



Вітаємо до Парафії Воздвиження Чесного Хреста! Welcome to Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish!

A place of prayer, family, and community since 1967 which follows the Eastern (Byzantine) Christian traditions of the Catholic Faith that first emerged in the lands of Rus-Ukraine through the preaching of Saint Andrew, the First-Called, and echoed onwards through the mission of the holy apostles to the Slavs, Cyril and Methodius. At Holy Cross, we are called to enter into communion with God within the community of the faithful, the Church, that is, the Body of Christ. Here, services are offered in the English and Ukrainian languages where we are united to God and one another, and, "with one heart and one voice", form the family of God. Jesus Christ is the centre of our life, and it is in the Divine Liturgy where we come to know Him in each other by means of the Sacred Scriptures, and through the receiving of the Holy Sacraments. May your participation in today's celebration be thoroughly enriching and truly meaningful as well.

Sunday, December 15, 2019 ~ Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

Today's Readings: *Epistle: Colossians 3: 4-11* *Gospel: Luke 14: 16-24*

Troparia and special texts are found on the bulletin inserts



Epistle Readers

Saturday (5 p.m.): Evelyn Poleschuk
Sunday (10 a.m.): Mary Ann Lysak



Eucharistic Ministers

Saturday (5 p.m.): Zenya Puchalski
Sunday (10 a.m.): Mary Ann Lysak

In today's parable, God offers us a great banquet that sometimes we doubted for being too good to be true, but we can prove to ourselves that our Lord's offer is far more than what we thought if we only surrender to Him and accept His calling.



Did you notice? The servant is the one who went out to tell the guests to come, but not only that, he was also the one who noticed that there was still room for more and brought it to the master's attention. Like the master's servant, each of us holds an important role in order to attain the Lord's will for us. We have an important duty for our neighbours, and like the master's servant, we can be the one to invite them to our Lord's home. Because if we truly love our Creator, we will do everything just to fill His home with His people. ~ from a sermon by John Mateos Ong

Your Return Gift to God

Let us strive to live as Christian stewards, receive God's gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them generously and lovingly with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.

DECEMBER 7/8



Envelopes and Loose: \$1,490.⁰⁰
Mission Collection: \$120.⁴⁰
Special Projects: \$40.⁰⁰
Flowers for Christmas: \$50.⁰⁰

Дякуємо за вашу щедрість! Thank you for your generosity!

December's Mission Collection has been designated for the **Mission to Seafarers: Port of Thunder Bay.**

Liturgical Services Schedule

Please note: Father Stepan will be away from **Monday, December 16** to **Wednesday, December 18** in conference (along with his fellow priests) with our new Bishop Bryan in Toronto. In case of emergency, please call Fr. Volodymyr Chvets (355-0384) or any Catholic priest during office hours. You can also phone 632-5461 to reach the priest 'on call.'

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

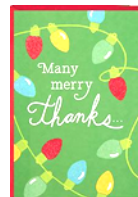
5:00 p.m. ~ **Sunday before Christmas** (Holy Fathers)
Epistle Reader: Christopher Tennant
Eucharistic Minister: Christopher Tennant

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

10:00 a.m. ~ **Sunday before Christmas** (Holy Fathers)
Epistle Reader: Susan Soldan
Eucharistic Minister: Stanley Myslicki

PARISH NEWS & ACTIVITIES

Many thanks to **Jaclyn & Chris Strehlow** as well as **Cheryl Bain** for taking the time to arrange and run the St. Nicholas party held last Sunday after liturgy. Thanks also to our honoured guest, **St. Nicholas** for bringing gifts, and his helper "angel" **Emma Myslicki**.



A message from **Sherry Opaski**: With the generous donations from our parishioners and a monetary donation, we were able to package **100** Christmas mugs for the children and **86** toiletry bags for the adults. Thanks so much for supporting our Christmas Cheer project ~ your kindness is sincerely appreciated!

