



Sunday, March 12, 2023

**ST. ATHANASIUS UKRAINIAN
CATHOLIC CHURCH
55 MCMURCHY AVENUE
REGINA SK. S4R 3G3**

Parish Priest: Fr. Vasyl Tymishak
Cell Phone: 306-519-9030

E-mail: vasyltymishak@gmail.com

Parish Office: 306-543-8008

E-mail: stathanasius@sasktel.net

Website: www.st-athanasius.ca

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/reginaukrainiancatholicnorth/live>

Parish Council President – Len Markewich

Cell phone (call or text) : 306-536-4252

UCWLC President – Holly Paluck

UCBC President - Mark Woitas

Ultimate A&B Youth - Lesia Lazurko

Knights of Columbus – Curtis Stechyshyn, Grand Knight

Parish Coordinator of Care (PCC) - Mary Lou Senko @ 306-525-6437

ROSARY: Sunday – 9:10 a.m. (livestreaming)

DIVINE LITURGY: Bilingual: Sunday - 9:30 a.m. for the faithful. (livestreaming)

DIVINE LITURGY in Ukrainian – the first Sunday of each month at 11:30 a.m.

Weekday Liturgies – as scheduled

Confessions before every Divine Liturgy & Week Day Liturgies – As per the schedule

MEMBERSHIP AT ST. ATHANASIUS PARISH is recognized by participating in the Sunday Divine Liturgy and by fulfilling your baptismal responsibility in contributing to our Church Community activities by using your time, talents and treasures. Regular financial donations by use of Sunday envelopes is necessary for our parish to grow and prosper. If you would like to become a registered member, please contact Fr. Vasyl or parish office.

Please contact Fr. Vasyl if you know of any parishioner who is sick and wants to be visited.

St. John Paul II Syro-Malabar Parish – Fr. Daris Cherian

E-mail: daris.cherian@gmail.com

Phone: 1-416-262-9670

Parish Council Trustee – Arun Abraham Phone: (1-306-891-4302)

E-mail: abru.arun@gmail.com

Welcome to all visitors and parishioners who are celebrating the Liturgy with us today. Everyone is invited to the auditorium for coffee, juice, cookies and socializing.

TO ALL PARISHIONERS: During our Livestream and Videotaping, the video may capture the likeness of those parishioners sitting in the pews during our services. This video will be kept for a maximum of 45 days. Other than those who choose to view the livestream as it happens, the video will not be released to third parties.



As our video will stream on Facebook, we will comply with the website's regulations.

If you are uncomfortable being on video, please advise the Greeters when you enter the church and they will place you in a pew where you will not be captured.

be captured.

Please join our services by visiting our website and clicking on the Livestream icon: <https://st-athanasius.ca/> or on Facebook:

<https://facebook.com/reginaukrainiancatholicnorth/live>

СЛАВА ІСУСУ ХРИСТУ! СЛАВА НА ВІКИ!
GLORY BE TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY BE FOREVER!

FEBRUARY/MARCH GREETERS		FEBRUARY/MARCH TABULATORS
Mar. 12	Terry & Rosanne Miller	Walter Brigidear & John Dmyterko
Mar. 19	Kevin Korchinski & Len Markewich	Kevin Korchinski & Rosanne Miller
Mar. 26	Mark & Karen Woitas	Art Wytrykush & Karen Woitas

FEBRUARY/MARCH ROSARY		FEBRUARY/MARCH READERS
Mar. 12	Karen Woitas/Svitlana Zelenyi <i>Sorrowful Mysteries</i>	Karen Woitas
Mar. 19	Bernice Bzdell/Iryna Baran <i>Byzantine Sorrowful Mysteries</i>	Rosanne Miller
Mar. 26	Louise Makuch/Natalia Osoba <i>Sorrowful Mysteries</i>	Louise Makuch

THIRD SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST
- Veneration of the Holy Cross

INSTEAD OF First Antiphon: p, 21 “Bless the Lord...” (First Psalm of Typica)

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless His holy name.
 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.
 He forgives all your iniquities, He heals all your diseases.
 He redeems your life from corruption, He crowns you with mercy and compassion.
 Compassionate and merciful is the Lord, long-suffering and abounding in mercy.
 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless His Holy name.
 Blessed are You, O Lord.

