

WELCOME TO ALL PARISHIONERS & GUESTS WHO HAVE JOINED US TODAY!



**ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER PARISH
ПАРАФІЯ СВ. МИКОЛАЯ ЧУДОТВОРЦЯ**



Pastor: Fr. Yuriy Vyshnevskyy

Emergency: 250.891.4507

Church: 250.384.2292 Hall: 250.384.2255

Facebook: facebook.com/stnicholasvictoria

1112 Caledonia Avenue, Victoria, BC V8T 1G1

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Tue-Fri DL - 9am; Sun DL - 10am

The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of New Westminster

Bishop: Most Rev. Ken Nowakowski

www.nweparchy.ca

**SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
ШОСТА НЕДІЛЯ ПІСЛЯ П'ЯТИДЕСЯТНИЦІ**

You were seen as spiritual rivers filled and overflowing, watering creation with the knowledge of God, and with gifts of healing you dried up soul-destroying passions, healing sickness and driving away the demons. God-bearing unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian, ever pray for our souls.

Since you overcame unreasoning passions with strength of soul, grant bounties to all creatures, holy ones! You were enriched by Christ with the grace of healing, therefore as we celebrate your sacred and radiant memorial, we pray to you for the purification of our souls.

Your holy tabernacles were light-bearing, saving heavens, and now your relics shine as the sun, radiant with the working of healing miracles, countless as the stars! Blessed Cosmas and most glorious Damian, ministers of the Lord, and intercessors for our souls!



*Holy Unmercenaries and
Wonderworkers Cosmas
and Damian*

PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP AFTER DIVINE LITURGY!



HAPPY CANADA DAY WEEKEND



SUNDAY HYMNS			
OPENING HYMN	В Страсі і Покорі / We Are Gathered Here To Worship pg. 234-235		
COMMUNION HYMN	Вірую Господи / I Do Believe pg. 246-24		
CLOSING HYMN	Вже Відходим / As We Leave This Place of Worship pg. 268-269		
<i>Please join us today in singing our Sunday hymns!</i>			
SUNDAY & DAILY SCHEDULE			
SUNDAY, July 1	Divine Liturgy - for the Parishioners of St Nicholas Parish		10:00 AM
MONDAY, July 2	NO SERVICE		
TUESDAY, July 3	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
WEDNESDAY, July 4	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
THURSDAY, July 5	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
FRIDAY, July 6	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
SATURDAY, July 7	NO SERVICE		
SUNDAY, July 8	Divine Liturgy - for the Parishioners of St Nicholas Parish		10:00 AM
<i>Please Note: to request a Divine Liturgy for a special intention, please see Fr. Yuriy to arrange for it!</i>			
SUNDAY EPISTLE READERS			
DATE	READING	UKRAINIAN	ENGLISH
SUNDAY, July 1	Rm. 12: 6-14	Motria Koropecy	Robert Herchak
SUNDAY, July 8	Rm. 15: 1-7	Yuliya Pelekhata	Bryan Melnyk
SUNDAY, July 15	1 Cor 1:10-18	Dmytro Maksymiv	Carol Chapman
SUNDAY, July 22	1 Cor. 3:9-17	Glikeria Iwanuck	Peter Iwanuck
<i>Thank you, Epistle readers, for your service in proclaiming God's Word!</i>			
2018 PARISH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE		PASTORAL MINISTRY & HOLY MYSTERIES	
CHAIRPERSON.....Alec Rossa - 250.472.3374		CONFESSIONS.....1/2 hour before Liturgy	
SECRETARY.....Richard DeMerchant - 250.893.3484		EUCARIST.....for the sick - any time	
TREASURER.....William Vanderven - 250.478.1458		BAPTISMS.....by appointment	
FINANCIAL SECRETARY.....David Newberry - 250.598.8197		MARRIAGES.....six months notice should be given to the parish priest, and he should be contacted before any other arrangements are made	
FUNDRAISING/HALL RENTAL.....Robert Herchak - 250.386.7872		FUNERALS.....by appointment	
MAINTENANCE.....Murray Chapman - 250.658.4769		ANOINTING.....any time	
LITURGICAL COMMITTEE...Motria Koropecy - 250.658.3051		HOSPITAL VISITS.....any time	
MEMBER AT LARGE.....Cindy Lazaruk - 778.677.9072			
<p>Bequests & Wills: Leaving a bequeath is a process of giving a donation through your will. It is simply a distribution from your estate to a charitable organization through your last will and testament. It can be as small or as large a donation as you wish. It is important that you talk to your lawyer about the process. In your kindness please remember St Nicholas the Wonderworker Ukrainian Catholic Church in your bequeath and will. If anyone wishes to make such a bequeath in their will, the following clause may be included or added to a will: "I give, devise, and bequeath to St Nicholas the Wonderworker Ukrainian Catholic Parish - 1112 Caledonia Avenue, Victoria BC, V8T 1G1, the sum of \$ _____ (or _____% of my estate), to be used for the benefit of the parish and it's pastoral activities."</p>			

