



**ST. PETER & ST. PAUL  
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
105 CLIFTON AVE  
ANSONIA, CT 06401  
Rectory Phone 203-734-3895  
Church Hall 203-732-2414



**Fr. Ed Cell 413-218-6404**

**December 25, 2022**

**Web Site: [www.stspucc.org](http://www.stspucc.org)**

**Very Rev. Archpriest Edward Canon Young, Pastor**

***The Great Feast of the Nativity of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Flesh***

Epistle: Galatians 4: 4-7    GOSPEL: Matthew 2; 1-12    Tone: Sheet

**DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE**

**WEEKDAYS:** MONDAY–FRIDAY 10:00AM

**SUNDAY:** 8:30 AM (Ukr.) & 10:00 AM (Eng.)

**Confessions are heard before each Divine Liturgy:**

**Sunday** 8:00AM to 8:30AM and  
9:30AM until 10:00AM

**Religious Education** – Saturday 10:00AM – 11:00AM

Sunday After 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy  
Call Audrey Sokol 203-924-1184 for more information.

**Preservation** – Please use the form in church vestibule, mail it to the church or bring it to Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young or Robert Jaskilka.

**Address or Name Change/New Phone Number**

– Please update your records. See Michael Wysowski, Jr. to update this info.

Returned checks are subject to a **\$35.00 fee.**

**Bulletin Notices** – Notices for the bulletin must be **in writing** by Wednesday @6PM to be included in that week's bulletin.

**Parish Council** meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month @7:15pm in the church hall.

**Rectory Office Hours - Thursday 1:00 to 3:00 PM or by Appointment on other days**

**\*\*\*\*Please Note \*\*\*\***

**Mass Offerings , Sorokousty  
Mother's Day, Father's Day**

**Checks must be made out to the Fr. Edward Young not the Church ! Thank You...**

**Baptism** Arrangement for baptism is to be made personally at the Parish Office. Please call rectory for an appointment.

**Marriage** – Arrangements for marriage are to be made at least **6 months prior** to the Wedding date. Please call rectory for an appointment.

**Sick Calls** – To arrange for Sacraments for the elderly and sick at home, please call Parish Office Fr. Young at 203-734-3895, **Please advise the rectory of any hospitalization.**

**In your Estate planning** – Remember Sts. Peter & Paul Church in your will.

**Stewardship** - "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). All Catholics, should give generous support—time, money, prayers, and personal service according to their circumstances—to parish and diocesan programs and to the universal Church

**Special Share in the Eucharist \*– Bread & Wine**

offered for a week, month, or year. Donations: one week - \$20.00  
Donors/intentions will be listed. Robert Jaskilka,  
Michael Wysowski, Jr or Fr. Edward Young

**Eternal Light \*–** offered to light for a week \$10.00.

Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

**Virgin Mary's Lamp and Sacred Heart Lamp\*** also available for offering!

Offered to light for a week is 10.00, each. Robert Jaskilka Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

**All start on Monday to Sunday!**

**\*Offering must be made when dates are reserved!**

A Welcome to St. Peter and St. Paul Parish to all who are worshipping with us today. If you are over twenty-one years of age and have not yet registered, have moved or will be moving, or have a new telephone number, please fill out the form below. Each household must be registered at St. Peter and St. Paul and every adult receives a set of stewardship envelopes. Registration also entails an annual dues to the parish. If a parishioner is not registered, it is difficult for church authorities to issue him or her a sponsor certificate, reference, or any other certification.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**A Prayer to Say before Holy Supper by the Father of the Family:**




**Troparion, Tone 4:** Your Nativity, O Christ our God,\* made the light of knowledge dawn on the world:\* through it, those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star\* to worship You, the Sun of Righteousness,\* and to know that You, the Dawn from on the high.\* Glory to You, O Lord. O God Father, Son and Holy Spirit, We bow our heads as we honor your presence at this



table. We keep in mind that Jesus is the cause of our rejoicing in this season. We will celebrate the arrival of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in a cave in Bethlehem. We thank you for each family member who has come to share this Holy Supper. We thank You for these traditional foods that has been provided for us to share at this meal. Lord, help us find and enjoy *all* of the blessings that you have placed in this Christmas Eve. Amen.

