

Ukrainian National Association Inc.
Life Insurance, Coverdells & Annuities

Judie Hawryluk
Secretary Branch 360
Chair of Buffalo District
UNA, Inc.



79 Southridge Drive
West Seneca, NY 14224
Tel.: 716-674-5185
Branch360UNA@verizon.net

**SLAVIS
BAZZAR**
Euro Delicatessen Store

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

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.busszkafuneralhomeinc.com

Our Church Web-Page Is:
<http://www.stnbuffalo.com>

Buffalo Community Web-Page Is:
<http://www.ukrainiansofbuffalo.com>

Please Support our Sponsors

Підтримаймо наших спонзорів

MICT MEEST

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

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

Thanks are extended to all Sponsors

**SAINT NICHOLAS
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**



**УКРАЇНЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА
ЦЕРКВА СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ**

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

№ 22
Parish E-Mail: stnbuffalo@yahoo.com
Web Page: <http://www.stnbuffalo.com>
Dioc. Web: <http://www.stamforddio.org>
308 Fillmore Avenue, Buffalo, N. Y. 14206

Rectory: (716) 852-7566

Fax: 855-1319 ~ **Kitchen:** 852-1908

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

Saturday, 11:45 AM – Субота, 11:45 р.

Ministry to the sick - Опіка над хворими

Family members should call the Rectory

Родина повинна повідомити священника

IN EMERGENCY CALL ANY TIME

В разі потреби завжди можна закликати

**UNDER THE PROTECTION
OF MOTHER OF GOD**



**ПІД ОПІКОЮ ПРЕЧИСТОЇ
ДІВИ МАРІЇ ОДІГІТРІЇ**

CHURCH BULLETIN – №22

May 29 – 2011 – 9 Травня
ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК – Ч. 22

Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ



from Rabula Gospel (6th c.) - з Євангелії Рабула
Вознесення Господа Нашого Ісуса Христа

**LITURGICAL SCHEDULE
ПОР'ЯДОК СВ. ЛІТУРГІЙ**

May 29: S. Man b. blind. - Н. Сліпородж.

10:00 AM +Станислав Ващак (родина)
12:00 PM +Irene; Olga & Lev; Semen &
Mychajlena; Yuri; Andrew Voychak;
Yulia & Wolodymyr Bilous; Mykola
& Maria Bratash (Roman Voychak)

Mon., May 30 – Понеділок, 30 Травня
Memorial Day – Services at Cemeteries
Відправи на кладовищах

Tue., May 31 – Вівторок, 31 Травня
9:15 AM +Володимира Гіль і панахида
3:15 PM Moleben – Молебень П.Д.М.

Wed., June 1 – Серeda, 1 Червня
9:15 AM +Марко Кольба і панахида

ASCENSION – ВОЗНЕСІННЯ

Thursday, June 2 – Чет., 2 Червня
10:00 AM За Парохіян-For Parishioners
12:00 PM +Michel & Julia Michalow –
55th Anniv. (Michelle, Michael)

Friday, June 3 – П'ят., 3 Червня
9:15 AM +Anna Perhach

(Bill & Maryann Kondor)
10:00 AM Moleben – Молебень Хр. Чол.

Saturday, June 4 – Субота, 4 Червня
4:30 PM +Norm Jagodzinski
(Ann Pawlowski)

June 5: S. Holy Fathers. - Н. Св. Отців

10:00 AM +Ірена Вочак (Роман)
12:00 PM For Parishioners - За Парохіян

**Вічне Світло в честь ПДМ горить за
+Марію Петришин
Пожертва: Андрій і Марія**

In the Beginning . . . (cont.)

(week 10) Chris's fingerprints are already evident. The fingers can curve around an object placed in the palm. Now Chris can feel pain but who would want to hurt Chris? Chris is having a wonderful time wriggling, shifting, dancing and playing with the toys in the womb – other fingers, toes, nose, ears – such fun! If only we had a window to the womb. The mother is coping with many changes – nurturing a baby is hard work.

“You know me through and through, from having watched my bones take shape when I was being formed in secret...”

