



# ВІСНИК the HERALD

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**від Матфея/from Matthew 28:18-20**

<sup>18</sup> А Ісус підійшов і промовив до них та й сказав: Дана Мені всяка влада на небі й на землі. <sup>19</sup> Тож ідіть, і навчіть всі народи, хрестячи їх в Ім'я Отця, і Сина, і Святого Духа, <sup>20</sup> навчаючи їх зберігати все те, що Я вам заповів. І ото, Я перебуватиму з вами повсякденно аж до кінця віку! Амінь.

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

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## Пасхальне Послання Єпископату Української Православної Церкви Канади у 2026 році Божому

*Всечесному духовенству, в Христі дияконству, і всім вірним УПЦК*

### **ХРИСТОС ВОСКРЕС!**

«Нехай воскресне Бог, і розбіжаться вороги Його» (Псалом 67:2). Світле Христове Воскресіння знову сходить над нами, як світанок після довгої ночі. Пасха Господня — це не лише спомин події, що сталася в Єрусалимі, але живе торжество Божої сили, яка долає те, що людині здається неподоланним. У гробі, запечатаному каменем, який стерегли воїни, здавалося, восторжествувала людська несправедливість. Та саме там, у глибині мовчання Великої суботи, звершувалася тайна спасіння. Бог діє тоді, коли людина бачить лише кінець.

Святий апостол і євангелист Іоан Богослов свідчить: «Світло світить у темряві, і темрява не обгорнула його» (Ін. 1:5). Ці слова особливо глибоко звучать сьогодні, коли людство переживає потрясіння, а наш народ уже четвертий рік проходить тяжке випробування повномасштабної війни. Чотири роки болю і втрат. Чотири роки руйнування міст і людських дол. Чотири роки мужності й жертвності. Ми називаємо речі своїми іменами: війна — це зло. Насильство — це гріх. Посягання на життя невинних і свободу народу є тяжким моральним злочином. Пророк Давид навчає: «Правда і мир поцілуються» (Пс. 84:11). Мир без правди — крихкий. Тому ми молимося про справедливий мир, який утвердиться на основі істини, а не страху. Пасха нагадує нам: зло не є остаточним.

Святитель Іоан Золотоустий у своєму огласительному слові виголошує: «Смерте, де твоє жало? Пекле, де твоя перемога? Воскрес Христос — і ти повалене». Ці слова Церква повторює століттями. І сьогодні вони звучать як духовний вирок усякій темряві. Жодна сила насильства не є вічною. Лише Бог — Господь історії. Господь наш Ісус Христос навчає в Євангелії від Луки: «У терпінні вашим спасайте душі ваші» (Лк. 21:19). Чотири роки випробування — це також іспит нашої витривалості. Найбільша небезпека — не тільки зовнішній ворог, але внутрішнє виснаження, зневіра, байдужість. Для нас, українців у Канаді, Пасха є закликком не втратити духовну пильність. Живучи в умовах миру й безпеки, ми покликані залишатися єдиними з тими, хто страждає, підтримувати правду, виховувати дітей у вірі та любові до Бога і свого народу. Святий апостол і євангелист Лука розповідає про учнів, які в день Воскресіння йшли до Емаусу (Лк. 24:13-35). Вони залишали Єрусалим із сумом, переконані, що їхня надія розбита. Христос ішов поруч із ними, але вони Його не впізнали. Лише коли Він переломив хліб, їхні очі відкрилися. Так і сьогодні Господь іде поруч із нашим народом, навіть тоді, коли ми не усвідомлюємо Його присутності. І саме в спільній молитві та Євхаристії Церква впізнає Воскреслого.

Святий апостол Павло пише: «Коли Бог за нас, хто проти нас?» (Рим. 8:31). Наша пасхальна радість повинна виявлятися в конкретних ділах: у допомозі потребуючим, у підтримці тих, хто захищає життя, у слові правди там, де її намагаються спотворити. Воскресіння Христове є свідченням того, що історія не завершується розп'яттям. Через хрест відкривається життя. Через темряву сходить світло. Через жертву народжується надія. У ці святі дні вітаємо наших воїнів, медиків, волонтерів, усіх, хто стоїть на сторожі життя і свободи. Вітаємо українські громади в Канаді та по всьому світі, які зберігають віру і духовну єдність. Нехай Воскреслий Господь укріпить знесилених, потішить скорботних, зцілить поранених і дарує мудрість тим, хто приймає рішення. Нехай благодать Божа провадить нашу землю шляхом правди, гідності і свободи. Благодать Господа нашого Ісуса Христа, любов Бога і Отця, і причастя Святого Духа нехай буде з усіма вами.

