



## The Most Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church



Parish Administered by Rev. Fr. Pavlo Myts

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Parish Executive Council Chairperson: Mr. Matt Dmyterko; UCWLC President: Mrs. Adelle Dmyterko - Tel: 250-554-3107

Parish Cantor: Mr. Myron Musey  Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of New Westminster: [www.nweparchy.ca](http://www.nweparchy.ca)

**SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON** – February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 A.D



**THE VIBRANT PARISH - A PLACE TO ENCOUNTER THE LIVING CHRIST: Through the Word, the Holy Mysteries & Prayer, Serving One's Neighbour, Leadership, Fostering & Serving Unity and**

**Missionary Spirit** – Pastoral Letter of His Beatitude Sviatoslav

O Lord Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd, as you once gathered lost sheep that they might hear Your voice and be your flock, so also today graciously look down from heaven upon our parish community, and send down on it your Holy Spirit, that it might be a place to receive the joy of Your Good News. Strengthen us with your presence, and always gather us together in prayer. Grant us the spirit of serving others, so that in our parish all might encounter You, the merciful God. Bless our spiritual leaders with Your wisdom, and inspire us to generously give of our time, talents and treasure for the building up of Your Kingdom. Unite us in peace and harmony, as befits Your community of love. Instill in us a missionary spirit, and let our parish community shine with the light of the Gospel, with prayer and good works, inviting all to share in the divine life, so that Your Name, O Saviour, may be praised, together with Your eternal Father, and Your most-holy, good and life-giving Spirit. Amen.

Regardless of our situation in life today, the message in today's gospel is the same for us as it was for the prodigal son thousands of years ago. Maybe we are like the prodigal son who had wrecked his life but had not yet mustered up the courage to return home and ask his father's forgiveness.

Perhaps, there is someone in our lives that we need to approach and muster up enough courage to say, "I'm sorry". Or maybe, somewhere, someday, someone will come up to you and say, "I was wrong". What will we do in this situation on that day?

Forgiveness is always a two-way street. May we have the courage to seek out and embrace the forgiveness that we so desperately need; from others, but most especially from the Almighty God.

**"...Open the doors of your hearts and your homes to Christ, allow His Holy Spirit to transform you, purify and strengthen you in God's love!"**

- Pastoral Letter of His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk "The Vibrant Parish"

**"...Відчиніть двері своїх душ і домівок Христові, дозвольте Його Святому Духові вас перемінити, очистити і скріпити Божою любов'ю!"**

- Пастирський Лист Блаженнішого Святослава Шевчука "Жива Парафія"

**Christian Greetings:** *Glory to Jesus Christ! – Glory to Him Forever!*

*Slava Isusu Chrystu! – Slava na Viky! Слава Ісусу Христу! – Слава на Віку!*

**Christ is among us! – He is and will be!**

### **Liturgical Propers:**

**Troparion** (Tone 6): Angelic powers were upon Your tomb and the guards became like dead men; Mary stood before Your tomb seeking Your most pure body. You captured Hades without being overcome by it. You met the Virgin and granted life. O Lord, risen from the dead, glory be to You.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

**Kontakion** (Tone 6): With his life-giving hand Christ our God, the Giver of life, raised all the dead from the murky abyss and bestowed resurrection upon humanity. He is for all the Saviour, the resurrection and the life, and the God of all.

**Kontakion** (Tone 3): Foolishly have I fled from Your glory, O Father, wasting the wealth You gave me on vices. Therefore I offer You the words of the Prodigal: Loving Father, I have sinned before You. Take me, for I repent, and make me as one of Your hired hands.

*Now and for ever and ever. Amen.*

**Theotokion** (Tone 6): Undaunted patroness of Christians, O steadfast intermediary with the Creator, turn not away from the suppliant voices of sinners, but in your kindness come to help us who cry out to you in faith. Be quick to intercede, make haste to plead, for you are ever the patroness of those who honor you, O Mother of God.

**Prokimenon** (Tone 6): Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance (Ps 27:9).

**Verse:** Unto You I will cry, O Lord my God, lest You turn from me in silence (Ps 27:1).

**Prokimenon** (Tone 6): Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance (Ps 27:9).



**Epistle:** *A reading from the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians:* (1 Cor. 6:12-20)

*Brethren:* “Everything is lawful for me” – but that does not mean that everything is good for me. “Everything is lawful for me” – but I will not let myself be enslaved by anything. “Food is for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will do away with them both in the end” – but the body is not for immorality; it is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. God, who raised up the Lord, will raise us also by his power.

Do you not see that your bodies are members of Christ? Would you have me take Christ’s members and make them the members of a prostitute? God forbid! Can you not see that the man who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? Scripture says, “The two shall become one flesh.” But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun lewd conduct. Every other sin a man commits is outside his body, but the fornicator sins against his own body. You must know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is within – the Spirit you have received from God. You are not your own. You have been purchased, and at a price. So glorify God in your body.