INSTEAD OF Third Antiphon: p, 27 “Remember us...” (The Beatitudes)

Remember us, O Lord, in Your kingdom.
 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
 Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.
 Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
 Blessed are the pure of heart, for they will see God.
 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.
 Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
 Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil word against you falsely because of Me.
 Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven.

TROPAR (Tone 7): By Your cross You destroyed death; You opened Paradise to the thief; You changed the lamentation of the myrrh-bearers to joy, and charged the apostles to proclaim that You are risen, O Christ, our God, offering great mercy to the world.

TROPAR OF THE CROSS (Tone 1): Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance. Grant victory to Your faithful people against enemies, and protect Your community by Your cross.

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

KONDAK (Tone 7): The gates of Eden are no more guarded by a blazing sword, for the tree of the cross has gloriously extinguished it, destroying the sting of death and the victory of hell. O my Savior, You went to those in Limbo crying aloud, "Return to paradise!"

INSTEAD OF Holy God, Holy Mighty: To Your cross, O Master, we bow in veneration, and we glorify Your holy Resurrection.

PROKIMEN (Tone 6): Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance.

Verse: Unto You I will cry, O Lord my God, lest You turn from me in silence.

A reading from the Epistle to the Hebrews (4: 14 -5:6)

Brothers and Sisters! Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our profession of faith. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet never sinned. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and favor and to find help in time of need. Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal patiently with erring sinners, for he himself is beset by weakness and so must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. One does not take this honor on his own initiative, but only when called by God as Aaron was. Even Christ did not glorify himself with the office of high priest; he received it from the One who said to him: "You are my son; today I have begotten you"; just as he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek."

ALLELUIA VERSES: *Remember the people you long since made your own.*

Yet, God, my king from the first, author of saving acts throughout the earth.

GOSPEL: Mark (8:34 – 9:1)

The Lord said: "If a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and follow in my steps. Whoever would preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will preserve it. What profit does a man show who gains the whole world and destroys himself in the process? What can a man offer in exchange for his life? If anyone in this faithless and corrupt age is ashamed of me and my doctrine, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes with the

holy angels in his Father's glory." He also said to them: "I assure you, among those standing here there are some who will not taste death until they see the reign of God established in power."

INSTEAD OF 'It Is Truly Right': In you, Lady full of grace, all creation rejoices, the world of angels and the human race. Sanctified temple, spiritual paradise, boast of virgins, God took flesh from you and became a child; He was God before the ages. He made your womb a throne and made it more encompassing than the heavens. In you, Lady full of grace, all creation rejoices, glory be to you.

COMMUNION HYMN: The Light of Your face, O Lord, is raised over us. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE MARCH 13 – MARCH 19, 2023

Monday, March 13, 2023 - The Transfer of the Relics of Our Holy Father Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople (847)

6:30 p.m. Children's Service & Catechism

Tuesday, March 14, 2023 - Our Venerable Father Benedict of Nursia (547)

10:00 a.m. 12 noon Katari School Confessions

No service scheduled

Wednesday, March 15, 2023 - The Holy Martyr Agapius and the Six Martyrs with Him (284-305)

Presanctified - [Genesis 9:18-10:1; Proverbs 12:23-13:10.](#)

6:30 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy for + Robert Wuschenny, requested by John Dmyterko

7:00 p.m. UCBC monthly meeting

Thursday, March 16, 2023 - The Holy Martyrs Sabinus and Papas (284-305)

10 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.-noon Pius X School Confessions

6:30 p.m. Lenten Akathist

Friday, March 17, 2023 - Our Venerable Father Alexius, Man of God

6:30 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Saturday, March 18, 2023 - All Souls Saturday; Our Holy Father Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem (386) [Hebrews 6:9-12; 1 Corinthians 15:47-57; Mark 7:31-37; John 5:24-30.](#)

10:00 a.m. Sorokousty Divine Liturgy and panakhyda

1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Presentation on The Shroud of Turin Presented by Fr. Gregory Hrynkiw at St. Athanasius open to all people

3:00 pm – Lenten Confessions in Moose Jaw & **4:00pm Sorokousty Divine Liturgy** and Panakhyda in Moose Jaw

Sunday, March 19, 2023 - Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast: St. John Climacus. [Hebrews 6:13-20](#); [Ephesians 5:9-19](#); [Mark 9:17-31](#); [Matthew 4:25-5:12](#).

