



WESTERN EPARCHY NEWSLETTER

WESTERN EPARCHY
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF CANADA

Issue 34: Winter, 2020

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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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HOLODOMOR COMMEMORATION Edmonton City Hall November 25, 2019



His Grace Bishop Ilarion presided at a Memorial Litiya, assisted by clergy, for the victims of the Holodomor. In attendance was the fifth President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko and Marina Poroshenko.

The Holodomor monument at Edmonton City Hall was the first in the world, erected in 1983.



Excerpt from: Archpastoral Remarks to the 60th Western Eparchy Assembly by His Grace Bishop Ilarion

I hope that God will strengthen our ties to serve together for His glory and our God-protected Western Eparchy. It is my immense joy to see all of you, especially those who come from far, from BC and from our rural parishes, at our 60th WE Assembly. 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 the 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. The Church does not belong to us. The Church belongs to God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the head of His Church. Sometimes we think that with our human efforts we can change something in the Church or resolve problems. We make some plans, resolutions with the words “be it resolved...” and we do not even understand that nothing in the Church can be resolved without God’s blessing. In that way we show that we don’t really understand the identity of the Church, which is not a human-founded organization or corporation, but the body of Christ where God is the head of the Church. We cannot decide for ourselves on how **we** must change our life to be closer to God, but we think we can change God’s Church without Him. If we really want to change or improve something in the Church, we need to pray and ask God’s blessing for that.

Many of us are preoccupied with declining membership of our Church and worry that our vineyard does not bear much fruit. We think we can improve the situation with our human efforts. But how good as Orthodox Christians are we? Probably we are like the dry branches in God’s vineyard. If we are in our Church complex during Lent or Fast days and organize meals with meat for our faithful and do not keep the fast, we are disrespecting God’s Commandments. How can we think that we are going to be blessed by God? Does God need growth in the number of faithful who are disrespecting Him? The Lord invites us at every Divine Liturgy with the words “Take, eat, this is My Body and drink of this, this is My Blood” and how many of us who are present in the Church listen to Him and obey Him? Many of us are deaf to His words and do not take His word seriously. And in this way, we disrespect God.

In the meantime, people have lots of brainstorm sessions and come up with ideas of how to increase membership in the Church, as if the Church is a Corporation. God doesn’t need such faithful who openly disrespect Him, even in the temples, and have a feeling that they are the ruling power in the Church. With that attitude, no retreats, no seminars, no parish council decisions can bring change for the growth of the Church. We need God for our salvation, but God doesn’t need dry branches in His vineyard. Let us seriously think about that. Our Lord said “do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”(Luke 12:32.) By these words our Lord addresses us. We should not be discouraged if we are small in numbers.

In reality, in human history, the Orthodox Church is not the largest in numbers, and many times, it looks like it is going to disappear. But God looks after His Church and after the Golgotha comes the Resurrection. For example, in the 1930s in Ukraine, there were only 6 active temples, and at the present time, there are over 17,000. We never know what God’s plans are. But I pray and strongly believe that God will not leave our eparchy without His care. It is true, that like a corporation, we are declining, but it fills me with great hope and joy that many parishes in our eparchy are starting to have a more frequent Eucharistic life. Our faithful have grown from being viewers or observers of the Divine Liturgy to becoming active participants of the Holy Eucharist. 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 salvation. 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 the Mysteries of the Church that bring us to salvation. ... (continued on page 4)



YOUTH APPRECIATION 2019– Children and youth who participate in the Church were honored at the Western Eparchy Assembly on October 27.



Youth Summit 2019



10th anniversary of the consecration of the temple of the UOC of St. Mary the Protectress, Parksville, BC. October 19, 2019



60th Anniversary of the Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor of St. Andrew, November 3, 2019



VICTORIA, BC – The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. George, November 9, 2019



60th Anniversary of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Michael the Archangel, November 24, 2019





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Excerpt from: Archpastoral Remarks to the 60th Western Eparchy Assembly by His Grace Bishop Ilarion

I am thankful to God that in our Western Eparchy despite all of our problems and challenges we face, we have good trends also. The Church is not a building where the faithful gather to worship; it is not a corporation, but the Church is the faithful who participate in the Holy Mysteries, have a spiritual life, and in this way are the true members of the Body of Christ, His Holy Church. What should decline will decline, the dry branch never will bring lots of fruit.

This year we gather for the 60th Assembly of the Western Eparchy. Our forefathers built the temples with big sacrifices in a much more difficult condition of life. In these 60 years, our Eparchy has faced many challenges. Some things were achieved with God's help; some things were not. We live in a different world than 50 or 60 years ago.

ORPHANAGE PROJECT IN UKRAINE

Many needed items were purchased in 2019. More assistance will be provided in 2020. **Tax Receipts for Revenue Canada will be issued.**

THANK YOU FOR THE CONTINUED SUPPORT RECEIVED BY YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS.

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 2019.

WESTERN EPARCHY FULL COUNCIL 2019-20

His Grace Bishop Ilarion

Rev. Fr. Timothy CHRAPKO, Member at large
Rt. Rev. Protopresbyter Victor LAKUSTA
Rev. Fr. Chad PAWLYSHYN
Rev. Mykhaylo POZDYK
Rt. Rev. Mitred Archpriest Georg PODTEPA, 1st V-Chairman
Rev. Fr. Wasyl SAPIHA
Rt. Rev. Protopresbyter Stephan SEMOTIUK, 2nd Vice-chairman
Rev. Fr. Yuriy SUCHEVAN
Rev. Fr. Roman TSAPLAN
Ted CHOLOD
Maria DEREWIANKA
Marshall KACHMAR, Treasurer
Dave KORZAN, Property Manager
Subd. Kyle LICKISS
Joy LOCKHART
Diana MAUCH, Secretary
Joanne RAK
Vivian SKAKUN, Member at large

WESTERN EPARCHY LEVIES 2020

Levies for 2020 will remain at \$15.00 per member (based on membership as of December 31, 2019.) However, please note the Resolution from WE Assembly 2018:

2.1 WHEREAS expenses continue to increase and programs are costly to initiate, and WHEREAS small congregations have difficulty supporting an increase in levies, BE IT RESOLVED, that a voluntary \$5.00 per member levy be implemented for those congregations who have the means to support this levy. These funds can be used to offset increased expenditures or new programs as decided by the Western Eparchy Council. Parishes may choose to add \$ 5.00 per member and submit \$ 20.00 per member.

LEVIES ARE PAYABLE NOW