

SAINT NICHOLAS
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



УКРАЇНЬСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА
ЦЕРКВА СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ

№
30

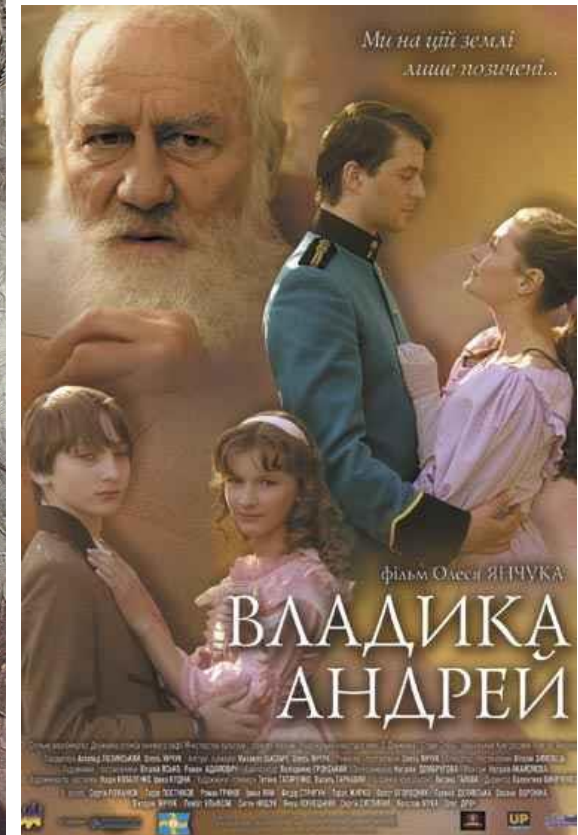
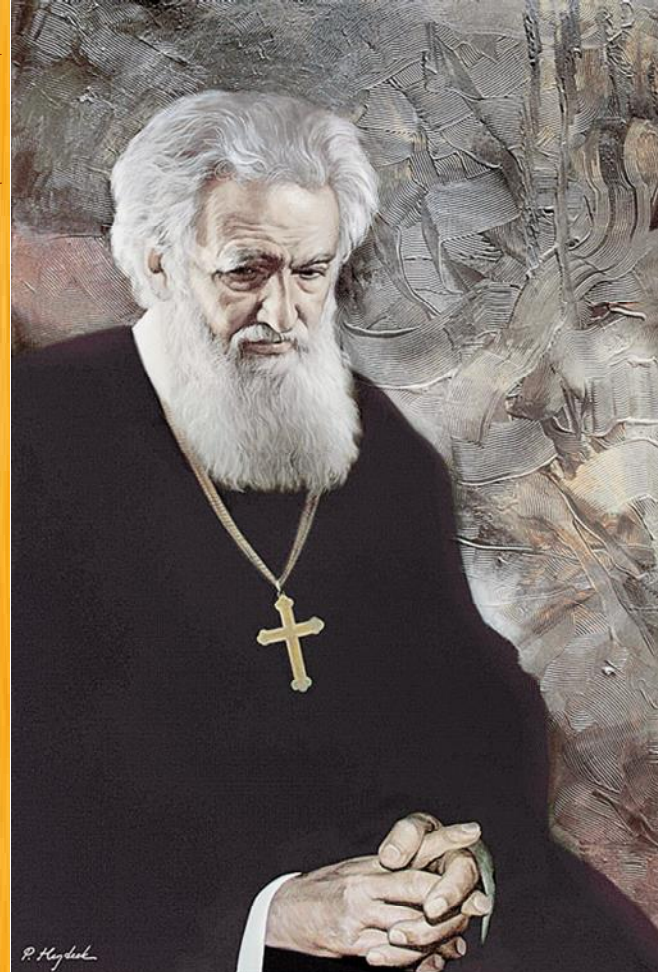
ПІД ОПІКОЮ
ПРЕЧИСТОЇ ДІВИ
МАРІЇ ОДІГТРІЇ
UNDER THE
PROTECTION OF
MOTHER OF GOD



CHURCH BULLETIN
July 26 – 2015 – 26 Липня
ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК



Сер., 29. VII. – Wed., July 29 at noon
Свята Літургія – Divine Liturgy
Опісля Фільм – Movie afterward



№
30



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На Новому Соколі – Plast, North Collins



