

St. Andrew's Outreach Newsletter

Христос Раждається!
Славте Його!



THE NATIVITY ICON



An old saying claims that one picture is worth a thousand words. This is especially true of the traditional Nativity Icon. The Scriptures relate Christ's birth with words; the icon uses lines, form and color.

The focal point of the Nativity Icon is, of course, the Virgin and child. Mary is depicted in a reclining position, the new-born Christ to her left. Both are serene and still devoid of human emotion. The scene contrasts sharply with the familiar "manger" scenes which depict the Virgin lovingly caressing the new-born child. The Nativity Icon attempts to show a deeper reality. While no one can doubt that a child's birth is depicted, the icon tells us that it is not just any

child or, for that matter, just any birth. One of the hymns for Christmas states that this is the "pre-eternal God, born for our sake as a little child." The iconographer makes no attempt to paint Christ with child-like characteristics. To the contrary, He looks more like a miniature adult. No attempt at realism is made. The reality depicted is deeper than can be comprehended with the human eye.

Surrounding the Virgin and child is the deep darkness of the cave. Artistically, it provides a sharp contrast to the white swaddling clothes and reclining Virgin, further emphasizing their prominence as the focal point of the composition. Yet symbolically, a double meaning is imparted. Not only does it express the fact that Christ comes into a darkened world as the light of mankind, but it provides the viewer with one of the great paradoxes of Christ's life: He entered human history by being born in a cave — a borrowed cave, no less — and He likewise fulfills His earthly mission in a cave — the tomb, also borrowed. Christ comes as King, yet has only a

cave for a palace. He conquers death and established His eternal Kingdom also within a cave. The deep, dark backdrop not only emphasizes the brilliance of the child's figure, but reminds us that this brilliance shall endure forever, overcoming and overpowering darkness for all eternity.

We can clearly see, then, that the central position of the Nativity Icon expresses much more than the miracle of human birth. This child is a human, for sure. Yet this child is also God, the Creator of all, becoming one with His creation by becoming a part of it. He is human, yet divine, and, as the composition of the icon itself states, He is the center of all that exists.

Directly above the manger, we see two groups of angels. The group to the left beholds the Saviour, gazing upon Him in awe, and adoration, while the group to the right turns its attention elsewhere. According to the Gospel, the first "public" announcement of the Saviour's birth was delivered to "certain poor shepherds tending their flocks by night." ...

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Websites:



Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada:

www.uocc.ca

Western Diocese

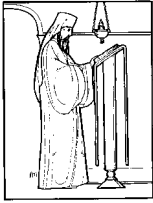
www.uocc.wd.ca/

St. Andrew's Parish
www.uocc-standrew.ca/



(You can now read our monthly "Outreach" newsletter on the parish website)

LITURGICAL



LITURGICAL SCRIPTURE READINGS

January 2008

Sunday, January 6th

32nd Sunday After Pentecost
"Eve of the Nativity of Christ"
Epistle: Hebr. 11:9, 10, 17-23,
32-40;

Gal. 3:15-22; Hebr. 1:1-12;
Gospel: Matt. 1:1-25, 13:31-36.

Monday, January 7th

"The Nativity of Our Lord and
Saviour Jesus Christ"

Epistle: Gal. 4:4-7;
Gospel: Matt. 2:1-12.

Tuesday, January 8th

"Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos"

Epistle: Hebr. 2:11-18;
Gospel: Matt. 2:13-23.

Wednesday, January 9th

"Holy Protomartyr and
Archdeacon Stephen"

Epistle: Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60;
Gospel: Matt. 21:33-42.

Sunday, January 13th

33rd Sunday After Pentecost

Epistle: Tim. 3:10-15;
Gospel: Luke 18:10-14.

Monday, January 14th

"Circumcision of Our Lord.
St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of
Caesarea in Cappadocia"

Epistle: Col. 2:8-12;
Gospel: Luke 2:20-21, 40-52.

Saturday, January 19th

"The Holy Theophany of Our
Lord and Saviour"

Epistle: Tt. 2:11-14;
Gospel: Matt. 3:13-17.