**Sacraments of Confirmation,
Baptism, and Holy Eucharist**

Was bestowed May 14th upon:

Maksym Bohdan Welsh

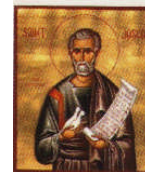
Son of Christina Anna Paszkowsky and Joseph Allan Welsh. May our good and loving Lord grant His blessings of peace, health, and happiness upon Maksym Bohdan! Congratulations! Mnohaya Lita!

* * *

Максим Богдан Велш

Син Христини Анни Пашковської і Йосифа Аллана Велш прийняв тайни хрещення, миропомазання і Пресвятої Євхаристії. Хай Господь благословить щастям і здоров'ям! Гратулюємо батькам! На Многая і Благая Літа!

**Eternal Light burns for
+Wolodymyr Petriwskyj
Requested by Joanne Bader**



**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 Fax 716-630-0133 tel. 716-688-1495
2321 Millersport Hwy (Getzville Plaza) Amherst, NY 14068

**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.uhdfcu.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.

- **CHURCH KITCHEN** – is open. Thank you for your help and patronage.
- **Coffee Hour** - Usually Every Sunday after Liturgy in Church Hall. Please join us!
- **June 5: Spaghetti Dinner (LUC)**

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 допомагаєте 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 Friday Evening.

ЦЕРК. ВІСНИК видається тижнево
Інформації подавати до п'ятниці вечора.

**SAINT NICHOLAS
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА ЦЕРКВА
СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ
(ПІД ОПІКОЮ ПРЕЧИСТОЇ
ДІВИ МАРІЇ ОДІГІТРИЇ)**

Please call if you are hospitalized,
homebound and need a priest.
Просимо закликати якщо ви у
лічниці або приковані до ліжка!

Коли плянуєте дату вашого вінчання чи хрещення то просимо поговорити з парохом, щоб потім не було непорозуміння. Може статися, що в цей день буде неможливо відбутися заплановане.

* * *

If you are planning a Baptism or Wedding, please contact Pastor about the date before making other arrangements.

V. Rev. Marijan Bryukh

**Are you listening "Good Samaritan"
Ukrainian Radio Program
on WJLL 1440 AM
Every Sunday at 2:00 PM?
Thanks for donations!**

* * *

**Чи слухаєте нашу радіо передачу
«Милосердний Самар'янин»
Неділя, 2 год. на WJLL 1440 AM?
Дякуємо за пожертви!**

**DONATIONS TO
2011 Stamford Bishop's Appeal**

Peter Maxim - \$300.00
H&E Swiatkiwsky - \$300.00
S&G Swiatkiwsky - \$200.00
Dora Horbachevsky - \$100.00
Sophia Sudyn - \$100.00
Wasylyna Ostaszuk - \$25.00

Total collected

as of May 27, 2011 - **\$1,025.00**

2011 Goal

for St. Nicholas Parish - **\$7,300.00**

Amount needed

to reach our Goal - **\$6,275.00**



Панахиди – Panachyda Services

Sunday at 1:30 PM - Неділя 1:30

Святого Матея – Saint Mathew

Загальна панахида

(на гробі Братчика Славка – 10 річниця)

Будемо відправляти панахиди перше у тій частині. Після того переходимо до інших гробів. Просимо взяти це під увагу, щоб не чекати задовго. Дорадую також принести крісла або сидіти в авті, якщо я ще далеко від гробів Ваших наймиліших.

Пон., 30 Травня – Mon., May 30

Кальварія – Mt. Calvary: 9:15 AM

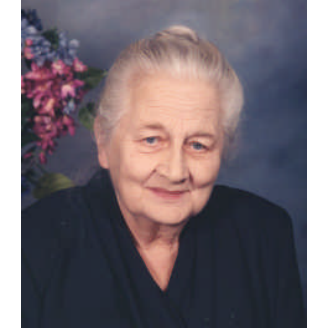
Св. Хреста - Holy Cross: 11:30 AM

Св. Матея – St. Mathew: 1:30 PM

In Memoriam – Вічна Пам'ять!

