

Blessing of Homes at Theophany



In the days following Theophany, the Fathers will be visiting and blessing the homes of parishioners with the newly blessed "Jordan Water". If you wish to have your home blessed please fill out the bottom portion of this page and drop it in the collection basket or drop it off at the rectory office.

HOME BLESSING 2016

Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Most Suitable time to visit: Morning ___ Afternoon ___ Evening ___

DATE	TIME	EPISTLE	CANTOR	USHERS	ORGANIST	GREETERS
SAT DEC 19	5:00 pm English	Vi Kluk	Peter Kobylka	Paul Shewchuk Andy Mathuik		
SUN DEC 20 <i>Sunday before the Nativity</i>	9:00 am Ukrainian	Mykhaylo Zotov	Ed Pindus	Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood		
	11:00 am English	Eleanor Shumay	Laurie Fedorowich Ron Wizniak	Henry Shumay Ed Skehar	Iris Skehar	Eleanor Shumay Henry Shumay
THUR DEC 24 <i>The Eve of The Nativity</i>	8:00 pm English	Doug Falconer	Laurie Fedorowich Ron Wizniak	Leonard Puchala John Uhryn	Iris Skehar	John Ostrowercha Vicky Ostrowercha
	10:30 pm Ukrainian	Peter Moroz	Colette Karapita	Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood		
FRI DEC 25 <i>The Nativity of Our Lord</i>	10:00 am English		Laurie Fedorowich Ron Wizniak	Henry Shumay Ed Skehar		
SAT DEC 26	5:00 pm English	Tom Abrametz	Peter Kobylka	Ann Musey Jean Kitsch		
SUN DEC 27 <i>Sunday after the Nativity</i>	9:00 am Ukrainian	Lorne Stechyshyn	Ed Pindus	Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood		
	11:00 am English	Sandra German	Laurie Fedorowich Ron Wizniak	Emil Strutynski Victor Puchala	Iris Skehar	Fred Schrader Sharla Schrader

ST. MARY'S UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH Церква Матері Божої Неустанної Помочі Our Mother of Perpetual Help 155 Catherine Street, Yorkton, SK S3N 0B9

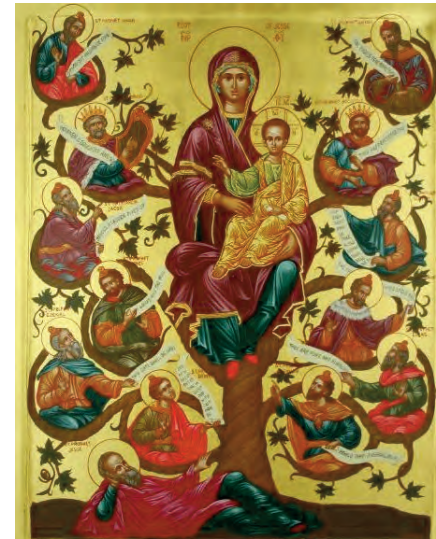
VOL. 52, No. 39

PARISH BULLETIN

DECEMBER 20, 2015

Христос Посеред нас !
Є і буде !

Christ is Among Us !
He is and will be !



The parish community of St. Mary's extends a warm
Welcome - Вітаємо
to everyone who is with us today, especially all Visitors.
We are pleased that you have come to pray with us this Sunday. May the Lord bless You.

Pastoral Care of the Ukrainian Redemptorists

Fr. Bohdan Lukie, CSsR - Pastor
Fr. Raymond Lukie, CSsR - Assistant Pastor
Fr. Methodius Kushko, CSsR - Assistant Pastor

OFFICE HOURS Monday - Friday
9:15 am - 12:00 pm 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Office 306-783-4594 Fax 306-782-4214
Info Line 306-782-0654

SICK CALLS - Anytime

BAPTISMS & MARRIAGES* by Appointment
**Please contact the pastor at least six months before the wedding date.*

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY

Saturday 5:00 pm English
Sunday 9:00 am Ukrainian
11:00 am English

HOLY DAYS

9:00 am Ukrainian 7:00 pm English

WEEKDAYS

8:00 am Monday - Friday
9:00 am Saturday

Beloved Parishioners and Guests,

Last Sunday Fr. Ray read the pastoral message of our **Patriarch Sviatoslav** which was mandated by all the Ukrainian Bishops throughout the world. His message was an intro to today's message from the Pastor – so please read this closely!