Vibrant Parish Prayer

O God, Creator of Heaven and Earth! Because of your indescribable love for us, you sent your Only-Begotten Son, Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ - The Way, The Truth, and The Life - and our Salvation. In His name, we turn to You. Strengthen our hearts and minds in Christian love and in unity of purpose as we strive to build a Vibrant Parish. Give us the grace to model our lives according to the Word of God. Instill in us the desire to pray and to celebrate the Holy Mysteries as one Christian Family in our Parish Community. Inspire us to follow Your great command to be a servant to the less fortunate among us! Grant this, O Lord, through the mercies and love for mankind of Your Only-Begotten Son with whom You are blessed, together with Your All-Holy, Good and Life-Giving Spirit, now and forever and ever. Amen!



ST. NICHOLAS PARISH
A PLACE TO ENCOUNTER THE LIVING CHRIST
Through the word, the Holy Mysteries & Prayer,
Serving One's Neighbor, Leadership
Fostering & Serving Unity and Missionary Spirit
(His Beatitude Sviatoslav)



Молитва Живої Парафії

Господи Ісусе Христе, Пастирю Добрий, як колись Ти пригорнув заблуканих овечок, щоб вони пізнали Твій голос і були Твоїм стадом, так і сьогодні глянь ласкаво з небесних висот на нашу парафію та зішли на неї Твого Святого Духа, щоб вона була місцем пізнання радості Доброї Новини. Скріплюй нас Твоєю присутністю та єднай нас кожночасно в молитві. Даруй нам духа служіння ближньому, щоб у нашій парафії кожний міг зустріти Тебе, милостивого Бога. Благослови наш духовний провід Твоєю мудрістю і дай, щоб ніхто з нас не шкодував ні часу, ні талантів, ні матеріальних дібр для розбудови Твого царства. Єднай нас у мирі та злагоді, щоб ми були Твоєю спільнотою любові. Всели в нас місійного духа, щоб ми стали тим світилом євангельського слова, молитви і добрих діл, що кличе кожного до участі в Божественному житті, щоб славилось, Спасе, Твоє Ім'я з безначальним Твоїм Отцем та пресвятим, благим і животворящим Твоїм Духом нині, і повсякчас, і на віки віків. Амінь.

DIVINE LITURGY PROPERS

The Divine Liturgy - An Anthology for Worship: Liturgy - pg. 270-318; propers - pg. 345

The Liturgy prescribed for today is that of St. John Chrysostom.

Troparion, Tone 5: Let us the faithful acclaim and worship the Word,* co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,* and born of the Virgin for our salvation.* For He willed to be lifted up on the cross in the flesh, to suffer death* and to raise the dead by His glorious resurrection.

Glory: Kontakion, Tone 5: You, my Saviour, descended to Hades,* and as the Almighty, You shattered its gates.* With Yourself You, as the Creator, raised the dead and shattered the sting of death,* and delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Humankind.* And so we cry out: "Save us, O Lord."

Now: Theotokion, Tone 5: Rejoice, O rampart and protection of those who have recourse to you!* Rejoice, O tranquil haven and Virgin,* who gave birth in the flesh to your Maker and God!
* Fail not to intercede for those* who sing and worship the Child you bore.

Prokeimenon, Tone 5: You, O Lord, will guard us and will keep us* from this generation and for ever. *Verse:* Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer left a just man.

Epistle - Romans 12:6-14 - A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans: Brothers and Sisters, since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honour. Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, and serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, and persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality. Bless those who persecute (you), bless and do not curse them.

