

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

St. Volodymyr and Olga Ukrainian Catholic Church

In this issue:

WORDS OF THANKS

PLEASE SUPPORT
OUR FOOD DRIVE

EXAMINATION OF
CONCIENCE

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Welcome to the St. Volodymyr and Olga Ukrainian Catholic Parish. We are a Byzantine Ukrainian Catholic Parish, located in Georgian Bay. We gather together as a community to glorify God through worship and community outreach. As part of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Toronto and Eastern Canada we celebrate bilingually (English and Ukrainian). Sunday Divine Liturgy is held at 11:30 a.m

A GIFT OF TIME - Everyone has been affected by the COVID pandemic. For some the effects have been physical however many people have been affected psychologically experiencing stress, anxiety and depression. While there may be people who have more money and possessions, we all have the same amount of time: exactly 24 hours every day. The greatest gift you can give someone is your time. We encourage you to reach over the phone to connect with your fellow parishioners and share with them your gift of time. Let it be your gift to them and a gift to yourself as well as we all connect as a spiritual family



Amid Covid-19 outbreak causing these challenging times we continue to rely on your generosity. We still have expenses and rely on your support. You can make donations thru e transfer; Cawajachurch1@gmail.com or sending them by mail: St. Volodymyr and Olga Ukrainian Catholic Church 5 Brook Ave. Tiny



Тропар, глас 4 Різдво Твоє, Христе Боже наш, засвітило світові світло розуміння.* В ньому бо ті, що звіздам служили, від звізди навчалися* поклонятися Тобі, Сонцю правди,* і пізнавати Тебе – Схід з висоти.* Господи, слава Тобі! Тропаріон,*

Tone 4 Your nativity, O Christ our God, made the light of knowledge dawn on the world:* through it, those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star* to worship You, the Sun of Righteousness,* and to know You, the Dawn from on high.* Glory to You, O Lord.*



Tiny Township church's golf tournament raises funds for children's charity

Rob Cooper (right), board member of We Are the Villagers, receives a \$500 cheque from Fr. Andrija Petresin (middle), pastor of Sts. Volodymyr and Olha Ukrainian Catholic Church, and Chester Bortkiewicz, member of the church golf committee that raises funds annually to support the Tiny Township church and other charities in north Simcoe. This donation to the For the Kids campaign will help children from marginalized families pursue extracurricular activities through 2022.

<https://www.simcoe.com/community-story/10524346-tiny-township-church-s-golf-tournament-raises-funds-for-children-s-charity/>

WORDS OF THANKS

Some of you heard that our church applied for a government grant thru Resilient Communities Fund (Ontario Trillium Foundation), which would include the expansion of our deck/patio. If we receive the funds, we would be enlarging our deck and laying a stone pathway/patio around the hall, extending it outward on the lawn. We would also build an access from outside into the existing washroom for general public within the Georgian Bay and numerous visitors. This would renew our efforts to facilitate community events for seniors, youth, and allow us to host community charitable events such as food banks, used clothing drives and food events, making our parish a community hub in the Georgian Bay area.

It was a big effort of our Church council, who between or treasurer Beverly, Pavlo, and Motria managed the complete of the application. Thank you, Bev, for your help; if it was not for you, it would not happen. What a blessing you have been to our parish. Thank you, Pavlo, Motria and all other council members who

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR FOOD DRIVE

Our Church will be collecting non-perishable items for the food banks at St. Vincent de Paul (St. Margaret's Catholic Church) and the Salvation Army. A box has been placed at the side entrance to the church and items can be dropped off before, or on your way into, the 11:30 liturgy. Donations will be delivered alternately to the food banks every second week. The holiday season is a time of year to reflect on our blessings and to share them with others if we can,"

Thank you in advance for helping Sts. Volodymyr and Olha contribute to assisting those in need. "

CHRISTMAS EVE TRADITION

Among the Ukrainians, the most beloved of all festivities is Christmas which covers a cycle of important fest days, centering around family and agricultural modes of life, is very colorful, being the most important part of Christmas. Its main feature is the evening meal called “Holy Supper” (Sviat Vechir) in literal translation. According to custom, all members of the family should be that night for a family reunion.

The supper on Holy Night differs from other evening meals, having twelve Lenten dishes, symbolic of the twelve Apostles who gathered at the Last Supper. The dishes are prepared with a vegetable shortening or cooking oil, omitting all animal fat, milk and milk products because Christmas is preceded by a period of fast which ends on Christmas Day after midnight or morning church service. The day of the Christmas Eve is a strict fast in commemoration of the hardships endured by Mother Mary en route to Bethlehem.

The table, set to according to time-honored custom, is first strewn with a small handful of fine hay in memory of the Christ Child in a manger, and over it is spread the very best tablecloth adorned with native embroidery. Bread (kalach), symbolizing prosperity, constitutes the central table decoration. Three round, braided loaves are placed one on top of the other with a candle inserted into the top loaf, and the bottom loaf encircled with tiny twigs of evergreen. Candles on both sides of the loaves complete the table decoration. If a member of the family has died during the year, a place is set for him in the believe that the spirit of the deceased unites with the family on that magic Holy Night. A lighted candle is always placed in the window as an invitation to any homeless stranger, or perchance a lost soul, to join the family in celebrating the birth of Christ.

