

МАЯК - BEACON

SEPTEMBER 2008

ISSUE 3



Українська Православна Громада Св. Володимира



St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Congregation

**Українська Православна Громада
Св. Володимира**

**St. Vladimir's
Ukrainian Orthodox Congregation**

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**МАЯК
BEACON**

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FALL EDITION



St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Congregation

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FROM FR. TARAS

Glory to Jesus Christ!

I welcome this latest edition of our congregation's newsletter, the Beacon. I thank all those who contributed to its production through the contribution of articles as well as those responsible for its layout and publication.

This issue comes to us as we conclude our many summer leisurely activities. With the end of summer comes a change of focus, a change of direction. The Church also experiences such change with the beginning of the new Church year, which occurs on September 1/14.

This year, as we begin the new Church year, we look forward to the renewal of our congregation's Southern Alberta Mission Project, which has been put on hold during the past two years. Through the renewal of this program, our congregation can once again respond to the call of Christ to, "*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations*" (Matthew 28:19). To assist us in this God-given responsibility, we are pleased that the Consistory of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada has assigned the Rev. Fr. Timothy Chrapko to be our congregation's Associate Pastor.

Fr. Timothy and Dobrodijka Julie come to Calgary from Vegreville, where they have been living while Fr. Timothy served at St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Congregation in Edmonton. Dobrodijka Julie is a school teacher and looks forward to continue in that field here in Calgary. Fr. Timothy is currently in the process of completing his Masters degree in Theological studies, which he will do while serving as our Associate Priest. We look forward to the many talents that Fr. Timothy and Dobrodijka Julie bring to our congregation. We welcome them and pray that the Lord bless them with all His graces as they make the transition to life in Calgary! Knowing the love and warmth of our community I am sure that this transition will be smooth and bring about new friendships that will

last a lifetime. May the Lord grant Fr. Timothy and Dobrodijka Julie many years of spiritual joy, countless blessings - Many Years!

God willing, as we enter into the new Church year, we will enter it with a new Bishop in our Western Diocese to lead us in the direction that God desires us to go as a Church. His Grace, Bishop Ilarion comes to Canada from Portugal where he has served the spiritual needs of the new Ukrainians in that country over the last number of years. Bishop Ilarion is young and energetic and is looking forward to meeting the spiritual needs of our people in Western Canada. May the Lord God grant him many years of service to our community – Eispolla eti despota!

We also take this opportunity to welcome all other newcomers to our congregation! Over the summer months we have been blessed in seeing a number of new people attending services. We welcome them as well and look forward to being a part of their spiritual growth and journey to the everlasting Kingdom.

The beginning of the new Church year invites us to enter once again into the mystery of our redemption. As we enter this new Church year, let us look forward to the many opportunities that it will provide for us individually and as a worshipping Christian community. The year ahead will provide us with opportunities for personal growth. It will provide us with opportunities for the expression of Christian love and faith. Above all else, it will provide us with the opportunity of becoming true children of God. Let us, therefore, not squander away the countless opportunities that lay ahead of us in this new Church year! May the blessings of the Lord be upon each and every one of you, through His grace and love of mankind, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages!

Understanding Baptism:

Part One of Four

By Fr. Timothy Chrapko

For my first contribution to this publication, I would like to focus on a matter which I believe is of great importance to our Church. The sacraments, in particular the sacraments of initiation, are pivotal moments in our faith that are sometimes undervalued in terms of their theological importance. We see them as rites of passage in our lives, but fail to truly understand the meaning behind them. In the following months, I will be looking at the meaning of Baptism in a series of articles. We will begin our discussion of this of the sacramental life in the Church with some thoughts on the very concepts of sacraments of mysteries. I hope that this examination of one of the most important sacraments of our Faith will shed light on what entry into the Church truly means. If you have any questions or require additional readings on the subject, please contact me at chrapkot@hotmail.com, or by telephone (403) 700-9947, or in person at any time.

The Sacraments

It is through the sacraments that God is able to communicate with humankind; it may be said that by this God is able to sanctify the totality of human existence. "In the Sacraments God offers everything and nothing can be added beyond that." ¹In essence, we are able to say that the totality of God's reaching toward mankind is found in and through the sacraments. It must be stated; however, that it is the duty of humanity to reach back toward God and thus make divine synergy possible. Examples of this cooperation between God and humankind can be witnessed in all of the sacraments; for example, it is not wheat and grapes that are offered to God on the altar during the Eucharist, but rather, we are able to see the gifts given to us by God coupled with human effort that produce the offering. Much of the same can be said regarding the various other sacraments, especially Baptism, for in the sacrament of Baptism we are able to see that the offering which we make to God is life itself, which God may take and by God's grace transform and sanctify, thus bringing humankind closer down the road to theosis or deification. In the sacramental life of the Church we are able to see the fullness of synergy in action, for the all important cooperation between humankind and God is assured. It must be stated, however, that it is important in the context of our human realm that we do not lose sight of the polarity found in this divine/human partnership, by this I mean to state that God is transcendent as well as imminent, and it is only through the Christ, and in the sacraments that we are able to experience the totality of God's imminence in our human condition:

²"The knowledge of God leads to this one, incomprehensible yet obvious and inescapable word: holy. And in this word we express both that God is the Absolutely Other, the One about whom we know nothing, and that He is the end of all our hunger, all our desires, the inaccessible One who mobilizes our wills, the mysterious treasure that attracts us, and there is really nothing to know but Him."

¹Nellas p. 130

²Schmemmann-For the Life of the World p. 32

By this we are able to see the imminence and transcendence of God, and the response of our soul to His call.

