

## THE OLYMPICS MUST STOP SILENCING the FALLEN

The Ukrainian World Congress calls on the International Olympic Committee to immediately reverse its decision to bar Ukrainian athlete Vladyslav Heraskevych for honoring athletes killed by Russia's war.

We call on people around the world to join us in protesting this decision and demanding Vladyslav's reinstatement by posting the message "Remembrance is NOT a violation."

Remembrance is not a breach of Olympic values. Punishing it is. Heraskevych's gesture was not political. It was human. The names he displayed belonged to athletes who should be competing today and are absent only because Russia took their lives. Forbidding this acknowledgment denies the reality of the war and its toll on Ukraine's sporting community.

This decision defies Olympic precedent. Acts of remembrance and solidarity have long been part of Olympic history and have not been met with censure or exclusion. Singling out a Ukrainian athlete exposes a double standard that undermines the IOC's claim to neutrality.

UWC President Paul Grod stated:

"Honoring murdered athletes is a moral obligation. The IOC's decision sends a devastating message that the memory of those killed by Russia's war is less important than avoiding discomfort for the aggressor."

By punishing remembrance, the IOC rewards aggression and tells athletes that truth must be hidden when it is inconvenient. The Ukrainian World Congress urges the IOC to reverse this decision and reaffirm that remembrance strengthens, rather than violates, the Olympic spirit.

Honor the fallen. Let their absence be seen. Their silence is the consequence of Russia's war, and it must not be ignored.

@iocofficial still don't know what they've brought upon themselves. After the committee barred Ukrainian skeleton racer Vladyslav Heraskevych from wearing a helmet honoring Ukrainians killed by Russia, his fellow athletes have started speaking out in support of him and protesting the IOC's decision.

Now Ukrainian defenders have joined the flash mob in solidarity. Because memory can't be silenced! The world must look into the eyes of the victims of Russian aggression.

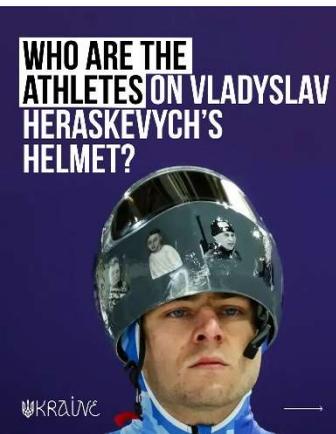


Earlier Ukrainian Olympic athlete **Olena Smaha** expressed her support for fellow athlete Vladyslav Heraskevych by writing a message for the IOC on her glove.

Meanwhile Ukrainian alpine skier **Dmytro Shepiuk** supported Heraskevych with a message "Ukr heroes with us" after his super-G performance.

REMEMBRANCE IS NOT A VIOLATION!  
MEMORY CAN'T BE SILENCED!

Владислав Гераскевич:  
"Світ має знати ціну свободи"  
Олена Смага: "Пам'ять - це не порушення правил"



**WHO ARE THE ATHLETES ON VLADYSLAV HERASKEVYCH'S HELMET?**

**MALYSHEV YEVHEN, 19 Y.O.**  
**Biathlon**  
Junior national team athlete, Youth Olympics competitor, defender. Killed Feb 2022 in a battle for Kharkiv.

**SHARPAR DMYTRO, 25 Y.O.**  
**Figure skating**  
Ukrainian championship medalist and defender. Killed in 2022 near Bakhmut.

**ISHCHENKO PAVLO**  
**Strongman**  
Multiple-time Ukrainian and European champion, defender. Killed in 2022 during a combat mission.

**DIACHENKO KATERYNA, 11 Y.O.**  
**Rhythmic gymnastics**  
Killed in 2022 after Russia's bombing of Mariupol.

**IVASHKO VIKTORIA, 9 Y.O.**  
**Judo**  
Killed in 2022 with her mother in Russian strike on Kyiv.

**LEBID MARIA, 15 Y.O.**  
**Ballroom dance**  
Killed in 2023 in Russian strike on Dnipro.

№ 07 FEBRUARY 15 2026

## SAINT NICHOLAS UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



## УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА ЦЕРКВА СЬЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ

№ 07 ПІД ОПІКОЮ ПРЕЧИСТОЇ ДІВИ МАРІЇ ОДІГІТРИЇ UNDER THE PROTECTION OF MOTHER OF GOD



CHURCH BULLETIN February 15 - 2026 - 15 лютого ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК

**TROIAN KATERYNA «МІАУ», 32 Y.O.**  
**Track & field**  
Athlete and drone operator with 1,000+ missions. Killed 2025 in combat, near Pokrovsk.