Prior to the evening meal a spoonful of each dish is mixed into the feed of the domestic animals, because animals were the first creatures to behold the new-born Christ. The first star in the eastern sky announces the time for the commencement of the meal. It is the children’s duty to watch for the star. Each member of the family, dressed in holiday attire, awaits the customary ritual opening. This is done by the master of the household who brings a sheaf of what called “did” or “didukh” (grandfather), a symbol of gathering of the clan, and greets his family with traditional salutations, expressing joy that God has favored them with good health and general well-being. The sheaf is placed in the corner of the dining room and remains there until New Year when it is taken out and burned. In the cities this tradition has been modified, and the sheaf is replaced with a few stalks of wheat which are placed in a vase, or they may be used as a table decoration.

Members of the family and servants gather around the table. The meal begins with the Lord’s prayer and then a thanksgiving grace appropriate to the occasion. The first and indispensable dish is kutya, a preparation of cooked wheat dressed with honey, ground poppy seed, and sometimes chopped nuts. This ritual dish, of a very ancient origin, has survived hundreds of generations without losing its importance in the Christmas festivity. It starts the meal in a ceremonial manner. The head of the family raises the first spoonful of the kutya, invoking God’s grace, and greets the family with the traditional Christmas greet: “Khrystos Rodyvsya” (Christ is born), to which they all reply in unison: “Slavim Yoho!” (Let us glorify Him). Following this ritual everyone must partake of the kutya, if only but a spoonful. The exact meaning of kutya has been lost. Scholars of the folklore generally believe that



Thomas Merton, my favourite Theologian and Trappist monk in his book: **No man is an Island**, writes:

“God has left Sin in the world in order that there may be forgiveness: not only the secret forgiveness by which He Himself cleanses our souls but the manifest forgiveness by which we have mercy on one another and so give expression to the fact that He is living, by His mercy, in our own hearts”.

The beautiful thing is that God not only forgives us in the sacrament of reconciliation by setting us to be free, but He also stays and lives with us in His mercy.

As we prepare ourselves spiritually for the saviour's coming by looking inside and quieting down from the external influences, our faith encourages us to admit that we are not perfect. To take responsibility for our lives, for both good & evil and do something about it. Our faith encourages us to find a way to say, "I am sorry" and approach the sacrament of reconciliation.

Please know that I am always available for the sacrament of reconciliation in the church before or after the service. These are some guidelines of how to do a good examination of conscience.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Faith

While people in every generation continue to seek the meaning and purpose of life, Christians have formulated a very simple and concise answer. The purpose of life is to know God, to love God and to serve God and His people.

Is God an important part of my life? Have friends, family or work become more important than God?

Do I pray everyday?

Have I participated in occult activities: ouija boards, wicca, spells, divination, evil eye, taro cards?

Have I used God's name to swear or express anger?

Have I missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days since my last confession?

Have I avoided telling a serious sin during confession?

Family

Family is the starting point of our encounter of life, of our experience of relationships, of our safety-net. At the same time, it could be a place of great distress; nevertheless, it is where we are formed and form our loved ones into Godly and loving people.

Do I take time to be present to my family, spouse, children, parents?

Do I express my love to my family member, spouse, children?

Have I fought with or disrespected family members? Have I made efforts to mend lingering hurts and wounds?

Am I a responsible God-parent?

Has my behavior or attitude cause my family members undo concern, stress, or anxiety?

If family members have passed away, do I remember them in my prayers?

Self

Each of us has a unique identity, which is forged over many years. In some ways it is formed by the people, influences and experiences that color our lives. We are a unique gift of God called to live in community with one another.

Have I been proud? Do I feel as if I am better than everyone around me? Have I been jealous of others, or of what others have?

Have I been unable to control my anger in my words or actions? Have I slandered someone's reputation?

Did I remain silent or indifferent when others did things that were wrong, sinful, or illegal? Do I waste time? Do I have a tendency to be lazy?

Have I failed to be generous with what God has blessed me? Am I over critical of others and myself?

Am I selfish and only care about my own wants and needs? Am I not satisfied or unhappy with what I have and have been given?

Have I tried to make myself a better Christian and better person? Have I broken promises deliberately?

My Body

God has provided us with a wonderful body for our time on earth. In order that our bodies serve us well we should care for them and avoid any intentional harm to ourselves or others.

Do I take care of my body by giving it enough sleep, exercise and food? Have I physically harmed another person by fighting, bullying?

Do I abuse my body by using illegal drugs, getting drunk, overeating, under-eating, not exercising, or exercising too much? Am I overly concerned with my physical appearance and what I think others think about me?

Sexuality is a beautiful part of human life. It has its place and time in the context of marriage. Have I been sexually active in inappropriate ways?

Have I invited impure thoughts or allowed them to linger long after I realize they cause me spiritual harm? Have I enjoyed pornography?

Have I degraded sexuality, the human body or the opposite sex with racy comments or jokes? Have I had an abortion or encouraged or assisted others to have one?

Others

Have I destroyed or vandalized another person's property? Have I stolen another person's property? Have I illegally downloaded material? Have I borrowed something without returning it?

Have I used others for my selfish needs? Am I envious or saddened when something good happens to others?

Do I get jealous of others' success? Have I shared a truth about another that should not have been shared? Do I gossip about others or fail to speak up when others gossip?

Let God know you are sorry for your sins. Bring them up in the sacrament of reconciliation as clearly as possible. Remember that whatever sins you address in confession they are released from your heart for good. Although you will continue to face many temptations and challenges, having an open and contrite heart is the first step to allowing God's grace to transform us into healthy & holy women and men.