Alleluia, Tone 5: *Verse:* Your mercies, O Lord, I will sing for ever; from generation to generation I will announce Your truth with my mouth. *Verse:* For You have said: Mercy shall be built up for ever; in the heavens Your truth shall be prepared.

Gospel - Matthew 9:1-8 - At that time Jesus entered a boat, made the crossing, and came into his own town. And there people brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Courage, child, your sins are forgiven." At that, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said, "Why do you harbour evil thoughts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" - he then said to the paralytic, "Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home." He rose and went home. When the crowds saw this they were struck with awe and glorified God who had given such authority to human beings.

Communion Hymn: Praise the Lord from the heavens;* praise Him in the highest.* Alleluia, alleluia,* alleluia!

Prayer After Holy Communion: Having been made worthy to partake in a mystical way of Your immaculate Body and precious Blood, O Christ our God, I acclaim and bless, worship and glorify You, and proclaim the greatness of Your saving acts, now and for ever and ever. Amen. (*more Prayers After Holy Communion on pg. 324-326 in the Anthology book*).



Тропар, глас 5: Рівнобезначальне з Отцем і Духом Слово,* що від Діви народилося на спасіння наше,* прославмо, вірні, і поклонімся,* бо Воно благозволило тілом зійти на хрест* і смерть перетерпіти, і воскресити померлих* славним воскресінням Своїм.

Слава: Кондак, глас 5: До аду, Спасе мій, зійшов Ти,* і, як всемогутній, сокрушивши його брами,* Ти, Чоловіколюбче, як Творець, воскресив з Собою померлих,* жало смерти вирвав, й Адама від прокляття визволив.* Тому всі до Тебе взиваємо:* Спаси нас, Господи!

І нині: Богородичний, глас 5: Радуйся, Брамо Господня, непрохідна!* Радуйся, Охороно і Покрове тих, що до Тебе приходять!* Радуйся, тиха Пристане і Вседіво, що Свого Творця і Бога тілом породила!* Молись безупинно за тих, що прославляють* і почитають Народженого від Тебе.

Прокімен, глас 5: Ти, Господи, збережеш нас і захистиш нас* від роду цього і повік.
Стих: Спаси мене, Господи, бо не стало праведного.

Апостол - Римлян 12:6-14 - До Римлян послання Святого Апостола Павла читання:
Браття і сестри, маючи, згідно з даною нам благодаттю, різні дари: коли то дар пророцтва, виконуймо його мірою віри; хто має дар служіння, нехай служить; хто навчання, нехай навчає; хто напоумлення, нехай напоумляє. Хто дає – у простоті; хто головує – дбайливо; хто милосердиться – то з радістю. Любов нехай буде нелицемірна; ненавидівши зло, приставайте до добра. Любіть один одного братньою любов'ю. Пошаною один одного випереджайте. В ревності не будьте ліниві, духом горіть, Господеві служіть; веселі в надії, в горі терпеливі, в молитві витривалі; святих у потребах спомагайте і дбайте про гостинність. Благословляйте тих, що вас гонять; благословляйте, не проклинайте.

Алилуя, глас 5: *Стих:* Милості Твої, Господи, оспівуватиму повік, і з роду в рід сповіщу устами моїми Твою вірність. *Стих:* Бо сказав Ти: Повік милість збудується, на небесах приготується істина Твоя.

Євангеліє - Матея 9:1-8 - У той час Ісус, сівши у човен, він переплив назад і прибув у своє місто. І от принесено до нього розслабленого, що лежав на ношах. Побачивши їхню віру, Ісус сказав розслабленому: “Бадьорися сину, твої гріхи відпускаються.” Та тут деякі з книжників заговорили між собою: “Він хулить.” Ісус, знавши їхні думки, каже: “Чого лукаве думаєте в серцях ваших? Що легше сказати: Твої гріхи відпущені, – чи сказати: Встань і ходи! Та щоб знали, що Син Чоловічий має владу на землі гріхи відпускати”, – каже розслабленому: “Встань, візьми твої ноші та й іди до свого дому.” Встав той і пішов до свого дому. Народ же, бачивши це, настрахався і славив Бога, що дав таку владу людям.

Причасний: Хваліте Господа з небес,* хваліте Його на висотах. Алилуя, алилуя, алилуя!

