



St. Nicholas visiting "Ridna Shkola",
At "Holy Trinity", December 19, 2015



Saint Nicholas
Feastday Dinner,
At Hriczko Post,
December 20, 2015



SAINT NICHOLAS
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА
ЦЕРКВА СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ



№
52

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



CHURCH BULLETIN

December 27 – 2015 – 27 Грудня
ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК

Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year!

Шасливого Нового Року!



Вітаємо вас з Новим роком та
Різдвом Христовим!

Бажаємо вам:

В Новий рік, в Різдво Христове
будьте радісні, панове!
Хай до вашої оселі колядки
прийдуть веселі,
Буде щастя і здоров'я, в справах
лад, комора повна,
А на вашому столі — паляниці
запашні.
Щоб ви нас не забували, з нами
завжди справу мали,
Хай завжди щастить і всюди, з
вами хай добробут буде!



№ 52
D E C E M B E R
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CHURCH BULLETIN

December 27 – 2015 – 27 Грудня

ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE



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

ПОР'ЯДОК СВ. ЛІТУРГІЙ

4:30 PM For the Mercy of the Lord
За Боже Милосердя

Saint Stephen – Св. Степан Первомученик
Dec. 27, S. After Christmas – Н. По Різдві

12:00 PM For Parishioners - За Парохіян
Monday, December 28 Грудня, Понеділок

Tuesday, December 29 Грудня, Вівторок

Wednesday, December 30 Грудня, Середа
9:00 AM +Sophia Sudyn (Betty Kitt)

Thursday, December 31 Грудня, Четвер
9:00 AM +Maria Bumbar – 1 year (Family)

St. Basil the Great – New Year 2016
Св. Василій Вел. – Новий Рік 2016

Friday, January 1 Січня, П'ятниця
10:00 AM St. Basil the Great – Св. Василя Вел.
For God's Blessing - За Боже Благословення

Saturday, January 2 Січня, Субота
10:00 AM +Маруся Процик
(Катерина Лехновська)

4:30 PM For Parishioners - За Парохіян

Jan. 3, S. Bef. Theophany – Перед Богоявл
12:00 PM +Munzio & Rose Cardullo
(Anne Ettipio)

Вічне Світло в честь П.Д.М.
горить за +Марусю Процик

Eternal Lights burns for
+Olga Kolotylo
Requ. by: Jagodzinski Family

27 Грудня: Неділя Праотців

10:00 р. Катерина Лехновська (діти)
90-ліття – МНОГАЯ ЛІТА!

3 Січня: Неділя Отців

10:00 р. +Др. Михайло Лоза – 22 річниця
(Дружина Др. Уляна Лоза)

May the peace and love of the Christ
Child, the gift of this Holy Season,
Be with you always!
Christ is born – Let us Glorify Him!

Щасливого Нового Року!
Happy New Year!

Христос Раждається! Christ is Born!
Славте Його! Glorify Him!



Please donate

For Children:

- New Cloths
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- Toys

For adult men:

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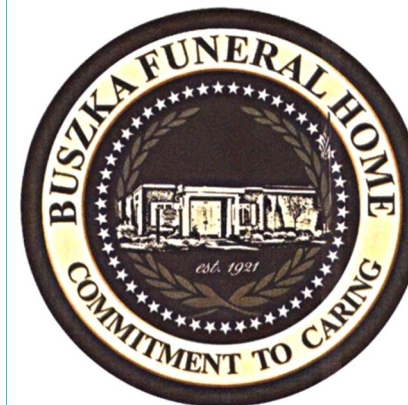
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<p>Buffalo Branch Ukrainian Home Dnipro 562 Genesee Street Buffalo NY 14204 (716) 847-6655 www.rufcu.org</p>	<p>Amherst Branch Ellicott Creek Plaza 2882 Niagara Falls Blvd Amherst NY 14228 (716) 799-8385 www.rufcu.org</p>
<p>Business Hours Closed Wednesdays, Зачинені по середах Mon., Tuesday, Thursday 9:30 am - 5 pm Пон., вівторок, четвер Friday / П'ятниця 9:30 am - 7 pm Saturday / Субота 9 am - 1 pm </p>	<p>Business Hours Closed Mondays, Зачинені по понеділках Tuesday - Thursday 9:30 am - 5 pm 3 вівторка по четвер Friday / П'ятниця 9:30 am - 6 pm Saturday / Субота 9 am - 1 pm </p>

Membership subject to eligibility. Federally insured by NCUA.

Щоб довідатися більше інформації 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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Cell Phones - Мобільні Телєфони:
Please turn off or silence your cell phone
before entering the church. Thank you!

Просимо вилучувати ваші мобільні
телєфони підчас Святої Літургії.

DONATIONS TO ST. NICHOLAS

“Special Appeal”

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- Ulana Loza - \$30.00
- Andrew & Gertrud Diakun - \$25.00
- Roman & Lyuba Khoma - \$20.00
- Norm & Irene Kingsly - \$15.00

Thank You! Дякуємо!