On **April 12, 2015**, Pope Francis formally announced the **Extraordinary Jubilee YEAR OF MERCY**. This is an extraordinary Holy Year since Holy Years are normally every 25 years, the last being 2000 when the Pope opened the **Holy Door** of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Regarding the Holy Door during the Jubilee Year of Mercy which commenced on December 8th, Pope Francis said: *“On that day, the Holy Door will become a Door of Mercy through which anyone who enters will experience the love of God who consoles, pardons and instills hope.”* **The official theme for this year is MERCIFUL LIKE THE FATHER based on Luke 6:36 - “Be merciful as your Father is merciful.”**

Certain churches throughout the world have been given the honour and privilege of establishing a **Holy Door** for a full year so that we will have many opportunities to pass through them as we better understand the **grace** and **spiritual conversion** associated with them. Every year is a good year for celebrating God's great mercy; yet, having a special Jubilee Year of Mercy can help us be more mindful of God's mercy all through our lives.

Our **St. Mary's Church** has been privileged and designated as a *“place of pilgrimage”* for this Jubilee Year. On Saturday, **December 26th at the 5:00 pm Liturgy** Bishop Bryan will celebrate a special Pontifical Blessing as we designate the original 100 year old south door of our church as our Jubilee **Holy Door**.

May we take full advantage of the **Holy Year** for our own personal renewal before God and the renewal of our parish and our whole Church! To quote **Pope Francis**: *“Our mercy should primarily be directed to our family members and neighbours, so that the door of every home becomes a 'door of mercy'.”* As we prayerfully pass through our **Holy Doors** here at St. Mary's, we receive the same graces and blessings as if we travelled to St. Peter's in Rome! How blessed we are!

Back in 1975-1984, I was honoured to merrily celebrate the **Birth of Jesus** with you at St. Mary's. How very pleased that I may again share the joy and happiness of Christmas with you and your families! May our Christ-mas celebrations deepen our faith and strength all of us as gloriously honour Our Lord and Saviour Jesus!



UPCOMING EVENTS

December 27	Feast of St. Stephen	
January 1	Circumcision of Our Lord - St. Basil's - New Year's	
January 1	Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood Bingo	12:00 Noon
January 2	Blue Army - First Saturday	9:00 am
January 4	UCWLC Meeting	7:00 pm
January 4	Knights of Columbus Meeting	7:00 pm
January 5	Vigil of Theophany Solemn Water Blessing & Divine Liturgy	5:00 pm
January 5	Parish Potluck Supper	6:30 pm
January 6	Feast of Theophany	
January 6	Knights of Columbus Bingo	1:00 pm
January 8	Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood Bingo	7:00 pm
January 11	Cultural Centre Board Meeting	7:30 pm
January 13	Holy Rosary Hour	12:00 Noon
January 18	Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood Meeting	7:00 pm
January 19	Parish Council Meeting	7:00 pm
January 17	First Solemn Holy Communion Class	9:45 am
January 17	Knights of Columbus Bingo	7:00 pm
January 28	Golden Agers Birthdays and Anniversaries	1:00 pm
January 30	Feast of the Three Holy Bishops - Gregory, Basil & John	
February 2	Feast of Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple	
February 16	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament resumes	

MUSÉE UKRAINA MUSEUM INC. 2016 CASH LOTTERY CALENDARS

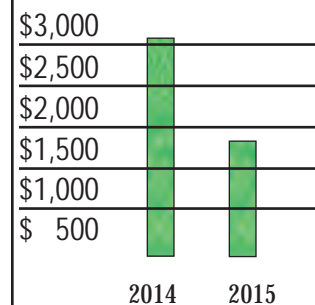
COST \$20 EACH FOR 366 DRAWS

Available from St. Mary's Rectory (306-783-4594) or Elizabeth Zahayko (306)783-6232



**CO-MISSIONARY FUND
2014 -15**

**OUR TARGET FOR THIS
YEAR IS \$3000.00**



Co-Missionary Fund Contributions can be made monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually. Our goal is to contribute \$250/month or \$3,000/yr. Please make your cheques payable to "St. Mary's" but memo the cheque **Co-Missionary Fund**.

Christmas Caroling

If you would like the carolers to visit your home please call:

Elsie Stechyshyn (306-783-4862)

or Steve Popowich (306-783-5441)

**Anyone interested *going out caroling* during the Christmas season may contact Elsie Stechyshyn or Steve Popowich



Listen for the UKRAINIAN HOUR

Sundays 3:00 - 4:00 pm Mondays 10:00 - 11:00 pm
on 98.5 the ROCK

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office: st.mary.yorkton@sasktel.net Pastor: blukie@gmail.com
 Web: www.saintmarysyorkton.com Eparchy of Saskatoon: www.skeparchy.org
 Eparchial Pastoral Council - Pat Thompson 306-782-9425
 Parish Council President - Geraldine Koban 306-782-0270 Knights of Columbus - Bill Prybylski 306-782-5259
 UCWLC - Brenda Pasloski 306-783-4438 UCY -
 UCBC - Peter Moroz 306-783-6293 Cultural Centre - Russ Thompson 306-782-9425
 Golden Agers - Verna Moroz 306-783-6293 Cultural Centre Manager - Stan Shymanski 306-782-1010
 Young Adult Ministry Office - Phone: 1-204-799-1060
 Email: rymcssr@gmail.com Web: www.yorktonredemptorists.com

SUNDAY COLLECTION DEC. 13 2015	Received in 154 Regular Envelopes	\$ 2,920.00
	Loose Collection	\$100.70
	Received in 54 Other Envelopes	\$ 1,922.75

UKRAINIAN CHOIR:

- ◆ Sunday December 20, 9:00 am Divine Liturgy
- ◆ Thursday, December 24th, Christmas Eve: 10:30 pm Compline & Divine Liturgy
- ◆ Friday, December 25th, Christmas Day, 9-10:30 am: on GX 94 AM radio (<http://cjgx.streamon.fm>)
- ◆ Sunday, January 3, 2:30 pm: carol at Gladstone Senior's Residence
- ◆ Friday, January 8, 7:00 pm: carol at the Bentley
- ◆ Carol at Clements Court: TBA

HAS YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGED ?? Please notify the Parish Office if you have a change of address or a new phone number. This will help to keep our records current and ensure that tax receipts go to the correct address. Thank you.

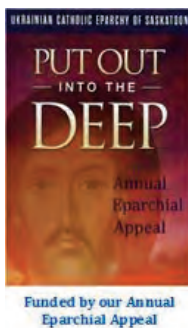
Have YOU checked out OUR Eparchial Website lately?



Visit us regularly at: <http://www.skeparchy.org>.
 • See what is happening in our Eparchy and the world . . . Give us your feedback and suggestions.
 • Communication building is a two-way street so we need you to be part of the link.
 • We are making changes, updating and rebuilding, so please send us your news and events from your parishes and organizations to: communications@skeparchy.org.

⇒Check us out on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Eparchy-of-Saskatoon/704575642946205>



**SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY AND THE HOLY FATHERS
DECEMBER 20, 2015**

*The theme of Sunday is always Resurrection.
We invite you to refrain from kneeling during the Divine Liturgy.*



*Today's special liturgical parts & readings are found on page 33-36 in the Tropars, Kondaks, Epistle & Gospel Readings booklets which are located at the entrances of the church.
Next Week's Readings: Epistle - Galatians 1:11-19 Gospel - Matthew 2:13-23*

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARY'S

SUN	9:00 am.....	Divine Liturgy
	11:00 am.....	Divine Liturgy
	11:00 am.....	Little Angels Class
MON	6:30 pm.....	Christmas Reconciliation (Confessions)
	7:00 pm.....	Divine Liturgy
THUR	10:30 am.....	Christmas Divine Liturgy @ Gladstone Seniors' Residence
	8:00 pm.....	"God is with us" Service & Divine Liturgy (English)
	10:30 pm.....	Povecheriye Service & Divine Liturgy (Ukrainian)
FRI	10:00 am.....	<i>Nativity of Our Lord</i> Divine Liturgy
SAT	9:00 am.....	<i>Sobor of the Mother of God</i> Divine Liturgy
	5:00 pm.....	Divine Liturgy

OFFICE HOURS - the Parish Office will be closed on Thursday, December 24th and Friday, December 25th for Christmas. The Office will close at **3:00 pm** on Thursday, December 31st and will be closed on Friday, January 1st for New Year's Day.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT WEEKEND'S BULLETIN - **Monday at 4:00 pm** due to Christmas Holidays.

WEDDINGS PLANS ??- If you are planning to be married at St. Mary's or any of the Yorkton District parishes, **please contact Fr. Bohdan (306-783-4594) at least six months before the wedding date.**

No GOLDEN AGERS BINGO - for the remainder of December. It will resume in the New Year.

EMAIL BULLETIN - If you would like to have the Bulletin emailed to you please send your request to: cssrmonastery@sasktel.net

2016 CHURCH CALENDARS ARE HERE!!

As a gift to our parishioners, the New Calendars are available at the entrances.
Please take only one calendar per family
 so that all parishioners may receive a calendar.



YORKTON DISTRICT PARISHES

Schedule of Services in the Yorkton Pastoral District

BEAVERDALE	Friday, December 25	10:00 am	Christmas Divine Liturgy
CALDER	Thursday, December 24	9:00 pm	God is with Us & Divine Liturgy

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20

Sunday before the Nativity *Hebrews 11:9-10,17-23,32-40 ~ Matthew 1:1-25*

MON Dec 21 *Martyr Juliana* *Hebrews 11:17-31 ~ Mark 9:42-10:1*

8:00 am +Mary & Bill Pacholko.....Family

8:00 am +Steve & Nettie Mysko.....Family

TUE Dec 22 *Great Martyr Anastasia* *Hebrews 12:25-28, 13:22-25 ~ Mark 10:2-12*

8:00 am Health for Mary F. Lazurko.....Golden Agers

8:00 am Health & God's Blessings for Emil Oucharek.....Delores & family

WED Dec 23 *10 Martyrs of Crete* *James 1:1-18 ~ Mark 10:11-16*

8:00 am Health & Happiness for Adela.....Maria Borys

8:00 am Health & God's Blessings for Mary Yakiwchuk.....Olga Sakundiak

THU Dec 24 *Hebrews 1:1-12 ~ Luke 2:1-20*



8:00 pm *Vigil of the Nativity - "God is with Us" Service & Divine Liturgy* **10:30 pm**

FRI Dec 25 *Galatians 4:4-7 ~ Matthew 2:1-12*

10:00 am † *Nativity of Our Lord*

SAT Dec 26 *Hebrews 2:11-18 ~ Matthew 2:13-23*

9:00 am † *Sobor of the Blessed Mother*

5:00 pm Members & Families.....Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS - If you are paying for this service by cheque, please make your cheque payable to: Ukrainian Catholic Mission

Christmas Reconciliation (Confessions)

will be held on Monday, December 21st at 6:30 pm with Divine Liturgy at 7:00 pm.

A Traditional Ukrainian Christmas Liturgy Broadcast

From St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church

GX94: 940 AM

Christmas Day - Friday, December 25th 9:00 am - 10:30 am



This radio broadcast was recorded by the Ukrainian Four Voice Choir under direction of Colette Karapita. The two hour program will include: The Christmas Compline (Povecherye), the Divine Liturgy, Ukrainian Carols and Christmas greetings on behalf of the parish.

If you are not in the listening area, tune in to: www.gx94radio.com (<http://cjgx.streamon.fm>)

We hope you will tune in to our program.

Saint Mary's Building Fund Donations



Estate of Mary Gulaga \$8,800.00

In Memory of John Shekula

Amelia Shekula \$ 50.00

Balance of the Fund to date: \$300,120.74 **Thank you very much**

Donations may be given anytime.

All funds collected will be used for the future renovations of our church.

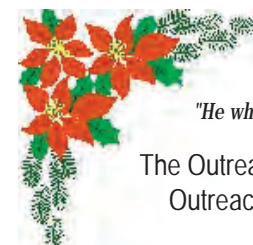
Building Fund Envelopes are available at the entrances of the Church

ST. MARY'S CHURCH DONATIONS

In Memory of Sophie Madarash

Edwin & Marianne Skene \$ 50.00

NO ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT from Tuesday, December 22nd until Tuesday, February 9th inclusive. It will resume on Tuesday, February 16th.



During the Christmas season, the Outreach Committee of St. Mary's Church encourages you, our Parishioners, to remember those less fortunate.

"He who has compassion on the poor lends to the LORD, and He will repay him for his good deed" Proverbs 19:17

The Outreach Committee welcomes your donations of food items as listed below. Also, there are Outreach envelopes available at the entrances, for those you would prefer a monetary donation.

Thank you for your support!

*granola/snack bars
dill pickles
ketchup
jello cups*

*canned soup
jam
Cheese Whiz
pudding cups*

*spaghetti sauce
pancake syrup
mustard
cereal*

*pork & beans
kidney beans
cookies
juice boxes*

Non-perishable food items only, please. Bins are located at each entrance.

JUST A REMINDER...

All contributions and donations that require a tax receipt for 2015 must be in the Parish Office by **MONDAY, December 28th.**



THE 2016 CHURCH OFFERING ENVELOPES

ARE AVAILABLE
FOR PICKUP
AT THE EAST ENTRANCE.

**Offering
Envelopes**





St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church

Церква Матері Божої Неустанної Помочі

Schedule of Services 2015-2016 Порядок Богослужень



THURSDAY DECEMBER 24 ГРУДНЯ ЧЕТВЕР

CHRISTMAS EVE (FAST DAY) - РІЗДВА (ПІСТ)

God is With Us Service (Eng)	8:00 pm	Велике Повечеря (Анг)
Divine Liturgy	8:30 pm	Служба Божа (Анг)
God is With Us Service (Ukr)	10:30 pm	Велике Повечеря (Укр)
Divine Liturgy (Ukr)	11:00 pm	Служба Божа (Укр)

CALDER:

God is With Us Service and Divine Liturgy	9:00 pm	Велике Повечеря (Анг)
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FRIDAY DECEMBER 25 ГРУДНЯ П'ЯТНИЦЯ

CHRISTMAS DAY - РІЗДВО

Divine Liturgy (Eng)	10:00 am	Служба Божа
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BEAVERDALE:

Divine Liturgy (Eng)	10:00 am	Служба Божа
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SATURDAY DECEMBER 26 ГРУДНЯ СУБОТА

SOBOR OF THE BLESSED MOTHER - СОБОР ПРЕС. БОГОРОДИЦІ

Divine Liturgy	9:00 am	Служба Божа
<i>(Anticipated for Sunday)</i>		
Divine Liturgy	5:00 pm	Служба Божа (Анг)

SUNDAY DECEMBER 27 ГРУДНЯ НЕДІЛЯ

**SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS - НЕДІЛЯ ПО РІЗДВІ
FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN - СВ. СТЕФАНА**

Divine Liturgy (Ukr)	9:00 am	Служба Божа (Укр)
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THURSDAY DECEMBER 31 ГРУДНЯ ЧЕТВЕР

(Anticipated for Circumcision/St. Basil the Great)

Divine Liturgy	7:00 pm	Служба Божа (Анг)
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FRIDAY JANUARY 1 СІЧНЯ П'ЯТНИЦЯ

**CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD - ОБРІЗАННЯ Г.Н.І.Х.
ST. BASIL THE GREAT - СВ. ВАСИЛІЯ ВЕЛИКОГО**

Divine Liturgy (Ukr)	9:00 am	Служба Божа (Укр)
Divine Liturgy (Eng)	7:00 pm	Служба Божа (Анг)

SATURDAY JANUARY 2 СІЧНЯ СУБОТА

Divine Liturgy	9:00 am	Служба Божа
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(Anticipated for Sunday)

Divine Liturgy (Eng)	5:00 pm	Служба Божа (Анг)
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SUNDAY JANUARY 3 СІЧНЯ НЕДІЛЯ

Divine Liturgy (Ukr)	9:00 am	Служба Божа (Укр)
Divine Liturgy (Eng)	11:00 am	Служба Божа (Анг)

TUESDAY JANUARY 5 СІЧНЯ ВІТРОК

THEOPHANY EVE (FAST DAY) НАВЕЧЕРЯ БОГОЯВЛЕННЯ (ПІСТ)

Solemn Water Blessing		Врочисте Водосвяття
Divine Liturgy (Eng)	5:00 pm	Служба Божа (Анг)
Parish Potluck Supper	6:30 pm	

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6 СІЧНЯ СЕРЕДА

THEOPHANY (JORDAN) - БОГОЯВЛЕННЯ (ЙОРДАН)

Solemn Water Blessing		Врочисте Водосвяття
Divine Liturgy (Ukr)	9:00 am	Служба Божа (Укр)



**THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH'S AND MUSÉE UKRAINA MUSEUM
INVITE YOU TO THREE SPECIAL EVENINGS OF CHRISTMAS PROGRAMMING
that will be happening at
the Khram of the Nun Martyrs Olympia and Laurentia,
and the Museum on December 25, 26 & 27.**

Each evening will feature special programming and refreshments. Included will be public viewing of the Sr. Theodosia Nativity scenes from different parts of the world.

December 25 – 7:00 pm Religious service at Shrine including opening of Holy Doors of Mercy, followed by unveiling of the Nativity Icon 'Drummer Boy' at the Museum at 7:30 pm. The Christmas carol "Little Drummer Boy" performed by Danylo Karnaukh. Poppy seed rolls served.

December 26 – 7:00 pm Christmas Carols performed by Theresa Sokyrka and caroling groups. Kutya served.

December 27 – 7:00 pm Christmas Carols performed by Ukrainian Children's Vocal Ensemble "Spivohrai" and caroling groups. Pampushky served.

**Notice of Annual General Meeting
of the Bishop Budka Eparchial Stewardship Society Inc. (BBESSI)**



When: Saturday, January 23, 2016

Time: *Registration* - 1:30 pm to 2:00 pm *Annual General Meeting* - 2:00 pm

Where: 210 Avenue M South (Church Auditorium) Saskatoon Saskatchewan

Who: All members of a Ukrainian Catholic parish or mission within the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon who are 18 years of age or older are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.

Purpose: This meeting is being called for the purposes of:

- Approving the Financial Statement Reviewer's Report and the Annual Financial Statements for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2015.
- Appointing a Reviewer of our financial records for the next fiscal period
- Approving Bylaws or Amendment to the Bylaws – none to consider for this Annual Meeting.
- Reporting of activities and motions of the Directors to the membership
- Electing Directors
- For transacting such other business as may properly come before an Annual General Meeting.

Access to Documents: The Financial Statements will be posted on the Eparchial website – <http://www.skeparchy.org/events/eparchial-events/bishop-budka-eparchial-stewardship-society-inc.-notice-of-annual-general-meeting-january-23-2016.html>.

You may also pick up copies of the Annual Report and Financial Statements at the Chancery Office at 214 Avenue M South, Saskatoon Saskatchewan. ***This information will be available commencing January 8th, 2016.***

Bishop Budka Eparchial Stewardship Society Inc. (BBESSI)

Call for Nominations to the Board of Directors of Bishop Budka Eparchial Stewardship Society Inc.

BBESSI is searching for people who are interested in serving on our Board of Directors. To qualify, a person must be 18 years of age or older, a resident of Canada and a member in good standing with a Ukrainian Catholic parish or mission within the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon. If you are interested or want more information, please call one of the members of our Nominating Committee: Andriy Lazurko – (306) 789-8054; Father Ivan Nahachewsky – (306-961-1390); Bernadette Popowych – (306) 249-2432; Morris Smysnuik (306) 280-8514

Dear friends,



Goodness abounds!

This Christmas, as a counterpoint to the destructive forces of misery and terror that we have witnessed these past months, we must not forget that goodness abounds! More than not forgetting, let us be ready to point it out when we see it.

A few weeks ago, I was invited to join a small group of people who help at the Out of the Cold breakfast program in Hamilton. These very good folk agreed in the autumn to get up early every Thursday morning from November through March to make their way to a small kitchen outlet to prepare a hot breakfast for over 120 men and women. The volunteers are part of about 400 remarkable and generous people who make the program work. They arrived in the quiet early morning hours and were spirited as they took up their duties, each one pitching in to assure that everything was ready for the arrival of the guests.

Steve showed me how to whip up pancake batter and how to cook the pancakes. Not too difficult – we worked together. Two hundred pancakes later, I was asked to help Karen and Frank serve the breakfast: pancakes, sausages, cereal, fruit, juice and the prerequisite coffee or tea. Morning greetings were friendly and sincere; the guests were known and called by name. As the serving line thinned out, I moved again, now to help with the washing of dishes. It gave me a chance to chat with Rob, who had done everything, including picking me up, to make the experience pleasant for me. The time passed quickly and, even before I left, I knew that I had participated in something good, something beautiful, something sacred!

The same thing happens every day in many communities in our country and around the world. Terrorists may get front page media coverage, but quiet unassuming goodness such as I experienced that morning wins hearts and souls! It won mine, and I know it won the guests'. Goodness abounds!

This Christmas we have begun the *Year of Mercy* called by Pope Francis. Feeding the hungry is one of the seven traditional *corporal works of mercy*. Many good people feed the hungry every day – often against great odds. When I think of the single unemployed parent worrying about how the three children will be fed that day, I know that my problems are small in comparison.

Recently, I was reminded that before original sin, there was original good. The biblical story of creation reminds us that God considered the created world to be "good". And the human was "very good"! Original good came before original sin – and in Jesus Christ, the first born, that goodness is restored.

Christmas is a time to remember that in spite of the horrors of evil, good abounds. This Christmas, let us look for the goodness of others, and allow the good in us to shine – so that God's compassionate mercy might be revealed through simple, everyday kindness. And when we see the good deeds of the other, acknowledge them and affirm them. A simple "thank you" is easy enough, and is actually quite effective.

Thank YOU ... and Merry Christmas to you, your families and your loved ones!

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI
Bishop of Hamilton and
President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops