

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

1091 Coronation Avenue, Kelowna, BC V1Y 7A8 Tel.: 250-860-7295 Email: dormitionkelowna@gmail.com
Parish web-site: <http://kelowna.nweparchy.ca/> Pastor: Rev. Fr. Pavlo Myts / о. Павло Миць
Facebook page: *DormitionKelowna Parish*: <https://www.facebook.com/dormitionkelowna.parish.5>
Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of New Westminster: www.nweparchy.ca



**Українська Католицька Церква
Успення Пресвятої Богородиці**



24th Sunday after Pentecost - November 24th, 2019 A.D.

“Many people think that peace is the absence of war. But peace is more than that. Peace is also the good relations between people, when we don't lie to one another, don't look for profit, don't wish evil. We should bear peace every day, every day we should establish contacts between people, seek good communication.” – teaches Patriarch Lubomyr Cardinal Husar

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 прикрі 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!

Слава Ісусу Христу! – Слава на Віку!

Slava Isusu Chrystu! - Slava na Viky! Christ is among us! - He is and will be!

Liturgical and Sacramental Celebrations:

- Tue., Nov. 26th - 9:30 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *repose of the soul of Raymond Suryadinata*
- Wed., Nov. 27th - 9:30 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *repose of the soul of Mrs. Dianne Mathiew* (requested by Mr. Darrin Mathiew)
- Thurs., Nov. 28th - 9:30 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for Mrs. Rose Ostopowich* (requested by Rev. Fr. Joseph Ostopowich)
- Fri., Nov. 29th - 9:30 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *for repose of the soul of Mr. Martin Ostopowich* (4th year memorial service requested by Rev. Fr. Joseph Ostopowich and Mrs. Rose Ostopowich)
- Sat., Nov. 30th - 3:40 p.m. Lectio Divina Bible Studies
- 4:00 p.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for all parishioners, guests and visitors*
- Sunday, Dec. 1st - 8:15 a.m. Rosary:
- 9:00 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for all parishioners, families, guests and visitors* (in English language)
- 11:00 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for all parishioners, families, guests and visitors* (in Ukrainian language)

Please, contact Fr. Pavlo if you want to have the Divine Liturgies celebrated in your special intentions, such as: In Thanksgiving for Favours Received, the Infirm, General Intentions, Repose of the Deceased, Help of the Holy Spirit, for the Travelers, Students, Workers, etc. If you would like to meet with the parish priest at the church or parish office, or want him to visit you, your relative or friend at their home, hospital or care home, please, call or email the pastor in advance to arrange time and a day.



Liturgical Propers in English language:

Tone 7, text from book *“The Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom”*; pages 103-105

Epistle: A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians: (Eph. 2:14-22)

Brothers and Sisters, it is Christ who is our peace, and who made the two of us one by breaking down the barrier of hostility that kept us apart. In his own flesh he abolished the law with its commands and precepts, to create in himself one new man from us who had been two and to make peace, reconciling both of us to God in one body through his cross, which put that enmity to death. He came and “announced the good news of peace to you who were far off, and to those who were near”; through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

This means that you are strangers and aliens no longer. No, you are fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God. You form a building which rises on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone. Through him the whole structure is fitted together and takes shape as a holy temple in the Lord; in him you are being built into this temple, to become a dwelling place for God in the Spirit.

Gospel: (Lk 8: 41-56)

At that time, a man named Jairus, who was chief of the synagogue, came up and fell at Jesus' feet, begging that he come to his home. Because of his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying. As Jesus went, the crowds almost crushed him. A woman with

hemorrhage of twelve years' duration, incurable at any doctor's hands, came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak. Immediately her bleeding stopped. Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" Everyone disclaimed doing it, while Peter said, "Lord, the crowds are milling and pressing around you!" Jesus insisted, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone forth from me." When the woman saw that her act had not gone unnoticed, came forward trembling. Falling at his feet, she related before the whole assemblage why she had touched him and how she had been instantly cured. Jesus said to her, "Daughter, it is your faith that has cured you. Now go in peace."