**Christ Is Born! Let us Glorify Him! ХРИСТОС РАЖДАЄТЬСЯ! СЛАВИТЕ ЙОГО!**

*Bread and Wine Offering- None Offered*

12/24	SATURDAY	9:00 PM 10:00 PM	<b>Christmas Eve is a day of Abstinence from Meat "PIST BEZ M'IASA" Christmas Services</b> 9:00 PM Grand Compline Service "Povecheriye" 10:00 PM CHRISTMAS DAY LITURGY For Holy-Day Obligation Liturgy <i>Pro Populo (For All Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян</i> <i>Liturgy of Saint Basil</i>
12/25	SUNDAY	10:00AM	<b>The Great Feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ Holy-Day Obligation</b> <b>10:00 A.M. Christmas Day Liturgy Pro Populo (For Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян</b>
12/26	MONDAY	10:00 AM	<b>The Synaxis of the Mother of God</b> +Maria, Ivan, Stefan Zaniuk & Stefan Pisarczyk req. by Luba Pisarczyk
12/27	TUESDAY	10:00 AM	Feast of Saint Stephen the Protomartyr Health & God's Blessing Fr. Stefan Yanovski
12/28	WEDNESDAY		No Liturgy
12/29	THURSDAY	6:00 PM	God's Blessing for Susan Monks req. by M/M John De Castra
12/30	FRIDAY		No Liturgy
12/31	SATURDAY	4:00 PM	<b>New Year's Eve Feast of Saint Melanie</b> 4:00 PM Vigil Liturgy for the Feast and Liturgy of Saint Basil Celebrated English Thanksgiving 2022
1/01	SUNDAY	8:30AM 10:00 AM	<b>Sunday before Theophany Feast of the Circumcision &amp; Feast of Saint Basil</b> <b>Pro Populo (For Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян</b> Asking God's Blessing of the New Year 2023
ETERNAL LIGHT		<i>In loving memory of Grandmothers +Mary Nyscot &amp; +Mary Cirkot by Carol Stumpf</i>	
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP		<i>In loving memory of +Stefania &amp; +Szymon Gebuza by Lisa &amp; Michael Warycha &amp; Family</i>	
SACRED HEART OF JESUS LAMP		<i>Good Health &amp; God's Blessing Alexis Shaub by Jennifer Walker</i>	
<b>BREAD &amp; WINE OFFERING RESERVED DATES</b> 1/2/23-1/8/23		<b>ETERNAL LIGHT LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES</b> 1/2/22-1/8/23 1/9/23-1/15/23 1/16/23-1/22/23 1/23/23-1/29/23 1/30/23-2/5/23 2/6/23-2/12/23	<b>BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES</b> 1/2/23-1/8/23 1/9/23-1/15-23 1/16/23-1/22/23 1/23/23-1/29/23 1/30/23-2/5/23 3/6/23-3/12/23 5/8/23-5/14/23
		<b>SACRED HEART OF JESUS LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES</b> 1/2/23-1/8/23 1/9/23-1/15/23 1/16/23/1/22/23 1/23/23-1/29/23 1/30/23-2/5/23 2/6/23-2/12/23 2/13/23-2/19/23 2/20/23-2/26/23	

**2022 & Past Church Dues (Blue Book) (Kollekt)**

During Lent & every Sunday dues current & past will be collected in the church hall after 8:30 AM & 10AM Sunday Liturgies.

Please bring your dues book to the **church hall** dues will not be collected in the rectory Back on January 25, 2005 the Parish Council voted to increase the yearly dues to \$75.00 per member. This is the first increase since 1998. The number of upcoming projects that are needed to keep the church building in good repairs, such as painting, doors, walls, fixing the roof, warranted this increase. **Do not place dues in your weekly envelope offering!**

**Please remember - this is not our church but YOUR church!**

**Please fulfill your responsibility to your Church!!**

**Friendly Reminder - 2022 & Past Church Dues** are due during lent to support your church to pay our obligations to keep the church running such as salaries; electricity; oil ; gas; water ; and continual maintenance; repair of the church, rectory and cemetery; insurance ; chancery fees; and telephone just to name a few.

