

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

1112 Caledonia Avenue, Victoria, BC V8T 1G1

www.stnicholasparish.org / st.nicholas.victoria@gmail.com

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

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

**THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
ТРИНАДЦЯТА НЕДІЛЯ ПІСЛЯ П'ЯТИДЕСЯТНИЦІ**



Let us play the spiritual flute on this noteworthy feast,* because from the seed of David* is born the Mother of the Life who dispels the darkness.* She is the renewal of Adam and the answer to Eve,* the source of incorruption and the transformation of corruption.* Because of her, we have been divinized and delivered from death.* We cry out to her with Gabriel:* “Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.* Because of you, He has granted us great mercy.”

Today God who dominates the spiritual thrones of heaven* welcomes on earth the holy throne which He had prepared for Himself.* In His love for mankind,* He who established the heavens in wisdom has fashioned a living heaven.* From a barren stem He has brought forth for us His Mother* as a branch full of life.* O God of miracles and hope of those who have no hope;* O Lord, glory to You!

***Nativity of the Mother of
God***

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		
<i>Please join us today in singing our Sunday hymns!</i>			
SUNDAY & DAILY SCHEDULE			
SUNDAY, September 8	Divine Liturgy - for the Parishioners of St Nicholas Parish		10:00 AM
MONDAY, September 9	NO SERVICES		
TUESDAY, September 10	Divine Liturgy		9:00 AM
WEDNESDAY, September 11	Divine Liturgy		9:00 AM
THURSDAY, September 12	Divine Liturgy		9:00 AM
FRIDAY, September 13	Divine Liturgy		9:00 AM
SATURDAY, September 14	NO SERVICES		
SUNDAY, September 15	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, September 8	Phi. 2:5-11	Dmytro Maksymiv	Robert Herchak
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
<i>Thank you, Epistle readers, for your service in proclaiming God's Word!</i>			
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			
<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 of our Father among the Saints John Chrysostom
An Anthology for Worship: Liturgy - pg. 270-318; propers - pg. 341, 677*

Troparion, Tone 4: When the disciples of the Lord learned from the angel* the glorious news of the resurrection* and cast off the ancestral condemnation,* they proudly told the apostles:* “Death has been plundered!* Christ our God is risen,* granting to the world great mercy.”

Troparion, Tone 4: Your nativity, O Virgin Mother of God,* has made joy known to all the world,* for from you dawned the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God.* He abolished the curse and gave the blessing;* and by making death of no effect He bestowed on us eternal life.

Glory: Kontakion, Tone 4: My Saviour and Deliverer from the grave* as God raised out of bondage the children of the earth* and shattered the gates of Hades;* and as Master, He rose on the third day.

Now: Kontakion, Tone 4: By your birth, O immaculate one,* Joachim and Anna were freed from the reproach of childlessness,* and Adam and Eve* from the corruption of death.* And your people, redeemed from the guilt of their sins,* celebrate as they cry out to you:* “The barren one gives birth to the Mother of God* and nourisher of our life.”

Prokeimenon, Tone 6: Save Your people, O Lord, * and bless Your inheritance. *Verse:* Unto You I will cry, O Lord, my God, lest You turn from me in silence.

Prokeimenon, Tone 3: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Epistle - Phi. 2:5-11 - A Reading from the 1st Letter of Saint Apostle Paul to Philippians: Brothers and Sisters, have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Alleuia, Tone 1: verse: I have exalted one chosen from the people and with my holy oil anointed him. *Verse:* My hand shall always be with him and my arm shall make him strong. *Verse:* Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline your ear. *Verse:* The rich among the people shall entreat your countenance.

Gospel - Lk. 10:38-42, 11:27-28 - At that time Jesus entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'

Instead of “It is truly...” we sing: O my soul, magnify the Virgin Mary, born from a barren womb.

Irmos, Tone 8: Virginité is alien to mothers* and childbearing is foreign to virgins;* yet in you, O Mother of God, both of them came together.* Therefore we and all the nations of the earth* without ceasing magnify you.

Communion Hymn: Praise the Lord from the heavens;* praise Him in the highest.* I will take the cup of salvation;* and I will call upon the name of the Lord.* 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 4: Світлу про воскресіння розповідь від ангела почувши* і від прадідного засуду звільнившись,* Господні учениці, радіючи, казали апостолам:* Здолано смерть, воскрес Христос Бог,* що дає світові велику милість.

Тропар глас 4: Різдво твоє, Богородице Діво, радість звістило всій вселенній, з тебе бо засяло Сонце правди – Христос Бог наш. Він, розрушивши клятву, дав благословення і, ударемнивши смерть, дарував нам життя вічне.

Слава: Кондак, глас 4: Спас і мій визволитель,* як Бог, із гробу воскресив землян від узів* і розбив брами адові* та воскрес на третій день, як Владика.