Fell asleep in the Lord

+Wolodymyra Maria Gill (nee Kobryn)



(May 29, 2021 - May 21, 2011)

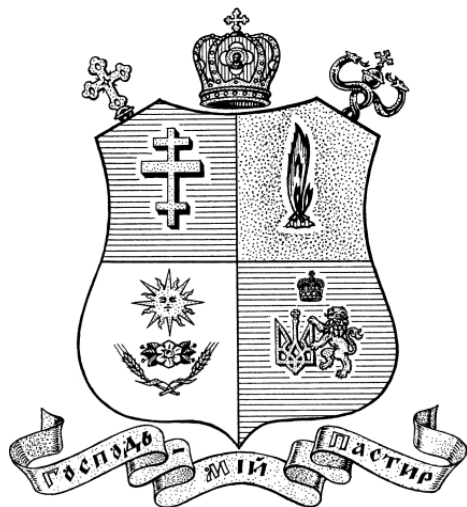
Beloved wife of the late Zenon Gill, MD; devoted mother of Ihor; sister of Roman (Olha) Kobryn; sister-in-law of Eugene (Anisia) Gill; aunt of Christina (Andrij) Tershakovec and Roman (fiancee Danielle MacKay) Kobryn, Jr.; great-aunt of Pawlo and Michael. Eternal Memory! Vichnaya Pamiat'!

Упокоїлася в Господі Св. Пам.

+Володимира Марія Гіль (був. Кобрин)

Синові Ігорові, братові Романові й іншим членам родини складаємо співчуття, а їй хай буде Вічна Пам'ять!

Народилася в Добромилі. В священничій родині о. Олексія Кобрин (мама Стефанія з дому Боднар); закінчила народну школу в Добромилі а гімназію у Жовкві; вчила в дитячих садочках по різних місечках; війна примусила переїзд до Німеччини а відтак до Америки; працювала медсестрою около Балтімору; записнала та одружилася з др. Зиновієм Гілем та мали сина Ігора; проживали довший час у штаті Нью Джерзі де помагала чоловікові в патріархальнім русі а в 1992 році переїхали до околиці Бафало, Н.Й. щоби бути ближче сина і де гарно проживали свої старші літа. Вічна її пам'ять! (Ігор)



The Eparchy of Stamford
Requests the Honor
Of Your Presence at
A Thanksgiving Moleben Service
Celebrating the Fifth Anniversary of
The Installation of His Excellency
The Most Reverend
Paul Chomnicki, D.D., O.S.B.M.
As Bishop of Stamford
Sunday, the Twenty Sixth of June
Two Thousand and Eleven
At Four o'clock in the Afternoon
Saint Basil Seminary Chapel
195 Glenbrook Road
Stamford, Connecticut, 06902
Reception Dinner Dance
(\$50 per person)
At Five o'clock in the Afternoon
Knights of Columbus
507 Shippan Avenue
Stamford, Connecticut 06902

Please take part – Просимо до участі!



Стемофордська Єпархія
Має Велику Шану
Запросити Вас На
Подячний Молебень
З Нагоди Святкування
П'ятої Річниці Інсталяції
Преосвященного Владики
Кир. Павла Хомницького, ЧСВВ
В Неділю
Двадцять Шостого Червня
Дві Тисячі Одинадцятого Року
В Четвертій годині по Полудні.
Семинарія Св. Василя Великого
195 Glenbrook Road
Stamford, Connecticut, 06902
**Прийняття і Забава
В П'ятій Годині Пополудні**

All you can eat
SPAGHETTI DINNER



Sunday, June 5, 2011
11:00AM- 2:00PM

St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic
Church Hall
308 Fillmore Ave.

Donation \$10.00

(children 12 & under- \$5.00)

includes:

salad, spaghetti & meatballs,
garlic bread, coffee and dessert

Sponsored by:
Niagara Frontier Council
League of Ukrainian Catholics

Ліга Українців Католиків спонзує
обід - 5 Червня по Святій Літургії.
Просимо підтримати Католицьку
Лігу. Закликаємо стати членами.

From the archives – З Архівів



Solemn Holy Communion – Причастя



Good Friday (Shrove) – Плащаниця



Christmas Time – Різдв'яний Час

З радія "Милосердний Самарянин"

Сьогодні тзв. неділя сліпородженого. Мова тут про чоловіка, який народився сліпим.

