

## How to use GoToMeeting Step by step with Screenshots

<http://www.quicksetupguide.com/others/gotomeeting1.htm>

**ETIQUETTE EVERY PERSON SHOULD KNOW:** As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread, few organizations remain unscathed – and virtual meetings have become an essential part of how modern organizations maintain productivity and continuity. They're an easy, cost-effective way to align multiple locations. While virtual meetings have likely been a part of your daily work routine for some time now, it's still easy to fall victim to some major meeting faux pas. Virtual meeting etiquette is a whole new ball game compared to in-person meetings. To help you keep your meetings productive and professional, follow these simple virtual meeting etiquette rules and tips. **Leave the keyboard alone. Dress appropriately. Be aware of your surroundings. Mute your microphone when you're not talking. No food allowed. Stay seated and stay present. Minimize Distractions**

### A PRAYER OF PROTECTION FROM CORONAVIRUS

O Lord our God, Who are rich in mercy and with careful wisdom direct our lives, hear our prayers and receive our repentance for our sins, bring an end to this new infectious disease, just as You averted the punishment of Your people in the past time. You Who are the Physician of our souls and bodies, grant restored health to those who have been seized by this illness raising them from their bed of suffering so that they may glorify You, O Merciful Saviour, and preserve in health those who have not been infected. By Your grace, O Lord, bless, strengthen, and preserve, all those who out of love and sacrifice care for the sick, either in their homes or in the hospitals. Deliver people in this city, in our country, and around the world from all illnesses and suffering, and teach us to value life and health as gifts from You. Give us Your peace, O God, and fill our hearts with unflinching faith in Your protection, hope in Your help, and love for You and our neighbor. For it is Yours to be merciful and to save us, O our God, and to You we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

### МОЛИТВА ЗАХИСТУ ВІД КОРОНАВІРУСА

«Господи, Боже наш, багатий милосердям і милістю, що Своїм мудрим Провидінням керуєш нашим життям, вислухай нашу молитву, прийми покаєння за гріхи наші, припини пошесть згубну, яка спіткала нас, як Ти і раніше припиняв згубні пошесті серед людей. Милосердний Спасителю, захисти здоров'я тих, хто на Тебе уповає. Лікарю душ і тіл наших, дай одужання тим, що хворіють, і підведи їх з ложа недуги та страждань. Благослови, Господи, укріпи і захисти Своєю благодаттю усіх тих, хто з благодійністю і жертівністю піклується про хворих вдома чи в лікарнях. Визволи людей в нашому місті (селі, монастирі), в нашій країні і по всьому світу від пошесті згубної, від хвороб і страждань та навчи нас цінувати життя і здоров'я як Твої дари. Дай нам, Боже, Твій мир і наповни наші серця непохитною вірою в Твій захист, надією на Твою підтримку і любов'ю до Тебе і наших ближніх. Твоє бо є, щоб милувати і спасати нас, Боже наш, і Тобі славу возсилаємо, Отцю, і Сину, і Святому Духу, нині і повсякчас і навіки віків. Амінь».

УКРАЇНСЬКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА КАТЕДРА ПРЕСВЯТОЇ ТРОЙЦІ  
HOLY TRINITY UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL  
154 East 10th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5T 1Z4

## SUNDAY BULLETIN НЕДІЛЬНИЙ БЮЛЕТЕНЬ

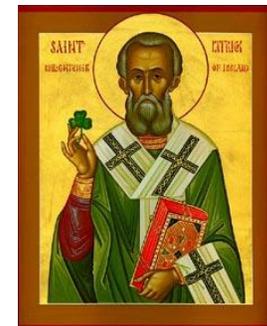
Rev. Father Roman Tsaplan, Parish Priest  
Office: 604-876-4747  
Cell: 778-239-6252  
E-mail: [rttsaplan@yahoo.ca](mailto:rttsaplan@yahoo.ca)  
Website: [www.uocvancouver.com](http://www.uocvancouver.com)

**WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE**  
Reading of Hours: 9:45 am

**DIVINE LITURGY 10:00 am**

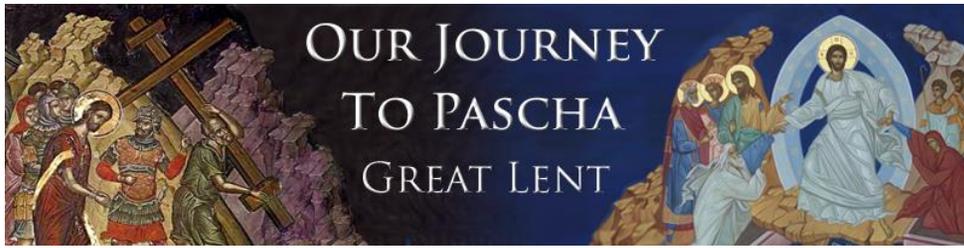
B.C.'s ban on social gatherings and events, including church worship, has been extended indefinitely, but Dr. Bonnie Henry has suggested planning could begin for resumption of faith services and other gatherings at the end of February

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/196589709>



**Сиропусна Неділя  
Cheesefare Sunday**

Sunday, March 14, 2021



# OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA GREAT LENT

## THOUGHTS ABOUT THE LENTEN SEASON

**WHAT IS THE GREAT FAST?** It is a tithe of the year, some 40 days set aside for spiritual discipline to prepare us for the greatest of Christian feasts, the Resurrection of Our Lord.

**Did Christ fast?** Yes, indeed. Following His baptism in the Jordan, Jesus went into seclusion in the desert and spent forty days and nights in prayer and fasting. This was His preparation for beginning His public ministry.

**What is involved in fasting?** To fast means to eat sparingly, that is, to cut down on the amount of food consumed. Abstaining is different. It means the elimination of certain foods from the diet. This usually involves meat and its by-products.

**Is that all there is to Lent?** No, that is but one aspect, involving the discipline of the flesh. But we are spirit, too, so the Church Fathers speak of the fasting of the soul. St. John Chrysostom says. *"The value of fasting consists not so much in abstinence from food, as in relinquishment of sinful practices."*

**What about prayer and worship?** Now we come to the heart of the Great Fast. Prayer is the key to the renewal of life, to repentance. We stop looking outward and look inward. There is an element of silence. And then there is worship. The wise men came and "worshipped Him," falling to their knees in adoration.

**What about Holy Confession and Communion?** These represent a high point in religious experience in the Fast. For here we cleanse our souls and receive Christ Himself into our lives as we come to the Eucharist. Jesus Himself proclaimed. *"Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man... and drink His blood... you have no life in you..."*



## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

### PASTORAL MESSAGE

#### Forgiveness of sin....

Few topics are less popular these days than sin. The concept of sin, and of a person's responsibility for it, has been vanishing in our society.

But during the Great Fast, as Christians prepare for the Day of Resurrection, they think of sin and of absolution as they receive the sacrament mystery of Penance, Confession.

How did Our Lord regard sin? Jesus dealt gently with sinners, but severely with sin. To those who were sorry, repentant, He offered full pardon, forgiveness, with an

admonition to forsake sin. To the paralyzed man brought to Him, Jesus said. **"My son your sins are forgiven you."** "After healing the blind man, Jesus said. **"Sin no more, lest something worse comes to you."**

Christ instructed His apostles to deal with sins. **"Whoever sins you forgive, they are forgiven; and whoever since you retain, they are retained,"** He said. The Early Church did the same, and the present Church likewise provides for the forgiveness of sins in Penance.

This sacrament has been called the **"second baptism,"** for it washes away transgressions committed after one's rebirth in Christ. It restores one to fellowship with the Savior, and heals the wounds of the spirit.

+ SUNDAY IS THE LORD'S DAY – LET US  
WORSHIP HIM +

### IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY FIND PEACE AND HOPE

*"Come to me, all who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest."  
(Holy Bible. Matthew 11:28)*



### TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

**WELCOME TO OUR PARISH:** Our warmest greetings are extended to all visitors and guests who are participating in today's Divine Liturgy via **GoToMeeting** Software. What a joy it is to have you praying with us.

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT:** Observing the Truths proclaimed by the Nicene Creed. Providing Holy Sacraments to its Members and Community. Offering Teachings to strengthen Members Beliefs. Providing Social Opportunities for Fellowship and Enjoyment. Providing Spiritual and Personal Counseling.



**TODAY -** Our regular schedule of services. We pray that our Heavenly Father give us a new appreciation of the passion and death of Jesus so that we may follow in his footsteps, seeking not to be served but to serve and to offer our lives in simplicity and kindness. During the Liturgy, we continue offering prayers for the health of Olga Andrushko and Helen Kerr.