### **ВОІСТИНУ ХРИСТОС ВОСКРЕС!**

*З палкими молитвами за всіх вас,*

**+Іларіон** - Архієпископ Вінніпегу і Центральної Єпархії, Митрополит УПЦК

**+Андрій** - Єпископ Торонто і Східної Єпархії

## Paschal Epistle of the Episcopate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada in the Year of Our Lord 2026

*To the venerable clergy, to the diaconate in Christ, and to all the faithful of the UOCC*

### **CHRIST IS RISEN!**

“May God arise, may His enemies be scattered” (Psalm 68:1). The Bright Resurrection of Christ rises over us once more, like dawn after a long night. The Lord’s Pascha is not only a remembrance of the event that took place in Jerusalem, but is a living triumph of God’s power, which overcomes what is insurmountable to man. In the tomb, sealed with a stone and guarded by soldiers, human injustice seemed to have prevailed. But right there, in the depths of the silence of Holy Saturday, the mystery of salvation was being accomplished. God acts precisely. Man sees only the end.

The holy apostle and evangelist John the Theologian testifies: “And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend” (John 1:5). These words deeply resonate, especially today when humanity is experiencing shock and upheaval, and our Ukrainian people have already completed the fourth year of the severe trials in a full-scale war. Four years of pain and loss. Four years of destruction of cities and human destinies. And likewise, four years of courage and sacrifices are to be noted. War is evil. Violence is sin. Encroachment on the lives of the innocent and the freedom of the people is a grave moral crime. The prophet David teaches: ‘Righteousness and peace kiss each other’ (Ps. 85:10). Peace without truth is fragile. Therefore, we pray for a just peace, which will be established based on truth, and not fear. Pascha reminds us: evil is not final.

Saint John Chrysostom proclaims in his declaratory word at Pascha: ‘O death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen—and you are defeated.’ The Church has repeated these words for centuries. And today they declare a spiritual sentence against all darkness. No force of violence is eternal. Only God is the Lord of history. Our Lord Jesus Christ teaches in the Gospel of Luke: ‘By your endurance save your souls’ (Lk. 21:19). Four years of trial are a test of our perseverance. The greatest danger is not only the external enemy, but also internal exhaustion, despair and indifference. For us, Ukrainians in Canada, Pascha is a call not to lose spiritual vigilance. Living in conditions of peace and security, we are called to remain united with those who suffer, to uphold the truth, to raise our children in faith and love of God and our people. The holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke tells about the disciples who were walking to Emmaus on the day of the Resurrection (Luke 24:13-35). They were leaving Jerusalem with sorrow, convinced that their hope was shattered. Christ walked beside them, but they did not recognize Him. Only when He broke bread did their eyes open. Likewise today, the Lord walks alongside our people, even when we do not realize His presence. And it is precisely in communal prayer and the Eucharist that the Church recognizes the Risen One.

The holy Apostle Paul writes: ‘If God is for us, who can be against us?’ (Romans 8:31). Our Paschal joy should be manifested in concrete deeds: in helping those in need, in supporting those who defend life and in speaking the truth where it is being distorted. The Resurrection of Christ is a testimony that history does not end with the Crucifixion. Through the Cross, life is revealed. Through darkness, light arises. Through sacrifice, hope is born. In these Holy Days, we greet our warriors, medics, volunteers and all who stand guard over life and freedom. We greet the Ukrainian community in Canada and around the world, who preserve the faith and spiritual unity. May the Risen Lord strengthen the weary, comfort the grieving, heal the wounded, and grant wisdom to those who make decisions. May God’s grace lead our land along the path of truth, dignity, and freedom. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

### **CHRIST IS TRULY RISEN!**

*With heartfelt prayers for all of you,*

**+Ilarion** - Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Eparchy,  
Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

**+Andriy** - Bishop of Toronto and the Eastern Eparchy



## Address by the Episcopate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada on the Occasion of the 4th Anniversary of the Full-Scale Invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine in 2022

*Venerable fathers, beloved brothers and sisters in Christ!*

During these days, with pain and prayer, we remember the fourth anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, a tragic stage of the war, which was a continuation of the aggression against Ukraine that had begun in 2014. This war brought untold suffering, loss, and destruction to the Ukrainian people and deeply wounded the hearts of millions of people around the world.