**ANDROSHCHUK VOLODYMYR, 22 Y.O.**  
**Track & field**  
Ukrainian decathlon champion, defender. Killed in action in 2023 near Bakhmut.

**HABAROV OLEKSIY 31 Y.O.**  
**Shooting**  
Master of Sport, national record holder, national team member, defender. Killed in action in 2025.

**KURDEL DARIA, 20 Y.O.**  
**Dance**  
Multiple-time winner of international sports dance competitions. Killed in 2023 in Russia's attack on Kryvyi Rih.

**KONONENKO IVAN**  
**Strongman, actor, defender.**  
Killed in action in 2023.

**PEREHUDOVA ALINA, 14 Y.O.**  
**Weightlifting**  
Killed in 2022 with her mother after Russia's shelling of Mariupol.

**HALINICHEV MAKSYM, 22 Y.O.**  
**Boxing**  
European youth champion, Youth Olympics silver medalist. Killed March 10, 2023, in the Luhansk region.

**KUTSENKO ANDRIY, 34 Y.O.**  
**Cycling**  
Multiple Ukrainian champion, defender. Killed in action in 2022.

**LOGINOV OLEKSIY, 23 Y.O.**  
**Hockey**  
Youth national champion goalkeeper, defender. Killed in action in 2022.

**BAKHUR KARYNA, 17 Y.O.**  
**Kickboxing**  
Ukrainian and European champion. Killed Nov 18, 2025 in Russian missile strike on the Kharkiv region.

**KOZUBENKO MYKYTA, 31 Y.O.**  
**Diving**  
Master of sport and coach, defender. Killed in action in 2022.

**POLISHCHUK ROMAN**  
**Track & field**  
Long jumper, defender. Killed in action in 2022.



Пишаймося і дякуймо Владиславу Гераскевичу і тим, хто підтримав цього відважного Українця нової генерації! Слава Україні! Героям Слава!

**YAREMENKO ANDRIY, 25 Y.O.**  
**Greco-Roman wrestling**  
Killed Dec 4, 2025 in combat as drone operator.

**SHPUK TARAS, 34 Y.O.**  
**Invictus Games coach**  
Veteran and sports advocate, defender. Killed in action in 2024.

**YEFIFANOV FEDIR, 18 Y.O.**  
**Fencing**  
National champion fencer, defender. Killed in action in 2022.

# CHURCH BULLETIN

February 15 – 2026 – 15 лютого  
ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК  
LITURGICAL SCHEDULE



## St. Nicholas Ukr. Cath. Church Церква Святого Миколая (Під Опікою П.Д.М.) ПОРЯДОК СВ. ЛІТУРГІЙ

Saturday, February 14 лютого, субота  
4:30 PM +Michael Petryshyn **STREAMING**  
(Maria, children and grandchildren)

15 лютого: М'ясопуста неділя **STREAMING**  
February 15: Meatfare Sunday

10:00 AM +Корнелія Налисник – 40 день  
Monday, February 16 лютого, понеділок

Tuesday, February 17 лютого, вівторок  
8:00 AM За прославу Сл. Б. Патріярха Йосифа  
For the beatification of Patriarch Josyf

Wednesday, February 18 лютого, середа  
9:00 AM За всіх хворих і немічних  
For all sick & suffering

Thursday, February 19 лютого, четвер

Friday, February 20 лютого, п'ятниця  
9:00 AM +Marija Dranka (Family)

Saturday, February 21 лютого, субота  
9:00 AM For Parishioners – За Парохіян  
4:30 PM +Wasył R. Puhacz – 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary  
(Family) **STREAMING**

22 лютого: Сиропузна неділя **STREAMING**  
February 22: Cheesefare (Forgiveness) Sunday  
10:00 AM +Стефанія Козодій (р. Середюк) – 40 день

Eternal Light burns  
In memory of +Kami  
(Elaine Nowadly)

Eternal Light Honoring Mother of God  
burns for Special Intention  
(Maria Petryshyn)

Pray for victory and peace in Ukraine!  
Помолімся за перемогу і мир в Україні!