**Alleluia** (Tone 6): He who lives in the aid of the Most High, shall dwell under the protection of the God of heaven (Ps 91:1). He says to the Lord: You are my protector and my refuge, my God, in Whom I hope (Ps 91:2).

**Gospel:** (Luke 15:11-32)

*Jesus said to them:* “A man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the estate that is coming to me.’ So the father divided up the property.

Some days later this younger son collected all his belongings and went off to a distant land, where he squandered his money on dissolute living. After he had spent everything, a great famine broke out in that country and he was in dire need. So he attached himself to one of the propertied class of the place, who sent him to his farm to take care of the pigs. He longed to fill his belly with the husks that were fodder for the pigs, but no one made a move to give him anything. Coming to his senses at last, he said: ‘How many hired hands at my father’s place have more than enough to eat, while here I am starving! I will break away and return to my father, and say to him, Father, I have sinned against God and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son. Treat me like one of your hired hands.’ With that he set off for his father’s house.

While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him and was deeply moved. He ran out to meet him, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him. The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against God and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.” The father said to his servants: ‘Quick! Bring out the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. Take the fatted calf and kill it. Let us eat and celebrate because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life. He was lost and is found.’ Then the celebration began.

“Meanwhile the elder son was out on the land. As he neared the house on his way home, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked him the reason for the dancing and the music. The servant answered, ‘Your brother is home, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has him back in good health.’ The son grew angry at this and would not go in; but his father came out and began to plead with him. “He said to his father in reply: ‘For years now I have slaved for you. I never disobeyed one of your orders, yet you never gave me so much as a kid goat to celebrate with my friends. Then, when this son of yours returns after having gone through your property with loose women, you kill the fatted calf for him.’”

‘My son,’ replied the father, ‘you are with me always, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice! This brother of yours was dead, and has come back to life. He was lost, and is found.’”

**Communion Verse:** Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest (Ps 148:1). Alleluia! (x3)

**Our Eparch, Bishop Ken** is requesting that at the conclusion of every Divine Liturgy we say an additional prayer for Peace in Ukraine until the end of the war. **For peace in Ukraine, let us pray: Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.**

## GRATITUDE

\* to all our parishioners, guests, visitors and all people of the good will who by their kindness, time, donations, knowingly and unknowingly, organize and lead praying with rosaries, attend services, share their time and work at the parish projects, organize socials, look after and graciously support our Christian, Catholic parish community! Thank you very much! May the Almighty God generously bless and reward your care, time and generosity!

## CONGRATULATIONS

\* May the Almighty God bless in good health and salvation in many, happy and blessed years of life to all our parishioners, guests, visitors, your family members who celebrate their heavenly patrons feast-days/name-days and especially to everyone who celebrate their birthdays, anniversaries or any other important events this week – Mnohaya i Blahaya Lita!



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR PARISHIONERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WHO HAVE JOINED US IN THIS DIVINE LITURGY. THANK YOU FOR PRAYING WITH US AT THE CHURCH TODAY. WISHING YOU A BLESSED, RESTFUL WEEKEND AND FRUITFUL, HEALTHY AND SAFE WEEK! EVERYONE IS VERY WELCOME TO COME AND PARTICIPATE IN OUR PARISH SOCIAL AT THE CHURCH HALL TODAY!

### Special Petitions:

\* We also pray to be blessed with generous hearts to contribute to our Bishop's initiatives and programmes, such as: the support of parishes, the education of parishioners, and the formation of seminarians, Lord hear us and have mercy.

\* We also pray for the people of Ukraine, that with the help of the Holy Spirit, they may obtain social peace, political harmony and economic stability: Lord, hear us and have mercy.

**REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR:** yourselves, Most Reverend Bishop Severian Yakymyshyn, Fr. Steven Basarab, Fr. Edward Evanko, Monsignor Jeremiah Desmond, Fr. Serabion ElMakary, Steve and Bernice Usipuik, Ann Kuz, Ann Derzak, Dave and Mary Emery, Elsie Kinaschuk, John and Mildred Kolody, Joseph Mychaluk, Zonia Rurka, Eugene Palsitt, Adeline Palsitt, Orest Hrycewich, Myron and Myrna Wizniak, Elsie Zachary, Matt Dmyterko, Allan and Sharon Ludwig, Jesse Pawlyshyn, Joe and Olga Burkatsky, Orest Kociuba, Kalyna Kociuba, Allan Bodnaruk, Maria Chorny, Katrien Sobhy, Marg Musey, Kathleen Musey, Jacob and Ann Dressler, Rosemary Pellizzon, Bronie Huska, Peter Huska, Mary Borrett, Stanley and Roma Nowakowski (Bishop Ken's parents), Larry and Valray Necember, Lawrence and Ping Beaton, Red Mackay, Theresa Munro, Michelle New, Martin Schinkelwitz, Adam Laniel, Cryss O'Donnell, Rose Ostopowich (Fr. Joe Ostopowich's mother), Sandra and Mike Jones, members of our parish and those who are not able to join actively in our community, your families, relatives, friends; governments and armed forces, especially the shut-in or those in the hospitals, traveling, working or studying, nursing and senior homes, those seeking God's answer to their prayers or those rejoicing with God's answer; those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries; those called to their eternal reward and for the family they leave behind; widows and widowers, orphans, homeless and all people who have asked us pray for them. Please, also in your kindness keep praying daily for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Remember to ask for special blessings to all Christian families!