Молитва По Святім Причастю: Таїнственно удостоївшись бути причасником Твого пречистого тіла і чесної крові, Христе Боже, оспівую і благословлю, поклоняюся, і славлю, і величаю спасіння Твої, Господи, нині і повсякчас, і на віки вічні. Амінь. (*більше Молитов По Святім Причастю на ст. 80-87 в маленькій книжечці “Божественна Літургія”*).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to RITA VANDERVEN and all those who celebrated their birthdays this past week. May the Lord Our God continue to bless you abundantly and the Holy Mother of God protects you at all times. Многая Літа!
 - ◆ **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please keep in your prayers TERRI CHYZOWSKI, who is recovering after her surgery, GORD HRYHORYSHEN, CORNELL BABIE and other members of our parish, our family and friends who are ailing, in hospitals, nursing homes and those who are not able to join actively in their community.
 - ◆ **ST. NICHOLAS BOOK STORE:** The Divine Liturgy An Anthology of Worship - **\$25**; “Christ Our Pascha” Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church/“Христос Наша Пасха” Катехизм Української Католицької Церкви - **\$25**; “Sing to Our God” hymn book - **\$15**; Молитовник “Прийдіте Поклонімся” - **\$10**.
 - ◆ **TRAVELING ICON:** Anyone interested in gracing their home with Christ The Teacher Icon can call Darlene DeMerchant at 250.727.3837.
 - ◆ **PARISH CALENDAR OF BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:** If you would like to be included in our Parish Calendar of Birthday and Anniversary celebrations, please put date in our calendar located at the church vestibule. Each week, we will list the names in our parish bulletin so we can celebrate these happy occasions together!
 - ◆ **JOIN OUR CHOIR:** Do you enjoy singing? Please consider joining our St Nicholas Parish Choir and remember that we ALWAYS looking for new members! Contact Motria Koropecky for details at 250.658.3051.
 - ◆ **CATECHISM ANNOUNCEMENT:** *"And they were bringing to Him also the infants, in order that He may be touching them; but after the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Himself and said, Let alone the little children to come to Me, and cease hindering them; for of such is the kingdom of God."* We are happy to welcome all children to our St. Nicholas The Wonderworker catechism program. Weekly classes are scheduled Sunday morning during Divine Liturgy. We want your children to learn more about their Catholic faith, sacred scripture, feast days, and religious practices and customs of the
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Ukrainian Catholic church. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Marian Chalifoux at 250.507.1005.

- ◆ **THRIFTY'S PRE-PAID FOOD CARDS** - We all have to buy groceries. Why not have 6% of it returned back to the church at no extra charge! Cards are available in \$100, \$200, and \$500 denominations. Talk to Alec after today's liturgy to pre-order your cards. We need to sell A LOT of them! We encourage you to consider purchasing them for yourselves as gifts too.

 - ◆ **BE A STEWARD:** Have you ever wondered what more can you do to help our parish? Here are some suggestions: Steward of property security; Steward of grounds cleaning; Steward of cleaning church; Steward of church linen; Steward of outreach; Steward of caring; Steward of prayer; Steward of service. Quite often, our homebound or senior members, once active in their younger years, want to find purpose in their senior years. It's not only about doing but about "BEING" present to others. Contact Fr. Yuriy **OR** Darlene DeMerchant for more information. You will be amazed how "BEING" can make a difference.

 - ◆ **PARISH LIBRARY:** please visit our parish library and browse through the books on spirituality, church history, iconography, history of the Ukrainians in Canada, children's books and more... The library is located in the church vestibule. Please use a library book sign out form when borrowing a book.

 - ◆ **SUNDAY COFFEE VOLUNTEERS** act as hosts and serve light refreshments following the Sunday morning Divine Liturgy, providing an opportunity for the faithful to socialize with friends and visitors following their shared worship experience. We thank all of our parishioners who kind volunteer to serve refreshments. Whether you are new to the Parish, or are a long-time members, please join us for coffee. Please speak with Robert if you would like to volunteer.

