

# St. Andrew's Outreach Newsletter



## Who Is Jesus?

All seven of the Church's Ecumenical Councils have been concerned with a single question: "Who is Jesus?" Indeed, according to the Gospels, Jesus Himself posed this question several times in various forms: "But who do you say that I am?" (Mark 8:29). "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" (Matthew 22:42)

The reason this question is important has to do with certain claims of Jesus, which indicate that the answer touches on the nature of God. When Jesus declares, for instance, that He and the Father are one (John 10:30), when He affirms that He is the way, the truth and the life, and that no one comes to the Father except through Him (14:6), when He claims that those who see Him see the Father (14:9) — in all such assertions Jesus of Nazareth forces Himself on the conscience of every human being who has ever lived.

The radical nature of these claims implies that their validity concerns the very being of God and, hence, the meaning of human existence. If these assertions are true,

then there really is no God except the God revealed as the Father of this Palestinian carpenter.

This is extremely important, because it implies that all other religions — even if they are monotheistic — are intrinsically idolatrous. Apart from Jesus Christ, there is no access to the true God. The others are but thieves and robbers (10:8). Every competitive religion is idol worship. What, after all, is idolatry but the worship of a false divinity. If the true God is known only in Jesus, then only Jesus can save mankind from bondage to false gods. Truly, if Jesus of Nazareth is who He says He is, then He is history's only safeguard against idolatry. It is either Jesus of the idols. There is no other choice.

### Our Holy One

Strictly speaking, human history has had only one "saint". At least that is what I infer from the Church's statement on the subject. When we chant the Great Doxology at the end of Matins, we declare to Christ our Lord, "Thou alone art holy" (*Sy ei monos Hagios*). I think that text rather settles the point.

But it is also a starting point, because more needs to be said on the subject. When we speak of Christ, among all human beings, as "alone Holy," the expression is not one of a simple degree. It is not a quantitative assertion, declaring that Christ, being holier than the rest of us, is said to be the "only saint" (*Tu solus Sanctus*). He is not only holier than the rest of us. He is holy in a sense very different from the rest of us. His is not a derived holiness of God, "for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

If Christ alone is holy, it is also His glory that fills the earth. "The whole earth is full of His glory," chanted the seraphim. Holiness is God's glory hidden and unseen. Glory is God's holiness openly revealed. Hence, it is the holiness of Christ that causes the glory of God to shine forth from His face (John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 4:4, 6; conceals and reveals the mystery.

### Our Mediator

Taking seriously the claims of Jesus, the New Testament four times speaks of Him as our "Mediator," our *Mesites*. Thus the Apostle Paul calls Him the "one Mediator between God and men, the Man ...-Continued on p. 5

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## Websites:

**Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada:**

[www.uocc.ca](http://www.uocc.ca)

**Western Eparchy**

[www.uocc.we.ca/](http://www.uocc.we.ca/)

**St. Andrew's Parish**  
[www.uocc-standrew.ca/](http://www.uocc-standrew.ca/)

↓  
**(You can read our monthly "Outreach" newsletter on the Parish website)**



# LITURGICAL



## LITURGICAL SCRIPTURE READINGS

February 2009

Sunday, February 1st  
*33rd Sunday After Pentecost*  
Epistle: 1 Tim. 4:9-15;  
Gospel: Luke 19:1-10.

Sunday, February 8th  
*"Sunday of the Publican  
and Pharisee"*  
Epistle: II Tim. 3:10-15;  
Gospel: Luke 18:10-14.

Sunday, February 15th  
*"Presentation (Meeting) of  
Our Lord in the Temple"*  
Epistle: I Cor. 6:12-20;  
Gospel: Luke 15:11-32.

Sunday, February 22nd  
*"Meat-fare Sunday"*  
Epistle: 1 Cor. 8:8-9:2;  
Gospel: Matt. 25:31-46.  
  
