

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



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



Pastor: Fr. Yuriy Vyshnevskyy

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Facebook: [facebook.com/stnicholasvictoria](https://www.facebook.com/stnicholasvictoria)

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

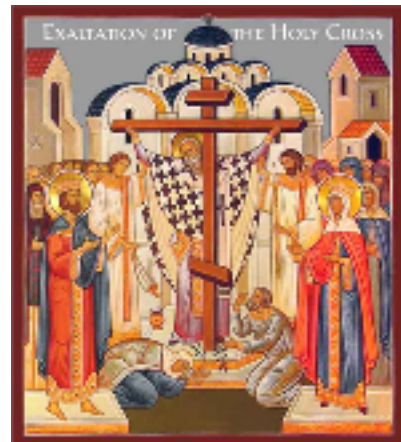
*The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of New Westminster
Bishop: Most Rev. Ken Nowakowski (www.nweparchy.ca)*

**FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
ЧОТИРНАДЦЯТА НЕДІЛЯ ПІСЛЯ П'ЯТИДЕСЯТНИЦІ**

O precious Cross of the Lord,* Moses prefigured you when he stretched out his arms to heaven* and thus defeated the haughty Amalek.* You are the pride of the faithful* and the strength of those who struggle,* the glory of the apostles, the courage of the just,* and the salvation of the saints.* Therefore, at the sight of your elevation,* the whole creation rejoices, exalts, and glorifies Christ* whose goodness joined together those who had strayed.

By its elevation the Cross is like an appeal to the whole creation.* We adore the blessed passion of Christ our God* who was suspended on it.* By this Cross, Christ destroyed the one who had destroyed us.* In His great goodness, He brought us back to life after we had been dead.* In His mercy He clothed us with beauty* and made us worthy of heaven.* Therefore, we exalt His Name with great rejoicing* and glorify His infinite condescension.

O most venerable Cross of the Lord,* the angels surround you with joy at your elevation today.* You raise up those who had fallen and had been delivered to death* for having eaten of the forbidden tree.* Therefore, we praise you with our lips,* begging for sanctification, saying:* Exalt Christ our gracious God, O you nations,* and adore His divine footsteps forever.



*Sunday after the
Exaltation of the Holy
Cross*

PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP AFTER DIVINE LITURGY!

SUNDAY HYMNS	
OPENING HYMN	Увійди Єрею / Come My Friends pg. 238-239
COMMUNION HYMN	Вірую Господи / I Do Believe pg. 246-247
CLOSING HYMN	О Спомагай Нас / Always Protect Us pg. 364-366

Please join us today in singing our Sunday hymns!

SUNDAY & DAILY SCHEDULE		
SUNDAY, September 15	Divine Liturgy - for the Parishioners of St Nicholas Parish	10:00 AM
MONDAY, September 16	NO SERVICES	
TUESDAY, September 17	NO SERVICES	
WEDNESDAY, September 18	NO SERVICES	
THURSDAY, September 19	Divine Liturgy	9:00 AM
FRIDAY, September 20	Divine Liturgy	9:00 AM
SATURDAY, September 21	NO SERVICES	
SUNDAY, September 22	Divine Liturgy - for the Parishioners of St Nicholas Parish	10:00 AM

Please Note: to request a Divine Liturgy for a special intention, please see Fr. Yuriy to arrange for it!

SUNDAY EPISTLE READERS			
DATE	READING	UKRAINIAN	ENGLISH
SUNDAY, September 15	Gal. 2: 16-20	Kateryna Yaremyn	Bryan Melnyk
SUNDAY, September 22	2 Cor. 4: 6-15	Liliia Palyvoda	Carol Chapman
SUNDAY, September 29	2 Cor. 6: 1-10	Glikeria Iwanuck	Peter Iwanuck
SUNDAY, October 6	2 Cor. 6: 16-17:1	Motria Koropecy	Darryl Huculak

Thank you, Epistle readers, for your service in proclaiming God's Word!