**REMINDER** for families of individuals, who are admitted to hospital - If you or a family member is admitted to hospital and you wish to have a priest visit, please be sure to have someone call our parish rectory office to make this request. Your pastor may have no other way of knowing that you are in hospital, as privacy legislation.

**SPIRIT OF AWARENESS:** Dear parishioners, if our brother / sister in Christ, who usually sits next to you, is not in the Church today, please phone him / her and ask how he / she is doing. Let him /her know that our parish community misses him / her very much!

\* **Sunday (Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>) faithful offerings/donations:** \$ 454.00 CAD.

\* **Our Parish UCWLC Meeting** will be held at 7:00 pm. on **Monday, Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 A.D**

\* **Monthly Parish Breakfast** will be held after the Divine Liturgy on next Sunday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Please, sign up, come, enjoy delicious breakfast, Christian gathering and support of our vibrant parish!

\* **FAITHFUL GIVING...** Remember that we never take a day off or a vacation from God, or from our obligation to attend Divine Liturgy on Sundays. When traveling, working or studying, please, make sure you check out the service schedule for the area churches at our eparchial website: [www.nweparchy.ca](http://www.nweparchy.ca) and attend the Divine Liturgy. Please remember as well, that while parishioners may be away and on vacation, the parish is not. Expenses continue as they do throughout the year. Please, remain consistent in your gifts to parish. Your weekly Sunday offering is important to our financial well-being. If you are away, we appreciate it when you forward your "make-up" donations. The financial stability of the parish counts on regular Sunday contributions. Please, continue to be generous!

**"Remember, O Lord, those who bear fruit doing good works in Your holy churches and remembering the poor. Send down Your mercy upon all of us!"** *(Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom)*

\* **BE A STEWARD: Have you ever wondered what more can you do to help our parish?** Here are some suggestions: **Steward** of property security; **Steward** of grounds cleaning; **Steward** of cleaning church; **Steward** of church linen; **Steward** of outreach; **Steward** of caring; **Steward** of prayer; **Steward** of service. Quite often, our homebound or senior members, once active in their younger years, want to find purpose in their senior years. It's not only about doing but about "BEING" present to others.

**Please, feel very welcome to participate in our church choir singing, reading of the Epistle, holding the candles during the Gospels readings, processions, parish cleaning, projects, etc.**

Contact Fr. Pavlo or Mr. Matt Dmyterko for more information. You will be amazed how "BEING" can make a difference!

**EPARCHY OF NEW WESTMINSTER VIBRANT PARISH APPEAL SHARE YOUR HEART**

*"...We need your urgent and immediate support to guarantee the viability of our Eparchy for future generations of your children and grandchildren. We want to ensure the survival of pastoral services including the celebration of the*



sacraments in the Ukrainian Catholic tradition, such as Divine Liturgies, Baptism, Marriages, Funerals and the great Feasts, which means so much to us...”



**+Ken (Eparchial Bishop of New Westminster)**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** 502 – 5<sup>th</sup> AVENUE, NEW WESTMINSTER, BC CANADA, V3L 1S2

**TELEPHONE:** 604-524-8824 **EMAIL:** new.chancery@gmail.com **WEBSITE:** [www.nweparchy.ca](http://www.nweparchy.ca)

\* **BURSARIES AVAILABLE:** The Catholic Health Association of BC will be awarding two bursaries valued at \$250 each to two 2017 graduating students who are enrolled in Catholic secondary schools, or who are members of BC or Yukon parishes and enrolled in public secondary schools, or who are home-schooled. Students are asked to submit a 500-word essay that demonstrates an awareness and understanding of the significance of Spirituality in Health Care. Submissions must be received on or before March 10, 2017. For further details, please refer to the poster on display in the vestibule of the church.

\* **BISHOP THOMAS J. LOBSINGER, OMI MEMORIAL BURSARY PROGRAM UNDERWAY:** The annual British Columbia and Yukon Bursary Program is known as the Bishop Thomas J. Lobsinger, OMI Memorial Bursary Program. The 2017 program is now receiving applications. Once again we are privileged to offer thirty bursaries of \$500.00 each to Catholic students across the Province of British Columbia. These bursaries are made available on a one-time-only basis to young practicing Catholic students who are in their second or subsequent year of post-secondary education at a recognized institute of higher learning within the Province. Applications are accepted from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 with the bursaries being awarded in the fall. The Terms of Reference can be found on our web site at

<http://kofcbc.org/files/2013/08/Terms-of-Reference-2017.pdf>

Requests for applications should be addressed to: **Knights of Columbus BC & Yukon**

Attn: Dale Hofer, Bursaries Chairman 2300 Teal Place Vernon, BC V1H 1R1



We would like to once again congratulate the many recipients over the past years and look forward the opportunity to assist many more young people in the advancement of their education.