**SUNDAY IS THE LORD'S DAY:** We believe that attending the services in person or on line and practicing Spirituality adds Hope, Meaning and Motivation to our Life.



**GET WELL** to our Parishioners that are ill and recuperating. Our thoughts and prayers are with you always, may you get well real soon. Please let Father Roman know of anyone who is ill or needing prayers.

**THE GREAT LENT WILL BEGON ON MARCH 15:** Lenten memorial services combined with the Divine Liturgy will be held on Sundays March 28, April 4 and 11 at 10:00 am. Please arrange to have your loved ones remembered in these special prayers.

**FORGIVENESS SUNDAY. LAY UP TREASURES IN HEAVEN:** As we approach Great Lent, the season of repentance, may this wonderful Gospel reading Mt. 6:14-21 on Forgiveness Sunday encourage us to return to the road that will lead us back to God and to our salvation.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING:** A meeting of the Executive Board of the Parish is scheduled for Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm via GoToMeeting virtual platform.



**SATURDAY AFTERNOON FOOD SALES – VOLUNTEERING:** Friday Night Suppers are still suspended until further notice; however, Vancouver Coastal Health has permitted us to make and sell Ukrainian food for takeout. If you wish to volunteer with making Ukrainian food and/or Saturday Afternoon Sales please contact one of the following people for more details: Marcia Moroz (604 553-2112 ) or Elena Murgoci or Daniel Moroz Lisk or email: [ukrainianfood@uocvancouver.com](mailto:ukrainianfood@uocvancouver.com).

**VARENYKY MAKING AND SALES (March 6th and 13th):** The SAS Committee would like to acknowledge and thank the volunteers from last weekend and this weekend. On Saturday March 6th volunteers produced over 155 dozen varenky. Volunteers made the traditional potato and cheese filled varenky as well as sauerkraut filled varenky, cherry filled varenky and green varenky (in honor of St. Patrick's Day - March 17th). On Saturday March 13th afternoon volunteers sold over 140 dozen varenky in less than 4 hours and brought in approximately \$1500. This was a record setting afternoon sales day for the church. Our loyal patrons were thrilled to have our traditional varenky once again and equally excited to try our new variations. Once again tremendous job and thank you for your time and effort! This wouldn't have happened or have been such a success without all of you. Volunteers included: Marcia Moroz, Elena Murgoci, Larisa Andrushko, Liz Kaminsky, Anna Zubchenko, Irina Raviv, Karina and Stan Trubin, Michelle Barile, Chuck and Vicki Croll, Wayne Jensen, and Alan Kukurudz.

**COMMUNION BREAD "Prospora"** this bread is specially baked for the purpose of communion.

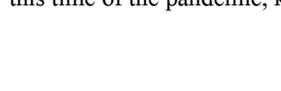


We would like to express our thanks to Nettie Holonko, Valia Malko, Jean Yaremko and Elena Edwards for preparing the dough and baking the prospora. May our Lord reward you with His blessing for your dedication.

**MEMBERSHIP DUES:** Parish members are asked to pay their 2021 Membership Dues (Family - \$200; Singles - \$105) at the earliest date possible.

**DONATIONS RECEIVED:** \$100 from Philip Ackril; \$1000 from Ira Shar. Thank you and may Almighty God reward you with His Divine Grace.

**DONATION ON LINE:** To make donations, please visit our website at [www.uocvancouver.com](http://www.uocvancouver.com) Your donations are deeply appreciated.



**SUNDAY OFFERING:** Brothers and sisters! God calls us on Sunday to share our abundance with a thankful heart. It is a privilege to share and an honor to be fortunate enough to do so. St. Paul encourages us to continue to do so because, as we do so, we glorify God and others see the evidence of Christ. During this time of the pandemic, kindly make your donations via our web site: [www.uocvancouver.com](http://www.uocvancouver.com)

**BEQUESTS TO THE PARISH:** Thankfully, from time to time, the Parish has been the beneficiary of the generosity of deceased individuals who have remembered us in their wills. These capital bequests assist the parish greatly, particularly with renovations or development projects which require significant capital outlays. We urge you to consider bequests to charitable beneficiaries such as your church.