He was still speaking when a man came from the ruler's house with the announcement, "Your daughter is dead; do not bother the Teacher further." Jesus heard this, and his response was: "Fear is useless; what is needed is trust and her life will be spared." Once he had arrived at the house, he permitted no one to enter with him except Peter, John, James, and the child's parents. While everyone wept and lamented her, he said, "Stop crying for she is not dead but asleep." They laughed at him, being certain she was dead." He took her by the hand and spoke these words: "Get up, child." The breath of life returned to her and she got up immediately; whereupon he told them to give her something to eat. Her parents were astounded, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened

Літургійні частини Українською мовою:

Глас 7, текст "Божественна Літургія Святого Івана Золотоустого"; сторінки 102-104



Апостол: До Ефесян послання Святого Апостола Павла читання: (Еф. 2, 14-22)

Браття і Сестри, Христос – наш мир, він, що зробив із двох одне, зруйнувавши стіну, яка була перегородою, тобто ворожнечу, – своїм тілом скасував закон заповідей у своїх рішеннях, на те, щоб із двох зробити в собі одну нову людину, вчинивши мир між нами, і щоб примирити їх обох в однім тілі з Богом через хрест, убивши ворожнечу в ньому. Він прийшов звітувати мир вам, що були далеко, і мир тим, що були близько; бо через нього, одні й другі, маємо доступ до Отця в однім Дусі. Отже ж ви більше не чужинці і не приходні, а співгромадяни святих і домашні Божі, побудовані на підвалині апостолів і пророків, де наріжним каменем – сам Ісус Христос. На ньому вся будівля, міцно споєна, росте святим храмом у Господі; на ньому ви теж будуєтеся разом на житло Бога в Дусі.

Євангеліє: (Лк. 8, 41-56)

У той час один чоловік приступив до Ісуса, Яір на ім'я, який був головою синагоги. Припавши до ніг Ісуса, він почав його просити зайти до нього в хату, бо була в нього дочка одиначка, яких дванадцять років, і вона вмирала. І як він ішов туди, люди тиснулися до нього. Аж тут жінка якась, що була хвора дванадцять років на кровотечу й витратила на лікарів увесь свій прожиток, і ніхто з них не міг її оздоровити, підійшовши ззаду, доторкнулась краю його одягу й умить стала здоровою – спинилась її кровотеча. Ісус спитав: "Хто доторкнувся мене?" А що всі відпекувались, Петро мовив: "Наставниче, то люди коло тебе юрмляться і тиснуться." Ісус же сказав: "Хтось доторкнувся до мене, бо я чув, як сила вийшла з мене." Побачивши жінка, що не втаїлася, тремтячи підійшла й упавши йому до ніг, призналася перед усіма людьми, чому до нього доторкнулась і як негайно одужала. Сказав їй Ісус: "Дочко, віра твоя спасла тебе, йди в мирі!"

Він говорив ще, як приходить хтось від голови синагоги і каже: "Твоя дочка померла, не турбуй більш Учителя." Ісус почувши це, озвався до нього: "Не бійся, тільки віруй, і вона спасеться." Прийшовши до хати, він не пустив нікого з собою всередину, крім Петра, Йоана та Якова з батьком та матір'ю дитини. Всі плакали за нею і голосили. Він же мовив: "Не плачте, вона не вмерла, вона тільки спить." І ті сміялися з нього, бо знали, що вмерла. А він узяв її за руку й голосно промовив: "Дівчино, пробудися!" І дух її повернувся до неї, і вона миттю встала. Тоді він звелів дати їй їсти. Батьки ж її були здивовані вельми, та він наказав їм нікому не говорити, що сталося.

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.

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, all who helped to make cabbage-rolls and cooked borsch; volunteered hours for pierogies supper, every person 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!

- Holy Resurrection Parish in Penticton: Sunday (Nov. 17th) Divine Liturgy donation was \$282.00
- Dormition of The Mother of God Parish in Kelowna: Sunday (Nov. 17th) Divine Liturgies donation was \$742.00

"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 Miss. Maria Melnyk on her birthday (Nov. 27), Mrs. Lydia Gudz-Zagaliouk on her birthday (Nov. 29th), name-days, and all our parishioners and family members who celebrate 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 BY COMING TO THE CHUCH: EVERYONE IS VERY WELCOME TO COME AND ATTEND CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP AT THE CHURCH HALL TODAY!