*

This
Christmas
end a quarrel.
Seek out a forgotten
friend. Dismiss suspicion,
and replace it with trust.
Write a love letter. Share some
treasure. Give a soft answer. Keep
a promiss. Find the time. Forgo a grudge.
Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you
were wrong. Try to understand. Examine your
demands on others. Think first of someone else.
Be kind; be gentle. Appreciate. Laugh a little. Laugh a
little more. Express your gratitude. Gladden the heart of a
child. Welcome a stranger. Take pleasure in the beauty and the
Wonder of Earth
Speak your love.
Speak it eagain.
Speak it yet
Once again,
Without
Ceasing.



**Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year!**
**Веселих Свят
Різдва Христового
і щасливого
Нового Року!**



CHRISTMAS EVE - PO NASHOMU

T'was the night before Roždestvo
And all through the village
The Ukraenchi all gathered
To eat twelve meatless dishes.
The kolach was nestled
All snug in its dish
While kutia was cooking
And so was some fish.
Women in their babushkas
And men in their caps
Had all settled down
With food in their laps.
When out on the lawn
There arose such a clatter
We all left our meal
To see what was the matter.
And what to our wondering eyes
should appear
But a pagach shaped sleigh
And eight lively reindeer.
With a white bearded dzaidzu
So lively and quick
We knew in a moment
It was Good Saint Nick
More rapid than horses
His reindeer all came
As he shouted, "Oy Yoy,"
And each reindeer's name.
"On Stefan, on Taras
On Myron and Yurik
On Vasyl, on Andrej
On Pavlo and Rurik."
Then out to the smokehouse
The reindeer all flew
With a sleigh full of kobasas
And saintly Mickolai too.
Down the chimney he came
With a leap and a bound
Dancing a kolomeyka
And twirling around.
He did a short polka
Then went to his work
And took some pyrohy
Then turned with a jerk.
We gave him kapusta
And Yurko's old clothes
Then we sang Divnaya Novyna
And back up the chimney he rose.
But we heard him exclaim
"Everyone now go to the table and yeech.
"Veseli Sviat to all
And to all Dobraneech!"

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

Ukrainian New Year's Dance
МАЛАНКА 2016
Saturday, January 16th, 2016

Ukrainian Cultural Center "DNIPRO"
562 Genesee St, Buffalo, NY 14204

Come one come all to a night of great music, dancing, food & friends!!

MUSIC provided by
"Pawuk Bros" of Rochester

Cocktail Hour, Dinner, Zabava, Midnight Buffet, & Champagne toast
Or come just for the Zabava

Tickets sales
from November 15th, 2015 thru January 10th, 2016
Dinner & Zabava \$50 per person adults
Dinner & Zabava for students (ages 13-18) \$30
***Dinner tickets will be pre-sale only
NO dinner tickets will be available at the door!***

Zabava only \$30 per person (no pre-sale necessary)

Cocktails: 6:30pm - Dinner 7:15pm - Zabava: 9:00pm
There will be a Midnight Snack & Midnight Toast

For More Information, Questions, Tickets & Reservations

Nicole Grega (716) 903-4777 or ukennikie29@gmail.com
Ann Sereidiuk (716) 316-1051

The Ukrainian Cultural Center "Dnipro" interior is a Smoke-Free Environment
The New York State Liquor Control Authority Strictly Prohibits the Bringing in of Any Outside Alcoholic Beverages



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ім. ЛЕСІ УКРАЇНКИ в Бофало Н.Й.
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МАЛАНКУ 2016

яка відбудеться
в суботу 16-го січня
2016 р.

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Білету тільки на Забаву \$30.00 при
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Коктейль 6:30 в. - Вечеря 7:15 в.
Забаву 9:00 в.

Зустріч нового року – шампанський тост

До замовлення білетів:

Никол Грега (716) 903-4777 -
ukennikie29@gmail.com

Ганя Середиук (716) 316-1051

**КУРИТИ ЗАБОРОНЕНО В ЗАЛІ "ДНІПРА"
КОМІСІЯ КОНТРОЛЯ АЛЬКОГОЛІВ В Н.Й.
ЗАБОРОНЯЄ ПРИНОСИТИ ВЛАСНІ АЛЬКО-
ГОЛЬНІ НАПИТКИ**



Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory for ever!
Слава Ісусу Христу! Слава на віки!

- KITCHEN is closed until January 17.
- Thank you for your patronage.
Thanks are extended to all who are helping!
- Coffee Hour - Usually Every Sunday after Liturgy in Church Hall. We are able to continue, so please join us downstars. Thank you!

Until we meet next Sunday...

