



№  
33

ПІД ОПІКОЮ  
ПРЕЧИСТОЇ ДІВИ  
МАРІЇ ОДІПТРИЇ  
UNDER THE  
PROTECTION OF  
MOTHER OF GOD



CHURCH BULLETIN

August 16 – 2015 – 16 Серпня  
ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК

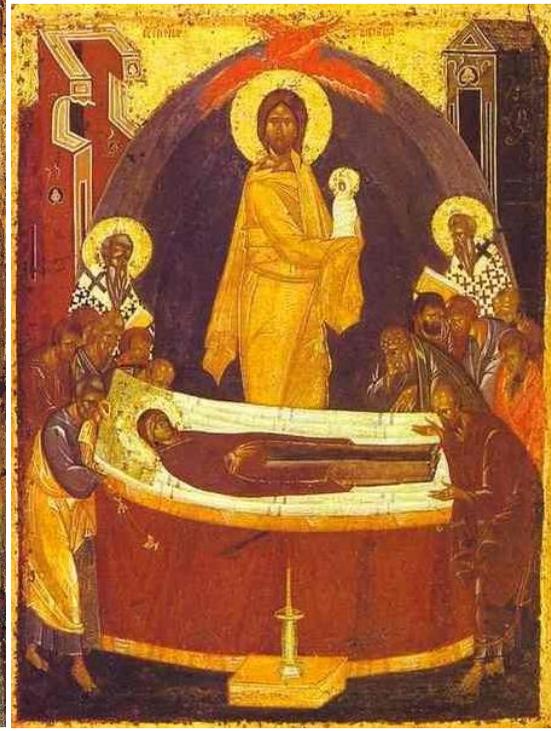


Transfiguration of Our Lord (August 6/19)  
Переображення Господнє (6/19 Серпня)

Dormition of Theotokos (Assumption of BVM)  
Успінн Пресвятої Богородиці

ПРЕСВЯТА БОГОРОДИЦЕ,  
СПАСИ НАС!!!

(Обидві ікони писав Теофан Грек)  
(Both icons by Theophanes the Greek)



(From our picnic) Pani Lida & Pani Olia: Mnohaya Lita!



From Shish Kebob for Ukraine – Yout for Peace in Ukraine



From Shish Kebob for Ukraine



From Saint Nicholas School Reunion - class of 1971



Picnic of SUA/UNWLA #49



Photo of the church by Stefan Mychajliv



№  
33  
AUGUST  
16  
2015

## CHURCH BULLETIN

August 16 – 2015 – 16 Серпня

ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК

## LITURGICAL SCHEDULE



Saint Nicholas Church  
Церква Св. Миколая  
(Під Опікою П.Д.М.)

## ПОР'ЯДОК СВ. ЛІТУРГІЙ

4:30 PM +Nryhorij Swiatkiwsky (Emily)

August 16, 12 S. aft. Pent. – 12 Н. по ЗСД

12:00 No noon Liturgy till September 13

Monday, August 17 Серпня, Понеділок  
No Liturgy – Нема Відправи

Tuesday, August 18 Серпня, Вівторок  
9:00 AM +Anna Zankiw (Anna Bonk)

Wednesday, August 19 Серпня, Середа  
10:00 AM see Julian

Thursday, August 20 Серпня, Четвер  
10:00 AM +Irene Voychak  
(Roman - 60<sup>th</sup> wedding Anniversary)

Friday, August 21 Серпня, П'ятниця  
5:00 PM +Marusia Procyk (Diatel Family)

Saturday August 22 Серпня, Субота  
9:00 AM За «Рідну Школу»

4:30 PM +Maria & Myron Nesteruk (Daughter)

August 23, 13 S. aft. Pent. – 12 Н. по ЗСД

12:00 No noon Liturgy till September 13

→ Вічне Світло, що горить  
через тиждень є 7 дол.  
→ Eternal Light that burns  
whole week s \$7.00

16 Серпня: 11 Неділя по 3. Св. Духа

10:00 р. For Parishioners – За Парохіян

Середа, 19 Серпня: ПЕРЕОБРАЖЕННЯ

10:00 р. For Parishioners – За Парохіян

23 Серпня: 12 Неділя по 3. Св. Духа

10:00 р. ЗА УКРАЇНСЬКИЙ НАРІД

Вітаємо о. Володимира Вербицького!

