



WESTERN EPARCHY NEWSLETTER

WESTERN EPARCHY
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF CANADA

Issue 26: Winter 2018

NATIVITY GREETINGS FROM HIS GRACE BISHOP ILARION

З нами Бог!

**Вітаю вас з Різдвам
Христовим!**

**Нехай
Новонароджений
Христос принесе Вам
добре здоров'я,
добробут, душевний
спокій та радість у
Новому Році.**



God is with us!

**I greet you on this
occasion of the
Great Nativity Feast.**

**May the newborn
Lord bring good
health, prosperity,
inner peace, and joy
to all of you in the
New Year!**

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Archpastoral Remarks to 58th Assembly of the Western Eparchy, 2017 By His Grace Bishop Ilarion

It is an immense joy to see all of you, especially those who come from far, from BC and from our rural parishes. I prayerfully wish that we continue to keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace as we are one body of Christ, one Church. I thank each and every one of you for your presence today and for your love and devotion to the Church. We are gathered here for the good of our Western Eparchy and glory of God. We should remember the words of our Lord "for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5). Sometimes we think that with some of our efforts or ideas, we are going to save the Church, but in reality we do not need to save the Church, but to save ourselves, and to achieve salvation.

It is not easy to live in the 21st century. We live in a secularized, liberal world that ignores God and centers around the human being with his sinful passions and desires. The world justifies the worst sins with nice words about human rights. We live in the world that is desensitized and that has no place for God in many segments of our life, even in families. In many countries the Church of Christ is becoming an island in an ungodly world. Many people have lost the fear of God and the fear of sin. The Church of Christ has many other kinds of challenges than those in the previous centuries, and these challenges are not more dangerous than they were in the past. The Church is not a human-made institution but a God-founded institution made for our salvation. We should realize that the Church of Christ is separate from this world, and the Church mission is not to please all people, all society, but to please God. We should remember the words of Christ, "if the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you." (John 15:18).

Sometimes we want our Church to be full of people, to be respected in society, and we might have different ideas, such as retreats, and business plans, on how to bring people so that our membership numbers increase, but many times, we cannot even bring our own children and grandchildren to the Church. Many times our children and grandchildren cannot see an example for spiritual growth, and find a real spirit of peace and love in our Church congregation.

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Many times, we function as a secular corporation, with their criteria and attitude, but unfortunately, we see that people who are seeking for God do not want to be members of a secular corporation, but are looking to find spiritual food, and peace for their soul in the Church. I am very happy that in many parishes in the Western Eparchy, when I visit them, I can see that we have positive trends in spiritual life. There are more faithful people, who are more serious and care about their spiritual life. They participate in the mysteries of the Church more often. For them it is not only about traditions but about a real life in Christ. This gives hope for the future of our Eparchy and for those parishes. No other way for the growth of the parish exists. All other activities in the Church are important, but cannot replace or be used in place of the mysteries of the Church that bring us to salvation. I am thankful to God that in our Western Eparchy despite all of our problems, challenges we face, we have good trends also.

Sometimes we see that in some parishes the numbers of members is decreasing, there are many financial difficulties and they think they have great problems. But our Lord did not say that His Church should be financially rich, or have many members, or that a majority of the population must belong to the Church. Our Lord said "For where 2 or 3 are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." (Matt 18:20.) An important example for all of us is being set in Thorhild. We all are aware that their Church burned down, and many are surprised by what is happening there. Even I didn't think the faithful of Thorhild would want to rebuild the Church because with everybody owning cars today, they can be in another Church in 15 minutes. However, their deep faith and devotion to God made miracles. And God helps them and strengthen them to rebuild the temple of God and keep God in their community. I am very pleased that we have such faithful people in our Eparchy. They still have some difficulties, and later, you will hear their presentation about the progress of the rebuilding of their Temple. Please help them spiritually and financially.

Sometimes membership numbers tell you nothing about the congregation. Membership numbers can be large, but the members don't get along and they don't have a strong spiritual life. Sometimes a parish might have much more financial potential, and are located in an area where growth is possible, like in big urban centers, but they do not grow spiritually. Here in Thorhild, in a small town, is a small congregation with deep faith, and bears much more spiritual fruit than in some large urban congregation. Our Lord said "do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32.) We are blessed that we have such people.

