



ST. ELIA'S NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023

**ХРИСТОС РОЖДАЄТЬСЯ!
СЛАВІМО ЙОГО!**

**CHRIST IS BORN!
LET US GLORIFY HIM!**

SUNDAY WORSHIP HOURS:

9:30 am Confessions
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
** Confessions are available
in the board room.*

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **EVE OF THEOPHANY at St Elia**
Blessing of water
January 18, Wednesday at 5:30 pm

followed by our Blessed Jordan Supper.

- Adults: \$20.00
- Youth 7~18: \$10.00
- Children 6 and under: Free

** Tickets will be available at the church
office starting on Sunday, Jan 1st*

** After the Blessing of the water,
we will have a Jordan Dinner and
Ukrainian Christmas Carol Sing-along.*

- **COUNCIL MEETING**
Sunday, Jan 15th, 2023
after Divine Liturgy

Newsletter submissions ~ feel free!

** If you want to share an event, story, or photos with
our Ukrainian Orthodox community, please send
the information to bpanchuk52@gmail.com*

CONTACTS

• **UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST. ELIA**

11833 – 66 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5B 1J2
Office: 780-471-2288 / Kitchen: 780-479-8824
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• **WEBSITES**

St. Elia: www.uocc-stelia.ca
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada: www.uocc.ca
Western Eparchy: www.uocc-we.ca

• **CLERGY**

PRIEST: Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Fr. Georg Podtepa
Home: 780-477-2583 / Cell: 780-984-6290
Rev. Fr. Vasyl Maskal Cell: 306-229-7743

• **COUNCIL**

President: Tammy Ewanec 780-660-6108
1st Vice-President: Betty Corlett 780-932-9727
2nd Vice-President: Dobr. Barbara Panchuk 780-710-5052
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• **Sunday Bulletin and Newsletter Contacts:**

Dobr. Barbara Panchuk 780-710-5052

PATRIARCHAL PROCLAMATION FOR CHRISTMAS

+ B A R T H O L O M E W

BY GOD'S MERCY, ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE-NEW ROME
AND ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH
TO ALL THE PLENITUDE OF THE CHURCH

GRACE, MERCY AND PEACE
FROM THE SAVIOR CHRIST BORN IN BETHLEHEM

* * *

Most honorable brother hierarchs,
Beloved children in the Lord,

Today our Holy Church celebrates the Nativity in the flesh of the pre-eternal Son and Word of God, this "foreign and strange mystery" that "was concealed from ages and from generations" (Col. 1:26). In Christ, the truth about God and mankind is definitively revealed, as St. Cyril of Alexandria so theologically explains: "We are human by nature, but He condescended to what is contrary to divine nature for the sake of love and became man. We are servants of God by nature as His creation, but He became a servant once again, contrary to divine nature when He became man. But the reverse also holds true: He is God in essence, and we are, by grace, able to ascend to what is contrary to human nature. For we are human, and He is the Son by nature, yet we too become sons by status inasmuch as we are called to fellowship in Him." [1]

"Know the truth, and the truth shall set you free" (Jn. 8:32). Our Lord Jesus Christ is "the way and the truth and the life" (Jn. 14:6), the liberator of man "from enslavement to the enemy." There is no life and liberty without the Truth or outside the Truth. Giving any meaning we desire to our life is not freedom, but the contemporary version of original sin, our self-enclosure within self-sufficient and self-serving independence, without a perception for truth as a relationship with God and our fellow human beings. Christmas is the time for self-knowledge, for understanding the difference between "God becoming man" and "man acting as god." It is the time for awareness of the Christian teaching that "we do not speak of man becoming divine, but of God becoming human." [2]

The message of the good news about Christmas today echoes alongside the din of war and the clash of weapons in Ukraine, which is experiencing the horrible consequences of a provocative and unjust invasion. For us Christians, all wars are the murder of our brothers? they are all civil wars, which as the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church proclaimed, are "the result of the presence of evil and sin in the world." [3] In the case of Ukraine, the words of St. Gregory Palamas about his contemporary bloody conflicts among Orthodox believers in Thessaloniki are still more relevant: "For their common nurturing mother is the holy Church and devotion, whose chief and perfecter is Christ, the genuine Son, who is not only our God, but who also deigned it appropriate to be our brother and Father." [4]

In the person of Christ, the "recapitulation" of all has been achieved, the emergence of unity within the human race and the sanctity of the human person, the opening of the way toward the "likeness of God," and the revelation of the peace "that surpasses all understanding" (Phil. 4:10). Christ is "our peace" (Eph. 2:14), and it is to Christ that the historic and emblematic Sacred Church of "Holy Irene" is dedicated in the City of Constantine.