Sunday, January 20th

Sunday After Theophany

"Synaxis of the Forerunner and
Baptist John"
Epistle: Eph. 4:7-13, Acts 19:1-8;
Gospel: Matt. 4:12-17,
John 1:29-34.

Sunday, January 27th
35th Sunday After Pentecost
Epistle: Col. 3:12-16;
Gospel: Luke 18:18-27.



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES AT ST. ANDREW'S

Sunday, January 6th
Bilingual

Sunday, January 13th
Bilingual

Sunday, January 20th
Bilingual

Sunday, January 27th
English

Confession @ 9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy commences
@ 10 a.m.

**Христос
Рождается!**

WORSHIP SERVICES AT ST. ANDREW'S SELO

Wednesday, January 9th
"Holy Protomartyr
and Archdeacon Stephen"

Tuesday, February 12th
"Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs"

10 am - Divine Liturgy
Fellowship Coffee & Lunch
to follow every Divine Liturgy.



Holy Unction

By being **anointed** with the blessed oil of
Holy Unction, we seek —

- the **healing** of our physical and spiritual infirmities;
- the **strengthening** of our spirit in order to bear our afflictions as Christ bore His; and
- **forgiveness** of our sins.

CALENDAR OF WORSHIP SERVICES

~ Nativity thru Theophany ~

January 2008

[Phillipian Fast/Advent — Dec. 28th thru Jan. 6th]

- 6th Sunday — "Eve of Nativity" (Strict Fast)
- 7th Monday — "Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"
9:00 a.m. - Nativity Vigil / Confession
10:00 a.m. - Liturgy of St. John
- 8th Tuesday — "Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos"
9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy @ St. Andrew's Church
- 9th Wednesday — "Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen"
10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy @ St. Andrew's Selo
- 14th Monday — NEW YEAR; "Circumcision of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" / "St. Basil the Great"
9:00 a.m. - Confession
9:30 a.m. - Liturgy of St. Basil & New Year Moleben
- 18th Friday — "Eve of Epiphany" (Strict Fast)
5:30 p.m. - Blessing of Water; Epiphany Supper to follow
- 19th Saturday — "Baptism of Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ"
9:30 a.m. - Liturgy of St. Basil & Great Blessing of Water
(Epiphany Blessing of Homes Commences)



OUR PARISH BULLETIN BOARD



In Memoriam!

St. Andrew's Sobor Family Extends their sincerest condolences to:

➤ Steve & Angie Siry and Family on the repose of Steve's sister, Anne Siry (formerly of Sheho, SK).

[Should you have names of loved ones you would like included in this section, please contact the Church Office (469-1463)]

ETERNAL BE THEIR MEMORY!

WE PRAY THAT THE LORD GOD WILL ESTABLISH THEIR SOUL WHERE THE RIGHTEOUS REPOSE



COPIES OF "THE HANDMAIDEN" & "AGAIN" MAGAZINES ARE AVAILABLE @ \$6.00/COPY AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE CHURCH, OR SUBSCRIBE @ \$5.00/COPY.

UOCC Bylaws

In preparation for discussing the new proposed bylaws of the *Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada* and to get a better understanding of the Orthodox Church, a Bible Study series (4 parts) has been prepared.



The "Guiding Principles Bible Study" presents the biblical and ecclesiological foundation for our new Church bylaws, and all those who would like to constructively contribute to the formation of these bylaws, as well as all those who are interested in learning more about the biblical basis of the Orthodox Church in general, are strongly encouraged to take part in the Bible Study session that will be offered.

Copies of the Bible Study, the Proposed Revised UOCC Bylaws, and a document comparing the current bylaws and proposed bylaws are all available at the entrance to the Church or at the Church Office. Please sign-in when you take a copy. Thank you!



NEXT PYROHY SUPPER!

Our next "Pyrohy Supper"

will be held

on

Friday,

February 1st

from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Bring Family & Friends!

Dine In or Take Out!

(There will be **no** Pyrohy Supper in the month of January)



DONATION ENVELOPES



Should you require more "Offering Envelopes" contact Gene Luchka (465-1736) or Mark Bartko (469-9921) or fill out the request form in the Church vestibule entrance area.

