

Успіння Пресвятої Богородиці

Українська Греко-
Католицька Церква



Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God *Ukrainian Catholic Church*

DORMITION DISTRICT

Office

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Website: dormition.eeparchy.com

Clergy

Pastor: Rev. Fr. Peter Babej

Email: fr.babej@eeparchy.com

Emergencies: 780-993-8037

Dormition Parish, Edmonton

15608-104 Ave, Edmonton, AB

Sunday Confession – 8:30 am

Sun. Liturgy – **9:30 am | 11:30 am**

Weekday Liturgy – Wed. 5:30 pm

Thurs., Fri., 7:00 am; Sat. 9:00 am.

Great Vespers – Saturdays, 6 pm

Confessions – After Vespers

St. Nicholas Parish, Carvel

AB-770, Carvel, Parkland County

Div. Liturgy – Sun. Jan. 21, 12:00 pm.

St. George Parish, Manly

53032 Hwy #770, Parkland County

Div. Liturgy – June 9, 2024, 12 noon

Holy Eucharist Parish, Cherhill

Township Rd. 562, Cherhill, AB

Div. Liturgy – May 26, 12:30 pm.

Sunday, January 28, 2024

Sunday of the Merciful Father and the Prodigal Son

Tone 2. Venerable Father Ephrem the Syrian (373)

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DIVINE LITURGY

Troparia and Kontakia

Troparion, Tone 2: When You went down to death, O Life Immortal,* You struck Hades dead with the blazing light of Your divinity.* When You raised the dead from the nether world,* all the powers of heaven cried out:* “O Giver of Life, Christ our God, glory be to You!”

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

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.

Prokeimenon, Tone 2

The Lord is my strength and my song of praise, and He has become my salvation.

The Lord has indeed chastised me, but He has not delivered me to death (Psalm 117:14,18)

The Lord is my strength and my song of praise, and He has become my salvation.

The Lord is my strength and my song of praise. And He has become my salvation.

Epistle – 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

A reading from the first epistle of the holy apostle Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters, “All things are lawful for me”¹, but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be enslaved by anything. “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food,” – and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is

¹ **All things are lawful for me:** Probably a slogan coined by certain Corinthians to justify their promiscuous lifestyle. Like many Greeks, they attached little importance to the body and held that sexual activity was as morally neutral as eating and drinking. This theoretical separation between body and spirit led them to believe that physical urges could be indiscriminately satisfied without harm to the spiritual life. Another view is that these words originated with Paul, but that members of the congregation have distorted his meaning to justify their sin. On this view, Paul is clarifying the expression to exclude a permissive interpretation of his teaching. Either way, participation in cultic prostitution was the disturbing result.

² **The body... for the Lord:** Paul hints that just as the body of a bride belongs to her husband through the covenant of marriage, so the body of the believer is consecrated to Christ through baptism. Christ’s spousal right over the body is thus violated when believers are involved in sexual impurity – a fact that makes promiscuity equivalent to adultery. The general resurrection puts this moral crisis in perspective: because our bodies belong to the Lord and are destined for eternity, they should not be desecrated by evil-doing. Paul contends **the body** belongs to God, and everything is relevant to the spiritual life. Therefore, dealing with sin means controlling our bodies. This is why in the Church abstinence from foods is the first discipline of the Fast, which also includes prayer and charitable giving.

³ **Members of Christ:** A theology developed at length in 12:12-31. **Prostitute:** Prostitution was a regular part of

not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.² And God raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ³? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two shall become one flesh.”⁴ But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him.⁵ Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body: but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple⁶ of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price.⁷ So, glorify God in your body.⁸

Roman society and often took place in a cultic context within pagan temples.

⁴ **The two shall become one:** A reference to Gen 2:24. According to Genesis, sexual union cements a bond between a man and a woman that makes them one flesh. The proper context of this unifying act is the covenant of marriage, where the bond is meant to be permanent, fruitful, and exclusive.

⁵ **One spirit with him:** The point is, not that sexual union is a mere reflection of our spiritual union with Christ, but that even our bodies become united with Christ through the Spirit. This union with Christ’s humanity – which is sacramental, not sexual – has its beginning in Baptism and is strengthened by the Eucharist.

⁶ **Your body is a temple:** Baptism makes every believer a spouse of God the Son and a sanctuary of God the Spirit. If prostitution is a sin of adultery against the former, it is a sin of profanation against the latter.

⁷ **bought with a price:** the background of this statement is the ownership that a master has over a slave once the purchase has been finalized. It is possible too, given the marital theme that runs through the preceding discussion, that Paul considers the price of Jesus’ death a dowry paid in advance of our spousal union with Him through grace.

⁸ **Glorify God in your body:** there is probably an implied contrast in these words: whereas the Gentiles in Corinth dishonour God in their temples through idolatrous worship

Alleluia Verses

Verse 1: The Lord will hear you in the day of tribulation; the name of the God of Jacob will shield you.

Verse 2: Lord, grant victory to the king and hear us in the day that we shall call upon You. (*Psalms 19:2,10*)

Gospel – Luke 15:11-32

The Lord told this parable⁹, “There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property¹⁰ that falls to me.’ And he divided his living between them. Not many days after, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to

and sacred prostitution, believers must glorify God in their bodily temples by offering them to God through chastity.