Since the very beginning of this aggression, the Ukrainian people have been enduring difficult trials. Throughout this time and to this day, we have been witnessing the loss of human lives, the separation of families, the forced displacement of millions of people, the obliteration of cities and villages, and the destruction of cultural heritage sites and Christian sanctuaries.

The full-scale invasion of 2022 was marked by the particular brutality of military action, which brought great suffering to the civilian population. This phase of aggression revealed to the entire world the depth of the tragedy and the scale of the suffering of the Ukrainian people, reminding the world once again of the urgent need for a just and lasting peace.

As the Episcopate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, we offer our prayers to the Lord God for the repose of the souls of all innocent people who were tortured and then killed, for the healing of the wounded, for the comfort of those who have lost their families and homes, and for the liberation of those taken captive. We also pray for the defenders of their homeland so that the Lord may strengthen their courage, strength their spirit, and preserve them from all that is evil.

We convey our deep gratitude to our country Canada, as well as to the clergy and laity of our Church, who have selflessly supported Ukraine and her victims through government programs, humanitarian aid, and unceasing prayer during these years of war. May the Lord reward each and every one of them for their expression of love and benevolence.

Let us remain united in faith, hope, and love. Let us remember the value of mutual support. This anniversary is a reminder of the responsibility of each one of us, to be witnesses of the truth, bearers of love, and servants of peace. The Holy Scriptures teach us: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matt. 5:9). However, true peace is impossible without truth and justice. Therefore, we call on all believers to pray unceasingly for a just and lasting peace for Ukraine, for the victory of good over evil, and of light over darkness.

With this, we bless the continued unceasing prayers in our Churches of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada for an end to the war in Ukraine.

May the All-Merciful Lord, Who unceasingly shows His love for humanity, strengthen the Ukrainian people in their trials, grant them the long-awaited victory and just peace, and bestow upon all of us the strength to stand firm in the truth of Christ.



*With the Hierarchical blessings and prayers for Ukraine,*

✙ **Ilarion**, Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

✙ **Andriy**, Bishop of Toronto and the Eastern Eparchy

## Remembrance and Prayer in Pictures

Between 22 and 24 February, over 60 commemorative events were held across Canada in support of Ukraine. We thank all elected representatives of the federal, provincial and municipal governments, as well as our priests and laity, for their prayers and support for the Ukrainian people. Below is a selection of photos from commemorative events across Canada:



**Alberta, Edmonton.** On 22 February, the Divine Liturgy and a memorial service were held at St. John the Baptist Cathedral for the repose of the souls of all those who gave their lives in defence of Ukraine, as well as the innocent victims of Russian aggression. The service was led by His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion, assisted by the cathedral's clergy.

**Winnipeg, Manitoba.** On 22 February, a rally in solidarity with Ukraine was held outside the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. A prayer for Ukraine was led by Archpriest Eugene Maximiuk, Dean of the Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral.

Photos by Norbert K. Iwan.

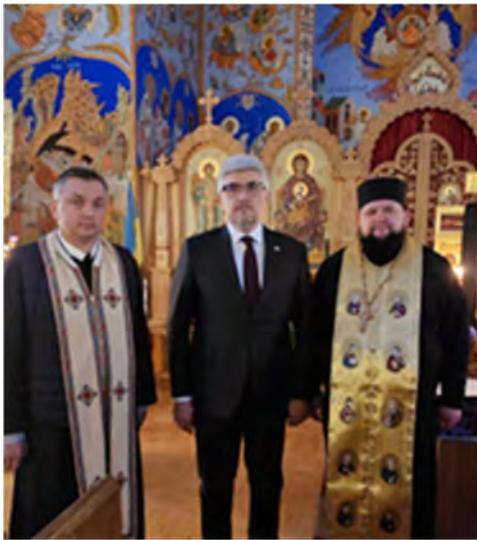


**Ontario, Toronto.** A rally in support of Ukraine took place on 22 February. A prayer was led by Bishop Andriy of Toronto and the Eastern Eparchy.

