



St Stephen  
Protomartyr

## ST. STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHRISTMAS BULLETIN 2022

### CHRISTMAS PASTORAL LETTER OF HIS BEATITUDE SVIATOSLAV

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

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

**Christ is born! Glorify Him!**

Beloved in Christ!

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

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

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

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

Therefore, despite all our limitations, anxieties and fears, as human beings we are called to accept this joy, to open our hearts to it. The angel explains how to recognize it: “And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger” (Lk 2:12). The Almighty God makes himself known “not in a royal palace, but among cattle, in the desert, in a cave...,” as we sing in the carol. The Apostle of the

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Mon-Thurs 9:00am -2:00pm

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403-249-4818, press 0

**Pastoral Emergencies:**  
403-249-4818, press 9

**Email:**  
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[Coordinator@Protomartyr.ca](mailto:Coordinator@Protomartyr.ca)

**Parish Website:**  
[www.saintstephencalgary.ca](http://www.saintstephencalgary.ca)

**Parish Calendar:**  
[www.saintstephencalgary.ca/  
calendar1.html](http://www.saintstephencalgary.ca/calendar1.html)

**Facebook:**  
[https://www.facebook.com/  
protomartyr.ca](https://www.facebook.com/protomartyr.ca)

**Eparchy Website:**  
[www.edmontoneparchy.com](http://www.edmontoneparchy.com)

#### DIVINE LITURGIES:

##### **Sunday Services:**

8:30 am—Bilingual  
10:05—Rosary  
10:30 am—English  
Vigil Liturgy, **Saturday** at 5:00 pm

##### **Weekday Services:**

**Wednesday and Thursdays**  
9:00am





## **HOLY MYSTERIES**

### **CONFESSION:**

Saturdays 4:00 to 4:45 pm  
Sundays before the 8 am and 10 am  
Liturgies OR by appointment  
403-249-4818, ext. 2

### **MARRIAGE, BAPTISM-CHRISMATION-EUCHARIST, FUNERALS :**

Contact the Sacramental Coordinator, Kim Bombak:  
Sacraments@Protomartyr.ca

### **ANOIDTING OF THE SICK:**

For emergencies call  
403-249-4818, ext. 9

### **DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS :**

Arrangements with the office

## **CLERGY & RELIGIOUS**

### **Pastor :**

Fr. Michael Bombak  
FatherMichael@Protomartyr.ca  
Office:403-249-4818, ext. 1

### **Pastor, St. Basil's Melkite Church**

Fr. Samer Naaman  
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## **PARISH OFFICE**

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## **HALL RENTAL INQUIRIES**

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Nations writes about this when he paints a contrast between divine and human wisdom: "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor 1:25). The divine path to true joy passes through weakness and patience, as once again notes St. Paul: "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor 12:9).

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

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

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

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

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

Dary nas nyni lyuboviu (Grant us love today)

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

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

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

Khrystos rodyvsia! Slavite! (Christ is born! Glorify!)

Khrystos rodyvsia! Slavite! (Christ is born! Glorify!)

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

Dear brothers and sisters! I warmly greet you all with the Birth of Christ: from East to West, from North to South—in Ukraine and abroad, on all the continents of the world. In a special way, I unite myself to our soldiers at the front. I embrace you with Christmas joy and thank you for your courage and heroism. I embrace those who were forced by the war to leave their homes or even their native land. I embrace our wounded, both military and civilian. With tears, I embrace those who lost relatives and friends in the past year. I extend my words of love and support to all in captivity or in temporarily occupied territories, who endure torture and abuse by the occupier and are unable to prepare for themselves a festive dinner nor pray in their native church on Christmas Day. I sincerely greet our volunteers and those who serve and work to eliminate the consequences of war and ensure the life of our peaceful cities and villages, especially our doctors, rescuers, and energy-sector workers.

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

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

† SVIATOSLAV

Given in Kyiv  
at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ,



# PASTORAL LETTER OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF CANADA ON THE OCCASION OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD 2022

To the Very Reverend Clergy, Monastics and Religious Sisters and Brothers, Seminarians and Laity of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Canada

## Christ is Born! Let us Glorify Him!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Legend of the Elderly Grandmother—A Ukrainian Folk Tale.



As we celebrate Christmas, the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, let us revisit the legend of the Elderly Grandmother.

It was the night the dear Christ-Child came to Bethlehem. In a country far away from Him, an old, old grandmother or “baba” sat in her snug little house by her warm fire. The wind was drifting the snow outside and howling down the chimney, but it only made baba’s fire burn more brightly.

“How glad I am that I may stay indoors,” said baba, holding her hands out to the bright blaze.