 - ◆ **WE SHARE THE AIR:** Please keep it healthy and fragrant free. Someone in this area is scent-sensitive. The chemicals used in scented products can make some people sick, especially those with fragrance sensitivities, asthma, allergies and other respiratory ailments. PLEASE DO NOT *wear perfume, cologne, lotion, aftershave and other fragrances; *USE unscented personal care products. Be Sensitive to Others. Thank you for your understanding. *St. Nicholas parish.*

 - ◆ **JUNE 24, SUNDAY DONATIONS** - Coffee: \$44.80; Vigil lights: \$11.00; Loose collection: \$40.00; Envelope collection: \$1,146.57; Pre-authorized donations June 18 to June 24: \$120.00; **Total: \$1,362.37**
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CAMP ST. VOLODYMYR - August 19-26, 2018

Start planning your summer holidays now! Come join us to celebrate our 34th year of camp for children in our Eparchy! Camp St. Volodymyr is a great place to be physically active, build self-confidence and self-esteem, develop life-long skills while reconnecting with nature and building friendships. Our camp is also a wonderful opportunity to experience God through nature and the companionship of others.

Campers will learn about the Ukrainian language and culture along with games, hiking, sports, arts and crafts, camp fires, water activities and much more!

If you are between the ages of 7-15 this is a summer must do! Registration is \$380. Book by July 4 to save \$50. Bus transportation is also available to and from New Westminster. Register online using Eventbrite. Search "Camp St. Volodymyr BC 2018." For more information contact Jennifer Caldwell @ 604.220.0584 or jennsawka@hotmail.com.

WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR CAMP: Camp St. Volodymyr is a nonprofit camp, run on a volunteer basis. Please contact Jennifer if you are interested in helping.

VOLUNTEER as a Camp Counsellor: We are seeking between 8-10 individuals to help plan and organize our camp activities. Apply online using Eventbrite. Search "Camp St. Volodymyr BC 2018." Applications due May 15, 2018. All volunteers will be subject to a criminal record check and must sign the camp code of conduct.

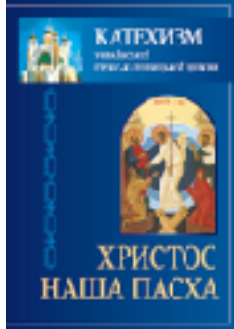
VOLUNTEER as a Camp Chef: We are seeking between 4-6 individuals to help us each day in the kitchen. It is your opportunity to get creative and be a part of the campers top 5 things at camp; The Food!

VOLUNTEER as our Camp Nurse: We are looking for an individual to be our camp nurse. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know the children in our Eparchy. This position would require valid first aid and nursing certification. Responsibilities would include administering medications brought by campers/staff as well as recording all incidents and treatments. Supplies and medications are provided by the camp.

DONATE Food: We are always happy to accept food donations of fresh fruits and vegetables, breakfast items; cereal, syrup, pancake mix, jam, Nutella, lunch items; chicken soup, Kraft dinner, cheese, drinks; juice boxes, powdered drinks, brownie/cake mixes, Jello, snack bars, cookies or treats. Gift certificates to Superstore and Costco are also welcomed.

DONATE Monetarily: Each year the Eparchy sponsors several children to attend. You can help send a deserving child to camp through your donations. Donation can be made through the Eparchy or online at our Eventbrite page. Tax receipts can be issued for donations of \$25 or more. nweparchy.ca

READING THE CATECHISM “CHRIST - OUR PASCHA”

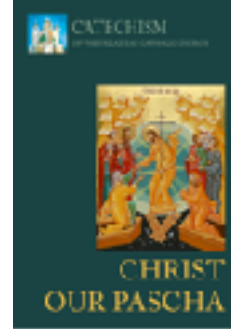


8) The Celebrant of the Mystery of Baptism

#423 The Mystery of Baptism is usually celebrated by a priest. He is the spiritual father of the parish community to which the newly baptized is united (and thus the appropriate presider). However, if there is danger of death, any Christian may baptize. In that case, Baptism is performed by a triple pouring of water over

the person with the words: “The servant of God, (name), is

baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.” Frequently, a person who receives Baptism while in danger of death does so without the full liturgical rite. Consequently, if the person lives and recovers, he or she is brought to a priest, who completes the rite and also performs Chrismation. The Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation are received only once in a lifetime because, having been born in Christ through the Holy Spirit, we remain children of the Father forever.