Photos from the Facebook page of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress - Toronto Branch.

## Remembrance and Prayer in Pictures (continued)

**Edmonton, Alberta.** A rally in support of Ukraine took place on 24 February. The prayer was led by Fr. Dr. Roman Shiyan, First Vice Chair of the Western Eparchy Council. Photos from the Facebook page of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress - Alberta Provincial Council (UCC-APC).



**Ottawa, Ontario.** On 24 February a prayer service was held at the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral, led by the Parish Priest, Fr. Taras Kinash. The Ukrainian Ambassador to Canada, Andrii Plakhotniuk, joined in the prayer. Photos are from the Embassy of Ukraine in Canada's Facebook page.

### Metropolitan's Call for Humanitarian Support for Ukraine

"Then He will answer them, saying, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me." (Matthew 25:45)

Your Grace,  
Reverend Presbyters & Deacons,  
Beloved Brothers & Sisters!

Last week, on the Sunday of the Last Judgement, we contemplated Christ's words, above, in His teaching to us about the criteria by which we shall be judged at the Great and Awesome Judgement. Simply put, we shall be judged by how we helped one another as images of God, struggling in this earthly life. We, Canadians, accustomed to cold, long winters live through them with the security of a heated, warm home, electricity to bring light to the dark, long nights, and natural gas to heat our food. In Ukraine, at this crucial time, for millions of people, this same cold manifests itself as darkness and cold homes without light and heat. Today, your Metropolitan turns to you at a time when our ancestral homeland Ukraine and

her God-protected people endure particularly difficult and challenging conditions. Russia is deliberately and systematically attacking Ukraine's energy system throughout the cold, winter months. Brutal attacks on infrastructure are leaving millions of Ukrainians without electricity, heat, and water.

Hospitals, shelters, schools, and kindergartens need immediate assistance just to survive the harshest of winter conditions. Today, I bless and call upon all members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada to support the initiative - #WarmthForUkraine-launched by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Andriy Sybiha, in partnership with the Ukrainian World Congress. I call upon us to join UCC National and the Canada-Ukraine Foundation, and other community and church institutions who have already joined this initiative. The goal is to provide Ukraine with generators

and heating equipment where it is vitally needed. I wish to acknowledge with sincere gratitude those members and parishes of the UOCC who have already supported #WarmthForUkraine. I bless and call upon the entire Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada to mobilize support as much as possible. For our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, this is one of the most important needs! Every contribution means light, warmth and a chance to survive the winter under the impossible conditions forced on the Ukrainian nation by Russian brutality.

In Christ, the Lord,

**+Ilarion**

Metropolitan Archbishop of Winnipeg  
& the Central Eparchy Primate of  
the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

## Serving Our Neighbours: Support for Kyiv from the Faithful in Canada



In January-February 2026, Ukraine once again faced serious difficulties due to targeted Russian strikes on its energy infrastructure. In particular, many families in the capital, Kyiv, endured prolonged power and heating cuts, which proved to be a particularly severe ordeal in the depths of winter.

In response to these circumstances, the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada have shown Christian solidarity and compassion. Matt and Kim Breerton of Sarnia, Ontario, together with the Ukrainian community of Woodstock, Ontario, collected and donated \$2,500.

The funds were channelled through Father Myroslav Shmyhelskyy, Parish Priest of St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Waterloo, Ontario. In addition to his parish ministry, he also provides spiritual care for newly arrived Ukrainians who have settled in the towns of Woodstock, Simcoe, and Listowel since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine (2022).

The funds raised were channelled to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and used to purchase essential items for families affected by prolonged power cuts. This aid proved particularly vital at a time when many homes in Kyiv were left without heating or electricity during the cold winter months.

We are sincerely grateful to the donors for their generosity, compassion and solidarity with the people of Ukraine. Their support is a shining testimony to living Christian love and a reminder of the strength of the church community when believers unite to support those facing trials.

Such acts of mercy demonstrate that, even across great distances, Orthodox faithful remain united in prayer, care and service to their neighbours.