As we humans: ³“...are lost individually, but saved collectively,” and therefore are not islands on our own but rather are interrelated and interdependent beings, we require the interaction of those around us in order to strive toward salvation. We are able to state that the fullness of the sacraments is found in the Εκκλησία, or gathering of the faithful, in order to become the body of Christ. It must be stated, however, that in more recent years, the practice of the entire community welcoming new members in has fallen by the wayside, and the most integral sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Chrismation, and the Eucharist, have become private rites of passage shared only amongst the closest family and friends. This segregation of the foundational sacraments has ultimately led to a divorce between these sacraments, and to a great extent, a divorce between these sacraments and the Church itself. We may go so far as to say that this divorce to an extent also includes the believers and the Church itself, for they no longer are able to realize the depth and importance of the gathered community of believers in the realization and manifestation of God's grace. This can be stated due to the fact that the two initial sacraments of initiation are taken out of the Eucharistic context and, therefore, separated from the lifeblood of the Church. Consequently, it is theologically essential that the Eucharistic Liturgy and the sacraments of initiation be together. Through an examination of the history and theology of Baptism, we may more clearly demonstrate how the above mentioned divorce between the sacraments and the Eucharist has brought about a great many pastoral problems.

As we are able to see, it is in and through the sacraments that we as human beings are able to receive and truly understand the working of the grace of God in our life. Additionally, we may see that the fullness of this grace is realized in the fullness of the gathering of the Church, which is the body of Christ. In the forthcoming part two of this examination we will explore the practice of baptism currently used in the Orthodox Church.

³Khomikov p. 6

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Slava Isusu Khrystu! Slava Naviki!
Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Just prior to the summer break, this committee as a gesture of appreciation to all those that have helped in any way at St. Vladimir's put on the annual Membership Appreciation/Grad Recognition BBQ. Greg Syrnick, again did an outstanding job of recognizing and congratulating our graduates who were also presented with a copy of the new Orthodox Study Bible. An icon was presented to those who were celebrating a second graduation.

We are busily preparing for the Sept. 14th Fall Pancake Breakfast to celebrate the New Church Year and introduce and welcome all the new members who have joined our church family through the past year. We extend an invitation to all to join us in this celebration.

After a successful Great Lenten Seminar with guest speaker Fr. Oleg Krawchenko, we are looking at holding a Saturday Fall Lenten Seminar. Please watch for details in upcoming church bulletins, flyers and our website www.stvlads.com. Plans are also in the works for a Great Lenten Seminar in the spring.

The Pocket Calendar and Membership Pictorial Directory were well received, and copies of both are available at the church office. We encourage those who have not yet picked up their complimentary copy of the Pictorial Directory to do so. There are also extra copies for purchase.

Financial sponsorship for meals to help feed the street people of Calgary through the Mustard Seed Program is mostly achieved through the Christmas and Paschal Charity Appeals. Please watch for details of our dates to prep and serve meals the Charity Appeals have funded. Appeal donations will also be used to brighten the lives of children in orphanages in Ukraine. We thank for your generous participation.

Joan Popowich , Chair

HIS GRACE BISHOP ILARION



SOBOR 2008 , Saskatoon, SK— (from left to right) Bishop Christopher-Toronto, Bishop Ilarion, Bishop Andriy, Metropolitan John, Bishop Yuri, Andrij Krochak

His Grace Bishop Ilarion (in the world Roman Rudnik) was born February 14, 1972 in L'viv, Ukraine. There he received his primary and secondary school. After taking his entrance exams, he was admitted to the Second year at the Ecclesiastical Seminary of Kyiv from which he graduated in 1992. Upon the recommendation of Archbishop Vsevolod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and with the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, he then was sent to Thessaloniki (Greece) where he graduated in 1997 from the Theological Faculty of the Aristotle University.

Roman Rudnik was tonsured a monk on December 5, 1997, taking the name of 'Ilarion'. He was ordained to the diaconate on December 21, 1997 and to the priesthood in 2000 by His Eminence Metropolitan Panteleimon of Tyrolis and Serention (Abbot of the Holy Monastery of Vlatadon in Thessaloniki). On September 14, 2000 he was elevated to the rank of Hieromonk.

Hieromonk Ilarion continued his theological studies in Canon Law and took a Masters

program, successfully defending his thesis on the '*Canonical relations between the Metropolis of Kyiv and the Ecumenical Patriarchate until 1240*'. In 2001 he attended English language lessons at the University of Illinois in Chicago. In October of 2002 he was sent to Portugal to serve the newly created parish of Saint Panteleimon in Porto. On March 21, 2004 he was elevated to the rank of 'Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Patriarchate'.

On the proposal of His All-Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate elected him on January 11, 2005 assistant bishop of His Eminence Metropolitan Epiphanius of Spain and Portugal, with the title of 'Bishop of Telmissos'. Bishop Ilarion's Episcopal ordination took place in Constantinople at the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George, on Saturday 29th January 2005. His names day is October 21.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

August 13, 2008

Since my last report on June 22, 2008, we have had a number of positive changes in our Congregation, the most important of which is that we now have a new Associate Priest assigned to our Congregation, Father Timothy Chrapko. Father Tim was born in Edmonton, Alberta, in December 1979. He was ordained as a Priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada on April 18, 2008. Father Chrapko is married to Dobrika Julie, who was born in Calgary, Alberta, and whose parents live here. Dobrika Julie is a school teacher. Both Father Timothy and Dobrika Julie are looking forward to serving our Congregation in Calgary, and I would like to ask all parishioners of our Congregation to make them welcome to our city. Father Timothy's and Dobrika Julie's transition to Calgary from Vegreville, Alberta, is being overseen by a group of Parish Council members, consisting of Shirley Din, Joan Popowich, Lorne Calkins and Chad Pawlyshyn.