⁹ The parable of the Prodigal Son reveals the boundless mercy of God. Though our sins offend the Father, he is ever willing to show us compassion and restore us to family life. In many ways the parable narrates the continuing struggles of the spiritual life, where conversion and repentance are part of an ongoing process. At another level, the parable narrates the exile and eventual homecoming of historical Israel. After the reign of King Solomon, Israel split into two kingdoms, becoming like two brothers living side by side in northern (Israel) and southern (Judah) Palestine. By the eighth century B.C., the Assyrians had carried off the northern tribes of Israel into a far country, where they forsook God and worshiped idols – a sin the prophets called harlotry (15:30; Jere 3:6; Hos 4:15). In the New Covenant, God welcomes home his exiled son by lavishing him with mercy and restoring to full sonship (Ezek 37:21-23; Hos 11:1-3, 11). This is especially brought out in Jer 31:18-20, where Ephraim (northern Israel), after a period of exile and disgrace, repents of his sin, is ashamed of his wrongdoing, and turns to God for mercy. It is important to remember that in the Genesis narratives, Ephraim was the nephew of Judah and the youngest brother in the tribal family of Israel (Gen 48:14).

¹⁰ **Share of property:** It was unusual and even shameful for a son to demand his inheritance before his father’s death (Sir

one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine.¹¹ And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself¹², he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.”’ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran¹³ and embraced him¹⁴ and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand¹⁵, and

33:23). Here the prodigal son compounded his father’s dishonour by squandering his inheritance in sin (15:13; Prov 28:7).

¹¹ **Feed swine:** Since Jews considered pigs unclean animals (Lev 11:7), only the most desperate conditions would force the son to take this disgraceful position. Working for a Gentile employer, he would be expected to violate the weekly Sabbath as well (Ex 20:8-11).

¹² **came to himself:** A person immersed in sin is living outside his true self. The prodigal realizes his hopeless condition. The bread symbolizes Christ, who is known through the Scriptures and the Eucharist.

¹³ **ran:** Though it was considered unseemly in Jewish culture for an old man to run, the father did not passively stand by waiting for his son to return. He ran to him. This self-humiliation for the sake of the lost indicates the way in which our Father, through Christ’s sacrifice, actively seeks those who stray.

¹⁴ **Embraced him:** literally, “fell upon his neck.” The actions of the father recall the mercy shown to Jacob (Gen 33:4) and the joys of family reunion in the patriarchal narratives (Gen 45:14; 46:29).

¹⁵ **Robe... and put a ring:** Symbols of honour and authority (Gen 41:42; Esther 3:10; 1 Mac 6:15). **Shoes:** Household slaves normally went barefoot. The father refuses this for his son, restoring him instead to full family membership.

shoes on his feet. And bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again¹⁶; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to be merry.

Now his elder son¹⁷ was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.’¹⁸ “But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, ‘Behold, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your commandment; yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!’ “And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens;* praise Him in the highest (*Psalms 148:1*).* Alleluia, alleluia,* alleluia.

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¹⁶ **was dead... is alive again:** A transfer of covenant status from curse to blessing. It is a restoration from spiritual death to eternal life.

¹⁷ **elder son:** The older brother’s grumbling signified the bitterness of the Pharisees (15:2), who wrongly saw God’s acceptance of sinners as a violation of covenant justice. The father in the parable is innocent of such a charge; he is simply forgiving and loving to his son, who recognized his errors and turned to his father for mercy.

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HYMN

For Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Hear now, you faithful, once more the story
Of the young man whose prodigal ways

2. Led him to sin and then to repentance:
God’s boundless grace is theme for our days!

Hear how the father, longing and yearning,
Ran out to meet the penitent boy:

2. Hugged him and clothed him,
Shoes and ring gave him,
Set out a feast to show forth his joy!

See, too, the brother, pouting in silence,
Jealous of father’s heart full of love.

2. Thus, we are often guilty of malice,
Not understanding grace from above.

Ev’ry thing’s lawful, so says the Scripture;
Not all is good, or done at our whim.

2. This mortal body, purchased at great price
By Christ the Lord, should glorify Him!

Soon will arrive the season of fasting;
Prayer and good works will fill ev’ry day.

2. Give us Your grace to have the right spirit,
That in our deeds, Your law we obey.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

BULLETIN BY EMAIL – if you wish to receive a copy of the bulletin by email, please let us know by calling the parish office or send your request to fr.babej@eeparchy.com.

CATECHISM CLASSES TODAY – as usual, after the 9:30 am Divine Liturgy.

¹⁸ **Fatted calf** is more closely translated “wheat-fed bull-calf,” or even more literally “a bull-calf formed from wheat.” This animal is a male calf raised on wheat in preparation for use as a religious offering. As the reconciliation of the prodigal son was not complete without the sacrifice of the calf, so man’s reconciliation to God is not by his repentance alone, but by Christ offering Himself on the Cross. The festive dining on an animal offering “formed from wheat” is a clear reference to our partaking of the Eucharistic Bread.

COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP – today, after the 9:30 am Divine Liturgy. Sincere thanks to our volunteers!

2024 DONATION ENVELOPES – Please pick-up your donation envelopes for 2024 at the entrance to the Parish Hall. If you would like to use donation envelopes for income tax purposes, please call the parish office at 780-489-8868, or fill out one of the parish member registration forms and leave it in the sacristy or slip it under the parish office door.

PARISH MEMBERSHIP – If you would like to become a registered member of Dormition Parish, please fill out the registration form provided in the vestibule. You can leave it with Fr. Peter, or in the sacristy, or slip it under the Parish Office door.

BEST WISHES – to William Sych, Donna Koziak, and to all who celebrate their birthdays or anniversaries this past week or in the next upcoming days. May God bless you with health, happiness and peace!

MANY HAPPY YEARS – Our best wishes and God’s blessings to Grace and Nicholas Kunysz, who celebrated their first wedding anniversary last Sunday, January 21. May God continue to bless you with health, happiness, and peace, for many happy years!

CONGRATULATIONS & BEST WISHES – to Justin and Catherine Tamsett on the arrival of their new born daughter, Natalia Petra Tamsett. Natalia was born on February 23rd. Thanks to be God for safe delivery! May the Lord God continue to bless the Tamsett family with peace and health, for many happy years!!!