**Catholic Independent Schools Kamloops Diocese** 205 Columbia Street, Kamloops, BC V2C 2S7

Phone: 250-372-5452 ext. 345 Fax: 250-372-5257 [superintendent@ciskd.ca](mailto:superintendent@ciskd.ca)

**Elementary Music St. Ann's Academy & Our Lady of Perpetual Help School**

**EXTERNAL POSTING**

OLPH & St. Ann's Academy are seeking a qualified candidate to fill a shared full-time Elementary Music term position for a maternity leave. It is anticipated this position will commence on April 18, 2017 for a one year term with the possibility of an extension to the end of the 2017 – 2018 school year. A degree or course work in this specialized area, along with teaching, Band and Choir experience would be greatly valued. As a Catholic Independent School the teachings of the Catholic faith are integrated into every aspect of the school and therefore candidates who actively practice their faith are highly valued. For further information, or to express your interest in this position, please contact the CISKD Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Kelly Tries at [superintendent@ciskd.ca](mailto:superintendent@ciskd.ca) The deadline for applications is Friday, February 17, 2017.

Prompt responses are encouraged and only those candidates chosen for interviews will be contacted.

\* **Syrian Refugee Family Sponsored by Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Cathedral:** Thank you to so many in the Kamloops parishes for the many responses to our request for help for our Syrian Refugee family, Ali and Delal Omar and children. We have winter tires arranged which will be installed once Ali has his BC Driver's license and the car is insured.

**Housing Needed:** a 2 - 3 bedroom rental, ideally on the North Shore for March 1, 2017 for approximately \$1000/month.

**Employment:** Ali is a trained mechanic with some experience in construction and working on large farm equipment. He is open to any mentorship opportunity with a trained mechanic to work towards a full time position in his trade or any general labour employment opportunity. FMI Anita Sehn 250 852-1529 or [afsehn99@gmail.com](mailto:afsehn99@gmail.com) Felisha Martin 604 499-6562 or [felisha.martin@gmail.com](mailto:felisha.martin@gmail.com)

**The Havana Declaration Broke International Silence on the War in Ukraine — Patriarch Sviatoslav (Shevchuk)**

Last year, the meeting in Cuba between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill and the signing of a common Declaration upset Ukrainian society. While international journalists and experts were calling it a unique historic event, the mood in Ukraine was more pessimistic. Some of the points of the Declaration pertained to the war in Ukraine and the activity of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. In the opinion of many, the Declaration was vaguely worded that it facilitated a pro-Russian interpretation of ecclesial or political realities. Many Greek-Catholics saw a sign of hope in the fact that Patriarch Sviatoslav (Shevchuk) did not hide behind diplomatic formulae, but intervened courageously by giving voice to their sorrows, posing important, poignant questions to the Apostolic See and to the Pope himself. A year on, many things have changed. Sometimes, it looks as if, referring to the bloody war in Syria as “sacred”, the Patriarch of Moscow lost all the

moral credit that he had acquired at Havana. However, others see that meeting as the beginning of a greater initiative. Perhaps it is too early to evaluate its results but RISU has taken advantage of the anniversary to pose questions to the Head of the UGCC about the Havana meeting and accord, and the developments that have happened in the year since it occurred.

**—Your Beatitude, a year has elapsed since the meeting between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill and the Havana Declaration which they signed. This event, or rather the document itself, provoked varying responses in Ukrainian society. Over the past year, there have been many developments in the Church and in society. How does that event look in the hindsight of the past year?**

What happened a year ago took us completely by surprise, but it also served as a lesson and an opportunity. First of all, it was a surprise to us that the pastoral activity of the UGCC had not constituted an obstacle for a meeting between the Patriarch of Moscow and the Holy Father as, previously, the Patriarchate of Moscow cited it as a reason for rejecting such a meeting. Therefore, we could only welcome the meeting itself, a meeting which Saint John Paul II, and Pope Benedict XVI both desired and worked toward. Through encounters, God changes people. And we celebrate such encounters in the Nativity of Christ and on the upcoming Feast of the Presentation of the Lord [ed. also known as “The Encounter”].

We have to recognize that Pope Francis has a strong impact on the contemporary world. Without being naive, we might suggest that the first anniversary of the encounter is still too early to judge the results of this process. Last year, the really bitter surprise was that, during the meeting, a Declaration was signed that our Church did not participate in preparing and in which there were points that pertained to us directly. It was precisely those points that caused alarm among our faithful, and Ukrainian society in general. Therefore, following the publication of that text, I felt obligated to respond to the anxieties of our faithful, and also to explain personally to the Holy Father which parts of the text, in our opinion, were not entirely correct: specifically, in describing the situation in Ukraine, and in particular, describing Orthodox-Catholic relations.

