

**Ukrainian Catholic Church
of the Dormition of the Mother of God**

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Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of New Westminster: www.nweparchy.ca

**Українська Католицька Церква
Успення Пресвятої Богородиці**

3rd Sunday after Pentecost - June 30th, 2019 A.D.

**'To live according to the Gospel is to fight against selfishness.
The Gospel is forgiveness and peace;
it is love that comes from God.'** – teaches Pope Francis I

THE VIBRANT PARISH - A PLACE TO ENCOUNTER THE LIVING CHRIST: Through the Word, the Holy Mysteries & Prayer, Serving One's Neighbour, Leadership, Fostering & Serving Unity and Missionary Spirit – *Pastoral Letter of His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk*

'All the challenging circumstances of our life on earth – these are for us an invitation to active love, which is an expression of living faith!' - *Pastoral Letter of His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk "The Vibrant Parish"*

'Всі ці прикри явища нашого земного життя – це для нас запрошення до чинної любові, яка є виявом живої віри.'
- *Пастирський Лист Блаженнішого Святослава Шевчука "Жива Парафія"*

**Christian Greetings: Glory to Jesus Christ! – Glory to Him Forever!
Slava Isusu Chrystu! – Slava na Viky! Слава Ісусу Христу! – Слава на Віку!
Christ is among us! – He is and will be!**

Liturgical and Sacramental Celebrations:

Monday, July 1st - 10:00 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for Canada*

Tuesday, July 2nd - 9:30 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *for good health of Mrs. Oksana Pylypchuk*

Thurs., July 4th - 9:30 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *for repose of the soul of Mrs. Victoria Connor*

(requested my Mrs. Alexandara Vedress and Family)

BLESSING OF THE GRAVES at 5 pm at the Lakeview Memorial Gardens cemetery

Fri., July 5th - 9:30 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *for Mr. David and Mrs. Maureen Wolchuk on their 40th Wedding Anniversary*

(requested by Mrs. Beverly Strom)

Saturday, July 6th – 3:40 p.m. Lectio Divina / Bible Studies: **(Studies and Service in Penticton, BC)**

– 4:00 p.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for all parishioners*

Memorial / Panakhyda Service (1st year Anniversary): *for repose of the soul of Mr. Edward Holick (requested by Mrs. Martha Holick and Family)*

Sunday, July 7th – 8:15 a.m. Rosary: **(Service in Kelowna, BC)**

– 9:00 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for all parishioners*

– 1:00 a.m. Sacrament of Marriage: *God's blessings for Kayla Pfof and Andrew Bowie*



Liturgical Propers in English language:

Tone 2, text from book "*The Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom*"; pages 91-93

Epistle: *A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans (Rm. 5:1-10)*

Brethren, now that we have been justified by faith, we are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have gained access by faith to the grace in which we now stand, and we boast of our hope for the glory of God. But not only that – we even boast of our afflictions! We know that affliction makes for endurance, and endurance for tested virtue, and tested virtue for hope. And this hope will not leave us disappointed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us.

At the appointed time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for us, godless men. It is rare that anyone should lay down his life for a just man, though it is barely possible that for a good man someone may have the courage to die. It is precisely in this that God proves His love for us: that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Now that we have been justified by His blood, it is all the more certain that we shall be saved by Him from God's wrath. For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him by the death of His Son, it is all the more certain that we who have been reconciled will be saved by His life.

Gospel: *(Matthew 6:22-33)*

The Lord said: 'The eye is the body's lamp. If your eyes are good, your body will be filled with light; if your eyes are bad, your body will be in darkness. And if your light is darkness, how deep will the darkness be!

No man can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other or be attentive to one and despise the other. You cannot give yourself to God and money.

I warn you, then; do not worry about your livelihood, what you are to eat or drink or use for clothing. Is not life more than food? Is not the body valuable than clothes? Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not more important than they? Which of you by worrying can add a moment to his life-span? As for clothes, why be concerned? Learn a lesson from the way the wild flowers grow. They do not work; they do not spin. Yet I assure you, not even Solomon in all his splendour was arrayed like one of these. If God can clothe in such splendour the grass of the field, which blooms today and is thrown on the fire tomorrow, will He not provide much more for you, o weak in faith!