## Divine Services for the First Week of Lent

The Great Penitential Canon of St. Andrew of Crete in the Edmonton Ukrainian Orthodox Deanery. During the first week of Great Lent, His Eminence Ilarion, Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Eparchy, Metropolitan of Canada, officiated at the Reading of the Great Penitential Canon of St. Andrew of Crete in the Edmonton Ukrainian Orthodox Deanery. He was assisted by clergy from the Edmonton Ukrainian Orthodox Deanery.

Monday, February 23 - Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor of St. Andrew

Tuesday, February 24 - Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Elia

Wednesday, February 25 - Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Michael

Thursday, February 26 - Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Anthony

## The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts



The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is a special service celebrated during Great Lent. It reminds the faithful that Christ – our Bread of Life – is always present among us, and that every Communion becomes a means of union with Him and with the whole Body of Christ, the Church.

On Friday, 27 February 2026, His Eminence Ilarion, Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Eparchy, Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, presided at the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at the Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Edmonton, AB. He was assisted by clergy of the Edmonton Ukrainian Orthodox Deanery.

## The Triumph of Orthodoxy in Edmonton, Alberta

On Sunday, March 1, 2026, His Eminence Ilarion, Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Eparchy, Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada presided at Vespers to celebrate the Triumph of Orthodoxy at the Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Edmonton, AB. He was assisted by clergy of the Edmonton Ukrainian Orthodox Deanery, as well as Clergy from Edmonton Greek and Romanian Orthodox Parishes.

This day is a celebration of the triumph of the Orthodox faith and a day of prayer for the unity of the Church, reminding the faithful of the power of faith, the beauty of worship and the spiritual unity of all Orthodox Christians.



## Divine Liturgy in Thorhild, Alberta

On the second Sunday of Great Lent, the Sunday Commemorating St. Gregory Palamas, His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion served the Divine Liturgy at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Thorhild, AB. He was assisted by Rev. Fr. Protodeacon Yaroslav Boychuk.



## Council of Bishops Establishes and Blesses Initiative for Evangelization

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada announces the Initiative for Evangelization, established with the blessing and leadership of the Council of Bishops to strengthen the Church's mission of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

From the very beginning of the Church, the mission to evangelize has been entrusted by Christ Himself to the Apostles and their

successors. In the Gospel according to Gospel of Matthew, the Lord commands: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

This apostolic mandate continues in the life of the Church through the bishops, who as successors to the Apostles guide the faithful in proclaiming the Gospel. Together with the clergy and faithful, the Church carries forward the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to it by Christ. As the Apostle Paul writes in Second Epistle to the Corinthians: "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

In this spirit, the Council of Bishops has organized an "Initiative for Evangelization" to help coordinate efforts that share the life of the Orthodox Christian faith across Canada.

The initiative is headed by Metropolitan Ilarion and Bishop Andriy, with Rev. Fr. Vasyl Maskal serving as its coordinator.

Recognizing the diverse pastoral realities within the Church and Canadian society, the work of evangelization has been organized into three primary areas of focus:

**Catechumens.** Led by Archpriest Dr. Timothy Chrapko and Rev. Fr. Chad Pawlyshyn, this area focuses on those

who are exploring the Orthodox Christian faith and preparing to enter the Church through catechesis and instruction.

**Canadian-born and raised faithful.** Led by Rev. Fr. Vasyl Maskal and Rev. Fr. Vasyl Kobrii, this initiative focuses on strengthening the faith of those raised in Canada and helping them live and share their Orthodox Christian identity within contemporary Canadian society.

**Ukrainian newcomers.** Led by Archpriest Myroslav Shmyhelsky and Dr. Andrii Tsebenko, this work focuses on welcoming and supporting newcomers from Ukraine who seek spiritual home and community within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada.

The initiative's work reflects the living witness of the Church throughout history. As John Chrysostom once observed: "A man who is a Christian cannot hide himself. The light of a Christian life cannot be concealed."

Through prayer, teaching, pastoral outreach, and visible Christian witness, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada seeks to shine the light of the Gospel within Canadian society. The work of evangelization is not simply a program but the natural expression of a living faith that invites all people to encounter Christ and the life of His Church.