Ukrainian Cultural Center “Dnipro”  
Український Культурний Центр «ДНІПРО»  
562 Genesee Street – Buffalo, NY 14204 – (716) 856-4476

**Annual Meeting Notice**  
Sunday, February 15, 2026, at 1:00pm  
All Members welcome!

**Річні Збори**  
Неділя, 15 лютого 2026 о 1:00 дня  
Всі члени запрошені!

**Our Annual Parish Meeting**  
Will be held Sunday, February 22, 2026,  
after the Divine Liturgy at 10 AM. In the  
beginning, we will start in the church with  
some explanation that everybody should  
hear, and afterward, we will continue in the  
church hall having our usual coffee hour.  
Please plan on attending!  
\*\*\* \*\*

**Наші Річні Загальні Збори**  
Відбудуться у неділю 22 лютого 2026,  
по св. Літургії о 10-й годині. Починаємо з  
коротким поясненням у церкві, а потім  
перейдемо надолину, де продовжимо  
при каві і солодкому.  
Просимо усіх взяти участь!

All Lenten services will be done according to  
the revised Julian Calendar, since officially  
in this Parish we follow Ukraine. This year it  
is a week apart from the Gregorian Calendar,  
which means that  
**Lent will begin on Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>.**  
Palm Sunday will be on April 5<sup>th</sup> and  
Easter on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

Christina H. Arthurs, Attorney  
716.853.5100 or carthurs@lippes.com  
Estate Planning & Probate | Real Estate  
Immigration | Corporate

**Lippes Mathias**  
Wexler Friedman LLP  
Albany | Buffalo | Florida | New York | Toronto Area | Washington, D.C.  
lippes.com  
Attorney Advertising.  
Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome.

**KARYCZAK'S**  
AUTOMOTIVE  
995 ABBOTT ROAD • BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14220

**Dayton** COMPLETE AUTO REPAIRS / N.Y.S. INSPECTION •  
FOREIGN & DOMESTIC CARS •  
TRANSMISSION ADJUSTMENTS & REPAIRS •  
WHEEL ALIGNMENTS & TIRES •  
**TIRES** BATTERIES / AIR CONDITIONING & ACCESSORIES •  
MUFFLER & EXHAUST SYSTEMS •

TOWING SERVICE - ALL WORK GUARANTEED

822-1574 FAX 825-7428 827-8895

Proud to Support  
St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church

**BUSZKA FUNERAL HOME**  
COMMITMENT TO CARING

**Buszka Funeral Home**  
Director Peter D. Stachowski  
2005 Clinton Street at S. Ogden, Buffalo New York 14206  
(716) 825-7777 www.buszkafuneralhome.com  
Another location at:  
2085 Union Rd., West Seneca, one block North of Clinton.

New spacious location, fresh and modern facility. On  
site Chapel is separated from large viewing rooms.  
Lower level has a new café plus a reception hall  
for family use.

**Сердечна подяка усім спонсорам!**

**Howard Hanna**  
Real Estate Services  
Ask me about  
the 100% Money  
Back Guarantee!

**JENNY PFEIFFER-NOWADLY**  
Licensed Associate Real Estate Broker

4909 Transit Road • Depew, NY 14043  
Cell: 716.523.6693  
Office: 716.656.8999 • Fax: 716.825.4911  
jennypfeiffer@howardhanna.com  
HowardHanna.com

PHONE 893-1025

**Fusani & Kuhn's Monuments, Inc.**

ASK FOR TOM

2398 GENESEE ST.  
BUFFALO, N.Y. 14225

Wilhelmina E. Klimeczko  
Janine R. Klimeczko  
Michael A. Klimeczko  
Licensed Directors

**Pietszak**  
Funeral Home

www.Pietszak.com (716) 897-2400

*Continuing a Tradition of  
thoughtful Personalized Service*

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

**Thanks are extended to all Sponsors!**

MARY KAY

Ulana Scheidle

Independent Beauty Consultant



(716) 628-7882

(716) 309-2772

uscheidle@verizon.net

www.marykay.com/uscheidle

Contact me for a complimentary facial

**EURO DELI AND GIFTS**

www.eurodelisausage.com



LUNCHES & SANDWICHES SERVED DAILY

For All of Your Old World Favorite Products, Just Around The Corner. Stop In & Take a Look.

Many Varieties of:

- Bologna • Salami • Fresh Polish Sausage • Head Cheese • Garlic Sausage • Smoked Fish
- European Beer • Kefir/Butter • Condiments • Pierogi (Homemade) - Many Varieties
- Smoked Sausages • Bacon (Bozek) • Canadian Bacon • Blood Kishka (Homemade)
- Polish Hams • Caviar • Kvas Drink • Cheese • European Chocolates • Pickles/Tomatoes

4166 Union Rd., Cheektowaga, NY (In Airport Plaza) 630-0130

2321 Millersport Hwy. Amherst (Getzville Plaza) 688-1495

PROFESSIONAL COLLISION SERVICES & MORE

**RED STAR**

Nick Hurmak OWNER (716) 316-2540

Alexander Arutunian MANAGER (716) 578-8185

112 DELAWARE STREET TONAWANDA, NY 14150 FAX: (716) 260-1254

www.redstarautomotive.com

**UKRAINIAN FEDERAL CREDIT UNION** **УКРАЇНСЬКА ФЕДЕРАЛЬНА КРЕДИТНА СПІЛКА**

Become a member of Ukrainian FCU and save money with lower rates on loans, make money with higher interest on your savings, and save time with our convenient online services!

