January, 2016

"Year of Mercy" Pastoral Letter

My brother bishop John and reverend clergy, venerable Sisters and beloved faithful of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

An Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy has been proclaimed by our Holy Father for the period of December 8th, 2015 to November 20th, 2016. Pope Francis issued an Apostolic Letter ‘Misericordiae Vultus’ in which he invites us to reflect on mercy as an expression of the face of God. Pope Francis states that the Church makes herself a servant of the love of Christ and mediates it to all people. It is a love that forgives and expresses itself in the gift of oneself. Wherever there are Christians, everyone should find an oasis of mercy. The Holy Father particularly desires that this Holy Year be celebrated as an occasion for the renewal of pastoral life.

Pope Francis invites us to receive God’s mercy, encouraging all to rediscover, appreciate and experience mercy through the practice of regular confessions. He further encourages us to actively share God’s mercy, recalling Jesus’ words, “Be Merciful as your Father is merciful” (Luke 6:36). Pope Francis challenges each of us to transform the door of every home into a ‘door of mercy’. He challenges (continued on next page)
us to become witnesses of God’s mercy, urging us not to be silent about God’s great works.

In his Pastoral Letter reflecting on the ‘Year of Mercy’, our Patriarch Sviatoslav Shevchuk focuses attention on how we accept God’s mercy in our life individually and as a community of love. He calls you and me to examine ourselves as to how we give testimony to mercy in our daily life with ourselves, with our neighbors and with all people with whom we interact.

The central themes of this ‘Year of Mercy’ invite us to increase our awareness and understanding of God’s mercy; to give active witness to God’s mercy in our actions and word; to actively seek the experience of giving and receiving mercy; to covet it within oneself; to zealously protect it by not losing sight of it; and to seek mercy in God’s holy temple, the Church. The Holy Father opened a special ‘Door of Mercy’ in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome and asked that this be done in every diocese at the Cathedral, and at any parish or shrine frequented by pilgrims. Opportunity is to be made for faithful to celebrate the Mystery of Reconciliation and the Eucharist as a sign of conversion and “immersion” in the Mercy of the Heavenly Father. In the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia, the primary door of every Church is designated as a ‘Door of Mercy’. It challenges all the faithful to renew their anticipation of meeting Jesus Christ in His Church every time we enter our churches for worship. Further, it challenges every pastor and parishioner to actively seek to invite others to enter the ‘Door of Mercy’ of the local parish where the pastor and faithful may give full witness to God’s mercy to the newcomer.

Lenten and other spiritual retreats ought to be planned within all parishes at various times of the year. They ought to be advertised throughout the local communities, welcoming others to seek the grace of God’s mercy in the parish.

The following parishes are designated to make special opportunities for faithful to receive the grace of God’s mercy: the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Philadelphia; the Ukrainian National Catholic Shrine of the Holy Family in Washington, D.C.; St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church in Newark, NJ; St. Anne Ukrainian Catholic Church in Warrington, PA; Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church in Centralia, PA.; and Ss. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church in Olyphant, PA. The three parishes with schools are also designated as special Churches to visit and to pass through their ‘Door of Mercy’, namely St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Passaic, NJ; Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church in Perth Amboy, NJ; and St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Minersville, PA. The pastors of these parishes are asked to offer special opportunities for reflection on God’s mercy with the students of the schools. Faithful are asked to occasionally visit and pray with a neighboring Ukrainian Catholic community of faith. Extend yourself to and with others in your faith journey. We grow in our mutual understanding of the journey of faith. We come to appreciate that we are part of a larger community of faith.

All pastors are asked to facilitate additional opportunities for offering the Mystery of Reconciliation (Confession) to all the faithful and visitors. Designate a special time during the week to be available throughout the year to offer God’s mercy through Reconciliation.
How fondly I recall the dedication of the late Mitred Archpriest Stephen Hrynuck who steadfastly offered confessions every Saturday at 3 pm, even into his late nineties! He would offer the opportunity regardless whether anyone came. He expressed surprise as to the number of people who would avail themselves of the opportunity to seek God’s mercy, even from among non-parishioners.

We strongly urge all clergy, religious and faithful to participate in a pilgrimage experience in this ‘Year of Mercy’. It offers an exceptional opportunity for grace-filled moments challenging each participant to renewal and rediscovery of our path to conversion. Plan to participate in the annual Archieparchial pilgrimage held at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Order of Saint Basil the Great in Fox Chase, PA on Sunday, October 2nd, 2016. Participate in the annual pilgrimage on the Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God on August 13th and 14th, 2016 on the grounds of the Motherhouse of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate in Sloatsburg, NY.

Seek to pray and visit with the holy relics of the Saints of our Church. The saints have given witness to God’s mercy in a very complete and sacrificial way. They inspire us to imitate them in our life. Healings and various manifestations have occurred among pilgrims who have prayed with the relics of the saints. Relics of Blessed Nicholas Charnetsky, CSsR are present permanently within our Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. A travelling icon with relics of Blessed Nicholas will begin to visit our parishes this Lent and throughout the coming years. Relics of Blessed Josaphata Hordashevskia, SSMI are also available in our Cathedral at the newly blessed mosaic of her. Relics of Blessed Hordashevskia, SSMI are also present within the Motherhouse of the Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate in Sloatsburg, NY and within an icon of her occasionally visiting parishes.

Visit and venerate the Miraculous Icon of Our Lady of Zhyrovytsi at Ss. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church in Olyphant, PA, the jewel covered Icon of Our Lady of Pochaiv in the Assumption of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church in Centralia, or the Icon of the Mother of God of Zarvanytsia at Christ the King Ukrainian Catholic Church in Philadelphia, PA. Pray to the Venerable Metropolitan Andrew Sheptytsky at the newly blessed mosaic of him in our Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Philadelphia.

Pope Francis announced the ‘Year of Mercy’ with the expressed goal of changing the way the Church is perceived by the faithful, lapsed believers and by the rest of the world. He challenges you and me to be instruments of that change. The Church – you and me – is called to reach out to people and to bring them the joy of the Gospel. We are called to encounter people with the invitation to journey with us in our faith. Our invitation and our witness ought to be characterized by the grace of God’s mercy expressed through us individually within our families and among our loved ones, within our parishes, and within our communities.

I pray that we may worthily respond to these challenges through the various directions and suggestions offered within this letter to you. Thank you for your anticipated loving and joyful embrace of the challenges.

May God bestow generously His mercy upon you and bless you in ways only He can!

+Stefan Soroka
Archbishop of Philadelphia for Ukrainians; Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States

Icon of the Mother of God of Zarvanytsia
The logo and the motto together provide a fitting summary of what the Jubilee Year is all about. The motto Merciful Like the Father (taken from the Gospel of Luke, 6:36) serves as an invitation to follow the merciful example of the Father who asks us not to judge or condemn but to forgive and to give love and forgiveness without measure (cfr. Lk 6:37-38).

The logo – the work of Jesuit Father Marko I. Rupnik – presents a small summa theologiae of the theme of mercy. In fact, it represents an image quite important to the early Church: that of the Son having taken upon his shoulders the lost soul demonstrating that it is the love of Christ that brings to completion the mystery of his incarnation culminating in redemption.

The logo has been designed in such a way so as to express the profound way in which the Good Shepherd touches the flesh of humanity and does so with a love with the power to change one’s life. One particular feature worthy of note is that while the Good Shepherd, in his great mercy, takes humanity upon himself, his eyes are merged with those of man. Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ. Every person discovers in Christ, the new Adam, one’s own humanity and the future that lies ahead, contemplating, in his gaze, the love of the Father.