9:10 a.m. Rosary - *livestreaming*

9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great – *livestreaming* followed by Parish AGM

NOTICE: Although though there are no restrictions on numbers who can attend church services, some people are not comfortable in group settings, therefore we continue our livestreaming of services. Our parish expenses continue and it would be very much appreciated if you could continue to support the parish. There are a few options available to you: drop off your envelope at 54 McMurchy Avenue, mail in your cheque to 55 McMurchy Avenue, Regina, S4R 3G3, or you can also do an e-transfer to stathandeposit@sasktel.net. **PLEASE COMPLETE THE MESSAGE FIELD and DO NOT USE ALIAS NAMES WHEN SENDING AN E-TRANSFER DONATION.**

March 5: 40 Regular Envelopes - \$1305; 2 Building Fund envelopes - \$140; 2 Visitor Envelopes - \$30; 13 Missions of Canada envelopes - \$240; Loose Change - \$187.

E-Transfers – 4 Regular Donations - \$595.00.

9 Pre authorized Givings - \$1515.

ST. ATHANASIUS PARISH's ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held immediately following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, March 19, in the parish auditorium. Coffee, muffins and cheese will be provided.

As per terms in our Parish Constitution, the announcement of executive positions must be written in the bulletin for the three weeks preceding the meeting. The following are the proposed executive positions:

President – Len Markewich (second year of two-year term); Vice-President – Basil Kuzyk (second year of two-year term); Treasurer – Doris Gordon (1st year of a 3rd 2 year term) Secretary - Terelyne Vadeboncoeur (1st year of her first 2 year term) Past President – Kevin Korchinski.

Linda Korchynski has completed 2 years as Secretary and will be leaving the Parish Council. We thank Linda for all her work on Parish Council.

AGM reports will be available after Liturgy after Sunday, March 12th or can be picked up at the parish office after that date.

SOROKOUSTY SERVICES – ALL SOULS SATURDAYS

Sorokousty Services (All Souls Saturday) will be celebrated this year **on March 11, March 18, and May 27.**

The word “Sorokousty” literally means “forty mouths” (*sorok* = *forty*; *ust* = *mouth*). Originally, this was a prayer service offered by forty mouths or by forty priests especially in Lenten time.

Sorokousty or All Souls Saturdays services have been celebrated for deceased by holding Liturgies, Panakhydas or Parastas for them in five Saturdays.

Each family in our parish has a book or a list where the names of deceased family members are written. Father reads out every book or list during each Sorokousty.

If you would like to have the names of your deceased relatives mentioned during the Sorokousty services this year, or if you wish to renew or add to last year’s list, please call @ 306-543-8008 our parish office Tuesday-Thursday 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.



DONATIONS for Easter flowers to decorate our church for Easter are now being accepted. Please use either the specifically marked envelopes provided at the back of the church, e-transfers, or include with your regular donations and indicate “Easter flower donation”. Thank you.



On Williw/Palm Sunday, April 2nd, the UCBC will be hosting a brunch to help us celebrate with our First Holy Communicants. Come out and celebrate as a church family. Tickets will be sold until Sunday March 26th. Adults \$20.00; Children (6-12) - \$15.00; Children 5 and under free.

ATTENTION SENIORS OF ST. ATHANASIUS: Our membership is very low. We would love to keep the club active. We definitely need more seniors to come forward. If anyone is interested in joining the Senior’s organization please call me or text me at 306-591-3702.

Angie Lawryk

FRIENDLY REMINDER: please do not drop used clothing and items at St. Athanasius Parish. The parish doesn’t have the space to house the items and the clothing. Thank you for your co-operation regarding this matter.