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**

**УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА
ЦЕРКВА СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ**

(ПІД ОПІКОЮ ПРЕЧИСТОЇ
ДІВИ МАРІЇ ОДІГІТРИЇ)

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

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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
Saturday - Субота**

Ministry to the sick – Опіка над хворима

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

Rev. Raymond Palko, visiting priest

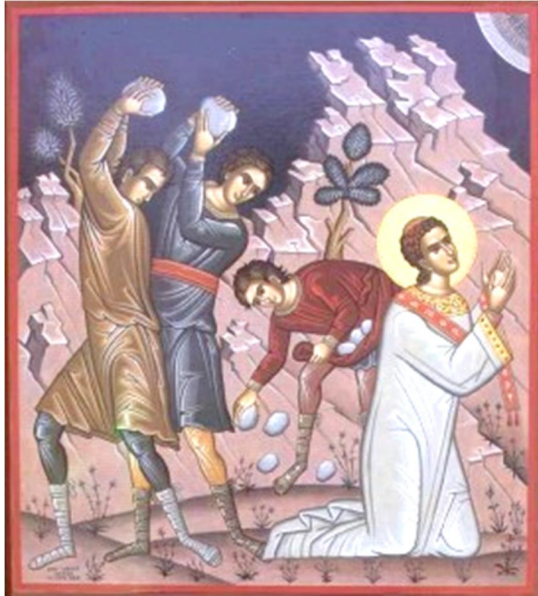
**Please call if you are hospitalized,
homebound and need a priest.**

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

The Saints on Sundays, 2015/16

December 27/January 9

Saint Stephen Protomartyr



Come, let us worship the new-born Christ;
Today he has crowned Saint Stephen.

Saint Stephen is known as the first Martyr. After such a brilliant, holy and happy day as the Nativity of the Lord, we are given the sobering liturgical memorial of one of the early deacons.

Stephen was elected by the 12 Apostles to care for the temporal needs of the poor through the distribution of food and clothing (Cf. Acts). He is the first almoner of the Church. Stephen performed many miracles and confounded the religious authorities in theological disputation while facing false charges. At his trial, Stephen preached the risen Jesus as the Christ to his detractors. He was stoned to death. He prayed for his persecutors as he was dying. One of those who conspired against Stephen was Saul of Tarsus, who later converted and became the great missionary, Saint Paul; he faced death, too, because his belief in Jesus as Messiah.

Saint Peter Damian thus begins his Sermon for this Feast: “We are holding in our arms the Son of the Virgin, and are honoring, with our caresses, this our Infant God. The holy Virgin has led us to the dear Crib. The most beautiful of the Daughters of men has brought us to the most beautiful among the Sons of men, [Ps. xliv. 3.] and the Blessed among women to Him that is Blessed above all. She tell us ... that now the veils of prophecy are drawn aside, and the counsel of God is accomplished. ... Is there anything capable of distracting us from this sweet Birth? On what else shall we fix our eyes? ... Lo! whilst Jesus is permitting us thus to caress him; whilst he is overwhelming us with the greatness of these mysteries, and our hearts are riveted in admiration – there comes before us Stephen full of grace and fortitude, doing great wonders and signs among the people. [Acts, vi. 8.] Is it right, that we turn from our King, to look on Stephen, his soldier? No – unless the King himself bid us do so. This our King, who is Son of the King, rises ... to assist at the glorious combat of his servant. ... Let us go with him, and contemplate this standard-bearer of the Martyrs.”

Come to my assistance my Lord and my God, that I may do for You all that you ask. Strengthen me in adversity and do not let me succumb to my feelings of worthlessness. Help me to feel in my heart all that You speak to me, and help me to understand. May I be to others what they need: a body to work when others cannot; a heart to love those who are forgotten; a shoulder to console those whose soul is in need; a smile to brighten the most somber of Your children; a mouth to proclaim Your love. Let me be to You, as a brush is to a painter, worthless without You, but capable of transforming the human heart by the power of Your mercy. Send me, my Lord if you need me, to touch others as You would touch them, to hold them as You would, to love them as only You can. Make my heart like Yours, that I may forgive everything and love beyond my own human frailty. Come live within me, that I may die to myself so You may fill my very being. Let me serve others as You would serve them, that in doing so I may serve You. Do not let me fail, oh Lord, or lead Your people astray. Allow me to live in Your presence today, that tomorrow I may die in Your hands and may You raise me one day that I may touch your face and live in Your glory.

Saint Stephen, pray for us!

<http://communio.stblogs.org/index.php/tag/st-stephen/>

Letter from Fr. Ray Dec. 27, 2015

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

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

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM! Yes, new calendar, old calendar, Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Jew, Buddhist, Hindu, believer, non-believer, holy ones, sinners, young and old, everyone on this earth knows it is Christmas! I firmly believe that every single person on this planet, whether they say they believe or not, are affected and changed by Christmas, by the coming of the new King. *Z Nami Boh, God is with us!* Everyone on this earth, is indeed blessed and loved by Jesus, “Who will save them from their sins.”

He came quietly and humbly the first time, some 2015 years ago, and only a few people knew he was even born. After all these centuries, by now, many, many more, realize God has come to His people. Some are open and easily receive this glorious Good News and follow Jesus. Others harden their hearts and close their ears, and even rail against Him.....but everyone KNOWS! Merry Christmas, World!