*Christ Is Born! Let us Glorify Him! Christ Comes Down from Heaven! Let Us Go Out To Meet Him! Christ Lives on Earth! Let us Exalt in Joy!*

Father Edward prays that He who was born in Bethlehem of Judea, Christ our God, Bless each and every one in our Parish Community through His Blessed Gifts of Heavenly Peace and God's Mercy!

*Merry Christmas and a Wonderful New Year to All!*

Бажаємо усім нашим Парафіянам Веселих Свят та Щасливого Нового Року!

Нехай наші серця горять любовю та надією в Милостивого Вифлеємського ДИТЯТКА, які народжується задля нашого спасіння і благає нас бути свідками Його Миру й Благоволення! **Благослови нас, О Божий Сину!**

Following Divine Liturgy our Parish Christmas Dinner



**ANNUAL PARISH COMMUNITY PROSPHORA- HOLY SUPPER**

**Sunday, 8th January 2023**

This is a wonderful tradition of our parish. It will take place following the 10:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy. As in the past, we ask all attending to bring a dish to pass. Suggested "meatless pot luck" dishes such as: Borscht & Mushroom Soup; Halushky (noodles & sauerkraut); Herring; crab cake or fish fillets; Macaroni & cheese; Pyrohy-Pierogi; Mushrooms sauce; Stewed fruits; other traditional items from Holy Supper and dessert items. Please assistance with this family event of our parish, the contact persons are: **Jaroslawa Sembrat** at 203-929-4813 or **Father Edward Young** 413-218-6404. All members of the parish should be present at this event

**TODAY**



**Sunday, at 9:30 AM** there will be the Recitation of the Holy Rosary of Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. One of the intentions for our prayers will be for our parish, and the needs for Ukraine. In this time of Foreign Invasion prayers are needed for we are hearing of the deaths of some many Soldiers and Civilians each day. Please Pray for USA and Ukraine in this time of Great NEED! God Save and Protect! **Боже спаси і О Хорони!**



**ST. PETER & ST. PAUL UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**"LET'S SHOW PRIDE IN OUR PARISH"**

**CELEBRATING 125 YEARS TEE SHIRT SALE \$25.00 EACH**

**BLUE WITH YELLOW LOGO S,M,L,XL 7 2XL 48 SHIRTS ORDERED**

**CONTACT SCOTT WALKER AT [SJAWALK@AOL.COM](mailto:SJAWALK@AOL.COM) OR 203-735-8885**



Varenyky (Pierogi)

Total Profit 2022 \$615.26



**2022 STAMFORD CHARITIES DIOCESE APPEAL**

The month of December continues the Stamford Diocese Charities Appeal for **2022**. This fund provides support for many programs in the Diocese as indicated in the Sower. Our offering reminds us that we are members of a greater body of the Church that operates beyond the barriers of our local parish and that each one of us has a role to play in the Church's mission of evangelization and sanctification.

You have received by mail your request for support. Please help this fund as you have in the past.

Please do not send your donation to Stamford!!!

Donations \$5,320.00 or 76% to go **\$1,680.00** This week \$50.00

Irene Henry \$50.00

There will be collectors to take your donation for 2022 in the church hall



**PRAYER FOR OUR NATION** Lord, we pray for peace and unity in our nation today. Keep us in peace, O Christ our God, under the protection of your Holy Cross; save us from our enemies, visible and invisible, that we may glorify You with thanksgiving, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. We pray that You would inspire this nation to be a nation under God. Give us your hope. Give us your peace. Amen

The Light of God ~ surround us. The Love of God ~ enfold us.

The Power of God ~ protect us. The Presence of God ~ watch over us.

The Mind of God ~ Guide us. The Law of God ~ direct us.

Wherever we are God ~ be our strength.