An important result of the Havana encounter was that our Church initiated a conversation with the Apostolic See [on these points]. Certainly, even before this event, we always strove to inform the Vatican regarding the truth concerning the war in Ukraine. Nevertheless, after Havana, the global community was able to perceive our distress once again, by being reminded of the “forgotten war” in Ukraine. Our pleas also resounded anew in the Vatican. And in encounters, appeals, and letters, myself, the Permanent Synod of our Church, and the Synod of the worldwide Episcopate strove to explain our position with a united voice, in explaining which elements of the Declaration had caused hurt. I would like to say that, to all of our appeals, the Holy Father himself and his collaborators were very serious and attentive.

The Pope’s interest and also personal solidarity with the suffering people of Ukraine resulted in his humanitarian aid initiative called “The Pope for Ukraine.” Perhaps he had been contemplating it in his heart long before, but I believe that it definitively came to fruition after the meeting between the Pope and the bishops of our Permanent Synod. On that occasion, we said: “Holy Father! We know that you understand Ukrainians’ sufferings and that Ukraine is an innocent victim of aggression. Give us a visible sign for those suffering most!” This humanitarian aid, which the Pope initiated by giving a considerable sum of his personal funds, became that sign. His next step was to appeal to all the Catholics of Europe to take up a collection for the needs of the victims of the war in Ukraine. This appeal received not only a material dimension: The Pope decisively broke the silence, which had fallen upon Western Europe for some reason, about the war in Donbas. And this represented such a significant help that we have yet to fully understand and evaluate it.

The Vatican Secretariat of State began to take a closer interest in the particular social processes in Ukraine, especially the humanitarian situation. Here we should remember that, last year, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State, made a fruitful, official visit to Ukraine. He presides over the papal diplomatic service and his visit, to personally inaugurate of the humanitarian papal mission in Ukraine, was an event representing highest state level for the Apostolic See. I had the impression that Ukrainian society did not completely comprehend the [diplomatic] level and importance of such a visit, its symbolism and the positive repercussions for our country. His Eminence visited the Maidan and paid homage to the fallen heroes of the Heavenly Hundred; which caused a storm of emotion in Moscow.

I can affirm that Pope Francis personally acted to increase the level of interest in Ukraine. Therefore, the encounter between the Pope and the Patriarch in Cuba simultaneously represented a challenge and an opportunity for our Church and for Ukrainian society.

**— You have rightly noted the ambiguous perception in Ukraine and the Ukrainian diaspora toward the Declaration, but perhaps the displeased voices, in particular your personal criticism, have also been ambiguously perceived in the Vatican?**

— Yes, you are right. Some considered my words to be too harsh. But the first person to come to my defense was Pope Francis himself. Even today, I am moved when I remember his interview on the plane from Mexico to Rome... I was and am still taken aback by the humility of the Holy Father. With great freedom and sincerity he supported me and said that, not only could I have reacted, but that I should to have reacted to the text of the Declaration. Besides this, he affirmed that that the Declaration’s text was not infallible, that it is not “a page of the Gospel”. It should not be underestimated but it should also not be exaggerated. We can and should criticize it. This pertains not to abstract agreements or schemas, but to the destiny of our Church and of my personal responsibility to the faithful and civil society. When I spoke about the suffering a year ago, I was not speaking myself but, rather, as the voice of Ukrainian society, the wounds of which had been aggravated by the Declaration or by its interpretation.

Our bishops spoke intensely and in complete frankness with Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity. I hope that our ecumenical position will be fully considered by his experts, and that the study of the ecumenical context of Ukraine will be seriously taken into consideration.

— ***Recently, on Ukrainian social media, the opinion is spreading that the pro-Russian politik of the Vatican and also that the UGCC should oppose the Pope in the name of national interests. How would you comment on that opinion?***

— Well, if we do not have our own politik, we will have somebody else's imposed upon us! I say this because, unfortunately, today I do not see a clear plan to further relations between Ukraine and the Vatican. The question of state politics lies outside of the competence of the Church's sphere of influence, although this does not mean that we should not take a position as citizens, in this regard. And we are expressing that position. Perhaps to some, it might appear that we express it too often and too courageously.

We have witnessed how our northern neighbour actively attempts to impose itself on the Holy See and seeks to manipulate and use it to its advantage. Even in the interpretation and political use of the Havana Declaration, throughout the previous year, we can see Moscow's proactive politik to this end. On the other hand, we have the impression that Ukrainian authorities are still unable to value the importance of relations with the Vatican, for our national interests. Even in the media, as you correctly noted, on the contrary, we hear hostile opinions regarding the Vatican. Personally, I am profoundly convinced that those who are seeking to place enmity between Ukraine and the Holy See, or to create the impression in Ukrainian society that the Vatican "is making friends with Moscow" against Ukraine, are the ones that are really acting against our national interests.