Our Land Development Committee, headed by Walter Semkuley, is making progress in developing a plan of action on the rental properties owned by our Congregation. To date, the Committee is awaiting Parish Council's view on the interpretation of the Will of the late Mrs. Kowal, who left her residential property to our Congregation for "a senior's residence". Parish Council must now determine whether the late Mrs. Kowal's gift was impressed with a trust that would restrict the development of that particular parcel of land to the development of a senior's residence.

I am also pleased to report that our Church heating and air conditioning system project is now substantially complete, and I would like to thank our women's organization for its financial support of this project and Don Popowich and Dan Zukiwsky for seeing it to its completion.

Again, I would like to express our Congregation's thanks to Father Taras and Dobrika Donna for their devoted spiritual leadership of our Congregation. As well, I would like to express our thanks to our Cantors, Elder Brothers and Sisters, Acolytes, and choir members for their participation in our Sunday services. Thanks again to Dan Zukiwsky, Glen Tacey and Nick Topolnitsky for their work in maintaining the Cultural Centre and Church properties.

Our thanks also go out to our kitchen organizers, and our administrative staff, Michele Faryna and Rick Ramsay for keeping our Church and Cultural Centre operating efficiently.

With the addition of Father Tim, our Congregation's financial needs will increase, and I therefore urge all Congregation members to financially support the Congregation to a level with which members are comfortable. And on that note, I would like to again express our collective thanks to the Men's and Women's organizations of our Congregation for their past and ongoing financial support.

Larry Yuzda
President

1 Timothy 3:15--"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"

Many non-Orthodox try to say that the Bible alone is the only means of determining God's Truth. However, the Bible itself contradicts them and says that the Church is the pillar and ground of the Truth.



SATURDAY UKRAINIAN CLASSES ARE STARTING!!!!

Come learn Ukrainian with us....

St. Vladimir's is pleased to offer Saturday Ukrainian classes for children aged 5 and up.

Classes are held from September 2008 to May 2009, 10:00 am-1:00 pm.

Our focus or educational concentration is:

- a) Vocabulary building, printing, introduction to reading,
- b) Art/culture/dance
- c) Music

We showcase the children's progress by participating in the St. Nicholas concert, as well as a year-end show.

Things your child will need:

- 1) A zippered 3-ring binder with 5 dividers
- 2) Pencil
- 3) Eraser
- 4) Indoor shoes (non-marking please)
- 5) Snack (no peanut or nut products)

For registration forms or additional information, please contact Lorraine at 547-7090 or lalford@shaw.ca. Fees are \$350.00 for the entire year, and cheques are made payable to St. Vladimir's Saturday School.

Come join us on Saturdays for lots of educational fun!!



Sadchok is open again and ready to help our little ones learn more about Ukrainian culture and language. Pani Lesia Mukminov will be teaching this year with Pani Olena Kanevska assisting her. Their wonderful energy and love for children will provide a fantastic learning opportunity for our preschoolers.

Classes will commence on September 8, 2008 with 10 three year olds and 5 four year olds. The children will begin the year learning "All About Me". Lessons will focus on body parts, weather, days of the week, months of the year, numbers, counting and shapes. The children are taught through song, dance, games & crafts.

We are looking forward to Fr. Taras attending Sadochok and blessing our classroom as well as the children on September 15 & 16.

For more information about Sadochok, please visit our website at www.ukrainianpreschool.ca or call Sherry at 403-244-3079. We are still accepting registrations so do not hesitate to sign-up your little ones and **"MAKE YOUR BABA PROUD!"**

Shannon Peddlesden, director

. A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I know what the Bible means!" His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean you 'know' what the Bible means?"
The son replied, "I do know!"
"Okay," said his father. "What does the Bible mean?"
"That's easy, Daddy." the young boy replied excitedly, "It stands for 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.'"



GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY BE FOREVER!

August 2008

With the blessing of His Eminence John, Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Diocese, and Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada, you are hereby informed that September 7th of this year will be known throughout our parishes as:

UKRAINIAN ADOPTION SUNDAY

This event is being held on behalf of the East European Adoptions Inc., which is a non-profit organization based here in Winnipeg to assist families adopting orphans from Eastern Europe and to support the many orphanages caring for needy children in Ukraine.

Your involvement as Ukrainian Orthodox parishes can take several forms, namely:

1. **make regular announcements** of this special day every Sunday after Divine Liturgy and at other church functions, meetings, etc. from now until Sept 7th;
2. **collect gently-used clothing, toys, games, and bedding** for use by both the children in orphanages and elderly in senior residences of Ukraine;
3. **contribute monetary donations towards the cost of shipping** these items to the needy people in Ukraine;
4. **advise prospective parents of the very real possibility of adopting children** from Eastern Europe, including Ukraine, Moldova, and Kazakhstan;
5. **attend the EEA fund-raising event on Saturday, Sept. 13** from 2:00-11:00 p.m. at the HitchNpost ranch just past the perimeter on Hwy. 6, NW of Winnipeg.

Your generous contributions and support are greatly appreciated!

The orphans and seniors of Ukraine graciously thank you!

For more information about the East European Adoptions Inc., please contact:

Darla Penner, executive director

777 Pritchard Avenue

Winnipeg, MB R2X 0E8

phone: (204) 947-2953

e-mail: darlauas@mts.net

N.B. All monetary gifts and donated items can be collected at the respective parishes, culminating on that Sunday of September 7th. Then these contributions can be dropped off at the Cropo Funeral Chapel. Arrangements for pick-up can also be made through:

Protodeacon Taras Maluzynsky @ (204) 667-6067 (res) or 781-0771 (cell).



УКРАЇНСЬКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА ЦЕРКВА В КАНАДІ
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF CANADA
L'ÉGLISE ORTHODOXE UKRAINIENNE DU CANADA

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24 July/6 August 2008
Holy Passion-bearers Boris and Hlib

File № C2008-0801

To the Venerable Clergy
And the God-loving Faithful
Of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

Слава Ісусу Христу!

Dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As you are aware, parts of Western Ukraine have been devastated by massive flooding. To date at least 22 people have died, and countless others have been left homeless or without food and water by this terrible natural disaster.

It is our Christian obligation to help those in need, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and offer shelter to the homeless. This obligation is especially important when it is our own brothers and sisters who are suffering.

I bless all the clergy and faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada to engage in charitable activities for the benefit of the flood victims in Ukraine. Parishes or individuals are encouraged to make monetary donations in support of the afflicted. Such donations can be made directly to the Ukrainian Canadian Social Services, Inc., National Headquarters, 2445 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ontario M6S 1P7 (please mark cheques "Pomich Ukraini Fund"), or may be sent to the Consistory (cheques should be made out to "Consistory of the UOCC - Flood Relief) and they will be forwarded from here.

I thank you in advance for your generous support in this important Christian action.

With Primatial Blessings,

+ *John, Metropolitan*

+JOHN, Metropolitan
Archbishop of Winnipeg
Primate, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

MJ/bh

PASSAGE OF HISTORIC LEGISLATION ACKNOWLEDGING HOLODOMOR AS GENOCIDE

Visnyk – July 2008

Bill C-459 receives Royal Assent _ On May 28, 2008 both the House of Commons and the Senate of Canada passed Bill C-459 *An Act to establish a Ukrainian Famine and Genocide ("Holodomor") Memorial Day and to recognize the Ukrainian Famine in 1932-33 as an act of genocide*. The Bill received Royal Assent on May 29, 2008. This Bill was the initiative of Manitoba Member of Parliament James Bezan (Selkirk-Interlake). With the support of all parties, he successfully moved that his Private Members Bill C-459 be passed at all stages. In a show of solidarity, Ontario MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre) supported the move and ensured that the Bill would be passed at all stages. Senator Raynell Andreychuk subsequently sponsored the Bill in the Senate.

Ukrainian Canadian Congress National President Paul Grod stated, "I would like to congratulate Mr. Bezan for his efforts in bringing this Bill about. The truth about the Holodomor as genocide has been suppressed for too long and I am proud that Canada is taking the lead in

rectifying this. I would also like to thank Borys Wrzesnewskyj for being a stalwart supporter of the importance of having Canada's Parliament acknowledge the genocide which took place in Ukraine in 1932-33. The Ukrainian Canadian community also extends its thanks to Prime Minister Stephen Harper for supporting the Bill along with the other party leaders, Hon. Stephan Dion, Hon. Jack Layton and Gilles Duceppe for ensuring that this Bill passed while the President of Ukraine, Victor Yushchenko, was in Canada. Secretary of State Jason Kenney also played a leading role in our efforts." Mr. Grod continued, "The next step is for Canada to support the efforts of the Government of Ukraine to have the General Assembly of the United Nations pass a resolution condemning the Holodomor as genocide against the Ukrainian people."

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress, which is the national coordinating body for Canada's 1.2 million Canadians of Ukrainian descent, has worked tirelessly to educate Canadians about the true nature of the Holodomor in Ukraine, when in the years 1932-33 millions of Ukrainians perished through a famine deliberately set in motion by the actions of the Soviet regime.

Baba to young grandson, on a hot day: "You look nice and cool,

Grandson: "You don't look so hot yourself."





The following story was extracted from "Elder Cleopa of Sihastria," a Romanian Abbot, spiritual father, missionary, confessor and hesychast.

From 1956 until 1959 Sihastria and the other monasteries throughout Romania enjoyed a period of relative peace and spiritual growth. For that brief time they were not openly harassed by the atheistic civil authorities who were ravaging the country; however, this proved to be the calm before the storm, for a wicked and diabolic attack on the Church of Christ was about to come over the horizon. The joint efforts of atheism and heretical challenges from various denominations were gathering to attack Orthodoxy. This was not something new for the Church, for during these two thousand years of Orthodoxy the evil one has never slept but only increased or decreased his attacks against the Church of the apostles. The Church has always suffered one or another kind of persecution or attack. Ever persecuted but constantly protected by the hand of God through the prayers of the saints, it remains alive and victorious, continuing to be the ark of our salvation.

In 1957, Fr. Cleopa experienced a forewarning of the great attack that was coming: he had to go from Pascani to Bacau by train and found himself in a compartment with modern-day "intellectuals" and military officers. These men had been taught that the Church was merely a system of myths and that those in it, especially the clergy, were to be reviled at every opportunity. As was to happen in the greater trial that still laid ahead, the experience that Fr. Cleopa had in the train proved that the gates of hell cannot prevail over the humility and the power of Christ.

When the elder found himself in the company of proclaimed atheists in such close quarters, he was not afraid, but simply thought to himself, "A monk in a train compartment with military

officers! What kind of conversation could we possibly have?" So he decided to remain silent and turn to interior prayer during the two hours that they would be together.

One of the men could not resist the opportunity to deride the Church and said to the others, "Whoa, look at this! There won't be any problem with this train since we have a "popa" riding with us!

This was said in complete derision, for there was a common superstition at that time, propagated of course by the communists, that if a priest crossed your path, trouble was sure to follow. Fr. Cleopa knew that they were trying to get a reaction from him, so he remained silent; nevertheless, the man continued:

"Hey, listen, since there is a priest here, wouldn't it be fun to have him tell us that story about God? They like to say that some old geezer made heaven and earth and the stars, as well as the mountains and oceans!"

Fr. Cleopa could not believe the blasphemy he was hearing: the man referred to God as an old geezer! Still, he remained silent, saying to himself, "Leave them alone. They are military officers who like to joke and laugh. What could I possibly have to say to them?" But then one of the men came and sat directly opposite him in the tiny compartment and asked him where he was from. The elder did not want to reveal that he was from Sihastria, so he said that he was from one of the monasteries around Neamt.