**PRAY FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE AND THE WORLD: MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS, THROUGH THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL, SPREAD YOUR OMOPHOR ~ WE IMPLOR YOUR PROTECTION OVER UKRAINE AND BEG THAT YOU INTERCEDE WITH OUR LORD TO GRANT PEACE.**



**PRAYER FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF UKRAINE IN TIME OF INVASION:** O Lord God of powers, and God of our salvation, O God, who alone work wonders: look down with mercy and compassion on Your humble servants, and out of love for mankind hearken and have mercy on us and on the land of Ukraine. For, behold, enemies have once more gathered together, in order to cause division and enmity. But You who know all things, understand that they have risen up righteously, and that it will be impossible to oppose their multitudes unless You show us Your help. Therefore, we who are sinful and unworthy pray unto You in repentance and with tears: Help us, O God, our Savior, and deliver the land of Ukraine for the sake of the glory of Your Name, that the enemy may not to say: *"Their God has forsaken them, and there is none to deliver and save them."* But let every nation understand that You are our God, and we Your people are always protected under Your dominion.

**Schedule of Christmas Season 2022 -2023 Divine Services, Ansonia, CT**

**Saturday , December 31, 2022 New Year's Eve Feast of Saint Melanie**

4:00 PM Vigil Liturgy for the Feast and Liturgy of Saint Basil Celebrated English

**Sunday , January 1, 2023- Sunday before Theophany Feast of the Circumcision & Feast of Saint Basil**

8:30 AM Divine Liturgy

10:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy

**Thursday, January 5, 2023 the Vigil of Theophany No Meat Permitted "PIST BEZ M'IASA"**

6:00 P.M. Divine Liturgy and the Greater Blessing of Water

**Friday, January 6, 2023 Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord. Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ Holy Day Obligation Fast Free**

10:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy

7:00 P.M. Divine Liturgy

**Sunday, January 8, 2023 Sunday after Theophany**

8:30 A.M. Divine Liturgy

10:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy



Donation – Church Fund **Mary Binkowski** \$400.00

Donation - **Linda & Samuel Campagna** \$100.00 Christmas Donation

**FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD**

CHRIST IS BORN ! GLORIFY HIM !



Today, Christmas, the Christian world celebrates the Nativity of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ. The Gospel reading of Matthew (2:1-23); we also find the Nativity story in the Gospel of Luke (2:1-20). On this day, we do not just celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus, but also the Mystery of Divine Incarnation. “The word became flesh and lived among us, we saw His glory as one of the Father filled with grace and truth,” (John 1:14). The apostle Paul calls it the “Mystery of godliness, “God was manifested in the flesh,” (1Timothy 3:16). The story of the Nativity in the Gospel is a story of love, a love story from God to us humans. The old world lived in eager waiting for the savior to come, and God sent the prophets who predicted the birth of the Savior from the Virgin in Bethlehem. “When the fullness of time came, God sent His Son born of a woman, born under the law, who would be the one under the law to receive adoption” (Galatians 4:4).

To the ancient philosophers, God was just a spectator watching the world from above, on His throne, indifferent to their pain and suffering, therefore it was the desire of

mankind to bring God down from his throne to live among them in the world and feel their pain and misery alongside of them. Isaiah expressed this desire when he shouted: “oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down” (Isaiah 64:1). And that’s exactly what occurred on the day of the Nativity; God split the Heavens apart and came down. The second person of the Holy Trinity was incarnated and came down to save the world. The angels preached to the shepherds who were watchful in the wilderness, saying: “Do not be afraid, I give you good tidings; it will be to all the people. Today the Savior is born for you; who is the Christ and the Lord,” (Luke 2:10-11).

The great St. Athanasios summarizes the intention and purpose of the incarnation of Christ with the following words: “God became man that man might become god.”

We read in the Vespers of the feast: *“Today heaven and earth unite with the birth of Christ, today God is on earth, and man ascended to the heavens.”*

Through the Nativity and Divine Incarnation, God descended into the deepest trenches of human misery, bearing as a man, all the weight of human suffering and grief, all the way to death; the death of the Cross. During His lifetime as man, He was tested and endured all the despair, pain and suffering that all humans experience; everything except sin. The author the Hebrews says: “For we don’t have a high Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15-16).

The celebration of the Nativity of Christ means that we acknowledge the fulfillment of all the divine providence of salvation and the completion of prophecies and promises since the Old Testament.