6) The Baptism of Children

#418 The Church baptizes both adults and children in order to lead them into the new life of Christ. The Church baptizes children, bearers of the image of God, so that they can receive the grace of divine likeness. Together with the gift of life, the most precious gift that parents can give is to bring their child to the Mystery of Baptism. When children are baptized,

b. The Holy Mystery of Chrismation

1) The Gift of Pentecost

#424 As the Paschal mystery of the Death and Resurrection of Christ finds its completion in the sending of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, so our rebirth in Christ is sealed by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Chrismation is the seal of the gift that we received in Baptism. It manifests that every baptized person receives the coming of the Holy Spirit, as did the apostles at Pentecost. This anointing by the Holy Spirit indicates that every Christian is born to new life in Christ and becomes a child of the Father in order to take part in the royal, priestly, and prophetic ministry of Christ for the salvation of the world. This is emphasized in the prayer of consecration of Holy Chrism on Great and Holy Thursday:

Send, O Lord, your Most Holy Spirit upon this Chrism and make of it a royal anointing, a spiritual anointing by which kings, high-priests, and prophets had been anointed, and all of their successors - bishops and presbyters and all who until this day have received rebirth in the font of regeneration ... Make this Chrism to be the Descent of the Holy Spirit.

2) *The Royal, Priestly, and Prophetic Ministry*

#425 Receiving the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Christian becomes a member of a “chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that [they] may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called [them] out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Pt 2:9).

All who are reborn in Christ are made kings by the sign of the Cross. And the anointing with the Holy Spirit consecrates them priests, so that besides this special ministry all Christians - filled with the Spirit and knowledge - would acknowledge themselves to be members of this royal nation and participants in priestly ministry. For what is more royal for the soul than to be able to discipline one’s body, to subject it to God? And what is more priestly than to sacrifice to the Lord a clean conscience and to offer on the altar of one’s heart the pure sacrifices of a godly life?

The prophetic ministry of the faithful is fulfilled in at least three ways: the unwavering confession of their faith, the deepening of their understanding of the faith, and witnessing to Christ in the world. This is why the Church prays for the newly-baptized during Chrismation with these words: “That he (or she) may become firm, strong, and steady in the orthodox faith, and in love and hope; and that he (or she) might always desire to confess the name of Christ our God boldly before everyone, without fear and without timidity.”

#426 Through Chrismation the gift of the Holy Spirit is sealed so that the Christian can “become Christ our God’s courageous and victorious competitor,” ready “to suffer and die out of love for him.” Through “growth in virtue” he or she can attain full maturity “to the measure of the full stature of Christ” (Eph 4:13). This is accomplished in the Christian “through the power, action, grace, and descent of the Most Holy Spirit.”

#427 Just as after Christ’s baptism in the Jordan the Holy Spirit led Christ in his salvific mission, and just as the Spirit leads the Church community since the descent on the apostles at Pentecost, so also in the Mystery of Chrismation the Holy Spirit grants to every Christian the capacity to discern and realize the foundational calling (vocation) of his or her life for the salvation and transfiguration of the world.

ORTHODOX CHURCH LEADERS DUEL OVER UKRAINE, MEET WITH POPE FRANCIS

The Bishop of Rome's support is being called upon by two sides of Eastern Orthodoxy over the creation of a new independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Within the span of a week, Pope Francis met with the spiritual head of Eastern Orthodoxy, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople, and the representatives of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow.

Both Constantinople and Moscow are locked in a battle over the creation of a new and independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which could shift the balance of power in Eastern Orthodoxy and impact the course of Orthodox-Catholic ecumenical dialogue.

Pope Francis' [May 30 statements](#) to the Russian Orthodox delegation, published by the Vatican Press Office, have now broken the papal silence in the game of patriarchal thrones between Constantinople and Moscow. While observers disagree whether or not the Pope took clear sides in the dispute, they say the message to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) was stay out of the conflict.

Metropolitan Hilarion, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations, has loudly and repeatedly accused the UGCC of supporting the efforts of the Ukrainian government, which is fighting Russian-backed separatists, to create a unified self-governing (or autocephalous) Ukrainian Orthodox Church, independent of the Moscow Patriarchate.

The Ukrainian government has petitioned Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I to create an autocephalous (self-governing) Ukrainian Orthodox Church out of two separate Orthodox Churches currently without canonical recognition in Eastern Orthodoxy, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate, which would also incorporate any Ukrainian Orthodox clergy and communities under the Moscow Patriarchate that would voluntarily join. The government plans to have this Kiev-based Ukrainian Orthodox Church exist alongside the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine.

Metropolitan Hilarion has denounced Constantinople's possible issuance of a *tomos*, a formal recognition of a unified, autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church, as legitimizing "[Ukrainian schismatics](#)." Metropolitan Hilarion also has condemned the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church repeatedly for allegedly supporting this plan. In [an interview with Interfax](#), a Russian news agency, Patriarch Kirill's spokesman alleged the UGCC was plotting to bring the Ukrainian Orthodox, through this new Ukrainian Orthodox Church, into the "Unia" — a term referring to the Eastern Catholic Churches, which have communion with the Bishop of Rome, that is regarded as perjorative by those Catholic Churches.

Pope Francis appeared to address those charges directly in his remarks to Metropolitan Hilarion at the Vatican, saying that “the Catholic Church will never allow an attitude of division to arise from her people.”

“We will never allow ourselves to do this; I do not want it,” he said. “In Moscow — in Russia — there is only one Patriarchate: yours. We will not have another one.”

The Holy Father added, “When some Catholic faithful, be they laypeople, priests or bishops, raise the banner of Uniatism, which does not work anymore, and is over, then it causes me pain. The Churches that are united in Rome must be respected, but Uniatism as a path of unity is not valid today.”

The Pope stated that “the Catholic Churches must not get involved in internal matters of the Russian Orthodox Church, nor in political issues. This is my attitude and the attitude of the Holy See today. And those who meddle do not obey the Holy See.”

Instead, the Holy Father emphasized the need for ecumenical unity to begin through “journeying” together “walking in love, in prayer,” instead of waiting for doctrinal agreement first.

“We must continue to study theology, to clarify the points, but in the meantime, let us walk together,” he said. Francis said “I found a brother” in Patriarch Kirill, and he added that he prayed for Catholic-Orthodox unity every morning before a relic of St. Seraphim of Sarov.

Russian media quickly seized upon Pope Francis’ words as both a rebuke to Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, head of the UGCC in Kiev, and the Ukrainian government. TASS Russian news agency, for example, reported that Pope Francis spoke “in favor of unity of the Russian Orthodox Church in the wake of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko’s plans to institute an independent local [national] Ukrainian Orthodox Church.”

What’s at Stake

But Anatoliy Babynskiy, a fellow of the Institute of Religion and Society at the Ukrainian Catholic University of Lviv, told the Register that a close reading of Pope Francis’ words shows the Holy Father steering clear of a “game of thrones” involving Constantinople, Moscow and Kiev.

Many analysts, including Babynskiy, contend that the Russian Orthodox are poised to see a serious loss of membership.

In Ukraine, a country of 45 million people, approximately 70% identify as Orthodox. A majority of Ukrainian Orthodox have flocked to the non-canonical churches, and given the ongoing Russian-backed fighting in the country, a large contingent of Orthodox bishops, clergy

and congregations are expected to leave the Moscow Patriarchate to join the new Ukrainian Orthodox Church once Bartholomew I gives his formal recognition.

Babynskyi said the move will create a 15th member of the Eastern Orthodox communion and make the new independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church one of the biggest churches in Eastern Orthodoxy. The Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine would be reduced to 10%-15% of Ukraine's population, down from 20%-25%, and the Ecumenical Patriarch, whose traditional leadership of global Orthodoxy has been challenged by Patriarch Kirill, is poised to gain a new ally.

Babynskyi pointed out that Pope Francis, who is close with Patriarch Bartholomew, said nothing about Ukraine, denying Metropolitan Hilarion the active support he came looking for. And the Catholic Church has not recognized the Russian annexation of Crimea, where those Catholic congregations remain part of their Ukrainian episcopal jurisdictions.

Ukrainian Catholics' Concerns

Pope Francis has drawn some criticism from Ukrainian Catholics for using the term "uniatism" — a method of proselytism once used to restore portions of Eastern Orthodox Churches to communion with Rome.

"The Moscow Patriarchate constantly accuses our Church of participating in uniatism, and it is a calumny," said Father Andriy Chirovsky, a Ukrainian Greek Catholic priest and the founder and first director of the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies in Toronto.