**CHURCH GROWTH BEGINS WITH ME:** Consider these thoughtful quotations: "Church growth involves spiritual as well as numerical growth." "Orthodox Christianity is the faith for all mankind." " As a steward, I must wisely manage the gifts God has given me and use them for building up of the Church." "I am called to work with Christ in reaching others." " I want my parish to serve as the means by which others are brought to Christ and His Church." "I must share God's love with others by sharing my faith with them." "Evangelization is the heart of the Church's life and experience." " I must help to make the Church more visible and invite others to services and activities." " Church growth begins with me."

**SPIRITUAL GROWTH:** The fruit of Worship is the gift of the Spirit which takes place by following Christ; *through prayer; virtues of faith, hope and love; friendship with others; listening and forgiving.*



**SUCCESS WHEN WE WORK TOGETHER:** Each of us has been gifted by God and being part of our congregation gives all of us the opportunity to live our faith; be part of helping the Church operate; share responsibilities and lighten the labour for others; demonstrate and teach our children and grandchildren the value of serving and forge deeper and more meaningful relationships with our Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Please take time to call someone when you think of them. Remember our congregation is here for all of us. Belonging and feeling included takes time. A personal commitment, financial support and taking responsibility to participate fully. **“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.**

**DAILY VISITORS LOG:** If you plan to come to Holy Trinity during the weekday please let the office know. Upon entry sign the Daily Visitor’s Log located at the top of the Office / Mezzanine entry stairs.

**SUNDAY BULLETIN -** If you have any announcements for the bulletin relating to Parish life, please submit them to Fr. Roman at [rtsaplan@yahoo.ca](mailto:rtsaplan@yahoo.ca) by no later than Friday morning.



**EXTRA PRAYER:** When the world falls down around you, \* And a prayer will see you through, \* Say an extra prayer for someone, \* Who may need it more than you. \* For who knows what hearts are breaking, \* In the silence of the night? \* Just that extra prayer you whisper, \* May help someone see the light! \* Every time you help a stranger, \* With an extra prayer - or two - \* You are building secret blessings, \* That will come back to you! (Nick Kenny).

**LENTEN NECESSITIES:** Increased Prayer; Fasting; Repentance and a sincere Confession; Works of Love and Generosity; Mutual Forgiveness. HOW HAVE YOU DONE?

**THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE SERVICE. MAY YOU ALL HAVE A WONDERFUL SUNDAY**

CATECHETICAL HOMILY  
AT THE OPENING  
OF HOLY AND GREAT LENT  
+ **BARTHOLOMEW**  
BY GOD'S MERCY  
ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE-NEW ROME  
AND ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH  
TO THE PLENITUDE OF THE CHURCH,  
MAY THE GRACE AND PEACE  
OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST,  
TOGETHER WITH OUR PRAYER, BLESSING AND FORGIVENESS  
BE WITH YOU ALL  
\* \* \*

Most honorable brothers and blessed children in the Lord,

With the good-will and grace of God, the giver of all good things, we are entering Holy and Great Lent, the arena of ascetic struggles. The Church knows the labyrinths of the human soul and the thread of Ariadne, the way out of all impasse – humility, repentance, the power of prayer and the sacred services of contrition, fasting that eliminates the passions, patience, obedience to the rule of piety. And so the Church invites us once again this year to a divinely inspired journey, whose measure is the Cross and whose horizon is the Resurrection of Christ.

The veneration of the Cross in the middle of Holy and Great Lent reveals the meaning of this whole period. The word of our Lord echoes strikingly: “Whoever desires to follow me ... let them lift their cross *each day* and follow me” (Lk 9.23). We are called to lift our own cross, following the Lord and beholding His life-giving Cross, with the awareness that the Lord is the one that saves and not the lifting of our cross. The Cross of the Lord is “the judgment of our criteria,” “the judgment of the world,” and at the same time the promise that evil in all its forms does not have the final word in history. In looking to Christ and under His protection, as the One who permits our struggle, while blessing and strengthening our effort, we fight the good fight, “afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Cor

4.8–9). This is the experiential quintessence also during the present period of the Cross and the Resurrection. We are on a journey to the Resurrection through the Cross, through which “joy has come to the whole world.”