SINCEREST PRAYERS AND CONDOLENCES – to the Sharek family on the passing away of +Myrna Sharek, the sister of Paul Sharek. We continue to prayer for +Myrna. May the Lord

God grant her rest and eternal remembrance. Vichnaya Pamyat’!

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES – at Dormition Parish will begin on Saturday, February 3, from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. The registration fee is \$50.00. Deadline to register is **Monday, January 29th, 2024**. For information or registration, please contact Alex Schabel at aschabel14@gmail.com.

THEOPHANY HOUSE BLESSINGS – If you would like a priest to visit to bless your home with holy water blessed on the Feast of Theophany, please contact Fr. Peter or Fr. Terry to make arrangements.

FEB. 2: FEAST OF THE ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST – Friday, February 2, 2024. With this feast, our Christmas Season comes to a close. Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 7:00 am and 7:00 pm. Great Vespers and Lytia will take place on Thursday, February 1, at 6:00 pm. On the day of the feast candles will be blessed at the conclusion of each Liturgy. Remember to bring your candles for the blessing!

FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH – falls on Friday, February 2nd, 2024, the Feast of the Encounter of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple. Divine Liturgy will be offered at 7:00 am and 7:00 pm.

FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH – falls on Saturday, February 3, 2024. Rosary and 8:30 am, Divine Liturgy at 9:00 am. Renewal of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary at the end of the Liturgy.

SUNDAY BREAKFAST AND FELLOWSHIP – will take place on Sunday, February 4, after the 9:30 am Divine Liturgy, in the Parish Hall. All are welcome!

BIBLE STUDY – NO BIBLE STUDY THIS WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31. We will resume

the following week, on Wednesday, February 7, at 7:00 pm, in the Parish Hall.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – will take place this Wednesday, January 31, at 6:45 pm, after the 5:30 pm Divine Liturgy.

LIGHTING OF CANDLES – When lighting candles, please ensure that no broken sticks are left behind in the candle wax. Broken sticks within the candle eventually cause the glass to heat-up unevenly and to crack. To light an additional candle: 1) First, blow out the ignited stick; 2) Place it into the sand, so that any burn part of the stick is broken off and removed; 3) Re-ignite the stick; 4) Light your next candle.

2024 MARRIAGE PREPARATION – will take over the course of two weekends: February 9-10, and March 1-2, 2024. To register, please contact Fr. Peter Babej at fr.babej@eeparchy.com or call 780-993-8037.

LIST OF THE DEPARTED – During the Great Fast, we will be prayer for the repose of the souls of the departed faithful, especially by name, for the departed faithful of our parish families and friends. Please fill out the list provided in today’s bulletin and submit it to Fr. Peter or leave it in the sacristy, or slip it under the Parish Office door.

THE GREAT FAST – will begin on Monday, February 12. The first day of the Fast is a day of strict fasting, and abstinence from meat, dairy and eggs, and from foods that contain these ingredients. Abstinence from meat and meat products is to be observed for the first week of the Great Fast (Monday to Friday).

NEXT MEN’S NIGHT – will take place on Friday, February 16, 2024. At 7:00 pm, we will begin with prayer, The Way of the Cross, followed by personal testimony, a

presentation on “The Role of Men,” and brotherly fellowship. To confirm your attendance, please email Fr. Peter at fr.babej@eeparchy.com.

JANUARY FOOD BANK DRIVE – MOST NEEDED ITEMS! – Currently, the Foodbank provides hampers to approximately 32,000 families per month. And the total keeps growing. The Foodbank relies on donations of not only money, but food products.

In response to this urgent need, let all of us be generous in donation food to those who are in need of assistance. The following is a list of suggestions. Please leave your donations in the designated box in the church vestibule:

- Canned beans without pork
- Canned fish, meat, milk, stew, soups
- Canned fruit, vegetables, beans
- Dry cereals, beans, lentils, pasta, rice
- Baby formula, baby food, diapers
- Peanut butter (500g), jams
- Healthy school snacks
- Pasta & canned pasta sauce
- Cookies, crackers, packaged meals
- Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, flour, oil
- Salad dressings, ketchup
- Mustard, pickles
- Toothpaste, toilet paper, bar soap
- Bath wash, razors, deodorant,
- Dish soap

NOTE: Safeway was \$10 packs of assorted food items. If you wish to make a monetary donation, cheques can be sent to: Edmonton Food Bank, P.O. Box 62061, Edmonton AB, T5M 4B5.

BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR LIFE – Pro-Life Conference and Luncheon. All Pro-Life Groups, Churches and Individuals are Welcome! Hosted by the Alberta March for Life and Edmonton Pro-Life. Saturday, February 3, 2024, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. The

Polish Hall, 10960-104 Street, Edmonton NW.
 Keynote Speaker: Mark Mallet. Mark is a co-host of the Countdown to the Kingdom Webcast and author of The Now Word.
 Workshop: CCBR. An educational pro-life organization will present a workshop on the practice of compelling and compassionate pro-life conversations. Space is limited. Register by Jan. 25, 2024, at albertamarchforlife.ca

50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE UKRAINIAN BILINGUAL PROGRAM – Edmonton Catholic Schools is celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its Ukrainian Bilingual Program on Saturday, February 10, 2024, with a gala banquet at Meridian Banquet Centre. Details and tickets are now available through the Eventbrite link: <https://50thAnniversaryUBPAS.eventbrite.ca>
 For updates, visit the Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com?UBPAS>

ST. BASIL UCWLC LENTEN RETREAT - Retreat Master: Deacon Cyril Kennedy. In Jesus, God has come into the world and defeated the powers of death, bringing humanity back to life. Three miracles: Jesus Healing the Women with the Flow of Blood, Jesus Raising Jairus' Daughter, and Jesus and the Gerasene Demoniac. **Age:** Teens and Adults.