2019 PARISH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE	PASTORAL MINISTRY & HOLY MYSTERIES
CHAIRPERSON..... Alec Rossa - 250.472.3374	CONFESSIONS..... 1/2 hour before Liturgy
VICE-CHAIRPERSON..... Richard DeMerchant - 250.893.3484	EUCARIST..... for the sick - any time
SECRETARY..... Luba Kucharyshyn - 780.476.4260	BAPTISMS..... by appointment
TREASURER..... William Vanderven - 250.478.1458	MARRIAGES..... six months notice should be given to the parish priest, and he should be contacted before any other arrangements are made
FINANCIAL SECRETARY..... David Newberry - 250.598.8197	FUNERALS..... by appointment
FUNDRAISING/HALL RENTAL..... Robert Herchak - 250.386.7872	ANOINTING..... any time
LITURGICAL COMMITTEE... Motria Koropecy - 250.658.3051	HOSPITAL VISITS..... any time
MEMBER AT LARGE..... Wayne Saunders - 780.710.2027	

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."

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 евангельського 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 of our Father among the Saints John Chrysostom
An Anthology for Worship: Liturgy - pg. 270-318; propers - pg. 345, 685*

Antiphon 1

Verse: O God, my God, hear me; why have You forsaken me? The words of my transgressions put salvation far from me.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Saviour, save us.

Verse: O God, I will call to You by day but You will not listen; and by night, yet it will not be foolish of me.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Saviour, save us.

Verse: But You, the praise of Israel, dwell in the holy place.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Saviour, save us.

Glory... Now... Only-begotten Son...

Antiphon 3

Verse: Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord, let us acclaim God, our Saviour.

Refrain: Son of God, crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia.

Verse: Let us come before His face with praise, and acclaim Him in psalms.

Refrain: Son of God, crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia.

Verse: For God is the great Lord, and the great king over all the earth.

Refrain: Son of God, crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia.

Entrance Verse: Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.

Refrain: Son of God, crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to You: Alleluia.

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.

Troparion, Tone 1: Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance.* Grant victory to Your faithful people against enemies,* and protect Your community by Your cross.

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 Mankind.* And so we cry out: "Save us, O Lord."

Now: Kontakion, Tone 4: By Your own choice, O Christ our God,* You were lifted on the cross.* Grant Your mercies to Your new community* that bears Your Name.* By Your power gladden the faithful people,* and grant them victory against enemies.* May they have the help of Your instrument of peace,* the invincible sign of victory.

Prokeimenon, Tone 7: Exalt the Lord our God,* and bow in worship at the footstool of his feet, for it is holy. *Verse:* The Lord reigns, let the people tremble.

Epistle - Gal. 2:16-20 - A Reading from the Letter of Saint Apostle Paul to Galatians:

Brothers and Sisters, we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. But if, in our effort to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have been found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again the very things that I once tore down, then I demonstrate that I am a transgressor. For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Alleluia, Tone 1: *Verse:* Remember Your congregation which You acquired from the beginning. *Verse:* But God is our king before the ages; He has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Gospel - Mark 8:34-9:1 - The Lord said, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.' And he said to them, 'Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.'

Instead of "It is truly..." we sing: O my soul, magnify the most precious cross of the Lord.

Irmos, Tone 8: You are a mystical Paradise, O Mother of God, who though untilled, have brought forth Christ. He has planted upon earth the life-giving Tree of the Cross. Therefore today as we raise it on high we bow low and we magnify you.

Communion Hymn: Praise the Lord from the heavens;* praise Him in the highest.* Let the light of Your countenance, O Lord,* shine upon us.* Alleluia, alleluia,* alleluia.

At the end of Liturgy we sing: To Your Cross, O Master, we bow in veneration, and we glorify Your holy Resurrection. (3x)

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).



Антифон 1

Стих: Боже, Боже мій, зваж на мене, чому ти оставив мене? Далеко від спасення мого слова гріхопадінь моїх.

Приспів: Молитвами Богородиці, Спасе, спаси нас.

Стих: Боже мій, закличу вдень і не вислухаєш, і вночі, і не в безумство мені.

Приспів: Молитвами Богородиці, Спасе, спаси нас.

Стих: А ти у святому живеш, хвало ізраїлева.

Приспів: Молитвами Богородиці, Спасе, спаси нас.

Слава: І нині: Єдинородний Сину...

Антифон 3

Стих: Прийдіте, радісно заспіваймо Господеві, воскликнім Богу, Спасителеві нашому.

Приспів: Спаси нас, Сину Божий, що плоттю розп'явся, співаємо Тобі: Алилуя.