На Холодному Ярі – SUM, Fillmore



CHURCH BULLETIN

July 26 – 2015 – 26 Липня
ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК



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

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

ПОР'ЯДОК СВ. ЛІТУРГІЙ

4:30 PM +Petro Hrynczak (William Ulak)

July 26, 9 S. aft. Pent. – 9 Н. по ЗСД

12:00 For Parishioners – За Парохіян

Monday, July 27 Липня, Понеділок

10:00 AM +Іван Грегa (Марія Маланяк)

Tuesday, July 28 Липня, Вівторок

10:00 AM +Dmytro Varanuskij (Dolores)

Wednesday, July 29 Липня, Середа

12:00 PM For the Beatification of Metr. Andrej Sheptytsky on the occasion of 150th Anniversary of his birth

→ → → За Прославу Слуги Божого ← ← ←

Митрополита Андрея Шептицького з нагоди 150-ліття з Дня Народження

Thursday, July 30 Липня, Четвер

No Liturgy – Нема Відправи

Friday, July 31 Липня, П'ятниця

9:00 AM +Anna Koman (Ivan Zudac)

Sat. August 1 Серпня, Субота

8:00 AM +Marusia Procyk (Virginia Makar)

4:30 PM For Parishioners – За Парохіян

July 26, 10 S. aft. Pent. – 10 Н. по ЗСД

12:00 +Salvatore & Anna Militello (Anne Etipio)

The Eternal Light burns
+Marusia & Joseph Procyk
Requ. by Family

Вічне Світло в честь П.Д.М.
Горить За МИР в Україні

26 Липня: 8 Неділя по 3. Св. Духа

10:00 р. +Онуфрій Білоголовський
(Оля Кобрин)

Святого Пророка Іллі

2 Серпня: 9 Неділя по 3. Св. Духа

10:00 р. +Юлія і +Степан Гривняк
+Іван і +Марія Ткач, +Василь
Лехновський (Катерина Лехновська)

ВАЖНЕ – IMPORTANT!

Reminder:

Our Annual Picnic is next Sunday, August 2, 2015. The following things are still needed for the picnic.

1. Help making varenyky on Wednesday morning.
2. Baked Goods- for dessert and to sell
3. Theme baskets –more baskets are needed value \$25.00. Help is needed around 5:00 PM Friday evening to put the baskets together
4. Help Setting up the tables and tents Saturday morning at 10:00
5. Help setting up on Sunday morning.
6. Helping in various booths where needed
7. Someone to take care of the outside grill on Sunday.

Ukrainian Treasures & More



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West Seneca NY 14224

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Ukrainian Eggs, Jewelry & Embroidery

photos on facebook.com

jahawryluk@gmail.com



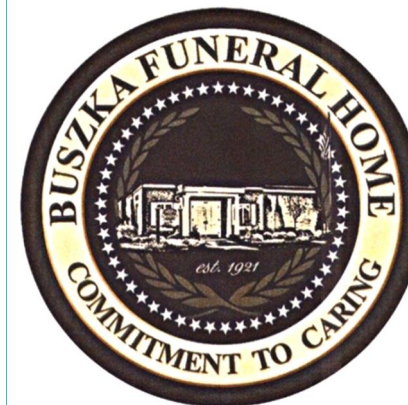
PHONE 893-1025

Fusani &
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ASK FOR TOM

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Monday & Tuesday 9:30 am – 4 pm | Wednesday
9:30 am – 2pm | Thursday 9:30 am – 6 pm |
Friday 9:30 am – 7 pm | Saturday 9:00 – 1 pm |

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| ONLINE SERVICES | NOTARY PUBLIC |

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ОЩАДНІ ТА ЧЕКОВІ РАХУНКИ | СЕРТИФІКАТИ |
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ГРОШОВІ ПЕРЕКАЗИ | ЕЛЕКТРОННІ ПОСЛУГИ |
ПОСЛУГИ НОТАРІУСА |

*Membership subject to eligibility.
Federally insured by NCUA.*

Щоб довідатися більше інформацій 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.

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4166 Union Rd.,
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2321 Millersport Hwy.
Amherst (Getzville Plaza) 688-1495

Are you listening "Good Samaritan"
Ukr. Radio Program on WJLL 1440 AM Every
Sunday at 2:00 PM?
Thank you for your donations!
We welcome your comments.

Чи ви слухасте нашу радіо передачу
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Неділя, 2 год. на WJLL 1440 AM? Сердечно
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Please include Our Church
In Your charitable donations!

