



# WESTERN EPARCHY NEWSLETTER

WESTERN EPARCHY  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
OF CANADA

Issue 16: Summer 2015



Icon in The Ukrainian Orthodox  
Church of The Holy Ascension,  
Ispas, Alberta.



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## UOCC YOUTH RETREAT Banff, Alberta May 1 - 3, 2015



The UOCC Youth Retreat which was held in Banff, Alberta featured Steven Christoforou, Youth Director of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, New York, USA, who inspired and enlightened our youth. Steven is the creator of the “Be the Bee” videos.

Information about youth can be found: [www.uoccyouth.com](http://www.uoccyouth.com)  
More pictures from the Youth Retreat: [www.uocc-we.ca/photos](http://www.uocc-we.ca/photos)



## The Sacrament of Holy Confession

By Joana Janis, Age 95



The Sacrament of Repentance - Confession is God-granted for the forgiveness of sins. God in His compassion designed means for the forgiveness of sins, as in the Sacrament of Baptism, which cleanses ancestral and personal sin. As sin is the barrier between man and God, so forgiveness of sin is the bridge uniting man with God. Our Lord addresses the whole human race when He said: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

When did you last come to Holy Confession? When preparing for Holy Confession, what sins should we confess? We could ask our self the following questions:

**Do I keep Sunday and feast days holy by participating as fully as possible in the Church services?**

**Do I observe fasting days and fasting periods of the Orthodox Church?**

**Do I receive our Lord's Eucharist frequently?**

**Have I prayed daily?**

**Do I promote peace, justice, morality, and love in my community and Church?**

**Have I caused injury to someone's life, health, spiritual or material possessions by violence or neglect?**

**Have I quarreled or been angry at or insulted someone?**

**Have I desired someone's position or property?**

**Have I stolen anything?**

**Do I give generously of my time, talent, and money to the needy?**

**Do I keep a tight rein on my tongue?**

**Do I gossip, tell lies, and think of myself as better than others?**

**Do I sin by revenge, judging, jealousy or anger?**

Aspects of our lives, such as daily prayer, Church services, sermons, spiritual readings, and fasting, can help us. They give us insights into ourselves. Every year of our lives we have heard the Gospel reading and the priests' sermons based on the Pharisee who said " God, I thank You that I am not like the other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that possess." (Luke 18:11-12) It is important to note: The Lord replied: "...for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."(Luke 18:14) The Lord said, "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 7:21). What this means is, we should not compare ourselves to others. The one we should compare ourselves to is our Lord, Jesus Christ.

We have also heard the parable and sermons every year regarding the prodigal son. We can learn from this reading about how to prepare for confession. When the prodigal son came to his senses, he went back to his father and said to him, " Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." (Luke 15: 18-19)

### **How can we prepare ourselves before we go to Confession?**

We can set a time—free from interruptions and distractions in a place where we will not be disturbed. We could close ourselves in a room and sit before an icon. This would be a place filled with silence, prayer, and thoughtful reflections. Silence will place us in God's presence where we will think of God only. If we lose ourselves, we can start by slowly praying the Jesus prayer: " Lord Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy on me a sinner." Repeat this prayer even many times. The Holy Spirit will reveal our sinfulness through prayer.

During Confession, we meet God as a God of forgiveness and mercy. We see the sinfulness of our anger and our judging of others. We see our greed, jealousy, and the foolishness of our pride and conceit. If we embrace God with love, we realize that sins against our neighbor are sins against God. ( continued on page 3)



## The Right Reverend Mitred Archpriest ALEXANDRE PALAMARCHUK



With the blessing of the Council of Bishops of the UOCC, His Grace Bishop Ilarion elevated The Very Rev. Archpriest Alexandre Palamarchuk to the rank of Mitred Archpriest during the Divine Liturgy at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity, Redwater, AB on Sunday, May 31, 2015.

AXIOS! AXIOS! AXIOS!

...Continued from page 2...

Then we pray, "Against You, You only have I sinned and done what is evil I your sight." (Psalm 51:4). Our prayers should include Psalms of Repentance and Psalms of discerning mistakes. We read, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults." (Psalm 19:12).