2023 LENTEN MISSION IN REGINA



As every year now, the two Regina parishes organize their Lenten Mission retreat jointly. Lenten Mission will take place on **Tuesday, March 28th and Wednesday March 29th** at St. Basil's Parish and will continue at St. Athanasius Parish on **Thursday, March 30th and Friday, March 31st**. The four traditional mission themes for Great Lent will be presented by **Rev. Fr. Leonid Malkov, CSsR** from Yorkton (**Wednesday March 29th and Thursday, March 30th**) and Seminarian Ivan Simko (**Tuesday, March 28th and Friday, March 31st**).

The sessions are not repeated and are different, although related to one another. The mission sessions will be livestreamed on Facebook pages: <https://facebook.com/reginaukrainiancatholicnorth/live> and on website: <https://st-athanasius.ca>

<https://www.facebook.com/stbasilchurchregina/live>

SCHEDULE

Tuesday, March 28 – Lenten Mission at St. Basil's Parish – Session 1

6:00-7:00 p.m.: Confessions
6:30 – 7:00 p.m.: Lenten Akathist
7:00 – 7:30 p.m.: Mission Talk – Seminarian Ivan Simko
7:30 p.m.: Fellowship & Social

Wednesday, March 29 – Lenten Mission at St. Basil's Parish - Session

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.: Confessions
6:30 – 7:40 p.m.: Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts and Mission Homily – Fr. Leonid Malkov, CSsR
8:10 – 9:00 p.m.: Fellowship & Social

Thursday, March 30 – Lenten Mission at St. Athanasius Parish – Session 3

6:00 – 7:00 p.m.: Confessions
6:30 – 7:00 p.m.: Lenten Akathist
7:00 – 7:30 p.m.: Mission Talk – Fr. Leonid Malkov, CSsR
7:30 p.m.: Fellowship & Social

Friday, March 31 – Lenten Mission at St. Athanasius Parish - Session 4

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.: Confessions
6:30 -7:40 p.m.: Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts and Mission Talk – Seminarian Ivan Simko
8:10 – 9:00 p.m.: Fellowship & Social



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Led by the Youth and Young Adults

Calling all youth and young adults! We are looking for those available to lead the Stations of the Cross throughout this Lenten Season on:

Friday, March 24 – Time 7pm at St. Athanasius Parish

If you are available to lead, please send Lesia an email to ultimateaandb@hotmail.com by the Thursday prior to the date noted above.

We welcome everyone to join us on the above date mentioned as we journey through the stations of the cross this Lenten Season!



START AND END YOUR DAY DURING LENT

WITH THE PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM

O Lord and Master of my life, Keep from me the spirit of indifference and discouragement, Lust of power and idle chatter.

(Prostration)

Instead, grant to me Your servant, the spirit of wholeness of being, humble- mindedness, patience and love.

(Prostration)

O Lord and King, Grant me the grace

to be aware of my sins, and not to judge my neighbour, For You are blessed, now and forever and ever.

(Prostration)

POPE's PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH: *For Victims of Abuse.* We pray for those who have suffered harm from members of the Church; may they find within the Church herself a concrete response to their pain and suffering.

MARCH FOOD BANK ITEM – JUICE

FUNERALS AT OUR PARISH

When a parishioner dies, it is important that we honour the deceased with a Christian Funeral. It is essential that you contact the Parish Priest to let him know that the person has died and then contact a local funeral home for the funeral arrangements.



The Funeral Service

Usually, a *Parastas* and/or *Panakhida* (memorial service also called Prayers) is served the evening before the funeral. On the day of the funeral, while at Roman Catholic Church a Mass for the Deceased is celebrated, in Ukrainian Catholic Tradition the Funeral Service is celebrated, therefore, a Divine Liturgy or Eucharist is not attached to it.

Divine Liturgy for the Deceased are celebrated after the burial in the Ukrainian church and may be served 3, 9, 40 days and 1 year service etc.

The Funeral Service of Our Church is deeply impressive, as well as truly meaningful and uplifting. It is profoundly moving, based in the Psalms, various hymns and a blessing of the body. The celebration is a truthful meditation on life and death, reminding us how precious and short life is and how it should be spent in union with God.