SUNDAY FELLOWSHIPS

The Sunday Fellowships are greatly appreciated by the worshipping congregation; therefore we would like to thank those who sponsored or provided these fellowships.

A most heartfelt thank you to:

... the months of **December** sponsors:

Emilie Gorgichuk, Mary Dymianiw, Anne Harasymuk, Greg & Patrece Maluzynsky (Dec. 2nd); Patron Saint's Day Feast and Peter Haugen's Ordination as Deacon (Dec. 9th); Church School Parents (Dec. 16th); Orysiuk Gotsoliouk - One Year Memorial for her mother (Dec. 23rd).

Those who had made the effort to sponsor or provide a Fellowship Lunch have to be commended.

At the same time **we invite other parish members** to also sponsor an occasional Fellowship.

If you are so inclined, please sign-up on the displayed sheet or contact **Stephanie** (469-1463 or 469-5293). Thank you!

THANK YOU!

On behalf of the *Probratymy* from Order of St. Andrew's Edmonton Branch, we wish to thank Stephanie and all the kitchen staff for the great meal and service which was provided on Wednesday, December 12th for the Annual Patron Saint's Day Celebration.

-Wally Yadowski
Social Chair

UKRAINIAN CHRISTMAS CAROLLING



To renew the Ukrainian Christmas tradition of door-to-door caroling in our Parish, you are invited to participate in this joyous experience for the purpose of goodwill, fellowship and fundraising. If you wish to go caroling and/or receive carolers in your home, please add your name to one of the Christmas Carolling posters around the church complex or contact Lesia Perritt at 465-5440 or lesiadp@shaw.ca to express an interest. A valiant attempt will be made to accommodate everyone! **Веселих Свят!**





MORE PARISH BULLETIN BOARD!



GREETERS' ROSTER

Listed below is a roster of those who have confirmed their participation as "Greeters/Hosts/Ushers" for this month:

January 6th -

Sharyn Johnstone & Robert Shewchuk

January 13th -

Wallace & Marie Mailman

January 20th -

Tom & Christine Haugen

January 27th -

Pauline & Alex Lysak

February 3rd -

Steve & Emilie Gorgichuk

Many thanks to those of you who have already volunteered for this ministry.

MORE GREETERS NEEDED

If you are interested in acting as a Greeter, please contact Pauline Lysak (434-4826) or Father Victor (440-4822).



READING MATERIAL



Several new books have been added to our Atrium **Library**

Collection. You may wish to have a look.



CHRISTMAS CAROL COLLECTION

Copies of thirty-one of the most popular Ukrainian Christmas Carols are now available for only \$29.95. Transliterated versions are also be obtained. You can order your copies now by emailing rlopatka@telusplanet.net or calling 434-3732.

CAMP BAR-V-NOK

For those families who are busy scheduling dancing, hockey, soccer, ball games, etc., we wish to inform you in advance that the Annual St. Andrew's weekend at Camp Bar-V-Nok has been booked for Thursday, June 19th - Sunday, June 22nd, 2008! Keep these dates in mind for your long term planning — more details will follow as we get into the spring season.

-Gordon Ostapchuk
Committee Chair

CHRISTMAS RADIO PROGRAM



St. Andrew's Sobor Parish will be broadcasting a Ukrainian Christmas Radio program on Monday, January 7th, 2008 @ 6:30 p.m. on World FM 101.7.

Carols will be sung by St. Andrew's Parish Choir and a Christmas Message will be delivered by Rt. Rev. Protobresbyter Victor Lakusta.

ORTHODOX

MEN'S RETREAT OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

The 5th Annual Retreat will be held April 11-13, 2008 at the Sanctum Retreat Centre in Caroline, Alberta. The theme for this year is "*Walking in Wisdom*" with Guest Speaker Fr. John Finlay. For more information contact Glen Tracey c/o St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Congregation in Calgary (403-934-4688) or pick up a registration form in the Church Entrance area.



Milestone Wedding Anniversary

It is with great pleasure that we congratulate Harry & Kay Koshman on their 73rd Anniversary Celebration. On behalf of St. Andrew's Parish, we wish you well and many more years.