This past Thursday evening, the fifth candle on the banner, **purple**, was 'lit' to represent **repentance**. It reminds us of our need to repent before we can meet the coming of Christ, as He Himself said when He began His work in Galilee, "Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand." (Matthew 4: 17)

A reminder of our **Christmas Sing-along** in our parish hall on **Monday, December 16** beginning at **6:30 p.m.** Remember to bring a donation of a canned/dry good in support of the Regional Food Distribution Association (RDFA), and if desired, some Christmas baking to share with others. Hope to see many there to help usher in the spirit of Christmas!

Any parishioner, 18 years & older, interested in serving on Parish Council is encouraged to submit his/her name to Father Stepan or PC Chair Cheryl Bain. Serving on the Council can be very rewarding, and as parishioners, we are encouraged to share our ideas, experiences and insight among each other. Please consider letting your name stand.

Your **2020 Parish Collection Envelopes** will be ready for pick-up next weekend. Church calendars are also on their way. Thank you for your patience and understanding.





THE MODERN CUSTOM of a Christmas tree does not come from any form of paganism. There is no evidence of any pagan religion decorating a special holiday tree for their mid-winter festivals, although the Romans celebrated the winter solstice with a festival called Saturnalia in honour of Saturnus, the god of agriculture. They decorated their houses with greens and lights and exchanged gifts. Late in the Middle Ages, Germans and Scandinavians placed ever-green trees inside their homes or just outside their doors to show their hope in the forthcoming spring. The first Christmas tree was decorated by Protestant Christians in 16th-century Germany. Our modern Christmas tree evolved from these early German traditions, and the custom most likely came to the United States with Hessian troops during the American Revolution, or with German immigrants to Pennsylvania and Ohio.

There is nothing in the Bible that either commands or prohibits Christmas trees. It has been falsely claimed by some that Jeremiah 10:1-16 prohibits the cutting down and decorating of trees in the same manner as we do at Christmas. However, even a cursory reading of the text makes it clear that the passage is one in which Jeremiah sets forth the prohibition against idols made of wood, plated with silver and gold, and worshipped. A similar idea appears in Isaiah 44, where Isaiah speaks of the silliness of the idol-worshippers who cut down a tree, burn part of it in the fire to warm themselves, and use the other part to fashion an idol, which they then bow down to. So, unless we bow down before our Christmas tree, carve it into an idol, and pray to it, these passages cannot be applied to Christmas trees. Source: www.gotquestions.org

The **Usher Schedule for 2020** has been printed and is posted on the bulletin board in the narthex. There are still many spaces to be filled. We ask all able members to consider signing up for one (or two) months. Let us continue this important ministry!

Our next scheduled bingo session is a matinee on **Friday, December 20**. Dates for the new year have been received and will be published in future bulletins.



The Executive wishes all members and their loved ones a very special holiday season with all the best in 2020! Our first meeting of our **60th** year will be the annual 'Super Bowl' Meeting on **Sunday, February 2** beginning at 4:30 p.m. followed by a dinner and social. Hope to see many members and some new faces in attendance for this customary gathering!

Comforting and Reassuring Words

*You are invited to come dine with Me
from now through all eternity.
Believe in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
and dine with Jesus as your host.
To live in heaven eternally,
All you must do is R.S.V.P.*

LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Rotary Carol Sing - Sunday, December 15 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Anglican Church, 808 Ridgeway St. (across from McKellar Place) in Thunder Bay South and at St. Paul's United Church, 349 Waverly Street, Thunder Bay North. Featuring local musicians and performers. Gather family and friends and come celebrate the season. Admission is free!

Christmas Recital - Zorya Dancers will be having a Christmas recital for all dancers, plus their family and friends on **Wednesday, December 18** from 6:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at St. Martin's School Gymnasium, 115 W. Mary St. Admission for adults is one (1) can or package of non-perishable food for the local food bank. You may also bring some dessert to share if so desired. It's an evening of family fun for everyone. Call or text Alice Chony (355-1945) for more information.