We are told, and we believe, that Christ will come again, then in all His glory, surrounded by the angels and saints of heaven. When He comes then, everyone will definitely KNOW Him, and recognize Him clearly, as the Holy One. At that time all the peoples of this earth, and ‘all things visible and invisible’ will bow down and worship Him. Not only will everyone see Him clearly, but, then, at that Second Coming, everyone will believe. On that day, everyone will know and recognize “The King of Glory!”

Christmas Day 2015 has come and gone. I pray you are still basking in the beauty of the feast with your family and friends. Remember, for us Catholics, and Orthodox (new calendar), our celebration of the Holy Day has just begun. The business world will quickly switch gears to make it look as if Christmas never happened. However, our Christmas, our festal prayers, our bright lights, our greetings of the season, all continue until Feb. 2, the Feast of the

Encounter. So celebrate the Good News of Bethlehem!

Did you notice (listen to) the Gospel readings at Liturgy the last three days? On Christmas Day it was about the Visit of the Magi and Herod’s conniving to find and destroy the Baby Jesus. The second day was about the Flight into Egypt to keep the child safe. The third day, the feast of St. Stephen, we heard the parable of the evil vinedressers, who killed the son. How quickly the “Joy to the world, peace on earth” has changed to evil, fear and blood! But we must put aside all doubt and concern about this ‘bad stuff.’ We now live in the Promise of the Kingdom and have faith that the victory is already won. We ponder the good things, strive to overcome sin and evil, and always keep in our hearts the great promises of our God as we journey through this life. God is with us! “God is our pilot. Seeing that a pilot steers the ship in which we sail, who will never allow us to perish, even in the midst of shipwrecks, there is no reason why our minds should be overwhelmed with fear and overcome with weariness.”(Calvin)

As we go from day to day through this vale of tears, trusting in the Lord, there are always choices to be made. The old philosopher and giver of wisdom, Yogi Berra, once spoke of such choices when he said, “*When you come to a fork in the road take it!*” 😊 😊 Keeping in mind what I just wrote above, about how Christmas changes to the reality of life, and of our choices to be made, I think what I am about to write will make a few of you a bit sad. But don’t be! It will be ok! I’m at a fork in the road and I’m gonna take it! Because of some new and different priestly duties and assignments, this is my last weekly letter.

My first letter to you was on May 6, 2007 and for these 8 and a half years I’ve stood naked before you (sorry about that....50 years ago that wasn’t a bad sight, but now.... 😊). Actually, I’ve bared my soul to you on many occasions as I often shared my deepest thoughts about everything! I have loved walking hand in hand with you as we observed the events and occurrences of ‘these days of our lives.’

We have seen and shared the beauty of this world when I wrote of the Divine Artist and His stars and flowers and great, teeming oceans! We prayed: "Glory to You, O Lord! In Wisdom you have made them all!" We've shared our concerns, our families and our journey to the Kingdom. As priest, I have tried to show you, and make you aware of, the Glorious Good News of the Gospel, and how we live out our call as His disciples. We talked of the 'good, the bad, the ugly', and yes, even the face of evil! You heard priestly instruction and exhortation in these words. And most, I think, they were not my words, but truly the inspired words coming from God through my miserable self. Before I write or preach, I pray the words of Fr. Coniaris, "Lord, I am empty, fill me!" And He does! I admit, often I would read a letter I had written, and wondered where it had come from! He has blessed me, and through me, He has blessed you!

When I was in the seminary part of our daily rule was a time called "Magna Silencia," or "Great Silence." This was a time after study and night prayers when talking was prohibited in the dorms. This was a spiritual exercise for us, which was supposed to encourage us to pray about the day past as we prepared for the new day to come. At first I thought this was a cuckoo thing, but now I clearly see the beauty and value in it. No doubt the world needs some periods of "Great Silence!" Now I intend to add to this silence by avoiding becoming any more a part of the constant yapping and blather of the internet, TV and all the rest of the media. It is definitely time for some quiet contemplation and "Great Silence."

Before I go I must thank Father Procyk for giving me the space in his bulletins over these years. Also for his patience on those weekends when 'the presses' had to be held up as he waited for my copy. Usually, that was the fault of "Ol' Mr. Mac", known to most finicky just when it comes time to hit 'Print.' ☺

Thanks to you, My Dear Reader, and especially for your words of encouragement during these years. Your positive comments have always been my

ground and my reason for continuing. But now, I gotta go.... Someone once said, "It's better to bring one daisy, than to send a dozen roses." I intend to be delivering a lot of daisies in the near future, rather than sending roses! You might not always have a letter in your mailbox anymore, but you will definitely have a daisy in your hand!

On this last weekend of the year, as the carols of the world fade to the strains of "Auld Lang Syne," it is indeed a fitting time for my fork in the road, and a fitting time for that song. For it is a song of love and kindness of "Auld Lang Syne, of Days Gone By." It is also the union of family, friends and neighbors as we join hands and go forward. It is also a blessing and a fellowship to go to that future. As we sing that song, we must answer the question, "Should *auld* acquaintance be forgotten?" The answer is, of course, "NO!" Our friends must never be forgotten. I will never forget you! I know I will be thinking of you when I hear that song being sung on New Year's night! I will remember you always!