Wishing you and all your dear ones 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., Danny M, Jordan M., Kit C., Shirley C., Peter Dranchuk, Olga Kuzyk, Anthony Huziak, George and Mary Dashkewytsch, Olga Romanyshyn, Myron Stec, Kay Ilnitski, Kalyna Kociuba, William Shuya, Maria Pylypchuk, Bronie Huska, Peter Huska, Stanley and Roma Nowakowski (Bishop Ken's parents), Barbara and Vincent Pasternak, 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, Leonard Proskow 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; your spiritual fathers, 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 or 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 his or her 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.



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 Твою присутністю та єднай нас кожночасно в молитві. Даруй нам духа служіння ближньому, щоб у нашій парафії кожний міг зустріти Тебе, милостивого Бога. Благослови наш духовний провід Твою 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 Твою спільнотою любові. Всели в нас місійного духа, щоб ми стали тим світилом 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.

Saint Philip's Fast (Advent) Missions will take place in our parish starting at 8:00 am with the Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession before the Divine Liturgy Service today, on Sunday, Nov 24th, 2019 A.D. in Kelowna, BC. Rev. Fr. Joseph Ostopowich is our mission master priest this year.

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. Email: Donoharmclinic@gmail.com or phone: 250-212-4899



TAX RECEIPTS: To ensure that you receive a tax receipt for your church donations, please, make sure you name or registered with our parish envelope number is written at a special church donation envelope.

On behalf of our church family, assurance of our prayers and deepest sympathy are to Mr. Anthony Huziak, family, relatives and friends! **May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ place our sister-parishioner Mrs. Victoria Huziak's soul in the place where all the saints abide, and may her memory be everlasting with the Lord and our prayers! – Vichnaya Pamyat'!**

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 help is needed to make pierogies starting at 8 a.m. on Sat. of Nov. 30th, 2019. It is a good time to help our parish fundraisers and socialize together. More helpers come – easier and faster the work is done! Please, come to help!

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!

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!

CATECHISM ANNOUNCEMENT: *"And they were bringing to Him also the infants, in order that He may be touching them; but after the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Himself and said, Let alone the little children to come to Me, and cease hindering them; for of such is the kingdom of God."* (Matthew 19:14) We are happy to welcome all children to our Dormition of the Mother of God parish catechism program. We want your children to learn more about their orthodox faith in the Catholic Church, sacred scripture, feast days, icons, singing and religious practices and customs of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. If you have any questions, or wish to volunteer and help, please, do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Marilyn Daulat or Rev. Fr. Pavlo Myts.

UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE PARISH SCHOOL: If you want your child or grandchild to learn Ukrainian language during this 2019-2020 school year – please, contact Mrs. Olena Fedorov or Dobr. Mariia Myts.

JOIN OUR CHURCH CHOIR: Do you enjoy singing? Please consider joining our Dormition Parish Choir and remember that we are looking for new members! Contact Mrs. Lesia Achtymichuk for more information and details.



2019 Grey Cup Game annual parish-community social gathering-party – will take place today, on Sunday, Nov. 24th. As in previous years, we are organizing this parish social event and pot-luck dinner. There will be a sign-up list to let us know what kind of dish you are bringing. We will be gathering around 3:00 p.m.

Holly Resurrection Ukrainian Catholic Parish Christmas dinner and social on Sunday, December 8th, 2019 A.D in Penticton, BC. Please, bring \$20 gift exchange when you come.

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)



'KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS' - as part of our parish fundraiser these special magnets are available for purchase at a donation of \$ 5.00. By placing on our cars, a magnet KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS, prepared by the Knights of Columbus, we evangelize silently and verbally through this wonderful

Christian symbol. In addition, by purchasing this magnet we also support our parish, since all money collected in our parish for these magnets are donated by the Knights of Columbus to our parish church-community!

Traditional and Very Delicious Ukrainian Food is available for sale at our parish: Perogies – \$ 6.00 per dozen, Cabbage-Rolls cooked and uncooked – \$ 6.00 per dozen. For more information, please contact Mrs. Alice Pelechaty at (250) 763-4870 or Mrs. Olena Fedorov at (778) 821-0759



Rachel's Corner: *“God is at your side and already guiding you. You just have to keep taking each next step, one at a time. He will take care of the rest.” - Rev. Fr. John Bartunek*