Mhooii Jima!

CHURCH CLEAN-UP THANK YOU!

A huge thank you goes out to the following people who gave of their time to do the Church clean-up this month:

George & Vera Tkachyk

Robert Shewchuk

Alex Lysak

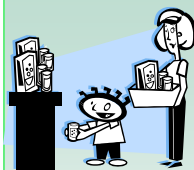
Gordon Ostapchuk



NEW PRIEST'S VESTMENTS!

Two sets of priest's vestments (one gold and one purple) were purchased for our Sobor Parish; therefore, we are appealing for donations, to cover the cost of these vestments. Please submit your donation to the Church Office or the Sunday Offering Baskets — clearly indicating that your donation is for the 'vestments'. All donors will be published in our future newsletter. We thank you for your generous support!

Food Bank Collection:



The membership of St. Andrew's Congregation — men, women and youth — support the efforts to make the lives of people in need — the unemployed, homeless, abused, abandoned, ill, elderly and lonely — more comfortable and bearable. **We continue to appeal to the St. Andrew's Parish members for support.** The *Edmonton Food Bank* still requires a large amount of non-perishable foods to replenish its continuously used up supply. A box will be set up in the atrium for your contributions. Bring in your groceries anytime at your convenience. Thank you!

-Sandra Hohol

Pochaiv Safe House Update

We are pleased to announce that the property in Ukraine where the *Klenovi Lyst* Safe House facility will be used as a transitional location for disadvantaged youth has been acquired! On December 7th, monies were used to purchase the building (a former kindergarten) to be used in the next facet of this project. Many thanks for your generous donations!

To date we have collected close to \$22,000.00!



Nativity Icon ... *Cont'd from page 1*

... Shepherds were hardly the socially elite of their day. They were simple, probably smell, common folk, the precise group whom the Saviour was to love so dearly. It was not by chance that these common, truly ordinary people were the first to learn of the Saviour's birth. It was, after all, the common man who responded to His message. Another paradox develops within the icon. Christ, the King of all, is surrounded by commoners, not royalty. And the commoners of this world interact as one with the angels of heaven, joining together in acknowledging their Saviour. The heavenly and the worldly — angel and shepherds — are united in the One who created both and unites all in His own person and being.

The upper left-hand corner of the icon depicts the Magi, the three "wise men" from the East. They gaze at the star of Bethlehem, studying its astrological uniqueness, only to find something even more unique — the God of all born among men. Another paradox unfolds. Christ's own earthly king, Herod the Great, not only rejected Him, but sought to kill Him. His own people rejected Him. To the Jews, the Messiah was to come for their benefit as their Saviour. Yet it was not only to the lowliest members of Jewish society, the shepherds, that the Saviour was first revealed, but also to three "kings" from the Orient — star worshippers, who "were taught by a star" to adore Christ, the "Sun of Righteousness."

The lower portion of the Nativity Icon brings out a single theme — humanity. If the image of angels interacting with shepherds and pagan magi serves to emphasize and fulfill the importance of the central figures, stressing the divinity of Christ, the two scenes in the lower portion of the icon remind us that this divine child was fully human. The homey image pictured in the lower right-hand corner, showing two women washing the newborn Christ, testifies that He is equally man. He takes on our humanity completely. He was born as a human, and, as such, must experience all that we experience, including that first bath. While no mention is made in the Scripture of this incident, it symbolizes an important reality, and enables us to understand Christ's complete identification with the human condition. He is "true God," as proclaimed in the Nicene Creed, yet He is also "true man." He is the creator, yet takes on all that is appropriate to His creation. He created the waters, yet as a newborn child, needs to be washed. This portion of the icon, then, does not serve to document an event. It transcends a mere event and becomes a statement in and of itself. If the upper portions of the icon teach us that the child of Bethlehem is the God and Saviour of all, this almost quaint scene reminds us that He is also human, just like us.