Стих: Прийдім з похвалами перед обличчя Його, і псалмами воскликнім Йому.

Приспів: Спаси нас, Сину Божий, що плоттю розп'явся, співаємо Тобі: Алилуя.

Стих: Бо Бог великий Господь, і цар великий по всій землі.

Приспів: Спаси нас, Сину Божий, що плоттю розп'явся, співаємо Тобі: Алилуя.

Вхідне: Прийдіте, поклонімся і припадім до Христа.

Приспів: Спаси нас, Сину Божий, що плоттю розп'явся, співаємо Тобі: Алилуя.

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.

Тропар, глас 1: Спаси, Господи, людей Твоїх і благослови насліддя Твоє, перемоги благовірному народові на супротивників даруй і хрестом Твоїм охорони люд Твій.

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 звиваємо:* Спаси нас, Господи!

І нині: Кондак, глас 4: Вознісся Ти на хрест волею Своєю. Новому людові Твоєму, що Твоє ім'я носить, даруй щедроти Твої, Христе Боже. Возвесели силою Твоєю благовірний народ, перемоги на супротивників дай йому, що за посібник має Твоє оружжя миру, непоборну перемогу.

Прокімен, глас 7: Возносіть Господа Бога нашого і поклоняйтеся підніжжю ніг Його, бо святе воно. Стих: Господь воцарився, нехай гніваються люди.

Апостол - Гал. 2:16-20 - До Галатів Послання Святого Апостола Павла Читання: Браття і Сестри, довідавшись, що людина оправдується не ділами закону, а через віру в Ісуса Христа, ми й увірували в Христа Ісуса, щоб оправдатися нам вірою в Христа, а не ділами закону; бо ніхто не оправдається ділами закону. Коли ж, шукаючи оправдання у Христі, виявилось, що й ми самі грішники, – то невже Христос – служитель гріха? Жадним робом! Бо коли я знову відбудовую те, що зруйнував був, то я себе самого оголошую переступником. Я бо через закон для закону вмер, щоб для Бога жити: я – розп'ятий з Христом. Живу вже не я, а живе Христос у мені. А що живу тепер у тілі, то живу вірою в Божого Сина, який полюбив мене й видав себе за мене.

Алилуя, глас 1: Стих: Пом'яни соньм Твій, що його придбав Ти із давна. Стих: Бог же – цар наш перше віку, вчинив спасіння посеред землі.

Євангеліє - Марк 8:34-9:1 - І Він покликав народ із Своїми учнями, та й промовив до них: Коли хоче хто йти вслід за Мною, хай зречеться самого себе, і хай візьме свого хреста та й за Мною йде! Бо хто хоче душу свою зберегти, той погубить її, а хто згубить душу свою ради Мене та Євангелії, той її збереже. Яка ж користь людині, що здобуде весь світ, але душу свою занепасть? Або що назамін дасть людина за душу свою? Бо хто буде Мене та Моєї науки соромитися в роді цім перелюбнім та грішнім, того посоромиться також Син Людський, як прийде у славі Свого Отця з Ангелами святими. І сказав Він до них: Поправді кажу вам, що деякі з тут-о приявних не скуштують смерти, аж поки не бачитимуть Царства Божого, що прийшло воно в силі.

Замість “Достойно ...” співаємо: Величай, душе моя, Господа, пречесний хрест Господній. **Ірмос, глас 8:** Таїнственний рай Ти, Богородице, що невоздільно виростила Христа. Він на землі насадив хресне життєносне древо. Йому, що Його нині возносять, поклоняючись, Тебе величаємо.

Причасний: Хваліте Господа з небес,* хваліте Його на висотах. Знаменувалося на нас світло лица Твого, Господи. Алилуя, алилуя, алилуя.

Після Літургії співаємо: Хресту Твоєму поклоняємось, Владико, і святеє восекресіння Твоє славимо (Зх).

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 SONYA HENRY, JOAN ROSSA 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!