PERSONAL & BUSINESS FINANCIAL SERVICES  
 SAVINGS & CHECKING ACCOUNTS | SHARE CERTIFICATES | MONEY MARKET | IRA | LOANS | MORTGAGES | VISA CREDIT & DEBIT CARDS | MONEYGRAM | INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC WIRE TRANSFERS | ONLINE SERVICES | [NOTARY PUBLIC | TRANSLATIONS | SCHOLARSHIPS] ПЕРСОНАЛЬНІ ТА БІЗНЕСОВІ ФІНАНСОВІ ПОСЛУГИ ОЩАДНІ ТА ЧЕКОВІ РАХУНКИ | СЕРТИФІКАТИ | М.М | ПЕНСІЙНІ РАХУНКИ | ПОЗИКИ | КРЕДИТИ НА НЕРУХОМІСТЬ | ПЛАТІЖНІ КАРТКИ VISA | MONEYGRAM | ГРОШОВІ ПЕРЕКАЗИ | ЕЛЕКТРОННІ ПОСЛУГИ | ПОСЛУГИ НОТАРІУСА | ПЕРЕКЛАДИ | СТИПЕНДІЇ

<p>Buffalo Branch                  Ukrainian Home Dnipro                  562 Genesee Street                  Buffalo NY 14204                  (716) 847-6655                  www.ukrainianfcu.org</p>	<p>Amherst Branch                  Ellicott Creek Plaza                  2882 Niagara Falls Blvd                  Amherst NY 14228                  (716) 799-8385                  www.ukrainianfcu.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 - 6 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.

DNIPRO  ДНІПРО  
 Ukrainian Cultural Center  
 562 Genesee St. Buffalo, NY 14204 856-4476  
 www.UkrainiansOfBuffalo.com  
 facebook.com/DniproUkrainianCulturalCenter  
 Lounge is OPEN every Friday 5-9 pm.  
 Підтримайте Ваш Народний Дім

Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>

11am - 5pm

at Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Church Hall  
 200 Como Park Ave. Cheektowaga, NY 14227



**PIEROGI EASTER FEST**

AID For UKRAINE Fundraiser

Potato, Cheese & Kraut Pierogi

- Cabbage Rolls
- Borscht
- Cakes & Cookies
- Shish Kebobs
- Sauerkraut & Sausage
- Easter Bread (paska)
- Basket Raffle
- Ukrainian Souvenirs

**Dine-In or Take-Out**

Pre-order To-Go Cabbage Rolls & Pierogi - Text to 716-324-6625

www.UkrainiansofBuffalo.com/fundraiser2026  
 Make checks payable to: Aid for Ukraine UFCU  
 Account # 1101037710 c/o Ukrainian Federal Credit Union  
 562 Genesee St. Buffalo, NY 14204  
 www.PayPal.com/fundraiser/charity/1438034



Sponsored by Buffalo Area Ukrainian Churches and Organizations

We prepare varenyky on Saturdays:  
 (8 am - 1 pm)

- February 14 лютого
- February 28 лютого
- March 14 березня

Ліпимо вареники по суботах  
 (8:00 - 13:00)

Просимо прийти і допомогти!  
 Please come and extend helping hand!

If you have any questions that you would like to have answered, please write them down and place in your church envelopes.

Якщо маєте якісь питання і хотіли би одержати відповіді на них, просимо записати і поставити до кошика.

**UKRAINIAN DANCE LESSONS!**  
 For Kids Ages 5-16

**Dnipro Ukrainian Cultural Center**  
**WEDNESDAYS 6-7 PM**  
 562 Genesee St., Buffalo, NY 14204  
 For more information email: vyshnya.lara@gmail.com

**Українські Танці**  
 для дітей 5-16 років

Починаючи з 28 січня  
 Кожної середи 18:00-19:00

Український культурний центр «Дніпро»  
 562 Genesee St., Buffalo, NY

- Навчання народних танців
- Розвиток ритму, координації та любові до української культури
- Дружня атмосфера

Для додаткової інформації звертайтеся:  
 vyshnya.lara@gmail.com

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Performing the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy are ways we can show our love for the Lord because by practicing them we are doing our best to follow Christ's command to love our neighbors as ourselves. This week I will be writing about the next two Spiritual Works which are to Counsel the doubtful and to Instruct the ignorant.