The rather unusual scene in the lower left-hand corner shows Joseph sleeping. Before him stands the curious figure of an elderly, bearded man. Various interpretations of this portion of the icon are offered. The most common states that Joseph is greatly troubled, tempted to put Mary away due to his obvious embarrassment. (They were not yet married.) The bearded figure personifies that temptation. Yet Joseph does not give in to that temptation. He accepts God's will and understands the truth about the birth of Christ. It is not his own, biological son, but God's. Joseph is thus the ever-faithful one who trusts God completely, despite the fact that he might not completely understand all that has happened. ... **-Cont'd in the Outreach EXTRA**



From Our Parish President

From the Parish President on Behalf of the Board of Management:

Christ is Among Us! Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ. This report consists of several announcements, a summary of the December 10 2007 Board meeting, and a special thank you.

Announcements:

1. Annual General Meeting. **The AGM has been scheduled for February 03, 2008.** This is an advance notice to Board members and to chairs and presidents of committees and related and affiliated organizations that they should have their reports submitted to the Church office by **January 13 2008.** The notice of meeting, agenda, and related information will be available on **January 20 2008.**

2. Initial Donation for Membership Privileges. On behalf of the Board of Management, I extend a sincere thank you to all who have fulfilled their initial donation for membership privileges for 2007 and to all who have contributed financially to our Parish. To those members who have not met their initial donations (\$150.00 for individual; \$300.00 for family) for membership privileges for 2007, please do so by December 31 2007. For purposes of levies to the Consistory and to the Western Diocese, our membership count will be based on the number of members who have fulfilled their full initial donation as of December 31 2007.

From the December 10 2007 Board Meeting:

1. Deferred the following agenda items to the next Meeting: Western Diocese Conference Follow-up, Parish Website Submission Procedures, Patron Saint's Day Follow-up, 50th Anniversary of St. Andrew's Parish, Commemoration of Holodomor of 1932-33 in Ukraine, and Report form Nominating Committee Chair.

2. Accepted that a revised advertisement of our Parish's Church Services be placed in the Sherwood Park Weekly News..

3. Tabled the "All Ukrainian" Divine Liturgy be tabled and that Mr. Michael Zukiwsky and Fr. Victor discuss implementation prior to the next Board meeting.

JANUARY 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Fr. Victor will be taking a short vacation from December 24th till January 3rd. For pastoral services, please call any of the Edmonton Mission Parish Priests.		1 <u>Fast</u>	2 <u>Fast</u>	3 <u>Fast</u>	4 <u>Fast</u> 6:30 p.m. - Ukr. Dance Classes <i>(Important rehearsal)</i>	5 <u>Fast</u>
6 <u>Strict Fast</u> <i>32nd Sunday After Pentecost</i> "Eve of Nativity"	7 "Nativity of Our Lord" Vigil - 9:00 a.m. Liturgy - 10 a.m.	8 "Synaxis of Theotokos" Liturgy @ St. Andrew's - 9 a.m. 9 a.m. - Golden Age Club Mtg.	9 "St. Stephen" 10 a.m. Liturgy @ Selo 7 p.m. - Ukr. Lang. Classes (1 group)	10	11 St. Andrew's Malanka <i>5:30 pm-Cocktails</i> <i>6:30 pm-Dinner</i>	12
13 <i>33rd Sunday After Pentecost</i> Sunday Before Theophany	14 New Year "Circumcision of Our Lord" & "St. Basil the Great" Liturgy @ St. Andrew's - 9:30 a.m.	15 9 a.m. - Golden Age Club Mtg. 7:00 p.m. - Parish Board Mtg.	16 7 p.m. - Ukr. Lang. Classes	17	18 <u>Strict Fast</u> "Eve of Epiphany" 5:30 p.m. - Blessing of Water & Epiphany Supper	19 "Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ" 9:30 a.m. - Liturgy of St. Basil & Blessing of Water
20 <i>34th Sunday After Pentecost</i> Sunday After Theophany "Synaxis of Baptist John"	21 7:00 p.m. - Mtg of Ladies Auxiliary & Men's Club	22 9 a.m. - Golden Age Club Mtg.	23 7 p.m. - Ukr. Lang. Classes	24	25 6:30 p.m. - Ukr. Dance Classes	26
27 <i>35th Sunday After Pentecost</i> <u>English Service</u>	28	29 9 a.m. - Golden Age Club Mtg.	30 7 p.m. - Ukr. Lang. Classes	31	Sunday Fellowship Roster: Jan. 6th ... Jan. 13th ... Jan. 20th ... Jan. 27th ... PLEASE SIGN UP IN THE CHURCH ATRIUM TO SPONSOR A FELLOWSHIP LUNCH	

Confession... 9:00 - 9:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy...10:00 a.m.