Просимо підтримувати Рідну Церкву
талантами, часом і жертвами.

Cell Phones - Мобільні Телефони:
Please turn off or silence your cell phone
before entering the church. Thank you!

Просимо вилучувати ваші мобільні
телефони підчас Святої Літургії.

**DONATIONS TO
2015 Stamford Bishop's Appeal**

Each member of our Parish is also a member of the Eparchy and should support and participate in this fundraiser. The following parishioners have already contributed:

R & O Wisniewski - \$25.00
William Dobrykewych - \$25.00

**2015 Goal
for St. Nicholas Parish - \$7,500.00**

**Total collected
as of July 9, 2015 - \$8,115.00**

**We have reached our goal!
Thank You for your GENEROSITY**

Sunday, SEPTEMBER 13, 2015
Noon to 7 p.m.



Ukrainian FESTIVAL
Presented by St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church

3275 ELMWOOD AVE., KENMORE, NY 14217
(ELMWOOD AVE BETWEEN SHERIDAN DRIVE AND THE I-190 YOUNGMANN EXPRESSWAY)

ETHNIC UKRAINIAN FOOD (Pyrohy/Pierogi, Stuffed Cabbage, Sausage) and BEVERAGES
CHICKEN BARBEQUE ELIGIOUS/ETHNIC VENDORS, BAKED GOODS, THEME BASKETS & RAFFLES AND MORE ...

Save the Dates

July 29th – 150 Anniversary of the Birth of Metropolitan Sheptytskyj
12:00 PM – LITURGY
1:00 PM – SHORT PROGRAM
PLEASE ATTEND!!!
Просимо взяти участь на Літургії з нагоди 150-ліття з Дня Народження великого Митрополита, Слуги Божого Андрея

July 29 – help in the kitchen for picnic
August 2th – Annual Parish Picnic, Parish Grounds

August 23th – Ukrainian American Day celebrating the 24th Anniversary of Ukrainian Independence

August 28th – Liturgy for Peace in Ukraine (Feast of Dormition of BVM on Julian Calendar) 5:00PM Fatima Shrine, Youngstown, NY

August 30th – Msgr. Paul Iwachiw Scholarship Awards Luncheon after 12:00 Noon

ST. BASIL in LANCASTER
→ → → Chicken and Ribs BBQ: ← ← ←
Finally we have our date for August: August 16. Chinese Auction, Raffle and fun for all. Help us selling the tickets.
Call 716-683-0313.



ANNUAL PICNIC



St. Nicholas

Ukrainian Catholic Church

Sunday, August 2, 2015

11:30 ó 5:00 PM

308 Fillmore Ave. Buffalo, NY



Pierogies, Cabbage Rolls, Baked Goods

Theme Baskets, Raffles



Enjoy an afternoon with your friends

Renew old acquaintances

At St. Nicholas Annual Picnic



Calling all children!!!

Meet clown Picadilly

Balloons, etcí 2-3 PM



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

- KITCHEN is now closed.
- Thank you for your patronage. Thanks are extended to all who helped!
- Coffee Hour - Usually Every Sunday after Liturgy in Church Hall. Please join us!

Have a nice Summer Vacation

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

УКРАЇНЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА ЦЕРКВА СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ

(ПІД ОПІКОЮ ПРЕЧИСТОЇ ДІВИ МАРІЇ ОДІГІТРИЇ)

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 – Релігійна Програма
 Субота - Saturday

Ministry to the sick - Опіка над xvorymy

Family members should call the Rectory
 Родина повинна повідомити священика

IN EMERGENCY CALL ANY TIME

В разі потреби завжди можна закликати

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!



Holy Trinity
Ukrainian Orthodox Church
 200 Como Park Blvd
 Cheektowaga, NY 14227
 Phone (716) 684-0738

Email: ukrorthodoxbuffalo@gmail.com
 Website: <http://www.holytrinitybuffalo.com/>

Ukrainian Heritage Festival

Sunday, July 26, 2015

12:00 Noon to Dusk

PROGRAM

12:00 Festival Begins

1:00 Opening Remarks V. Rev. Yuriy Kasyanov

1:30 Music by "Budemo Razom"

from Rochester

Violin virtuoso—Famous violinist
Vasyl Popadiuk

Performances by various Ukrainian
 dance groups and soloists

Dusk - Festival Ends

Ethnic Food, Ukrainian and Local Beer,
 Wine available

\$1 Admission/Door Prize

Handicapped Parking Available

Sponsored by



Please save the date!