On the day of Nativity, Every creature and every element of nature offers its thanks and gifts to Christ in their own way, just like we read in the Feast of vespers that “the Angels offered praise, the Magi gifts, and the shepherds the exclamation, and the land of the cave, and Nature the manger, but for us a Virgin Mother”. Mankind has never seen a greater and more generous and honorable gift, that is the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary, the completely pure one, to represent the entire human race. The Lord has descended, and Jesus laid in the humble manger, a humble and small cave, but by His presence in this vile place, He lit and sanctified it with His divine light. Our hearts are similarly humble and small and wretched, but let us prepare to receive Him, and reserve for Him a place; and through His presence He will cleanse, enlighten and sanctify it. Let us this Nativity and with every feast be just like the shepherds who shared their great discovery with the villagers of Bethlehem, and share the incarnation of Christ with our family, our loved ones and our neighbors, and celebrate in a way that differs from the world, with Christ in our hearts.

*(Excerpts from <https://www.antiochian.org.au/>)*

**CATECHISM - CHRIST OUR PASCHA - TODAY’S EPISTLE / GOSPEL LESSON :**

**TRADITION:** Page 21, Section 35-40; Page 28, Section 55-59

Christmas proclaims the Church’s glorious vision of man because of who Christ is. He is the Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, by whom all things were made. He has become flesh and dwelt among us. God has become man. He has clothed Himself in our human flesh that we might clothe ourselves in His own divinity and live His uncreated life in His Holy Spirit.




The icon of the Nativity tells the story of Christ's birth from the Scriptures. It also shows that all

creation is taking part in Christ's birth. The angels give thanks with their song; the heavens give the star; the Wise Men give their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The poor, humble shepherds give their praise and amazement; the earth gives the cave, and humanity gives the Virgin. **Христос Рождается - Славимо Його! "Khrystos Razdayetsia" ("Christ is born") "Slavete Yoho" (Let us glorify him")**



The 2023 calendars are here – one per family as long as they last:  
 The calendars were generously donated by John Zaleski of Wakelee Memorial Funeral Home  
 Thank you and mnohaya lita! The Calendars are near the Bulletins



<p><b>For your AD info,                  message Call                  203-734-3895 or                  YoungE8073@aol.com</b></p>	<p><b>WAKELEE MEMORIAL                  FUNERAL HOME</b>                  John S. Zaleski                  Director                  Virginia K. Hylwa                  Administrator   <b>203.734.1490</b>  <i>Parishioners Serving                  Parishioners Over 90 Yrs.</i></p> 	<p><b>For your AD info, message                  Call                  203-734-3895 or                  YoungE8073@aol.com</b></p>  <p>JOIN SUMA F.C.U. &amp;  <b>Save Big!</b>  <i>Support Locally!</i>  <b>Bank Near &amp; Far!</b></p> <p>For all your financial needs - we                  are just a call, click or a text away                  914.220.4900                  memberservice@sumafcu.org                  or visit our                  New Haven or Stamford branches.  <b>We are open!</b></p>  <p>www.sumafcu.org</p>
<p>Support those who                  advertise in our                  bulletin!</p>		

# CHURCH ENVELOPE 2023 PROBLEM

Info @ Church Budget <info@churchbudget.com>

Tue, Dec 13, 2022 at 6:16 AM

Bob,

Your orders are still here being worked on. We apologize for the delay we have experienced some difficulties in a few presses going down and getting the parts here to fix them and also in extra hired help that we normally have no problem in hiring to help get the orders out the door. We are working 6 days a week 12-hours a day to try to get every order out. Every order we have is a priority and we will get them out to you as soon as we possibly can. Our goal is to have every order we have out by Christmas but we cannot guarantee that. We cannot honestly tell you that will happen and then it doesn't. If you do not have them by Christmas, it will be after the first of the year. Our phones are very busy we are sorry that you could not get through on them. Again, we apologize for the delay.

Thank you

Have a wonderful day; Patty

## UPDATE

As a result of the above problem on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 there will be 3 weeks of envelopes to use,

You can find them in shoe boxes as you come in to church with 2023 envelope number and your name.

Scott Walker (10am) & Steve Strumello (830am) will be there to answer questions.

