Western New York . The response was overwhelming.

Thank you so much for everyone's generous support; Holy Tri-

nity church for providing a hall and friends that set it up; all Ukrainian churches for donating pierogi (varenyky); everyone who donated Gift Baskets and Gift Cards; for buying food and supplies; for cooking, baking, workings in the kitchen; selling tickets and food; for help making baskets and organizing them; for advertising the fundraiser and bringing your friends and family. We could not have done it without you. All proceeds from our fundraiser will go to victims of the war in Ukraine. God Bless!

- Organizing committee

Сердечна подяка усім, що допомогли позбирати фонди для потерпілих від війни в Україні. Нехай Господь Вас щедро благословить!

- Організаційний Комітет

Protection of the Most Holy Mother of God Catholic Church, 2713 Ferry Ave. Niagara Falls, NY 14301 is having another wine-tasting event with Eagle Crest/Oh-ne-Da winery, on Friday May 29. More info later.



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

- KITCHEN is now open.
- Thank you for your patronage. We need your help in the kitchen. Thank you!
- Coffee Hour - Usually Every Sunday after Liturgy in Church Hall. Please join us!
- Lent starts February 16 according to Gregorian and February 23 according to Julian Calendar.

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 помагаєте 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!

CHURCH BULLETIN is published weekly. Deadline for information is Friday Evening. ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК видається тижнево. Інформації подавати до П'ятниці вечора.

SAINT NICHOLAS UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Marriage: Contact 6 months in advance

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Субота - Saturday

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V. Rev. Marijan Procyk, pastor & dean

Rev. Raymond Palko, visiting priest

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

Просимо закликати якщо ви у лічниці або приковані до ліжка!

З радія "Милосердний Самарянин"

Сьогодні за юліанським стилем квітна неділя, а перед нами Христові страсті.

Коли на початку цього тижня бачимо Христа у славі, що її людина задумала, то на його кінці побачимо Христа у славі згідно з Божим задумом.

Сьогодні чули ми такі слова, що їх викрикували ті, що стелили квіти, оливкові галузки і пальмове віття перед Христом: "Осанна, благословенний хто йде в ім'я Господнє. Цар Ізраїля", а на другу неділю почуємо у церкві величне: "Христос Воскрес із мертвих, смертю смерть подолав і тим що у гробах життя дарував".

Сьогодні люди радісні, величають Христа, а за пару днів на Велику п'ятницю кричатимуть: "Геть з ним. Ми його не потребуємо. Розпініть його."

Як така різка зміна була можливою?

Сьогодні люди думали, що Христос входить до Єрусалиму, щоб стати царем. Той, що вмів гарно говорити, що відкрив очі сліпому і дав слух глухому, той, що Лазаря воскресив із мертвих, міг також зробити, щоб і свій народ вивести з неволі.

Очевидно Христос міг визволити від Римлян, але це не було його завданням... Він радше прийшов визволити свій народ від гріхів, навести їх і нас на правильний шлях.

Народ, почувши ся заведеним, і зрозумівши, що їхні сподівання не сповнилися, змінив своє наставлення під намовою священиків, книжників, фарисеїв...

Як то легко зробити щось злого під намовою тих, які гарно вміють говорити, а їхні діла далекі від справедливості.

Важним є, дорогі в Христі, щоб і ми одного дня не прославляли когось, а вже наступного змішували з болотом. Різниця між дорогоцінним золотом а без вартісним болотом у писанні є тільки в першій букві, а у вимові тільки ще в наголосі. І так дуже легко можна перевернути одне на друге. Щось подібне і сталося у наставленні людей у подіях Квітної Неділі і Великої П'ятниці.

Постараймося цього тижня розважувати над любов'ю, що нам її Христос показав, щоб її наслі-

дувати і над ненавистю Христових противників, щоб її, немов проказу, оминати.

У Великий Четвер Христос установив Пресвяту Євхаристію. У чудесний спосіб під видами хліба і вина, Він залишив нам себе, і наказав своїм послідовникам: Оце чиніть на мій спомин. Ми це повторяємо кожного разу коли беремо участь у Святій Літургії. Постараймося часто брати участь також у достойному прийманні Святого Причастя.