У суботу, 8 Серпня

На посілості Української Православної
 Церкви в Чіктоваґа буде тзв.

«Шіш Кабоб»

щоб придбати фонди для потерпілих в
 Україні.

Просимо допомогти і взяти участь!

Saturday, August 8, 2015,
"SHISH KABOB Fundraiser"



to support the war victims in Ukraine,
 at Holy Trinity Ukrainian Church Grove

located at 200 Como Park Blvd.

Cheektowaga, N.Y. 14227,

Beginning at 4pm till 9pm.

Eat In or Take Out

- Shish Kabob
- Potato Salad
- Basket Raffle
- Games & Prizes

At this time we ask that Ukrainians and
 friends in the WNY Community support this
 effort by donating a gift basket or gift
 certificate for the basket raffle, and to
 attend our Shish Kabob event.

For more information please contact Oxana
 Bandriwsky (716) 847-1281

Letter from Fr. Ray July 26, 2015

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Dear _____

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

I recently received a gift of some correspondence cards. The inside is blank, except for a quotation from the woman, Liliias Trotter, who also did the artwork on the card. Reminding me of the beautiful steppes of Ukraine, the outside picture shows several people harvesting a field of wheat. Inside is her quote: "Our time for growing is so short that we cannot afford to waste a day." Let us pray for each other so that we can continue to grow and harvest in the Lord's vineyard. Let us pray that we do not waste a day!

I know for sure we didn't waste any days this week. We have been out and about since last Saturday night, and that is a good thing. On Monday and Tuesday we were blessed with summertime visitors, two schoolmates from the seminary, who stopped off here in West Seneca on their way to Ontario. It was a happy few hours as we reminisced of those times and places of over forty years ago.

The classes of the seminary from St. Basil's in Stamford to St. Josaphat's in Washington, D.C. are really a "Band of Brothers." Some became priests, some deacons, some serve the church in various other ways, from the Altar to the church kitchen and the pierogi pots. Regretfully, some no longer serve the church; others have already passed on to their eternal reward. No matter where they have gone or what they are doing these days is of little import. All that really matters is that he can ask the question, "Remember when we were in the seminary and.....?" We were not in the military or wars, but those formative days of our lives are still, and always will be, such a huge part of our lives, much as our soldiers. The days of "should I be a priest, can I be a priest?" are always with us, even more so when we have a chance to get together and remember. Brothers, it was great to see you again. Come back soon!

In the last several letters I know I have written of summertime things. Having visitors during these pleasant and easy-to-travel months is right up there adding to the joys of the season. I hope you have the opportunity to visit loved-ones and friends, or to have them visit you. Seminarians or not, all of us really do walk hand-in-hand as that "Band of Brothers and Sisters." Another wish for "Happy Summer!"

A few weeks back I wrote a few lines about the "Light Side" and the "Dark Side" of the Star War movies. I never was interested in "Star Trek" or "Star Wars." That is, until now. Our grandson, Noah, has discovered "Star Wars", introduced it to his sisters, and re-introduced it to us. It all started one day with a trip to the library and finding a book about the movie. Then it was an easy step to the computer, and the further discovery of the magical world of *Ewoks*, and *Wookies!* He's been really INTO IT ever since!

That brings us to last Saturday night. I almost always serve the 4:30pm vigil Liturgy at St. Nicholas here in Buffalo. Not that night, though.....It was "Star Wars Night" at the ballpark! We experienced a few hours of fun that will be a lifetime of memories! It was an extremely well done event, and the children had a ball! The characters from the movie were there and everyone was able to get up close and personal, and even have pictures taken with them. A little kid is really a little kid when he/she stands next to Darth Vader or Chewboka. I'm glad we went. It was an awesome time for the kids and the grownups loved it!

Hey, I want to thank you for the bulletins you have been bringing back from your trips. By the way, when we travel, I always bring back a bulletin from at least one church. I'm just sayin'. ☺ ☺ So I really do know how hard it can be to find a church, and then get a bulletin. I know I make Presbyteria a little crazy as I go in search of the open church in our ports of call. You have been doing a great job.... TKS!! And Bless YOU!

Please know you don't have to do anything really extraordinary to bring your "receipt" home.