So I don't think God is willing for this anymore, and I see the creek is rising! So I will say, "Thanks for the memories!... Happy Trails to you!... I did it my way!.. Good night, Mrs. Calabash, wherever you are!" At this point the guy in the white hat is supposed to kiss his gal and head off into the sunset. Not here! I gladly kiss the gal, but we're off together.

My dear sister Mary, of blessed memory, regularly wrote to me when I was away from home. She always put in special quotes she found for me to ponder like this, "Many people will come in and out of your life, but a few will leave footprints on your heart." I hope my footprints are on yours....I know yours are on mine! So as our babies say, "Bye, see ya, love ya!" "Thank you! Love You! Bless You! Pray for You!" (Sr. Bridget) "Without life, nothing else matters!" (Stephenson Co. ProLife)

God bless you! Our Holy Lady keep you beneath the veil of her heavenly protection, today and always!

Love ya!
Fr. Ray,

VATICAN CITY -- Pope Francis issued a Christmas Day prayer that recent U.N.-backed peace agreements for Syria and Libya will quickly end the suffering of their people, denouncing the "monstrous evil" and atrocities they have endured and praising the countries that have taken in their refugees.

Speaking from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, Francis issued a plenary indulgence for Catholics in hopes of spreading the church's message of mercy in a world torn by war, poverty and extremist attacks. The sun-soaked Saint Peter's Square was under heavy security, as it has been since the Nov. 13 Paris attacks by Islamic extremists that left 130 dead.

An indulgence is an ancient church tradition related to the forgiveness of sins. Francis announced it after delivering his annual "Urbi et Orbi (To the city and the world)" speech listing global hotspots and his prayers for an end to human suffering.

Francis referred to the "brutal acts of terrorism" that struck the French capital this year as well as attacks in Egypt's airspace, in Beirut, Mali and Tunisia. He denounced the ongoing conflicts in Africa, the Middle East and Ukraine and issued consolation to Christians being persecuted for their faith in many parts of the planet.

"They are our martyrs of today," he said.

In an indirect reference to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), he said: "May the attention of the international community be unanimously directed to ending the atrocities which in those countries, as well as in Iraq, Libya, Yemen and sub-Saharan Africa, even now reap numerous victims, cause immense suffering and do not even spare the historical and cultural patrimony of entire peoples."

Francis said he hoped the plenary indulgence he issued for this, his Holy Year of Mercy, would

encourage the faithful "to welcome God's mercy in our lives, and be merciful with our brothers to make peace grow."

"Only God's mercy can free humanity from the many forms of evil, at times monstrous evil, which selfishness spawns in our midst," he said.

Libya has been in a state of lawlessness since dictator Moammar Gadhafi was overthrown in 2011. Syria has seen a five-year war that has killed over 250,000 people and forced millions to flee the country. The surge of refugees flowing out of Syria to Europe has created a migration crisis for the entire continent.

"We pray to the Lord that the agreement reached in the United Nations may succeed in halting as quickly as possible the clash

of arms in Syria and in remedying the extremely grave humanitarian situation of its suffering people," he said. "It is likewise urgent that the agreement on Libya be supported by all, so as to overcome the grave divisions and violence afflicting the country."

The pope called to mind the suffering of refugees and migrants fleeing their troubled homes, as well as others victimized by violence and greed. "Even today great numbers of men and women are deprived of their human dignity and, like the child Jesus, suffer cold, poverty, and rejection," he said. "May our closeness today be felt by those who are most vulnerable, especially child soldiers, women who suffer violence, and the victims of human trafficking and the drug trade."

Francis praised both individuals and countries that have taken in refugees fleeing "inhuman conditions," saying their generosity had helped the newcomers "build a dignified future for themselves and for their dear ones, and to be integrated in the societies which receive them."

(CBS/AP)



Послання наших владик на Різдво

Цього року Різдво нашого Господа і Спаси Ісуса Христа ми святкуємо в межах проголошеного Папою Франциском Святого Року. Цей надзвичайний ювілей присвячений Божественному Милосердю. Він починається на празник Непорочного Зачаття (8 грудня) і завершиться 20 листопада 2016 р. Наш Святіший Отець висловив надію, що вся Церква знайде «радість, яка необхідна, щоб заново відкрити і зробити плідним Милосердя Боже, з яким в наш час всі ми покликані нести розраду кожному чоловіку чи жінці». Папа Франциск закликає нас вийти в мандрівку, яка починається з духовного навернення. Він просить нас прожити цей рік в світлі Господніх слів: «Будьте милосердні, як і Отець ваш милосердний» (Лк. 6, 36).

Історія Різдва нашого Господа і Спаси Ісуса Христа проливає світло на те, як ми маємо приймати Боже милосердя, як маємо жити ним і свідчити про це оточуючому світу.