Не бачити світа, не розрізняти різних красок, не добачати схід сонця, не задивлятися на його захід, означає не милуватися Божим даром зору, якого ми усі задармо одержали.

Сліпота вважалася страшною карою за гріхи, і апостоли питаються Господа: "Хто насправді согрішив, що він сліпим родився? Чи він сам, чи може батьки його?"

Очевидно, що нераз хвороба є наслідком невідповідного життя, але не конче це карою за гріхи. (Господь є милосердний і Він готовий простити провини, бо не бажає смерті грішника, але щоб той навернувся і жив.) Христос пояснює: "Ніхто не провинився, але він сліпим народився, щоб слава Божа на ньому виявилася."

І оздоровляє його Господь. Робить з болота слину і посилає його, щоб умився у Силоамській купелі. Тут потрібна була віра, що він умившись зможе бачити. І умивається і бачить, і радіє...

Ми всі до певної міри сліпі, і ми усі бажаємо прозріння. Працюємо в тому напр'ямку. Вчимося, набираємо досвіду, щоб розігнати темряву.

Що властиво є темрява - Чорний колір. Чи це не брак світла - брак білого. (Біле це мішанина усіх красок – у відповідних пропорціях.) Посідання світла – це наші добрі діла і наміри, це добре відношення до інших не залежно як інші до нас ставляться, це принемання усього, що від Господа прихо-

дить, уповання на Всевишнього, різнокольоровий килим приємний для ока. Посідання темряви натомість – це бачиння усього у негативному, відкидання чого небудь доброго, уповання на себе самих...

Просім Господа Бога і Спаса нашого Ісуса Христа, щоб нам відкрив наші очі, працюймо у тому напр'ямку, щоб ми, кожної хвилини нашого життя, упивали в себе Христове світло, щоб воно чим більше нас просвітлювало, щоб ми його випромінювали назовні, на всіх з якими стрічаємося на дорозі життя і в такий спосіб розганяли темряву...

У четвер празник Вознесіння.

40 днів по Воскресінні, перед тим заки вознісся на небо до свого небесного Батька, Христос навчав своїх учнів, приготував їх, просвітлював їх. Помимо того ми бачимо, що учні не розуміють у чому полягає Христова місія тут між ними, і в чому міститься їхнє завдання. Вони питаються Господа, чи нарешті відбудуєш Ізраїльське Царство?

Очевидно - Христос володар, але не політичний. Він духовний провідник. Ідучи за Ним ми опановуємо себе, стаємо провідниками для тих, які бажають побачити світло.

За 10 днів по Вознесінні будемо празнувати Зіслання Св. Духа. Коли Дух зійде на апостолів, вони уповні просвітляться і зрозуміють. Ми також, під впливом Св. Духа можемо розуміти свої завдання, побачити правдиве Христове світло і просякнутися ним іншим освітлювати дорогу.

From the desk of Fr. Ray Palko

**XPICTOC BOCKPEC! BOICTUHY BOCKPEC!
CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN!**

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

And the world didn't end last Saturday night as some had predicted! Boy, there's a perfect example of what Jesus was saying when His disciples asked Him when it would be the end of time. He replied, "Take heed you be not seduced; for many will come in my name saying: I am he and the time is at hand. Go ye not therefore after them." (Lk. 21: 8)

It really is as simple as that! He tells us there would be false prophets springing up and those saying that they are the Messiah, and those who will try to confuse and trick us. Our plan, our life, must be just as simple as: "Don't go chasing after them!" Remember when Jesus was teaching about His Body and Blood in the 6th chapter of John? Many of those around Him began to leave and He asked the twelve if they, too, were going to leave. Peter answered for them, and us, when he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." (John 6:68)

It's been quite awhile since I wrote anything about politics in your letter as I have been purposely avoiding the subject. It usually makes me upset and sad and I don't like to write when I feel like that. BUT...having had the special election in the 26th congressional district here in NY I can't avoid it this week. It is so upsetting to me that the most pro-choice candidate, and a "practicing Catholic" has won the election. It boggles my mind that we care more about "the economy" or "Medicare" than about saving lives of innocent children. Remember how crazy the media was here a few weeks back because deer were being killed while trying to jump that cemetery fence in Amherst? So many people became involved in "saving the deer" and that became the only thing of importance around here in the lives of many, many people. What about saving the babies?!