**NO NOON LITURGIES ON THE  
FOLLOWING 4 SUNDAY'S  
August 16, August 23,  
August 30 & September 6**

Просимо пам'ятати, що Св. Літургія, у  
Fatima Shrine, Youngstown, NY  
28 Серпня о 5 год. буде  
**ЗА МИР В УКРАЇНІ**  
**ПРОСИМО ВЗЯТИ УЧАСТЬ!!!**

**Вічне Світло в честь П.Д.М.  
Горить За МИР в Україні**

The Liturgical Choir of the Buffalo Deanery will meet for a rehearsal of the Moleben to the Mother of God, in the Saint Nicholas Church Hall at 6:00pm on Monday, August 17, 2015. Director Leo Orynowka respectfully urges all members to attend.



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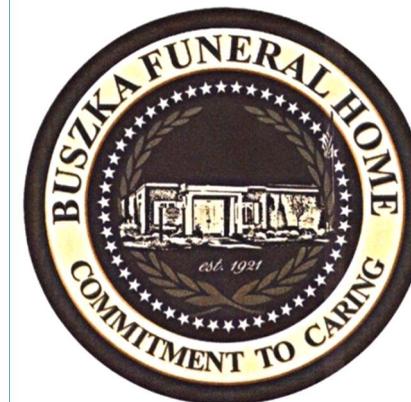
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**AMHERST BRANCH BUSINESS HOURS:**

(Closed Mondays | Зачинені по понеділках)  
 Tuesday – Thursday | 3 вівторка по четвер

| 9:30 am – 5 pm |

Friday | 9:30 am – 6 pm | П'ятниця

Saturday | 9 am – 1 pm | Субота

Our existing branch on **GENESEE STREET** will remain open; however, we will be **CLOSED ON WEDNESDAYS** starting **JULY 1**.  
 Філія на **GENESEE STREET** буде **ЗАЧИНЕНА ПО СЕРЕДАХ**, починаючи з 1 ЛИПНЯ.

**BUFFALO BRANCH BUSINESS HOURS:**

(Closed Wednesday | Зачинені по середах)

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday | 9:30 am – 5 pm |

Понеділок, Вівторок, Четвер

Friday | 9:30 am – 7 pm | П'ятниця

Saturday | 9 am – 1 pm | Субота

Щоб довідатися більше інформацій про це що діється в громаді,

Просимо відвідати веб-сторінку.

<http://www.ukrainiansofbuffalo.com>

Is the the web-page to find  
 More information and events  
 In our Ukrainian Community.

**EURO DELI AND GIFTS**  
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Are you listening "Good Samaritan"  
 Ukr. Radio Program on WJLL 1440 AM Every  
 Sunday at 2:00 PM?

Thank you for your donations!  
 We welcome your comments.

\*\*\*

Чи ви слухасте нашу радіо передачу  
 «Милосердний Самар'янин»  
 Неділя, 2 год. на WJLL 1440 AM?

Сердечно дякуємо за пожертви!

Please include Our Church  
 In Your charitable donations!

\*\*\*

Просимо підтримувати Рідну Церкву  
 талантами, часом і жертвами.

**Cell Phones - Мобільні Телєфони:**

Please turn off or silence your cell phone  
 before entering the church. Thank you!

\*\*\*

Просимо вилучувати ваші мобільні  
 телефони підчас Святої Літургії.

**Save the Dates**

August 23<sup>th</sup> – Ukrainian American Day  
 celebrating the 24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
 Ukrainian Independence

August 28<sup>th</sup> – Liturgy for Peace in  
 Ukraine (Feast of Dormition of BVM  
 on Julian Calendar) 5:00 PM  
 Fatima Shrine, Youngstown, NY  
**Please make effort to attend!**  
**Просимо взяти участь!!!**

August 30<sup>th</sup> – Msgr. Paul Iwachiw  
 Scholarship Awards Luncheon after  
 12:00 Noon

**Chicken and Ribs BBQ to Benefit  
 ST. BASIL Ukr. Cath. Church**  
 12 Embury Pl., Lancaster, N.Y. 14086  
**August 16 12:00 – 5:00 PM.**

Chinese Auction at 4 PM, Raffle and fun for all.  
 \$10 chicken dinner includes ½ chicken, spuds,  
 chef salad, dinner roll, dessert, pop/coffee.

\$12 rib dinner includes BBQ ribs, spuds, chef  
 salad, dinner roll, dessert, pop/coffee.

Help us selling the tickets.

Call **716-683-0313**.

Today is the last day of  
**The Festival**  
**In St. Josaphat in Rochester**  
 Starting at 1:00 PM

**Sunday, SEPTEMBER 13, 2015**

Noon to 7 p.m.

**Ukrainian  
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Presented by St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church



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Friday, November 6 7 P.M. Exhibit Opening/Reception	Saturday, November 7 2 P.M. Dedication Ceremony 10 A.M. – 7 P.M. Exhibit	Sunday, November 8 2 P.M. Concert
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The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, Inc.,  
Buffalo Branch, invites everyone to attend

# Ukrainian American Day

Celebrating the 24th Anniversary  
of Ukrainian Independence  
on  
Sunday, August 23, 2015  
at

the Ukrainian Cultural Center "Dnipro"  
562 Genesee Street, Buffalo, NY

Hours: 1:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Prayer of Thanksgiving  
("Moleben") at 1:45 pm

Authentic Ukrainian food, live vocalists and musicians, Ukrainian dancers,  
art displays, craft vendors, full selection of Slavic beer,  
huge basket raffle, bounce house and children's activities.

**Featuring performances by Toronto's DESNA DANCE COMPANY**

**FREE ADMISSION**

**Ample parking available**

**For more information contact:**

W. Serediuk: 821-0711      Akacia Belmega: 674-4916  
Andrew Diakun: 632-4212      Luba Terech: 359-3075  
Dnipro: 856-4476

Please visit our website at [www.UkrainiansOfBuffalo.com](http://www.UkrainiansOfBuffalo.com)



Sunday Coffee Hours: If anyone would like to  
volunteer to host a Sunday, please contact Elaine,  
Emily or Anna.

- KITCHEN is now closed.
- Thank you for your patronage.  
Thanks are extended to all who helped!
- Coffee Hour - Usually Every Sunday after Liturgy  
in Church Hall. Please join us!

Have a nice  
Summer Vacation

## TOP'S GIFT CARDS:

Please help  
us raise money  
for our Church by  
purchasing Top's  
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We receive back 5% of your spending. To take  
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call 655-3810, or call the rectory. Thank you and  
God Bless!



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б закупити слід звертатися до п. Марії Боднар,  
або до канцелярії. Дякуємо!

CHURCH BULLETIN is published weekly.  
Deadline for information is Friday Evening.  
ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК видається тижнево.  
Інформації подавати до П'ятниці вечора.

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**Confession:** Before Liturgies

**Сповідь:** Перед Св. Літургіями

**Baptism:** By appointment

**Хрещення:** За домовленням

**Marriage:** Contact 6 months in advance

**Вінчання:** Голоситися 6 місяців скорше

**Religion classes – Релігійна Програма**  
Субота - Saturday

**Ministry to the sick - Опіка над xvorymy**

Family members should call the Rectory

Родина повинна повідомити священика

**IN EMERGENCY CALL ANY TIME**

**В разі потреби завжди можна закликати**

V. Rev. Marijan Procyk, pastor & dean

Rev. Raymond Palko, visiting priest

**Please call if you are hospitalized,  
homebound and need a priest.**

**Просимо закликати якщо ви у ліжниці  
або приковані до ліжка!**

## Letter from Fr. Ray August 16, 2015

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

(Say your name right here for your very own personal letter)

Aaaaagh! Off to a rough start with your letter today. Oh Mr. Mac has not been cooperating in allowing me to begin to type. It's scary and frustrating when the computer begins to "have a mind of its own." I thought I was going to be in for a very trying afternoon, but soon everything began to click into place. Anyway, I think I'm where I'm supposed to be, and hopefully, all these words are going someplace where I'll be able to retrieve them later when it becomes time to send it. Being technically challenged doesn't help either!! ☺ ☺

It seems as if I was just with you, not so long ago, and here I am again. Actually, I really am writing earlier than usual so I can get your letter submitted before a moved-up printing deadline for this week. As I begin, it is Tuesday afternoon, August 11 and we've just returned from the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at Holy Protection. We are still celebrating the beautiful feast day of the Holy Transfiguration, which continues until Thursday August 13. When you read this, it will be over and we will have begun the next major holy day, which is that of the Dormition of the Theotokos. Being another one of our Twelve Great Feasts, the Holy Dormition is also celebrated for eight days. The actual holy day is Saturday August 15, but the prayers of the feast are taken every day after that up to, and including Sunday August 23. These are dates according to the new calendar, so this coming Wednesday, Aug. 19, is Transfiguration and the same holy days of which I speak, will be taken according to the Julian (o.s.). I've often written about the joy, beauty and spiritual benefit of attending our services, for sure, the important ones of the Twelve Major Feasts, and especially, these of July and August. July 20 was the feast of St. Elias when we blessed vehicles. Then August 1 was blessing of water and honey. The sixth of the month is the Feast of the Holy Transfiguration

when we bring fruits for blessing. On the holy day of the Dormition the faithful bring flowers and fragrant herbs to be blessed. Within this great feast of the Dormition is August 16 with the commemoration of "The Icon not made by Hands." This day we will venerate this holy image and perhaps bless icons too. This month is truly "a month of blessings!" I write of joy, blessing and uplifting of our spiritual minds, yet I am sad. Yes, it makes me sad when we celebrate these days of our spiritual lives and they are ignored by so many. I can't imagine an August without the basket of fruit and flowers being prepared and carried to the church for the special blessing. The feast days and fast days, and all the other days making up the yearly liturgical cycle, are such great treasures given to each of us. How sad that so many simply refuse to come to Liturgy to receive the blessings offered. I can't imagine an August without being able to celebrate this month of God-given gifts and blessings. Each day brings with it something new and wonderful, and each day we find ourselves praying as St. Peter did on the Holy Mountain, "Lord, it is good for us to be here!"

Once again Dear Reader, you are invited to "Come and See." Come to the church for the services and holy days and let God speak to you in the prayers and rituals of our beautiful rite. Come and be renewed and excited about the "treasury of gifts" and the doorways to "Life." Come and be reminded of the many, many blessings God has bestowed, and continues to bestow upon us! You must come because your very soul depends upon it! We bemoan the fact of so many churches being empty and we wring our hands as we lament the "For Sale" signs in front of others. Ya know what? It's our own fault! For whatever reason those who should be parishioners have left, or do not see the importance of a parish community and simply stay away. Those who should be taking up the torch of our ancestors, those who should be now pursuing vocations to the convent or priesthood, or those who should now be marrying and having children have gone elsewhere, or worse yet, nowhere at all. Doesn't Jesus teach us



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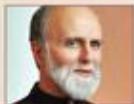


- **OCT 24, 2015**  
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- **OCT 25, 2015**  
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- **OCT 31, 2015**  
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Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel
- **NOV 1, 2015**  
New York City  
The Roosevelt Hotel



- **NOV 14, 2015**  
Toronto  
Liberty Grand Complex
- **NOV 15, 2015**  
Montreal  
Centre Mont-Royal
- **NOV 20, 2015**  
Calgary  
St. Stephen Protomartyr  
Ukrainian Catholic Cultural Center

### Invited Speakers and Stars\*



**Bishop Borys Gudziak**  
President, Ukrainian  
Catholic University



**Fr. Bohdan Prakh**  
Rector, Ukrainian  
Catholic University

- **Maria Burmaka**  
Activist and Musician
- **Chrystia Freeland**  
Writer, Journalist and  
politician
- **Victor Morozov**  
Musician
- **Oksana Mukha**  
Musician
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1 (800) 599-3671 or visit us at [www.ucf.org](http://www.ucf.org)



Scan this QR code for more info

\* Not all will appear in every city

that if we don't respond to His invitation to the Great Supper, someone else will take our place? Do you know our old parish of Holy Spirit in Lackawanna, NY is now a mosque? Beautiful Holy Trinity in St. Clair, PA is now a Christian outreach and soup kitchen.

I mentioned it before, but I am reminded again because of our recent visitors to Holy Protection, so I take this opportunity, not only to invite you to the Liturgy and celebration of the Holy Days, but also to visit the other of our churches whenever you can. It is always a good thing when we have visitors to our homes. It makes us feel good to offer hospitality and to welcome them, spend time with them. We like when folks drop in just to say hello. It is the same with the church. I love it when Monsignor C. comes to visit us and concelebrates whenever he can. He knows he has a standing invitation, which means no invitation necessary. I love it when the tourists pop in, sometimes just to say a prayer and continue on their journey. (Had two today who did just that). I especially love it when parishioners from our local parishes come to join us for a Liturgy. Please know you also, just like Monsignor C., have a standing invitation. Come and pray with us whenever the opportunity arises. You definitely do not have to wait for a big occasion, like a praznyk or episcopal visitation. Doors are open one hour before services!

Oh yeah, 'The High Holy Days.' This time of August also is bringing out the worshippers once again. They are all around us, writing about their favorite 'saints' and talking on the TV about them, and holding up their 'icons.' The worshippers are venerating and bowing down to 'their saints' and in the days ahead, it will certainly pick up even greater momentum. Already their chants of worship to their gods can be heard in all the land. Soon the din and noise will be once again heard across this country as they chant and sing as did the priests of Baal when they were confronted by the Holy Prophet Elias. No, I write not about those "who worship the Father in Spirit and truth," but about those who worship false gods and golden calves! Yes, it is that time of the year again, Football Training Camp!

Priorities, priorities, my Dear Spiritual Children! There is only One True God! May God save them and us!

Jesus said in the Gospel of John, "The devil was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is not truth in him....for he is a liar and the father of lies." (Jn. 8: 43-44)

And the lies of *Planned Parenthood* continue to spill forth as refuse from the sewers. Yesterday, August 10, 2015, LifeNews.com reported that the Obama administration gave a grant to the New Hampshire affiliate of *Planned Parenthood* abortion business in 2011. This grant of One Million Dollars was completely secret. LifeNews reports "The Obama administration is keeping documents secret related to a non-competitive grant the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services awarded directly to Planned Parenthood of Northern New England in 2011 without going through state approval or standard protocols and despite the fact that the state decided not to fund Planned Parenthood that year." This is just another of the many allegations that have arisen regarding the forcing of Americans to fund this "women's" health organization. We have seen the videos.... The full, unedited videos have confirmed that revelations that some aborted baby remains sold by Planned Parenthood go to biotech companies for the purpose of creating "humanized" mice! Meanwhile, Planned Parenthood has been exposed as having sold body parts from aborted babies for as much as 15 years. They have lied about it of course, and continue to lie about it. At the very least right now, Planned Parenthood must be defunded! We speak much about "working to end abortion." Now we have a clear opportunity to stand up and say, "No more! No more killing! No more dead babies!" We must seize this opportunity and do whatever we can to stamp out this evil that has infected our country and the world! Till next time, God bless you and our Holy Lady protect you!

ICXC NIKA

In His Love,  
Fr. Ray

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Would you like to grow closer to our Lord? If so, turn your radio dial to 101.7 FM Catholic radio and transform your life today.

*The Station of the Cross* is a not-for-profit, listener-supported radio network that adheres to the Truth revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, handed down by the Holy Spirit through the Magisterium, and taught in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The network broadcasts 24/7 and can also be heard on [thestationofthecross.com](http://thestationofthecross.com) and the iCatholicRadio mobile app.

94% of those who listen to Catholic radio become more spiritually engaged and inspired (John Paul the Great University MBA study). Regardless of your state in life, *The Station of the Cross* has a program for you:

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- Answers to Faith Questions
- Current Issues from a Catholic Viewpoint
- Solutions to Life and Family Challenges
- Inspirational Real-Life Stories

## Ісус Дорога Правда і Життя

Якось одного чоловіка запитали:  
- Що ти отримуєш щоденно молячись Богу?  
А він відповів:

Я не тільки отримую:  
- любов Божу  
- мир Божий  
- радість Божу  
- силу Божу  
- мудрість Божу  
- надію на Вічне Життя

Але і втрачаю:  
- егоїзм  
- дратівливість  
- депресію  
- жадібність  
- злобу  
- страх смерті



**Jesus is  
the Way,  
the Truth,  
and the Life**

'Once a man was asked, 'what did you gain by regularly praying to God?' The man replied, 'nothing... but let me tell you what I lost: Anger, ego, greed, depression, insecurity, and fear of death.' Sometimes, the answer to our prayers is not gaining but losing; which ultimately is the gain.'

### З радія "Милосердний Самарянин"

У середу Свято Переображення. Святкування цього празника сягає IV ст. В цьому часі св. Олена, мати цісаря Костянтина Великого, збудувала храм на горі Тавор у честь Господнього Преображення. Від VI ст. цей празник урочисто святкується у Східній Церкві під назвою „Господнього Преображення” а по де куди „Празником Тавору”. Земне життя Спасителя добігає до кінця. Зближається час Його страстей і смерти на Голготі і тому на Горі Таворі, з Ним розмовляють Мойсей, старозавтний законодавець та пророк Ілля про ці недалекі події, і про сповнення обіцянки і надії на визволення.

І озвався Петро і каже до Ісуса: "Господи, добре нам тут бути. Коли хочеш, збудуємо тут три шатра, тобі — одне, одне — Мойсееві, а одне — Іллі". І ще він говорив, як ось ясна хмара покрила їх і голос з хмари промовив: "Це син мій улюблений, якого я собі вподобав. Його слухайте". Зачувши це, учні припали лицем до землі і дуже полякались. Та Ісус приступив до них, доторкнувся їх і сказав: "Вставайте і не бійтеся". А коли вони підняли свої очі, не бачили вже нікого, окрім одного Ісуса" (Мт. 17, 1-8).

Так виявив Христос апостолам Свою славу, яка належала Йому як Синові Божому, одноістотному з Отцем і Святим Духом. Цю безмірну славу Сина Божого ми виразно добачаємо впродовж всього земного життя Ісуса Христа, навіть у найглибшим прирженні та найтяжчих муках на хресті.

Ісус приходить на світ у вигляді маленької дитини, кладеться у вбогі ясла вифлеємської яскині, але цілі хори війнства небесного Його витають похвальними піснями і мудреці-волхви спішать до Нього з поклоном і дарами. Він завжди тихий і серцем покірний, але перед Ним коряться вітри і море, тремтять злі духи, на Його Слово навіть мертві воскресають і з гробу виходять. Він слабне з утоми, але при одному дотику Його руки криві ходять, німі говорять, сліпі бачать, прокажені очищаються. Він терпить спрагу і голод, але після Його благословення тисячі народу насичуються п'ятьма хлібами, а вода переминюється у вино. Його в городі Гетсиманським приходять ув'язнити, але Він єдиним словом: "Це Я", — кладе на землю численний зброєносний натовп. Він дає Себе розп'яти на хресті між двома розбійниками і в тяжких муках кличе: "Боже

Мій, Боже Мій, чому Ти Мене покинув?" — але від того голосу затьмарюється сонце і земля трясеться, скелі розпадаються, гроби відкриваються, тіла праведників воскресають і багатьом з'являються. Його поклали в гробі як людину, але Він як Бог правдивий на третій день воскрес із мертвих і в славі вознісся на небеса, щоб колись знову прийти на землю судити живих і мертвих. Та не тільки, щоб скріпити віру апостолів в Своє Божественне походження переобразився Христос на Таворі. Ісус Христос переобразився на Таворі ще для того, щоб показати нам, що і ми колись переобразимося так само світло і ясно як Він, наш Господь і Спаситель, у Царстві Небеснім. Про це наше переображення запевняє нас Христос словами Святого Євангелія: "Праведники засяють мов сонце в царстві Отця небесного". Про наше майбутнє переображення виразно говорить і ап. Павло, котрому Бог дав можливість частково побачити і відчути блаженство святих у Царстві Небеснім. У посланні до Коринтян він пише про тіло наше, яке після смерті "сіється в тління — встане в нетління; сіється в безчесті — встане у славі; сіється в немочі — встане в силі; сіється тіло звичайне — встане тіло духовне".

Ще виразніше про наше переображення ап. Павло говорить в листі до Филип'ян: "Життя ж наше на небесах, звідки ждемо й Спасителя і Господа нашого Ісуса Христа, Який переминить тіло нашого пониження, щоб воно стало подібне до прославленого тіла його" (Фил. 3, 20-21).

Ісус Христос переобразився на Таворській горі, щоб відкрити перед апостолами, а рівно і перед нами, ту заслону, котра закриває Його славне Небесне Царство, до котрого ми всі без винятку покликані. В тому Царстві найбільшою нагородою праведників оглядання Божої величі і слави. Апостоли на Таворі лише на хвилинку побачили цю славу і відразу забули про все на світі, і в пориві невимовного щастя піднесено кличуть: "Господи, добре нам тут бути". Якою ж радістю наповняться серця вибраних, коли перед усіма людьми і ангелами Христос до них закличе: "Прийдіть, благословенні мого Отця, і унаслідуйте царство, приготоване вам від сотворення світу". І вони будуть споглядати Божу всемогутню велич і незрівняну славу і цьому спогляданню не буде кінця. Амінь.

### From "Good Samaritan" Ukr. Radio pr.

The Liturgical Year opens with the feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God and closes with her Dormition, which we celebrated yesterday. Although the feast of the Dormition reminds us of the sad occasion of death, nevertheless, it belongs to the joyful feasts. The Church rejoices because the Mother of God was transferred body and soul from this earthly life to join her Son in Eternal glory. And because of her Dormition, we have a powerful intercessor and protectress in Heaven. St. John of Damascus wrote in his sermon on the Dormition of the Mother of God: "For I see her as more sanctified than the Saints, more sacred than the sacred, purer than the pure. She is the precious urn of the manna, rather let me say, she is more truly a fountain, lying on her humble bed in the holy and glorious city of David, in that famed and shining Sion in which the law of the letter was fulfilled and the law of the Spirit revealed. In her, Christ rising from the dead was seen by the Apostles, and they believed, as did also Thomas, and through him the world, that He was the Lord and God. The Most Holy Mother of God is the citadel of the churches. She is the inn of the Disciples. In her, with a mighty sound, and with the gift of many tongues, the Most Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Apostles; in her thee Theologian who had received the care of the Mother of God, ministered to her needs. She is the Mother of all the Churches throughout the whole world, and the dwelling place of the Mother of God after the Resurrection of her Son from the dead."

We venerate the Mother of God, our Theotokos because of her part in our salvation. We honor her because of her role in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Virgin Mary must indeed have been better than any human being who has ever lived to have been chosen to be the mother of the Son of God. She must have been completely free from personal sin. But we do not venerate her for that reason. We do so because if she had not agreed to become the mother of Jesus - our salvation would not have been possible. The Incarnation was God's act, but it depended also on the willing cooperation of the Virgin Mary. Look at any icon of the Theotokos; she is always accompanied by or pointing towards her Son. So it is not possible to venerate the Mother of God without at the same time worshipping the Son of God. In honoring the part of the Virgin Mary in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, we are honoring her because of her obedience to the Lord. When told she was to be the mother of God's Son, she replied, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it

unto me according to thy word"(Luke 1:38). Mary obeyed God, just as obedience is what is required of our own faith.

The day of the death of the Mother of God is called the Dormition, or falling asleep in our Church, for her body did not know corruption after death, but together with her soul was taken up into Heaven. We have no historical data to indicate how long the Mother of God remained on earth after the Ascension of Christ into Heaven, nor when, where, or how she died, for the Gospels say nothing of this. The foundation for the feast of the Dormition is to be found in a sacred tradition of the Church dating back to apostolic times, apocryphal writings, the constant faith of the people, and the unanimous opinion of the holy fathers of the Church of the first thousand years of Christianity. It is believed those three days before the death of the Mother of God, the Archangel Gabriel appeared and announced to her from her son, Jesus, the time of her departure into Eternity. On the day of her death, in a miraculous manner the Apostles gathered in Jerusalem, although they had been scattered in various countries of the then known world. St. Thomas was the only Apostle absent. The Mother of God expressed her wish to be buried in Gethsemane near her parents and her husband, Joseph. Christ, in person, came accompanied by the Angels and Saints, to escort His Most Holy Mother to Heaven. The Apostles, while singing holy hymns, carried the body of Mary to the grave where they remained keeping vigil for three days. On the third day, St. Thomas came from afar and desired very much to view for the last time the Most Pure Mother of God. When the grave was opened, her body was not there, only the funeral clothes in which her body had been wrapped remained. The Apostles then realized that Mary had been taken up body and soul into Heaven.

From the beginning of the sixth century, it was believed by many that the tomb of the Mother of God was to be found in the Church of the Dormition in Gethsemane, while the Church on Mt. Sion was regarded as the site of her Dormition. However, to this day, historians cannot prove anything certain concerning the place of her death and burial. Some believe she died in Jerusalem, others claim that she died in Ephesus where St. John was believed to have taken her. Even today, a house is pointed out in Ephesus as the one where the Mother of God lived. St. John of Damascus clearly believed in the assumption of the Most Holy Mother of God, both body and soul into Heaven. In one of his sermons, he wrote: "It

was fitting that He, who preserved Mary's virginity after her birth should also preserve her body incorrupt after her death. It is fitting that She, who carried in her arms the Creator of the World as a Child, dwell in the Heavenly mansion. It is fitting, that She, who beheld her Son on the cross while her heart was pierced with a sword of grief she did not know at the Nativity, should now look upon Him as He sits with the Father. It is fitting that the Mother of God possess all that her Son possesses and that all creatures venerate her as the Mother and maidservant of God." The whole tradition and faith of the Church, regarding Mary's wonderful Dormition and Assumption, body and soul into Heaven, is clearly reflected throughout

the service for the feast of the Dormition. "Death and the tomb could not hold you, O Mother of God. You are our ever-vigilant intercessor in prayer and our unflinching hope in pleading for us. For He Who dwelt in the ever virgin womb transferred the Mother of Life to life." Our tradition is also visible in the custom we have of blessing flowers on the feast of the Dormition. (A Byzantine Rite, Liturgical Year – pg. 431.)



When I think of everything that the Mother of God endured in order to play a vital role in our salvation and the beautiful serenity of her nature, I often think of the sea oyster and the pearl of great sacrifice. Through the everyday events of our lives, God reveals simple lessons to us, and not that long ago, while I was on vacation near the seashore with my son, we decided to take a walk. We came upon a little open-air stand called 'The Oyster Shop.' Inside, an older woman stood with a large bucket of oysters. She said that each oyster had a pearl and, for five dollars, the children could choose one. She would open it for them, and whatever was inside would be theirs. Next, she began a slide presentation and explained the story of how a pearl develops. The woman told us that, at some time in the course of the oyster's development, a foreign substance such as a grain of sand gets into the little muscle and irritates the oyster. In response, the oyster covers that irritant with a secretion. The longer the irritation is there, the more the oyster coats it. Pearl oysters vary in size and can be quite rough and ugly. Yet what happens inside of them is a combination of rainbows, moonlight, and bits of flame. Once the oyster accepts the irritation as part of itself, the pearl begins to

develop. The worst storms, gales, even hurricanes will not dislodge it. As time goes by and this oyster is finally pulled up from the bed where it has been for many years, it is opened only to reveal a beautiful pearl. Later, when I had time to think about, I meditated on the story of how a pearl forms and it reminded me of how something comes into our spiritual life; it comes because the Lord has chosen us to do something special that we may offer our own pearl up to God. Thinking about other details of the pearl, you realize that the longer the pearl stays in the oyster the more valuable it becomes. Therefore, the longer we stay committed and the more we do for God, the more beautiful will be the pearl that each one of us can

give. It is through our own personal hardships that we find the strength to become the people of faith that God intends us to be. It comes from years and years of steadfast obedience to God in spite of our hardships and the everyday irritations of life. Somehow, we too develop something beautiful inside of us. The Pearl is just one more analogy of how God can take our brokenness and turn each of us into something beautiful - if we let Him. And there was no greater 'Pearl' in the entire world than the one created through the Most Holy Mother of God.

Our Mother of God, the beloved Theotokos, could have never imagined that the Lord would send to her an angel who would ask her to become the mother of the Son of God. And still she accepted without hesitation, she took upon herself the burden of humanity's struggle to live with God once again. By giving birth to the Son of God, she provided the means by which mankind could be redeemed through the love of her Son. Our Blessed Mother accepted one of the greatest hardships, to watch her own son be crucified on the cross, and yet she continues to be our source of strength and intercession. Without her struggles and the hardships she bore, we would not have been given the gift of salvation; her sufferings prepared her for leading a life of holiness and grace. She is not only the Mother of God, but she remains our Mother, our Theotokos in whom we pray to and trust for guidance during the most difficult times of our lives. May we continue to pray to the Mother of God for our strength and her intercession before the judgment seat of Christ.

## Proposal to the Constitution of Ukraine About Defense of Life, Marriage...

UCU Appeals to Government Leaders to Ensure the Constitution of Ukraine is Carried out regarding Defense of Children and Family Values  
Wednesday, July 29, 2015



Father Bohdan Prach, Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU), has sent a statement to the President of Ukraine, the Parliament of Ukraine, and the Government with a call to ensure that the Constitution is followed regarding the defense of children and the defense of family values. (The photo shows Fr. Prach at commencement ceremonies earlier this month.)

The text of the statement follows:

President of Ukraine,  
Petro Poroshenko  
Speaker of the Parliament of Ukraine,  
Volodymyr Hroisman,  
Prime Minister of Ukraine,  
Arseniy Yatsenyuk

Honored Mr. President!  
Honored Mr. Speaker!  
Honored Mr. Prime Minister!

The future of Ukraine to a significant extent depends on the state of family life in our country. In our opinion the health of the family and the promotion of family values is a real challenge in ensuring the basic rights of Ukrainian

citizens. Only in this way is it possible to overcome the practice of abortion and reduce the number of divorces, the level of family violence, the number of children abandoned by their parents, social orphans, the fall in the birth rate, and other severe social problems.

In connection with the introduction of changes to the Constitution of Ukraine, we turn to you with an appeal to ensure that the Constitution is carried out regarding the defense of children and the defense of family values. The life of the human being begins from the moment of conception and should be defended before as well as after birth (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).

Therefore we propose:

1. To introduce changes to Article 3 of the Constitution of Ukraine and to present it as follows: "The human being, its life from conception to natural death, its health, honor and dignity, integrity and safety, is recognized in Ukraine as the highest social value."
2. To introduce changes to Article 27 of the Constitution of Ukraine and to present it as follows: "Each human being has an inalienable right to life from conception to natural death."
3. To bring all laws and regulations into accordance with Article 27 of the Constitution of Ukraine in this new wording (see Point 1).
4. To adopt the Law of Ukraine "Regarding the Defense of Human Life from Conception to Natural Death."
5. To preserve inviolable the norms of the Constitution of Ukraine (CU, Article 51) and the Family Code of Ukraine (FCU, Article 21), which define marriage as the family union of a woman and a man and stipulate that "persons of the same sex cannot be adopters." (FCU, Article 211, Section 3)

We appeal to you to display civil responsibility in matters of the defense of human rights and the health of the family and to support the stated propositions regarding changes to the Constitution of Ukraine.

With respect and prayer,  
Fr. Bohdan Prach  
Rector

- See more at:

<http://ucef.org/news/4609/#sthash.CaVhnRAM.dpuf>