Reading of Hours (Youth Sunday)... 9:30: a.m.

Following every Sunday Divine Liturgy, "Fellowship Coffee & Lunch" is served!

We welcome you and yours!



From Our Parish President ...

Continued from p. 5

...
 4. Accepted that the Metropolitan Ladies League proceed with commissioning a mural and that the mural be placed on the wall of the first landing in the stairwell leading to the Cultural room.
 5. Accepted that a photo display of the members of the Metropolitan Ladies League be placed in an appropriate place in the Tillie Kurysh Hall.
 6. Accepted that the photo display and lay out of the members of the Metropolitan Ladies League complement the other framed photos in the Tillie Kurysh Hall.
 7. Accepted that the requirement for honorary membership is continuous membership at St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish for a minimum of ten previous years. The other requirement is that the member be 90 years or older.
 8. Heard a report from Mrs. Lesia Perritt regarding the caroling survey.
 9. Accepted that a quarter page, back and white Nativity Greeting be placed in the Herald/Visnyk.
 10. Accepted the Treasurer's Report.
 11. Accepted that bills payable be paid.
 12. Accepted that the accumulated donations toward the Metropolitan's Residence be forwarded to the Consistory.
 13. Accepted that the Parish forward \$5000.00 to the Council of Ukrainian Orthodox Churches,

Edmonton as part of our investment in St. Stephen's Cemetery in Edmonton.

14. Heard from Dr. Harry Hohol, membership chair, that 13 members had not fulfilled their initial donation for membership privileges for 2007.

15. Heard an oral report from Fr. Victor.

16. Scheduled a meeting of the Board and the Budget and Finance Committee for December 19 2007 for the purposes of developing a budget for our Parish for 2008.

17. Accepted the recommendations, with modifications, of the Human Resources Committee regarding employee hourly rates, salaries, and benefits for 2008.

18. Accepted that financial aid in the amount of \$430.00 be provided to a non-member of our Parish.

19. Scheduled the next Board meeting for January 15 2008.

A Special Thank You:

On December 9 2007, our Parish celebrated the commemoration of our Patron Saint, Saint Andrew, the first called apostle. During the program, we recognized the many members who served as members on and representatives of committees and organizations and members who volunteered with the many activities of our Parish. I concluded the recognition with a story about traveling by stagecoach and ticket holders. I am going to

repeat that message here as a special thank you to all the members of our Parish because each and every one of us has volunteered our services and help to our Parish. So, here is the story. "I want to tell you a bit about some reading that I have done. The reading comes from a section called Reflections which appears in the Country Guide, which is a farming magazine. The issue is November 2006. Reflections is a section that is written by Bishop Rod Andrews who is with the Anglican Diocese in Saskatoon. Bishop Andrews writes about the history of traveling by stagecoach. So this goes back some time because I suspect that none of us had to travel by stagecoach. However, in the days of travel by stagecoach you could purchase 3 different levels of stagecoach tickets. Having a first class ticket meant that you can remain seated during the entire trip, no matter what happened. If the stagecoach got stuck in the mud, or if a wheel fell off, you could remain seated until the problem was fixed. If you had a second class ticket, you could remain seated until there was a problem. So, if the stagecoach got stuck in the mud or a wheel fell off, a second class ticket holder had to get off until the problem was resolved. You could stand off to one side and watch the other people work; you were not required to get your hands dirty. However, you were not allowed to stay on board – only the first class ticket holders could stay on

board. With a third class ticket, you definitely had to get off the stagecoach if something went wrong and it was your responsibility to help solve the problem. If the stagecoach was stuck in the mud, you had to get out and push. If the wheel was broken and had fallen off the wagon, you had to help fix that broken wheel and get it back on the stagecoach. It was your duty and responsibility to make sure that the stagecoach completed its trip. And so dear brothers and sisters in Christ, life at St. Andrew's is much like a trip on one of those old time stagecoaches. There are no first class or second class ticket holders. No matter where we think we should ride, we are all riding third class on St. Andrew's stagecoach and I am very proud of that. Thank you very much for volunteering and insuring that St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish remains a viable Parish!"

