

# **SAINTS PETER AND PAUL UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

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December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Father Yurii Bobko, Pastor  
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Protopresbyter William Diakiw, Attached  
Parish Board President: Robert Prokopchak  
Choir Director: Lydia Rudolf

## **\*\*\*\*\* PARISH NEWS AND UPDATES \*\*\*\*\***

**WELCOME All!** Welcome to the God-Loving and God-Protected Parish of Saints Peter and Paul! A Parish of the UOC of the USA and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Our warmest greetings are extended to all visitors and guests, and to all of our beloved parishioners who are participating in today's Divine Liturgy. We are blessed to have you with us today! If you are with us for the first time, PLEASE introduce yourself to Father Yurii – he is looking forward to meeting you! Also, please feel free to email or call Father Yurii with any questions and let him know what is going on in your life, especially if you need spiritual guidance. We hope that you will find peace and comfort in Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church. You are very welcome to come every Sunday and on feast days, make yourself at home, and to become a part of our parish family. Through the intercession of Saints Peter and Paul we hope and pray that our community might grow into a full-fledged Parish in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. Through your prayers and dedication of time, talents, and donations, this can become a reality in all faith and love.

Dear brothers and sisters! We would like to remind you that we all still under the Coronavirus restrictions; please, before going to the church make sure you have read all the responsibilities and rules that applied for the church visit during these days!

We wish to announce that we will have Sunday school for children every three weeks and also adult education (catechism) for those who are interested every last week of the month. As you already know our Sunday school and catechism are going to be held on Sunday after Liturgy.

Please remember that our annual Bake sale this year will be held starting **November 30 through December 2**. We encourage everyone to take an active role in this event and share the word about it with relatives and friends.

We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who came out to help these past weeks at our Pirohi Sales. We again encourage everyone to come out to help with the next Parish Pirohi Sale on **December 18th** as we work together once again for the good of our Parish in this special way.

We would like to remind that we will have celebration of St. Nicholas feast day on **December 6<sup>th</sup>** after Divine Liturgy in our hall with the St. Nicholas program for our parish family.

Aslo, we will have Christmas celebration with Christmas program on the third day of Christmas – **December 27<sup>th</sup>** with lunch and Christmas caroling.

We are going to continue doing the Prayer Corner during the Liturgy. If you have and know anybody from you Family, relatives, or friends who you would like Fr. Yurii to remember and pray during liturgy, please submit the names on the card to Fr. Yurii before Liturgy.

**PLEASE NOTE**, if there is a need for confession or home visit, you will need to inform Fr. Yurii and after this the time and day will be appointed for home visit or for confession at the parish Church of Ss. Peter and Paul!

\*\*\*\*\*REFLECTION FOR THESE WEEKS\*\*\*\*\*

## Nativity Fast

Please, remember that we have already entered the Nativity Fast that will be going through **November 15<sup>th</sup> until December 25<sup>th</sup>**, we need to remember about the importance of this Nativity fast. The Nativity Fast is established so that by the day of the Nativity of Christ we cleanse ourselves by repentance, prayer and fasting, so that with a pure heart, soul and body we can reverently meet the Son of God who has appeared in the world. Fast by itself is not a goal, but only a means for a correct spiritual life based on prayer and the sacraments of Repentance and Communion. Fasting without prayer is just a diet.

The establishment of Nativity fasting, as well as other multi-day fasts, has its roots in the ancient times of Christianity. The first mention of it can be found in the works of St. Ambrose of Milan, Philastrius, Blessed Augustine, dating from the fourth century. In the fifth century, Leo the Great wrote about the antiquity of Nativity fasting.

At first it lasted only seven days (some Christians - more), but in 1166 the Patriarch of Constantinople Luke Chrysoverg established to observe Christmas fasting for forty days. There was a reason for that: the feast of the Nativity of Christ is not inferior in its significance in the work of our salvation to the feast of the Resurrection of Christ, so the way of preparation for it must have a certain symbolic meaning.

Forty days in Scripture always precede great events: the fasts of the prophets Moses and Elijah, or the forty-day abstinence from the food of the Savior Jesus Christ Himself before preaching. That is, the fast itself emphasizes the significance of the event, and forty days emphasize the special preparation for it. Thus, since the twelfth century, Nativity fasting in the Orthodox Church has become a "small" Pentecost, which is second only to the Great Lent before the Pascha. It is also called the Philip's fast. This is due to the fact that on November 14, the day before it begins, the memory of one of the twelve apostles of Christ - the Apostle Philip - is celebrated.

The Church's rite teaches what should be abstained from during fasting - "all piously fasting should strictly observe the regulations on the quality of food, that is, abstain from some food not as from bad ones but as from indecent fasting and forbidden by the Church. Food which should be abstained from during fasts, are: meat, cheese, butter, milk, eggs, and sometimes fish, depending on the difference between holy fasts. The rules for eating during the fast, which are indicated in the calendars, refer to the monastery Rule - this is the ideal norm. Laymen can get relief from the priest, depending on the specific conditions of life and health.

The main task of any fast is to motivate a person to repentance, mercy and self-discipline through restrictions on food and entertainment. It is not a question of starving oneself to starvation - such extremes are condemned by the Church.

The meaning of fasting is to discipline the body, to master oneself and to move from a relaxed state to another, so to speak, spiritual regime. Prayer, repentance, works of mercy and love contribute to this. For example, helping the sick, lonely, needy people and orphans, who in the approaching Christmas holidays are especially in need not only of material goods, but also of words of love and support.

Everyone has to decide what sacrifices they can make for the sake of their neighbor: whether to help with medicine or money for the treatment of sick people, to take part in actions to collect warm things for homeless people, toys and sweet gifts for orphans, or to organize or volunteer in such events and other.

Despite the fact that often everyone can engage in charity in order to help others with financial, material and physical resources. Even a weak person can help someone in need if he prays or simply sympathizes with his neighbor.