Цей день вважаємо установою священства. Кожного разу коли відправляємо Св. Літургію ми повторяємо Христові слова: "Беріть, їжте, це є тіло моє", і "беріть пийте, це є кров моя нового завіту, що за вас і за многих проливається, на відпущення гріхів".

У той день Христос помивши ноги апостолам показав нам, що не треба себе вивищувати, але хто хоче бути вищим, хай по прикладі Христа буде слугою інших.

У той день Юда зрадив Христа за 30 срібняків, очевидно думаючи, що Христос сам себе визволить, а він – Юда, трохи збагатиться. Так як знаємо не вийшло, і він пішов і відібрав собі життя. Постараймося ніколи не зрадити це що нам в житті дороге: віру, мову, культуру, історію...

У цей день Христос по вечері пішов до Гетсиманського городу, де перебув довго на молитві. І ми також повинні часто знаходитися на молитві. Прославляти Бога, дякувати йому за все одержане, висловити завжди свою згідність з Божою волею...

На велику п'ятницю Христос розширив свої руки на хрест, щоб показати нам як багато він нас любить. І ми повинні розширити свої руки, щоб з радістю прийняти ласки Господні, що з того хреста зпливають на нас.

На тому хресті Христос простив усім коли сказав: "Прости їм бо не знають що роблять."

На ньому також він передав нас усіх під опіку своєї матері коли промовив до Івана, що заступає нас усіх: "Ось мати твоя".

На хресті Христос потвердив, що виконав все, що мав виконати коли сказав довершилося...

Letter from Fr. Ray April 5, 2015

Christ is Risen! He is Truly Risen!

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear _____

(Say your name right here for your very own personal letter)

Here we go again. The two Christian greetings on top of this letter indicate once again the division of our Christian community. Yes, today is Glorious and Radiant Pascha for most of the Christian world, but for some of our Catholic Churches, and all of the Orthodox Churches, today is "Flowery/Palm Sunday. It's always difficult, and a little bit sad, when these splits occur.

It's sad, because we so clearly see and experience this division and separation on our special, important and family Holy Days, whether it be Christmas or Easter. We want to be together, we need to be together. However, in our parishes and in our families we know things are not always the way they should be. So we make the best of our split and separation and pray that one day we will be together as a family. One day, we will sit together at the same table and rejoice in the Good News and Love of our Divine Saviour, come to offer us salvation and Eternal Life. You are well and I hope happy where you are, and we are well and happy where we are, but it would be so much more wonderful if we were together! Please God....one day, one day.

It's difficult because the disunity and separation is so evident on these beautiful, grace-filled days. Also, it makes my writing to you a bit of a task, as I know some who will read their letter this week, will not be experiencing the wonder and awe and radiant joy as those of us who have already reached the Empty Tomb. I've done it before, so I guess I can do it again, but I just wish there could be complete unity for all Christians. Anyway, here we go again....

On March 25 and 26th we had our Lenten Mission in Holy Protection, the first one in a few years. Thank you, Fr. Procyk for coming to hear confessions and to conduct these two days of reflection for us. As pastor, I've been hesitating to arrange a mission

because I feared no one would come as we have such a small community. Yeah, I know, a little trust and faith is all that was needed. Thanks God it worked out very nicely. The first night we had 17 people, remarkable for a church our size! The second night we had nine. The "huge" number for the first night was due to our seven visitors.

There is a much neglected, but very important aspect of our community that is so often overlooked, and that is our connection, support, and even responsibility to each other. From time to time I invite anyone reading this letter to come pay us a visit at Holy Protection. From time to time it happens, and it is really a good feeling to have you come. First of all, it is nice to be remembered and that we actually exist as a parish here in Niagara Falls. Because we are a tourist town, we, especially in the summer, are on the lookout for guests. Thank you for coming, but please continue to remember there is a parish in Niagara Falls and you are always welcome to join us any time we have a service or event. Hope to see you again, very soon! It is a great feeling to see you, and you really make our day with your visit!