*Confession @ 9:00 a.m.*  
*Divine Liturgy commences*  
*@ 10 a.m.*

### SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES AT ST. ANDREW'S

Sunday, February 1st  
**Bilingual**

Sunday, February 8th  
**Bilingual**

Sunday, February 15th  
**Bilingual**

Sunday, February 22nd  
**English**

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



## The Liturgy As A Baptismal Feast

In the first centuries it was most usual for people to become members of the Church as adults. A person received baptism and became a member of the Church after he had learned the truths of the faith. In practice this instruction of *catechumens*, people preparing for baptism, took place mainly in connection with the Holy Liturgy. But those preparing for baptism were allowed to be present only during the first part of the Liturgy. Still today this part of the Liturgy is called the *Liturgy of the Catechumens*. Its central feature is the scriptural reading and the teaching, chumens took part in prayers offered on their behalf. ... ***-Continued on p. 3***

## Upcoming Sunday Memorial Services

Feb. 1st - One-Year Memorial Fellowship for **Harry Koshman** (sponsored by the Family)



### WORSHIP SERVICES AT ST. ANDREW'S SELO

Thursday, February 12th  
*"Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs"*

Saturday, March 7th  
*Theodore Saturday*  
(Great Lent Confession  
& Communion)

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



## The Eucharist

### The Sacrament Of Our Redemption

That remarkable teacher in the early Church in the West, the blessed Augustine, speaks of his mother, the pious Monica, in his *Confessions* as follows:

*She only desired to be remembered at Thy altar, which she had served without ever missing so much as a day. For she knew that at Thy altar we receive the holy Victim Who cancelled the decree that was against us and in Whom we have triumphed over the enemy who reckons up our sins, tries to find some charge against us, and yet can find no fault in Him in Whom we conquer ... To this sacrament of our redemption Thy handmaid had bound her soul by the bond of faith. (IX:13)*

This testimony of Augustine concerning his mother, who had "bound her soul to the sacrament of redemption by the bond of faith," tells us something very essential about the faith of a Christian, something that was important not only in Monica's time in the early Church of the fourth century, but even today.

The visible centre of the spiritual life of the individual member of the Church as well as that of the whole Church is still the Holy Altar and the sacrament of redemption which is performed there. This sacrament is called **Holy Communion**, and the service in which it takes place is called the **Holy and Divine Liturgy**.

Participation in Holy Communion is the physical aspect of this sacrament of our redemption, but its audible and verbal content is the offering of thanksgiving — *eucharistia* in Greek — to God the Father. In this verbal service the main cause for thanksgiving is the redemptive sacrifice once offered by Christ for the sake of mankind; the **Eucharist** is also called a bloodless sacrifice of thanksgiving. ◆



## OUR PARISH BULLETIN BOARD



### In Memoriam!

[Should you have names of loved ones you would like included in this section, please contact the Church Office (780-469-1463)]

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

- ⇒ Ernest & Vivian and Family on the repose of Ernest's uncle, Fred Skakun (of Hairy Hill, AB);
- ⇒ Mike & Adele Sawchyn and Family on the repose of Adele's brother-in-law, Theodore Windjack (of Kelowna, BC);
- ⇒ Walter Koshman and Family on the repose of Walter's brother-in-law, Theodore Windjack (of Kelowna, BC);
- ⇒ Clifford & Lesia Perritt and Family on the repose of Cliff's brother, Roy Perritt;
- ⇒ Rev. Michael & Dobr. Orysia Kopchuk and Family on the repose of Orysia's brother;
- ⇒ Mike & Adele Sawchyn and Family on the repose of Adele's uncle, Dave Davidson (of Saskatoon, SK);
- ⇒ Walter Koshman and Family on the repose of Walter's uncle, Dave Davidson (of Saskatoon, SK).

The 2009 Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 8th at 1:00 p.m. at St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish.

All reports of the Board members will be available for pick-up and review the week before.



#### REMEMBERING THE LIVING & DEPARTED

During every liturgy the priest says prayers for the living and the departed. At the entrance to the church, please fill in special "Remembrance Cards" and submit them to the celebrant priest so that prayers may be offered.

#### ETERNAL BE THEIR MEMORY!

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

#### NEXT PYROHY SUPPER!

Our next "Pyrohy Supper" will be held on **Friday, February 6th & then on March 6th** from 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. Bring Family & Friends! Dine In or Take Out!