Our Savior blesses the "peacemakers," for "they shall be called children of God" (Matt. 5:9); He promotes the notion of righteousness and love, even towards our enemies. In the Divine Liturgy, the Orthodox Church prays "for the peace from above" and "for the peace of the whole world."

And during the Liturgy of Basil the Great, we pray to and glorify the Giver of all good things: “Grant us your peace and your love, Lord our God; for you have granted us all things.” As recipients and supreme beneficiaries of all things from God, we are obliged more than anyone else to strive for peace in accordance with the scriptural: “To the one that has received much, more will be demanded” (Lk. 12:48). In this sense,

Never in the history of mankind has peace among peoples been a condition taken for granted. Instead, it was everywhere and always the result of inspired initiatives, of courage and self-sacrifice, of resistance to violence and rejection of war as a means of resolving differences, and a perpetual struggle for justice and protection of human dignity. Their contribution to peace and reconciliation constitutes the primary criterion for the credibility of religions. Within religious traditions, there are undoubtedly motivations not only for inner peace, but also for the advancement and establishment of societal peace and overcoming aggression in relations between people and nations. This is especially significant in our time when the position is maintained that peace will ensure due to economic development, a rise in living standards, and progress in science and technology through digital communication and the internet. We are convinced that there can be no peace among people and civilizations without peace among religions without dialogue and collaboration. Faith in God strengthens our effort for a world of peace and justice, even when that effort confronts humanly unsurpassable hurdles. At any rate, it is unacceptable for representatives of religions to preach fanaticism and fan the flames of hatred.

Most reverend brothers and beloved children,

Christ is born? glorify Him. Christ is descending from the heavens? come and meet Him. Christ is on earth? rise up to greet Him! Adhering to the exhortation of our holy predecessor on the Throne of the Church of Constantinople, let us celebrate the nativity of the world’s Savior with spiritual joy, “not in an earthly, but in a heavenly manner,” avoiding “everything superfluous and unnecessary; especially when others – made of the same clay and combination – are suffering hunger and poverty.”[5] We pray that all of you may enjoy a prayerful and glorious Holy Twelve Days of Christmas, like a genuine fullness of time and radiance of the light of eternity. May the coming 2023 prove – by the goodness and grace of the Divine Word that became flesh for us and for our salvation – to be a period of peace, love, and solidarity,

We wish you many blessed years!

+ BARTHOLOMEW of Constantinople
Fervent supplicant of all before God

[1] *Cyril of Alexandria, Thesaurus on the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity* , PG 75.561.

[2] *John of Damascus, Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* , PG 94.988.

[3] *The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today’s World* , IV, 1.

[4] *Gregory Palamas, On Peace with One Another* , PG 151.10.

[5] *Gregory the Theologian, On the Feast of Theophany, or the Nativity of Christ* , PG 36.316.

Message from Parish Priest, Father Georg Podtepa

January, 2023.

CHRIST IS BORN! ХРИСТОС РОЖДАЕТСЯ!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's a holy festival that gives the Orthodox Christian message of spreading peace, love and harmony. It's time to revive our traditional customs and greet each other with love and rejoice in the joy of the birth of the Son of God. Let's wish our near and dear ones with Orthodox merry Christmas wishes. Let's have Christmas prayers for the well-being of every beautiful creation of the Lord and sing carols. Christmas is the time for prayers, and reading the holy Bible. It's time to recollect and walk on the righteous path. Let's read the Orthodox Christmas quotes which are written in the Bible and follow the divine path of our Lord.

May the Lord bless you with peace, love and joy! May He give you the wisdom to see the light of truth!

**CHRIST IS BORN!!
LET US GLORIFY HIM! СЛАВИМО ЙОГО!**

Please stay safe.

Very Rev. Archpriest Fr. Georg Podtepa

UPDATE FROM THE MISSION OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Христос народився!

We have completed our Christmas season donations:

\$500 to the Free Store for the movie & popcorn event for children of evacuees

\$500 in Walmart gift cards for the UCSS.

\$500 for the food program at Balwin School

It has been a blessing to be able to reach out to neighbours in need.

Myrna Kostash, for Betty Corlett, Dobr Sofiya Maskal, Dobr Barbara Panchuk and Tanya Popowich

December 30, 2022

St. Athanasius On the Incarnation : THE DIVINE DILEMMA AND ITS SOLUTION IN THE INCARNATION

...because death and corruption were gaining ever firmer hold on them, the human race was in process of destruction. Man, who was created in God's image and in his possession of reason reflected the very Word Himself, was disappearing, and the work of God was being undone. The law of death, which followed from the Transgression, prevailed upon us, and from it there was no escape. The thing that was happening was in truth both monstrous and unfitting. It would, of course, have been unthinkable that God should go back upon His word and that man, having transgressed, should not die; but it was equally monstrous that beings which once had shared the nature of the Word should perish and turn back again into non-existence through corruption.