To counsel the doubtful means to help people who are struggling with their faith, or by helping them to make some type of faith based moral decision. Not every problem is serious and all of us, at times, have doubts about our faith, but some doubts about the faith are serious and some of life's problems are very difficult. Those types of doubts should not be ignored. In order to provide guidance in serious matters, we need to understand what it means when we recite the Creed, which we do at every Liturgy. We also need to know what the Church teaches about matters of the faith and the various ethical problems in our society today. Two resources that can provide us with that type of information are: The Catechism of the Catholic Church and our own Ukrainian Catholic Catechism which is titled Christ our Pascha. Becoming familiar with those books can not only help us understand our faith but they will also strengthen it.

When someone we know asks us to help them with a dilemma, be it the existence of God or some type of ethical or moral decision they are facing and we don't have an answer, we need to be honest by telling them we are not sure. It's better to say you don't know than to come up with an answer off the top of your head that either goes against the teachings of the Church or drives the person you are trying to help away from it. After saying that, immediately go and try and help them find an answer to their problem. This can be done by using one of the catechisms mentioned earlier or by referring them to a priest, family member or a faith based social worker. I think it goes without saying that by referring them to others, I mean for you to give them the names of other people you think might be better able to help. I do not mean that we should be telling other people about someone else's problems. We also should never forget the power of prayer. Asking our Lord for guidance is never a bad idea.

Instructing the Ignorant or to use another word, the uninformed, is another Act of Mercy that requires us to have a good working knowledge of our faith along with sacred scripture, in particular the New Testament. It is our responsibility to bring our children up in the faith, and it is also our responsibility to answer the questions they

may have or those of anyone else who might be curious about what we believe. Being familiar with the Catechism will help us to answer those questions and Lent is a great time to read the catechism. We should also be familiar with sacred scripture. A good way to do that is to read the Epistle and Gospel passages for each day. If you have a church calendar those readings are provided at the bottom of each day. Saint Jerome said "Ignorance of the Scriptures is Ignorance of Christ." If we do not spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to our family and friends, who will? (Deacon David)

From the Catechism: "Christ Our Pascha"

### The Role of Icons in Prayer

**592** An icon is written (painted) in prayer and for prayer. To recognize and understand an icon one needs to contemplate it prayerfully. Someone who only views an icon will understand it only as a work of art. The process of contemplating an icon needs to be learned. The word "contemplation" here means "to look to the depth." The first step toward contemplation is to concentrate the gaze on the icon. Thus, we place a lamp before the icon—a sign of divine light. Concentration leads to interior silence. When we raise our gaze to the icon, we see a figure or group of figures. The inscription on the icon informs us as to whom or what event we are gazing.

**593** The person of Christ is depicted on the icon with certain recognizable signs. One of these signs is the cross-in-halo around the head of Christ. Within this halo is the Greek inscription  $\theta\ \omega\nu$  (ho On), which means The-One-Who-Is (see Ex 3:14). Christ is usually depicted in a red tunic, covered with a blue mantle. The royal red of the tunic signifies the divine nature of Christ, which in his Incarnation was clad in his human nature, represented by the blue mantle. In icons of the Transfiguration, Resurrection, Ascension, and Fearful Judgment, as well as icons of the Christ-Child with the Mother of God, the vestments of Christ are depicted in gold or white, signifying the divine nature and the glorified human nature of Christ.

**594** The Mother of God is depicted on icons in a red veil that covers her head and shoulders, a symbol of the divine grace with which God fully gifted her. The veil covers a blue tunic, a symbol of her humanity. On her forehead and shoulders are three gold stars that symbolize her perpetual virginity. She is a "virgin before childbirth, a virgin in childbirth, and remains a virgin after childbirth."



- **CHURCH KITCHEN is now CLOSED**  
Check with us later – Things might change.
- Thank you for your help and patronage!
- Thanks are extended to all volunteers!
- Coffee Hour - Usually Every Sunday after Liturgy in Church Hall.