Recently, one of our faithful parishioners, and a close reader of his letters, was out of town for a special family event. Well, he found the local Ukrainian Catholic Church, attended the Sunday Liturgy, and promptly left immediately after the service to 'get on the road' for home. Oh, no! A few minutes on the road with the car pointing home, he realized he had forgotten to pick up the bulletin. His family was kind enough to turn the car around and get back to the church before Father locked the doors and he was able to grab a bulletin. I would have believed him even if he didn't get one! ☺ ☺ Thanks for reading your letter!

Thanks even more for attending Sunday services wherever you are! I joke a bit about bringing that bulletin home as your 'receipt' to prove you were at Liturgy when you were away, but it is very serious. I know, and you know, that we are supposed to attend a church service for Sunday, be it Saturday night Vespers, or Sunday morning Matins or Sunday Liturgy. Failing to do so, without good reason, is still a sin. Even with all the closings of churches, there is still an abundance of parishes and a number of various times when services are offered. Usually, one can easily get there without any extraordinary effort.

I know sometimes you get to read your letter in different places and at different times of the day. If you are having your morning coffee or your lunch right now, I suggest you finish it and then come back to the letter. Last week after I finished your letter the news broke with that ugly video. You know the one of which I write. It's the one of the woman from *Planned Parenthood* discussing the sale of infant body parts while she is having lunch, eating a salad and sipping wine. Another veil is pulled back to reveal another evil side of that organization, a side Pro-Life people have always known. God help us! How far we have fallen when any person can speak as did that woman and have others around her who think it is a good thing! Can anyone with a conscience even imagine we could be discussing

such a thing in this day and age!? If you haven't seen this video, horrible as it is, you must view it!


A long time ago when the Supreme Court found a way to finagle the Constitution, many good people including Fr. John Corapi, (God bless him and bring him back), Mother Teresa and St. John Paul II, all warned of the "slippery slope." We were told that once the culture of life is pushed aside there would be no stopping the advocates of abortion. As the abortion mills continued to kill millions and millions of babies the public opposition was soothed by the many false arguments, mostly coming from Planned Parenthood. "Women's health" was one of the big ones. For a long time they said, "It's not really a baby. It's only a tissue mass." Then when it was proven to be a baby they said, "Oh, the baby can't feel pain."

Of course they were proven wrong and to be outright liars in all they do. Now we have come to this, the crushing and tearing apart of the baby to protect "the vital organs" which will be sold to make money! Weren't these horror stories of the Nazi death camps?! This is what happens when we elect godless governments! If we are to survive as a country, we must turn back to the culture of life. All of us must become active....pray, call your elected representative, become active in protest.

As we do everything in our power to stop the killing of preborn babies we also must pray for "everybody involved in abortion." That means those who work to stop it, but also those who promote it and sadly, those who have had abortions. We pray, we pray for the poor girls who now cry for their little ones. May they and all of us trust in the Mercy of God! May He heal them and us!

In all things, Dear One, we know God is with us always! May He bless you, give you strength, courage and a deep faith! May our Holy Mother protect you! God willing, till next week.....

In His Love,
Fr. Ray



УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛІЧНА УНІВЕРСИТЕТ

БЛАГОДІЙНІ БЕНКЕТИ НА ПІДТРИМКУ УКУ

A NEW GENERATION FOR A NEW UKRAINE!

2015 GALA FUNDRAISING EVENTS IN SUPPORT OF UCU

The **UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY** is in the public phase of its Comprehensive Campaign to support the building of a modern campus and the establishment of new academic programs. **Support Ukraine's Future!**

UNITED STATES



- **OCT 24, 2015**
Washington DC
Army Navy Country Club-Arlington
- **OCT 25, 2015**
Chicago
Ritz-Carlton Hotel
- **OCT 31, 2015**
Syracuse, NY
Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel
- **NOV 1, 2015**
New York City
The Roosevelt Hotel

CANADA



- **NOV 14, 2015**
Toronto
Liberty Grand Complex
- **NOV 15, 2015**
Montreal
Centre Mont-Royal
- **NOV 20, 2015**
Calgary
St. Stephen Protomartyr Ukrainian Catholic Cultural Center

Invited Speakers and Stars*

• Bishop Borys Gudziak President, Ukrainian Catholic University	• Maria Burmaka Activist and Musician	• Carl Gershman President, National Endowment for Democracy	• Oksana Mukha Musician	• Pavlo Sheremeta Director of UCU's School of Public Management
• Fr. Bohdan Prach Rector, Ukrainian Catholic University	• Chrystia Freeland Writer, journalist and politician	• Victor Morozov Musician	• Mikheil Saakashvili Governor, Odessa Oblast, Ukraine	• Timothy Snyder Housum Professor of History at Yale University