#### 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 **January** sponsors:

Fellowship Committee (Jan. 4 & 11); Ladies Auxiliary Epiphany Supper (Jan. 18).

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** (780-469-1463 or 780-469-5293).

Thank you!

#### BLESSING OF HOMES

During the **Epiphany Season** (January 19th to February 15th), Fr. Victor will be visiting the homes of those members who wish to have their home blessed and prayers offered. The home is considered to be the "Domestic Church", which the Parish Priest visits annually to offer prayers and ask for God's blessings of not only the homes but also of those who dwell within it.

**All visitations will be by appointment**, thereby you will be called to arrange an appointment for such a visit.



#### "Baptismal Feast"

*Continued from p. 2*

... These included petitions to "make them worthy in due time of the laver of regeneration," or baptism, and to "unite them to Thy Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church." Then, after receiving the bishop's blessing, the catechumens departed from the service. Only the faithful who had already been baptized could remain in the church, and hence the second part of the Liturgy is still called the *Liturgy of the Faithful*. This preparation for baptism in connection with the Liturgy usually went throughout the six weeks of Lent. Then on Great Saturday or Easter Day itself the catechumens were led into the baptistry or to a shore ... **-Cont'd on p. 5**

#### 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.



## 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:

February 1st -

*Steven & Patricia Pawluk*

February 8th -

*Bruce & Gloria Macdonald*

February 15th -

*Olga Alexandruk &*

*Dobr. Marusia Lakusta*

February 22nd -

*Clifford & Lesia Perritt*

### MORE GREETERS

#### NEEDED

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



### WALL CALENDARS & NEW CHURCH ALMANAC

Wall calendars for 2009 are now available on a voluntary donation basis.



As well, Church Almanacs may be purchased for \$25.00. For more information, please contact the Church Office.

### THANK YOU!

A sincere thank you to the **Malanka Committee:** Trish & Mark Bartko, Stephanie McNee, George Gushaty, Fedor Gotsaliouk and Gene Luchka for all your help!

Special thanks to the Hospodari, Bill & Mary Dymianiw for being such great hosts; Stephanie for preparing the hors d'oeuvres and as always, the delicious "nachynka". Mark — superb work as MC!

Also thanks to Ollie Sluzar, Mickey Samycia, Sandra Hohol, June Gushaty, Robyn Shewchuk, Deona & Andry Serna, Alex Fisher, Steve Korchinsky and Gordon Haug for all your work.

Thank you to Trish and the *Veerneest* Dancers and the Malanka skit participants, Rose Marie Danyliuk; and Mercer's Catering for a delicious dinner and excellent service.

St. Andrew's Men's Club  
Social Chair  
*Wally Yadlowski*



### MEN'S CLUB AGM

The **Annual General Meeting of St. Andrew's Men's Club shall be held on Monday, February 16th, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.** at St. Andrew's Cultural Center. We welcome existing members and any persons interested in becoming involved with the Men's Club organization. For more information, please contact Lawrence Dary.



### Who Was Saint Valentine?

St. Valentine is a Christian martyr who is commemorated on the 14th of February. As with many martyrs from that time, not a great deal of information about him has come down to us. We do have a legend that gives us a hint although the original message content was rather different to the romantic messages that are sent today. ... **-Cont'd on p. 8**

### Christian Mission Donation

At the Western Eparchy Conference held in October this past year it was resolved that each parish, mission and parochial district be encouraged to collect a special offering during the Christmas and Waster festive season, and that the money collected be equally distributed to the Consistory of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada and the Western Eparchy of the UOCC.

A second offering collection was held on January 18th, and to date we have received \$1025.00. We will continue to receive donations till the end of January. Please use the "*Christmas Mission Donation*" envelopes or send it to the Parish Office **noting on the cheque** that it is designated for the "*Christmas Mission Donation*".

We thank you for your generous support!

### 50th Anniversary Photo Directory

We have arranged for a "Final Pick-up" for those who did not receive their copy. You can still do so on **Saturday, February 7th between 10 a.m. and 12 noon in the Parish Atrium.** After that, Michael Gilyshyn will prepare a list of those who were not able to attend Saturday, and directories will be made available in the Church Office.