It was unworthy of the goodness of God that creatures made by Him should be brought to nothing through the deceit wrought upon man by the devil; and it was supremely unfitting that the work of God in mankind should disappear, either through their own negligence or through the deceit of evil spirits. As, then, the creatures whom He had created reasonable, like the Word, were in fact perishing, and such noble works were on the road to ruin, what then was God, being Good, to do? Was He to let corruption and death have their way with them? In that case, what was the use of having made them in the beginning? Surely it would have been better never to have been created at all than, having been created, to be neglected and perish; and, besides that, such indifference to the ruin of His own work before His very eyes would argue not goodness in God but limitation, and that far more than if He had never created men at all. It was impossible, therefore, that God should leave man to be carried off by corruption, because it would be unfitting and unworthy of Himself.

Yet, true though this is, it is not the whole matter. As we have already noted, it was unthinkable that God, the Father of Truth, should go back upon His word regarding death in order to ensure our continued existence. He could not falsify Himself; what, then, was God to do? Was He to demand repentance from men for their transgression? You might say that that was worthy of God, and argue further that, as through the Transgression they became subject to corruption, so through repentance they might return to incorruption again. But repentance would not guard the Divine consistency, for, if death did not hold dominion over men, God would still remain untrue. Nor does repentance recall men from what is according to their nature; all that it does is to make them cease from sinning. Had it been a case of a trespass only, and not of a subsequent corruption, repentance would have been well enough; but when once transgression had begun men came under the power of the corruption proper to their nature and were bereft of the grace which belonged to them as creatures in the Image of God. No, repentance could not meet the case.

What—or rather Who was it that was needed for such grace and such recall as we required? Who, save the Word of God Himself, Who also in the beginning had made all things out of nothing? His part it was, and His alone, both to bring again the corruptible to incorruption and to maintain for the Father His consistency of character with all. For He alone, being Word of the Father and above all, was in consequence both able to recreate all, and worthy to suffer on behalf of all and to be an ambassador for all with the Father. For this purpose, then, the incorporeal and incorruptible and immaterial Word of God entered our world. In one sense, indeed, He was not far from it before, for no part of creation had ever been without Him Who, while ever abiding in union with the Father, yet fills all things that are. But now He entered the world in a new way, stooping to our level in His love and Self-revealing to us.

He saw the reasonable race, the race of men that, like Himself, expressed the Father's Mind, wasting out of existence, and death reigning over all in corruption. He saw that corruption held us all the closer, because it was the penalty for the Transgression; He saw, too, how unthinkable it would be for the law to be repealed before it was fulfilled. He saw how unseemly it was that the very things of which He Himself was the Artificer should be disappearing. He saw how the surpassing wickedness of men was mounting up against them;

He saw also their universal liability to death. All this He saw and, pitying our race, moved with compassion for our limitation, unable to endure that death should have the mastery, rather than that His creatures should perish and the work of His Father for us men come to nought, He took to Himself a body, a human body even as our own. Nor did He will merely to become embodied or merely to appear; had that been so, He could have revealed His divine majesty in some other and better way. No, He took our body, and not only so, but He took it directly from a spotless, stainless virgin, without the agency of human father—a pure body, untainted by intercourse with man.

He, the Mighty One, the Artificer of all Himself, prepared this body in the virgin as a temple for Himself, and took it for His very own, as the instrument through which He was known and in which He dwelt. Thus, taking a body like our own, because all our bodies were liable to the corruption of death, He surrendered His body to death instead of all, and offered it to the Father. This He did out of sheer love for us, so that in His death all might die, and the law of death thereby be abolished because, having fulfilled in His body that for which it was appointed, it was thereafter voided of its power for men. This He did that He might turn again to incorruption men who had turned back to corruption, and make them alive through death by the appropriation of His body and by the grace of His resurrection. Thus He would make death to disappear from them as utterly as straw from fire.

The Word perceived that corruption could not be got rid of otherwise than through death; yet He Himself, as the Word, being immortal and the Father's Son, was such as could not die. For this reason, therefore, He assumed a body capable of death, in order that it, through belonging to the Word Who is above all, might become in dying a sufficient exchange for all, and, itself remaining incorruptible through His indwelling, might thereafter put an end to corruption for all others as well, by the grace of the resurrection.