Date: Saturday, Feb 24, 2024.

Program: Begins with Liturgy and Homily: 9:00 am in St. Basil's Church. Registration and Coffee: 10 am | Sessions: 10:45 am - 3:15 pm in St. Basil's Cultural Centre. Last Session: 3:30 pm in St. Basil's Church.

Online Registration Link: Pre-Registration is required at:

<https://forms.gle/AoFZ1CSueu5rCjzE6> or
[Christina 780-435-7415](mailto:Christina.780-435-7415)
clmacyk@telusplanet.net

Registration Deadline: February 15, 2024.

Ticket Fee: \$30.00 (includes lunch and snacks).

CHURCH FLOOR PROJECT – As you can see, our church carpet and flooring need to be replaced. Also, the floor in the sanctuary needs to be repaired and levelled. We will need to raise at least \$10,000 in order to begin this urgent project. **Fundraiser deadline: is April 8, 2024.**

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 2023

Sunday Collection

Sunday Envelopes	\$445.00
Loose Donations	\$160.00
Candles	\$12.50
TOTAL Sunday Collection	\$617.50

OTHER INCOME

General Donations to Parish	\$80.00
Women's Group Donation	\$36.00
Caroling Donation	\$30.00
Pyrohy Sales	\$50.00

TOTAL Other Income **\$196.00**

TOTAL INCOME **\$813.50**

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CHURCH FLOOR PROJECT

N.N.	\$1,000.00
Benoit and Denise Boudreau	\$1,000.00
N.N.	\$500.00
Justin and Catherine Tamsett	\$500.00
Alex Schabel	\$400.00
Steve and Janet Konowalec	\$300.00
Chris Lirette	\$300.00
Fr. Peter and Dobr. Donna Babej	\$250.00
Iryna Laschuk	\$250.00
N.N.	\$200.00
N.N.	\$100.00
Ivan and Luba Genyk	\$100.00
Sheila Leiding	\$50.00
N.N.	\$50.00
Maria Lang	\$30.00
N.N.	\$20.00
N.N.	20.00
N.N.	5.00
Total Donations	\$5,076.00

THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

by Fr. Antony Hughes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

What is the opposite of fear? You might say “courage” and you might be right. But it has been suggested that the opposite of fear is compassion. I like that answer best. Where there is no fear there is no need for defensiveness. Judgment relies on fear. So does hate. Without fear compassion becomes possible. If we are not defending ourselves, then the way is open to love. Compassion, I insist, is not weakness. Compassion is strength. Compassion is divine.

Let’s talk for a moment about the father in the story of the Prodigal Son. He is fearless. He takes the risk of offering his sons their inheritance before his death. They could have taken everything! When the younger son decides to take him up on the proposal, the father does not go back on his promise. He doesn’t try to stop him. He freely embraces his son’s freedom of choice. How many of us could do such a thing? How many of us, when presented with the opportunity, confirm the freedom of the other to act even in ways that are opposed to our own values and interests? Most of us are afraid of freedom, but not the father. He demonstrates fearlessness of the highest quality. So high it is divine. He is the perfect image of God, the One who cannot be pleased or displeased. He is always the same in all things and towards the obedient and the disobedient.

We are meant to see in the father an image of God, of course, and what of the older brother? When the younger son returns repenting of his sins and the father graciously embraces him the older son complains. “How

could you take him back like that?” The older son believes that the father is too generous. To us this insane generosity is the source of our hope. God is too generous, too welcoming, too inclusive. Why, God may even accept us, though we do not deserve it. It is sometimes very hard to accept. The “older brother” cannot accept it. There are always some who base their belief on a God who is angry and infinitely offended. But how can this be? The Gospels show us a very different God in the life of Jesus Christ, the living, breathing example of the God who is too generous.

We should note that the older son, in his complaining, demonstrates the opposite. He is wedded to and attached to his grudges. He won’t let go of his anger. God is definitely not like that. The older brother is stuck in the past and we all know what happens when we get stuck in the past. We suffer because the past is an illusion, it is no more, and yet we are trying like crazy people to live in it. God, on the other hand, is eternally present.

The father however demonstrates what it means to live in the present. He rejoices that his son is home! The important thing is that his son is now home. The past is over and cannot be changed, but the present! O, the wonderful present! The son returns with the necessary, miraculous words “I am sorry” on his lips, but the father runs to embrace him even while he is still a long way off. The young prodigal barely has an opportunity to get out his rehearsed lines. Remember what the Lord says? “The angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner who repents.” How sad that the older brother was too wrapped up in himself, too self-interested to enjoy his brother’s homecoming. Notice where he is when the father finds him. He is “out in the fields” in a less dramatic form of self-exile from his father’s house. Self-interest always gets in

the way of! Self-interest blinds us to what is good like nothing else can.

Are you beginning to see a pattern in the Gospels? I am! God is generous to a fault. He has no ego to defend. God is not offended because God has no ego. The father in the parable is not offended because he has no ego to be offended! Only the ego suffers offense. When we feel the pains of offense, the agony of fear, the fire of anger, the bristling of our defenses it is a sign that the ego is at work. At that moment our ignorance comes clearly on display. Be thankful! It points the way to repentance. One of my dearest spiritual fathers and brothers once told me, "Your obstacle is your path." So instead of getting down on ourselves for having such thoughts and feelings we should give thanks and learn the tools that will allow us not to attach ourselves to them. That is, we need to learn and practice continual watchfulness so that we do not sin.