We have a limited number of 'overprint' copies which are available for purchase from George Gushaty at \$10.00 a copy.

Thanks again to the Directory committee, those who participated and of course the Men's Club. Seven months later ... we're done ... Thank you, Lord!  
*Johnny Bohonos, Pictorial Directory*

### "GET ACQUAINTED TEA"

#### IN HONOR OF HIS GRACE, ILARION

**Sunday, February 15th, 2009**

Official Opening 2:00 p.m./Reception to Follow

St. John's Auditorium

(10611 - 110 Avenue)

Reception hosted by St. John's Cathedral

Branch and other Edmonton Branches

of the

Ukrainian Women's Association

*Sponsored by the Western Eparchy of the UOCC*

## CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS



*Glory to Jesus Christ!*

A special thank you is extended to the students who participated in the Nativity Pageantry which was enjoyed by all — a job well done!

### Looking Ahead:

**March 8th** *Sunday of Orthodoxy* — Students will participate

**March 21st** *Paska and Pysanka Workshop* — Please register your child/children and sign up to volunteer to help that day

*Yours in Christ,*  
Olga Alexandruk

### **“WHO IS JESUS?”** *Continued from p. 1*

... Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5), while the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers to Jesus as “The Mediator of the new covenant” (9:15; 12:24), the Mediator of a better covenant” (8:6). Jesus is God’s Son who assumed our humanity and became thereby the one Mediator between God and Man. This is to say that in the person of Jesus, both God’s nature and man’s are fixed forever in a unity that prompts us to speak of the God-Man. He joins both forms of existence in His own person.

Jesus’ mediation means that He is both God rendered visible and Man rendered acceptable. For our salvation, the Church insists, He must be both. Were He only a man, His death on the Cross would be unavailing. Where He only God, His resurrection from the dead would have no significance. If we are truly redeemed, He must be both.

### **Our Brother**

In the Incarnation, God’s Son became our brother. He affirmed this truth when He said to Mary Magdalene, “Go to My brethren” (John 20:17). “I will declare Your name to My brethren,” says He to the Father in Hebrews 2:12.

Most of all, however, Jesus claims brotherhood with all mankind in the context of history’s final judgment, where we learn, “inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Matthew 25:40). Jesus’ proclaimed solidarity of brotherhood with the whole human race means that the proper destiny of that race is a true community. It is not an assembly of self-made individuals, but the communion of the younger brothers and sisters of Jesus, who will be judged, at the end of history, on the basis of how they have treated one another.

**Source:** *Patrick Henry Reardon*

All Saints Antiochian Orthodox Church, Chicago Illinois



## From Our Parish President

*Slava Isusu Khrystu! Glory be to Jesus Christ!*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I am pleased to report on the following activities of the Board **from the January 12, 2009 Board meeting.**

1. Two computers and a few peripherals including wireless internet access and a printer are scheduled for installation on January 14. As mentioned before, phase 2 of the computer system implementation will occur in the February/March time frame with the addition of a new office computer and server. St. Andrew’s is looking for a member to act as our computer system administrator to help us manage our system. Please help us and volunteer for this position. All interested persons are to call me 780.469.1729.

2. Recent documentation St. Andrew’s supplied the “Klynovi Lyst” charity in Ukraine was couriered in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of December. It did not arrive until the first week of January.

3. Genesis Communications will be contacted to attend a regular Divine Liturgy to make measurements of the effectiveness of our sound system.

4. All submissions from the individual committees received were reviewed by the Budget and Finance Committee and summarized into their report with recommendations. That report was accepted. Not all committees provided a report, and all committee chairs are reminded of their responsibility to submit regular reports to the Board for information purposes, and the report to the Budget and Finance Committee can ...

***-Continued on p. 7***

### **“Baptismal Feast”** *continued from p. 3*

... where they were baptized. From there the newly baptized together with the whole congregation walked in solemn procession into the church. In the church the bishop laid his hands upon the newly baptized or — in later practice — anointed them with holy chrism as a sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Having thus become members of the Church, the newly baptized could now be present for the first time at the *Liturgy of the Faithful*, participating in the Eucharist and receiving Holy Communion.