Within a very short time, we will be celebrating the Birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Let us celebrate his Birth with Faith, with Grace, with humbleness, with love, with generosity and benevolence, with hope and in harmony. On behalf of the Board, I extend to all of you, a Joyous and Merry Christmas and the very best in 2008.

God Bless!

Ernest N. Skakun – Parish President





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Email: st.andrews_uocc@telusplanet.net

PASTOR:

Right Rev. Fr. Victor Lakusta
Phone: 780 - 438-1890
Email: flakusta@telusplanet.net

Office Hours:

Tuesday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
Thursday: Pastoral Visitation Day
Friday: 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

“St. Andrew’s Outreach” is published monthly to encourage Christian growth, to share our faith in Our Lord God, Jesus Christ, to keep you informed of our parish events and activities, and to invite you to worship with us.

Next “Outreach” Issue - January 27th

Disclaimer: We do not claim that all the information published in this newsletter is accurate. All submissions are the responsibilities of their contributors.



St. Andrew’s Men’s Club Website
www.uocc-standrew.ca/mensclub/



PASTORAL REFLECTIONS!



IT’S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS!

The forty-day Lenten period which precedes the Great Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and began on November 28th is known as **ADVENT**. Like Great Lent, Advent is a time of fasting, repentance, prayer, and meditation; unlike Great Lent, it is observed in a most personal and private way, for the season of Advent has no special liturgical services.

In our secularized society, Advent provides the means of combating the annual complaint that “Christmas is becoming too commercial.” Advent offers us the opportunity to prepare for Christmas in a *spiritual* manner while enabling us to receive Jesus Christ, the greatest gift offered to humanity, into our lives. Advent’s emphasis is on our preparation to receive this Gift rather than on preparing to simply celebrate the day in a secular manner.

How, during Advent, can you prepare for the Great Feast of Christ’s birth? Orthodox Christians have traditionally observed the following:

Prayer

Communicate more frequently with

God. Worship and praise Him. Take your complaints to Him. Ask for His blessings, for direction, for guidance, for help. Advent is a perfect time to improve – or begin – a solid, serious, prayer life. (Warning: Asking God for that Christmas present you’ve always dreamed of is not what is meant by Advent prayer!)

Fasting

Before going out for a big dinner at an expensive restaurant, one usually eats very little so that one’s appetite might be saved. The same applies to Lenten fasting. If we are to truly *feast* on Christmas, we must first fast. Determine a rule of fasting for yourself and *stick with it*. Do as much as you can, but remember that fasting is simply a means of preparation, not an end in itself. Read through the account of the Sermon on the Mount of Matthew 5-7 for Jesus’ views on fasting.

Holy Communion

The birth of Christ unites God and man in a glorious yet mysterious way. In the same way, the sacrament of Holy Communion also unites us with God. It reveals our *common union* with God, and is the most perfect means of offering Him thanks.

Receiving Holy Communion frequently during the Lenten period prepares us to understand the birth of Christ and His involvement with humanity.

Sharing With Those In Need

When Christ came into the world, He did so in order to share Himself with us in our hour of need. We, in turn, are expected to share others around us who are also in need. During Advent, open yourself up to others. Be reconciled with those who hurt you and with those whom you have hurt. Seek forgiveness from others while offering forgiveness. Be generous with others just as God has been generous to you. Help the needy just as God helps you. Share with the poor. Pray for the sick. Give yourself as a Christmas present to those who need you the most.

If, during this Advent season, the four means of preparation outlined above bring you even one iota closer to Our Lord, then you will have indeed properly prepared for the Feast of the Nativity and for the reception of the greatest Christmas gift of all – **Jesus Christ!**

-Fr. Victor