### **Spiritual Blessing for the Alberta Community: Meeting between the Ukrainian community in Alberta and the Ambassador of Ukraine, attended by Metropolitan Ilarion**



On 8 March 2026, an important meeting took place in Edmonton between the Ukrainian community in Alberta and Andrii Plakhotniuk, the Ambassador of Ukraine to Canada. The event was organized by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress - Alberta Provincial Council (UCC-APC) and UCC-Edmonton as part of the Ambassador's series of visits to Canadian provinces.

The spiritual aspect of the event was led by His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion, who, accompanied by Fr. Cornell Zubritsky, offered a prayer for the blessing of the meeting and the spiritual strengthening of the Ukrainian community.



## His Grace, Bishop Andriy Celebrated Passia (The Divine Passion of Christ) at Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church (March 22, 2026)

On Sunday, March 22, 2026, the fourth Sunday of the Great and Holy Fast, dedicated to the memory of St. Gregory Palamas; His Grace, Bishop Andriy of Toronto and the Eastern Eparchy, along with the clergy of the Hamilton Deanery celebrated Passia (The Divine Passion of Christ) at Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Niagara Falls, ON.

In His Grace's sermon spoke about the turbulent and challenging society and world we live in, and the challenge of finding peace and tranquility that our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ grants unto each of us. In his closing remarks he challenged all gathered to carry their spiritual struggles during this Great and Holy Fast, to grow spiritually and to foster love amongst one another, struggling toward the goal of eternal life with our heavenly father.

Following the service all gathered partook in a delicious Lenten meal, and fellowship with one another.

The parish of Sts. Peter and Paul has seen a rebirth in recent years due to the influx of newcomers from Ukraine, along with their rector, Archpriest Petro Sabat, co-labour to rebuild the parish community and to spiritually nourish all in Niagara Falls.

## Divine Liturgy at the Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor of St. Mary the Protectress, Winnipeg, MB (March 29, 2026)

On the fifth Sunday of Great Lent, the Sunday Commemorating St. Mary of Egypt, His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion served the Divine Liturgy at the Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor of St. Mary the Protectress in Winnipeg, MB. He was assisted by clergy from the Winnipeg Ukrainian Orthodox Deanery.



## Western Eparchy Clergy Retreat in Edmonton, Alberta (March 23-25, 2026)



With the Blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Ilarion, Primate of UOCC, a Clergy Retreat was held in the Western Eparchy. The retreat took place at the Providence Renewal Centre in Edmonton, AB, with a time of theological reflection, prayer from the daily cycle of services offered in the retreat centre chapel, the sharing of common experiences and concerns among

the parishes of the Western Eparchy, and the strengthening of the bonds of love and unity among the clergy present with their Primate.

This year, the retreat sessions, presented by Archpriest Dr. Timothy Chrapko, focused on the importance of Holy Week in deepening our experience of Pascha. The retreat culminated with the celebration of the Hierarchical Vespers Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25, at St. John's Cathedral. In Edmonton. His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion was assisted by the clergy of the Western Eparchy of the UOCC.



## Passia (Passion Service) at Tolstoi, MB (March 29, 2026)

On March 29, the fifth Sunday of Great Lent, His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion, Primate of the UOCC, celebrated the Passia (The Divine Suffering of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ) at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Descent of the Holy Spirit in Tolstoi, MB. His Eminence was assisted by clergy of the Winnipeg Ukrainian Orthodox Deanery.

## Central Eparchy Clergy Retreat in Winnipeg, Manitoba (March 30-April 1, 2026)

With the Blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Ilarion, Primate of the UOCC, a Clergy Retreat was held in the Central Eparchy. The retreat commenced at the St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg, MB, with a time of theological reflection, prayer from the daily cycle of services offered in the College Chapel, the sharing of common



experiences and concerns among the parishes of the Central Eparchy. Archpriest Dr. Timothy Chrapko served as the retreat speaker.

The retreat culminated with the celebration of the Hierarchical Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts on the morning of Wednesday, April 1, at Holy Trinity

Metropolitan Cathedral in Winnipeg. His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion was assisted by the clergy of the Central Eparchy of the UOCC.