From what has been said it is clear that preparation for baptism was not only a matter of learning the article of Christian belief theoretically, but also an important part of it consisted in gradually beginning to participate in the liturgical life of the Church, entering into its spirit and thus really “binding one’s soul to the sacrament of redemption by the bond of faith.”



# FEBRUARY 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <i>33rd Sunday After Pentecost</i>	2	3 9 am - Golden Age Club Meeting	4  7 pm - Ukr Lang Classes	5	6 5 - 7:30 pm - Pyrohy Supper  6:30 pm - Ukr Dance Classes	7 10 am - 12 noon: Photo Directory Pick-up (Atrium)
8 <i>"Sunday of the Publican &amp; Pharisee"</i>  1 pm - Parish Annual General Mtg	9	10 9 am - Golden Age Club Meeting  7 pm - Parish Board Mtg	11  7 pm - Ukr Lang Classes	12 10 am - <i>"Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs"</i> at Selo	13  6:30 pm - Ukr Dance Classes	14 
15 <i>"Meeting of Our Lord in the Temple"</i> 2 pm - Tea Honoring His Grace Ilarion (St. John's Aud.)	16 Family Day Weekend  7 pm - Men's Club Annual General Mtg & Ladies Aux. Mtg	17 9 am - Golden Age Club Meeting	18  7 pm - Ukr Lang Classes	19	20  6:30 pm - Ukr Dance Classes	21
22 <i>"Meat-fare Sunday"</i>	23	24 9 am - Golden Age Club Meeting	25  7 pm - Ukr Lang Classes	26	27  6:30 pm - Ukr Dance Classes	28

Fr. Victor will be away on vacation from February 16th to March 1st inclusive.  
For pastoral services, contact any of the Edmonton Mission Parish Priests.



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*



... be their final report to the Board. All reports received will be available for viewing at the annual general meeting.

5. The question of unused holiday time was investigated and was actually resolved at the 2004 AGM, where it was decided that vacation time is to be used in the year it is generated.

6. The request from the Ladies' Auxiliary for funds donated to St. Andrew's Sobor ear-marked for the Ukrainian Language Class was tabled until next meeting so all concerned parties would be present for the discussions.

7. The Treasurer's report was heard and accepted. Accepted that the bills payable be paid.

8. St. Andrew's annual membership count was reviewed.

9. A report was heard from the Hospodar outlining recent repairs required to our facility. Also, Mr. Gene Luchka reported that St. Andrew's will be facing some large repair costs as some of the old heating and ventilating equipment has recently developed problems. Costs for repair are budgeted in the 2009 budget. Because we are operating in the new calendar year, some other maintenance items are delayed until after the AGM and the new budget is approved.

10. A report was heard from the Ladies' Auxiliary.

11. Fr. Victor provided a

pastoral report.

12. The proposed 2009 budget was presented, discussed, and a modified version was accepted.

13. **The next Board meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2009.**

I hope to see you at our Parish's annual general meeting on February 8, 2009!

*Slava Naviky! Glory Be Forever!*

*-Michael Zukiwsky  
Parish President*

### **WITH THANKS!**

The following items have been donated to the Parish Library by Cliff & Lesia Perritt:

- "Harvest of Despair, The Unknown Holocaust" (DVD)  
- "The Unknown Holocaust" (trilingual DVD)  
- *Rybalski's Son* by Orest S. Talpash

## MORE BULLETIN BOARD!

### **St. Andrew's is looking for your help!**

Are you computer literate? Are you organized? Are you able to spend some time weekly managing a computer system?

The parish is setting up our new computer system for all users at the parish and we require a **Computer System Administrator** to assist in and management of the system structure.

The evolving responsibilities may include:

- Ensure that any basic software updates are installed on a timely basis
- Check to ensure that anti-virus software is up to date and effective; download updates frequently
- Back up the hard drive in

frequent intervals

-Create the filing system architecture and maintain it

-Create files as may be required and file documents sent to the Parish as attachments to e-mail

-Check for in-coming e-mail to the various e-mail accounts and direct appropriately

-Implement changes to the various users (to add and to delete users)

-Work with the system manager to coordinate the installation of new software, changes to security protocols, etc

If you feel that you can assist the parish with the computer system in fulfilling these and other tasks, please contact Michael Zukiwsky at 780.469.1729.

