

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



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

Pastor: Fr. Yuriy Vyshnevskyy

1112 Caledonia Avenue, Victoria, BC V8T 1G1

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

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

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

Saint David of Thessalonica pursued asceticism at the monastery of the holy Martyrs Theodore and Mercurius. Inspired by the example of the holy stylites, he lived in an almond tree in constant prayer, keeping strict fast, and enduring heat and cold. He remained there for three years until an angel told him to come down.

St David received from God the gift of wonderworking, and he healed many from sickness. The holy ascetic gave spiritual counsel to all who came to him. Having attained to passionlessness, he was like an angel in the flesh, and he was able to take hot coals into his hands without harm. He died the year 540.

O blessed David, by discarding the old self and its urges, and by truly clothing yourself with Christ, you laid a foundation for virtue. And so, after repelling many hostile attacks, you became a guide for monks. Offer your prayers for the salvation of our souls.

Saint David of Thessalonica



PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP AFTER DIVINE LITURGY!

SUNDAY HYMNS			
OPENING HYMN	Увійди, Єрею / Come My Friends pg. 238-239		
COMMUNION HYMN	Тіло Христове / Let Me Receive You, O Christ pg. 258-259		
CLOSING HYMN	Вислухай, Боже Могучий / Hear Our Petition pg. 280-281		
<i>Please join us today in singing our Sunday hymns!</i>			
SUNDAY & DAILY SCHEDULE			
SUNDAY, June 26	Divine Liturgy - for the Parishioners of St Nicholas Parish		10:00 AM
MONDAY, June 27	NO SERVICES		*****
TUESDAY, June 28	Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
WEDNESDAY, June 29	Divine Liturgy - Feast of Sts. Peter & Paul		9:00 AM
THURSDAY, June 30	NO SERVICES		*****
FRIDAY, July 1	NO SERVICES		*****
SATURDAY, July 2	NO SERVICES		*****
SUNDAY, July 3	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, June 26	Rm. 12: 6-14	Liliia Palyvoda	Peter Iwanuck
SUNDAY, July 3	Rm. 15: 1-7	Motria Koropecy	Caroline Smudy
SUNDAY, July 10	1 Cor. 1:10-18	Yuliya Pelekhata	Rita Vanderven
SUNDAY, July 17	Heb. 13:7-16	Glikeria Iwanuck	Darryl Huculak
<i>Thank you, Epistle readers, for your service in proclaiming God's Word!</i>			
PARISH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE		PASTORAL MINISTRY & HOLY MYSTERIES	
CHAIRPERSON.....Alec Rossa - 250.472.3374		CONFESSIONS.....1/2 hour before Liturgy	
VICE-CHAIRPERSON.....Darlene DeMerchant - 250.727.3837		EUCCHARIST.....for the sick - any time	
SECRETARY.....Cindy Lazaruk - 778.677.9072		BAPTISMS.....by appointment	
TREASURER.....William Vanderven - 250.478.1458		MARRIAGES.....by appointment	
FINANCIAL SECRETARY.....David Newberry - 250.598.8197		FUNERALS.....by appointment	
FUNDRAISING/HALL RENTAL.....Robert Herchak - 250.386.7872		ANOINTING.....any time	
MAINTENANCE.....Murray Chapman - 250.658.4769		HOSPITAL VISITS.....any time	
LITURGICAL COMMITTEE...Motria Koropecy - 250.658.3051			
MEMBER AT LARGE.....Caroline Smudy - 778.440.9419			
VIBRANT PARISH.....Darlene DeMerchant - 250.727.3837			
<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!



THE VIBRANT 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

An Anthology for Worship: pg. 345

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 Mankind.* 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 - Rm. 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.



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

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: 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 Народоженого 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 - Рм. 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 - Матей 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, знаючи 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!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

◆**ST. ANDREW'S REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL** has the following positions available: Two Part-time Certified Educational Assistants; School Counsellor/Academic Advisor position available. Application forms and details are posted on <http://cisdv.bc.ca/employment-opportunities.php>

- ◆ **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to 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 Лѣта!

- ◆ **WE NEED YOUR HELP:** Dear Parishioners. You probably noticed that we trimmed all the chestnut trees on the church property and we removed one tree for a cost of \$1,500. We want to let you know that we received a donation in the amount of \$1,000 towards this expense and we would welcome any donations to cover the rest of this cost. We also received another generous donation in the amount of \$1,000 to cover the cost of the repair of our industrial fridge in the kitchen. May God bless our donors abundantly for their generous donations to support our parish.

- ◆ **MOLEBEN TO CHRIST THE LOVER OF MANKIND:** please join us for Moleben every Wednesday at 7PM.

- ◆ **THE DIVINE LITURGY - AN ANTHOLOGY FOR WORSHIP:** books have been purchased and we would be most appreciative for any donations to offset the costs of the books (\$400.00). This is a one-volume source for singing the Divine Liturgy in English with sections in Ukrainian. This book contains Sundays, Festal and Weekday Musical Settings for the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Music for the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great, the Hours in English, Propers for the Liturgical Year, Tables for Scriptural Readings, Hymns and Carols, Blessings and Other Brief Rites. May the use of the Anthology bring abundant blessings to all of us, and with one voice and one heart sing the praises of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

- ◆ **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

- ◆ **VIBRANT PARISH PRAYER:** Please help yourself to a copy of the Vibrant Parish Prayer card located in each pew. You are most welcome to take one home with you. This prayer is recited at the end of each Liturgy. "It is in our parish the faithful most frequently encounter Christ through Christian instruction, community prayer and service to ones neighbour. In promoting and enlivening our parish life, we also enliven the entire Church."

- ◆ **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

- ◆ **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please keep in your prayers members of our parish, our family and friends who are ailing, are in hospitals, nursing homes and those who are not able to join actively in their community.
- ◆ **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.
- ◆ **TRAVELING ICON:** Anyone interested in gracing their home with Christ The Teacher Icon can call Darlene DeMerchant at 250.727.3837
- ◆ **RENOVATIONS TO THE RECTORY:** In our today's world, everything is costing more and more money. We as a Parish community really need your help. We need your financial help toward the costs of the renovations to the rectory. Renovation Fund is \$30,000 but we are still short over \$15,000 of our goal. We need to rebuild the front porch and steps and the rear stairs as well as do seismic upgrade to the basement which will cost us approximately \$25,000. Please consider donating generously to this work. We thank you and pray for you!
- ◆ **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.
- ◆ **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.
- ◆ **SUNDAY, JUNE 19 DONATION:** Coffee: \$46.60; Vigil lights: \$14.50; Loose collection: \$73.00; Envelope collection: \$595.00; Pre-authorized payments June 13 to June 19: \$120.00
- ◆ **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:** Tuesday, June 28 at 6:30 PM

CAMP ST. VOLODYMYR - 21-28 AUGUST, 2016

We are currently in need of a camp nurse, arts & crafts co-ordinator and someone to help to take the leadership role in the kitchen. If you are interested or know of anyone who may be able to fulfill these roles please contact Jennifer Caldwell @ [604.220.0584](tel:604.220.0584) or jennsawka@hotmail.com. Visit our website via www.nweparchy.ca
REGISTRATION

Camp offers a wide range of activities for campers aged 7-15 (as of December 31, 2016). Registration is available online via Eventbrite "Camp St. Volodymyr BC 2016." Early bird registration Ends July 7, 2016.

DONATE

We are always happy to accept food donations

NEWS

Cardinal Parolin: I saw Christian culture, dialogue & brotherly solidarity in Ukraine

The visit of the Vatican's Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin was concluded with a meeting with the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations held on June 20 in metropolitan chambers of St Sophia. The Vatican guest shared his impressions of the visit to Ukraine, and members AUCCRO remembered how they met with Pope John Paul II 15 years ago.

In a speech to AUCCRO members, Cardinal Parolin noted the importance of this organization for Ukrainian religious life. The archbishop pointed out that in the times of the baptism of Kyiv there was the unity and communion between Rome and Constantinople. "That event is a kind of archetype, which is not just recalled in memory, but from which we draw inspiration to understand: if this was our past, why it cannot be our future, in the restored fidelity to the commandments of Christ "that all may be one"?"

The cardinal recalled that in the last century Ukrainian people became martyrs who endured the madness of Nazism and Communism, famine and turmoil of the Chernobyl disaster.

"The Ukrainian people still suffer from bombing, destruction of villages and infrastructure, and primarily from the return of hatred and mistrust that are destabilizing the society, which makes all efforts to gain the opportunity to equally enjoy the various gifts that the Creator has bestowed upon them," the Vatican's Secretary of State noted.

“At this time of outstanding difficulties, aggravated by the load of institutional, financial and moral crisis, which inflicts great suffering – we, the religious community, are called to the unprecedented responsibility,” the Cardinal said. He assured that common service of all those who believe in God to those in need will help everyone feel brothers again.

“This is our day, brothers; the time for which we are responsible. For neither politics nor wealth, nor mutual disputes can make us true disciples of the Creator. We will become true through the spirit of service and trust to us, which comes from the fact that we have no other purpose than serving the common good,” the Vatican’s Secretary of State noted, speaking to AUCCRO members. “For a believer, nothing can justify hatred, slander, rejection of one’s brother. It is even less possible to justify using the name of God. This is blasphemy: refer to God as the One who produces division and death.”

The Vatican’s guest also said that the striving of Ukrainian youth for justice, fighting corruption, abuse of power and lack of opportunities can be based on Christian culture, which is rooted in the Ukrainian land. “This culture continues to inspire when we first become its witnesses. Our debate and our opposition in the name of the past forgotten by everyone except for our stubborn resentment do not help us to be the followers of that truth which makes us free. Your young people are seeking for integrity, consistency, respect and want to see it first in us and through us. If we can give it to them – they will be saved and will save Ukraine,” the Cardinal said.

At the end of his speech, he said that the entire Catholic Church, which raised funds to help Ukraine, wanted to take actual steps towards peace in Ukraine and solidarity with the victims of war in eastern Ukraine.

In turn, all members of the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations mentioned the visit of St. John Paul II in Ukraine and invited the current pontificate to come to Ukraine. Head of the UGCC Patriarch Sviatoslav said that His Eminence Lubomyr (Husar) often recalled the words of Pope John Paul II, who was impressed by meeting with AUCCRO members and called Ukraine the “laboratory of ecumenism.”

Archbishop Yevstratii (Zoria), the representative of the UOC-KP, conveyed greetings from Patriarch Filaret and also recalled the words of John Paul II that after long ecumenical theological discussions the time came for common protection of morals, family, and human dignity, that AUCCRO is actually engaged in. “We remain different, but talk about one and the same thing.”

Sheikh Ahmad Tamim spoke on behalf of the Muslims of Ukraine. Hennadiy Bilorytskyy thanked on behalf of the Chief Rabbi Jacob Dov Bleich for the efforts of the Catholic Church in support of the Jewish-Christian dialogue. He said: “We need peace, but not at any price. Not at the cost of Ukrainians because we have already paid a high price.”

In turn, Archpriest Mykolai Danylych, spokesman for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), expressed hope for the Vatican's balanced position on Ukrainian events. He also mentioned that during the great wars the Catholic Church found itself in the situation where its congregation was on both sides of the front. Now the faithful of the UOC (MP) are on both sides of the confrontation. Like the Vatican, they stand for territorial integrity of Ukraine.

President of the Council Valeriy Antoniuk, chairperson of the Ukrainian Union of Baptist Churches, thanked the Catholic Church for the good initiative, readiness to serve Ukraine. In the follow-up to the previous speakers – the council members and representatives of the government, he invited Pope Francis to visit Ukraine again.

Expressing gratitude for this meeting, Cardinal Parolin could not withhold admiration of the Council's work and the level of dialogue. He also called for more active joint actions relying "on the great resource that you have - the people." The whole country is suffering, but he saw people's solidarity, joy and desire to help each other. It is the communication with people that was the best experience of the Vatican's guest in Ukraine.

(risu.org.ua)

Pope Francis invokes magic word 'genocide' on day one in Armenia

In a departure from his prepared text on Friday, Pope Francis used the magic word "genocide" in describing the suffering and loss of life of Armenians at the hands of the dying Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century. Invoking that term generally brings political and diplomatic protests from Turkey.

Suppose you're a pope on a foreign trip, and you know full well there's one word that pretty much everyone is waiting to hear you say. Also suppose you don't quite want to say it every time you open your mouth - either because you don't like having your linguistic choices dictated, or because of political and diplomatic fallout, or because you prefer another vocabulary, or for some other reason.

What do you do?

One option is to allow your hosts to use the word, over and over again, and then to have your official communications channels make sure everyone knows it's been said. Another is to wait for the right moment, and just go ahead and say it yourself.

On Friday in Armenia, Pope Francis did both.

Heading into his June 24-26 outing, Armenians were straining to hear Pope Francis use the word "genocide" with regard to their staggering losses in the early 20th century under the old Ottoman Empire. Many worried he might not do so after a recent comment on the present

situation facing Christians in Iraq and Syria, in which Francis said he prefers the word “martyrdom” to “genocide.”

Use of the term “genocide,” of course, usually drives Turkey into cycles of objections and protest, claiming that what happened was part of a larger war rather than a consciously genocidal campaign of extermination. When Pope Francis used the term in the context of an anniversary ceremony last year, Turkey recalled its ambassador to the Vatican.

In two major addresses on Friday, one at Yerevan’s Apostolic Cathedral and the other at the country’s Presidential Palace, Francis clearly and repeatedly acknowledged the magnitude of the suffering Armenians endured.

He heard his hosts, Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, head of the local Orthodox community that’s basically the national church here, and Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, describe that carnage over and over again as a “genocide.”

Karekin used the term “genocide” four times in the course of a brief welcoming address, while Sargsyan used it three times, adding, “We simply want things to be called by their names.”

Both speeches were provided in advance by Vatican press aides, in translation and at the same time the pope’s talks were distributed - which doesn’t quite make them official Vatican verbiage, but which does suggest the Vatican wanted people to know Francis wasn’t running away from references to “genocide” either.

In an address to the political and diplomatic community in Yerevan on Friday evening, Francis recalled that last year was the centenary of the Armenian genocide - the “Metz Yeghern,” as Francis called it, literally meaning “great evil” or “great calamity,” a term that for Armenians carries much the same resonance as Shoah does for Jews with regard to the Holocaust.

In a small but significant departure from his prepared text, Francis added a reference to the event as “that genocide,” thereby using the key word his audience was waiting for him to deliver.

“Sadly, that tragedy was the first of the deplorable series of catastrophes of the past century, made possible by twisted racial, ideological or religious aims that darkened the minds of the tormentors even to the point of planning the annihilation of entire peoples,” Francis said.

The pontiff also added, “It’s so sad, that in this, as in the other two [genocides], the great international powers looked to the other side.”

Earlier in the week, the pope's spokesman, Father Federico Lombardi, gave a briefing to reporters that studiously avoided using the word "genocide," insisting that Metz Yeghern is "actually stronger."

"I'm free to use the word, the term that my Armenian brothers use, [and] I think everyone knows very well what it means," Lombardi said, pointing out that Francis will visit the official Armenian Genocide memorial on the hill of Tsitsernakaberd on Saturday precisely in order to recall the loss of life.

While there, Francis will deposit flowers and also meet a small group of descendants of Armenians who fled the slaughter in 1915 and were sheltered by Pope Benedict XV at Castel Gandolfo, the summer papal residence in the hills outside Rome.

On Friday night, Lombardi said he could not predict what Turkey's reaction may be to the pope's latest use of the term "genocide," but stressed that "the pope always speaks in the perspective of peace, reconciliation, and dialogue among different peoples, nations and cultures."

"There are many Armenians who have good relations with Turks, and many Turks have good relations with Armenia, people who desire peace and dialogue," he said.

The pope was especially strong on the impact of the suffering, which St. John Paul II and a former Armenian patriarch described in 2001 as "the first genocide of the 20th century."

"Having seen the pernicious effects to which hatred, prejudice and the untrammelled desire for dominion led in the last century, I express my lively hope that humanity will learn from those tragic experiences the need to act with responsibility and wisdom to avoid the danger of a return to such horrors," the pope said.

"May all join in striving to ensure that whenever conflicts emerge between nations, dialogue, the enduring and authentic quest of peace, cooperation between states and the constant commitment of international organizations will always prevail, with the aim of creating a climate of trust favourable for the achievement of lasting agreements," he said.

Indirectly, the pontiff also acknowledged that a major driving force for the violence unleashed by the Ottomans on their Armenian minority a century ago is because the Ottomans were Muslims and the Armenians are fiercely proud of their heritage as the world's first officially Christian nation.

"It is vitally important that all those who declare their faith in God join forces to isolate those who use religion to promote war, oppression and violent persecution, exploiting and manipulating the holy name of God," Francis said, in effect stipulating that the Armenians know that reality better than most.

Francis acknowledged that such anti-Christian persecution is hardly a finished tale.

“Today Christians in particular, perhaps even more than at the time of the first martyrs, in some places experience discrimination and persecution for the mere fact of professing their faith,” he said.

“The Armenian people have experienced these situations firsthand; they have known suffering and pain; they have known persecution; they preserved not only the memory of past hurts, but also the spirit that has enabled them always to start over again,” Francis told his hosts.

In his clinching line to the speech, Francis praised “the courage of the martyrs,” a reference every Armenian would immediately recognize as, in part, a reference to their ancestors a century ago.

In other words, at the end of day one in Armenia no one could accuse Pope Francis of having come here and either avoiding or playing down the magnitude of the country’s suffering, which is so much a part of the national consciousness, and he did once use the word that Armenians believe is the key symbol of sensitivity to their losses.

Yet the pope also did not go out of his way to invoke the word every chance he had, thereby also signalling sensitivity to Turkish attitudes.

It remains to be seen whether that will be enough to head off another diplomatic and political impasse with one of the world’s most important Muslim powers, but at least this part is clear: Francis may not use the word “genocide” every time he talks about Armenia, but he has not put it on the shelf either.

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