Since the day of the abortion, has it been hard to feel God there at your side? Is it hard to believe He wants to be there, and yearns to heal your heart? Come on a Rachel's Vineyard™ Retreat and let Him show you. Come on a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat for healing. Come join us on a Rachel's Vineyard retreat for spiritual and emotional healing. www.RachelsVineyardKelowna.com

info@rachelsvineyardkelowna.com 250-762-2273 Like us on Facebook: [Rachel's Vineyard Kelowna](https://www.facebook.com/RachelsVineyardKelowna)

Movie “The Keys of the Kingdom” with Rev. Fr. Ron Dechant, OMI will be on Monday, Nov. 25th, @ 7:00 pm in the hall of Saint Charles Garnier Roman Catholic Church. Orphaned as a child, Francis Chisholm (Gregory Peck) grows up to join the priesthood. He decides to become a missionary in China and arrives to find the previous church burned down. Undaunted, he presses on but doesn't initially farewell with the local populace. It's not until the child of a Mandarin falls ill that Chisholm proves his worth. Over time, he collaborates with a trio of nuns, endures several wars and, at the end of his life, returns to Scotland.

Christianity shouldn't be 'foreign,' Pope Francis tells Thai Catholics

BANGKOK, Thailand- In a country where Catholic priests and religious amount to fewer than 2,500 amid 69 million people, Pope Francis urged them not to fear being few in number and to further inculturate the Gospel so Catholicism isn't seen as a religion for foreigners.

Speaking on Friday in St. Peter's Parish of Wat Roman in Tha Kham to religious men and women who minister to the country's tiny Catholic population of less than 400,000, Francis urged them to allow others to see the beauty of “the gaze [of Christ] that captivates because it is able to penetrate appearances to find and celebrate the authentic beauty present in every person.” “It is a gaze that, as the Gospel teaches us, shatters all determinism, fatalism and standards,” Francis said, noting that, as the Gospels describe, where many saw a sinner, a blasphemer, a tax collector, an evildoer or even a traitor, “Jesus was able to see apostles.” Through his gaze, and that of his mother, Mary, men and women called to apostolic fruitfulness see in those who are in the margins of society a “brother or sister redeemed by Jesus Christ.” Christianity, he said, cannot be understood apart from the dignity of each human person. Priests and religious who spend their lives serving Jesus in their brothers and sisters, the pope said, “manage to see beauty where others only see contempt, abandonment or an object of sexual gratification.”



The St. Peter's Parish is on the outskirts of Bangkok, in a small Catholic neighborhood. Among the hundreds in attendance, was a group of cloistered nuns, seated to the side of the altar, in their brown and black habits. When Francis arrived dozens of children and teenagers welcomed him changing “viva il papa,” an Italian papal hurrah.

There are currently just 835 priests between diocesan and religious in Thailand, no permanent deacons and 1,461 religious, but a boost may be coming: There are over 700 men in the minor seminary and 300 in the major seminary.

In percentage terms, the country is actually priest-rich. There's one priest for every 500 baptized Catholics, while it's one per 2,000 in the U.S. The Catholic Church first arrived in the former kingdom of Siam 350 years ago, with the anniversary falling this year. “The Lord did not call us and send us forth into the world to impose obligations on people, or lay heavier burdens than those they already have, which are many, but rather to share joy, a beautiful, new and surprising horizon,” Francis said on Friday, before quoting Pope emeritus Benedict XVI, who said that the Catholic Church doesn't grow by proselytizing but by attraction.

This means that ministers shouldn't be afraid to look for “new symbols and images, for that particular music which can help awaken in the Thai people the amazement that the Lord wants to give us,” Francis said.

Here, he urged them not to be afraid to continue inculturating the Gospel, looking for new ways of transmitting the faith capable of awakening a desire to know Christ: “Who is that man? Who are these people who follow a man who was crucified?”

Francis also noted that while he prepared for the encounter, he learned “with some pain” that for many here Christianity is a religion for foreigners, in a country where the great majority is Buddhist. This attitude, Francis said, should spur the Church into finding ways to talk about the faith “in dialect,” much like a mother who sings a song to her child. “With that same intimacy, let us give the faith a Thai face and flesh, which involves much more than making translations,” he said. “It's about letting the Gospel be stripped of fine but foreign garb; to let it ‘sing’ with the native music of this land and inspire the hearts of our brothers and sisters with the same beauty that set our own hearts on fire.” A French missionary living in Thailand told *Crux* on Thursday that this inculturation often poses challenges. He cited as an example that recently, authorities asked the Church to consider using a different Thai word to refer to a “bishop,” since the current term is the same as a Buddhist leader. Instead of coming up with a new word in the local language, the Church decided simply to use the English term.

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The missionary said he understood the reasoning, since the Thai language is full of words borrowed from English, such as "passport," instead of the local one, which translates to something like "personal document used to travel abroad." Apostolic fruitfulness "requires and is sustained by fidelity to deep prayer," Francis said, in the manner of grandparents who do their chores with a rosary in hand, "sanctifying their entire day." "This is contemplation in action, making God part of the little things of each day," he said, quoting St. Pope Paul VI, who said that one of the biggest obstacles to evangelization is a lack of fervor, nurtured by a double encounter with the face of Christ and that of "our brothers and sisters." Francis began his remarks by thanking all those consecrated men and women who, "by the silent martyrdom of fidelity and daily commitment, have borne great fruit," including those who were called to struggle for the things that God loves and for which Christ gave his life. "I would even ask you to be wounded by that same love; to have that same passion for Jesus and for his kingdom," he said.

Later Friday, Pope Francis met the bishops of Thailand and members of Asia's bishops conference in the Blessed Nicholas Boonkerd Kitbamrung Shrine, next to the parish of St. Peter where he encountered the religious. The figure to whom the church is dedicated, in Francis's words, devoted his life to evangelization and catechesis, primarily here in Thailand but also in part of Vietnam and along the border with Laos, and "crowned his witness to Christ with martyrdom." Thousands of faithful were on the premises of the shrine that the pontiff swung through in the popemobile before Friday's first meeting. Among them were pilgrims hailing from many parts of Thailand and also abroad, including Catholics from China. Many in the crowd were holding signs in English and Italian, including one that read, "You really know how to pope, alleluia." Francis was constantly flanked by his interpreter, Sister Ana Rosa Sivori, his second cousin, an Argentine nun who has been in Thailand since the 1960s.

The pope's remarks to the bishops were focused on mission, reminding them the Holy Spirit arrives in new territories before missionaries and stays with them. The first missionaries of Asia - many of whom were Jesuits, like the pope, and many of whom were martyred - didn't look for "guaranteed success," he said. "On the contrary, their 'guarantee' lay in the certainty that no person or culture was a priori incapable of receiving the seed of life, happiness, and above all friendship that the Lord wants to sow in them," he said, noting they plunged into these new realities convinced of the beauty "of which they were bearers," because "all life has value in the eyes of the Master."

Quoting Pope Paul VI, Francis said "the Church is an evangelizer, but she begins by being evangelized herself. She is the community of believers, the community of hope lived and communicated, the community of brotherly love, and she needs to listen unceasingly to what she must believe, to her reasons for hoping, to the new commandment of love." The pope praised the bishops for taking the concerns of their people upon themselves, from the drugs, human trafficking and migrants and refugees to the exploitation of workers and inequality. Francis said they are doing so on a "multicultural and multi-religious continent," endowed with great beauty and prosperity but also "troubled" by poverty and exploitation.

"Rapid technological advancements can open up immense possibilities that make life easier, but can also result in the growth of consumerism and materialism, especially among young people," he said. Facing these tensions, Francis said, stands the pastor who "struggles and intercedes with his people and for his people," encouraged by the memory of the first missionaries. Missionary efforts, he said, cannot depend on "fruitless discussions and ways of thinking that end up making us turn in on ourselves, paralyzing any kind of action." As he has done before, the pope urged the bishops not to forget that there are ecclesial structures and ways of thinking that "hamper" the efforts to evangelize, and that no matter how good those structures are, they must be rooted in "an authentic evangelical spirit," including "fervent prayer and intercession." Francis called on the universal Church to learn from bishops and other ministers in Asia, who, as a minority in most of these countries, in many of which "you are persecuted," haven't let themselves be corrupted by an inferiority complex nor the complaint that they are not given due recognition. In the afternoon, the pope is scheduled to take part in an interreligious meeting in this Buddhist-majority country, and later on, say Mass in Bangkok's cathedral for the country's youth. He will be in Thailand until Saturday, when he flies to Japan. There he will visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where he is expected to release a message on nuclear weapons.

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