**See you there!**  
**HAVE A BLESSED DAY!!!**

### Sunday of Last Judgement



### Неділя Страшного Суду

**Ukrainian American Freedom Foundation**  
501C3 Tax Deductible Charity accepting donations.

**Renovate  
Dnipro**



**Humanitarian  
Aid to Ukraine**

UAFF-Dnipro 562 Genesee St. Buffalo, NY 14204

[www.UkrainiansOfBuffalo.com](http://www.UkrainiansOfBuffalo.com)

[facebook.com/UkrainiansOfBuffalo.com](https://facebook.com/UkrainiansOfBuffalo.com)

(716) 847-1281

Організація Оборони Чотирьох Свобід України

ODFFU – Buffalo, NY – Branch # 22

Emil Bandriwsky, President

CHURCH BULLETIN is published weekly.  
Deadline for information is Thursday evening.  
ЦЕРК. ВІСНИК видається тижнево.  
Інформації просимо подавати до четверга.

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

Par. E-Mail: - [stnbuffalo@gmail.com](mailto:stnbuffalo@gmail.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: No fax number

Kitchen: 852-1908

➔ **In Emergency call:**  
**(716) 830-3920**

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  
See bulletin for scheduled dates.

**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

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



### М'ЯСОПУСНА НЕДІЛЯ (СТРАШНОГО СУДУ)

У нинішньому євангельському читанні М'ясопусної неділі ми чули про закінчення Вселенної. Вкінці всього постануть перед Господом усі народи і над ними розпочнеться суд. Ніхто його не уникне, не буде жодної першості чи будь-якого виправдання, не існуватиме жодної можливості підкупити Справедливого Суддю, втекти чи сховатися. Усе там буде відкрито, без жодного затаювання.

У церквах на наших рідних землях часто висіли великого розміру ікони Страшного суду. Були вони розміщені при виході, щоби входячи і виходячи з храму, вірні могли щоразу звертати увагу на зображення і пам'ятати, що чекає на нас у недалекому майбутньому, і бути готовими. Бо ніхто не знає ні дня, ні години, коли нам треба буде дати відповідь на питання: як ми використали дорогоцінний Божий дар життя; що ми з ним зробили; як впливали на тих, з ким зустрічалися на життєвій дорозі; що доброго залишили після себе, а що взяли Господеві у подарунок?

Подивімося нині на цю ікону Страшного суду. Бачимо Христа, що сидить на троні й підіймає руку для благословення усіх втомлених, терплячих, осамітнених, даруючи їм спокій, якого вони так довго шукали і нарешті знайшли, коли здавалося, що надії вже нема. При тій нагоді Учитель так промовив: «Прийдіть, благословенні Отця мого. Увійдіть у Царство, приготоване вам від початку. Бо я голодував, і ви дали мені їсти, мав спрагу, і ви напоїли мене, нагий був, і ви одягнули мене, хворий був і в тюрмі, і ви відвідали мене, сумний був, і потішили мене, радісний був, і ви раділи зі мною, прагнув знання, і ви навчили мене, сліпий був, і ви провадили мене, не розумів, і ви повчили мене, поранений був, і ви завинули мої рани і вигоїли їх, мертвий був, і ви поховали мої тлінні останки. Бо все, що ви зробили одному з отих найменших моїх братів і сестер, ви мені зробили».

Зрозуміли тоді блаженні, що зайвим було шукати чогось надзвичайного у своєму житті, щоб перебувати із Христом. Достатньо отих, малих, діл любові. І не важливо наскільки довгим чи коротким було їхнє життя, чи були вони багатими чи бідними, здоровими чи хворими, вченими чи неуками. Важливе лише їх ставлення до ближнього, бо щоразу, коли вони помічали потреби інших, Господь посилав їх, щоби принести полегшення потребуючим.

Рука Господня підноситься догори і опускається, а відтак відходить наліво і направо. Таким чином вона творить хрест як знак, що Христос визволив нас хрестом і цим за усіх нас заплатив сповна.

У підніжжя Христа, на згаданій іконі, лежить розкрита книга, яка містить усю історію спасіння людського роду і нашу у ньому участь. Там чітко записані усі діла кожної людини, починаючи від Адама. У ту одну мить, немов у фільмі, крутиться ціле наше життя. Це щаслива хвилинка, адже людина стає гідною Христової любові. Немає нікого, хто заслужив би на власне спасіння, і ніхто не здобуває його власною силою. Але всі ми, хоч б раз у житті, могли разом із розбійником на хресті проказати: «Згадай мене, Господи, коли прийдеш у Царство Твоє». І тоді Спаситель нам відповість: «Ще сьогодні будеш зі мною в раю». І, ось це сьогодні, якраз і є та мить благодаті, коли вирішується доля цілого людства загалом і кожного з нас зокрема.