"What are you? A priest, professor, teacher?" the man asked. Had it been revealed to the men that this was Fr. Cleopa from Sihastria, they would have recognized the name. But Fr. Cleopa, in his humility answered, "I am just a simple monk and I have to travel now to

Bacau."

"Well, listen," the man went on, "these friends of ours are curious to have you tell us something about God! How does that story go about God? That Bible of yours says that God made heaven, earth, all the world, but we have other ideas about this."

Fr. Cleopa replied, "Please excuse me. I am just a simple monk, but even so, if I begin to tell you about God then this train will have to circle the world three times and I still would not finish because there is so much to tell!"

"Ha! Ha! Did you hear what the priest said? Come on. We want to know. You are a monk, we are officers, and we are all going as far as Bacau. Come on, now, how does the story go, Father?"

So, before beginning to speak, Fr. Cleopa stood up and made the sign of the cross. Of course, the others did not do so. "That's their problem," thought the elder, as he observed their total disrespect and disregard for prayer.

One of the men, a major, stood up and asked, "Look Father, I have to tell you something. Isn't it absurd to expect us to believe in something that can't be seen? You say that God exists, but has anyone ever seen Him? It's crazy for someone to believe in something that cannot be seen!"

"Sirs, first of all, I want to be assured that we will speak respectfully, since this is a serious discussion," replied Fr. Cleopa.

"Of course, Father. Hmmp! Why not? If someone gets upset, then it's his problem!"

Fr. Cleopa went on in his great wisdom, "I can see that you are intelligent men, but I am very simple; still I will begin with, as you put it, the 'story' about God as we understand it. Look, gentlemen, I have to say that you, all of you in this compartment, are fools!"

"Did you hear that! The priest says we are fools!"

"Of course! And if you find that I am not correct in that statement, then when we reach the first

station, hand me over to the police. But first I will show you why I have said that you are fools."

"It is absolute foolishness for someone to believe in what he does not see! Who has ever seen God?" they demanded.

Addressing the others in the compartment, Fr. Cleopa said, "Did you hear that he said it is madness to believe in what cannot be seen? Well, first of all, the Holy Spirit says in the Psalms, beginning with Psalm 13 and 52, 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God!' Didn't you say that it is foolish to believe in what cannot be seen?"

"Yes. That is what I said."

"Well I told you that you are the fools. You all are idiots. And I will tell you why I have every right to say this. I have never seen anyone's mind-never! So, according to your statement that you cannot believe in something that isn't visible, wouldn't it then be foolish for me to believe that you have a mind if I have not seen it?"

"Well! Score a point for the priest!" one of the men said.

Fr. Cleopa developed his reasoning, "How can I believe that you have a mind if I have never seen it? I've never seen yours, nor my own. What does it look like? Is it white, black, red, green? What form does it have: square, triangle, hexagon? Tell me, gentlemen, tell me what it looks like. Is it pliable or hard? If you can show me these physical attributes of the mind, then I will say that you have one; if you cannot show it to me, then it means, according to your own declaration, that you do not have one!"

At that point the men began to accuse one another for not stating their point in other words and began to call each other "stupid." They began to realize that they had met their match in this simple "popa."

Fr. Cleopa continued, "So we will go on and admit that everyone has a mind. Right? We agree on this, even though we cannot see the mind. Let's move on: Have you ever seen life? Who has ever seen the life in man? Would anyone say that a

person is dead when he is obviously alive? Yet, can you see actual life?"

"Well, no you can't," they admitted.

"So wouldn't it be foolish for us to believe that people have life if we cannot see it?"

"But, Father, life is something that is manifested," they countered.

"Very good!" answered Fr. Cleopa, "Through its manifestations, we can believe that life exists even though we cannot actually see that thing we call life. That is how it is with God."

Then Fr. Cleopa began to teach them about the aspects of the soul without them ever realizing that he was entering into true theology: "What are God's manifestations in this world? Do you have imagination? Do you feel anger? Have you ever seen anger? Do you have thoughts? Have you ever seen a thought? Do you have desires? You have all these things, for they are aspects of the soul, which include appetitive and incensive attributes.

"You all possess within your bodies the ability to grow. Have you ever seen growth? Do you know how you grow? In addition to this, you have powers of the soul, such as thought, choices, decision, sorrow, grief, joy; but have you ever seen these things which belong to the soul?"

"Scripture tells us that man is the image and likeness of God. Not according to exterior form, but according to the spiritual. Look at how many powers belong to the soul! You have never seen anger, rationality, desire, joy, sadness, grief, imagination, free will, life or even the mind. Yet they all exist. Even pagan philosophy teaches that these all belong to the soul. But have you ever seen a soul?"

"Exactly our point!" they exclaimed, "It can't be seen because it does not exist!"

"How can you say that?" asked Fr. Cleopa. "If you had no soul, then you could not even be talking with me. You could not even blink your eyes without God if there were no life in you. All the faculties of the soul: life, mind, free will,

reasoning, anger, joy, everything, all are unseen, and all those faculties are according to the image and likeness of God, for God is unseen. But man is the prototype and image of God on earth, especially in regard to the aspects of the soul: mind, word and spirit.

"Have you ever seen speech? Have you ever seen the spirit with which you speak? Look at how many invisible faculties there are in your soul! You have never seen them, but you know they are there!"

One of the men began to realize that there was no way they could win in this discussion. "Hmm! It would have been better if we had kept quiet! Look, this guy must be a seminary director or something!"

Then one of the men, a doctor, decided that he could get the best of the simple monk. "Father, let's move on and leave those others alone. Listen! I am a major and a doctor. I have done countless operations and know all the insides of man since I have been doing surgeries for more than thirty years. But I have never seen the soul! How can I believe that it exists in man if I have never come upon it in all those surgeries?"