## **St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

### **1959 - 2009**

**Thank you to the committees and individuals who have submitted ideas and projects for our St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Parish Sobor 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemoration.**

**Ideas have been varied and range from Pancake Breakfasts to Formal Banquets to Theme Evenings, to Outreach Projects to the community as a whole, Commemoration Booklets and last but not least, the traditional St. Andrew's Day Celebrations on December 13, 2009. We encourage you to keep the ideas coming, since final decisions have not yet been made. We look forward to your input.**

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee along with the Archives Committee requests your help in the two following areas:

- If you have photographs, negatives, slides or memorabilia of St. Andrew's Parish and its functions from any year and on any topic- altar boys, CYMK, Malanka, sod turnings, construction stages of the parish buildings, socials etc., we would appreciate the opportunity to digitally copy them for some of our DVD productions.
- If you know of the addresses of past members and children of members and past members we would appreciate having them for contact purposes to notify them of our activities.

**Contributions of the above information would be gratefully appreciated. Contact George Tkachyk at 780-634-5803 with the above information.**



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Phone: 780 - 440-4822 or 469-1463  
Fax: 780 - 469-5256

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 - February 22nd

*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/](http://www.uocc-standrew.ca/mensclub/)



## PASTORAL REFLECTIONS!



Someone once called the Orthodox Church *‘The Candlelight Kingdom’*, candles are so much a part of our worship that it has been said ‘to light a candle is to pray’.

Why do we use candles? And what has prayer to do with lighting candles?

In the Bible God is often described in terms of fire and light. (Heb12: 29, ‘For our God is a consuming fire’) The coming Messiah, Jesus, is spoken of in terms of light. (Is.9: 1-2 ‘the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined’) The Gospel of John portrays Jesus in terms of light in many places: John 1:5 ‘The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it’ and in John 8: 12 Jesus said ‘I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life’

So every time we light a candle the flame and the light should remind us of God.

There is a custom of lighting a candle upon entering church. You may have noticed a bowl of sand and some tapers for this purpose. This simple act is deeply

meaningful. It means that in the liturgy when the word of God is preached, the Holy Spirit will come to remove the veil of blindness from our eyes, the veil of lack of understanding and make the light of Christ shine in our hearts. **Lighting a candle on entering church expresses our belief that Jesus is the Light of the world** and that as His disciple, I am called daily to reflect His light in my life. Some of you may remember the Sunday school song on the same theme ‘Jesus bids us shine with a clear, pure light, like a little candle burning in the night, in this world of darkness so we must shine, you in your small corner and I in mine’

At one point during a Baptism or Chrismation, the members of the congregation all hold a lit taper to show that we are little Christs i.e. Christians, and we bear the light of Christ.

When the Priest comes out in procession with the Gospel Book he is preceded by a server, carrying a candle, to show that the word of God, to use the words of the Psalmist, ‘is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path’.



**Saint Valentine? -Cont’d from p. 5**

... The story of Valentines Day begins in the 3rd century with an oppressive Roman Emperor, Claudius II, who made it a crime punishable by death to associate with Christians. Thereby, Valentinus, a humble Christian martyr, was arrested and imprisoned.

During the last weeks of his life, the jailer brought his blind daughter, Julia, to take lessons from Valentinus as he was a man of learning. He described the world to her, taught her arithmetic and told her about God. She saw the world through his eyes.

“Valentinus, does God really hear our prayers?” Julia said one day. “Yes, my child, He hears each one,” he replied.

“Do you know what I pray for every morning and every night? I pray that I might see.”

They sat quietly together, each praying. Suddenly there was a bright light in the prison cell. Radiant, Julia screamed, “Valentinus, I can see! I can see!”

“Praise be to God!” Valentinus exclaimed, and he knelt in prayer.

On the eve of his death Valentinus wrote a last note to Julia, urging her to say close to God, and he signed it **“From Your Valentine.”**