Cremation

The Church sincerely recommends that the pious custom of burial be retained; but it does not forbid cremation, unless this is chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching (*Canon 876, §3*).

If the cremation is preferred because of certain circumstances, please make sure you are familiar with the current teaching of the Church and the Eparchial policy regarding it. The Eparchial Funeral directives about cremation are more or less the same as those of Roman Catholics. In any case, the decision to cremate should never be taken hurriedly and always in consultation with your parish priest.

The Catholic Church strongly recommends that the funeral service should be performed in the presence of the body of the deceased before it is cremated. The presence of the body over which the church community is praying is an essential and deeply meaningful feature of the Church's funeral rites.

Most parishioners are familiar with our funeral customs but if you are unsure, you can always contact the Parish Priest who will answer any questions you may have.

THE MAIN RULE OF FASTING – “DO NOT EAT EACH OTHER...”

Lent - the Great Fast - begins forty days before Palm Sunday, on the Monday after Forgiveness Sunday (Cheese- Fare Sunday), and lasts until the Friday preceding Palm Sunday.

Holy Week is a special Fast in honor of our Lord's Passion, and lasts from the evening of Palm Sunday until Holy Saturday inclusive.

According to the directions of the Episcopal Synods of Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church the canonical prescriptions for fasting are **UGCC Part.Law Can. 115§ 2. (CCEO, c. 882):**

- 1) A strict fast is observed on the first day of the Great Fast and Passion Friday, i.e. abstention from meat and dairy products and eggs, as well as foods that contain these ingredients.
- 2) Abstention from all meat and foods containing meat is to be observed during the first week of the Great Fast and all days of Passion Week.
- 3) During the Great Fast, abstention from the consumption of meat and meat products is to be observed on all Mondays, avoided Wednesdays and Fridays. All other foods are permitted on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Prayer & Good Works: All faithful are urged to attend, besides the regular Sunday and Holiday services, the special services of the Great Lent. They are exhorted to perform Christian and penitential deeds of charity.

Following the Church's recommendations about fast, we do not only fast from food, in today's world, we also need to fast from television, internet, computer, games or anything else that prevents us from hearing God's voice of Gospels.

All that the Church recommends to observe regarding the fasting is solely for the welfare of the faithful. It must be understood that the requirements for fasting are recommended only to healthy Christians who do not have any dependence on work, road, training, pregnancy, and much more. Following all previous rules, the Church, considering the present-day life and circumstances, prescribes all the recommended requirements for fasting on the conscience, conditions and current circumstances of the life of Christians.

Have a great Lenten Journey!!

UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC FOUNDATION OF SASKATCHEWAN GRANT FUND PROGRAM

Ukrainian Catholic Foundation of Saskatchewan (UCFSask) is considering applications for grants from the Grant Fund Program. The Foundation is looking for applications from Parishes/Missions and approved Eparchial Organizations for projects/initiatives that align with the Foundation's mission and purpose. In addition, grant allocations will also be guided by the recommendations for action from the Eparchial 2014 SOBOR Document – The Vibrant Parish. The Foundation will be looking to distribute up to \$50,000 from the Grant Fund this year.

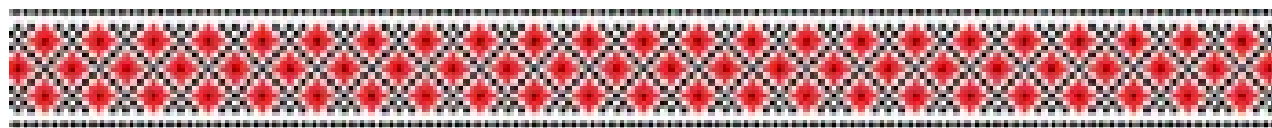
To receive this grant money, Parishes/Missions or Eparchial Organizations will be required to complete a grant application form. The application form is available under the “Grants” tab on the Foundation's website at www.ucfsask.org. More detailed information concerning the grant fund, and the guidelines under which grants will be considered is also available under the “Grants” tab on the website.