Father Chirovsky told the Register both the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches have rejected "uniatism" in the [1993 Balamand declaration](#). But he said the Russian Orthodox do not use the term theologically, but pejoratively, to delegitimize and isolate the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

He stressed that the Ukrainian Greek Catholics support the pastoral healing of the divisions between Ukrainian Orthodox. But he said they are also wary of too close an alliance between the church and state, or heresies that elevate nationalism over the Gospel — concerns that they believe are alleviated by communion with the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter the Apostle.

Father Cyril Hovorun, acting director of the Huffington Ecumenical Institute at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, who also has represented the Russian Orthodox Church in ecumenical dialogues, told the Register that the Ukrainian Greek Catholics have been unfairly blamed by the Moscow Patriarchate for a pastoral problem created by its closeness to the Russian government and silence on the Russian-backed war in Ukraine.

Father Hovorun said the Russian Church and Russian government's concerns about retaining control of the Orthodox Church in Kiev go beyond historical ties. The Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine is also seen by the Russian government as the remaining Russian institution that can exert influence on Ukrainian society. Both the Russian government and the Russian Orthodox Church, he said, are putting significant pressure on Bartholomew I to abandon his plans to recognize an autocephalous Ukrainian Church.

“The Russian Church and the Russian government, I think, have hopes that through the Pope they could exercise pressure on Bartholomew to stop this process,” he said.

Competing Claims

The visits of the Orthodox leaders in Rome come amid Patriarch Bartholomew's and Metropolitan Hilarion's intense, in-person lobbying of the heads of the other 14 Eastern Orthodox churches and their synods.

Bartholomew is advancing the case for recognizing a self-governing Ukrainian Church among the Orthodox Churches, while the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian government oppose the change. Kiev is considered the spiritual birthplace of the Russian Church since 988, when Vladimir I and the Kievan Rus embraced Christianity in a mass baptism. While the ecumenical patriarch considers Constantinople to be the mother church of Kiev, the Moscow Patriarchate claims it has a better claim for primacy over the region, arguing jurisdiction over Ukraine was transferred from Constantinople in 1686.

The two non-canonical Orthodox Churches in Ukraine that would unite into a unified, national Orthodox church (and be joined by some Orthodox bishops, priests and communities currently under the Moscow Patriarchate) are on the verge of fulfilling a plan that began 25 years ago after the fall of the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church began in 1921, after Ukraine first gained independence from Russian rule, while the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate formed in 1992 after splitting with the Russian Orthodox Church. Since the Russian annexation of Ukrainian territory in 2014, support for the Kyivan Patriarchate has increased, with nearly 25% of Ukrainian Orthodox claiming membership, according to the Ruzumkov Center.

Aristotle Papanikolaou, a co-founding director of the Orthodox Christian Studies Center at Fordham University, told the Register that Patriarch Bartholomew would not simply issue the equivalent of a “papal decree” and recognize a new autocephalous Ukrainian Church. Eastern Orthodoxy requires the ecumenical patriarch to have a certain consensus of the currently 14 autocephalous Orthodox Churches in order to create the new autocephalous Ukrainian Church.

“He can act unilaterally, but what will ensue is a debate whether he can act unilaterally, and then there is a question of which of the other Churches will recognize that act,” he said.

Papanikolaou said he did not read Pope Francis' statements as taking sides between Moscow and Constantinople, but rather aimed at the Ukrainian Greek Catholics to stay out of the conflict.

Rome's Careful Stance

Father Ronald Roberson, the associate director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, told the Register that Pope Francis seemed to mainly reiterate the Vatican's careful stance toward the Russian Orthodox Church. Father Roberson pointed out that when the Vatican re-established Latin Church dioceses in Russia, it did so in a way that avoided treading on the Russian Orthodox Church's spiritual territory in Russia.

The formation of an official Ukrainian Orthodox Church is "a really delicate situation," according to Father Roberson. Some have even speculated the decision could lead to a serious rift or schism in Eastern Orthodoxy.

Pope Francis could be deeply concerned the Catholic Church does not get blamed as a spoiler. Father Roberson said if Constantinople recognizes an autocephalous church in Ukraine, "Moscow's reaction is going to be very, very strong."

He said, "It's going to be treacherous waters, and Catholics are going to have to tread very, very lightly."

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