Where is the outrage? Where is the sympathy for those poor little ones ripped apart in the mother's womb? Our blessed Lord reminded the disciples of this when He said, "Look at the birds of the air.....Are you not of much more value than they?" (Matthew 6: 26-27) Isn't an unborn human being of more value than a deer? Don't tell me the world isn't upside down!

Do you know that when she was still a candidate Kathy Hochul, now congresswoman elect, unequivocally stated she is pro-abortion? Once she had publicly stated this position she was immediately supported by groups such as "National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, commonly called NARAL." Hochul has said she was grateful for the support of these people who embraced her as "100 % for abortion," which means she even favors the heinous and terrible procedure known as partial birth abortion. Hochul says she was grateful for the support of groups such as this and said, "I will fight alongside NARAL Pro-Choice New York to ensure women have access to safe and adequate health care services (abortion), without any interference from the federal government, This, now Congresswoman-elect describes herself as a practicing Catholic. How do you think she's going to vote when these issues come before her in Congress? We must vote according to Catholic teaching because our ballot definitely has consequences. We can be such a force for good if only we would be who we are supposed to be and stand up and courageously join in this battle.

The reason this special election was held in the first place was because Chris Lee who was the congressman, resigned in disgrace amid a public scandal. What we can learn from this so clearly is that in his violating the trust of his family, friends and constituents his actions had a snowball effect on his sins. Bad actions and sin have the ripple effect and continue to multiply, don't they? The destruction and betrayal of family and friends now results in the election of one who thinks abortion is all about "the woman and her doctor."

The Church has always taught that our sin is never only personal, or just me and God. No, when we sin the entire Body of Christ suffers. Here is a clear example of one's sin, giving opportunity for that sin to grow in others. Lord have mercy on us!

The answer to these and all the problems of our life, big and small, is for us to truly live Godly lives. We are called to holiness and we must live our lives accordingly. As a matter of fact, His Beatitude Sviatoslav, in his first words as head of our Greek-Catholic Church clearly stated the mission of our Church and that would be "the holiness of the united people of God." We are called to live with an unchanging attitude and selfless devotion to Him. And it is a whole-life faithfulness, not just on Sunday morning.

And speaking of selfless devotion and giving of oneself, we are especially remembering all those who gave their lives in the service of our country on this "Memorial Day Weekend." We send them our sincerest *Thank You* and pray that they are in that place where there is only Life Everlasting. Dear Warriors for freedom we pray: *"May you have no more hills to climb, nor cold, nor rain, nor mud, nor enemy fire, and may you rest in Peace. Vichnaja Pamjat! Christ is Risen!"*

And life goes on...we cry, we laugh; we struggle, we rejoice; we are sick, we are healthy; Whenever you are dear reader, and whatever is your circumstance in life know that our Lord has come and given us Eternal Life. He is "the Way, the Truth and the Life." Remember the bumper sticker: *"No Jesus... No Peace.*

"Know Jesus... Know Peace!"

You are often in my thoughts and prayers as we pray for all "the sick, the suffering, the grieving and those who are away from us." If you are physically able, don't forget that his Thursday, June 2 is "a big holy day." It is the feast of the Ascension, a holy day of obligation, when we all should make every effort to attend Liturgy. Have a blessed week, and God willing and the creek don't rise, I'll write again next week. "The grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you!" May our holy Lady the Theotokos keep you beneath the veil of her heavenly protection.

In the Love of our Risen Lord,

Fr. Ray
Fr. Ray

To All Visitors, Friends And Parishioners:

Welcome to our Ukrainian Catholic parish of Saint Nicholas. Make yourself at home.

Every married couple or single person over 18 years old should be registered with the parish. Your donations to support our parish indicate your willingness to be a member of St. Nicholas Parish. In other words, to be considered a member of this parish attendance and support is strongly recommended. We use the system of envelopes. In the case you decide not to use envelopes, you can choose other method of supporting the parish, but your support is appreciated and much needed. May good Lord bless you all!