Посередині нашої ікони, внизу, бачимо стовп, до якого прив'язана людина. Вона символізує усіх нас живих, які ще можуть обрати якою дорогою піти. Бо там, один крок ліворуч, і вже назавжди можемо опинитися у місці довічних мук, звідки немає вороття. Але один крок праворуч – і ми біля дверей до небесного Єрусалиму, де на нас чекають праведники Старого і Нового Завітів на чолі зі святими Мойсеєм і Петром, куди ми можемо увійти разом із ними, і перебувати із Христом у Його Царстві по всі віки.

Ми всі, дорогі брати і сестри, ще прив'язані. Ще залежимо від повітря, яким дихаємо, від їжі, яку споживаємо. Можливо, ми облутані чорними нитками злоти, гніву, ненависти, переплетини різнокольоровими нитками ненажерства, пияцтва, лінивства, розпусти... Усі ці нитки творять такий «чудовий» килим, «приємний» для ока, який стелиться вліво від Христа. І, коли у своєму благословенні Господня рука покаже ліворуч, ось тоді золоті нитки лагідності, довготерпіння, стриманості, підкріплені різнокольоровими нитками любові, радості, вдячності, можуть розірватися, і ми розлогими дорогами можемо відійти, а за собою почувемо тоді Христові слова: «Геть від мене, бо ви не нагодували мене, не напоїли, не відвідали»...

Нехай так не станеться. Блаженні ті, які витримують до кінця, чії золоті нитки не розвуться. Хай наші життєві нитки забарвляться Христовою кров'ю, яку Він пролив на хресті за нас. Скажімо Господеві: «Прости і згадай», і Він нам відповість: «Усе прощено і вже згадав. Прийдіть, благословенні...». Коли ми облутані золотими нитками віри, Божого страху, довготерпеливості, переплетені різнокольоровими нитками несебелюбства, відважності, доброти, справедливості, вдячності, тоді то, коли Христос покаже направо, чорні нитки заздрости, нетерпеливості розірвуться і золоті нитки поведуть нас у Царство Боже. (Р.П. «М.С.»)

### Meatfare Sunday (Last Judgement)

Suppose you are a judge and you were given the responsibility to judge this case involving a young thief. The evidence against him is overwhelming, and he is found guilty. But when it comes to the sentencing phase of the trial, he expresses his remorse, and he begs you to give him another chance. He tells you that he has changed his ways, and he offers to make restitution to those from whom he stole. What would you do? Being the good Christian judge you are, perhaps you feel sorry for him, and you decide to show compassion by giving this man another chance. So you let him go under the strict stipulation that he will change his ways. The thief goes out of the courtroom to the waiting reporters and tells them that he has changed his ways, and then he goes home and tells his family and friends that he is a new and better man. But is he really? What is the only thing that will convince you that this man has genuinely changed his ways? Only his actions! If he genuinely stops stealing, then the man has indeed changed his ways. We would be naïve to just take his word for it, so why should God be any different in assessing whether or not our faith is genuine? Looking at the parable of the sheep and the goats in the gospel of St. Matthew, we are forced to consider the Day of our Lord, or rather the Day of Judgment. Here we see Jesus in a different role than the one we normally like to portray. Jesus is our Lord, He is our Savior... but he is also our judge. "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory" (Matthew 25:31).

All roads do eventually lead to God, but not the way some people would like us to believe. In today's gospel, a better understanding of the scripture is that all roads lead to judgment, but only one leads to salvation. And God will separate the people, one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. Placing his sheep on his right and the goats on his left. "Verily I say unto you, in as much as you have done it unto one of the least of my brethren, you have done it unto me". (Matthew 25:40). The surprise of the righteous at this statement makes it impossible to think that works of righteousness win salvation. How they treated the "least of these" was not for the purpose of being accepted or rejected by the Kingdom of Heaven. The sheep in the gospel of St. Matthew did not show love to gain Heaven. Jesus is interested here in the righteousness of the whole person. a righteousness from the heart. True disciples will love one another and serve the least of their brethren with compassion, and in so doing they unconsciously serve Christ. When we respond to others, we are responding to

Christ. We are Christ bearers before others in our homes, in the church, in school, at work, in the whole world. What would happen if, every day, we were always conscious of this truth and did our best to put it into practice? We must be willing to serve as messengers of Christ. We are His hands and His feet, to be a blessing to all those we come in contact with.

A nineteenth century painting shows a long row of beggars waiting in a soup line. They are all ragged and worn. But around the head of one, barely perceptible, is a halo. One of them is Christ! You may see no halo around the heads of your brothers and sisters in need, yet to serve them is to serve Christ, for the Lord is hidden in them. It is not a question that they do not have, but rather a question that we do not see. While it is true that the type of service we are called by God

to engage in is simple, that is not to say that it is without cost. The actions with which Christ mentions in this passage all have a ring of personal compassion and require more than simply writing a check to charity. "When I was hungry you gave me to eat, when I was thirsty you gave me to drink, I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you covered me; sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me" (Matthew 25:35-36). The call of God to genuine service is the call to become personally involved in the lives of those who are hurting and in need, and to touch them with our own lives.

After living a "decent" life, my time on earth came to an end. The first thing I remember is sitting on a bench in the waiting room of what I thought to be a courthouse. The doors opened and I was instructed to come in and have a seat by the defense table. As I looked around, I saw the "prosecutor". He was a villainous looking gent, who snarled as he stared at me. I sat down and looked to my left and there sat my lawyer, a kind and gentle looking man whose appearance seemed very familiar to me. The corner door flew open and there appeared the judge in full flowing robes. He commanded an awesome presence as he moved across the room, so much so that I could not take my eyes off of him. As he took his seat behind the bench he said, "Let us begin." The prosecutor rose and

said, "My name is Satan and I am here to show you why this man belongs in hell." He proceeded to tell of lies that I told, things that I stole, and in the past when I cheated on others. Satan told of other terrible perversions that were once in my life and the more he spoke the further down in my seat I sank. I was so embarrassed that I could



not look at anyone, as Satan told of sins that even I had completely forgotten about. As upset as I was at him for telling all these things about me, I was equally upset at my representative, who sat there silently not offering any form of defense on my behalf. I know I had been guilty of those things, but I had done some good in my life... couldn't that at least count for something? Would it not equal out part of the harm I have done? Satan finished with a fury and said, "This man belongs in hell, he is guilty of all that I have charged and there is not a person who can prove otherwise. When it was my lawyer's turn, first he asked if he might approach the bench. The judge allowed this over the strong objection of Satan and beckoned him to come forward. As he got up and started walking, I was able to see him now in his full splendor and majesty. Now I realized why he seemed so familiar, this was Jesus representing me... my Lord and my Savior. He stopped at the bench and softly smiled at his Heavenly Father, and then he turned to address the court. "Satan was correct in saying that this man had sinned, I will not deny any of these allegations. And yes, the wage of sin is death, and this man deserves to be punished". Jesus took a deep breath and turned to his Father with outstretched arms and proclaimed, "However, I died on the cross so that this person might have Eternal life, and

he has accepted me as his Savior, so he is mine." Jesus continued, "His name is written in the book of life and no one can snatch him from me. Satan this man is not to be given justice, but rather mercy." As Jesus sat down, he quietly paused, looked at his Father and replied, "There is nothing else that needs to be done, I have done it all". The Judge lifted his mighty hand and slammed the gavel down, and the following words bellowed from his lips- "This man is free - the penalty for him has already been paid in full, case dismissed." As my Lord led me away, I could hear Satan ranting and raving, "I won't give up, I will win the next one." I asked Jesus as he gave me instructions as where to go next, "Have you ever lost a case?" To which Christ lovingly smiled and said, "Everyone that has come to me and asked me to represent them has received the same verdict as you... Paid in Full."

"Verily I say unto you, in as much as you have done it unto one of the least of my brethren, you have done it unto me". (Matthew 25:40). Christ's question to us on judgment day is not whether we have acknowledged Him as our Savior, but rather, "Having acknowledged me as your Savior, what did you do with your life?" He will assess the reality of our faith on that basis. But our righteous deeds do not negate the place of grace. Jesus is with us every day; He lives right near us in the lives of those we too often walk past. Showing love toward others and taking care of their needs is the way our faith in Christ is put into action. God is calling us to loving service! And being kind does not require superhuman strength... just complete faith in Jesus. May I suggest to you that our charitable ways be more than just love? They are love in action. Charity is taking the steps necessary to minister to those who are in need at their point of need. Charity requires a humble, selfless attitude. On the final Day of Judgment, when Christ turns to his sheep in the fold and says, "You have gained a place with me forever," it will be proven through our actions of love. May we never reach a point in our lives when we fail to focus on the needs of one another! The great, wonderful truth is that when we meet the needs of others, God in Heaven sees the heart of our actions, and what we are willing to do for the least of His brethren. To live the way that God calls us to be is not an easy task. But when we live with the attitude that every act of kindness is a direct service to Christ, we will find sufficient energy and strength to meet the needs that come our way. Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can. May this be the way in which we live and are recognized by those we meet each day. ("G.S." R.P.)