Stop worrying, then, over questions like, 'What are we to eat, or what are we to drink, or what are we to wear?' The unbelievers are always running after these things. Your Heavenly Father knows all that you need. Seek first His Kingship over you, His way of holiness, and all these things will be given you besides.

Our Eparch, Bishop Ken is requesting that at the conclusion of every Divine Liturgy we say an additional prayer for Peace in Ukraine until the end of the war. For peace in Ukraine, let us pray: Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Літургійні частини Українською мовою:

Глас 2, текст з книги "Божественна Літургія Святого Івана Золотоустого"; стт. 90-92

Апостол: До Римлян послання Святого Апостола Павла читання: (Рм. 5, 1-10)

Браття і Сестри, оправдані ж вірою, ми маємо мир з Богом через Господа нашого Ісуса Христа, через якого ми вірою одержали доступ до тієї ласки, що в ній стоїмо і хвалимося надією на славу Богу. Та й не тільки це, але ми хвалимось і в утисках, знаючи, що утиск виробляє терпеливість, терпеливість – досвід, а досвід – надію. Надія ж не засоромить, бо любов Бога влита в серця наші Святим Духом, що нам даний. Христос бо, тоді як ми були ще безсилі, у свою пору, помер за безбожних. Воно навряд чи хто за праведника вмирає; бо за доброго, може, хтось і відважився б умерти. Бог же показує свою до нас любов тим, що Христос умер за нас, коли ми ще були грішниками. Отож, тим більш тепер, оправдані його кров'ю, ми спасемося ним від гніву. Бо коли, будши ворогами, ми примирилися з Богом смертю Його Сина, то тим більше тепер, примирившись, спасемося його життям.



Євангеліє: (Мт. 6, 22-33)

Сказав Господь: "Світло тіла – око. Як, отже, твоє око здорове, все тіло твоє буде світле. А коли твоє око лихе, все тіло твоє буде в темряві. Коли ж те світло, що в тобі, темрява, то темрява – якою ж великою буде! Ніхто не може двом панам служити: бо або одного зненавидить, а другого буде любити, або триматиметься одного, а того знехтує. Не можете Богові служити – і мамоні. Ось чому кажу вам: Не турбуйтеся вашим життям, що вам їсти та що пити; ні тілом вашим, у що одягнутись. Хіба життя не більш – їжі, тіло – не більш одяжі. Гляньте на птиць небесних: не сіють і не жнуть, ані не збирають у засіки, а Отець ваш небесний їх годує! Хіба ви від них не вартісніші? Хто з вас, журячись, спроможен додати до свого віку хоч один лікоть? І про одягу чого ж вам клопотатись? Гляньте на польові лілеї, як ростуть вони: не працюють і не прядуть. Та я кажу вам, що й Соломон у всій своїй славі не вдягався так, як одна з них. І коли зілля польове, яке сьогодні є, а завтра вкидають його до печі, Бог так одягає, то чи не багато більше вас, маловірні? Отож не турбуйтеся, промовляючи: Що будемо їсти, що пити й у що зодягнемось? Про все те побиваються погани. Отець же ваш небесний знає, що вам усе це потрібне. Шукайте перше Царство Боже та його справедливості, а все те вам додасться."

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

ЩИРО ВАМ ДЯКУЄМО

Gratitudes to all our parishioners, guests, visitors and all people of the good will who by their kindness share time, talents and treasures, volunteered, organized coffee-socials, make donations, everyone who knowingly and unknowingly for the other people thoughtfully care and help our parish community, parishioners welcoming our guests and visitors, prayerfully participate at the church services, actively participate at different parish projects and programs, looking after and graciously supporting our Christian, Catholic Church community! May the Almighty God bless and abundantly reward your time, care and generosity! **"Remember, O Lord, those who bear fruit doing good works in Your holy churches and remembering the poor. Send down Your mercy upon all of us!"** (A Prayer from the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom)

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

May the Almighty God bless in good health and salvation in many, happy and blessed years of life to Mr. Nicholas and Mrs. Cecelia Lalach on their 57th wedding anniversary (June 30th), to Mr. Leonard Proskow on his birthday (July 2nd), to Mr. Peter and Mrs. Maria Karolcik on their 37th wedding anniversary (July 3rd), to Mr. Robert and Mrs. Sayvonne McBride on their 5th wedding anniversary (July 5th), to Nykolai Werbowy on his birthday (July 6th), to Mr. Peter Dranchuk on his birthday, and all our parishioners and family members who celebrate Canada Day, their birthdays, heavenly patron's /saint's name-days, wedding anniversaries and any other special anniversaries this week – Mnohaya i Blahaya Lita!

NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR PARISHIONERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WHO HAVE JOINED US IN THIS DIVINE LITURGY. THANK YOU FOR PRAYERFUL PRESENCE AND FULLFILLING GOD'S COMANDMENT AT THE CHUCH TODAY! EVERYONE IS VERY WELCOME TO COME AND ATTEND CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP AT THE CHURCH HALL TODAY!

Wishing you to be guided by the Holy Spirit, blessed with joy, peace and Christian love always!



PLEASE, REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR: yourselves, Most Reverend Bishop-Emeritus Severian Yakymyshyn, Lucy D., Janet F., Alex R., Volodymyr P., Ivan L., Ray Saranchuk, Cameron V., Rose Ostopowich, Keyton A., Ric B., Rocio A., Kit C., Shirley C., Peter Dranchuk, Olga Kuzyk, Anthony and Victoria Huziak, George and Mary Dashkewytsch, Olga Romanyshyn, Myron Stec, Kay Ilitski, Kalyna Kociuba, William Shuya, Maria Pylypchuk, Bronie Huska, Peter Huska, Stanley and Roma Nowakowski (Bishop Ken's parents), Barbara and Vincent Pasternak, Dorothy Scott, Lorraine Turcotte, Dr. Nadia Popil, the Hillman Family, John and Ann Bulych, Joseph Stetch, Rosa Maria Santos, Anita N., Ron and Verna Shoemaker, Jonas and Anne, Alyssa and Adam, Mark and Asia, Karen Feniuk, Volodymyr Melnyk and all members of our parish family and those who are not able to join actively in our community, your families, relatives, friends; governments and armed forces, especially the shut-in or those in the hospitals, traveling, working or studying,

nursing and senior homes, those seeking God's answer to their prayers or those rejoicing with God's answer; those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries; those called to their eternal reward and for the family they leave behind; widows and widowers, orphans, homeless and all people who have asked us pray for them. Please, also in your kindness keep praying daily for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Remember to ask for special blessings to all Christian families! **REMINDER** for families of individuals, who are admitted to hospital - If you or a family member is admitted to hospital and you wish to have a priest visit, please be sure to have someone call our parish rectory office to make this request. Your pastor may have no other way of knowing that you are in hospital, as privacy legislation. **SPIRIT OF CHRISTIAN AWARENESS:** Dear parishioners, if our brother / sister in Christ, who usually sits next to you, is not in the Church today, please phone him / her and ask how he / she is doing. Let him or her know that our parish community misses this brother or sister at the church very much and prays for them daily!

We also pray for the people of Ukraine, that with the help of the Holy Spirit, they may obtain social peace, political harmony and economic stability: Lord, hear us and have mercy.

❖ **Basic Guidelines for Reception of Holy Communion:** You are a member of the Catholic Church (faithful of the Orthodox churches are very welcome to receive Holy Communion); 2) You have participated in the Sacrament of Confession at least during the Easter or Christmas seasons this past year if not more frequently; 3) You attend Divine Services regularly; 4) Your lifestyle is consistent with the teaching of the Catholic Church; 5) You have kept the Liturgical fast – no food at least one hour prior to the Divine Liturgy (water and medicine does not break the fast). 6) You have been in church from the beginning of the service, or at least heard the Gospel. 7) To the best of your ability, you are in the state of Grace. *If for any of these or other reasons you cannot receive Holy Communion, you are very welcome to come for a blessing. Please indicate to the priest that you would like to receive his blessing.*

Pastoral and Sacramental Ministry:

Baptisms: by appointment. **Marriages:** six months' notice should be given to the parish priest, and he should be contacted before any other arrangements are made. **Reconciliation:** on Sundays and Holy Days: before Liturgies and other days, by appointment. **Holy Communion:** for the sick, by appointment, any time, **Holy Unction** (Anointing of the Sick): Those anticipating surgery, hospitalization or treatments and who would like to receive anointing (by appointment, any time)