The scene is captured within the so called mandorla (the shape of an almond), a figure quite important in early and medieval iconography, for it calls to mind the two natures of Christ, divine and human. The three concentric ovals, with colors progressively lighter as we move outward, suggest the movement of Christ who carries humanity out of the night of sin and death. Conversely, the depth of the darker color suggests the impenetrability of the love of the Father who forgives all.

http://www.iubilaeummisericordiae.va/content/gdm/en/giubileo/logo.html

The first miracle Peter witnessed at the hands of Jesus drove the fisherman to his knees—a catch of fish so heavy that Peter’s boat was in danger of sinking. Peter realized that if Jesus could do this, he also was able to look into Peter’s soul and observe the sins hidden there.

“Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man,” Peter begged.

Peter didn’t realize how merciful God is. But Jesus assured him. “Do not be afraid.”

These are same words with which Moses encouraged the Hebrews as they fled Pharoah’s soldiers. The same words with which the angel Gabriel comforted the young Mary during the Visitation. In fact, this is the most commonly repeated phrase in the Bible—both Old and New Testaments: “Have no fear” or “Do not be afraid.”

This is one of the reasons why—when Peter, James and John brought their boats to shore that day—they “left everything and followed him.”

Left everything. And followed him.

Think about what any of us would do in this situation. Jesus says to each of us today, “Do not be afraid.” It is left to each of us, however, to “leave everything” and follow him.

Our prayer today: Jesus, help me walk away without hesitation from the things of this world that keep me from following you.

-Mr. Peter Yaremko
“Be merciful just as your Father is merciful.” (Luke 6:36)

There is a story of a mother who was pleading with Napoleon Bonaparte for mercy on the life of her son, an army officer, who had been sentenced to death for treason. The emperor called the young officer’s crime an unforgivable betrayal of the nation, which it undoubtedly was, and that justice demanded his life.

“Not justice!” cried the mother, “Give him mercy!” “He does not deserve mercy”, was Napoleon’s curt retort.

“But”, said the mother, “if he deserved it, it would not be mercy!” This mother’s wise reply immediately softened the heart of Napoleon who spared her son from the sentence of death.

As we know, this year our Lenten journey is taking place during the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, inaugurated by His Holiness Pope Francis last December in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

We are called to be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful. But before we are able show mercy to anyone else, we are called first to open our own hearts so that we can accept the gift of mercy freely given to us by the Father. This sounds easy enough in theory, but opening our hearts to God is, at times, not as straightforward as we may think. Because in order to accept this gift of mercy, we must first admit to ourselves and to God that we, abject and sinful human creatures, are indeed, in dire need of his mercy. We are called to acquire an attitude of sincere penitence and humility, which is not always easy for us who have grown up on a diet, served up by our modern society, of pride, entitlement, and self-sufficiency.

This is why the Church, in her great wisdom, has given us the great spiritual gift of this holy season of Great Lent. The unique and evocative prayers and services of Great Lent are such that they instill in us, firstly, a recognition of our own faults and failings and secondly, a desire for personal conversion and a return to the loving arms of God the Father and his mercy. And so, over and over again in the divine services we pray: “Lord, have mercy.”

One of the saints of the Byzantine church

(continued on next page)
writes the following: “This expression – Lord, have mercy – is appropriate, since we should not ask for anything except for mercy. As sinners we cannot, nor dare not, say anything to our Loving Master except have mercy.”

Our limited human intellect cannot, of course, even partially grasp the depth and breadth of the mercy of God for us. The word mercy in English is the translation of the Greek word eleos, which has the same root as the old Greek word for olive oil, a substance which was used in the ancient world as a soothing agent for bruises and minor wounds. The oil was poured onto the wound and gently massaged in, thus soothing, comforting and making whole the injured part. This should immediately bring to mind of course, the gospel parable of the Good Samaritan and the traveller who poured olive oil on the wounds of the man lying beaten and left for dead at the side of the road. (Luke 10:29-37)

So when we pray “Lord, have mercy”, we are praying in effect: “Lord, soothe me, comfort me, take away my pain, show me your steadfast love.” This mercy refers to the infinite loving kindness of God, his compassion for us his suffering children, his desire to lift us up from our pain and sorrow and sinfulness. It is in this profound sense that we pray “Lord, have mercy” with such great frequency and fervor throughout the divine services.

If we are called to embrace the mercy of God with open arms and hearts for ourselves, then how much more are we called to share this gift with others and to witness to this gift in the world? Like the traveler in the gospel parable we too are called to be a good Samaritan to those in our lives whom we meet, even accidentally, in our daily lives, who have need of the soothing balm of God’s mercy to be rubbed into their wounds of body and soul, whether or not these wounds come from outside themselves or are self-inflicted.

Jesus never compromised on his ideals, but he did beautifully describe and embody God’s unconditional love, mercy and forgiveness for everyone: a beggar with leprosy, a Samaritan woman with five failed marriages, a traitor like Peter, a self-righteous human rights abuser like Saul of Tarsus, a prodigal son, an adulteress. The Gospel gives eloquent witness to this on many occasions. If Jesus showed a way of keeping the highest standards, while at the same time offering Living Water – love, forgiveness, mercy, to the least deserving of it, can we then, act any differently?

St. Isaac, the Syrian once said, “Never say that God is just. If he were just, you would be in hell. Rely only on his injustice, which is forgiveness, love and mercy”.

Our prayer today is that the Father’s gifts of forgiveness, love and mercy may brighten the path of our Lenten journey upon which we are now embarking and lead us spiritually renewed and refreshed to the Feast of Our Lord’s Resurrection!

+Stefan Soroka
Archbishop of Philadelphia for Ukrainians
Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States

+Richard Seminack
Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago

+Paul Chomnycky, OSBM (author)
Eparch of Stamford

+ Bohdan Danylo
Eparch of St. Josaphat in Parma

+John Bura
Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia

Great Fast, 2016
Spiritual Regulations for the Great Fast

Although our Church traditionally prescribed abstention from meat and dairy products in days gone by for the entire duration of the Great Fast, the following are the minimal Lenten regulations today:

Abstinence from meat and all dairy products on the First Day of the Great Fast and on Good Friday.

Abstinence from meat only on all Fridays of the Great Fast as well as Holy Saturday. It is also traditional to abstain from meat on Wednesdays during the Great Fast.

Reception of the Holy Mysteries of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist during the period from the onset of Great Fast to the Wednesday before Ascension Thursday.

The Fasting and Abstinence regulations are not binding on persons 60 or older, the very poor, sick, nursing or pregnant women, children below the age of 14, and those who engage in physically very hard labor. However, all are urged, if able to do so, to observe the fasting and abstinence regulations.

All the faithful are urged to attend the Lenten services such as Lenten Vespers, the Presanctified Liturgy and the Commemoration of the Deceased (Sorokousty).

Such good deeds as almsgiving, visitation of the sick, Bible reading and praying for vocations to the priesthood and religious life are most earnestly recommended to all the Faithful.

Great Fast Liturgical Guidelines

The weekdays of the Great Fast are aliturgical meaning no Divine Liturgy, even for funerals, should be celebrated except for the Feast of the Annunciation. On Wednesdays and Fridays of the Great Fast, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is to be celebrated. Typika may be used the other days. For funerals, the liturgical text used by the New Jersey Protopresbyterate or St. Michael Church in Frackville may be utilized. The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is to be celebrated for Sunday Liturgies during this time.

During Holy Week, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is to be celebrated Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. On Holy Thursday evening, Vespers with Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great should be celebrated. On Good Friday March 25 which is also the Feast of the Annunciation special services which include the Divine Liturgy are to be celebrated. (Liturgical instructions and text will be provided.) On Holy Saturday evening, Vespers with the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is to be celebrated.
(On Cheesefare Sunday, all the clergy and faithful have been asked to conduct the Forgiveness Service after the homily during the Divine Liturgy. While this service has been traditionally part of Forgiveness Vespers on Sunday evening, by observing this rite of humility and love at the Divine Liturgy, more of the faithful will experience this moving service as the Christian community prepares to begin the journey through the Great Fast. The following article, written by Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemann, explains the significance of the services of Cheesefare Sunday.)

Forgiveness Service on Cheesefare Sunday

In the Orthodox (and Eastern Catholic) Church, the last Sunday before Great Lent — the day on which, at Vespers, Lent is liturgically announced and inaugurated — is called Forgiveness Sunday. On the morning of that Sunday, (also known as Cheesefare Sunday, at the Divine Liturgy, we hear the words of Christ: “If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses...” (Mark 6:14-15)

Then after Lenten Vespers — after hearing the announcement of Lent in the Great Prokeimen: “Turn not away Thy face from Thy child for I am afflicted! Hear me speedily! Draw near unto my soul and deliver it!”, after making our entrance into Lenten worship, with its special memories, with the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian, with its prostrations — we ask forgiveness from each other, we perform the rite of forgiveness and reconciliation. And as we approach each other with words of reconciliation, the choir intones the Paschal hymns, filling the church with the anticipation of Paschal joy.

What is the meaning of this rite? Why is it that the Church wants us to begin the Lenten season with forgiveness and reconciliation? These questions are in order because for too many people Lent means primarily, and almost exclusively, a change of diet, the compliance with ecclesiastical regulations concerning fasting. They understand fasting as an end in itself, as a “good deed” required by God and carrying in itself its merit and its reward. But, the Church spares no effort in revealing to us that fasting is but a means, one among many, towards a higher goal: the spiritual renewal of man, his return to God, true repentance and, therefore, true reconciliation. The Church spares no effort in warning us against a hypocritical and pharisaic fasting, against the reduction of religion to mere external obligations. As a Lenten hymn says:

In vain do you rejoice in no eating, O soul!  
For you abstain from food,  
But from passions you are not purified.  
If you persevere in sin, you will perform a useless fast.

Now, forgiveness stands at the very center of Christian faith and of Christian life because Christianity itself is, above all, the religion of forgiveness. God forgives us, and His forgiveness is in Christ, His Son, Whom He sends to us, so that by sharing in His humanity we may share in His love and be truly reconciled with God. Indeed, Christianity has no other content but love. And it is primarily the renewal of that love, a return to it, a growth in it, that we seek in Great Lent, in fasting and prayer, in the entire spirit and the entire effort of that season. Thus, truly forgiveness is both the beginning of, and the proper condition for the Lenten season.

One may ask, however: Why should I perform this rite when I have no “enemies”? Why should I ask forgiveness from people who have done nothing to me, and whom I hardly know? To ask these questions,
is to misunderstand the Church teaching concerning forgiveness. It is true, that open enmity, personal hatred, real animosity may be absent from our life, though if we experience them, it may be easier for us to repent, for these feelings openly contradict Divine commandments. But, the Church reveals to us that there are much subtler ways of offending Divine Love. These are indifference, selfishness, lack of interest in other people, of any real concern for them -- in short, that wall which we usually erect around ourselves, thinking that by being “polite” and “friendly” we fulfill God’s commandments. The rite of forgiveness is so important precisely because it makes us realize – be it only for one minute – that our entire relationship to other men is wrong, makes us experience that encounter of one child of God with another, of one person created by God with another, makes us feel that mutual “recognition” which is so terribly lacking in our cold and dehumanized world.

On that unique evening, listening to the joyful Paschal hymns we are called to make a spiritual discovery: to taste of another mode of life and relationship with people, of life whose essence is love. We can discover that always and everywhere Christ, the Divine Love Himself, stands in the midst of us, transforming our mutual alienation into brotherhood. As I advance towards the other, as the other comes to me – we begin to realize that it is Christ Who brings us together by His love for both of us.

And because we make this discovery – and because this discovery is that of the Kingdom of God itself: the Kingdom of Peace and Love, of reconciliation with God and, in Him, with all that exists – we hear the hymns of that Feast, which once a year, “opens to us the doors of Paradise.” We know why we shall fast and pray, what we shall seek during the long Lenten pilgrimage. Forgiveness Sunday: the day on which we acquire the power to make our fasting – true fasting; our effort – true effort; our reconciliation with God – true reconciliation.

Priest: May the Lord God, through His grace and loving kindness, forgive you. And I also pardon and forgive you.

Sunday of Cheesefare - February 7, 2016

Matthew 6:14-21

“The Lord said: “If you forgive others their transgressions, Your Heavenly Father will forgive you yours. But if you do not forgive others, neither will Your Father forgive your transgressions.

When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father Who is hidden. And your Father Who sees what is hidden will repay you.

Do not store up for yourself treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal. Rather store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroy nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is there also will your heart be.
SPECIAL DIVINE LITURGY FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY WILL BE CELEBRATED AT THE GOLDEN-DOMED UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL IN PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 28

A Special Divine Liturgy for the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy will be celebrated by Metropolitan Stefan Soroka at the Golden-domed Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Philadelphia, Sunday, February 28, 2016 beginning at 10 a.m. Please note this will be the only Divine Liturgy celebrated Sunday morning, February 28 at the Cathedral. Additional details will be forthcoming in the next issue of “The Way.”

2016 SIX DAYS OF CREATION COURSES IN ICONOGRAPHY

ECCLESIASTICAL PICTORIAL EMBROIDERY WITH

Master Embroiderer

Olga Fishchuk of Kiev

ST. THOMAS SEMINARY, BLOOMFIELD, CT

JUNE 12 - 18, 2016

Olga Fishchuk is a graduate of the Pictorial Embroidery Department of the Icon Painting School under the Moscow Orthodox Theological Academy (Sergiev Posad, Russia). Her works are in use at the Church of the Protection of Our Lady at the Moscow Orthodox Theological Academy; the Church of the Archangel Michael in Moscow; the Kiev-Pecherska Lavra and Zverynetsky Monastery in Kiev. Olga’s work has been featured in many exhibitions in Russia, Ukraine and elsewhere.

The course is open to ten students. Basic embroidery skills are required. To learn more about the course curriculum and how to register, visit our website: www.hexaemeron.org

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202-526-3737
www.ucns-holyfamily.org

Come and experience the Mercy of the Lord!

You, O Lord, are a God who takes away iniquity and pardons sin, who does not hold your anger forever, but are pleased to show mercy. You, Lord, will return to us and have pity on your people. You will trample down our sins and toss them into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:18-19)

Archbishop Stefan Soroka has designated the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family as a sanctuary of pilgrimage for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy: All are welcome and invited to enter through our Door of Mercy and to partake of the Holy Mysteries

CONFESSION IS AVAILABLE 30 MINUTES BEFORE EVERY SERVICE

Schedule for the Great Fast 2016

Monday February 8 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
7:00 p.m. Bi-lingual

Friday February 12 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
7:00 p.m. Bi-lingual

Saturday February 13 Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
10:30 a.m. Bi-lingual

Sunday February 14 Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
9:00 a.m. English 11:30 a.m. Ukrainian

Friday February 19 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
7:00 p.m. Bi-lingual

Saturday February 20 Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
10:30 a.m. Bi-lingual

Sunday February 21 Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
9:00 a.m. English 11:30 a.m. Ukrainian

Friday February 26 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
7:00 p.m. Bi-lingual

Saturday February 27 Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
10:30 a.m. Bi-lingual

Sunday February 28 Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
9:00 a.m. English 11:30 a.m. Ukrainian

Friday March 4 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
7:00 p.m. Bi-lingual

Saturday March 5 Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
10:30 a.m. Bi-lingual

Sunday March 6 Liturgy of St. Basil the Great – Archieparchial Women’s Day 2016
10:30 a.m. Bi-lingual

Friday March 11 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
7:00 p.m. Bi-lingual

Saturday March 12 Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
10:30 a.m. Bi-lingual

Sunday March 13 Liturgy of St. Basil the Great – Pysanka Workshop and Bazaar
9:00 a.m. English 11:30 a.m. Ukrainian

Friday March 18 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
7:00 p.m. Bi-lingual

Saturday March 19 Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom – Lazarus Saturday
10:30 a.m. Bi-lingual

Sunday March 20 Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom – Palm (Flowery) Sunday
9:00 a.m. English 11:30 a.m. Ukrainian
Philadelphia, Pa.— On Sundays during the Great Fast, the faithful of the parishes of the Philadelphia Deanery are invited and encouraged to participate in Lenten Vespers which will be held in a different church each Sunday of Lent.

The Lenten Vespers will begin at 4:00 p.m. Visiting clergy will be available for the Holy Mystery of Reconciliation before the services, hearing confessions beginning at 3:30 p.m. During the services, a visiting priest will also give a sermon.

The Lenten Vesper schedule is as follows:

Sunday, February 28—4 p.m. Annunciation of the BVM Church, 1206 Valley Road Melrose Park, Pa. Sermon: Father Volodymyr Klanichka

Sunday, March 6—4 p.m. Protection of the BVM Church, 2026 Bath Road, Bristol, Pa. Sermon: Father Walter Pasicznyk

Sunday, March 13—4 p.m. Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 830 North Franklin Street, Philadelphia, Pa. Sermon: Father John Fields

It is hoped that the faithful from throughout the area will travel from parish to parish each Sunday during the prayerful time of the Great Fast, not only for the spiritual enrichment provided during these services but also to meet other parishioners and to become more familiar with the churches that are part of the Philadelphia Deanery.

Sunday Devotions Schedule during the Great Fast in the Parishes of the South Anthracite Deanery

During this Lenten season, the faithful of the South Anthracite Protopresbytery of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia will continue the decades-old tradition of gathering for Lenten devotions on Sunday afternoons in the churches of the deanery. During the services, the host pastor will also give a sermon.

The Lenten devotions begin each Sunday at 3 p.m. and are coordinated by the Protopresbyter Very Rev. Michael Hutsko and the clergy of the South Anthracite Deanery. After the services, a cake and coffee social is held in the respective parish halls. The proceeds from the weekly collection benefit the St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Seminary in Washington, D.C.

The 2016 Lenten Devotion schedule is as follows:

Forgiveness Vespers, Feb. 7 (Cheesefare Sunday) — Protection of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church, McAdoo, Pa.

First Sunday of the Great Fast, Feb. 14 — Patronage of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church, Marion Heights, Pa.


Third Sunday of the Great Fast, Feb. 28 — St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church, Maizeville, Pa.

Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast, March 6 — Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church, Mount Carmel, Pa.


Flowery (Palm) Sunday, March 20— St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church, Minersville, Pa.
FEBRUARY 07, 2016

February 7th
2:00 pm

St. Mary’s Chapel in Sloatsburg, NY will be blessed as a “Holy Door” for this Jubilee Year!

The Sisters Servants invite all to come and celebrate this special service.

Pope Francis wants these Holy Doors to become a “Door of Mercy” through which all who enter will experience the love of God, Who consoles, pardons, and instills hope.”

The service will begin at 2:00 pm in the Gallery with a procession, and will be bi-lingual.

All are invited to come and pray privately in the chapel before an icon of the Mother of God, Door of Mercy used by Pope Francis opening the Holy Doors in Rome. Refreshments will be served following the service.
In his Letter to the Galatians, St. Paul teaches us “… not to grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.” Come join the women of the Archeparchy as our speakers address, within the framework of Sacred Scripture and the tenets of Eastern Christian Spirituality, the pastoral and practical aspects of caring for family members with special needs AND offer suggestions for caregivers on how to care for themselves spiritually, pastorally and practically.

Our Day begins with Divine Liturgy at 10:30 a.m. at both locations followed by Luncheon and Program.

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2016

at the

UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE HOLY FAMILY

4250 Harewood Road, Northeast
Washington, D. C.

OR

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2016

at

ST. VLADIMIR UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH

430 North Seventh Avenue
Scranton, Pennsylvania

St. John, Protector of the Theotokos and Patron of Caregivers

REGISTRATION

I will attend Women's Day on MARCH 6 in Washington (Registration Deadline: February 20)
I will attend Women's Day on APRIL 24 in Scranton (Registration Deadline: April 10)

__________________________________________
Name

__________________________________________
Address

__________________________________________
City    State    ZIP

__________________________________________
Email    Phone

__________________________________________
Parish

Suggested Donation:
$10 to Cover the Cost of Lunch

Please Make Checks Payable to:

Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia

PLEASE MAIL REGISTRATION TO:

Sister Dorothy Ann Busowski, OSBM
710 Fox Chase Road, Fox Chase Manor, Pennsylvania 19046
FIRST SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST LENTEN VESPERS AND PROCESSION WITH THE HOLY ICONS

Patriarch Methodios, summoned the Synod of Constantinople in 843 to bring peace to the Church following the iconoclast controversy. At the end of the first session, all made a triumphal procession from the Church of Blachernae to Hagia Sophia, restoring the icons to the church. This occurred on 11 March, 843 (which that year was the first Sunday of Lent). The Synod decreed that a perpetual feast on the anniversary of that day should be observed each year on the First Sunday of Great Lent.

Sunday, February 14, 2016 – 4:00 PM
Holy Myrrh-Bearers Eastern Catholic Church
(Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia)
900 Fairview Road
Swarthmore, PA 19081

Celebrants – Priests of the Philadelphia Deanery
Guest preacher Rev. Paul Makar, Pastor of St. Michael’s Church, Cherry Hill, N.J.
Confessions will be heard starting at 3:30 PM by Msgr. Peter Waslo and Rev. Edward Higgins

LEAGUE OF UKRAINIAN CATHOLICS OF AMERICA
ANNUAL LENTEN RETREAT

March 11 to 13, 2016
ST. MARY’S VILLA RETREAT CENTER, SLOATSBURG, NY

This year’s theme is “Merciful, like the Father”. This is the motto of Pope Francis’ Jubilee Year of Mercy. It is a time of exploring the meaning of mercy and our allowing God’s unconditional love and limitless mercy to transform our lives. We will explore prayer and forgiveness and our own ability to reconcile and forgive as well as expand our capacity to trust. This spiritual event will be our “door to mercy” through which we choose to pass, trusting in the power and love and mercy of God to transform our lives.

Retreat Director is Archpriest Father Daniel Troyan who is pastor of Holy Ghost Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in West Easton, Pennsylvania. He has served in many Ukrainian Catholic parishes from Ohio through Pennsylvania in his 34 years of priesthood. He has served as Director of Evangelization and Coordinator for the Shroud of Turin exhibit for the Archeparchy of Philadelphia. He has been a member of the League of Ukrainian Catholics since his youth and is presently National Spiritual Director of the LUC.

Additional details along with registration information will be made available shortly.
We congratulate Bishop John Bura on his 45th Anniversary of the Holy Priesthood and the 10th Anniversary of his episcopal ordination. On February 14, 1971 Bishop John was ordained a priest and on February 21, 2006 was ordained bishop. He was named auxiliary bishop of the Archeparchy of Philadelphia for Ukrainian Catholics. May the Lord God continue to bless our auxiliary bishop with good health, happiness and salvation of soul for many happy and blessed years!

Mnohaya Lita

2016 South Anthracite Deanery Lenten Confession Schedule

During the Great Fast, the priests of the South Anthracite Deanery visit neighboring churches to offer the Holy Mystery of Penance. It provides an excellent opportunity for the faithful to receive the Holy Mystery of Reconciliation as they spiritually prepare for the celebration of Pascha.

The following is the visiting priests’ confession schedule for the parishes of the South Anthracite Deanery. Confessions will be heard on the listed dates from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. All Catholic faithful are invited to receive the grace of forgiveness through confession by entering the door of the confessional, the true Door of Mercy during this the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

**Monday, March 14**
Assumption of the BVM Ukrainian Catholic Church
Centralia, Pa.

Ss. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church
Mt. Carmel, Pa.

Nativity BVM Ukrainian Catholic Church
Middleport, Pa.

Transfiguration of Our Lord Ukrainian Catholic Church
Shamokin, Pa.

**Tuesday, March 15**
St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church
Maizeville, Pa.

Protection of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church
Marion Heights, Pa.

St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church
Minersville, Pa.

St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church
Shenandoah, Pa.

**Thursday, March 17**
St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church
Hazleton, Pa.

Protection of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church
McAdoo, Pa.

St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church
Frackville, Pa.

St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church
St. Clair, Pa.

Confessions are heard from 6:00 PM until 7:00 PM in each parish.
Saint Basil Academy: Inaugural Year of Music Academy

As the first semester of the school year at Saint Basil Academy comes to a close, we are well into the inaugural year of the SBA Music Academy. This exciting new venture at the Academy begins with nine students, all of whom will graduate with at least ten music credits, in addition to the rigorous SBA academic course load. The nine young ladies represent three grade levels at the all-girls high school directed by the Sisters of the Order of Saint Basil the Great in Jenkintown, PA. The diverse representation of instruments includes piano, voice, flute, trumpet and trombone, and the violin.

Music Academy students have an opportunity to enjoy specialized classes geared toward the serious musician. This first year’s courses include individualized music theory classes, keyboard harmony, master classes and chamber ensembles. The students also join the rest of the Saint Basil Academy student body in the various performance groups that have played an important role at the school throughout its history. Music technology and music history courses are planned as the addition to the curriculum for next year.

The first official performance by the SBA Music Academy was the elegant Fall Soirée, held Sunday, November 8, 2015. As the guests partook of delectable hot hors d’oeuvres and sweet desserts, they enjoyed an afternoon of musical entertainment. Freshman Julia Mayro and sophomore Taylor Grabowski, both of whom are music scholarship recipients, presented the delicate beauty of the flute, while music scholarship students Tabitha Ford, trumpeter, and sophomore Molly McAndrew, trombonist, contrasted with the more robust sound of the brasses. Freshman music scholarship violinist Elizabeth Gorodenchuk shared the sweet melody of her instrument, and joined Tabitha Ford on trumpet and Julia Mayro with flute in a moving chamber trio. Joy Iaconianni, a junior immediately eager to join the Music Academy, thrilled the audience with her pianistic skills.

Talented freshmen pianist Emily DeMarshall and vocalist Arianna Torres rounded out the performances. Arianna, who joined enthusiastic pianist Sarah Haughton in a duet, had also represented Saint Basil Academy in the High School Papal Choir last fall, along with senior Gina Vreeland, who, although not in the Music Academy, is a beautiful singer in the Choir.
The Saint Basil Academy musicians shared their talents during the Annual Festival of Christmas Carols, held at our beautiful Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Members of the Concert Choir, directed by Sister Germaine Senita, OSBM and accompanied by Mrs. Khrystyna Yurchakevych, sang a joyful Christmas song from their Christmas concert repertoire; and Music Academy chamber trio, violinist Elizabeth Gorodenchuk and flautists Taylor Grabowski and Julia Mayro, as coached by Mr. Thomas Meany, presented their version of the ever popular Shchedryk – Ukrainian Bell Carol.

This coming April, the art students of Saint Basil Academy will present an Art Exhibition at the Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center. Their works, guided by Sister Susanne Matwiyiw, OSBM, will show examples of various media, including pastels, charcoal, pencil sketches, and sculptures. But, a great focus will be on iconography. This project has been made possible through the generosity of the Ukrainian Community Foundation of Philadelphia. The thirty students who are working on this sacred Byzantine art are now in the finishing stages of their work. The Saint Basil Academy art exhibit will open with a concert by students of Saint Basil Academy and the SBA Music Academy. Stay tuned for more details about the coming event.

Please visit the Saint Basil Academy website, www.stbasilacademy.org for information about our school and all coming events.

Submitted by
Lesia Penkalskyj
A New Year and Semester Begins at
St. Josaphat Seminary, Washington, DC

Seminary Retreat

The annual seminary retreat was held in early January to begin the 2016 spring semester. Pictured (l-r) Martin Nagy (Chicago Eparchy), Kairo Chorne (Philadelphia Archeparchy), Bohdan Vasyliv (Philadelphia Archeparchy), Rev. Mark Morozowich, retreat master, (Dean of the School of Theology and Religious Studies at Catholic University), Andrew Perrong (Philadelphia Archeparchy), Carlos Batiz (Chicago Eparchy), and Alex Bricki (Philadelphia Archeparchy).

One of the First Events of the New Semester - The March for Life

The Seminarians and Priests of St. Josaphat Seminary join the annual March for Life on January 22, 2016, just as the Blizzard of 2016 began to hit the Nation’s Capital region.

(continued on next page)
The Blizzard of 2016 in Washington

20 souls braved the snow clogged streets of Washington and attended the 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy at the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family.

A Snowed in Seminary

Snow was almost up to the front doors of the seminary. Washington came to a standstill for almost 5 days.

A Snowed in Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family
Ascension Manor
Affordable Apartments for Seniors 62 years or older

911 N. Franklin Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123
215-922-1116
(Fax) 215-922-3735
TDD: 711
http://www.ascensionmanor.org

Make Ascension Manor Your Home. You Will Be Glad That You Did!!!

- Bus stop at the front door
- Located in the Northern Liberties Section of Philadelphia, Minutes from Center City
- Walking distance to pharmacy, food markets, bank and library
- Local pharmacy delivery available
- One block away from the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and within walking distance of other Houses of worship
- Neighborhood food market delivery available
- Computer Room, Meditation Room and more!
- Well-lighted, fenced-in parking lot
- Surveillance cameras installed on all floors of the building
- Planned activities... bus trips... parties
- Laundry facilities
- Social services available to assist residents
- 24 hour emergency maintenance
- Gardening available
- Center City skyline view
- 3½ beautifully landscaped acres

FEBRUARY 07, 2016 21
Fundraiser for Olyphant, PA

Just in time for Easter, (March 27, 2016) Saint Cyril’s Choir, (Fundraiser) of Saint Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church, Olyphant, PA has “The Traditional Ukrainian Lenten Songs and Easter Anthems” CD, sung in Church Slavonic is available for purchase. ($15.00 each CD) it starts with Greetings by the Late Rev. Archpriest Stephen Hrynuk. Over 30 Choir members sing over 20 “Traditional Ukrainian Lenten Songs and Easter Anthems”

Also released in a new format is the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, celebrated by the Late Monsignor Stephen Hrynuk and sung by St. Cyril’s Choir, The historical DVD is available for $20.00 each. The Easter Music CD and “The Traditional Ukrainian Christmas Carols” CD are available for $15.00 each.

Please contact Glenda Marcinko at 570-876-2888. All items can be mailed for additional cost, depending on the quantity and destination. Available for pick up after the 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy on Sunday.

At this time SS. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church Choir, Olyphant, PA is announcing the need for “Good Adult Singers” to join the Church Choir. The Choir sings in Church Slavonic and you do not need to speak Ukrainian. Serious interested singers only, please contact Maestro Patrick Marcinko II at 570-876-2888. The Divine Liturgy is sung by the choir every Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

Submitted by Lauren Telep
We Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate, like Blessed Josepha, our foundress, are called to be women of deep faith nourished by an intimate personal relationship with God, striving to live out our community life lovingly and Simply, responsive to the needs of all, in the spirit of the Gospel, offering service in a compassionate, joyful and hospitable manner.

Never bound by a singly-defined ministry, the SSMI’s have taken a flexible view, remaining faithful to its charism and founders’ words: “Serve where the need is the greatest.”

Every vocation involves asking yourself the questions:

How am I Good News to others?
What gives me life?
And how do I share that life with others?

The best candidates for religious life are women who have lots of choices - yet with all those choices say: “I want to consecrate my life to God.”

Are you being called to be a Sister Servant of Mary Immaculate?
Glory to God!
Honor to Mary!
Peace to Us!

Rev. Szupa blesses candles at the Cathedral on the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple on February 2, 2016

SSMI - 9 Emmanuel Drive, P.O. Box 9
Sloatsburg, NY 10974
Phone: 845-753-2840
Email: ssminy@aol.com
Website: www.ssmi-us.org
Vocation Directors:
Sr. Eliane Ilnitski, SSMI
ilnitskieli10@yahoo.com
Sr. Tekla Gnatyuk, SSMI
yluanah@gmail.com

PLEASE SAVE THIS DATE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2016
for a special presentation courtesy of
THE SISTERS OF THE ORDER OF SAINT BASIL THE GREAT

ESTATE PLANNING:
Taking Care of the People You Love

BASILIAN
SPIRITUALITY CENTER
710 Fox Chase Road in Jenkintown
6:30pm-8:30pm

Complimentary Drinks and Appetizers
Details to Follow

Канікули з Богом

ЗАНЮТЬТЕ ДАТУ!
15-19 серпня 2016 року
8.30 ранку - 3.30 пополудні

КАНІКУЛИ З БОГОМ
“Вишиванка для Ісуса”
Табір для українських дітей ніком 8-13 років
Спонсор:
Сестри Чину Святого Василя Великого та Духовний Центр Сестер Василіянок
у співпраці з Релігійним Товариством українців католиків “Санта Софія” США

Афіша з детальною програмою незабаром!

SAVE THE DATE!
August 15 - 19, 2016
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
VACATION WITH GOD:
Embroidery for Jesus Christ

Camp for Ukrainian Children Age 8-13
Sponsored by the Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great
Basilian Spirituality Center
In cooperation with
St. Sophia Religious Association of Ukrainian Catholics, Inc.

Look for flyer with details coming soon!
UKRAINE PRAYS FOR THE UNITY OF CHRISTIANS

January 26, 2016

During Christian Unity Week in Ukraine, Molebens were celebrated in various locations, i.e. Kiev, Kharkiv, and Lviv. The spiritual heads of the Catholic Church along with other Christian groups participated in the ecumenical prayer service in Kyiv. On Sunday, January 24th, 2016 in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church of St. Basil the Great His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk and Papal Nuncio Claudio Gugerotti represented the Catholics of both rites: Ukrainian Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic Churches. The three branches (jurisdictions) of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church along with representatives of the Lutheran and Evangelical faithgroups.

Addressing those gathered His Beatitude Sviatoslav noted the sacrifices of the youth and the wounded soldiers. He implored all present to pray, work, and forgive one another and be united in building a common future in love.

Translated into English from an article on http://uk.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/01/27/україна_в_молитвах_за_єдність_християн/1203824

General Audience: God of Mercy is not indifferent

January 27, 2016

(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis on Wednesday spoke about God’s mercy throughout history, and in our own day.

In his weekly General Audience, Pope Francis noted that the Lord always accompanied the people of Israel, and showed how God continues to work in our own time as well. He pointed to the story of Joseph and his brothers as an example of grace and reconciliation, and said the Jubilee Year of Mercy was a good opportunity to reconcile with family members.

The example of Moses, who led the Israelites from slavery to freedom, shows that “mercy cannot remain indifferent in the face of the suffering of the oppressed, the cry of those subject to violence, reduced to slavery, condemned to death.” Suffering is a reality in every age, a reality that can make us feel impotent, and tempt us to indifference. But, Pope Francis said, “God is not indifferent, He never looks away from
human suffering.” The God of mercy hears the groaning of the poor and intervenes to save them, especially by “raising up men and women able to hear the cries of the suffering, and working in favour of the oppressed.”

As Moses was God’s instrument leading the people of Israel to freedom, we too, especially in this Year of Mercy, can be mediators of God’s mercy. “There are so many good things we can do!” the Pope said. Turning again to the history of the people of Israel, Pope Francis spoke of how God made a covenant with the people, creating a special, privileged relationship with them. This special relationship, brought to fulfillment through the Blood of Christ, “destroys our sin through forgiveness, and makes us definitively children of God.” Pope Francis concluded his address with the hope that, in this Year of Mercy, we too, precisely because of the mercy God has shown us, might cooperate with God in accomplishing works of mercy.


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**Ukrainian delegation asks the Pope to pray for peace**

22 January 2016

The international meeting of the workers of pilgrimage centers, sanctuaries and places of pilgrimage was held in the Vatican from January 19 to 21, 2016 in the framework of the Year of Mercy. Within three days, several thousand participants from over 20 countries in joint conferences, prayer and recollection undertook the Jubilee Pilgrimage to the Cathedral of St. Peter, entering it through the Holy Doors. The pilgrimage ended with the audience with Pope Francis. Ukraine was represented on this group pilgrimage by Pilgrimage Center “Rafail” of Lviv Archdiocese of UGCC.

As Olena Kulyhina, the meeting participant reported to RISU, during an audience with the organizers of pilgrimages, which took place on Thursday, 21 January, in the village of Paul VI, Pope Francis emphasized that such kind of popular piety as pilgrimage is nothing but a very important form of evangelization which requires special support and development.