I am hoping and praying they will come in before the end of this year. Use this envelope with your new number and name. Write of the front the type of offering or offering ex. Reg. fuel, Holy Days, Epiphany; initial offering; Church Maint.; Church In Need; and Cemetery Maint

Thank You, be patient. God Bless Bob Jaskilka

Env Num \_\_\_\_\_ Your Name

Date 1/1/2023

Type of donation \_\_\_\_\_ Amt \_\_\_\_\_

Type of donation \_\_\_\_\_ Amt \_\_\_\_\_

Type of donation \_\_\_\_\_ Amt \_\_\_\_\_



## **METROPOLITAN ARCHEPARCHY OF PHILADELPHIA**

**810 North Franklin Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19123-2005**

**Phone (215) 627-0143 Fax (215) 627-0377**

**ukrmet@ukrcap.org**

### **CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**

**Of the Bishops of the Ukrainian Catholic Church  
Of the United States of America in the Year of Our Lord 2022.**

**“And they were terrified...But the angel said to them: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;**

**He is the Messiah, the Lord.” (Lk. 2:10-11)**

**Most Reverend Fathers, Deacons, Monks and Nuns, Brother  
Seminarians, and Dearest Faithful,**

**Simple shepherds who tended their flocks near Bethlehem lived their usual lives. They did not expect much change in the routine of their daily chores, and they "were keeping the night watch over their flock." This was their work, this was their vocation, ordinary and unremarkable.**

**However, everything suddenly changed when they saw an angel of the Lord who “appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them." Being in this glory caused them a sense of terror so great that the angel himself had to reassure them and thereby change this "great fear" into "great joy."**

**We all started this passing year of 2022, with the usual worries and plans that we made for the end of the pandemic. We wanted to resume our usual lives again and no longer expected any disruptions but wanted only to " keep watch " of our own affairs and responsibilities again. But that fateful day of February 24<sup>th</sup> suddenly changed all our lives, all our plans, all our feelings, everything... A full-scale invasion began...**

**Fear, pain, despair, and immense anger - all this filled our being, our thoughts, even our prayers. Our native Ukrainians were torn apart and killed... None of us, even in our wildest dreams, could have thought that we, the latest generation, would once again experience the great Baturyn massacre, but also now in Hostomel, Bucha, and Irpin; let us reflect on the evacuation of peaceful people under fire - not from Hitler's Nazis - but from brain washed Putinists. We were driven to righteous anger by a fight to the death of the newest heroes of Kruty near Kyiv, Kharkiv, Sumy, Mykolaiv, Bakhmut...**

**We were afraid of the "great terror" of our native land. But when we all stood together, united as a great Ukrainian community, suddenly we heard a voice from Heaven: "Do not be afraid, Ukrainians, do not be afraid, you inhabitants of the fertile land I have bestowed upon you. You stood together against the opposing enemy, small and large. Don't be afraid!"**

**Our men came to the defense of Ukraine, women secured the rear with their work and prayers, Ukrainians abroad collected the necessary means for the fight all over the world, even children raised funds for the Armed Forces of Ukraine through their own talents – indeed, a community of democratic nations and freedom-loving people came to the aid of the courageous Ukrainian people.**

**And we are no longer afraid because we see that the Lord is with us and today his angel announces great joy for the whole nation: "... for unto you today, a Savior was born." God comes to us!**

**Jesus is born in a manger, in the midst of unsanitary conditions, and He knows what suffering and cold are. The Lord comes to the most needy and becomes a refugee Himself, because He is forced to flee from death with the righteous Joseph and Mary. Jesus knows what it is to lose one's home and to be a wanderer without knowing when the mistrust will come to an end. That is why He is today, like never before, close to Ukrainians, He is with us in a distant foreign land and in the homes without light and heat in Ukraine. He is with us as we live through our difficulties and challenges. God is with us...**

Jesus knows the experience of the cross and death, loneliness, and rejection. Christ is with us in times of shelling and the danger of repeated enemy attacks on native towns and villages. Jesus is with us, He will lead us through this field of suffering and death, and even more than that, He is the Conqueror of death and the Giver of Life.