Funerals and Memorials: by appointment. * Please, contact Fr. Pavlo if you want to have the Divine Liturgies celebrated in your special (such as: In thanksgiving for favours received, the Infirm, General Intentions, the Deceased, Help of the Holy Spirit, for the Travelers, etc.) intentions. *If you need to meet with the parish priest, please, call or email in advance to arrange time and a day.*

❖ **A SPECIAL REQUEST:** After each Divine Liturgy and every church service, please, keep silence in the House of the Lord as some of the faithful are still praying at the church. As well, please, do not forget close all Liturgy and/or hymnbooks and return them to their proper place. Also, please do not leave any church bulletins or any other material in the pews. Let each of us do our part to be true stewards of our parish church by helping to keep the church building clean and neat. Thank you very much! **Every parishioner is personally responsible before God for our spiritual home/parish church!**

❖ **Volunteers for Sunday coffee socials and clean-ups are needed** – please continue putting your name on the calendar posted in the church hall. If you can help out, please, let us know. Your help is truly appreciated!

VIBRANT PARISH PRAYER: O Lord Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd, as you once gathered lost sheep that they might hear Your voice and be your flock, so also today graciously look down from heaven upon our parish community, and send down on it your Holy Spirit, that it might be a place to receive the joy of Your Good News. Strengthen us with your presence, and always gather us together in prayer. Grant us the spirit of serving others, so that in our parish all might encounter You, the merciful God. Bless our spiritual leaders with Your wisdom, and inspire us to generously give of our time, talents and treasure for the building up of Your Kingdom. Unite us in peace and harmony, as befits Your community of love. Instill in us a missionary spirit, and let our parish community shine with the light of the Gospel, with prayer and good works, inviting all to share in the divine life, so that Your Name, O Saviour, may be praised, together with Your eternal Father, and Your most-holy, good and life-giving Spirit. Amen.



МОЛИТВА ЖИВОЇ ПАРАФІЇ: Господи Ісусе Христе, Пастирю Добрий, як колись Ти пригорнув заблуканих овечок, щоб вони пізнали Твій голос і були Твоїм стадом, так і сьогодні глянь ласкаво з небесних висот на нашу парафію та зішли на неї Твого Святого Духа, щоб вона була місцем пізнання радості Доброї Новини. Скріплюй нас Твоєю присутністю та єднай нас кожнчасно в молитві. Даруй нам духа служіння ближньому, щоб у нашій парафії кожний міг зустріти Тебе, милостивого Бога. Благослови наш духовний провід Твоєю мудрістю і дай, щоб ніхто з нас не шкодував ні часу, ні талантів, ні матеріальних дібр для розбудови Твого царства. Єднай нас у мирі та злагоді, щоб ми були Твоєю спільнотою любові. Всели в нас місійного духа, щоб ми стали тим світлом евангельського слова, молитви і добрих діл, що кличе кожного до участі в Божественному житті, щоб славилось, Спасе, Твоє Ім'я з безначальним Твоїм Отцем та пресвятим, благим і животворящим Твоїм Духом нині, і повсякчас, і на віки віків. Амінь.



❖ **'Joyful Summer with God' – our parish summer camp will be from 9:00 am to 11:30 am from Tuesday, August 13 to Thursday, August 15th, 2019 A.D.** Children from age 5 to 12 years old are very welcome. Please, Contact Mrs. Marilyn Daulat or Fr. Pavlo for more information.

❖ **Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Grindrod** - invites you to its Parish Feast Day Celebration Sunday, June 30, 2019. The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 12:00 p.m. Reception, social, games ... etc. to follow. There is no cost for the luncheon, but donations are accepted. We are looking forward to seeing you, welcoming you and sharing the joy of celebration with all of you!