It was by surrendering to death the body which He had taken, as an offering and sacrifice free from every stain, that He forthwith abolished death for His human brethren by the offering of the equivalent. For naturally, since the Word of God was above all, when He offered His own temple and bodily instrument as a substitute for the life of all, He fulfilled in death all that was required. Naturally also, through this union of the immortal Son of God with our human nature, all men were clothed with incorruption in the promise of the resurrection. For the solidarity of mankind is such that, by virtue of the Word's indwelling in a single human body, the corruption which goes with death has lost its power over all. You know how it is when some great king enters a large city and dwells in one of its houses; because of his dwelling in that single house, the whole city is honored, and enemies and robbers cease to molest it. Even so is it with the King of all; He has come into our country and dwelt in one body amidst the many, and in consequence the designs of the enemy against mankind have been foiled and the corruption of death, which formerly held them in its power, has simply ceased to be.

The human race would have perished utterly had not the Lord and Savior of all, the Son of God, come among us to put an end to death. This great work was, indeed, supremely worthy of the goodness of God. A king who has founded a city, so far from neglecting it when through the carelessness of the inhabitants it is attacked by robbers, avenges it and saves it from destruction, having regard rather to his own honor than to the people's neglect. Much more, then, the Word of the All-good Father was not unmindful of the human race that He had called to be; but rather, by the offering of His own body He abolished the death which they had incurred, and corrected their neglect by His own teaching.

Thus by His own power He restored the whole nature of man. The Savior's own inspired disciples assure us of this. We read in one place: "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that, if One died on behalf of all, then all died, and He died for all that we should no longer live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died and rose again from the dead, even our Lord Jesus Christ."¹ And again another says: "But we behold Him Who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He should taste of death on behalf of every man." The same writer goes on to point out why it was necessary for God the Word and none other to become Man: "For it became Him, for Whom are all things and through Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through suffering."²

He means that the rescue of mankind from corruption was the proper part only of Him Who made them in the beginning. He points out also that the Word assumed a human body, expressly in order that He might offer it in sacrifice for other like bodies:

“Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself assumed the same, in order that through death He might bring to nought Him that hath the power of death, that is to say, the Devil, and might rescue those who all their lives were enslaved by the fear of death.”³ For by the sacrifice of His own body He did two things: He put an end to the law of death which barred our way; and He made a new beginning of life for us, by giving us the hope of resurrection.

By man death has gained its power over men; by the Word made Man death has been destroyed and life raised up anew. That is what Paul says, that true servant of Christ: For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. Just as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,”⁴ and so forth. Now, therefore, when we die we no longer do so as men condemned to death, but as those who are even now in process of rising we await the general resurrection of all, “which in its own times He shall show,”⁵ even God Who wrought it and bestowed it on us. This, then, is the first cause of the Savior’s becoming Man. There are, however, other things which show how wholly fitting is His blessed presence in our midst; and these we must now go on to consider.

1. 2 Cor. 5:14 f. 2. Heb. 2:9 ff. 3. Heb. 2:14 f. 4. 1 Cor. 15:21 5. 1 Tim. 6:15.

News and Stories in St. Elia Parish Community



Bill Ewanec's 90th Birthday; Dec 27th

Happy Birthday Bill! God grant you many more great years with us.

Thank you for all things you do for our St. Elia community.



CHRISTMAS CAROL SING ALONG

СПІВАЙТИ КОЛЯДКИ І ЩЕДРІВКИ З НАМИ

After the Blessing of the Water, we welcome everyone to come to a small feast and for a sing-along of Ukrainian Christmas carols.

Після освячення Йорданської води запрошуємо усіх на святкову вечерю і маленький sing-along українських колядок і щедрівок.

JANUARY 18, 2022
ST. ELIA'S CHURCH, 11833 66 ST,
EDMONTON, AB T5B 1J2

UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST.ELIA.

ORDER OF SERVICES FOR JANUARY 2023.

1. - SUNDAY.....SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY OF CHRIST..... 10:00 A.M.
6. - FRIDAY.....EVE OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST..... 4:30 P.M.
7. - SATURDAY.....THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD.....10:00 A.M.
8. - SUNDAY.....SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY.....10:00 A.M.
- 15 - SUNDAY..... SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY..... 10:00 A.M
- 18 - WEDNESDAY..... EVE OF THEOPHANY. BLESSING WATER 5:30 P.M.
- 19 - THURSDAY.....HOLY THEOPHANY. BLESSING WATER10:00 A.M.
- 22 - SUNDAY..... ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA10:00 A.M.
- 29 - SUNDAY..... ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT10:00 A.M.