◆ **INVITATION:** Our Bishop, Most Rev. Ken (Nowakowski) celebrated his 30th anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood on 19 August and we want to continue the celebrations! You are cordially invited to thank God for Bishop Ken's vocation and priestly life at the Vespers service on **Saturday, 5 October** at our Cathedral parish at **6:00 pm**. There is no charge for the reception meal following the Vespers, however there is limited seating available thus in order to make sure we are prepared to host you please RSVP no later than 28 September to: Fr. Mykhailo Ozorovych Tel: [604.704.5889](tel:604.704.5889), mykhailo.oz@gmail.com. In lieu of a gift, Bishop Ken has requested donations be made to Holy Eucharist Cathedral for further beautification of the church.

◆ **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please keep in your prayers SYLVIA KELLY, EVE BRUCE-LOCKHART 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**; “The Rosary - The Prayer Rule of the Mother of God in the Ukrainian Catholic Church” - **\$10**.

◆ **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](tel: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 Ukrainian Catholic church. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Marian Chalifoux at [250.507.1005](tel: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-sitive. 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.*

◆**SEPTEMBER 8 DONATIONS** - Coffee: \$57.00; Vigil lights: \$24.10; Loose collection: \$55.10; Envelope collection: \$536.25; Pre-authorized donations Sept 2 to Sept 8: \$320.00 **TOTAL: \$992.45.** May God bless and reward you abundantly for your generosity!

APPOINTMENT OF BISHOP OF EPARCHY OF KAMYANETS-PODILSKYI, UKRAINE



Reverend Ivan Kulyk, Parish Priest of Parish of Saints Sergius and Bacchus in Rome

Pope Francis has granted his assent to the election by the Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church of the Reverend Ivan Kulyk, parish priest of the parish of Saints Sergius and Bacchus in

Rome, as bishop of the eparchy of Kamyanets-Podilskyi of the Ukrainians (Ukraine).

Reverend Ivan Kulyk

Reverend Ivan Kulyk was born on March 16, 1979 in Perevolka, in the region of Ternopil.

In 1997 he began his priestly formation at the major seminary of Ternopil, which he then continued at the seminary of Lublin, Poland. He received priestly ordination on May 8, 2005.

From 2005 to 2009 he studied at the “Augustinianum” Patristic Institute in Rome, where he obtained a licentiate in patristics and patrology.

From 2006 to 2009 he exercised his pastoral ministry for the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic faithful resident in Italy, in particular in Cattolica, Pesaro, Padua, Este, Tiene, Bassano del Grappa and Chioggia.

In 2009 he was appointed as administrator of the parish of Saints Sergius and Bacchus in Rome. Since 2013 he has served as parish priest of the same parish.

THE UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

Two events in connection with the Honourable Cross of Christ are commemorated on this day: first, the finding of the Honourable Cross on Golgotha and second, the return of the Honourable Cross from Persia to Jerusalem. Visiting the Holy Land, the holy Empress Helena decided to find the Honourable Cross of Christ.

An old Jewish man named Judah was the only one who knew where the Cross was located, and, constrained by the empress, he revealed that the Cross was buried under the temple of Venus that Emperor Hadrian had built on Golgotha. The empress ordered that this idolatrous temple be razed and, having dug deep below it, found three crosses. While the empress pondered on how to recognize which of these was the Cross of Christ, a funeral procession passed by.

Patriarch Macarius told them to place the crosses, one by one, on the dead man. When they placed the first and second cross on the dead man, the dead man lay unchanged. When they placed the third cross on him, the dead man came back to life. By this they knew that this was the Precious and Life-giving Cross of Christ. They then placed the Cross on a sick woman, and she became well. The patriarch elevated the Cross for all the people to see, and the people sang with tears: “Lord, have mercy!”

Empress Helena had a silver case made and set the Honourable Cross in it. Later, the Persian Emperor Chozroes conquered Jerusalem, enslaved many people, and took the Lord’s Cross to Persia. The Cross remained in Persia for fourteen years. In the year 628 the Greek Emperor Heraclius defeated Chozroes and, with much ceremony, returned the Cross to Jerusalem.

As he entered the city Emperor Heraclius carried the Cross on his back, but suddenly was unable to take another step. Patriarch Zacharias saw an angel preventing the emperor from bearing the Cross on the same path that the Lord had walked barefoot and humiliated. The patriarch communicated this vision to the emperor. The emperor removed his raiment and, in ragged attire and barefoot, took up the Cross, carried it to Golgotha, and placed it in the Church of the Resurrection, to the joy and consolation of the whole Christian world.

**LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS TO HIS HOLINESS
BARTHOLOMEW I, ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE,
ACCOMPANYING THE GIFT OF SOME RELICS OF SAINT PETER,
13.09.2019**

The following is the letter sent by the Holy Father Francis to His Holiness Bartholomew I, Archbishop of Constantinople, Ecumenical Patriarch, accompanying the gift of some relics of Saint Peter, consigned to the delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul:

**To His Holiness Bartholomew
Archbishop of Constantinople
Ecumenical Patriarch**

Your Holiness, dear Brother,

With deep affection and spiritual closeness, I send you my cordial good wishes of grace and peace in the love of the Risen Lord. In these past weeks, I have often thought of writing to you to explain more fully the gift of some fragments of the relics of the Apostle Peter that I presented to Your Holiness through the distinguished delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate led by Archbishop Job of Telmessos which took part in the patronal feast of the Church of Rome.

Your Holiness knows well that the uninterrupted tradition of the Roman Church has always testified that the Apostle Peter, after his martyrdom in the Circus of Nero, was buried in the adjoining necropolis of the Vatican Hill. His tomb quickly became a place of pilgrimage for the faithful from every part of the Christian world. Later, the Emperor Constantine erected the Vatican Basilica dedicated to Saint Peter over the site of the tomb of the Apostle.

In June 1939, immediately following his election, my predecessor Pope Pius XII decided to undertake excavations beneath the Vatican Basilica. The works led first to the discovery of the exact burial place of the Apostle and later, in 1952, to the discovery, under the high altar of the Basilica, of a funerary niche attached to a red wall dated to the year 150 and covered with precious graffiti, including one of fundamental importance which reads, in Greek, Πετρος ενι. This contained bones that can quite reasonably be considered those of the Apostle Peter. From those relics, now enshrined in the necropolis under Saint Peter's Basilica, Pope Saint Paul VI had nine fragments removed for the private chapel of the papal apartment in the Apostolic Palace.

The nine fragments were placed in a bronze case bearing the inscription, Ex ossibus quae in Archibasilicae Vaticanae hypogeo inventa Beati Petri apostoli esse putantur: "Bones found in the earth beneath the Vatican Basilica considered to be those of Blessed Peter the Apostle". It was this same case, containing nine fragments of the bones of the Apostle, that I desired to present to Your Holiness and to the beloved Church of Constantinople over which you preside with such devotion.

As I reflected on our mutual determination to advance together towards full communion, and thanked God for the progress already made since our venerable predecessors met in Jerusalem over fifty years ago, I thought of the gift that Patriarch Athenagoras gave to Pope Paul VI: an icon depicting the brothers Peter and Andrew embracing, united in faith and in love of their common Lord. This icon that, at the behest of Pope Paul VI, is displayed today in the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, has become for us a prophetic sign of the restoration of that visible communion between our Churches to which we aspire and for which we fervently pray and work. Hence, in the peace born of prayer, I sensed that it would be highly significant were some fragments of the relics of the Apostle Peter to be placed beside the relics of the Apostle Andrew, who is venerated as the heavenly patron of the Church of Constantinople.

I sensed that this thought came to me from the Holy Spirit, who in so many ways prompts Christians to regain that full communion for which our Lord Jesus Christ prayed on the eve of his glorious Passion (cf. Jn 17:21).

This gesture is intended to be a confirmation of the journey that our Churches have made in drawing closer to one another: a journey at times demanding and difficult, yet one accompanied by evident signs of God's grace. Pursuing this journey calls above all for spiritual conversion and renewed fidelity to the Lord who requires on our part greater commitment and new, courageous steps. Difficulties and disagreements, now and in the future, must not distract us from our duty and responsibility as Christians, and particularly as Pastors of the Church, before God and history.

The joining of the relics of the two brother Apostles can also serve as a constant reminder and encouragement that, on this continuing journey, our divergences will no longer stand in the way of our common witness and our evangelizing mission in the service of a human family that today is tempted to build a purely secular future, a future without God.

Your Holiness, beloved Brother, I have found great comfort in sharing these thoughts with you. In the hope of soon encountering you once more, I ask you to pray for me and to bless me, and I exchange with Your Holiness a fraternal embrace of peace.

From the Vatican, 30 August 2019

FRANCIS