Fr. Cleopa then turned his full attention to the doctor. "You are a doctor, and you do not believe that the soul exists because you have not seen it?"

"That's right!"

"But you and other doctors, do you believe that suffering exists in this world?"

The doctor was being led right into Fr. Cleopa's hands. "Of course it exists, Father!"

Fr. Cleopa was pensive for a moment, and then said, "I don't believe that suffering exists! Such a belief would be foolish, sir, because I cannot see that thing you call suffering or pain."

"Oh, but it does exist," the doctor insisted.

"When you cut into someone with your scalpel and the man cries out, or when he is thrashing in the claws of death, have you actually seen pain?"

"Pain is not something you can see!" The doctor replied.

"Oh, but you want to see the soul? Pain is one of the faculties of the body, it is natural to man, and it is blended into those aspects, which belong to the soul. Just as you cannot see pain, so you also cannot see the soul. Who has seen pain? But everyone knows that pain exists."

The doctor's companions began to laugh at him, "Ha! Well, the priest sure did shut your mouth, didn't he?"

Another of the officers, wishing that the discussion had never begun, said to the others, "We've come up with a bad one here!"

But one of the others was beginning to see a ray of true light. "Wait, guys. This is something nice to hear. We can tell others what we have learned from the priest. Go on, Father, tell us some more."

But before Fr. Cleopa could begin, one of the men said to him, "Father, we all know very well that the Church has always stood against science. Look, the Russians have successfully launched a man into space! Yuri Gagarin circled the earth three times and landed safely!"

"What has that got to do with anything?" asked Fr. Cleopa. "It didn't prove any of your points."

"It is the fruit and proof of science over religion!" declared the officer. "You are proof that the Church is against science by saying that it proved nothing. You are all like those fools who were against Galileo!"

Now the "simple shepherd monk" from Sihastria was about to thoroughly put these learned people to shame. "Let me explain these things a little. If a bee goes out of its hive and flies around the field that the hive is in, can he assume that he knows everything that exists in the world? Of course not! But that is exactly what man has now done. He has come out of his hive and circled the 'field,' so to speak, in which he lives and now thinks that he has done something remarkable! A gnat that flies from one finger to another has accomplished more than man has with his science, both those in the east and those in the west.

"But wait, there is more to say; whether you consider these words to be pleasant or bitter or sweet, I want to continue with this explanation as much as possible before we reach Bacau."

"Gentlemen, can you all recognize the Big Dipper, the Little Dipper and the North Star in the night sky?"

"Of course!"

"All of astronomy and science, beginning with the most advanced in such knowledge, tell us that the light from one end of the cup of the Big Dipper has to travel 1300 light years to reach the star at the other end of the cup. Now light travels at 300,000 kilometers per second—now imagine how far it is from the star at the far end of the cup of the Dipper until the star at the very end of the Dipper's handle or the distance from there to the Prepelus."

"What is the Prepelus?" the men asked, fully engrossed now in what Fr. Cleopa was saying.

"It's a very small star out there. What I am getting at is this: tell me, how far is it from one end of the Dipper to the very farthest end?"

"This is very interesting!" the men said. Then they wondered and asked, "Who figured all that out?"

"A French astronomer from the last century named Camille Flammarion. I read his discoveries in a book called *God in Nature*. But now let's go on: Have you ever noticed a star that looks as if it is dancing, just as night falls and the stars first come out? That is Alfa Centura. Astronomy says that this is the closest star to our own solar system, yet it would take one million light years to reach that star! Now, gentlemen, look at these figures and measurements and tell me what fantastic accomplishment Yuri Gagarin has made!"

"Well, I guess it really isn't even a drop in the bucket," they admitted.

"The earth's circumference is roughly 36,000 kilometers. What is that compared to a million light years between a star and our planet?"

"Having said all this, let's move on to the more serious nature of our discussion. God reveals His works not in great things, but in the minute, according to the words of St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite. Imagine, the eye of a needle contains eight sextillion atoms. That's an astronomical figure! A sextillion, written out, is followed by twenty-one zeros! In order for someone to count the atoms in a needle's eye he would have to count more than one million per second and continue doing so for 250 years! So, tell me how fantastic science is compared to the fact that God has put so many atoms into the space of a needle's eye!

"Let's go on to something even more miraculous. There are sixteen billion ions on the point of a needle. Camille Flammarion stated these facts and brought them to the attention of atheists of his time because they were trying to create a living being. Such attempts are impossible since only God can create life. How big do you think these ions are? If you had a magnifying glass that would make a flea look as big as Ceahlau, you still could not see an ion. Yet, as small as these ions are, they are alive!

"Flammarion hesitated to say that God exists in every body and plant, since that was the pantheistic heresy. But I would put it this way: God exists in all of His creation, since He has put life into everything that exists, right down to the very smallest microscopic creature!

"Again, we have to be careful not to appear pantheistic, so we do not say that God is the soul of nature. In the words of the apostle Paul, we say that God exists, for through Him and from Him do all things exist!"

Fr. Cleopa realized that they had only begun their conversation, but he had to wrap it up since they were approaching the station at Bacau, so he said to them, "You have to realize that you cannot even blink an eyelid without God, my brothers!"

"Why, Father?" They asked, no longer in an aggressive manner, but truly inquisitive.

"Life is from God, the Giver of life. Once you die, you cannot even blink an eye."

The discussion had lasted over two hours. In addition to the points mentioned above, Fr. Cleopa had also quoted extensively from the writings of St. John of Damascus and St. Basil the Great. As the men were disembarking from the train, they were truly sorry to be leaving Fr. Cleopa. Several of them embraced him, others gave him some fruits or candies; but the most moving phenomenon of all was that several of the men gave him prayer lists of names to be commemorated. These men who had proclaimed that there is no God were now asking the elder to pray for them and their loved ones!