Many times throughout history, we have endured attempts by politicians and all kinds of ideologues to turn our Church against the Vatican. Here I want to emphasize that the unity of our Church with the Holy Father is not based on mere political or diplomatic convenience. This unity with the Universal Hierarch means the recognition of the particular role of the Successor of the Apostle Peter, the Pope, in the Church of Christ. It is an object of our faith and is an integral part of the identity of our Church. We are dealing with that unity and that faith that the martyrs and confessors of our Church witnessed with their own blood, especially in the twentieth century. I vividly remember, during Soviet times, when Communist propaganda was trying to convince our people that the Vatican and the Pope were enemies of the Ukrainian people, a old woman very simply said: "Let those people say what they want, but we always were and always will be with the Pope." Only now do I understand that this was a true and authentic confession of the Christian Faith by the people. It is particularly important for all of us to remember this witness today.

It is worth calling to mind the role played by the Roman Pontiffs in recent Ukrainian history. Pope Pius XII strongly condemned Soviet atheist aggression and the destruction of the UGCC. At the very same time, he was rescuing tens of thousands of Ukrainian migrants from being "repatriated" to Siberia. Then, a short time later, Rome erected eparchies and exarchates for Ukrainians on various continents. This was fundamental in sustaining Ukrainians throughout the world. After the Second World War, the Vatican and Roman Catholics not only supported [Ukrainian] church structures and charitable work, but also became a major promoter of Ukrainian culture in Europe. For example, it supported the authors of "The Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Studies," which was created at Sarcelles near Paris, by the Ukrainian Free University of Munich and the Ukrainian Catholic University in Rome. Pope Saint John XXIII was involved in the liberation of Patriarch Yosyf Slipyi, who became the greatest Ukrainian ambassador in the free world, and who vitally influenced the course of Ukrainian history. We cannot exaggerate the role played in our history by Saint John Paul II, who contributed to the fall of the Communist regime. Being the most respected world leader, he frequently spoke in Ukrainian during his 27-year pontificate. Has there every been a world leader that took such a positive stance toward our language, our culture, and our history? Pope Benedict XVI continued in this tradition, clearing expressing himself on totalitarianism and on the historical truth regarding Ukraine. Pope Francis also maintains this stance. The Holy Father is a moral leader for the world and Vatican diplomacy is an important subject of international law today. The embassies to the Vatican are among the most important spaces of dialogue and influence world opinion. It is no accident that the Russian Federation invests so many resources in its relations with the Vatican, whereas our voice is sometimes simply insufficient.

We are convinced that in the difficult time for Ukraine, we need to make every possible effort, in order that the relationship between our country and the Holy See develops efficaciously. On the strategic plane, our great desire is to work toward the stipulation of a concordat—a comprehensive international accord between Ukraine and the Vatican.

***And yet, we have not heard a clear condemnation of Russia's war against Ukraine, either from the Pope or from his diplomatic representatives. No one has called the aggressor by that name. On the contrary, we have heard the theory of a "fratricidal conflict" and that "no one knows who started it". We have not fully heard that the Vatican has unequivocally sided with the victim of this conflict and that it expressed itself in support of he sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Or are these statements only the result of the lack of proper communication?***

In answer to your question, I would like to remind everyone that, during his visit, Cardinal Parolin clearly affirmed that the conflict in Ukraine must be resolved on the basis of international law. This means that the Holy See recognizes that the war in Ukraine as an external aggression and not as an internal civil war. The Vatican has never recognized the annexation of Crimea, even if it has not directly addressed this question. In Zaporizhia, the Secretary of State also made an appeal to the nations of Europe and to Russia, to maintain their international obligations toward Ukraine. In other words, the Vatican affirmed everything that you said but in the language of Vatican diplomacy, which differs in style from that of civil states.

Affirming the fact, in this manner, of an external aggression against a sovereign state is nothing new. Rather, it corresponds to the traditions and language of Vatican diplomacy. In this context, we should remember the visit of John Paul II to Lebanon, in 1997.

At that time, the Syrian and Israeli armies were still in the country, a fact that was obvious to the international community. Nevertheless, even then, speaking of the desire for independence and of freedom for Lebanon, the Holy Father did not mention the Syrians or the Israelis by name. He merely alluded to the fact that the integrity of the Lebanese borders must be recognized and respected by all. Yet everyone present understood what he was talking about...

Regarding which side the Holy See unequivocally stands ... The fact is that, in the First Millennium, the Pope and the Holy Apostolic See were considered the highest arbiter and mediator for resolving interchurch conflicts and those between countries; the highest court of appeal in the quest for justice. Therefore, in the face of conflicts, the Vatican takes a position which corresponds to its mission and its traditions. A mediator cannot take the side of any one of the parties in conflict. It must remain above them, in order to function as an intermediary, and to help to implement a just peace. That kind of mission requires the arbiter to maintain relations with each of the parties in conflict, never allowing itself to be “influenced” by any side. Otherwise, its final verdict will not be just. Obviously, such mediation requires that both sides of the conflict accept the mediation of the arbiter; it requires that they desire it and that, afterwards, they obligate themselves to follow its decisions.