We also must not allow ourselves to be fooled into thinking we are justified and that those negative thoughts and feelings are an unavoidable part of who we are. Heavens no! We are made in the image of God! That junk cannot define us unless we let it. Instead, we need to open our eyes and see the truth that our suffering comes when we give into the temptation of self-interest. "Don't you dare stand in my way," we shout. Or like Madonna we shout from the rooftops that, "Everyone is entitled to my opinion." But we do not need to go down that sinful path. No indeed. We can, if we choose, keep those negative thoughts and feelings from carrying us where we do not wish to go. But we must catch them quickly before they do so that we can make the wise choice of turning aside from temptation while the freedom remains as an option. The point of all this is to move beyond our own fearful limitations by becoming the love that God is.

I want to thank Tiffany for introducing me to this wonderful quote from St. Maximos the Confessor.

"The one who is perfect in love and has reached the summit of detachment knows no distinction between (what is) one's own and (what is) another's, between faithful and unfaithful, between slave and freeman, or indeed between male and female. But having risen above the tyranny of the passions and looking to the one nature of men he regards all equally and is equally disposed toward all. For in him there is neither Greek nor Jew, neither male nor female, neither slave nor freeman, but Christ is everything and in everything."

Who among us does not desire to live like that? That is passionlessness. That is sinlessness. The person who has passed beyond judgment of any kind is one who has seen God. The one who lives like that is truly free. Nothing evil can touch her. This is what I see in the Prodigal Son's father. A free man. A defied man.

Fear is the fertile soil of offense. Self-interest is the fertilizer of corruption. God knows no fear. God has no self-interest. Therefore, God knows no offense. Therefore, God is All-Compassionate. Olivier Clement writes:

"In the crucified Christ forgiveness is offered and life is given. For humanity it is no longer a matter of fearing judgment or of meriting salvation, but of welcoming love in trust and humility" (Clement, 1993, p. 49).

Like the father in the parable is, we must become for he is a perfect image of what God is. As long as there is anything in us that does not reflect that perfection we must remain outside the Kingdom in the prodigal son's "foreign land".

www.stmaryorthodoxchurch.org

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"I am held by the rosary and the Eucharist," UGCC priest from front-line Myrnohrad

On the night of January 22, the Ukrainian city of Myrnohrad in the Donetsk region was hit by an enemy attack, as a result of which high-rise buildings were damaged, one of which was the home of UGCC priest Ivan Vasylenko. "I had some strange feelings that there would be an explosion. They chased me for about a month. I even looked out of my window to where it was supposed to hit. For some reason, I had such a thought and it depressed me. I always drove her away, but there really was an attack," Fr. Ivan recalls.

On January 22, 2024, exactly at midnight, an enemy S-300 missile flew into the yard of a densely populated area of Myrnohrad. About 20 thousand people live in the Molodezhny microdistrict. Among residential buildings, there are mainly five- and nine-story buildings.

"By God's grace, God's love, the prayers of people and the Mother of God, who watches over this city, there were no victims," said Fr. Ivan Vasylenko.

According to the priest, as a result of the attack, 2 people were injured, 400 windows were broken and 40 cars were badly damaged, many people were left without full-fledged housing in the middle of winter.

"Now I am in the temple, but, believe me, I don't have time to think about myself," the priest said. "Every minute we try to serve those in need."

Father Ivan said that the UGCC actively helps the families who remained in Myrnohrad, regularly delivering humanitarian aid to them. In addition, he noted that people are



constantly in need of help, including food kits from the Patriarchal Foundation "Mudra Sprava", as well as financial assistance for those whose homes were damaged by Russian weapons.

"I would like to remind you of the very important words of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky: 'Do not love Ukraine with a stream of noisy and noisy phrases, but with quiet and tireless work.'"

Activities of the Church in Myrnohrad

The parish in Myrnohrad, Donetsk region, has existed for more than 20 years. It is there, in particular in the Church of the Holy Supreme Apostles Peter and Paul, that Fr. Ivan Vasylenko serves.

"This is my first parish," says Fr. Ivan. "At first, we served in the apartment, then in the assembly hall, then we prayed in the chapel for 10 years. But over the past 10 years, a large stone church of the Holy Supreme Apostles Peter and Paul has been built."

According to the pastor, the number of parishioners in Myrnohrad has always increased: from 10 believers in an apartment to 60 worshippers already in the church. Unfortunately, since the beginning of the full-scale war, many people have left. However, people are held back by prayer: "I thought that

there were ungodly people living here who are happy without God. But this is not the case – they feel bad without God," Fr. Ivan emphasized.

In addition to the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul, another small parish of the UGCC was born last year — the Church of the Holy Trinity. About 15 parishioners go to the chapel today, who pray the Liturgy every day. The priest said that in the Donetsk region he especially feels the incredible support of the Church - bishops and priests of the UGCC from all over the country and the world. In particular, Bishop Maksym Ryabukha, Auxiliary Bishop of the Donetsk Exarchate, often makes pastoral visits to parishes in the region with his seminarian brothers. For the locals, it is a joy and grace to pray with the bishop, to communicate with him and future priests.

"Even the word still has great power. And when a person comes with support and hugs, it is more than all the money in the world," Fr. Ivan shared.

It is important to note that the community is also engaged in charitable work. There are points of invincibility from the "Wise Cause" in the city, where those in need can warm up and receive humanitarian aid. There are also three animal shelters in Myrnohrad, each with more than 100 dogs. Father Ivan, together with volunteers, take care of his younger friends and regularly bring them food.

In addition to charity, the community also works with young people. And although there are very few children and teenagers left in the region now, there is a parish of the UGCC in neighboring Pokrovsk, where young people often gather, communicate with each other and hold various events.

Father Ivan said that there are many elderly parishioners in the city who are not able to come to services on their own: "I console them, saying that once they went to God's temple, and now God Himself comes to them. That is, I take the Holy Mysteries and go to them. These are the little ministries."

"Prayer Comforts a Person"

During the war, people change a lot. Father Ivan stressed that in the Donetsk region, people also pray a lot, like no one else, they want peace and the victory of the Ukrainian army over the evil and darkness that has come. However, it is important to be able to remain calm and optimistic in modern conditions.