## Eastern Eparchy Clergy Retreat in Toronto, Ontario



The retreat was held at St. Volodymyr Cathedral in Toronto and became a blessed opportunity for the spiritual renewal of the clergy and faithful of the deanery during Great Lent. The retreat began with the Hierarchical Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, celebrated by Bishop Andriy and the clergy of the deanery. It became a source of spiritual focus, reminding all that the source of strength for a pastor always begins in the Eucharistic life of the Church. We sincerely thank the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada at St. Volodymyr Cathedral and all those who took part in preparing and organizing the warm hospitality.

## Weyburn and Swift Current: The Pastoral and Missionary Presence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

In the context of the new wave of Ukrainian migration to Canada, driven by the war, an important pastoral and missionary task arises for the Church, as there are many among the new arrivals who identify as Orthodox. Many of them have come from areas affected by hostilities, from regions under occupation or subject to regular missile and air strikes. Consequently, their experience of resettlement is often accompanied not only by social difficulties but also by profound inner turmoil.

As they settle in various cities and regions across Canada, often outside established parish centres, these people require not only integration into their new environment, but also spiritual support, the preservation of their religious identity, and a living connection with their native church tradition. In this context, the opportunity to receive spiritual care within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada takes on particular significance, as it is capable not only of providing liturgical life but also of becoming a space for inner renewal, support and the strengthening of faith.

A prime example of such ministry are the mission centres in the towns of Weyburn and Swift Current, SK. Pastoral care for these centres is provided by Fr. Volodymyr Feskiv, a priest who serves at the Descent of the Holy Spirit Sobor in Regina, SK. As he noted, these mission centres began to actively develop in 2024 and 2025.

The first mission outreach was in Weyburn, a town located approximately 111 km from Regina. Fr. Volodymyr notes that missionary work here began on the feast of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in 2024. He also notes that Lesia, Fr. Dcn. Mark Dumanski's sister, assists in this mission district.

As there are no Orthodox churches in the town, the congregation rents the All Saints Anglican Church. Services are held approximately once a month, on Saturdays. For various reasons, the congregation does not always turn out in large numbers, but around 65 people attended the first Easter service.

The second centre of missionary work is in Swift Current, approximately 250 km from Regina. Regular services began here in the summer of 2025.



The missionary community in Swift Current (March 2026).

The mission began in response to a pastoral need in 2025: Fr. Volodymyr was conducting the funeral of a young Ukrainian man, which was attended by many of his compatriots. It was then, as the priest notes, that the idea arose of making regular visits to the area, as it became clear that a significant number of Ukrainians living there needed spiritual care. Subsequently, the newly formed local community of Orthodox believers took the initiative to ensure that the priest would visit them on a regular basis.

The town is home to a Greek Orthodox church dedicated to the miraculous icon of the Mother of God, 'The Life-Giving Spring' (Lifegiving Font Greek Orthodox Church). As the priest of this community also serves in Regina, as Fr. Volodymyr notes, 'with the blessing of our bishop, I approached him with a request to hold services. Consequently, the local community granted permission to use their church for liturgical purposes.'

Services are held once a month, on Saturdays. Around 35 people attended the first service. According to Fr. Volodymyr, he estimates that had the service taken place on Easter Sunday, the number of worshippers could have reached around 100.

Alexei Oberliand, who lives in Swift Current, provides considerable assistance with organizational matters on the ground. As Fr. Volodymyr notes, "my wife, Dobr. Natalia Feskiv, Dobr. Diana Dumanski and Maxim Kazakov, the choirmaster from Regina, are all actively involved in the missionary work. In this way, the Divine Liturgy is celebrated with harmonious singing which contributes to the gradual development of a full liturgical life within the community."

Missionary work is an important part of the Church's ministry, aimed at providing spiritual care for the faithful

and supporting their church life in Canada. As Fr. Volodymyr notes, for many of these people, participation in worship is extremely important. Some of them were already active in the Church back in Ukraine – they were not only baptized and married, but also participated in church life – and so naturally seek a spiritual continuation of this experience in Canada. At the same time, for others, life’s trials may have served as an impetus for a deeper understanding of the faith and a

return to the Church. The communities are still taking shape, and not all the faithful are yet attending regularly, due to various circumstances; however, this work is gradually bearing fruit. As the priest emphasizes, missionary work is a long-term process, and, with God’s help, we can expect these communities to grow stronger in just a few years.