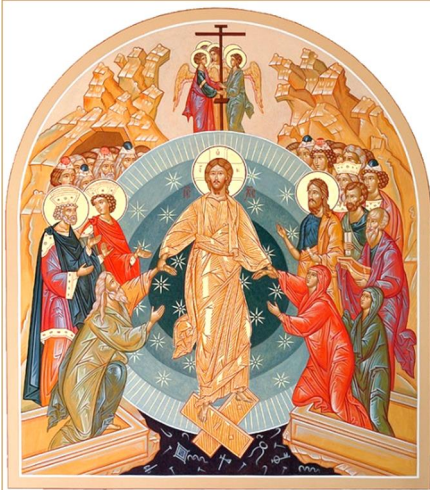
I write about Niagara Falls and Holy Protection, but it is important especially for our people to freely visit any of our churches anytime. Too often we stay in "my church" and miss a great many gifts, graces and wonders which can be found in another of our parishes. When I have the opportunity to visit another of our churches I am especially encouraged by the "Body of Christ." Here in the various communities we can experience the Faith of our Fathers which has been passed on to us. Here also, we can rejoice in knowing the faith is the same where we visit, as it is in our own parish. I'm sure you will find other good reasons to visit another parish from time to time. But ya gotta do it once in awhile. How about on vacation or traveling? Do you look for one of our churches, or do you go to whatever is closest? Or do you skip it altogether? As I said, it simply makes us feel good to have you stop in and offer your support and encouragement. We love to have you come and pray with us! Come again! Come any time!

Last week I left you with a P.S. to end your letter where I reminded you to check out the historical rendering of the death of Jesus which was on TV. On this Pascha Sunday, April 5, I want to remind you of yet another good thing to watch. On NBC at 9pm there will be another worthwhile show called "A.D. The Bible Continues." While in the previously mentioned show there was an abrupt ending with the death of Jesus, in this latest movie we are told we will see the people and events of the days after His death AND RESURRECTION. O'Reilly wrote of "The Killing of Jesus" and he wasn't concerned with the days after.

In "A.D. The Bible Continues" we will see how the apostles saw and talked with and ate with the Risen Lord. Then we will see what happened to that band of His followers after our Blessed

Lord ascended into heaven and sent His Holy Spirit. I particularly mention this because this first show begins with the Acts of the Apostles, the epistle readings in our Liturgy from now until Pentecost. Couldn't have come at a better time. I hope we all get a chance to watch.

Like the monks of old, we of the new calendar, have now come in from the desert place. (We pray for you on the Julian Calendar. May He continue to bless your fast and show you His holy Resurrection!) Sometimes in the olden days, some of the monks who went out into the wild for the Lenten days did not return. Remembering them, I also remember those of our family, friends and parishes who began the Great Fast with us, but who were called to Eternity before the end of the fasting time. To them we sing "Vichnaja Pamjat, Eternal Memory." Saddened at their going, we also rejoice as we remember that they certainly will be singing "Christos Voskres-Christ is Risen" in the Kingdom of heaven.



Now on this glorious and radiant day of the Resurrection I greet each and every one with the most sincere greeting of the Paschal season. We now will celebrate for the next 50 days as we, like those apostles, will see Him, meet Him, walk with Him, eat with Him as we rejoice in the New Life He has brought us! Now we are like the Myrrh-bearing women at the empty tomb. Empty, but for the angels who say to us, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how He told you, while He was yet in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise."

As we celebrate the Holy Liturgy during this time of Pascha, may our hearts burn with love for Him as we, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, will recognize Him in the breaking of the bread. My dear parishioner, family member, friend and spiritual child, may you and yours be blessed and filled with the Love and Joy of our Risen Saviour! May your faith in this Gift of New Life be renewed and ever deepened! As we sing at the end of Paschal Matins: "It is the Day of Resurrection, so let us be radiant for the festival, and let us embrace one another. Let us speak, brothers and sisters, also to those who hate us, and in the Resurrection, let us forgive everything, and so let us cry: "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and on those in the tombs, bestowing life."