Боже милосердя проявляється в тому, як Він втрутився в народження Свого єдиного Сина, Ісуса, в такий же складний і випробувальний час, як і сьогоднішній. Ісус народився в стаєнці, бо для Нього не знайшлося місця в заїзді. Божа любов до людства не може бути зменшена через зайнятість світу. Боже милосердя не можна стримати. Чи є в нашому серці місце для Ісуса в зайнятості й завантаженості нашого графіку? Чи ми свідомі, як багато Божого милосердя оточує нас?

Ми вражені покірною пастирив, які відгукнулися на слова ангела і пішли шукати новонародженого Царя. Ми бачимо спокій і вмиротворення у простому й смиренному пошуку Ісуса. Три царі астрологи йдуть до Ісуса і вміло обминають повторну зустріч з Іродом, щоб уникнути розповіді про новонародженого. Відданість пошуку правди Євангелія і уникнення тих, які можуть відволікти нас від зустрічі з Ісусом, є для нас взірцем. Ми приходимо до усвідомлення, що помагає нам у зрозумінні й прийнятті Божого милосердя.

Влада в часи Ісуса не прагла пізнати Божу присутність і милосердя. Ви пам'ятаєте як Ірод наказав знищити всіх дітей до двох років, щоб позбутися Ісусової присутності. Сьогоднішній світ наповнений випадками і потугами суспільства позбавити Божої присутності наше оточення. Егоїстичні владці намагаються захопити владу над іншими, щоб розвинути свою ідеологію і розбудувати імперії. Ми бачимо це в нашій дорогій Україні, в Сирії і сусідніх з нею країнах, в інших частинах світу. Ми схилиємося перед сьогоднішніми свідченнями мучеників за віру, які боронять права віруючих. Вони розкривають милосердя Небесного Отця і закликають нас наслідувати їх у виявах милосердя.

Йосиф покірно прислухався до застереження ві сні й, попрямувавши до Єгипту, захистив Ісуса та Його

Матір Марію. Ми покликані зрозуміти становище сьогоднішніх біженців у світлі свідчення Божого милосердя до Йосифа, Марії та Ісуса, які також були біженцями. Наша відповідь біженцям має бути не менша, ніж та, яку наш Отець Небесний дав Святій Родині.

Папа Франциск говорить нам про подорож, яка веде до духовного навернення. Пригадайте, як Ісус ще хлопчиком відстав від Святої Родини, коли вони поверталися через пустелю. Батьки знайшли Ісуса в храмі, він навчав інших. Коли ви чи я втрачаємо сенс життя, чи нашу дорогу посеред зайнятості та спокус щодення, ми можемо знайти Ісуса Христа в Його храмі, в Його святій Церкві. Боже милосердя присутнє і проявляється в Його святій Церкві і через Його служителів. Ісус посеред нас! Боже милосердя чекає, коли зможе щедро вилитися на вас, як ви ввійдете в глибоку подорож віри. Ця подорож має розпочатися з частішого прийняття нами таїнства сповіді. Боже милосердя розкривається, коли Він чує про наш жаль за здійснені гріхи. У своїй любові до вас, висловленій через Його священників, Бог відкриває Своє зрозуміння і любов. Бог скеровує вас до відновленого життя в Ньому через співчутливі поради священників та накладені покути. Боже милосердя сходить на вас, коли ви отримуєте відпущення гріхів.

Папа Франциск просить, щоб двері кожного дому стали «дверима милосердя». Запевніться, що двері вашого дому, двері ваших церков і двері вашого серця широко відкриті для відображення милосердя нашого Небесного Отця. Виявіть Боже милосердя запрошуючи і показуючи іншим, знайомим і не знайомим, Божі Святі Двері, які ведуть до Божого милосердя.

Ми присяднемося до нашого Святішого Отця, ввіряючи цей Новий Рік Матері Милосердя, «щоб вона звернула свій погляд на нас і заопікувалася нашою подорожжю». Двері сердець і думок єпископів нашої Української Католицької Церкви в США широко відкриті для проявів любові та вдячності всім вам, вірним нашої Церкви. Ми пам'ятаємо про вас у наших молитвах зі смиренням складених перед Ісусом Христом у спільному святкуванні з вами Його народження. Нехай кожен з нас зростає в своїй відкритості до отримання Божого милосердя. Приймімо випробування – бути такими ж милосердними, як наш Отець Небесний. Щоб ми раділи живому запевненню і засвідченню проявів Божого милосердя в житті світу.

З радістю уділяємо наше єпископське благословення всім, хто святкує Різдво нашого Господа і Спаси Ісуса Христа, входячи в ювілейний рік активного пошуку духовного навернення.