❖ **If you wish to help or have any questions, suggestions, ideas about our parish community life, please, contact our parish executive council chairperson Mrs. Yvonne Crawford.**

❖ **BE A STEWARD:** Have you ever wondered what more can you do to help our parish-church? Here are some suggestions: Steward of property security; Steward of grounds cleaning; Steward of cleaning church; Steward of church linen; Steward of outreach; Steward of caring; Steward of prayer; Steward of service. Quite often, our homebound or senior members, once active in their younger years, want to find purpose in their senior years. It's not only about doing but about "BEING" present to others! Please, feel very welcome to participate in our church choir singing, reading of the Epistles and others inspiring Bible texts, holding the candles during the Gospels readings, processions, welcoming, parish cleaning, projects, etc. **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** to help out with weekly cleaning in the church and organizing of coffee social after the Divine Liturgy on Sundays, work-bees, etc. If you can help out, please, let us know. Please, Contact Mrs. Yvonne Crawford or Fr. Pavlo for more information. You will be amazed how "BEING" can make a difference at our spiritual, parish life!

❖ **FAITHFUL GIVING ...** Please, remember that we never take a day off or a vacation from God, or from our obligation to attend Divine Liturgy on Sundays and Holy Days. When traveling, working, participating in different sport's tournaments, activities or studying, please, make sure you check out the service schedule for the area churches at our eparchial website: www.nweparchy.ca and attend the Divine Liturgy. Remember as well, that while parishioners may be away and on vacation, the parish-church is not. Expenses continue as they do throughout the year. Please, remain consistent in your gifts to parish. Your weekly Sunday offering is important to our financial well-being. If you are away, we appreciate it when you forward your "make-up" donations. The financial stability of the parish counts on regular Sunday contributions. Please, continue to be supportive and generous! "Remember, O Lord, those who bear fruit doing good works in Your holy churches and remembering the poor. Send down Your mercy upon all of us!" (*Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom*)

❖ **Rachel's Corner:** *"I could speak about my role in the abortion without feeling judged. I was understood, and it helped that others have shared my pain."* - Testimonial

Join us on a Rachel's Vineyard retreat and let them help you as you acknowledge that the abortion decision affects men as well. Let God show you that you don't have to live with that burden anymore. Will you let Him in? Your life and how you think, and feel can be so very different. Join us on a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat and let the healing begin. Life can be so much better. Give yourself the chance. Join us on a Rachel's Vineyard™ Retreat and come alive again as you are warmed by the rays of His healing mercy. www.RachelsVineyardKelowna.com info@rachelsvineyardkelowna.com 250-762-2273 Like us on Facebook: Rachel's Vineyard Kelowna

CAMP SAINT VOLODYMYR on August 18-25, 2019 A.D.

Start planning your summer holidays now! Come join us to celebrate our 36th year of camp for children in our Eparchy! Camp St. Volodymyr is a great place to be physically active, build self-confidence and self-esteem, develop life-long skills while reconnecting with nature and building friendships. Our camp is also a wonderful opportunity to experience God through nature and the companionship of others.

Campers will learn about the Ukrainian language and culture along with games, hiking, sports, arts and crafts, camp fires, water activities and much more! If you are between the ages of 7-15 this is a summer must do! Registration is \$380. Book by July 4 to save \$50. Bus transportation is also available to and from New Westminster. Register online using Eventbrite. Search "Camp St. Volodymyr BC 2019." For more information contact Jennifer Caldwell @ 604.220.0584 or jennsawka@hotmail.com.

WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR CAMP: Camp St. Volodymyr is a nonprofit camp, run on a volunteer basis. Please contact Jennifer if you are interested in helping.



VOLUNTEER as a Camp Chef. We are seeking between 4-6 individuals to help us each day in the kitchen. It is your opportunity to get creative and be a part of the campers top 5 things at camp; The Food!

VOLUNTEER as our Camp Nurse. We are looking for an individual to be our camp nurse. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know the children in our Eparchy. This position would require valid first aid and nursing certification. Responsibilities would include administering medications brought by campers/staff as well as recording all incidents and treatments. Supplies and medications are provided by the camp.

DONATE Food: We are always happy to accept food donations of fresh fruits and vegetables, breakfast items; cereal, syrup, pancake mix, jam, Nutella, lunch items; chicken soup, Kraft dinner, cheese, drinks; juice boxes, powdered drinks, brownie/cake mixes, Jello, snack bars, cookies or treats. Gift certificates to Superstore and Costco are also welcomed.