FOR MORE INFORMATION call the Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation at 1 (800) 599-3671 or visit us at www.ucf.org

* Not all will appear in every city



Зрадія "Милосердний Самарянин"

Сьогодні 8 Неділя по Зісланні Св. Духа. Христос проповідує, а люди його зачаровано слухають, що навіть забували про їжу. Апостоли звертаються до Христа, щоб відпустив народи, бо вже пізно і всі голоди. А Христос їм каже «Дайте ви їм їсти.» Ці слова звернені не тільки до апостолів, але й до всіх Христових учнів від початку християнства аж до сьогодні, і до кінця світу.

Якщо хтось голодний, нагодуй його, якщо спраглий, напій, якщо подорожній, приймай у свій дім, якщо хворий, відвідай його. Це є нашим обов'язком, і на основі сповнення його ми будемо суджені, бо «все, що ви зробили одним з тих найменших, ви Мені зробили», навчає нас Христос під час розповіді про Страшний Суд.

Кожного разу, коли ми слухаємо у храмі або читаємо вдома Слово Боже - Євангеліє, то маємо справу не тільки з релігійним текстом, а зі зверненням Бога до нас. Бог промовляє до нас через слова Євангелія, і через нього пропонує нам свою поміч. В попередні неділі ми чули в Євангелії події, де розповідалося про різні види оздоровлень хворих Ісусом, а тим самим Божої опіки над людьми. Сьогодні ще одна така нагода. Ісус навчав людей, оздоровив хворих, котрих принесли до Нього, а потім чудесно нагодував п'ять тисяч народу хлібом і рибою.

Чудесне розмноження Ісусом Христом п'яти хлібів і двох риб - це ще одне потвердження того, що Бог справді дбає про духовні і тілесні потреби людей, опікується ними, бо Йому не байдужа доля людини. Бог ніколи не залишає людину один на один з її проблемами, а завжди готовий переживати труднощі разом з нею.

Чудо п'яти хлібів має подвійне значення. Найперше, це черговий образ і заповідь установа Христом майбутнього таїнства Євхаристії, цього невичерпного джерела духовної поживи і помочі для християн. По-друге, це запрошення людей до співпраці з Богом через молитву і святі таїнства для ошасливлення свого щоденного життя.

Ісус, оздоровивши хворих, захотів сам нагодувати їх, чудесно розмноживши п'ять хлібів і дві риби. І це сталося не випадково. Бо хліб, це плід праці людських рук, символ людського життя. Розмно-

живши чудесно хліб, плід людської праці, цим жестом Христос хотів сказати, що Божа поміч людям потребує певної участі людини, щоб вона вийшла назустріч Богу. Бог завжди готовий і хоче помагати людям у житті, але людина повинна зі своєї сторони зробити крок до Бога: просити Його про поміч і бути готовою цю поміч від Бога прийняти. Він хоче, щоб ми приносили Йому в молитві хліб нашого щоденного життя: наші труднощі, клопоти, переживання, а Він прийме і перемінить їх у духовну поживу для нас у вигляді різних ласк і дарів Святого Духа. Які ж умови повинна сповнити людина, щоб впевнено отримати поміч від Бога? Це співпраця з Богом через дотримання заповідей, добрі вчинки, побожне життя, тобто надія душі на Бога, це молитва і святі таїнства. Вони свідчать про відкритість людської душі на Бога. Часта молитва християнина і прийняття Святих Таїн є знаком його готовності прийняти Божу поміч. Це також віра і любов до Бога.

Чому так важлива віра і любов? Ісус Христос зробив чудо п'яти хлібів, щоб наситити голодних, але через це пробудилася і зміцнилася віра апостолів і людей у Нього, як правдивого Месію, що був давно обіцяний, а тепер вже з ними перебуває, і їхні немочі бере на себе. Світло віри допомагає людині розпізнавати знаки Божої любові – помочі, а любов дозволяє приймати їх і з них користати.

Щоб ми, дорогі в Христі, наповнилися світлом віри і любові, щоб могли Божу поміч щодня відчувати і щедро користати з неї. (о. Михайло Чижович, *редемпторист*)

Будьмо вдячні Господеві, за все, що він для нас робить, за всі його дари.