"Father, we want to write to you. But tell us who you are: you must be a director or professor at a seminary!"

"I told you that I am just a simple shepherd at a monastery. If you really want to hear wonderful things, then you have to meet with a bishop or an abbot. Then you will really be amazed at the beautiful things they will tell you. I am just an ignorant shepherd monk, but bishops have been educated and know how to speak and explain things."

The men had been convinced. "Oh! What does our life mean? We have been such fools! Look at what this monk had told us!"

This conversation that Fr. Cleopa had in the train shows that although the powers of darkness seek to attack the Church and destroy it, the gates of hell cannot prevail. The two-hour conversation between the intellectuals of the military and the simple shepherd-monk of Sihastria was, in a sense, an image of the Romanians under communist domination and the overcoming of that oppression. The above conversation took place in 1957, but the Church and people of Romania had terrible trials to endure before the yoke of atheism was finally shaken from them. The persecution and attack mentioned earlier, which had been looming on the horizon, was about to be launched against the servants of Christ.

The Many Faces of Forgiveness

Forgiveness is restoration and reconciliation.

Forgiveness demands that we view others through the eyes of mercy.

Forgiveness restores what has been damaged and brings healing where there has been alienation.

Forgiveness restores unity where there has been division.

Forgiveness attempts to foster reconciliation where oneness ceases to exist.

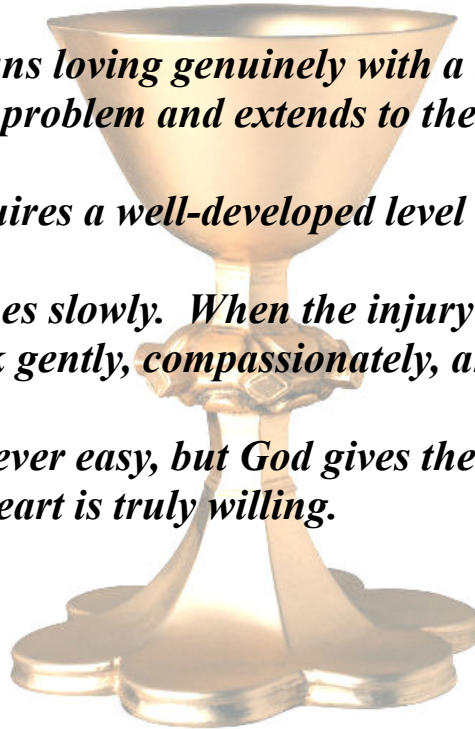
Forgiveness is a right relationship with God and neighbor.

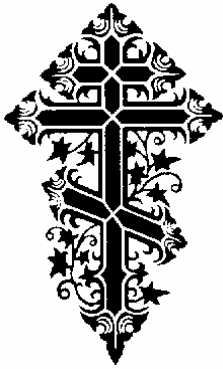
Forgiveness means loving genuinely with a love that goes beyond the problem and extends to the person(s) involved.

Forgiveness requires a well-developed level of maturity.

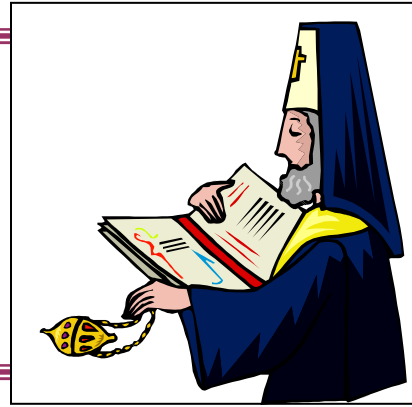
Forgiveness comes slowly. When the injury is deep, layers are peeled back gently, compassionately, and with time.

Forgiveness is never easy, but God gives the grace to forgive when the heart is truly willing.





SAYINGS OF THE FATHERS



Prayer: Don't give God instructions -- just report for duty!

A Sunday School teacher began her lesson with a question, "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?"

A hand shot up in the air. "He is an artist!" said the kindergarten boy. "Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked.

"You know - Our Father, who does art in Heaven... "

"PRAYER is a refuge for those who are shaken, an anchor for those tossed by waves, a walking stick for the infirm, a treasure house for the poor, a stronghold for the rich, a destroyer of sicknesses, a preserver of health. Prayer keeps our virtues intact and quickly removes all evil. If temptation overtakes us, it easily drives it away; if we lose some property or something else, which causes our soul grief, it removes it. Prayer banishes every sorrow, causes good humor, facilitates constant well-being. It is the mother of love of wisdom. He who can sincerely pray is richer than everyone else, even though he is the poorest of all. On the contrary, he who does not have recourse to prayer, even though he sit on a king's throne, is the poorest of all...."

From Fr. Seraphim Rose

Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous



"PRAYERS at home are in introduction, a preparation for prayers in Church. Thus he who is not accustomed to pray at home can seldom pray diligently in Church. Experience bears witness to this: anyone can observe it for himself."

From St. John of Kronstadt (1829-1908)

James 5:14 "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."



"Someone who bears a grudge while he prays is like a person who sows in the sea and expects to reap a harvest."

St Herman of Alaska

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PANCAKE BREAKFAST: St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Congregation cordially invites all of its members, adherents and guests to a Pancake Breakfast on the occasion of the beginning of the new Church Year on Sunday, September 14 immediately following the Divine Liturgy. Please come out and enjoy this breakfast!

HIERARCHAL VISITATION: St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Congregation sincerely invites all her members, adherents and guests to attend a Hierarchal Visitation of the Most Reverend Metropolitan John on Sunday, November 2. A Festive Dinner and appropriate program will follow the Divine Liturgy on this day. We look forward to seeing you at our visitation!

