

CHURCH BULLETIN FOR JANUARY 23, 2021

ОГОЛОШЕННЯ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holy water blessed during the recent feast of Theophany is available for pickup after vespers and divine liturgy. The tanks containing the water are located near the nativity scene to the right of the iconostas. You can bring your own jars and fill them with the water or else you can pick up one of the small clear plastic pre-filled 4-ounce containers on the small table next to the holy water tanks. You can take it home, drink it, or bless your home by sprinkling it with the water. (see next page for explanation)

Ukrainian Seniors' Club Meeting will take place on January Wed. 26th January at 7 : 00 PM on ZOOM. This is for Seniors 60+ Please contact cornell.popyk@sympatico.ca to register if you would like to attend but have not registered yet .

The goal of the Ukrainian Seniors Club is to provide a venue in which seniors can socialize and articulate their concerns and hopes. Under the leadership of Cornell Popyk the parish seniors association was created in spite of COIV19 pandemic. The pandemic exposed a need to address the particular needs of parish seniors that have been overlooked.

From the Eparchy: With profound sadness, we hasten to inform you that Rev. Fr. Jaroslaw Shudrak has reposed in the Lord, today, Friday, January 21, 2022. We entrust to your fervent prayers the peaceful repose of the soul of Presbyter Jaroslaw.

Your prayers for the peace and security of Ukraine are requested in view of the imminent threat of invasion from Russia. Preparations for war have been ongoing for months, including massing more than 100,000 soldiers on the Russian side of the border, as well as many other hostile actions.

Last month, a former parishioner, William Baptiste, received \$1,715 fundraised from our parish on the occasion of the passing of his wife Lorelle. He would like to address our parish as follows. Note that the passing of his wife was not his only recent misfortune:

Our remaining family is very thankful for the thoughts and prayers and gifts of our brothers and sisters in Christ from the St.J-B parish community at this challenging time, where within months we lost my mother and my Dear Bride Lorelle; I was hospitalized and our home was flooded. But we want to share what we have learned through all this:

Our faith isn't just something nice we do on Sunday. It is empowerment for life even in the face of tragedy after tragedy. There is something eminently practical about having a personal loving relationship with God the source of all love, life and power in the universe. We can be fully human, experiencing all forms of human tragedy and pain, but there is still great power available to us. So we are not overcome.

Jordan Water Blessing

Closely connected with the feast of the Theophany is the Great Water Blessing or Blessing of Jordan Water. This sacred tradition of the Eastern Church can be traced back to the first centuries of Christianity. From earliest times our people have greatly cherished this custom. They attached great significance to the Blessed Jordan Water which they kept in their homes as something possessing great sanctifying powers.

From very ancient times the Eastern Church has regarded the sanctified Jordan water as a great sacramental, possessing miraculous powers for healing both soul and body. In a sermon on the feast of the Theophany St. John Chrysostom says: "This is the day on which Christ was baptized and blessed the substance of waters. For this reason, at midnight on this feast, the faithful take water home and keep it throughout the year. It is interesting to note that this blessed water is not spoiled for a long time; it remains fresh even for two or three years and after such a long period its quality does not differ from the water recently brought from the well."

Our people cherished the Jordan Water with such devotion that they observed a strict fast up to the time of its blessing and received it, fasting, as they would Holy Communion. Our people sprinkled all their buildings and the whole farm with this water in order to drive away every impure spirit from their land.

The content and prayers and rites of the Great Water Blessing best reflect the faith of our Eastern Church in the power and blessing of the Jordan Water. In these prayers we repeatedly call upon the Holy Spirit to come down upon the water, to purify and sanctify it, and impart to it a healing power for the soul and body.

Here's an excerpt from the blessing prayers:

'O King and Lover of mankind, come and sanctify this water by the descent of your Holy Spirit. And confer upon it the grace of redemption, and the blessing of Jordan. Make it a font of incorruptibility, a gift of sanctification, a remission of sins, a

healing of sickness, a destroyer of demons, render it inaccessible to the adverse powers, and make it full of the power of Angels, so that all who draw from it and partake of it may be blessed in their souls and bodies, healed of their sufferings, sanctified in their homes, and they may receive every befitting grace... Grant sanctification, blessing, cleansing and health to all those who touch it, who sprinkle themselves with it or partake of it.'

(quoted from "Byzantine Rite Liturgical Year" by Julian Katrij, OSBM)