Remember, in Christ Jesus all things are made new! This is the Day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it! Celebrate the Day! God bless you! May our Holy Lady protect you beneath her heavenly veil! Blessed Pascha, my Dear One! Christ is Risen! He is truly Risen!

In the Love of the Risen Lord
Fr. Ray

In Memoriam – Вічна Пам'ять!

Упокоїлася в Господі

+Св. П. Ірена Чіп (був. Затирач)

(19 Лютого, 1923 - 30 Березня, 2015)

Пхорон був у Четвер о 10 год. р.

Зі святими упокой, Христе,
душу слугині Твоєї Ірени!

Родині складаємо співчуття
а їй хай буде
ВІЧНАЯ ПАМ'ЯТЬ!



Fell asleep in the Lord

+Irene Tschip (nee Zatyrcz)

(February 19, 1923 - March 30, 2015)

beloved wife of the late Osyp; devoted mother of Roman (Irene); grandmother of Andrew (Melissa) and Steven Tschip; great-grandmother of Brianna, Arianna and Melody. Funeral was Thursday at 10 at the PIETSZAK FUNERAL HOME, 2400 William St. (near Harlem)

We extend our sympathy
to the Family. May he rest in peace!
Eternal Memory!

Blessed Josaphata Hordashevskia

The Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate will be in our parish on Saturday, April 18, 2015, with the pilgrimage icon of their foundress, Blessed Josaphata Hordashevskia, with a "first class relic." She was beatified in 2001 by Pope (St.) John Paul II. At least one miracle has been attributed to her intercession. The Sisters pray that one day soon, Blessed Josaphata will be canonized! The afternoon will begin at 2:00 with the moleben to Blessed Josaphata followed by a light lunch and then the Sisters will give a presentation about the life of Blessed Josaphata in English and Ukrainian.

Please attend!

Блаженна Йосафата Гордаєвська

18 Квітня, у суботу перед нашим свяченим приїдуть до нас сестри зі Слобтсбургу з іконою їхньої засновниці, Блаж. Йосафати Гордашевської. У 2 год, Молебень і легкий обід, а потім сестри матимуть коротку доповідь.

Просимо до участі!

Молитва на Піст Св. Єфрема Сирина (+373)

Господи і Владико життя мого, духа лінивства, недбалости, властолюб'я і пустослов'я віджини від мене. (поклін)

Духа чистоти, покори, терпеливості і любови дай мені слугі твоєму. (поклін)

Так, Господи царю, дай мені бачити провини мої, і не осуджувати брата мого ні сестри моєї, бо ти благословен еси на віки вічні. Амінь! (поклін)

Eulogy for Stephan Balaban By his Son Nazar Balaban:

He leaves his loving wife Jadwiga, two sons Nazar and Christopher, with their significant others Kellie and Amanda, and his first wife Sophia. He is also mourned by his mother Anastasia and sister Lesia with her husband Ihor, his niece Olia and her son Andrew, along with good friend Bohdan, and other family and friends in Buffalo, Ukraine, and Poland.

Stephan was a good hearted and caring individual. His family remembers his kindness and that he "could not hurt a fly." He was a generous family man and a loving father. He cared for the lives of others and expressed an ongoing concern for the crisis in Ukraine.

He supported the community and was a member of a local sports club. He has lived in the United States for the past 24 years, battling cancer for the last 5 and 1/2 years. He left peacefully, only leaving positive memories for his family and friends. He will truly be missed.

Eternal Memory!

Stephan BALABAN - March 28, 2015, of Depew, beloved husband of Jadwiga (Wozniak) Balaban; loving father of Nazar (Amanda Smith) Balaban and stepfather of Krzysztof (fiancee, Kellie Sonnenfeld) Wrobel; dear son of Anastasia and the late Omelyan Balaban; brother of Lesia (Ihor) Kolotylo; uncle of Olia and great-uncle of Andriy, all of Ukraine.