Parishes/Missions or Eparchial Organizations wishing to apply for a grant should complete and submit their “grant application form”, to the Foundation Office by 5:00pm April 15, 2023.

NOTE: Parishes/Missions/Eparchial Organizations who have already submitted their applications to the Foundation DO NOT need to re-submit their applications

If more information or clarification is required, please contact the UCFSask office at:

(306) 653-0138, ext 223 or email at admin@ucfsask.org. or go to our website at www.ucfsask.org where the criteria for grant funding and the grant application form is located under the “GRANTS” caption.



St. Athanasius Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood

Easter Sausage Fundraiser



1 Ring = \$7.50 per lbs. (Which is two sticks of sausage.)

Contact Basil Kuzyk at

306-570-6618

or

basilkuzyk@gmail.com

Orders must be in by March 20, 2023.to order.





UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF SASKATOON
УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА ЕПАРХІЯ САСКАТУНУ
214 Ave. M South, Saskatoon, SK, S7M 2K4 CANADA
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Ref. # 0032

March 6, 2023

PRESS RELEASE

To the Clergy, Religious and Faithful of the Eparchy of Saskatoon:

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

In an attempt to be responsible stewards and to balance the budget of the Eparchy by 2024 and beyond, following discussions by the clergy and College of Consultors, decisions were made to reduce expenses in 2023. Decisions to date are:

- The Data Management System will be allowed to lapse at the end of the current contract year, expiring on February 2, 2024. This means that the Foundation will continue using the current system for the 2023 Annual Eparchial Appeal which includes issuing income tax receipts in January of 2024. The Foundation will research and employ a less expensive system in the future. All other uses of the current DMS system will immediately revert to manual systems that have been employed in the previous years.*
- The position of Assistant to the Chancery Office will end on August 31, 2023. His work as of late included three aspects: DMS coordinator, Administration and Stewardship. DMS is no longer required. Other projects have been completed, will be continued or will be deprioritized.*
- The position of Youth Ministry Coordinator, will end as of August 31, 2023. Some of the projects will be re-evaluated for the future to see if they can continue through volunteer efforts.*
- The Family Life Office will be vacated effective March 15, 2023.*
- Safeguarding duties will be reassigned.*
- The position of Chancellor will cease to be funded by the Eparchy as of August 1, 2023 when new clergy assignments will be effected.*

It is clear that these decisions are very significant and have not been made lightly. Let us use the weeks of Holy Lent to process these decisions and charitably discuss these matters. If you would like further information you may contact Fr. Janko Kolosnjaji, Vicar General, at 306-664-3459 or Fr. Ivan Nahachewsky, Chancellor, at 306-961-1390 or your parish priest.

Issued by the Eparchy of Saskatoon

THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT FAST

SUNDAY OF THE VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



Icon of the crucifixion scene

WE BOW TO YOUR CROSS, O LORD

St. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, tells us: "I believe nothing can happen that will outweigh the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For Him I have accepted the loss of everything. I look on everything as so much rubbish if only I can have Christ and be given a place in Him ... All I want is to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and to share His suffering by being formed in the pattern of His death. That is the way I can hope to take my place in the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:8-11).

St. Paul knew Christ because he experienced Christ in his life. This happened not only at the time of his conversion, but also during his life in his mission to bring the knowledge of Christ to the Gentiles. He knew Christ and truly loved Him because he experienced Christ's passion and death through imprisonment, shipwreck, persecution, physical punishment and finally in his martyr's death by the sword.

We are likewise asked to experience Christ by accepting our cross. When we accept a cross and suffer, in some mysterious way, we share in the suffering of Christ. By bearing our cross, we help share His cross. We thus unite ourselves with Christ as we share His experience. By pain and suffering, by bearing our cross, we learn first hand the great love Jesus had for us when He willingly accepted the burden of our sins and their punishment by His redemptive passion and death.

By uniting ourselves with Him and experiencing His pain, we slowly grow to a greater love for both God and neighbor. Only love, real love, can make our sacrifices, our crosses, a joy.