"Today, a woman asked me where I got such optimism and strength," the priest said. "I am held by the rosary and the Eucharist. I said that it's not from me, it's God giving it to me, and I pass this positive energy on to everyone. I encouraged the woman to come to confession and receive the Eucharist to feel the same way I feel."

In addition, Fr. Ivan is sure that God is always on the side of those who protect their relatives at home. The light always rises and drives away the darkness. It will be the same in Ukraine, but unfortunately, with great and terrible sacrifices of our people. But the priest urged us to remember that the greatest sacrifice is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

"A person has only one life. But if it is lived with dignity and rightness, as the people of God live, then one life is enough. If we have and value our roots, language, Church and faith, then we, as a nation, definitely have a future," the priest stressed.

Департамент інформації УГКЦ

СЛУЖБА БОЖА

Тропарі і кондаки

Тропар, глас 2: Коли зійшов Ти до смерти, Життя безсмертне,* тоді ад умертвив Ти сіянням Божества;* коли ж і померлих з глибин підземних Ти воскресив,* всі сили небесні взивали:* Життедавче, Христе Боже наш, слава Тобі!

†Слава Отцю, і Сину, і Святому Духові, і нині, і повсякчас, і на віки вічні. Амінь.

Кондак, глас 2: Воскрес Ти з гробу, всесильний Спасе,* і ад, побачивши чудо, зжахнувся та й мертві встали;* а творіння, бачивши, радіє з Тобою, й Адам веселиться,* і світ, Спасе мій, повсякчас Тебе оспівує.

Прокімен, Глас 2

Господь – моя сила і моя пісня,* і Він став моїм спасінням (Пс. 117,14).

Стих: Тяжко покарав мене Господь, та не передав мене смерті (Пс. 117,18).

Апостол – До 1 Коринтян 6:12-20

До Коринтян першого послання святого апостола Павла читання.

Браття і Сестри, все мені можна, та не корисне. Все мені можна, та я не дам нічому заволодіти мною. Їжа для живота, а живіт для їжі. Та Бог одне і друге знищить. Тіло ж не для розпусту, але для Господа, і Господь для тіла. Бог же і Господа воскресив, і нас воскресить силою своєю. Хіба не знаєте, що тіла ваші – члени Христові? Узявши, отже, члени Христові, зроблю їх членами блудниці? Не бути тому! Хіба не знаєте, що хто пристає до блудниці, є з нею одним тілом? Бо будуть, – каже, – двоє одним тілом. Хто ж пристає до Господа, є одним з ним. Утікайте від розпусту. Усякий гріх, що чоловік чинить, є назовні тіла; хто ж чинить розпусту, грішить

проти власного тіла. Хіба не знаєте, що ваше тіло – храм Святого Духа, що у вас пробував, якого ви маєте від Бога? Отже ви не належите більш самі до себе. Ви бо куплені за високу ціну. Тож прославляйте Бога вашим тілом.

Алилуя, глас 2

1. Вислухає тебе Господь у день печалі, захистить тебе ім'я Бога Якова. 2. Господи, спаси царя і вислухай нас, коли будемо взивати до Тебе.

Євангеліє – Від Луки 15:11-32

Сказав Господь притчу оцю: В одного чоловіка було два сини. Молодший з них сказав батькові: Тату, дай мені частину маєтку, що мені припадає. Батько розділив між ними свій маєток. Кілька днів потім, молодший зібрав усе й пустився у далекий край і там розтратив свій маєток: жив розпусно. І як він усе розтратив, настав великий голод у тім краю, і він став бідувати. Пішов він і найнявся у одного з мешканців того краю, і той послав його на своє поле пасти свині. І він бажав би був наповнити живіт свій стручками, що їли свині, але й тих ніхто не давав йому. Опам'ятавшись, він сказав до себе: скільки наймитів у мого батька мають подостатком хліба, а я тут з голоду конаю. Встану, піду до батька мого і скажу йому: отче, я согрішив проти неба й проти тебе. Я недостойний більше зватись твоїм сином. Прийми мене за одного з твоїх наймитів. Встав він і пішов до батька свого. І як він був іще далеко, побачив його батько і, змилосердившись, побіг, кинувся йому на шию і поцілував його. Син сказав до нього: Отче, я согрішив проти неба й проти тебе. Я недостойний більше зватись твоїм сином. Батько ж кликнув до своїх слуг: Принесіть швидко найкращу одіж, одягніть

його, дайте йому на руку перстень і сандали на ноги. Приведіть годоване теля й заріжте його; і їймо, веселімся, бо цей мій син був мертвий і ожив, пропав був і найшовся. І вони стали веселитись. Старший його син був у полі; і як він, вертаючись, наблизився до дому, почув музику й танці. Покликав він одного зі слуг і спитав, що то таке. Той сказав йому: Брат твій вернувся, і твій батько зарізав годоване теля, бо найшов його живим-здоровим. Розгнівавсь той і не хотів увійти. Вийшов тоді батько і став його просити. Той же озвався до батька: Ось стільки років служу тобі й ніколи не порушив ані одного приказу твого, і ти не дав мені ніколи козеняти, щоб з друзями моїми повеселитись. А коли вернувся оцей син твій, що проїв твій маєток з блудницями, ти зарізав для нього годоване теля. Батько ж сказав до нього: Ти завжди при мені, дитино, і все моє – твоє. Однак слід було веселитись і радіти, бо цей брат твій був мертвий і ожив, пропав був і найшовся.

Причасний

Хваліте Господа з небес, хваліте його в вишніх. Аلیلуя, * Аلیلуя, аلیلуя, * аلیلуя.