In recent years, we have heard our state officials make requests to the Vatican, for mediation to resolve the war in Donbas in a diplomatic way, and for the liberation of our hostages. And we have also asked for the protection of our parishes in Crimea. For the moment, such a Vatican mission to mediate between Russia and Ukraine is not taking place, but the Holy See’s diplomatic stance intends, precisely, to be such a mission. My observations regarding the risks of the Havana Accord also pertained to the possibility that Moscow might try to manipulate the Holy Father and place him “on their side.” This is an aspect of the hybrid [information] war against Ukraine. In such a case, the Holy See would no longer be above the conflict but would become party to it by taking the position of one of the two sides.

I would like to affirm that, in my opinion, Vatican diplomacy has succeeded in remaining above the conflict, for the moment, even though this has irritated Moscow and disappointed us. Obviously, we would have wanted the Holy See to place itself unequivocally and exclusively on our side. And, precisely for this reason, we hear the criticism that the Vatican is insufficiently clear in its position. Nevertheless, even we should not give in to the temptation to manipulate the Apostolic See and not appreciate its diplomatic efforts in favour of our national interests, in as much as we are able.

On the other hand, the role and duty of the UGCC, as a local Eastern Catholic Church *sui iuris*, is a little different. We have always stood and will always stand on the side of our people. We will defend them and we will defend their rights. We are aware of our obligation to take care of those whom the Lord has entrusted to our pastoral care and to raise our voice in their name, appealing to the Holy Father and to Christians throughout the world. Our mission is precisely that of sanctifying this people of God with the word of Christ’s Truth, to cultivate in them faith in God, to correct their faults and to educate them in Christian virtue, in particular the virtue of true Christian patriotism and those other civic virtues necessary to strengthen and develop the independent Ukrainian state. Our mission is: being with our military on the field of battle, being near the hospital bed with the sick and wounded, caring for refugees and the internally displaced, helping the poor and those that have nothing with which to buy their daily bread. Our mission is precisely that of cultivating a missionary spirit and preaching the Gospel to all people.

Our view of the state and of the conditions in which our people live today is different from the understanding or idea of Ukraine which various Vatican offices have. Since our point of view comes from within and theirs comes from without, our point of view is formed from a daily dialogue with our people, whereas theirs is formed on the basis of humanity’s worldwide challenges. For this reason, it is so important for the officials of the Holy See to take into account the views of local pastors. Pope Francis understands this very well because, for many years, he was the head of the Argentinian bishops, and he too was not immediately understood in certain Vatican departments.

As to the question of the war in Ukraine, the Holy See does not place itself so much on the side of the state, but rather on the side of the victims of war. This is a natural characteristic of its particular diplomacy. Let us allow the Vatican to be itself and to carry out its own special mission, as regards our affairs, while we are to carry out our part of the mission. Let us be patient. Let us defend our legitimate rights, let us fight for the truth, and be true to ourselves!

— ***But Your Beatitude, even Patriarch Kirill of Moscow says that he stands “above” the conflict and also emphasizes that, in acting thus, he is in full solidarity with the Pope. The Apostolic See remains silent, as regards to such a declaration. It seems to me that this causes many doubts in Ukrainian, in that we all remember well Kirill’s homilies about the “Russian World”, under the auspices of which appeared all these Girkin and Babai [militant Russian leaders in Donbas].***

— Personally, I believe that such an affirmation is simply not serious. It is nothing other than mimicry, that is, an attempt by the Patriarchate of Moscow to impose upon the world an image of Moscow as the “Third Rome.” In reality, the Patriarchate of Moscow is just another local Church, one among many. It was never a universal mediator, not even in the Orthodox world. Moreover, it always denied that the Roman Papacy had any role as a Universal hierarch. For the Patriarch of Moscow to thus aspire to the role of Universal Hierarch seems to be a negation of its own ecclesiology, as formulated by itself. And this is true from a theological or a canonical point of view.

If one takes into account the fact that Russia itself is the aggressor toward Ukraine, while the Russian Orthodox Church positions itself as the Church that consequently defends its Russian state interests, then to imagine itself as “above the conflict” is merely denying the obvious. This Church can act as a mediator only if we are dealing with an internal Russian conflict, a war between the subjects of the Russian Federation or an internal war between the individual members of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Perhaps we are again witnessing the manifestation of a certain “geopolitical subconscious” where, instead of Ukrainians and without Ukrainians, Ukraine is incorporated into the “Russian World” without the opportunity to appeal. Perhaps they see the war against us as an internal conflict within this “World”. In reality, the war against Ukraine, as an independent sovereign state, violates international law, as the Holy See specifically declared. Meanwhile, the Holy Father is carrying out his ministry as Universal Hierarch, according to the ancient traditions of the First Millennium of Christianity.