### Greetings on the 75th Birthday of Metropolitan Emeritus

26 May marks the 75th birthday of His Eminence Metropolitan Yurij (Kalistchuk) Emeritus – a hierarch whose long-standing archpastoral ministry is associated with service in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada. He has held the episcopal rank for 37 years, serving as Primate from 2010 to 2021. His service as head of the UOCC has made a significant contribution to the development of Ukrainian Orthodoxy both in Canada and in Ukraine.

We sincerely wish His Eminence good health and spiritual and physical strength, so that his life’s journey may continue to be a fruitful testimony of wise service for the benefit of the Holy Church.

*Many happy returns, Your Eminence!*

### Greetings on the 80th Birthday of Mitred Protopresbyter Stephan Semotiuk

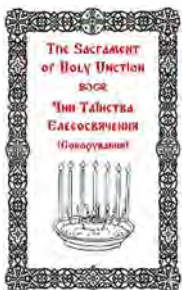
31 May marks the 80th birthday of Mitred Protopresbyter Stephan Semotiuk – a zealous servant of Christ’s Church, who has spent 57 years of his life in the priesthood within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada. His many years of service are a shining testimony to his devotion to his pastoral calling, his self-sacrifice and his deep sense of responsibility for the ministry entrusted to him.

We warmly congratulate the celebrant on this significant occasion and pray for his good health, spiritual joy, inexhaustible strength and many blessed years of life.

*Many happy returns of the day!*



### New Publications from the Liturgical Commission Added to the UOCC Website Service Booklets Tab (<https://www.uocc.ca/service-booklets/>)



With the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Ilarion, the Liturgical Commission released two new publications in April 2026: (1) Holy Week - The Sacrament of Holy Unction, and (2) Commemoration of the Reposed on the Day of Rejoicing: Provody.

The **Sacrament of Holy Unction** is offered for the healing of soul and body and for forgiveness of sins. The “General” Sacrament of Holy Unction is celebrated on Holy Wednesday (The Holy and Great Fast) in the afternoon, gathering the faithful together in the Holy Temple.

From the time of the Patristic Fathers to the present, Orthodox Christians have observed Tuesday of St. Thomas Week—**Provody**, the Day of Rejoicing—as an extension of Paschal joy. On this day, the faithful gather for the Divine Liturgy, followed by a Memorial Litia with the offering of koliva, commemorating those who have fallen asleep in the hope of the Resurrection. Clergy and faithful then visit the graves, not to bless them, but to proclaim anew that Christ is Risen and that life reigns. Early Orthodox settlers in Canada faithfully preserved this tradition, visiting graves even without clergy, singing Paschal hymns and sharing Paschal foods. These customs endure today, affirming that all are alive in Christ and that we are called to proclaim the Risen Lord to the entire world.

The PDFs are available for free download under the Service Booklets tab on the uocc.ca website.



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## **Mission Statement of The Herald (Visnyk)**

1. Proclaim the good news of our Incarnate Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ as taught by the Holy Orthodox Church, of which the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is an integral part.
2. Provide news about the Ukrainian Orthodox community in Canada, Ukraine and throughout the world.
3. Serving as a forum for the exchange of information and perspectives on what it means to live as a Canadian Orthodox Christian of Ukrainian heritage.
4. Foster the growth and development of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada, in Ukraine and throughout the world.
5. Provide articles on the Ukrainian Canadian heritage, history, culture and traditions.

“To foster the growth and development of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada” we request and encourage you, our UOCC faithful, to send in and share information and pictures from Easter services or summer children camps or special events in your parish by sending the same to the Communications Directors at: [communications1@uocc.ca](mailto:communications1@uocc.ca) or [communications2@uocc.ca](mailto:communications2@uocc.ca).

Articles published in *Visnyk/The Herald*, signed by the writer, do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, but rather those of the author. All materials are subject to editorial modification for clarity, space considerations and stylistic conventions adopted by the *Visnyk/The Herald*. The editor reserves the right to edit or shorten, if necessary, all articles, as well as to refuse publication of submitted materials if deemed unsuitable or at variance with editorial policy. The editor must approve the publication of any articles that have been published earlier or are under consideration for publishing elsewhere.

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