According to the Holy Father, the one taking part in the pilgrimage brings personal history and faith, and thus receives a personal experience of the individual and not mass spirituality. And the sanctuary and pilgrimage locations, to which the pilgrims come, are their home and a place where they can count on unconditional acceptance. As Ukrainian delegation was one of the largest (it represented 10 people) in these events, its head according to the audience protocol was provided with an opportunity to personally greet Pope Francis and tell him a few words.

“There is nothing is more important than the prayer for peace in Ukraine that we could ask in the situation that our country is going through the past few years. And as always, I was very pleased that Pope Francis, just hearing the word “Ukraine,” turned to me and said: “Glory to Jesus Christ!” in Ukrainian,” said Vasyl Mikula, Director of Pilgrimage Center ‘Rafail’ told RISU.

His Beatitude Sviatoslav takes part in celebrations of Ukrainian Unity Day

23 January 2016

On Friday, January 22nd on Ukrainian Unity Day, the Father and Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church His Beatitude Sviatoslav took part in the ceremony of laying flowers at the monuments of Taras Shevchenko and Mykhailo Grushevsky in Kyiv.

Afterwards, His Beatitude prayed and laid flowers at the memorial bas-relief of the righteous metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky that is placed on the Teacher’s House of Kyiv (former Central Council of Ukraine and Directorate of UNR).

The UGCC Department of Information

Adapted from an article on: http://news.ugcc.ua/en/news/the_head_of_the_ugcc_took_part_inCelebrations_of_ukrainian_unity_day_75838.html

Pope closes Year of Consecrated Life, calls religious to make courageous choices

February 2, 2016

(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis on Tuesday called on consecrated men and women to make courageous and prophetic choices, to not be afraid of getting their hands dirty and of walking the geographical and existencial peripheries of mankind today.

The Pope was speaking to consecrated men and women during the closing Mass of the Year of Consecrated Life in St. Peter’s Basilica.

The Year, which was celebrated throughout the world, began on the First Sunday of Advent in November 2014 and came to a close on the World Day of Consecrated Life on 2 February 2016.

The initiative, called for by Pope Francis, aimed to be an occasion of renewal for men and women in consecrated life, of thanksgiving among the faithful for the service of sisters, brothers, priests, and nuns, and an invitation to young Catholics to consider a religious vocation.

During his homily the Pope described the just-ended Year of Consecrated Life as “a river”, saying “it now flows into the sea of mercy, into the immense mystery of love that we are experiencing through the Extraordinary Jubilee”.

The final days of the Year of Consecrated Life were marked in the Vatican with a theological symposium on religious life, on the theme Consecrated Life in Communion. A common foundation in the diversity of styles.

http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/02/pope_closes_year_of_consecrated_life/1205498
‘Don’t forget your vocation,’ Pope tells religious

February 3, 2016

(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis told consecrated men and women to never forget the beauty of their call to religious life, reminding them that the marrow of consecrated life is prayer.

“And go forth! Each of us has a place, a work in the Church,” the Pope told religious men and women in St Peter’s Square, after celebrating Mass in the Basilica for the end of the Year of Consecrated Life. “Today the Lord continues to call you with that love with which you were called,” he said. “Do not forget, do not forget that beauty, that wonder of the first call.”

Pope Francis stressed the importance of prayer for consecrated persons in continuing forward. “The marrow of the consecrated life is prayer: pray! And thus to grow old, but you will grow old like a good wine!” He expressed special appreciation for elderly religious who have maintained a rich spiritual life. “I really enjoy finding those religious women or men, old but with shining eyes, because they have the fire of the spiritual life still burning,” he said. Finally, the Pope urged religious men and women to pray for new vocations “so that our work of consecration may go ahead.”

The Year for Consecrated Life, which was celebrated throughout the world, began on the First Sunday of Advent in November 2014 and came to a close on the World Day of Consecrated Life on 2 February 2016.

Below find Vatican Radio’s translation of Pope Francis’ remarks at the end of Mass:

Dear consecrated brothers and sisters, thank you so much! You have participated in the Eucharist out in the cool air! But the heart is on fire!

Thank you for having finished this Year of Consecrated Life in this way, all together. And go forth! Each of us has a place, a work in the Church. Please, don’t forget your first vocation, your initial call. Remember! Today the Lord continues to call you with that love with which you were called. Do not forget, do not forget that beauty, that wonder of the first call. And then continue to work. How beautiful it is to continue! There is always something to do. The most important thing is to pray. The marrow of the consecrated life is prayer: pray! And thus to grow old, but you will grow old like a good wine!

I have one thing to tell you. I really enjoy meeting with those religious women or men, old but with shining eyes, because they have the fire of the spiritual life still burning. It hasn’t gone out, that light hasn’t gone out! Go forward today, every day, and continue to work and to look to tomorrow with hope, always asking the Lord to send us new vocations, so that our work of consecration may go ahead. Memory: Don’t forget the initial call! The work of every day, and then the hope to go ahead and seed well, because those who come after us may receive the heritage we will leave for them.

Now let us pray to Mary. Hail Mary...

Have a good evening and pray for me!

http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/03/%E2%80%98don%E2%80%99t_forget_your_vocation,%E2%80%99_pope_tells_religious/1205578
Pope tells faithful to open their hearts to forgiveness

February 3, 2016

(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis is urging the faithful to open their hearts to forgiveness.

“This is the way to solve differences within families – he said - between spouses or between parents and children”. This is what happens when he who has been offended loves the person who offended him and wants to save the relationship: “that binds him to the other” he said.

The Pope was addressing over 10,000 pilgrims gathered in St. Peter’s Square for the weekly General Audience. Reflecting on the Sacred Scriptures that present God as infinite mercy, but also as perfect justice, the Pope asked the question of how to reconcile infinite mercy with perfect justice? How does the reality of mercy fit in with the needs of justice?

It could appear – he said – that the two realities are in contradiction, but this is not so because God’s justice is his mercy. When we think of justice – Pope Francis said – we think of its legal administration which seeks retribution and exacts a penalty. Such legal justice does not conquer evil - he said – but simply stems its tide.

But the Bible presents true justice as a process which avoids a tribunal; it invites the offended person to engage directly with the guilty person and invite him to conversion by helping him to see the evil he has done, and by appealing to his conscience. In this way - the Pope said - the guilty person is able to see his wrong and be open to the forgiveness offered.

Pope Francis said he knows that it this a “difficult journey”. “It requires that we be ready to forgive and desire always the salvation of those who offend us. This is God’s justice. He does not seek our condemnation, but our salvation” he said.

This – he said - is God’s justice. He does not seek our condemnation, but our salvation” and the salvation of all of his children – even that of Pontius Pilate and of Judas: He is the Lord of mercy and wants to save everyone.

He explained that by making us see the wrong we have done, the Father helps us to recognize our need for his mercy revealed in Jesus Christ. God’s justice is his mercy. And reminding confessors of their great responsibility when they grant forgiveness in the name of God, Pope Francis concluded telling the faithful that as God’s children, we must be open to his divine mercy, and readily and generously share it with our brothers and sisters.

(Linda Bordoni)

http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/04/pope_tells_faithful_to_open_their_hearts_to_forgiveness/1205654
Pope Francis’ Lenten Message: Mercy of God Helps Us to Be Merciful

The Holy Father called the faithful to do spiritual and corporal works of mercy this Lent.