Some of you may wonder why the Church, in the midst of the current pandemic, would add to the already existing health restrictions yet another “quarantine,” namely Great Lent. Indeed, Great Lent is also a “quarantine,” a period that lasts forty days. Nevertheless, the Church does not aim to weaken us further with additional obligations and prohibitions. On the contrary, it calls us to give meaning to the quarantine that we are living as a result of the coronavirus, through Great Lent, as liberation from enslavement to “the things of our world.”

Today’s Gospel reading establishes the conditions of this liberation. The first condition is fasting, not in the sense of abstaining only from specific foods, but also from those habits that keep us attached to the world. Such abstinence does not comprise an expression of contempt of the world, but a necessary precondition for reorienting our relationship with the world and for experiencing the unique joy of discovering the world as the domain of Christian witness. This is why, even during this stage of fasting, the approach and experience of the life of the faithful have a paschal dimension, the taste of the Resurrection. The “Lenten atmosphere” is not depressing, but joyous. It is the “great joy” that was proclaimed as good news by the angel “to all people” at the birth of the Savior (Lk 2.10). This is the unwavering “fulness of joy” (1 Jn 1.4) of life in Christ. Christ is always present in our life – He is closer to us than we are to ourselves – all the days of our life, “unto the end of the ages” (Mt 28.20). The life of the Church is an unshakeable witness to the grace that has come and to the hope of the Kingdom, to the fullness of revelation of the mystery of the Divine Economy.

Faith is the response to God’s loving condescension to us; it is the “Yes” of our whole existence to Him, who “bowed the heavens and descended” in order to redeem the human race “from the slavery of the enemy” and in order to open for us the way toward deification through grace. The sacrificial love for the neighbor and the “care” for the whole creation spring from and are nurtured by this gift of grace. If this

***The Great Lent Epistle of the Permanent Conference  
of Ukrainian Orthodox Bishops Beyond the Borders of Ukraine***

charitable love for others and the god-pleasing concern for creation are absent, then my neighbor becomes “my hell” and creation is abandoned to irrational forces, which transform it into an object of exploitation and into a hostile environment for humankind.

The second condition of the liberation promised by Great Lent is forgiveness. Oblivion of divine mercy and God’s ineffable beneficence, breach of the Lord’s commandment that we should become “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world” (Mt 5.13-14), and a false transformation of the Christian way of life: to all of these attitudes leads a “closed spirituality” that thrives on the denial and rejection of the “other” and of the world, wipes out love, forgiveness and the acceptance of the different. Yet, this barren and arrogant attitude of life is denounced emphatically by the word of the Gospel on the first three Sundays of the Triodion.

It is known that such extremes are especially prevalent during periods when the Church invites its faithful to spiritual discipline and vigilance. However, the authentic spiritual life is a way of internal renewal, an exodus from our selves, a loving movement toward our neighbor. It is not based on syndromes of purity and exclusion, but on forgiveness and discernment, doxology and thanksgiving, according to the experiential wisdom of the ascetic tradition: “It is not food, but gluttony that is evil ... not speaking, but idle speech ... not the world, but the passions.”

With this attitude and these sentiments, we join our prayers with all of you, beloved brothers and children, that we may definitively overcome the lethal pandemic and swiftly respond to its social and economic consequences. And we ask for your beseeching supplications, too, for the reopening of the Sacred Theological School of Halki, after a long period of fifty years that has passed since its silence was imposed externally and fully unjustly, as we welcome Holy and Great Lent in the Church, singing and chanting together “God is with us,” to Whom belongs the glory and might to the endless ages. Amen!

Holy and Great Lent 2021

✠ **BARTHOLOMEW of Constantinople**  
Fervent supplicant for all before God

Beloved in the Lord: clergy, brothers and sisters in the Lord!

Once again, we are entering into the Sacred Season of the Holy and Great Lent.

In the First Gospel, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ calls Matthew with a simple expression “*Follow me.*” Upon hearing the call, the tax collector “*got up and followed him.*” The Greek translation of “got up” is *anastas*, the word used also to describe the Resurrection (*anastasis*) of our Lord from the dead. Choosing to follow Him is also a kind of resurrection from the dead, since it involves the rising up from a “lower” path of life to a “higher” one, from a preoccupation with the temporal world to an ultimate immersion in the Divinity of God.

The call of Christ Jesus addresses the mind, but it is meant to move through the mind into the body, and through the body into the whole of one’s life, into action and decision. “Follow me” has the sense of “walk as I walk, think as I think and choose as I choose.” Discipleship – being a follower – requires an entire reworking of the self, according to the example set by our Savior.