Слово Назара Балабана про свого Батька Степана Балабана:

Прощається з коханою дружиною Ядзєю, синами Назаром і Крістофером та їхніми нареченими Келлі і Амендою, З першою дружиною Софією, В Україні з мамою Анастасією та Сестрою Лесею та її чоловіком Ігором, племінницею Олею з сином Андрійком з ближньою та дальною родиною тут, в Україні і в Польщі. З добрим колегою Богданом з родиною та з усіма приятелями в Україні і тут на чужині. Стефан був надзвичайною людиною доброї душі та характеру. Ніколи не відмовив в допомозі. Був добрим сім'янином і батьком. Любив життя і вболівав за події в Україні. Все його життя небуло легким. Армійська служба пройшла в Афганістані. Брав участь в ліквідації наслідків Чорнобильської аварії. Ціле своє життя працював добросовісно, за що його всі поважали. Належав до місцевого спортивного клубу. 24 роки прожив тут в Америці-останні 5.5 років боровся з тяжкою хворобою і відійшов у вічність у спокою залишивши добру пам'ять і смуток для родини і приятелів.

Вічная Пам'ять!



From "Good Samaritan" Ukr. Radio pr.

Christ is Risen – indeed He is Risen! Of all the great feasts in the Ecclesiastical Year, none is more joyous and celebrated than the Feast we honor today: the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. St. John Chrysostom, in his sermon on the Resurrection, extols today's feast with these words: "Where, O death, is your sting? Where, O Hades is your victory? Christ is risen and you have fallen. Christ is risen and the demons have been cast down. Christ is risen and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen and life reigns. Christ has risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep." Easter is indeed a time for extreme jubilation! Today, we gather to celebrate Christ's victory over death, because He is our Lord and our Savior, and His victory is our victory.

The resurrection of Christ is the sure pledge of our own resurrection to everlasting life. Just as Christ rose, so too shall we rise one day into a new and glorious Eternal life. Christ assured us of this when he said: "The hour is coming in which all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they who have done good shall come forth unto resurrection of life. For this is the will of the Father who sent me, that whoever beholds the Son and believes in Him, shall have everlasting life, and I will raise Him up on the last day" (John 5:28-29, 6:40). Easter is a time of great joy and happiness, and truth be told, quite often the deepest moments of happiness we experience are the unexpected ones. They sneak up on us when we are not looking. It comes from outside influences, from relationships, our family, the unexpected stimulus of beauty. If we think about the resurrection story recorded in the Gospels, we see how this great joy of Easter was also one of great happiness because it was unexpected. We read a narrative of shock and amazement, utter disorientation. One of the things that makes the resurrection story so believable is just that sense of unexpectedness – the disciples do not come to the empty tomb and say, 'Well, there you have it; just like Jesus said.' They arrive skeptical, never having really believed that their Lord would return from the death, and now they find themselves in a new and unexpected atmosphere where anything is possible; and so bright is the light in that new morning that even the familiar face of Jesus becomes unrecognizable. But as the story goes on in the Gospel of St. John, we are told that the disciples, while anxiously gathered in their locked room, were 'filled with joy' when they saw Jesus among them. They have

been jolted out of the rut of what is usual and predictable – and joy springs on them without warning. Easter changes everything!