A REMEMBRANCE DAY REQUIEM WILL BE SERVED IN OUR CHURCH on Tuesday, November 11 at 10:45 a.m. for all men and women who gave their lives in defence of our country and of freedom and justice everywhere. Please make every effort to attend this special Remembrance Day service and program!

UKRAINIAN REMEMBRANCE DAY: Calgary's Ukrainian community will be commemorating the 75th anniversary of Stalin's genocidal famine on Saturday November 22 at 11:00 AM at St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Cultural Centre (411 Meredith Road). Please go to: www.calgaryucc.org or www.faminegenocide.com for more information.

ST. VLADIMIR'S UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CONGREGATION HAS OPENINGS FOR ACOLYTES (ALTAR BOYS) for the 2008/2009 Church Year. If you are interested in Sanctuary Service or wish to be removed from the Acolyte list, please contact Fr. Timothy @ 700-9947.

AUTOMATED FUNDS TRANSFER: St. Vladimir's Congregation now offers Automated Funds Transfer for donations. Forms can be found on the information table in the entrance of the church or on our website by choosing forms on the right side. If you have any questions about the program, please contact James Teterenko or Lorne Calkins, or by emailing preauthorized.payments@stvlads.com.

ORTHODOX WOMEN'S RETREAT: The eighth annual Orthodox Women's Retreat will be held on Friday, September 19 - Sunday, September 21, 2008 at the Entheos Retreat Center. The main speaker for this year's retreat will be Mother Christophora, Abbess of the Monastery of the Transfiguration, Ellwood City, Pennsylvania. The theme of this retreat weekend is "*Faith, Hope and Love*". Registration deadline is August 30, 2008. Space is limited, so please register early! For more information, please call Shirley Din @ 282-5566. Registration form is attached and are also available at the Cultural Centre information table.

May 2008

Christ is in our midst! He is and ever shall be!

To Our Beloved Sisters In Christ,

Our eighth annual Orthodox Women's Retreat will be held again in September 2008. We are thankful to once again be able to offer this weekend filled with spiritual refreshment, and to provide an opportunity for the women in our Church community to worship, learn, and share in each other's lives.

Come and join us!

Date: September 19th, 20th and 21st.

Place: Entheos Christian Retreat and Conference Centre
18 km west of Calgary city limits on Highway 8 (See map on reverse)
403-246-4313

Speaker: Mother Christophora, Abbess of the Monastery of the Transfiguration, Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, was born and raised in an Orthodox family and active in the church serving as a school teacher, reader and choir director. A graduate from Penn State University, she counseled in the drug and alcohol addiction field, and at the age of 29 she entered the monastery. Taking monastic vows in 1986, in 1987 she was elected the monastery Abbess. Along with many other projects, she coordinated an extensive building program at the monastery. She is an active retreat speaker throughout the U.S.A. and Canada.

Theme: **"FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE"**

Cost: \$175 double occupancy.

Registration/payment* deadline August 30th, 2008.

*Payment option: 2 cheques, one for \$90.00 dated July 15, 2008 and the second for \$85.00 dated August 30, 2008.

SPACE IS LIMITED-PLEASE REGISTER EARLY TO ENSURE PLACEMENT

What you will need to bring: Bible, prayer books, notebook, pen, closed walking shoes, layered warm clothing, jacket, toiletries, alarm clock, camera, flashlight and extra blanket/throw. Standard bedding and towels provided.

* TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL - NOT ALLOWED IN ROOMS.

*IN KINDNESS AND RESPECT TO OTHERS, PLEASE ENSURE SHOWERS AND FELLOWSHIP ARE CONCLUDED BEFORE 11:00 P.M.

A selection of icons and books will be available for purchase (cash or cheque only).

Dinner will not be provided on Friday evening. Snacks will be available in the main conference room during check-in and at 7:00 pm.

NOTE: You will not be receiving a written confirmation of registration. Please address any questions to the following committee members:

Registration Contact:

Shirley Din
(403)282-5566 Tel

Information Contacts:

Myra Reinheimer
(403)938-4929 Tel

Ghada Ziadeh
(403)240-2549 Tel

*"...aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness."
1 Timothy 6:11.*

Orthodox Women's Weekend Retreat

Theme: "Faith, Hope and Love"

Guest Speaker: Mother Christophora

September 19 - 21

(see schedule on reverse)

\$175.00* per person, double occupancy

Entheos Christian Retreat and Conference Centre

(Bragg Creek, Alberta, 18 km outside Calgary city limits)

REGISTRATION/PAYMENT* DEADLINE AUGUST 30TH, 2008. SPACE IS LIMITED

Registration must include your payment*, name, address, telephone number, and home Parish.

*Payment option: 2 cheques, one for \$90.00 dated July 15, 2008 and another for \$85.00 dated August 30, 2008.

Please send all correspondence/registration/payment to: Orthodox Women's Retreat
Ms. Shirley Din
3551 Morley Trail NW,
Calgary, Alberta, T2M 4H5

----- **ONE APPLICANT ONLY** PER REGISTRATION FORM / PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN -----

Please reserve my space for the Sept. 19 - 21, 2008 retreat. Enclosed is my payment/payments* of \$175.00.

Please make cheques payable to the **Orthodox Women's Retreat.**

*Payment option: 2 cheques, one for \$90.00 dated July 15, 2008 and another for \$85.00 dated August 30, 2008.

**** PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY ****

Name _____ --- _____ Cheque No. _____

Parish _____

Address _____ City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ E-mail _____

Suggested Roommate _____ Roommate's Parish _____

Food Allergies/Special Dietary Needs _____

Special Care Needs (check-in assistance) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

If you require a pick-up from bus or plane, please note here. _____