В нас є побожний звичай перед вживанням їжі звертатися з молитвою до Бога. Цей звичай, як бачимо, освячений прикладом Самого Господа, бо Він підніс очі догори, поблагословив хлібе, і роздав? Ми повинні наслідувати Христа. Тому, сідаючи за стіл, обов'язково повинні ми згадати Того, Хто дає нам їжу, а наситившись, — подякувати Йому. Хто Бога любить, той не може забути про Нього, користуючись Його дарами, незалежно чи ми в дома чи в дорозі, чи в ресторані, де і коли б це не було – завжди дякуймо Господеві, бо він благий і Чоловіколюбчець.

From "Good Samaritan" Ukr. Radio pr.

Just about every kid has a period in their lives where they love superheroes. The kids idolize their ability to do the impossible, to fly, their incredible strength or their x-ray vision. When I was growing up, I loved superman and wonder woman. I wanted to be just like them - strong, good, protecting the innocent and fighting for those in need of their super powers. I remember running around my house with my homemade cape or my wonder woman lasso, whenever I would daydream... I ended up turning into one of those super heroes and the world seemed like a better place. A sad time for me came when I realized I could not be one of those comic book superheroes, because it was impossible. And sometimes I think that we read the Bible like we would read a comic book, or watch our favorite superheroes on the television or at the movies. We look at the amazing things that some of the folks did in the Bible and are amazed by them, we even idolize their lives and their passion for God, but sometimes we see the people in the Bible as superheroes, whose super powers are impossible for us to match.

We read of some amazing things and some extraordinary people in the Bible. Sometimes it is hard to grasp that these were real people who once lived, and not just a bunch of made up superheroes. These people had real struggles and genuine problems in life - they were just people like you and me putting their faith into practice. They were super people with super character, but they did not have special powers to live better lives or do anything more fantastic than we are capable of doing today – they simply had a special kind of faith. They are examples for us about how we too, can live our lives. When I read of people like Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Job, Mary Magdalene, Elizabeth, and Paul, I envy some things about them. I envy the closeness they had with God. They had a special relationship with God; they had a constant communication with Him. I admire what they could accomplish for God. It is amazing how God can take these weak and imperfect individuals and do such amazing things through them that they could so greatly impact other people. They trusted God even when it did not make sense to them, and especially when it was not popular and when things were not going their way.

They are spiritual giants that we are talking about thousands of years later because of the kind of faith that they had.

A voyaging ship was wrecked during a storm at sea and only two of the men on it were able to swim to a small, desert like island. The two survivors, not knowing what else to do, came to an agreement that they had no other recourse but to pray to God. However, to determine whose prayers should be most effective, they agreed to divide the territory between them and stay on opposite sides of the island. The first thing they prayed for was food. The next morning, the first man saw a fruit-bearing tree on his side of the island, and he was able to eat its fruit. The other man's parcel of land remained barren. After a week, the first man prayed for a house, clothes, more food. The next day, all of these were given to him. However, the second man still had nothing. Finally, the first man prayed for a ship, so that he could leave the island. In the morning, he found a ship docked at his side of the island and boarded the ship to leave. Since none of the other man's prayers had been answered, since nothing on his side of the island had been changed, the first man considered the other man unworthy to receive God's blessings, so he decided to leave the second man stranded on the island. As the ship was about to leave, the first man heard a voice from Heaven above, "Why are you leaving your companion on the island?" The man said, "My blessings are a result of my faith and prayers, since I was the one who prayed for them. His prayers were all unanswered Lord, so I figured he does not believe in you or deserve anything." "You are sorely mistaken", said the voice from Heaven, "And you are in greater debt to your companion than you know." "How is that?" The man asked. "It was his great faith that invoked your blessings and gave you everything that you have, because he prayed that all of your prayers would be answered."