BY CNA/EWTN NEWS 01/26/2016

VATICAN CITY — In his 2016 Lenten message, Pope Francis called the faithful to place special emphasis on the spiritual and corporal works of mercy this Lent, taking into account the current Jubilee Year of Mercy. “God’s mercy transforms human hearts; it enables us, through the experience of a faithful love, to become merciful in turn,” the Pope wrote in the short document, released Tuesday by the Vatican.

The spiritual and corporal works of mercy, he said, “remind us that faith finds expression in concrete, everyday actions meant to help our neighbors in body and spirit: by feeding, visiting, comforting and instructing them.” “On such things will we be judged,” he said.

The title of this year’s message was drawn from the Gospel of Matthew: “I Desire Mercy, Not Sacrifice,” and has the subtitle: “The Works of Mercy on the Road of the Jubilee.”

In the message, signed the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, Oct. 4, 2015, the Pope said those who are truly poor are the ones who believe themselves to be rich. “This is because they are slaves to sin, which leads them to use wealth and power not for the service of God and others, but to stifle within their hearts the profound sense that they, too, are only poor beggars,” he said. “The greater their power and wealth, the more this blindness and deception can grow,” he said.

Pope Francis recounted the Parable of the Poor Man Named Lazarus, who would beg at the door of the Rich Man. Lazarus represents Christ, the Pope said, and, therefore, “the possibility of conversion which God offers us and which we may well fail to see.” This blindness “is often accompanied by the proud illusion of our own omnipotence,” he observed. Such an illusion can take “social and political forms,” he explained, citing as examples the “totalitarian systems of the 20th century.”

In modern times, this illusion is seen in “the ideologies of monopolizing thought and technoscience, which would make God irrelevant and reduce man to raw material to be exploited.” The Pope went on to explain how the illusion can link back to the “idolatry of money,” leading to a lack of concern for the poor “on the part of wealthier individuals and societies.” “They close their doors, refusing even to see the poor,” he said.

“For all of us, then, the season of Lent in this jubilee year is a favorable time to overcome our existential alienation by listening to God’s word and by practicing the works of mercy.” Pope Francis stressed that “the corporal and spiritual works of mercy must never be separated.” “By touching the flesh of the crucified Jesus in the suffering, sinners can receive the gift of realizing that they, too, are poor and in need,” he said. “This love alone is the answer to that yearning for infinite happiness and love that we think we can satisfy with the idols of knowledge, power and riches.”

The Pope warned against those who are constantly refusing “to open the doors of their hearts to Christ, who knocks on them in the poor,” as such consistent refusal on the part of the “proud, rich and powerful”
leads to condemnation. Lent will begin Feb. 10 with Ash Wednesday, when the Church will send out “missionaries of mercy,” priests with the faculties to pardon sins in cases otherwise reserved for the Holy See, as part of the jubilee year.

In the opening section of the Lenten message, Pope Francis centered his reflection on Mary as the image of the Church’s evangelization, “because She is evangelized.” The Pope began by reiterating the call for mercy to be celebrated and experienced in a particular way this Lent, citing the bull of indiction for the Jubilee Year of Mercy. “The mercy of God is a proclamation made to the world, a proclamation which each Christian is called to experience firsthand,” he said.

After receiving the “Good News” from the Angel Gabriel, Mary proclaims the Magnificat, in which She “prophetically sings of the mercy whereby God chose Her,” the Pope recounts. He describes Mary as the “perfect icon of the Church which evangelizes, for She was, and continues to be, evangelized by the Holy Spirit, who made Her virginal womb fruitful.”

Pope Francis then reflected on the history of mercy as seen in the covenant between God and the people of Israel. “God shows himself ever rich in mercy, ever ready to treat His people with deep tenderness and compassion, especially at those tragic moments when infidelity ruptures the bond of the covenant, which then needs to be ratified more firmly in justice and truth,” he said.

“Here is a true love story, in which God plays the role of the betrayed father and husband, while Israel plays the unfaithful child and bride.” “This love story culminates in the incarnation of God’s Son,” who the Father has made “mercy incarnate,” the Pope said, citing the jubilee bull of induction. “As the Son of God, he is the Bridegroom who does everything to win over the love of His Bride, to whom He is bound by an unconditional love, which becomes visible in the eternal wedding feast.”

Pope Francis reflected how it is through mercy that God restores His relationship with the sinner. “In Jesus crucified, God shows His desire to draw near to sinners, however far they may have strayed from Him. In this way, He hopes to soften the hardened heart of His Bride.”

Pope Francis concluded the message by calling on Mary’s intercession during the upcoming season of Lent. “Let us not waste this season of Lent, so favorable a time for conversion!”

National Catholic Schools Week

By Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka

National Catholic Schools Week will be observed from January 31st to February 6th at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic School in Minersville, PA, St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic School in Passaic, NJ, Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic School in Perth Amboy, NJ and St. Basil Academy in Fox Chase, PA.

This year’s theme “Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service” aspires every person to get involved in and create what a Catholic School is called to be. Jesus, the Good Shepherd “came that they might have life and have it to the full” (Jn 10:10). We are invited to an abundant life in Jesus Christ. When we fully live and breathe this faith, we live in His abundance.

Our heartfelt gratitude is offered to all who are part of the family of our four schools. We acknowledge and thank the clergy, religious Sisters, the administrators, teachers, and all of the support staff for their sharing of this giftedness in their skills through their person. This enables each school to reflect abundant life in Jesus Christ.

Special thanks to the parents who seek the best for their children and offer their love and support for the school staff and students. You do it because of your living out your inspired desire for abundant life. We admire your tremendous personal and financial sacrifices to ensure a high standard of education and religious formation for your children.

Uppermost are our admiration and best wishes for every student in each school family. The highest ideals of a Catholic school can only encourage each student to strive to be their best in the pursuit of the abundant life offered to all by Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We pray for each student as each grows in the skills and understanding of achieving the best in your Catholic School family. May all grow in closeness with Jesus as we strive to be fully who we are called to be as a faithful student of a valued Ukrainian Catholic school. We are particularly grateful for the meaningful example of excellence each school provides for the Church and for the community of which they are a part.

Especially helpful are the individual organizations and businesses who offer financial help to our Ukrainian Catholic schools. Donations by persons and groups who desire to support the high standard of education and religious formation in our schools are enablers. Such valued donors truly breathe Jesus Christ’s call to abundant life. Can there be a better way to share one’s wealth and blessings than with children growing in knowledge and faith? Choose to financially help our Ukrainian Catholic schools to fulfill their sacred mission to teach and prepare our children.

All involved in our Ukrainian Catholic schools will be especially remembered in prayers offered throughout National Catholic Schools Week. May we all continue to be inspired to grow in our communities through our faith, knowledge and service of God.

God bless you richly in ways only He can!
Prayer of St. Ephraem

O Lord and Master of my life, keep me from the spirit of indifference and discouragement, lust of power and idle talk.

Instead grant to me Your servant the spirit of wholeness of being, humility, patience and love.

O Lord and King, grant me the grace to be aware of my sins and not to judge my brother; for You are blessed now and ever and forever. Amen.

Молитва св. Ефрема

Господи і Владико життя мого!
Духа лінивства, недбайності, влаштолог'я і пустамовства віджени від мене.

Духахчистоти, покори, терпимості й любові даруй мені, слузі Твоєму.

Так, Господи, Царю!
Дай мені бачити гріхи мої і не осуджувати брата мою, бо Ти благословений на віки вічні. Амінь.