He loves His people, and for the sake of this love, He became incarnate, became one of us, was born of the Most Holy Theotokos, and went to His suffering and the cross to save and redeem us all from death, sin, and the power of the devil.

Looking at the Christ Child, laying in the manger, we also see His Cross. Because only by looking at the Cross of the Lord, will we be able to overcome all fear, suffering, and death with Him in order to reach victory, because Jesus Himself is our victory.

"May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way!" (2 Thessalonians 3:16)

Christ is born! Let us glorify Him!

**+Borys (Gudziak)**  
Archbishop of Philadelphia, Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States Head  
of the Department of External Church Relations, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

**+Paul (Chomnycky), OSBM**  
Eparch of Stamford

**+Benedict (Aleksiychuk), author**  
Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago

**+ Bohdan (Danylo)**  
Eparch of St. Josaphat in Parma



**UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**SVIATOSLAV SHEVCHUK**  
MAJOR ARCHBISHOP OF KYIV-HALYCH

Вих. ВА 22/298 ENG

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**CHRISTMAS PASTORAL LETTER**  
**OF HIS BEATITUDE SVIATOSLAV**

**Most Reverend Archbishops and Metropolitans,  
God-loving Bishops, Very Reverend Clergy, Venerable Monastics,  
Dearly Beloved Brothers and Sisters,  
in Ukraine and throughout the world**

*Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy  
that will be for all the people (Lk 2:10)*

**Christ is born! Glorify Him!**

**Beloved in Christ!**

I share a great joy with you, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord" (Lk 2:11). For us who believe in the Lord Jesus, to celebrate Christmas is to open ourselves to a joy that lasts forever. The Son of God becomes one of us – God is with us!

In life, we often experience joyful or pleasant events: the birth of a child, a wedding, some achievement, dinner with relatives and friends, etc. However, life experience tells us that such moments are very fragile: a brief moment – and what brought us joy and pleasure, irrevocably sinks into nothingness, and we are left alone with pain, sadness and disappointment. There are many reasons for such a sudden change: a second of inattention, an accident, illness, human malice, or war, as we see in the fate of our long-suffering nation.

And yet, today, we announce to each other a joy that no earthly ordeal or misfortune can deprive us of – the invincible joy of Christ's Nativity. This is not some fleeting experience or form of distraction that allows us to escape for a while from some daily or even cruel reality. The joy of Christmas is an immersion into the reality of God himself. The Son of God enters into human life, human reality, and takes upon himself the fragility and drama of human existence in order to bring a heavenly perspective into human horizons: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!'" (Lk 2:13-14).

Christmas invites us to an encounter with a God who comes as the Saviour of the world – an encounter that brings heavenly joy. However, in preparing for it, we inevitably become aware of our own weakness and unworthiness, which give rise in us to fear. In itself, this fear is not a bad thing, if it arises from the humility of a creature before its Creator, a disciple before his Master, a servant before his Lord. At the Divine Liturgy, the celebrant invites the faithful to Holy Communion with the words: “Approach with the fear of God and faith.” Awareness of our sins and weaknesses should not lead to paralysis, but to repentance and action. That is why the angel says to the shepherds, frightened by the bright vision of divine glory: “Do not be afraid!” The Lord overcomes our sinfulness and weakness. And so, a person *should not be afraid* of heavenly joy. We are called to joy – one that is authentic, sincere, profound, eternal. It is given to us as a generous gift from God. This is the profound meaning of the incarnation of the Son of God – He becomes one of us to pave for us the way to the joy of his Father and ours.

Therefore, despite all our limitations, anxieties and fears, as human beings we are called to *accept this joy*, to open our hearts to it. The angel explains how to recognize it: “And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger” (Lk 2:12). The Almighty God makes himself known “not in a royal palace, but among cattle, in the desert, in a cave...,” as we sing in the carol. The Apostle of the Nations writes about this when he paints a contrast between divine and human wisdom: “For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Cor 1:25). The divine path to true joy passes through weakness and patience, as once again notes St. Paul: “Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Cor 12:9).

Finally, a person is called to *share the joy of Christmas*: “The shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.’ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them” (Lk 2:15-18). Dear brothers and sisters, no matter where we are, let us sincerely share the joy of the Birth of our Saviour, so that it truly becomes “a joy for all the people.”