I hope today that many of us read through the Bible and sometimes think, "That's the type of person that I want to be" or "that is the type of faith that I would like to have." The bottom line is that we can have that type of faith. Jesus promised that we would be able to have a faith that could move mountains. We can have that type of relationship with God today. Sometimes we are

way too easily satisfied with mediocrity in our faith. We are satisfied with being a casual Ukrainian Catholic in name only. We are satisfied with our lack of commitment, excitement, or zeal. One of my favorite characters in the Bible is the Apostle Peter. Peter was a man who was full of zeal for the Lord. When Jesus was on the mountain and was transfigured with Moses and Elijah it was Peter who wanted to stay and build shelters for all three of them. When Jesus told Peter he was going to be killed it was Peter who said he would die with him. It was Peter who assured Jesus that even if everyone else denied him he would not. It was Peter who drew his sword and cut off the soldier's ear who came to arrest Jesus. It was Peter who ran to see the empty tomb and left the boat to come to the resurrected Lord. People can fault Peter for some of his overzealous actions, and even for denying that he knew the Lord three times, but overall, Peter had a heart for Jesus and is an example for us all of the elation we should have in following Jesus.

The Gospel reading for this ninth Sunday after Pentecost follows straight on from that of last Sunday. After feeding the multitude, Jesus sends the apostles away. He tells them to get into a ship, and Jesus himself retires to a mountain, alone, to pray. Meanwhile, the ship in which the disciples are crossing the Sea of Galilee is shaken by the strong waves as the winds blow against them. But suddenly the disciples see Jesus walking out to them on the sea; and terrified, they think it is a ghost. Jesus reassures them: "Be of good cheer, it is I!". To Peter's request: "Lord, if it is you, then bid me to come out on the water". Jesus answers him: "Come". Peter gets out of the ship: "And when Peter was coming down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go out to Jesus. But when he saw the waves and felt the wind he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out saying: "Lord, save me"". Jesus stretched out his hands to him, and saves Peter, but then gently rebukes him for having such little faith. Jesus and Peter get back into the ship and when the wind dies down; the disciples kneel down to worship Jesus saying: "Thou art the Son of God".

This account contains precious information that applies to our own spiritual life. The wind tossed waves on which Peter wanted to walk could be compared to our difficulties and, especially, to our

temptations in life. If we look back at our own spiritual defeats, we will see that it was always in the instant when we stopped looking at Jesus and going straight toward him, that we began to sink. Just as Peter became fearful, took his eyes off Christ, and began to sink. As soon as we allow our attention to be so distracted by the events and difficulties of this world, that we no longer notice Jesus, we become lost and lose sight of our own faith. There will be many storms in life that surround us and threaten us, but if we ask the Lord to bid us to come out on the water toward him, and have enough faith to remain focused on the Lord, then we will overcome and defeat any difficulties in life by trusting in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Immediately following this miracle of Jesus and Peter on the water, Jesus taught the large crowds that had gathered about the Bread of Life. The Bible tells us that the crowds had a hard time accepting Jesus' message and were offended. Amidst the crowds turning their backs on Jesus, he looks back to his disciples with a broken heart and asks them, are they going to leave him too? Peter is the one that pipes up and says an incredible thing that was no doubt shaped by the incident on the Sea of Galilee just a little while earlier, "To whom shall we go, you alone have the words of Eternal life, and we believe and know that you are the Son of God." Peter is saying; I believe without any doubt that you alone can save us. We too should want to be near Jesus because He alone can save us. We too should have a zeal and a passion about encountering Jesus today. During today's Gospel reading, Peter had this request of Jesus: 'Lord, if it is you, tell me to come to you on the water'. Peter wanted to get out of the boat; he wanted to be with Jesus. Sometimes, in order to get to Jesus we need to get out of the boat; we need to leave our comfort zone and place our complete trust in the Lord.

We believe in Jesus for our salvation and for the forgiveness of our sins. The Bible says: "And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a spirit"; and they cried out for fear. But Jesus spoke unto them, saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I - be not afraid" (Matthew 14:25-27). The truth is that, no matter what the storm may be, the storm has a purpose. Our

storms in life may be sickness or disease, pain, or even loss; but Jesus is always in the midst of the storm. God can and will use storms to bring us to a higher level of spiritual growth. Jesus told Peter to come out of the boat to Him. Today, he is calling us out of the boat; he is calling us to step out on the raging water in faith. When Peter was called out of the boat the storm was howling greatly and the waves were crashing and still Peter stepped out of the boat and into the water to be with Jesus. And even though his faith wavered, Peter still had the desire to be with Jesus. We all need this faith to step out of our boats because Jesus is calling out to us in faith. We are not called to be superheroes; we are called to be a people with super faith.

The storms of life may be great and the winds may be moving all around us, but let us not forget that it is Jesus who moves the wind. And whenever life seems to throw us a curve ball, just remember the words of Jesus to His disciples – "Be of good cheer; it is I - be not afraid".

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