Reading from the Bible will help. To understand how God wants us to live our lives, we could, for example, read The Beatitudes in (Matthew 5:3 -10) or what love means in (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

We should set ourself a rule of daily scripture reading. Silence, prayer, reading and reflection will not follow as they are written; they will be mixed; but we must include these ingredients in our preparation for confession.

Our life prepares us for Holy Confession. It is the spiritual aspects such as prayer, Church services, sermons, Gospel readings and fasting that give us insights into ourselves. This is what we should bring to Our Lord in the Sacrament of Holy Confession. "God speaks to us through the sound of a gentle breeze." as indicated in (1 Book of Kings 19: 12-13).

God gave us the Sacrament of Holy Confession so that we could rid ourselves of the burdens and sins in our daily lives. We receive forgiveness for our sins through Repentance - Holy Confession. If we confess our sins, we cleanse ourselves from all unrighteousness.

We ask, "Why confess to priests besides admitting sins to ourselves?" Remember that priests are chosen workers with God for our salvation which we may reach through Holy Confession. With the priest as a witness, the sinner is united not only with God, but also to the people of God. The Church accepts us—making the Holy Confession as part of the Church family of God and the Church we are in. Is our greatest obstacle having to confess to a priest? Remember, we do not confess to the priest. We confess to the Lord. The priest might say "Christ stands here invisibly and receives your confession. I am only a witness." We read "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (John 20: 22-23) When Holy Confession is over, the priest says, "God forgives you." He does not say "I forgive you." Our Lord said "There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance." (Luke 15:7)

In conclusion, remember that our Lord said: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either." (Luke 6:27-29)

As St. John Chrysostom said: Repentance is "not being ashamed again to enter the Church; be ashamed when you sin but not when you repent."

As St. Isaac the Syrian wrote: "This life has been given to you for repentance. Do not waste it on other things."



## His Grace Bishop Ilarion served a Noon-day Service and Provody at The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Mary, SLAWA, AB.



### The Orphanage in Ukraine Project (Update)

The situation in Ukraine has deteriorated as the war rages on and the orphanages we support have had refugee orphan children from eastern Ukraine added to their care. At the same time, the government of Ukraine has not increased their funding so they have appealed to us for more assistance. They have to look after more children with what little money they get. They have asked us to kindly increase our financial support to them and we are trying to do this. Please find it in your hearts as individuals or as parishes to donate some extra funds so that we can increase our support to the orphans in Ukraine during these troubling and difficult times.

**Please makes cheques payable to:**

**UOCC Western Eparchy  
(Memo: Orphanages in Ukraine)  
Tax Receipts will be issued.**

#### PASCHAL DONATIONS

**A sincere thank you to the following parishes and districts that contributed to the Paschal SECOND PLATE COLLECTION up to now:**

- Two Hills and District
- Lac La Biche Parochial District
- Calgary-St. Vladimir
- Athabasca- Sts. Peter and Paul
- Lethbridge- Holy Trinity
- Camrose- All Saints
- Kelowna- Sts. Peter and Paul
- Edmonton- St. John's Cathedral
- Kamloops- All Saints
- Vegreville- St. Vladimir

**It is not too late to make donations for the Paschal Second Plate appeal.**

### UOCC WESTERN EPARCHY YOUTH SUMMIT

**October 23 and 24**

For more information:  
**[www.uoccyouth.com](http://www.uoccyouth.com)**

or  
**Fr. Timothy Chrapko  
([fr.t.chrapko@gmail.com](mailto:fr.t.chrapko@gmail.com))**

### WESTERN EPARCHY FALL ASSEMBLY

**October 23 - 25**

### YOUTH APPRECIATION BANQUET

**October 24**

**The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist and St. John's Cultural Centre**

**WESTERN EPARCHY LEVIES 2015  
Levies for 2015 remain at \$15.00 per member (based on membership as of December 31, 2014.)  
LEVIES ARE PAYABLE NOW**