**Христос Раждається!
Славте Його!**

(Слідують підписи владик)

From "Good Samaritan" Ukr. Radio program

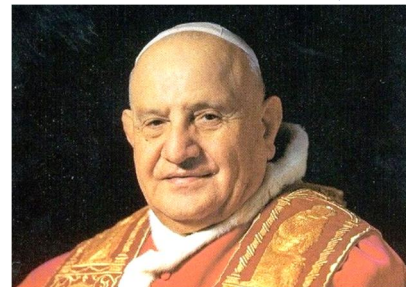
Christ is born – let us glorify Him! It is hard to believe this week will already mark the start of a brand New Year unfolding. Lord, let this year be filled with the things that are truly good, with the comfort of warmth in our relationships, with the strength to help those who need our compassion, and the humility and openness to accept help from others. As we make our resolutions for the year ahead, let us go forward with great hope that all things can be possible - with the Lord's help and guidance to lead our way. It was Pope John XXIII who once wrote in his New Year's address:

"May the Lord banish from the hearts of all men and women whatever might endanger peace. May He transform them into witnesses of truth, justice and love. May He enkindle the rulers of peoples so that in addition to their solicitude for the proper welfare of their citizens, they may guarantee and defend the great gift of peace. May He enkindle the wills of all so that they may overcome the barriers that divide, embrace the bonds of mutual charity, understand others, and pardon those who have done them wrong. May all peoples of the earth become as brothers and sisters, and may the most longed-for peace blossom forth and reign always among men and women."

On January 1st, we often think of New Year's resolutions, because celebrating the start of a new calendar year for many people, feels like a new beginning or perhaps a start to something better. However, when we speak of New Year's resolutions we should also keep in mind our resolve as Christians to improve our relationships not only with one another - but also with God. I am reminded of the third chapter in the Book of Proverbs, where Solomon, the son of David, begins with: "My child, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity in the Lord. Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge the Lord and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord

and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your spirit. Blessed is the man or woman who finds wisdom and gains understanding, for this is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations, by understanding He set the heavens in place. My child, preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbor, 'Come back later; I will give it tomorrow,' when you now have it with you". The chapter goes on to teach us many valuable lessons on how we should lead our lives in the sight of God. And in the wake of this New Year, let us resolve to pay close attention and adherence to these principles and see just what the good Lord can do in our lives.

Leonard was very proud of his nine-year-old daughter, Emily. Determined to buy a mountain bike, she had been saving her allowance all year long, as well as doing small jobs around the neighborhood to earn extra money. By Thanksgiving, she had accumulated only \$49. Teasingly, Leonard said, "You know that you have your pick from my antique bicycle collection." "Thanks, Dad. But your bikes are a little too old for me." And Emily was right. All of Leonard's bikes were 1970's models. As Christmas approached, Emily and her father went bike shopping. Still short of her goal, she picked out several less expensive models for which she might settle. As they left one store, Emily noticed a Salvation Army volunteer standing next to a big red kettle, exuberantly ringing his bell. "Can we give something, Dad?" Emily asked. But Leonard was out of change and did not have anything to offer the man. Throughout December, Emily continued to work hard. And then one day, she made a startling announcement. "You know all the money that I have been saving?" she said without hesitation. "I am going to give it to the people who are really in need". "That's very kind", Leonard said. "But you have been saving all year long. Maybe you could just give part of it." But Emily shook her head. So the following morning, just before Christmas, Emily handed her entire savings of \$65 to a very grateful Salvation Army



volunteer. Moved by Emily's selflessness, Leonard decided to donate one of his antique bicycles to a car dealer who was collecting used bikes for children in need. As Leonard selected a shiny model bike from his collection, it seemed as if a second bike took on a glow. At first, Leonard did not wish to donate two bikes, but as he went to load one bike into his car, he found himself taking two bicycles to donate. When Leonard delivered the bikes, the car dealer told him that these bikes would make two less fortunate children very happy for Christmas. And he handed Leonard two tickets, one for each bicycle that he donated. Tickets to be used for a chance to win a brand new men's 21-speed bike! Days passed and the New Year came, when Leonard received a special notice through the mail. It came as no surprise to Leonard when the second ticket proved to be a winner. Leonard was very pleased when the shop owner happily substituted a beautiful girl's mountain bike for the one advertised. Coincidence? Maybe! But Leonard likes to think it was

God's way of rewarding a young lady for making a sacrifice well beyond her years - while giving her father a very valuable lesson in the process.

One of the most comforting thoughts we have to take into the New Year is that Jesus loves us and cares for us. There is not a person upon the earth for whom He fails to love. No matter where we live, regardless of who we are, Christ has a place for each of us in His heart. The idea of "place" seems important in the Gospel of St. Matthew, where we read of Bethlehem, the place of our Lord's birth and Egypt, the place of His refuge. Let us not forget Nazareth, in Galilee, that remained important not only at the beginning, but also at the very end - when Jesus was crucified. Place is important to God! The place where you are right now is important to God, wherever you may be: Perhaps a small town, a large city, or even a rural farm community. It may be a city where you barely know your neighbors. It may be a nursing home or even a homeless shelter, far from what you may consider "Home". But, trust our Lord lives there and welcomes your Spirit. For that place, wherever we may be, is always important to God. May you know in these days just after Christmas, and before the start of the coming New Year, that Jesus was born so that God would not dwell in some far off Kingdom, not in some distant place, but rather here with you and me.

10 Things God wants you to remember

- I will give you rest.
- I will strengthen you.
- I will answer you.
- I believe in you.
- I will bless you.
- I am for you.
- I will not fail you.
- I will provide for you.
- I will be with you
- I love you.