But suddenly she heard a loud rap at her door. She opened it and her candle shone on three old men standing outside in the snow. Their beards were as white as the snow, and so long that they reached the ground. Their eyes shone kindly in the light of baba’s candle, and their arms were full of precious things – boxes of jewels, and sweet-smelling oils, and ointments.

“We have travelled far, Baba,” they said, “and we stop to tell you of the Baby Prince born this night in Bethlehem. He comes to rule the world and teach all men to be loving and true. We carry Him gifts. Come with us, Baba.”

But baba looked at the drifting snow, and then inside at her cozy room and the crackling fire. “It is too late for me to go with you, good sirs,” she said, “the weather is too cold.” She went inside again and shut the door, and the old men journeyed on to Bethlehem without her. But as baba sat by her fire, rocking, she began to think about the Little Christ-Child, for she loved all babies.

“Tomorrow I will go to find Him,” she said; “tomorrow, when it is light, and I will carry Him some toys.”

So when it was morning baba put on her long cloak and took her staff, and filled her basket with the pretty things a baby would like – gold balls and wooden toys – and she set out to find the Christ-Child.

But, oh, baba had forgotten to ask the three old men the road to Bethlehem, and they travelled so far through the night that she could not overtake them. Up and down the road she hurried, through woods and fields and towns, saying to whomsoever she met: “I go to find the Christ-Child. Where does He lie? I bring some pretty toys for His sake.”

But no one could tell her the way to go, and they all said: “Farther on, Baba, farther on.” So she travelled on and on and on for years and years – but she never found the little Christ-Child.

They say that old baba is travelling still, looking for Him. When it comes Christmas Eve, and the children are lying fast asleep, baba comes softly through the snowy fields and towns, wrapped in her long cloak and carrying her basket on her arm. With her staff she raps gently at the doors and goes inside and holds her candle close to the little children’s faces.

“Is He here?” she asks. “Is the little Christ-Child here?” And then she turns sorrowfully away again, crying: “Farther on, farther on!” But before she leaves she takes a toy from her basket and lays it beside the pillow for a Christmas gift. “For His sake,” she says softly, and then hurries on through the years and forever in search of the little Christ-Child.

We celebrate Christmas this year in the context of the war in Ukraine and other places in the world. Jesus comes into the world as an infant, an innocent baby, in need of care and love. He chooses to be born in the simplicity of a manger, not in a palace as a king. As such, his humble beginnings declare him to be the Prince of Peace. His mission is to declare peace among all peoples.

As Jesus’ followers, we are called to be peacemakers. Let us work towards peace in our families, among our friends, and among neighbours and strangers alike by adopting a way of life that puts the needs of others first, and ours second. Let us “live simply so others may simply live,” a motto made famous by Gandhi, quoting Saint Elizabeth Seton.

To live simply so others may simply live means to put God first in our lives, to live according to God’s ways, to see brother and sister in each person, to satisfy the hunger and thirst in those in need, to value justice and freedom, to seek truth, to honour human dignity, to take care of mother earth so that our children and grandchildren may have a home to inherit, to have compassion, and above all to love God, neighbour and self as God loves us.

To live otherwise, that is, to live a life that values money, wealth, and power above all else, risks selling ourselves short, ending up unhappy and disappointed. Rather God wants us to be happy and to live with God forever in paradise, in the Garden of Eden, in heaven with God and all our loved ones.

The elderly grandmother – baba, missed her opportunity to see the Christ-child, and forever searches for him, unsatisfied, alone, and cold, growing ever older.

Yet, it is not too late for us. May the story of Christmas – of Jesus’ birth, of God’s presence among us – continue to inspire the world, transforming it through peace and love into the Kingdom of God here on earth.

As we celebrate the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, may Christ, truly bless you and your family with peace, love and joy, now and in the New Year!

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

+ Lawrence Huculak, OSBM, Metropolitan Archbishop of Winnipeg; Apostolic Administrator of Saskatoon

+ David Motiuk, Eparchial Bishop of Edmonton; Apostolic Administrator of New Westminster

+ Bryan Bayda, CSsR, Eparchial Bishop of Toronto

+ Andriy Raby, Auxiliary Bishop of Winnipeg

+ Michael Wiwchar, CSsR, Bishop Emeritus of Saskatoon

+ Stephen Chmilar, Bishop Emeritus of Toronto

CHRIST IS BORN!  
GLORIFY HIM!

Христос Раждається!  
Славимо Його!



Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Христос Раждається! Славимо Його!

My dearest parishioners,

Christmas has arrived once again this year and we have truly received the best gift- as always! Despite the invasion of Ukraine, crippling inflation, and supply chain issues we celebrate the greatest gift we can and ever will receive - the gift of God Himself. "God is with us! з нами Бог!" If God is with us, who can be against us?