As the Bishop of the Western Eparchy, I try to visit all congregations, big and small, but especially those in rural and distant areas. Unfortunately, in the last few years, Prince George congregation did not have regular services. During this year, we in the Western Eparchy, restarted regular monthly services there and I visited them 3 times. There is potential for growth and mission work there. When I visited them, I asked them for forgiveness because in some way, we abandoned them and they were disappointed and felt like orphans. By the grace of God, they are on the way of renewal and growth of their parish. We are going to support them in our mission efforts in our Eparchy. Each parish, small or big, is important to us and with God's help, we are going to do the best that is possible to support and look after them.

Today, I especially would like to mention one person who has passed away, but his trust and love for the work of the Western Eparchy is seen in the shining example that he has set. Orest Kotyshyn was very supportive of the work being done in the Western Eparchy, especially with youth, whether with orphans in Ukraine, or youth here in Canada. Orest generously supported these programs and showed his appreciation for the efforts being made with youth both here and in Ukraine and he affirmed that this was a positive step for the Church in both countries. He showed this support by donating a generous portion of his estate so that the future of the Church could be secured through his efforts and extend beyond his lifetime. Orest Kotyshyn, a lifetime member of St. Elia Church, a teacher, a humble, pious person fell asleep in the Lord on April 24, 2016. He greatly respected bishops and priests; he worried about the Church; he cared about work with youth. Sometimes people criticize us, and our Eparchy, but there are also good people who trust, appreciate and support what we do.



**50th Anniversary to the Holy Priesthood
Rt. Rev. Protopresbyter Nicholas RAULIUK
AXIOS!**



**HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY
The Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral of St. John the Baptist
October 29, 2017**



YOUTH APPRECIATION 2017 – Children and youth who participate in the Church were honored at the Western Eparchy Assembly on October 28.



**JAROSLAW – The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Demetrius
November 5, 2017**



**CALMAR – The 90th Anniversary of The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity
October 22, 2017**



HOLODOMOR COMMEMORATION 2017



His Grace Bishop Ilarion attended the Commemoration of the Holodomor held at the Alberta Legislature on November 21, 2017



His Grace Bishop Ilarion and clergy served a Panahyda to commemorate the Holodomor at Edmonton City Hall on November 25, 2017

WESTERN EPARCHY FULL COUNCIL 2017-18 His Grace Bishop Ilarion

- Rev. Fr. Timothy CHRAPKO, Member at Large
- Rt. Rev. Archpriest Taras KROCHAK
- Rev. Fr. Michael MARANCHUK, 2nd V- Chairman
- Rev. Fr. Chad PAWLYSHYN
- Rt. Rev. Mitred Archpriest Georg PODTEPA, 1st V- Chairman
- Rev. Fr. Mykhaylo POZDYK
- Rev. Fr. Wasyl SAPIHA
- Rev. Fr. Yuriy SUCHEVAN
- Rev. Fr. Roman TSAPLAN
- Maria DEREWIANKA
- Marshall KACHMAR, Treasurer
- Zenovia LAZARUIK, Member at Large
- Subd. Kyle LICKISS
- Diana MAUCH, Secretary
- Katherine MISKE
- Joanne RAK
- Ihor STEBLI, Property Manager
- Caroline YEWCHIN

SECOND PLATE COLLECTION

All parishes are reminded to hold a second plate collection during the Nativity Season for funds for the Western Eparchy. We thank the parishes and districts that made donations in 2017.

WESTERN EPARCHY LEVIES 2018

Levies for 2018 will remain at \$15.00 per member (based on membership as of December 31, 2017.)

Levies are payable now.

ORPHANAGE PROJECT IN UKRAINE

Many needed items were purchased in 2017. More assistance will be provided in 2018. Tax Receipts for Revenue Canada will be issued. THANK YOU FOR THE CONTINUED SUPPORT RECEIVED BY YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS.