

UPCOMING LITURGIES & EVENTS: April 5-12, 2020

Holy Week and Easter Services – All our liturgical services continue to be ‘**closed to the public**’, but this doesn’t mean that we cannot pray and celebrate the joy of Christ’s Resurrection at home. Towards that end, in addition to your own personal prayers and with your family, you are encouraged to participate in the following services:

April 5 Palm Sunday	9:30AM - Sunday Divine Liturgy	Closed to the public - Livestreamed
April 8 Holy Wednesday	6:30PM – Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	Closed to the public - Livestreamed
April 9 Holy Thursday	6:30PM - Vespers & Divine Liturgy	Closed to the public - Livestreamed
April 10 Good Friday	3:00PM - Good Friday Vespers	Closed to the public - Livestreamed
April 11 Holy Saturday	10AM-Noon - Confessions	(outside church; weather permitting)
April 12 EASTER SUNDAY	8:00AM - Resurrection Matins & Liturgy	Closed to the public - Livestreamed

A note on praying the Liturgy remotely: Some have found it helpful to create a prayer space around the device they use to watch the Livestreamed Liturgy, occupying a different space or posture than they would if they were using the same device to do work or watch a movie on Netflix. With that in mind, consider lighting a candle and placing it next to your computer or tablet, enthrone your favourite icon(s) and have other religious objects (like a prayer rope or rosary) at hand to help you to enter more fully in the prayer. Dress like you would as if you are going to church (i.e. not in pyjamas); sit and stand as we usually do in church.

PARISH & COMMUNITY NEWS

- 1. PLEASE PRAY FOR EACH OTHER!** Remember especially those who are sick, suffering or house-bound: Alex Skakun, Hailey Woytowich, Steph Cooley, Jules Chrusch, Rose Chrusch, Tina Wesolowski, Nikolas Stefanyshyn, Albert/Genevieve Zaiachkowski, Delvine Zaparaniuk, Olga Kondra, Shelley Perepeluk, Bill Muzyka.
- 2. Share Lent:** Thank you for giving from the heart to Share Lent 2020! Development and Peace — Caritas Canada thanks you for your Share Lent donation. Your donations will help support our sisters and brothers in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. If you have not had a chance to donate, there is still time to donate online at devp.org/give. Thank you for continuing to pray for all those who are working to build a world of peace and justice.
- 3. Helping Those in Need** – Food Banks of Saskatchewan have launched a province-wide Crisis Response Fund. Donate at: <https://lnkd.in/gAPDyP8>. Our friends at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish (426 Avenue J South) have seen an increase in the number of people accessing their food pantry, so they would be grateful for any contributions of food. Contact them directly at ologsaskatoon@rcdos.ca or 306-653-4945 if you can help. You might also consider donating to Development and Peace – Caritas Canada’s Share Lent campaign online at <https://bit.ly/2Wul1Yy> or by phone at 1 888 664- 3387. Each year, their Share Lent campaign raises funds to support millions of people in the Global South, whose needs will be even greater this year.
- 4. Supporting your Church** - Our parish council is grateful to those of you who have continued to support Dormition Parish financially by leaving donations in the church mailbox, on the parish website, or through our pre-authorized debit (PAD) program. THANK YOU! Please continue to use these donation methods or sending your gifts by mail to the church (120 105th Street West). In an effort to simplify the registration process for PAD, especially in these days when it’s not advised to pick up a form from the church, we’ve developed a [online application](#) which is both secure and convenient. You might also consider making a donation via e-transfer to treasurerdormitionucc@gmail.com.

At-Home Willow & Easter Basket Blessing

In his [pastoral directive](#) (see below) for Holy Week and Easter, Bishop Bryan stresses that “though your blessing is not sacramental...God is calling laity to experience this, given the circumstances. Try to discover your dignity and worth when Christ, through you, blesses your family and items for your home. Share in Christ’s priesthood since you have been baptized in Christ.” With this in mind, there will not be any in-person blessings of Willows or Easter Baskets at our churches this year. Instead, you are encouraged to bless yours at home, by formulating your own prayer, or using the following:

[Blessing of Willows/Branches/Palms](#)

[Blessing of Easter Food](#)

You can pray these blessings on your own time, but are encouraged to have these prayers on hand while participating in our livestream liturgy on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, following these suggestions:

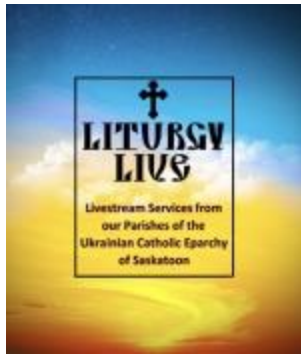
For **Palm Sunday**, if you don’t have access to a willow tree, I encourage you to find some sort of branch from your house or back yard (or your neighbour’s backyard with their permission) and have that at the ready when you tune in for the Livestreamed Liturgy @ 9:30AM. As has become our custom, at the beginning of the Liturgy we will bless the branches together (me at the church/you at home, following the same blessing text), so that we can have those in-hand for the reading of the Gospel (similar to the Hebrew people who welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem).

On **Easter Sunday** morning, please prepare your basket as if you were coming to church, and then tune in to the Livestreamed Liturgy @ 8:00AM. At the conclusion of the Easter Liturgy, we will bless the baskets together (me at church/you at home, following the same blessing text). In a spirit of charity, please consider preparing a second basket of food to share with your neighbour – bless others by sharing what you have!

[What’s in an Easter Basket?](#)

If you have Holy Water at home that you brought from the church, feel free to use that to sprinkle on your branches and Easter foods. In a small but significant way, that blessed water is another sign of our spiritual Communion these days. Alternatively, you can prepare some ordinary water at home and pray a [Simple Blessing of Water](#). Above all, as Bishop Bryan also mentions: “Discover how Christ wants to use you in more at-home ways to bless; your belongings and gifts from God; your brother, your sister, your parents by your actions and words. When you forgive you bless! Through your love, kindness and compassion you bless (and not just with water). You are empowered to express your baptismal priesthood in Christ!”

For further reflection: [Our homes as Domestic Church](#). Here are some suggestions for praying with your kids and family during Holy Week & Easter: [Easter from Home in Quarantine](#); [Holy Week & Easter at Home](#); and [Resources for Holy Week Pascha in your Domestic Church](#) (my favourite is the Good Friday ‘Fort’ Tomb suggestion).



Liturgy Live Services for Holy Week & Easter Eparchy of Saskatoon and Beyond

During this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, while our churches are closed, we invite you to connect through our “Liturgy Live” service to prayerfully celebrate in your homes, your Domestic Church, the Services for Holy Week & Easter through our churches who are livestreaming or have the pre-recorded services for you to participate in. Please join us.

The annual downtown **Way of the Cross** through the streets of Saskatoon is cancelled this year because of the COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings. However, a video version of the prayers and reflections for the Scriptural Way of the Cross, using the stations introduced by Saint John Paul II in 1991, with prayer provided by a number of local groups and individuals (including Bishop Mark Hagemoen), will be posted online on Good Friday. The written reflections will also be available to pray along at each station. Watch for the links on <https://saskatoonmass.com> as well as on the diocesan website: <https://rcdos.ca> and on the diocesan social media platforms (Facebook & Twitter).

Pray for people who are infected with COVID-19 or facing quarantine:

Jesus, during Your ministry on Earth You showed Your power and caring by healing people of all ages and stations of life from physical, mental, and spiritual ailments. Be present now to people who need Your loving touch because of COVID-19. May they feel Your power of healing through the care of doctors and nurses. Take away the fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation from people receiving treatment or under quarantine. Give them a sense of purpose in pursuing health and protecting others from exposure to the disease. Protect their families and friends and bring peace to all who love them.

Pray for medical professionals, caregivers, and researchers responsible for fighting the new coronavirus:

God, as more people get sick, healthcare workers and first responders are working longer hours with fewer supplies and with more risk of contracting the new coronavirus themselves. Renew their energy and sustain them on long shifts. Bring Your protection upon them as they work with patients. Multiply their supplies so they have the protective items needed to stay safe on the job. Inspire and invigorate the research doctors developing better tests to diagnose the virus, create vaccines to prevent it, and identify protocols to eliminate the disease's spread.

Pray for the deceased, especially those who will die alone during these days of quarantine.

NOTICE: The St. Volodymyr Ukrainian Catholic Park (Pike Lake) WILL BE CLOSED TILL FURTHER NOTICE!

Catholic Hospital Chaplaincy: During the COVID-19 crisis, patients can still receive pastoral visits from designated denominational chaplains under some circumstances. To request a visit for yourself or a loved one at Saskatoon hospitals, contact Jackie Saretsky at 306-292-5531 or Fr. Rhéal Bussière at 306-371-7125.

The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon **Covenant of Care Abuse and Misconduct Protocol** is designed to ensure that all allegations of physical and sexual abuse and other misconduct are handled responsibly, transparently and with all due care and attention. If you have a concern please contact Fr. Andre, Parish Coordinator of Care **Jon Abrametz** at (306-652-8833 ext.1) or **Deb Larmour**, Eparchial Coordinator of Care covenantofcare@skeparchy.org or 306-653-0138 ext. 228.

2020-04-02 Pastoral Letter to the Eparchy of Saskatoon on COVID-19
To the Reverend Clergy, Members of Religious Orders and Faithful of the
Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon

“Our pioneers and ancestors kept the faith even though, at times, they seldom celebrated the sacraments in churches because of external circumstances or oppression. Let us hear God speak to us through their example and learn from them as they strengthened their domestic churches – by interior and external faith.” (Bishop Bryan Bayda)

ATTITUDE - Maintain an active attitude of constant discernment, both secular and sacred

As COVID-19 information is constantly updated, so must we continue to learn from our science and health communities about the virus, ways to self-check for symptoms and best practices. Likewise, we must continue to update ourselves regarding the spiritual impact of this pandemic and be revitalized about how to spiritually strengthen ourselves and others.

We don't have the comfort of adopting a spiritual routine and then leave it at that, such as reading a directive that may be days old and think it won't be updated. That is why I continue to meet, by Zoom and telephone, to bring to you the best practices and directives. No one should make decisions in these days without consultation, for the Holy Spirit speaks through all of us.

Since my last pastoral letter to you on March 20, 2020, more directives and suggestions have become available from the Eastern Congregation of Churches in Rome dated March 25, 2020 and in the [Letter of His Beatitude Sviatoslav with Recommendations as to how to serve the Holy Week and Easter Services During the Covid-19 Pandemic](#) (24 March 2020). Clergy and parish leaders have worked tirelessly to be pastoral and understanding of the physical and spiritual needs of their families of faith. They have issued pastoral Parish directives. **Yet we must be prepared to receive new and updated directives. Directives are progressing all the time.**

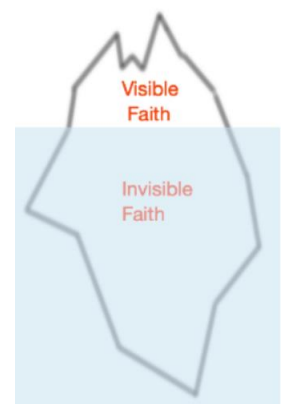
These directives have always been given in the context of the civic authorities and their directives and the progress of safety (meeting of groups limited to 250, then 100, then 50, 10, 5). **Therefore, when a church official may suggest a spiritual practice, it is based on a specific context. However, this is not meant to provide someone with a means to justify a personal decision so as to ignore another church official. In other words, following the “letter of the law to avoid the spirit of the law” is not right.** For example, one directive says “one may venerate....” but, more locally, the directives says “it is forbidden”. Like the Code of Canons for Eastern Churches, there is a general law and then there is a particular law. Please don't use one directive against the other to merely justify your actions.

Hours ago, I consulted about these directives, and discussed them at great length, with all of the Ukrainian Catholic Metropolia (Bishops) of North America of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. I continue to consult with Roman Catholic bishops; the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops; the College of Consultors and other leadership in our Eparchies that administrate or work in hospitals and care homes. So, when I urge you to follow this directive keeping in mind the previous ones, it is with utmost love, consideration and compassion that I give you direction in the Eparchy of Saskatoon. Broader consultation takes more time, but it offers a more comprehensive update.

Much, much more importantly, it is following the **spirit** of these directives that we should focus on. As the external marking of our faith is important, we must strive to have a **disposition of the connectedness between symbols/actions and internal faith**. For example, mindful that the tip of an iceberg is still the true iceberg, we must focus on both dimensions of the entire iceberg, the portion that is visible as well as invisible. Likewise, while our spiritual ritual is **visible**, a truly significant part of our faith is that which is internal or **invisible** and is 100% connected to the visible.

Don't reduce your faith and relationship with Christ to merely external visible rites of passage. Your body and your soul are unique but inseparable.

Your encounter with Jesus is the entire iceberg. We encounter Him in all ways that He witnessed to the Father's love, His private prayer life (*JN 17:1-26*), His passion, obedience and humility, death and glorious resurrection. Please read a wonderful reflection on how it is Christ who blesses (*The Domestic Church: A Place of Prayer and Blessing compiled by Fr. Onuferko*). Every person allows Christ in them to bless according to their sacramental status in life. The visible part of your faith points to the invisible participation in the life of Christ. Vice versa, your interior life is expressed in your visible life. As much as Jesus through Jordan water blesses an icon, an object, a willow or food, so does Jesus bless all things through your interior disposition of fasting, obedience, prayer, intercession, charity or reverence.



ACTION - Allow the indwelling Trinity to develop your Interior Life and your Domestic Church. Pruning helps the branch to bear more fruit. Move from maintenance to mission!

You are invited to preach in word and deed a Domestic Church Mission over the upcoming days!

Therefore, mindful of the mystery of the pandemic and its ultra-infectious properties, in addition to the previous directives:

1. In the Eparchy of Saskatoon, there is to be no public veneration in a church during Holy Week, including the shroud on Holy Friday, and Easter because of COVID 19.

a. WHY? In the Eparchy of Saskatoon, it is reserved to the clergy to venerate and carry out the services in our churches and share them online. Understandably, faithful may not have a physical or electronic means to join in, but this is because of numerous complications and risks of sanitizing, marshalling people in lines, etc. In the end, it is still participation but in a different way. Other bishops have made directives for their faithful but their circumstances have different variables.

b. ALTERNATIVELY: faithful can celebrate the service at home, with parallel symbols and gestures that normally would take place (willows, Shroud, Cross on Doors, Pascha) and do them coinciding with a televised or live-streamed service. Encounter Christ in your family or in the person who is caring for your personal needs. *“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”* MT18:20

2. Clergy are to prepare their parishioners to receive parts of the services in printed or online form as much as possible. Read the Gospels so to participate in these mysteries of Christ’s Life and love for us. Reflect with Jesus and the *Theotokos* about the mystery of His suffering, death and resurrection and yours.

3. All faithful are encouraged to make a sincere Act of Contrition. This, of course, refers to the situation when “a penitent sincerely regrets his/her sins, not out of fear of God’s just punishment; but because of having offended our loving Lord.”¹ Ask your local parish priest how to do this, or check online.

¹ Letter of His Beatitude Sviatoslav with Recommendations as to how to serve the Holy Week and Easter Services During the Covid-19 Pandemic (24 March 2020), n. 7

4. All faithful are encouraged to make a sincere Spiritual Communion. Ask your local parish priest how to do this or check online.

5. There are to be no pedestrian gatherings at churches or halls for the sacramental blessings of willows or food in a pedestrian fashion.

a. WHY? While the blessing of Christ through the Pope or Bishop or Priest is sacramental and of great value, your blessing is also important.

b. ALTERNATIVELY: The Pope blessed over electronic platforms. Have your willows or food blessed by the bishop or priest over electronic platforms also. And though your blessing is not sacramental in the same sense, God is calling laity to experience this, given the circumstances. Try to discover your dignity and worth when Christ, through you, blesses your family and items for your home. Share in Christ’s priesthood since you have been baptized in Christ.

c. Discover how Christ wants to use you in more at-home ways to bless; your belongings and gifts from God; your brother, your sister, your parents by your actions and words. When you forgive you bless. Through your love, kindness and compassion you bless (and not just with water). **You are empowered to express your baptismal priesthood in Christ!** Encounter Him through confession and forgiveness in your daily life from one another on a one-to-one basis. This is a preparation for a sacramental confession with a priest who at a later time, on behalf of the entire Body of Christ, will provide an encounter with Christ on a sacramental level.

d. Discover how Communion with Christ sacramentally in the Eucharist should be enhanced by desire, by spiritual communion several times a day, every day. The opportunity has perhaps never been more timely. **Receiving the Eucharist physically at church is prepared by many spiritual communions daily at home or elsewhere in your life.** As a parent, child, relative or friend, spiritually commune with Christ for others, thus, expressing your baptismal priesthood in Christ when interceding for others!

e. Experience the crescendo that should take place before attending a parish service. (A metaphor from secular life: practices and the regular season games make the playoffs and the championship game that much more meaningful).

To appreciate the presence of Christ in the entire Church, the Body of Christ, focus on the Domestic Church and **the role God calls you to play in your church as a missionary disciple**, a branch of the larger vine. Like a team is strengthened

by each member that physically trains or deepens their personal commitment, so does your spiritual prayer and domestic development enhance the Body of Christ. God is present in the entire Body of Christ where in our parishes we sacramentally receive the Eucharist. This is preceded by a reverence for God's presence in Scripture; God celebrated in our domestic churches; God's presence celebrated in our personal lives; and God encountered in the poor. Kindly read the following passage slowly, as if God is reading it to you:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full." (John 15:1-11 (ESV) 1)

In Christ,
Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSSR
Eparch of the Eparchy of Saskatoon