Follow me... Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel!

The Lenten season is an invitation to a sincere review of our life in the Light of the Gospel. Any illusion of self-sufficiency we may have held should have been dispelled by these past 12 months in which we have faced a global medical crisis, economic hardship, social unrest, and partisan divisiveness. Perhaps, when we emerge on the far side of COVID-19 pandemic, we would have learned to be a bit more humble — that, despite all our vast technology, we are not the masters of our destinies as we sometimes tend to believe.

The events of the past year have caused much suffering for many people and suffering does not usually exalt us. It can and does embitter us, and we can be and are tempted to self-pity, becoming completely self-centered. A faithful observance of the Holy and Great Lent can help us grow in humility - which is not “thinking less of ourselves” (as some erroneously believe) but rather, “thinking of ourselves less”. Great Lent, therefore, is a summons to reach out to others in their need so that we, having experienced mercy from God, might learn how to be ourselves merciful.

And, certainly, this past year has been very disruptive of our lives. We yearn for “normality” -whatever the “new” normal might be. And so, while we face

the future with humility, we must also embrace the present with a strong dose of patience. Patience is the spiritual vaccine we all need during these days of pandemic, economic stress, social unrest, and political divisiveness and, therefore, a great virtue for us to work on this Great and Holy Lent of 2021. St. Peter says: *“Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For, “Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it. For the eye of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”* (1 Peter 3:8-12)

If you are patient, you do not answer that angry email with an angrier one. You wait and perhaps you will not say or write something you cannot take back. Patience helps you de-escalate tense situations. Patience gives birth to humility and brings us closer to holiness. Holy and Great Lent calls us to recommit ourselves to the search for holiness, which is what “life in Christ” means for all Orthodox Christians.

Through prayer, repentance, fasting and simple daily kindness, we lead ourselves and our loved ones to a renewed faith in the power of God’s Love for us, a Love that is stronger than sin, death, and the devil. Through repentance in the Holy Mystery of Confession, we seek to overcome the influence of sin which has wounded our capacity to live in fellowship with others and union with God. In the Fourth Prayer – of St. Simeon the Translator – before receiving the Holy Eucharist – Communion, we pray: *“The multitude of Your Loving-Kindness is immeasurable and the mercy of Your Goodness and Forbearance beyond description and there is no sin, which overcomes Your Love for all mankind.”* Thus, we see that there is great hope always that we can be victorious over sin – turning away from sin and toward a Loving God, always ready to embrace us in His LOVE.

Let us all journey through this Sacred Season with a sense of repentance, with a renewed desire to love, to serve, to be present for one other; so that we can all proclaim to the world around us – WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF LOVE! WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF THE GOSPEL! WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF PASCHA!

Blessed Lenten Journey to all!

*With Archpastoral blessings,*

+ **YURIJ** – Metropolitan  
*Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada*

+ **ANTONY** – Metropolitan  
*Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, South America and Diaspora*

+ **JEREMIAH** – Archbishop  
*Ukrainian Orthodox Eparchy of South America*

+ **DANIEL** – Archbishop  
*Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora*

+ **ILARION** – Bishop  
*Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada*

+ **ANDRIY** – Bishop  
*Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada*

### ***Великопосне Послання Постійної Конференції Українських Православних Єпископів Поза Межами України***

Улюблені у Христі: духовенство, брати і сестри!

Ось і знову ми вступаємо у Священну Пору Святого та Великого Посту.

В Першому Євангелії, Господь наш і Спаситель Ісус Христос кличе Матвія простим зверненням *“Йди за Мною”*. Почувши заклик, митар *“встав і пішов за ним”*. Грецький переклад слова *“встав”* - *анастас*, також вживається для опису події Воскресіння (*анастасіс*) Господа нашого Ісуса Христа з мертвих. Вибір наслідувати Христа, свого роду є також воскресінням з мертвих, оскільки він включає в себе піднесення від *“нижчого”* шляху життя до *“вищого”*, від тимчасових турбот світу цього до основного занурення в Божество.

Заклик Ісуса Христа звернений до розуму, але він повинен пройти через наш розум у тіло, а через тіло — у все життя, дії та рішення. *“Йди за мною”* означає *“ходи, як Я ходжу, думай, як Я думаю, та вибирай, як Я вибираю”*. Бути учнем, означає бути послідовником, і вимагає повністю

перевиховати себе, згідно прикладу, показаного нашим Спасителем.

Иди за мною ... Відвернись від гріха і будь вірним Євангелії!

Час Великого Посту - це запрошення до щирого огляду нашого життя у світлі Євангелії. Будь-яка ілюзія самозабезпеченості, яку ми можливо мали, повинна була б розвіятись за останні 12 місяців, з часу, коли ми зіткнулися з світовою медичною кризою, економічними труднощами, громадськими заворушеннями та партійною роздільністю. Можливо, переживши пандемію COVID-19, ми навчимося бути дещо покірнішими - усвідомивши, що незважаючи на неймовірні можливості сьогоденної технології, наша доля все одно не є в наших руках, як ми часто думаємо.

Події минулого року завдали великих страждань багатьом людям, а страждання зазвичай не підносять нас. Вони можуть, а часто і роблять нас озлобленими, і тоді ми впадаємо у спокусу жалю над собою, стаючи повністю егоцентричними. Правильне дотримання Святого і Великого Посту може допомогти нам зрости у смиренні - що не означає, що ми будемо “менше задумуватись над собою” (як дехто помилково вважає), а швидше, “менше думати про себе”. Отож, Великий Піст це заклик звернутися до тих, хто в потребі, щоб ми, отримавши милосердя від Бога, навчилися бути милосердними.

Звичайно, минулий рік був дуже руйнівним для нашого життя. Ми всі прагнемо “нормальності” — якою б “нова” норма не була. Тому, дивлячись у майбутнє з смиренням, ми повинні сприймати сьогодення з терпінням. Терпіння — це духовна вакцина, яка усім нам необхідна в ці дні пандемії, економічного стресу, громадських заворушень та політичного розколу, а також велика чеснота над якою нам потрібно працювати у цей Великий і Святий Піст 2021 року. Святий Апостол Петро повчає: “Нарешті ж, будьте всі єдинодумні, спочутливі, братолюбні, милосердні, покірливі. Не платіть злом за зло, або лайкою за лайку, навпаки, благословляйте, знаючи, що на це вас покликано, щоб ви впадкували благословення. Бо хто хоче любити життя та бачити добрі дні, нехай здержить свого язика від лихого та уста свої від говорення підступу. Ухиляйся від злого та добре чини, шукай миру й женися за ним! Бо очі Господні до праведних, а вуха Його до їхніх прохань, а Господнє лице проти тих, хто чинить лихе! (1Петра 3: 8-12)

Якщо Ви терплячі, Ви не відповісте на роздратований електронний лист ще гнівнішим листом. Ви почекаєте, і, можливо, не скажете чи напишете

того, чого Ви не зможете забрати назад. Терпіння допомагає зняти напругу з ситуації. Терпіння породжує смирення і зближує нас із святістю. Святий і Великий Піст закликає нас шукати святості, що для всіх Православних Християн означає “життя у Христі”.

Через молитву, покаяння, піст та простоту щоденної доброти ми приводимо себе та своїх близьких до оновленої віри в силу Божої Любові до нас, Любові, яка є сильнішою за гріх, смерть та диявола. Через покаяння у Святій Тайні Сповіді, ми прагнемо подолати вплив гріха, який вражає нашу здатність жити у мирі з іншими та єднанні з Богом. У 4-й Молитві св. Симеона Метафраста перед Святою Євхаристією/Причастям, ми молимося: “Безмірне множество щедрот Твоїх і милість невимовна незлостивої Твоєї благодаті, і немає гріха, щоб переміг Твою Любов до людства”. Отже, ми бачимо, що завжди є велика надія на те, що ми можемо бути переможцями над гріхом — відвернувшись від нього та повернувшись до Люблячого Бога, який завжди готового обняти нас у Своїй ЛЮБОВІ.

Давайте, усі разом, подорожувати цією Священною Порою з почуттям покаяння, відновленим бажанням любити, служити та бути поруч один для одного; щоб ми могли проголосити світу навколо нас те, що - МИ ЛЮДИ ЛЮБОВІ! МИ ЛЮДИ ЄВАНГЕЛІЇ! МИ ЛЮДИ ПАСХИ!

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- + **АНДРІЙ** - Єпископ Української Православної Церкви в Канаді