What was it like for those first few hours after the empty tomb had been found, after Mary Magdalene had delivered her breathless message? It must have been a period of alarming uncertainty, half hope, half dilemma; which of us would really rejoice at the prospect of a miracle that would make us rethink most of what we had taken for granted? But into that chaos steps a figure before whose face the questions fade away, and all hope and certainty and happiness spring forth in the realization that Christ has indeed risen from the dead. Perhaps part of the message of Easter is very simply, be ready to be surprised; be ready to allow the joy of our Lord's resurrection and the promise of Eternal life to permeate deep within our hearts and souls, into even the dark crevices that daily hardships bring – until it explodes with great joy and happiness. Christian joy, the joy of Easter, is offered to the world not to guarantee a permanently happy society in the sense of a society free from tension, pain or disappointment, but to affirm that whatever happens in the unpredictable world – sometimes wonderfully, sometimes horribly – there is a deeper level of reality, a world within the world, where love and reconciliation are ceaselessly at work, a world with which contact can be made so that we are able to live honestly and courageously with the challenges constantly thrown at us. And on the first Easter morning, it is as if the fountains of the great deep are broken open, and we are allowed to see, like the Apostles Peter and John into the empty tomb, we look into the unexpected certainty for one moment – and find the genuine gift our Lord holds out to this world, the genuine love and happiness He brings to us with the promise of Eternal life.

When I was a child growing up, we had a neighborhood playground at the end of our street. It was fabulous because we could play there all the time, thanks to a few older men who would faithfully mow the extensive lawn to maintain our playground area. Regularly, once a week these older gentlemen could be seen on their riding lawn mowers circumventing the area foliage, trees, and flower beds through the vast acre of land. While I did not know these men very well, I pleasantly recall how one of them would sing while he mowed around the playground and baseball diamond with this wonderful operatic voice. He sang while he mowed and we kids just expected to hear his baritone songs wherever he went. This continued on for several years, until one spring a very strange thing

happened; I noticed that when the same older gentleman came to mow our field of play, there was no more singing. I remember thinking it was rather strange, but I was too busy enjoying the beautiful spring day to inquire about his unexpected silence. The next week there was still no singing and strangely enough it gave me that bothersome feeling as when something is wrong or missing. On the third week, I finally asked the other men why their friend was not singing. They replied, "His wife passed away just before Easter and now he does not have a song to sing." I remember feeling quite sad for the silent, old man, and at the tender age of ten, what did I know about life after death. I knew that Jesus rose from the dead, but did that mean that we still had a song to sing?

As we celebrate this Easter day, I suppose that we are all seeking a song to sing. Like the women who came to the tomb, like the Apostles who were in hiding, we have lost our friend, our teacher, the one we were following and now he is dead and in the grave, and we have lost our song. The stone that sealed the tomb is rolled away, but we are still perplexed and puzzled about it all. "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" we are asked. Yes, why do we? Why do we keep searching for life, love and happiness in an empty tomb? I suppose it is revealed in our faith, because much like the myrrh-bearing women who were the first to announce the empty tomb; we too come to celebrate an empty grave, because it means that we still have a song of joy to sing. For the Apostles, the result of this unexpected empty tomb brought them great joy, because they thought that all was lost until Christ appeared to them and what happiness must have elevated their souls. The resurrection of Christ is our certainty that there is indeed life after death, and that those loved ones who passed before us have Eternal life because of what Easter means for us today. I once read that carved into a wooden wall of a cemetery during World War II, were these words, "I believe in the sun even when it is not shining; I believe in love even when I do not feel it; I believe in God even when he is silent." Even though the women do not see Jesus and all they have is a word from two men in dazzling clothes, angels who have appeared to them and say that Jesus is not here in the cemetery but is risen from the dead, that is all we have as well. We have a word of resurrection, a promise that challenges us to believe when God seems silent. What we have is a new song of



joy that continues to be sung and celebrated every Easter for two thousand years, because the unexpected joy of the empty tomb is the center of our faith – and what happiness it brings; what a joyful song we can now sing.

A few years ago, I read about a very promising young athlete at the height of his career. A recent graduate from high school, on his way through college and heading straight for the NBA, this young man had every potential of making it great as a basketball star. And what made him shine even brighter was his outstanding character, and the way that he gave of his time to help inner-city youth follow their dreams. Children who did not have the same opportunities as he did were given inspiration and encouragement to succeed among the challenges they faced in life. As this young man continued through college, he heard of a woman in his community who was in desperate need of a kidney transplant in order to live. This athlete was tested and found out that he was an ideal donor for this ailing woman. In the middle of a very successful career, something he had worked long and hard for, with the NBA clearly in his grasp, this young man was willing to sacrifice his entire career to donate one of his kidneys to a woman in need. He knew it would end his career, he knew he would lose everything that he had worked for, but compared to his love for another human being - it did not matter to him. The woman died before she could receive the kidney transplant, due to unforeseen complications, but hearing about his willingness to truly help another human being, I was lifted to a higher place. The world was lifted to a higher place by his unexpected gift of love. And yet, it was a far greater love than this which led Jesus to the cross, took him through the valley of death, only to rise again on the third day into His Eternal glory.