І нині: Кондак, глас 4: Йоаким і Анна з неслави бездітності і Адам і Єва від тління смерті визволилися, Пречиста, у святім різдві твоїм. Його празнують люди твої, з провини прогрішень ізбавлені, як кличуть до тебе: Неплідна родить Богородицо і кормительку Життя нашого.

Прокімен, глас 4: Які величні діла Твої, Господи! Все премудрістю сотворив Ти. *Стих:* Благослови, душе моя, Господа! Господи, Боже мій, Ти вельми великий.

Апостол - 1 Кор 15:1-11 - До Коринтян 1-е Послання Святого Апостола Павла
Читання: Браття і сестри, Плакайте ті самі думки в собі, які були й у Христі Ісусі. Він, існуючи в Божій природі, не вважав за здобич свою рівність із Богом, а применшив себе самого, прийнявши вигляд слуги, ставши подібним до людини. Подобою явившись як людина, він понизив себе, ставши слухняним аж до смерті, смерті ж - хресної. Тому і Бог його вивищив і дав йому ім'я, що понад усяке ім'я, щоб перед іменем Ісуса всяке коліно приклонилося на небі, на землі й під землею, і щоб усякий язик визнав, що Ісус Христос є Господь на славу Бога Отця.

Алилуя, глас 4: *Стих:* Натягни лук і наступай, і пануй істини ради, лагідности і справедливости. *Стих:* Ти полюбив правду і зненавидів беззаконня.

Євангеліє - Лк. 10:38-42, 11:27-28 - В той час увійшов Ісус в одне село, і якась жінка, Марта на ім'я, прийняла його в хату. Була ж у неї сестра що звалася Марія; ця, сівши в ногах Господа, слухала його слова. Марта ж клопоталась усякою прислугою. Наблизившись, каже: "Господи, чи тобі байдуже, що сестра моя лишила мене саму служити? Скажи їй, щоб мені допомогла." Озвався Господь до неї і промовив: "Марто, Марто, ти побиваєшся і клопочешся про багато, одного ж потрібно. Марія вибрала кращу частку, що не відніметься від неї."

Замість "Достойно..." співаємо: Величай, душе моя, з неплідної народжену Діву Марію.

Ірмос, глас 8: Чуже матерям дівство і чудне дівам дітородження. На тобі, Богородице, обоє довершилось. Тому тебе ми, всі племена землі, безустанно величаємо.

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 CAROLINE SMUDY 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 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 Koropecy 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 1 DONATIONS** - Coffee: \$48.00; Vigil lights: \$37.00; Loose collection: \$32.75; Envelope collection: \$923.47; Pre-authorized donations Aug 26 to Sept 1: \$245.00**TOTAL: \$1,286.22**

THE NATIVITY OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary: The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that it seemed altogether impossible to restore them. People often said that God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind.

The Son of God chose to take on human nature for the salvation of mankind, and chose as His Mother the All-Pure Virgin Mary, who alone was worthy to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since Saint Anna was barren.

Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Saints Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them, to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin, and therefore the righteous Saints Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feasts at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

Saint Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. Saint Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem

Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and of them would be born a most blessed daughter Mary, through Whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God, so the Church sings in its festal hymns: "the East Gate... bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls" (2nd Stikhera on "Lord, I Have Cried", Tone 6).

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks the change of the times when the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of the human race from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled. This event has brought to earth the grace of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of Truth, piety, virtue and everlasting life. The Theotokos is revealed to all of us by grace as a merciful Intercessor and Mother, to Whom we have recourse with filial devotion.

ARCHBISHOP MOUNTS PRESSURE FOR PAPAL VISIT TO UKRAINE, SAYS MOSCOW GETTING IN THE WAY

Archbishop Borys Gudziak, one of nearly 50 Ukrainian Greek Catholic bishops in Rome this week, says he and his fellow prelates are pushing harder than ever for a papal visit to Ukraine - a trip that he said is crucial to ending conflict in the country, but which is being held up by fear of potential reprisal from Russia.

Speaking of the ongoing conflict with Russian troops in Ukraine's eastern region, Gudziak - who heads the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia - lamented that yet another life was taken this week when a barrage of 17 missiles let loose in the conflict area.

"Almost every day someone is killed. This has been going on for five years. It's like a terrorist act in your country every day. This is thousands of terrorist acts," he told Crux.

"We believe that if the pope came to Ukraine, the killing would, if not stop, would lessen," the archbishop said, explaining that an invitation for a papal visit was issued a long time ago.

Gudziak said the delay in accepting the invite is due at least in part to fear over backlash from the Russian Orthodox Church, despite the pope's consistent attention to Ukraine and his frequent appeals for an end to the ongoing war with Russian separatists.