— *And how do you evaluate of the recent visits of Apostolic Nuncio Claudio Gugerotti to the Donbas region?*

It is important to emphasize here that he went to this territory in fulfillment of the will of the Pope. In doing so, he testified to the fact that it is part of Ukraine, because he is the papal ambassador exclusively for Ukraine. Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti truly helped and continues to help us with the pastoral care of our priests and faithful which remain in the occupied territories, and which neither myself nor their bishop can go to visit, at this time.

I do not share the opinion of those who believe that all the people in the occupied territories are enemies of Ukraine. Of course there are people who have taken up arms and are collaborating, but the level of their guilt and their destiny will be decided by a tribunal. Nevertheless, the majority of the inhabitants are simple people who have become the instruments of criminals. This reminds me of the propaganda of Stalin, who held that those who were territories that had been occupied by the Germans, and those taken hostage during the Second World War, were all enemies of the people. We must fight, not against these simple people, who look for protection and spiritual support from our priests, but for these people! Those of our priests who, like the Good Shepherd, have not abandoned their flocks in Donetsk and Luhansk, merit respect and every support. Our Exarch of Donetsk, Bishop Stepan Meniok, was put on the “list of those to be shot” and, for the present, cannot cross the border to visit these communities. Thus, we are grateful to Archbishop Claudio for having taken upon himself the pastoral responsibility of visiting our people.

— *Perhaps you would like to add a message for our readers?*

To conclude, I would like to thank all of our faithful in Ukraine and beyond its borders, for the love that they have given toward their Church and to their people, for their prayer and for work involving personal sacrifice, for the welfare of Ukraine. I am truly inspired by the testimony of those who are defending our dignity and our liberty, who sacrifice their own lives, and by the enormous volunteer movement. I am inspired by various manifestations of international solidarity on the part of Ukrainians of the diaspora, as well as by those who support us with their prayer and with systematic material support. Together we constitute a great spiritual power. We have no doubt that God is with us. The truth is with us, international law, and God’s closeness to those who suffer. There is much work still ahead. But I am convinced that, with the help of God, we can achieve everything and together, with common efforts, we will win a just peace for Ukraine!

Translated by Rev. A. McVay,

Source: [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/expert\\_thought/interview/65952/](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/expert_thought/interview/65952/)



### **Liturgical celebrations during week:**

Mon., Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgies: **Rest of the souls of the Simpson & Coobs families**

– 6:30 p.m. Moleben to the Mother of God (Eng./Ukr.)

Tue., Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> – Fri., Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgies: **Rest of the souls of the Simpson & Coobs families**

Sunday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> – 9:30 a.m. Rosary (Eng.)

– 10:00 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: **God’s blessings for all parishioners.** (Eng./Ukr.)

\* Please, contact Fr. Pavlo if you want to have the Divine Liturgies celebrated in your special (such as: In thanksgiving for favours received, the Infirm, General Intentions, the Deceased, Help of the Holy Spirit, for the Travelers, etc.) intentions.

**Pastoral Ministry and Sacraments: Reconciliation:** on Sundays and Holy Days: before Liturgies and other days, by appointment.

**Holy Communion:** for the sick, by appointment, any time. **Baptisms:** by appointment. **Marriages:** six months’ notice should be given to the parish priest, and he should be contacted before any other arrangements are made. **Funerals and Memorials:** by appointment. **Holy Unction** (Anointing of the Sick): Those anticipating surgery, hospitalization or treatments and who would like to receive anointing or to **meet with parish priest, please call or email Fr. Pavlo in advance to arrange a time and a day.**

\***Basic Guidelines for Reception of Holy Communion:** You are a member of the Catholic Church (Orthodox faithful are welcome to receive Holy Communion); 2) You have participated in the Sacrament of Confession at least during the Easter or Christmas seasons this past year if not more frequently; 3) You attend Divine Services regularly; 4) Your lifestyle is consistent with the teaching of the Catholic Church; 5) You have kept the Liturgical fast – no food at least one hour prior to the Divine Liturgy (water and medicine does not break the fast). 6) You have been in church from the beginning of the service, or at least heard the Gospel. 7) To the best of your ability, you are in the state of Grace. **If for any of these or other reasons you cannot receive Holy Communion, you are very welcome to come for a blessing. Please indicate to the priest that you would like to receive his blessing.**

\* **Bequests and Wills:** Leaving a bequest is a process of giving a donation through your will. It is simply a distribution from your estate to a charitable organization through your last will and testament. It can be as small or as large a donation as you wish. It is important that you talk to your lawyer about the process. In your kindness please remember The Most Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church in Kamloops, BC in your bequests and wills. If anyone wishes to make such a bequest in their will, the following clause may be included or added to a will: "I give, devise, and bequeath to The Most Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church at 109 Tranquille Road, Kamloops, BC V3B 3E8 the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_ (or \_\_\_\_% of my estate), to be used for the benefit of the church/parish, it's needs and pastoral ministry."