On this Easter Day, we rejoice because the tomb is empty. Like the angels that first announced the empty tomb and the women who spread the good news of Christ's Resurrection, we too must go out and share the joy of our resurrected Lord with those that we love, and with those who are in need of our love. And along with the Apostles Peter and John, I pray that we hear the good news today of our Lord's Resurrection and that we run to the tomb to look inside and believe that the song we are singing is true: *Christ is risen from the dead, by death He conquered death, and to those in the graves He granted life.*

Глава УГКЦ до молоді: «Ніхто і ніщо не може змусити вас чинити супроти вашої християнської совісті» (Субота, 04 квітня 2015)



Якщо ми всі як Божий народ поводитимемося відповідно до умов, засад Нового Заповіту, ми будемо непереможні. Бо немає такого створіння, яке б перемогло свого Творця. Немає людини, яка б перемогла Бога. А якщо Бог є з нами, то хто проти нас?! Про це говорив у Лазареву суботу, Отець і Глава Української Греко-Католицької Церкви Блаженніший Святослав на зустрічі з молоддю в Патріаршому соборі Воскресіння Христового.

На зустрічі була присутня молодь з різних осередків молодіжних спільнот: Чернігівщини, Київщини, Вінниччини, Тернопільщини.

Говорячи про наше сьогоднішнє Предстоятель розповів, що вчора мав цікаву розмову з Блаженнішим Любомиром (Гузаром), і він так упевнено сказав: «Ніхто не має розв'язки тої ситуації на Сході України, крім одного Бога. Усе є в Божих руках». «Тоді ми знаємо, – зазначив Глава Церкви, – що ця справа є в добрих руках. Лише тоді, коли ми відчуваємо себе в особливих стосунках з нашим Богом, ми сьогодні маємо надію, силу, маємо не-

просто шанс, а реальну можливість пройти нашою хресною дорогою до переможного кінця», – запевнив Блаженніший Святослав.

«Ми певні, – продовжив він, – що Господь своє сповнить. Але ми мусимо своє зробити... У такому непростою часі ми мусимо так жити, так служити як Божі діти і Божий народ».

Глава Церкви звернув увагу молоді на цікавий образ у книзі Одкровення – держатися слова. «Держатися слова – як на мене, це є те, що ми маємо робити зі свого боку. Держатися слова. Тобто в жодному випадку не відступити, не втратити того, що ми отримали в часі хрещення – не перестати бути християнами. Держатися з усієї сили того, що ми отримали в святих Таїнствах Хрещення, Миропомазання і Євхаристії», – вважає Блаженніший.

Департамент інформації УГКЦ

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«З упевненістю можна сказати, що великим є лише той, хто любить нас, як наш Бог-Отець, хто вміє служити так, як служить Його Син єдинородний силою і благодаттю Божої любові, яка нам подається як Дух Святий. Великим є той християнин, який так любить Бога і ближнього, що готовий за свою віру життя віддати. Великим є той громадянин своєї держави, який готовий задля її захисту пожертвувати власним життям. Любов чинить людину героєм. Великим є той батько родини, який так любить свою дружину і своїх дітей, що власне життя готовий віддати. Великою є та мама, яка так любить своїх діточок, що за них може пожертвувати собою, своєю кар'єрою, своїми амбітними планами, щоб дати їм життя. Великим є той суспільний і державний діяч, який вміє служити так, як цього навчає наш Спаситель».

(Блаж. Святослав - Проповідь 5 нед. В. Посту.)