“The opinion of Moscow regarding anything significant in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has been a shadow over us for at least 50 years, since the mid-1960s,” Gudziak said, explaining that fear of blowback from the Russian Orthodox definitely has “a role” in why a papal visit to Ukraine has yet to take place.

Tensions between the Russian Orthodox and Greek Catholics in Ukraine have been growing worse since the fall of communism in the Soviet Union in 1991. After Ukraine became independent from the USSR, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church asked for its properties to be returned; however, many had been given by the communist regime to the Orthodox Church, which refused to give them back.

The situation was made more precarious earlier this year, when the Patriarch of Constantinople recognized the independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, a move Moscow refuses to recognize. The Russian Orthodox Church accuses the Greek Catholics of supporting the split.

Gudziak said he is using the occasion of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church's Sept. 2-10 synod, which is taking place in Rome, to raise the issue of a papal visit with the Vatican officials they meet again.

“One of the great opportunities we have for two days is to explain things, to bring things home, make them concrete with life stories,” he said, adding that the meeting “is really a special occasion to give information helpful for the discernment process.”

“There is nobody, no institution has assisted Ukrainians internationally in the last 100 years as much as the Holy See,” he said, explaining that although there has been no word yet about a papal visit, “we have signals that it's not out of the question.”

This week's synod has brought together 47 Ukrainian Greek Catholic bishops from all over the world, and is focused on the theme, “Communion and unity in the life and testimony of the Ukrainian Church today.”

The synod has drawn the participation from top clerics and Vatican officials, including a private audience with Francis himself, as well as Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin; Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, prefect of the Vatican Congregation for Eastern Churches; and close papal ally Cardinal Angelo de Donatis, Vicar of Rome.

In July, Francis also named de Donatis apostolic administrator of the new exarchate for Ukrainian Greek Catholics living in Italy, which has become a prime destination for those fleeing poverty and war in their homeland.

In his comments to Crux, Gudziak explained that while the Ukrainian Greek Catholic bishops typically hold their synods in Ukraine, the reason this year's gathering is happening in Rome is because of the theme of the gathering, which focuses on unity and communion with the See of Peter.

He said he firmly believes that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is a priority for the Vatican, as is evidenced by "unprecedented" gestures such as a two-way meeting between Ukrainian bishops and Vatican officials earlier this summer, and a special collection in 2016 which raised over \$5.5 million to offer support to Ukrainians struggling due to the country's economic crisis and the conflict in its eastern region.

"By the war and by Putin's economic warfare, (Ukraine has) become the poorest country in terms of per capita GDP in Europe. The economy is not doing well," Gudziak said, explaining that many people are unemployed and some 10 million have left the country over the past two decades.

The ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine has also left many of its citizens scarred, with hundreds of thousands now suffering from post-traumatic shock, he said. Over 100,000 veterans have already been decommissioned, most of whom suffer psychological trauma due to the war.

According to Gudziak, official numbers put the death toll at 13,000 on the Ukrainian side of the border, however, the number of casualties on the Russian side of the demarcation line, many of whom are Ukrainian citizens, is unknown.

In his Sept. 3 speech to synod participants, Parolin outlined four key challenges the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is facing in the country: Evangelization, political and social issues, war and ecumenical relations, which have been complicated by the recent independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Gudziak said he believes these challenges in themselves are not necessarily unique to Ukraine, but they have been compounded by the country's economic crisis and its ongoing war, prompting a crisis of faith in some.

"People who face ultimate challenges often face ultimate questions," he said.

With Francis's constant attention to the poor and those on the fringes, Gudziak voiced hope that despite whatever ecumenical backlash might ensue, the pope would come to console his tired and suffering flock in Ukraine.

Gudziak said he thought a papal trip could possibly be scheduled to take place sometime in the next 24 months, saying there are numerous occasions which would provide opportunities for a visit.

“Do I think it will happen? I wouldn’t be surprised if it does,” he said, explaining that he spoke “very passionately” about the significance of a visit to Parolin, who promised to pass the message on to Francis.

“This pope is a pope of unexpected surprises and great affinity to peoples and places that are on the edge, and Ukraine is on the edge of Europe geographically,” he said. “It’s enduring a war, it’s been rendered the poorest country in Europe, it has 10 million migrants outside of the country.”

“We have no doubt that the Holy See is in solidarity with the suffering in Ukraine, particularly with the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church,” he said, but noted that institutionally, there are always hurdles to jump.

“In every big structure there are different points of view on issues and not everyone considers Ukraine as a priority,” he said, explaining that in an exchange with Parolin, he insisted that a global rising of tensions and deconstruction of Catholic structures “allows us to be bold and free.”

“The Holy Father has shown in many ways an incisive, prophetic vision and the courage to bolt from practiced tradition and protocol,” he said. “We would hope that he might move prophetically to contribute to peace in Ukraine with a grand gesture.”