DONATE Monetarily: Each year the Eparchy sponsors several children to attend. You can help send a deserving child to camp through your donations. Donation can be made through the Eparchy or online at our Eventbrite page. Tax receipts can be issued for donations of \$25 or more. Visit our website www.nweparchy.ca **HELP NEEDED at CAMP ST. VOLODYMYR:** We are currently in need of a camp nurse, kitchen coordinator and part/daytime help in the kitchen. If you are interested or know of anyone who may be able to fulfill these roles please contact Jennifer Caldwell @ 604.220.0584 or jennsawka@hotmail.com. Visit our website via www.nweparchy.ca

Pope teaches: ‘Jesus is looking for witnesses, not ‘religion editors’’

Jun 29, 2019

Pope Francis celebrates Mass with blessing of the palliums, in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, Saturday, June 29, 2019. (Credit: Gregorio Borgias/AP.)

ROME - Being a follower of Christ does not mean being curious about who he was or craving religious news, Pope Francis said on Saturday during the Mass for the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul. Jesus, he said, is not interested in polls, nor is he looking for “front page” Christians.

“We may be curious about Jesus, or interested in church matters or religious news,” Francis said. “We may open computer sites and the papers, and talk about holy things.”

Yet, he asked, is this done to be up-to-date with



what people are saying?

“Jesus does not care about polls or past history,” the pope said. “He is not looking for religion editors, much less ‘front page’ Christians. He is looking for witnesses who say to him each day: ‘Lord, you are my life’.”

The pontiff’s words came during his homily in St. Peter’s Basilica. During the ceremony, he handed the pallium, a small wool white garment that goes around the neck and down to the chest - to the 31 Metropolitan Archbishops he created during the past year. The list includes Archbishop Wilton Gregory, recently transferred to Washington D.C. from Atlanta.

When the archbishops go back home, the papal representative in the countries where they minister will actually impose the wool garment on the archbishop.

“The pallium reminds the sheep that the shepherd is called to bear him on his shoulders,” Francis said towards the end of his homily. “It is a sign that the shepherds do not live for themselves but for the sheep. It is a sign that, in order to possess life, we have to lose it, give it away.”

Francis invited those gathered to pray so that they receive the grace not to be “lukewarm Christians living by half measures, allowing our love to grow cold. Let us rediscover who we truly are through a daily relationship with Jesus and through the power of his forgiveness.”

Known for having strong words for the clergy - last year, he told the new archbishops not to be “armchair apostles” - Francis didn’t focus on the prelates this year, but on Peter and Paul: “Witnesses to life, witnesses to forgiveness and witnesses to Jesus.”

Peter, the first pope, is also the man who denied Jesus three times the night before he was crucified. Paul, on the other hand, persecuted the Church of God before being called to follow Jesus.

“If we go to the heart of that testimony, we can see them as witnesses to life, witnesses to forgiveness and witnesses to Jesus,” Francis said of the two saints, who also serve as the patrons of the Diocese of Rome.

Despite the mistakes they made, the pope said, “Jesus called them by name and changed their lives,” placing his trust in them, “in one who denied him and one who persecuted his followers, in two repentant sinners.”

According to Francis, one might ask why Jesus chose them instead of two witnesses of utter integrity, such as the apostles John and Barnabas. This choice too, he said, was a teaching: “The starting point of the Christian life is not our worthiness; in fact, the Lord was able to accomplish little with those who thought they were good and decent.”

It’s not those who consider themselves righteous that God uses to work miracles, but those who know themselves to be in need.

“He is not attracted by our goodness; that is not why he loves us,” Francis said of God. “He loves us just as we are; he is looking for people who are not self-sufficient, but ready to open their hearts to him.”

Humanly, Peter and Paul failed, the pope noted. Yet they encountered a life that was greater than their failures and a forgiveness that was enough to heal their guilt.

Speaking about what it is to be a witness to Jesus, the pope said that Christ is not the past but the “present and future.” He’s not some distant historical character to be remembered, but “a living person: He is newness, not things we have already seen, the newness of the future and not a memory from the past.”

Also present during the liturgy was a delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Each year, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Vatican send delegations for the feasts of their respective patrons. The Vatican sends a delegation to Istanbul on the November 30 feast of St. Andrew, the patron of the Patriarchate.

“Your presence reminds us that we can spare no effort also in the journey towards full unity among believers, in communion at every level,” the pope told the Patriarchate’s delegation. “For together, reconciled to God and having forgiven one another, we are called to bear witness to Jesus by our lives.”

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