As the Magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, honouring His kingship, priesthood, and self-sacrifice, we too, are challenged to join them in offering our lives to Him out of love. What small gift can we commit to offering the Newborn King in the manger this year? Here are a few suggestions:

1. Sign up for FORMED - If you haven't already, follow the instructions with this bulletin. Commit to growing in your faith through the high-quality resources available to you free from the parish.
2. Spend some time daily in prayer, working your way through the scriptures or the catechism. This is made easy through the "Bible in a Year" or "Catechism in a year" reading plan/podcast from Ascension Press: [All Bible in a Year Episodes - Ascension Press Media](#) and [The Catechism in a Year - Ascension \(ascensionpress.com\)](#). These make great new year's resolutions!
3. Come out to our Alpha sessions (delivered in English and Ukrainian) beginning January 15<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM. Learn more about your faith, have some great conversations, and answer the deepest questions of your heart before participating in the 10:30 AM Sunday liturgy. Better yet, bring a friend to explore and grow with.
4. Work to provide much needed loving care in supporting our Ukrainian Newcomers. The need is great and so are the possibilities of help, organized through our Ukrainian Support Network. Remember that whatever we do to the least of our brothers and sisters, we do to the Lord Himself.

This next year we are hoping to expand our presence on St. Mary University Campus through the work of our Evangelist, Felipe, and begin to provide new opportunities for our young adults here at the parish. We also continue to provide vital care for our Ukrainian Newcomers. It is a true honour and blessing for St. Stephen's parish that we can work to providing a new home for our Ukrainian Newcomers at this time and I sincerely thank all our parishioners and friends for their countless hours of support.

Brothers and sisters, the Lord has given Himself as a gift to the world and continues to give Himself to us in the Most Holy Eucharist. May this same Lord, born in a cave for our salvation, continue to bless you now and always!

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Христос Раждається! Славимо Його!

Fr. Michael Bombak

Христос Раждається! Славимо Його!

Мої дорогі парафіяни,

Цього року знову прийшло Різдво, і ми, як завжди, отримали найкращий подарунок! Незважаючи на вторгнення в Україну, руйнівну інфляцію та відсутність постачання світла та тепла, ми святкуємо найбільший дар, який ми можемо отримати і коли-небудь отримаємо, – дар Самого Бога. «З нами Бог! Якщо з нами Бог, то хто проти нас?»

Так як і Волхви принесли дари із золота, ладану та мирри, вшановуючи Його царство, святість та самопожертву, так і ми приєднуємося до них, щоб присвятити своє життя Йому з любов'ю. Який маленький подарунок ми можемо запропонувати Новонародженому Царю в яслах цього року? Ось кілька пропозицій:

1. Зареєструйтеся на FORMED. Якщо ви ще цього не зробили, дотримуйтеся інструкцій у цьому бюлетені. Візьміть на себе зобов'язання зростати у своїй вірі за допомогою високоякісних ресурсів, доступних вам безкоштовно від парафії.
2. Щодня приділяйте деякий час молитві, вивчаючи Святе Письмо або катехизм. Це легко зробити за допомогою плану чи подкасту «Біблія за рік» або «Катехизис за рік» від Ascension Press: [All Bible in a Year Episodes - Ascension Press Media](#) та [The Catechism in a Year - Ascension \(ascensionpress.com\)](#). Це прекрасні новорічні наміри!
3. Приходьте на наші сесії від ALPHA (ведуться англійською та українською мовами), які починаються 15 січня о 9:00 ранку. Дізнайтеся більше про свою віру, проведіть час у чудовій бесіді, та знайдіть відповіді на найглибші запитання свого серця перед тим, як взяти участь у недільній літургії о 10:30. А ще краще, візьміть друга, щоб досліджувати та розвиватися разом.
4. Працюйте, щоб забезпечити таку необхідну турботу з любов'ю, підтримуючи наших українських новоприбулих. Потреба велика, як і можливості допомоги, організовані через нашу Українську мережу підтримки. Пам'ятайте, що все, що ми робимо для найменших із наших братів і сестер, ми робимо для Самого Господа.

У наступному році ми сподіваємося розширити свою діяльність на кампусі Університету Св. Марії завдяки роботі нашого євангеліста Феліпе та почати надавати нові можливості для нашої молоді тут, у парафії. Ми також продовжуємо надавати життєво важливу допомогу нашим українським новоприбулим. Це справжня честь і благословення для парафії Св. Степана, що ми можемо працювати, щоб забезпечити новий дім для наших українських новоприбулих у цей час, і я щиро дякую всім нашим парафіянам і друзям за їх незліченні години підтримки. Брати і сестри, Господь дав Себе в дар світу і продовжує давати Себе нам у Пресвятій Євхаристії. Нехай цей самий Господь, народжений у печері для нашого спасіння, благословляє вас тепер і завжди!

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Христос Раждається! Славимо Його!

Св. Отець, Михайло Бомбак