Wherever we are, Jesus longs to be born there. This is the Word given to us in the very first chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, when an Angel appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife", the Angel said, "For the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit, and they shall name Him Emmanuel", which means God is with us!

If the New Year were something tangible, some spark of the divine that could speak to us, perhaps it would say: I am the New Year. I am an unspoiled page in your book of time. I am your next chance at the art of living. I am your opportunity to practice what you have learned about life during the last twelve months. All that you sought and did not find is hidden in me, waiting for you to search it but with more determination. All the good that you tried for and did not achieve is mine to grant when you have fewer conflicting desires. All that you dreamed but did not dare to do, all that you hoped but did not will, all the faith that you claimed but did not have—these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened by the touch of a strong purpose. I am your opportunity to renew your faith in the Lord who said, "Behold, I make all things new". St. Paul's letter to the Hebrews reminds us that: "Nothing on earth can separate us from the love of Christ. Not finances. Not disappointment. Not rejection. Not failure. Nothing." (Romans 8:31-39). As we swiftly approach the coming New Year, I pray that each of us will feel the joy of knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of Jesus. The Lord is in our homes, in our hearts, in the family and friends that we hold dear, and in the simple things of life that mean so much to us.

So today and throughout this coming New Year, I pray you have enough happiness to keep you kind. Enough trials to keep you strong; Enough sorrow to keep you human; Enough hope to keep you happy; Enough weakness to keep you humble; Enough success to keep you thankful; Enough friends to give you comfort; Enough wealth to meet your needs; Enough enthusiasm to make you look forward to tomorrow, and enough determination to make each day better than the day before. My brothers and sisters, as we will soon celebrate with our friends and family the blessing of yet another New Year, may the peace and love of the Christ child, the gift of this Holy Season, be with you always.

Pope Francis' Christmas Eve homily



Vatican City • The following is the Vatican's official English translation of Pope Francis' Christmas Eve Mass homily, which he delivered in Italian:

"Tonight, 'a great light' shines forth (Isaiah 9:1); the light of Jesus' birth shines all about us. How true and timely are the words of the prophet Isaiah which we have just heard: 'You have brought abundant joy and great rejoicing' (9:2)! Our heart was already joyful in awaiting this moment; now that joy abounds and overflows, for the promise has been at last fulfilled. Joy and gladness are a sure sign that the message contained in the mystery of this night is truly from God. There is no room for doubt; let us leave that to the skeptics who, by looking to reason alone, never find the truth. There is no room for the indifference which reigns in the hearts of those unable to love for fear of losing something. All sadness has been banished, for the Child Jesus brings true comfort to every heart.

Today, the Son of God is born, and everything changes. The Savior of the world comes to partake of our human nature; no longer are we alone and forsaken. The Virgin offers us her Son as the beginning of a new life. The true light has come to illumine our lives so often beset by the darkness of sin. Today we once more discover who we are! Tonight we have been shown the way to reach the journey's end. Now must we put away all fear and dread, for the light shows us the path to Bethlehem. We must not be laggards; we are not permitted to stand idle. We must set out to see our Savior lying in a manger. This is the reason for our joy and gladness: this

Child has been 'born to us'; he was 'given to us', as Isaiah proclaims (cf. 9:5). The people who for two thousand years has traversed all the pathways of the world in order to allow every man and woman to share in this joy is now given the mission of making known 'the Prince of peace' and becoming his effective servant in the midst of the nations.

So when we hear tell of the birth of Christ, let us be silent and let the Child speak. Let us take his words to heart in rapt contemplation of his face. If we take him in our arms and let ourselves be embraced by him, he will bring us unending peace of heart. This Child teaches us what is truly essential in our lives. He was born into the poverty of this world; there was no room in the inn for him and his family. He found shelter and support in a stable and was laid in a manger for animals. And yet, from this nothingness, the light of God's glory shines forth. From now on, the way of authentic liberation and perennial redemption is open to every man and woman who is simple of heart. This Child, whose face radiates the goodness, mercy and love of God the Father, trains us, his disciples, as Saint Paul says, 'to reject godless ways' and the richness of the world, in order to live 'temperately, justly and devoutly' (Titus 2:12).

In a society so often intoxicated by consumerism and hedonism, wealth and extravagance, appearances and narcissism, this Child calls us to act soberly, in other words, in a way that is simple, balanced, consistent, capable of seeing and doing what is essential. In a world which all too often is merciless to the sinner and lenient to the sin, we need to cultivate a strong sense of justice, to discern and to do God's will. Amid a culture of indifference which not infrequently turns ruthless, our style of life should instead be devout, filled with empathy, compassion and mercy, drawn daily from the wellspring of prayer.

Like the shepherds of Bethlehem, may we too, with eyes full of amazement and wonder, gaze upon the Child Jesus, the Son of God. And in his presence may our hearts burst forth in prayer: 'Show us, Lord, your mercy, and grant us your salvation' (Psalms 85:8)."