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ОГОЛОШЕННЯ

ВІСНИК ЕЛЕКТРОННОЮ ПОШТОЮ – якщо хтось бажає отримати парафіяльний вісник електронною поштою просимо звернутися до о. Петра на адресу fr.babej@eeparchy.com.

МНОГАЯ ЛІТА – з днем народження, складаємо найщиріші побажання Василеві Сич, Доні Козяк, там всім, хто святкує свої уродини. Нехай Господь Бог благословить на многі і благі літа!

КУРС НАВЧАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ – почнеться в церкві Успіння Пресвятої Богородиці у суботу, 3-го лютого, 2024, від 10:00 год. ранку то 12:00 п.п. Кошт: \$50. Реєстрація кінчається 29-го січня, 2024. За дальшими інформаціями або в справі реєстрації, просимо звернутися до Олекси Щабел на адресу schabel14@gmail.com.

ПАРАФІЯЛЬНЕ ЧЛЕНСТВО – Якщо бажаєте вступити в членство парафії Успіння Пресвятої Богородиці, просимо виповнити анкети (при вході до церкви) та передати о. Петрові.

КОВЕРКТИ НА 2024 РІК – Можна підібрати сьогодні, при вході до церковної залі. Якщо бажаєте отримати ковертки, просимо виповнити анкету членства і передати о. Петрові.

МАТЕРІ В МОЛИТВІ - Спільнота „Матері в молитві” була заснована для допомоги матерям, які бажають разом молитися за своїх дітей та онуків, дітей парафії та всіх українських дітей і знайти необхідну підтримку. Слідуюче зібрання і молитва відбудеться **у неділю, 11-го лютого, 2024**, після україномовної Божественної Літургії. Для додаткової інформації просимо звертатися до Лесі Бабяк за номером 587-937-0311, або електронічною поштою та адресу Lesia.Ivanivna.Babiak@gmail.com. Запрошуємо до молитви!

СТРІТЕННЯ Г.Н.І.Х. – припадає у п’ятницю, 2-го лютого, 2024. Служба Божа (дво-мовна) відправиться о год. 7:00 ранку, та о год. 7:00 вечора. Благословення свічок при кінці кожної Літургії.

ПЕРША П’ЯТНИЦЯ – припадає у п’ятницю, 2-го лютого, свято Стрітєння Г.Н.І.Х. Служба Божа о год. 7:00 ранку та 7:00 вечора (19.00)

ПЕРША СУБОТА – припадає у суботу, 3-го лютого, 2024. Вервиця о год. 8:30 ранку, Служба Божа о год. 9:00 ранку.

ПІДГОТОВКА ДО ШЛЮБУ – відбудеться у днях 9-10 лютого, та 1-2 березня. В справі інформації та реєстрації, просимо звернутися до о. Петра на телефон 780-489-8868, або fr.babej@eeparchy.com.

СПИСОК НА СОРОКОУСТИ – протягом Великого Посту, підчас богослужень в середу та суботу, отці читатимуть імена померших. Просимо списати всі імена померших із вашої родини та включені карточці, та передати о. Петрові або залишити в захристії або церковній канцелярії.

НОВА ПІДЛОГА І КИЛИМ – Як бачите, мусимо вставити в церкві нову підлогу і килим. Щоб почати цей проект, переводимо збірку. Щира подяка за всі пожертви в цьому намірі! Збірка кінчається 8-го квітня, 2024.

«Мене тримає вервиця і Євхаристія», — священник УГКЦ із прифронтового Мирнограда

У ніч на 22 січня українське місто Мирноград на Донеччині зазнало ворожого удару, внаслідок якого були пошкоджені багатоповерхівки, в одній з яких — житло священника УГКЦ Івана Василенка. «У мене якісь були дивні відчуття, що буде вибух. Приблизно місяць вони мене переслідували. Я навіть дивився зі свого вікна туди, куди мало прилетіти. Чомусь була в мене така думка і



вона гнітила мене. Я відганяв її завжди, але справді стався приліт», — згадує о. Іван.

22 січня 2024 року, рівно опівночі, у двір густозаселеного району м. Мирноград прилетіла ворожа ракета С-300. У мікрорайоні Молодіжному проживає близько 20 тисяч населення. Серед житлових будинків — переважно п'яти- та дев'ятиповерхівки.

«За Божою ласкою, Божою любов'ю, молитвами людей і Богородиці, яка чуває над цим містом, жодних жертв не було», — розповів о. Іван Василенко.

За словами священника, унаслідок удару 2 людини поранено, 400 вікон розбито і дуже пошкоджено 40 автомобілів, багато людей залишилися без повноцінного житла посеред зими.

«Зараз я перебуваю у храмі, але, повірте, про себе не маю часу думати, — зазначив священник. — Щохвилини намагаємося послужити потребуючим».

Отець Іван розповів, що УГКЦ активно допомагає родинам, які залишилися в Мирнограді, регулярно доставляючи їм гуманітарну допомогу. Крім цього зазначив, що люди постійно потребують помочі, зокрема продуктових наборів від Патріаршої фундації «Мудра справа», а також фінансової для тих, чиє житло постраждало від російської зброї.

«Хочеться мені нагадати дуже важливі слова митрополита Андрея Шептицького: «Не потоком шумних і галасливих фраз, а тихою невтомною працею любіть Україну».

Діяльність Церкви в Мирнограді

Парафія в Мирнограді на Донеччині існує вже понад 20 років. Саме там, зокрема у храмі Святих верховних апостолів Петра і Павла, здійснює служіння о. Іван Василенко.

«Це моя перша парафія, — розповідає о. Іван. — На початку ми служили у квартирі, потім в актовому залі, потім протягом 10 років молилися у каплиці. А ось вже за останні 10 років збудували великий кам'яний храм Святих верховних апостолів Петра і Павла».