* * *

Вітаємо до нашої і Вашої Церкви Св. Отця Нашого Миколая. Двері завжди відкриті. Господній дім є нашим домом. Хай Господь благословить усіх!

Подружжя і самотні особи понад 18 років можуть зареєструватися. Якщо ви не бажаєте вживати систему коверт, будь ласка дайте нам ваші адреси і телефони, щоб могли з вами сконтактуватися по потребі. Ваші датки просимо вложити у коверту і написати Ваше ім'я, бо в протилежному Ваші пожертви будуть анонімними.

Хай Господь благословить Вас і Вашу родину на многая і Благая Літа!

From "Good Samaritan" Ukr. Radio pr.

When I think about the reference from today's scripture: 'He was born blind so that the will of God could be revealed through him,' I remember a young boy named Gabe, and the time when his incredible story was shared with me. I was with my son at the playground, enjoying some beautiful weather, when we first met Gabe. My son and I were playing catch, when the ball rolled behind the slide at the playground. As I went to retrieve it, to my complete surprise - out popped a little boy from behind the slide with this amazingly wide eyed smile and angelic looking face, who took such delight in returning the ball to me. I thought he was about the same age as John Paul, since they were of similar height and build, but I found out later that Gabe was nearly four years older, and that because of his health issues he would always be small for his age. I was rather taken with Gabe, and soon learned that Gabe was short for Gabriel. We included him in our game of catch and both boys were having a wonderful time. Gabe wore these thick lensed glasses that often came to rest on the middle of his nose, so his eyes would peek up at you, over the frames. They made him look that much more endearing, but I figured that his sight must not be too good, so I made sure we threw the ball slowly to Gabe so he would have a better chance of catching it. I also noticed Gabe was wearing these bright green frog boots, even though the weather called for sneakers or even sandals, but I could see how happy and special they made him feel. A few moments later I met his mother, Debbie, and we started talking about our boys, when she mentioned that Gabe suffers from Downs Syndrome. From his outward appearance, I had wondered about it myself, but it seemed like a relatively mild case, until she told me that Gabe had already made it through four major surgeries at the renowned Pediatric Clinic in Boston, Massachusetts to reconstruct his heart, because his congestive heart defect was much more serious than what they usually anticipate for children with Downs Syndrome, but from looking at this precious little boy, you would have thought that he did not have a care in the world, because he was so happy and delightful. There was even a profound peace that emanated

from his laughter. I found out that Gabe was Debbie's fifth child, and when she was 18 weeks pregnant, they discovered the serious heart condition and genetic defects that her son would be facing. Her doctor at Sister's Hospital in Buffalo actually recommended that Debbie and her husband abort the fetus, but they refused to let the doctors do anything that would hurt their baby, because they believed that God had a reason behind their son, Gabe, and they were not about to question God's Wisdom. After Gabe was born, he was not expected to live past his first year. Born with a two chamber heart and serious bone and muscular impairments, Gabe could only walk with the assistance of a body brace. Every night, Gabe's hips would dislocate due to developmental defects in his ligaments and tendons, and he faces much pain and discomfort until they fall back into place. But after many prayers and multiple surgeries later, Gabe made it to where he is today - the bright eyed, gentle, and happy boy whose heart is filled with so much love, and who runs around the playground so joyful and carefree. It made me ponder today's Gospel reading even more, when Debbie told me how Gabe brought her own father back to God. She told me that for years, her father lost his faith; he stopped believing in God and no longer went to Church or even prayed. And this devastated her completely, because she has such a strong sense of God in her own life. But when her father learned about Gabe's condition, when he learned about the uphill battle he would be facing in order to survive, he started praying for his grandson, both day and night, he even returned to the Church faithfully and became a believing Christian again. One year ago, Debbie's father died unexpectedly, but she told me that she gained much solace from the fact that her father died believing in God again, because now she could rest assured that he's in Heaven because of his renewed faith. Debbie firmly believes that all of this was made possible because of her son, Gabe, and how the will of God was so beautifully revealed through him. Gabe is a beacon of God's mercy and love, a way for God's work to be manifest in a world that desperately needs it the most - because his rare innocence can truly open one's eyes to Christ.