Celebrating Christmas from year to year, we enter ever more profoundly into the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God in human history, which became an integral part of the history of our people with the Baptism of Rus-Ukraine. This year, when in the Ukrainian sky the enemy is trying to cancel out the radiance of the Christmas star with its missiles and bombs, we should pay attention not to the calendar, not to astronomical phenomena, but to the fact that Christ came today to be born in the body of a tortured, crucified, and wounded Ukraine. Perhaps it sounds paradoxical, but our victory in this war will come not by the power of the mighty of this world, but by the newborn Divine Child, of whom Isaiah prophesied: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Is 9:6).

To celebrate Christmas means not to be afraid of heavenly joy while engulfed in a sea of tears and blood. Allowing the joy of Christmas to enter our hearts guarantees our perseverance and indomitability, our ability to overcome all life's challenges, as St. Paul explains: "I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Phil 4:12-13).

Now, in this time of war, we should celebrate Christmas more than ever – solemnly and openly, carolling with joy – both at home and in parish churches, and on the streets of our towns and villages:

*Blahoslovy nas, Dytyatko Bozhe (Bless us, Divine Child),*

*Dary nas nyni lyuboviu (Grant us love today)*

*Naj tsila syla pekla ne zmozhe (May all forces of hell fail)*

*Nas rozdilyty z Toboiu. (To separate us from You.)*

*Blahoslovy nas, my Tvoyi dity (Bless us, for we are Your children,)*

*Khrystos rodyosia! Slavite! (Christ is born! Glorify!)*

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Having received the power of the newborn Son of God, we are called to share it with our brothers and sisters in order to fortify their faith, confirm hope, and strengthen love. Singing carols is not some loud social gathering. To carol is to share the power and joy of Christ's Nativity, which from the beginning already contains the Lord God's promise of Paschal triumph. That is why many generations of ancestors drew inspiration and strength from their faith in the incarnate Christ, our crucified and risen Saviour, to fight against enslavers and invaders. Let us remind ourselves how our insurgents in hiding and the prisoners of Stalin's concentration camps were strengthened by our ancestral carol to fight the enemy, how our underground Church carolled, despite the repressions of the communist authorities. In those dark times, the carol became a hymn of victory over the night of atheism and godlessness, a prophecy foretelling the inevitable fall of the prison of nations – the Soviet Union. Today, let the Ukrainian army sing carols at the front. Let those imprisoned, the wounded, and those brothers and sisters who are in the temporarily occupied territories carol. Let the joy of the Christmas carol in their mouths turn into a hymn of victory over the Russian invader. Let our cities and villages, our faithful families in Ukraine and abroad, our volunteers and activists sing carols. Let this carol become a space of solidarity and a sharing of our gifts – spiritual and temporal. Let our Christmas carol donations be a personal contribution – to support the Ukrainian army and provide aid to war victims.

Dear brothers and sisters! I warmly greet you all with the Birth of Christ: from East to West, from North to South – in Ukraine and abroad, on all the continents of the world. In a special way, I unite myself to our soldiers at the front. I embrace you with Christmas joy and thank you for your courage and heroism. I embrace those who were forced by the war to leave their homes or even their native land. I embrace our wounded, both military and

civilian. With tears, I embrace those who lost relatives and friends in the past year. I extend my words of love and support to all in captivity or in temporarily occupied territories, who endure torture and abuse by the occupier and are unable to prepare for themselves a festive dinner nor pray in their native church on Christmas Day. I sincerely greet our volunteers and those who serve and work to eliminate the consequences of war and ensure the life of our peaceful cities and villages, especially our doctors, rescuers, and energy-sector workers.

From the bottom of my heart, I wish all of you the authentic joy of the children of God, a tasty kutia, a cheerful celebration of Christ's Nativity, and a happy, peaceful, and blessed New Year!

Christ is born! Glorify Him!



Given in Kyiv

at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ,  
on the day of our father St. Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, Wonderworker  
the 19<sup>th</sup> (6<sup>th</sup>) of December in the 2022<sup>nd</sup> Year of our Lord