За словами пароха, кількість парафіян у Мирнограді завжди збільшувалася: від 10 вірян у квартирі до 60 молільників вже у храмі. На жаль, з початку повномасштабної війни багато людей виїхало. Однак людей тримає молитва: «Я думав, що тут живуть безбожні люди, яким без Бога добре. Але це не так — без Бога їм погано», — наголосив о. Іван.

Окрім храму Петра і Павла, минулого року народилася ще одна маленька парафія УГКЦ — храм Пресвятої Тройці. До каплиці сьогодні ходять близько 15 парафіян, які щодня моляться Літургію.

Священник розповів, що на Донеччині особливо відчуває неймовірну підтримку Церкви — єпископів та священників УГКЦ з усіх куточків країни та світу. Зокрема, владика Максим Рябуха, єпископ-помічник Донецького екзархату, часто здійснює душпастирські відвідини парафій у регіоні з братами-семінаристами. Для місцевих — це радість і благодать помолитися разом з єпископом, поспілкуватися з ним та майбутніми священниками.

«Навіть слово все ж таки має велику силу. І коли людина приїжджає з підтримкою і обіймає, — це більше, ніж всі гроші світу», — поділився о. Іван.

Важливо зазначити, що громада займається і благодійною працею. У місті є пункти незламності від «Мудрої справи», де потребуючі можуть зігрітися й отримати гуманітарну допомогу. Також у Мирнограді є три притулки для тварин, де в кожному живе понад 100 собачок. Отець Іван разом із волонтерами піклуються про менших друзів і регулярно привозять їм корм.

У громаді, крім благодійності, проводиться також робота з молоддю. І хоча в регіоні зараз залишилося зовсім мало дітей та підлітків, у сусідньому Покровську є парафія УГКЦ, де часто збирається молодь, спілкується між собою та проводить різні заходи.

Отець Іван розповів, що в місті залишилося багато парафіян похилого віку, не здатних самостійно приходити на богослужіння: «Я їх втішаю, кажучи, що колись вони ходили до Божого храму, а тепер Бог до них сам приходиться. Тобто я беру Святи Тайни і йду до них. Ось такі маленькі служіння».

«Людину заспокоює молитва»

За час війни люди дуже змінюються. Отець Іван наголосив, що на Донеччині люди теж багато моляться, як ніхто хочуть миру і перемоги української армії над злом та темрявою, що прийшла. Однак важливо в сучасних умовах уміти зберігати спокій та оптимізм.

«Сьогодні одна жінка запитала, звідки в мене такий оптимізм і сила, — розповів

священник. — Мене тримає вервиця і Євхаристія. Я сказав, що це не від мене — це Бог дає мені і я передаю цю позитивну енергію кожному. Я закликав жінку прийти до сповіді та прийняти Євхаристію, щоби відчувати те саме, що відчуваю я».

Окрім цього, о. Іван упевнений, що Бог завжди на стороні тих, хто в себе вдома захищає рідних. Світло завжди встає та темряву проганяє. Так буде і в Україні, однак із великими та страшними жертвами нашого народу, на жаль. Але священник закликав пам'ятати, що найбільшою жертвою є жертва Ісуса Христа.

«Життя в людини одне. Але якщо воно прожите гідно і правильно, як проживають люди Божі, то одного життя достатньо. Якщо ми маємо і цінуємо своє коріння, мову, Церкву та віру, тоді ми, як нація, точно маємо майбутнє», — наголосив священник.

Департамент інформації УГКЦ

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THIS WEEK AT DORMITION

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28: PRODIGAL SON. Venerable Ephraim the Syrian.

7:30 AM – Church Open for Prayer.

8:30 AM – Confessions.

9:00 AM – Panakhyda; for the repose of +Anna (Lobay) Lupynis.

9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy**; for intentions of all parishioners; for Ukraine and its' Armed Forces; for the repose of +Anna (Lobay) Lupynis.

11:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy** (Ukrainian); for intentions of all parishioners; for Ukraine and its' Armed Forces; for the repose of +Orest Burak.

Mon. Jan. 29: Transfer of the relics of Ignatius the Godbearer.

Repose of +Orest Burak (celebrated privately).

Tues. Jan. 30: Three Holy Hierarchs.

Repose of +Orest Burak (celebrated privately). For the needs and intentions of all parishioners.

Wed. Jan. 31: Cyrus and John, Wonderworkers and Physicians.

5:30 PM – Divine Liturgy; for the repose of +Orest Burak; for intentions of all parishioners.

6:45 PM – PARISH COUNCIL MEETING (NO BIBLE STUDY).

Thurs. Feb. 1: Pre-feast of the Encounter; Martyr Tryphon.

7:00 AM – Divine Liturgy; for the repose of +Orest Burak.

6:00 PM – Great Vespers and Lytia

Fri. Feb. 2: ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE.

7:00 AM – **Divine Liturgy**; for the needs and intentions of all parishioners.

7:00 PM – **Divine Liturgy**; for the needs and intentions of all parishioners.

Sat. Feb. 3: All-Souls Saturday; Simeon the Righteous and Anna the Prophetess.

8:30 AM – Rosary Prayer

9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy; for the repose of +Myrna Sharek; for the repose of +Orest Burak; for the repose of all the faithful departed.

1:00 PM – Preparation for First Solemn Confession.

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4: SUNDAY OF GREAT JUDGMENT (Meat-fare Sunday). Venerable Isidore of Pelusium.

7:30 AM – Church Open for Prayer.

8:30 AM – Confessions.

9:00 AM – Rosary Prayer.

9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy**; for the needs and intentions of all parishioners; for Ukraine and its' Armed Forces; for the repose of +Orest Burak.

11:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy** (Ukrainian); for the needs and intentions of all parishioners; for Ukraine and its' Armed Forces; for the repose of +Orest Burak.

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