Elf Jr. The Musical - Presented by St. Patrick High School Grade 12 Drama Class, **Wednesday, December 18** and **Thursday, December 19** at 7:00 p.m. (Selkirk Auditorium). Tickets are \$10/person and are available from the Main Office. Call 623-5218 before they're all sold out!

Holiday Health Care Career Fair - Monday, December 23 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at St. Joseph's Heritage, 63 Carrie Street. Bring your resume and meet with local and regional recruiters about jobs all across the health care sector. Register now at www.thunderbay.ca/HolidayHealthCareCareerFair.

Malanka 2020 - New Year's Eve Ukrainian Style, presented by Zorya Ukrainian Dance Association, **Saturday, January 11, 2020** at the Royal Canadian Slovak Legion, 801 Atlantic Ave. Symposium: 6:00 p.m.; Dinner: 7:00 p.m. Check out the poster and leaflets in the narthex for more information.

HOLY CROSS GOLDEN AGERS

Thursday afternoon activities are cancelled for the rest of December and through to the end of January, and will resume on **February 6, 2020** (weather permitting) at the usual time when new members are welcome to join. We wish all current members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay warm and healthy and be careful in your daily travels, especially where there's snow and ice!

There will be no December bus to Grand Portage. However, if there's enough interest, the first one of the new year will leave the church parking lot at 3:45 p.m. on **Wednesday, January 15**, and arrive back @ 10:00 p.m. Contact either Ann Kozlowski (622-3006) or Ann (G) Opaski (577-2805) to book your **free** seat today.

*Do not regret growing older.
It's a privilege denied to many.*

Readings for the Sunday before Christmas (to help prepare for the nourishment of the Word of God at Liturgy)

Epistle: Hebrews 11: 9-10; 17-23; 32-40
(Faith)

Gospel: Matthew 1: 1-25
(The Ancestors of Jesus Christ, and His birth)

As you read each passage, ask yourself these questions:
"What thoughts, ideas, words or images come to mind?"
and "What are the connections between them?"
This will help make them easier to follow and understand.



Everyone Is Invited to God's Celebration

Most of you have been to a party, but have any of you have ever given a party? Of course, you have! We have all given a party at some time. Perhaps it was a birthday party, or a slumber party. Maybe you had a picnic or a costume party. No matter what kind of party you give, it is a lot of work to get ready for a party, isn't it? First, you must decide what kind of a party you are going to have. Then you have to go out and buy the decorations or make them yourself. You must plan what games you are going to play and make sure that you have all of the proper equipment for the games. Next, you have to decide what you are going to serve and go to the store to buy refreshments. After you have made all the plans, you make a list of who you are going to invite and send out the invitations.

Have you ever planned a party and sent out the invitations, but no one showed up? Oh, let's hope not! If that happened, how do you think it would make you feel? Would you be angry? Would your feelings be hurt? What do you think you might do?

Jesus once told about a man who threw a party, but none of the people he invited showed up for his party. All the plans had been made, the food was prepared, the invitations had

been sent. The day of the celebration came, but no one showed up! The man sent his servants to see where the people were and why they had not come to his celebration. The people all began to make excuses about how busy they were. The man was very upset, so he told his servants to go out into the streets and invite everyone they saw to come to his celebration. They did exactly what the man told them to do and the Bible tells us that the hall was filled with guests, but there was room for more.

God is going to have a great celebration for His Son Jesus in heaven and we have all been invited. Some people will turn down God's invitation. You too have been invited -- will you accept God's invitation?

Dear Father, thank You for inviting us to join You in Your heavenly celebration. If there is anyone who has not accepted Your invitation, we pray that today will be the day.

You are lovingly invited to

- Come close to God and become best friends
- Have all your sins forgiven
- Learn to live and love like Jesus, God's only perfect Son
- Spend forever with God in heaven

TIME: anytime you believe

PLACE: starts in your heart
Continues forever in heaven

Your response is required
Call out anytime, day or night
Love,

Jesus

Source: www.sermons4kids.com

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