

# Dormition of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church

1091 Coronation Avenue, Kelowna, BC V1Y 7A8 Tel.: 250-860-7295

Parish web-site: <http://kelowna.nweparchy.ca/>

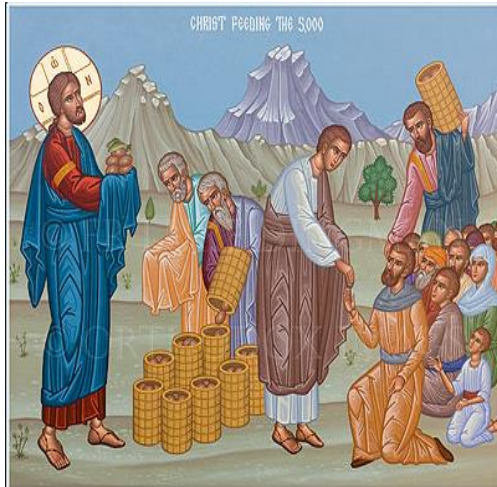
Pastor: Rev. Fr. Pavlo Myts / о. Павло Миць

Facebook page: *DormitionKelowna Parish*: <https://www.facebook.com/dormitionkelowna.parish.5>  
Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of New Westminster: [www.nweparchy.ca](http://www.nweparchy.ca)



# Українська Католицька Церква Успення Пресвятої Богородиці

Email: [dormitionkelowna@gmail.com](mailto:dormitionkelowna@gmail.com)



## 8<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY after PENTECOST- July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020 A.D.

**“Christ leads us to go out from ourselves more and more, to give ourselves and to serve others.”** – 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



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

### Prayer During the Coronavirus Outbreak:

Lord, Our God,  
We thank you for the life that is your gift,  
For the providence that sustains us,  
And for your wisdom that directs the course of our days.  
The threat of an infection of coronavirus is upon us today.  
This disease causes fear among us and has claimed lives.  
We humbly beg you, loving Lord,  
Dispel our fear and deliver us from this and other diseases.  
Heal those who are afflicted and stop the spread of the virus.  
Strengthen us in charity to care for one another.  
For You are a God of mercy, kindness, and love, and we glorify You Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

### Молитва у Часі Спалаху Коронавірусу:

Господи, Боже наш,  
Дякуємо Тобі за життя, яке є Твоім даром,  
За провидіння, яке нас підтримує,  
І за Твою мудрість, яка спрямовує хід наших днів.  
Сьогодні перед нами загроза зараження коронавірусом.  
Ця хвороба викликає страх серед нас і забирає життя.  
Ми смирено просимо Тебе, люблячого Господа,  
Розвій наш страх і позбав нас від цієї та усіх інших хвороб.  
Вилікуй тих, хто страждає, і зупини поширення вірусу.  
Зміцнюй нас у благодаті, щоб ми дбали одні про одних.  
Бо Ти - Бог милосердя, доброти та любові, і ми прославляємо Тебе Отця, Сина і Святого Духа, нині, і повсякчас і на віки вічні. Амінь.

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 come to Confession, meet with the parish priest at the church or parish office, receive spiritual care and support via telephon or internet, 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 First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians: (1 Cor 1:10-18)

Brothers and Sisters, I beg you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to agree in what you say. Let there be no factions; rather, be united in mind and judgment. I have been informed, my brethren, by certain members of Chloe’s household that you are quarreling among yourselves. This is what I mean: One of you will say, “I belong to Paul,” another, “I belong to Apollos,” still another, “Cephas has my allegiance,” and the fourth,

“I belong to Christ,” Has Christ, then, been divided into parts? Was it Paul who was crucified for you? Was it in Paul’s name that you were baptized? Thank God, I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so there are none who can say that you were baptized in my name. Oh, and I baptized the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I am not aware of having baptized anyone else. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel – not with wordy “wisdom,” however, lest the cross of Christ be rendered void of its meaning!

### Gospel: (Matthew 14:14-22)

At that time, Jesus saw a large crowd, his heart was moved with pity, and he cured their sick. As evening drew on, his disciples came to him with the suggestion: “This is a deserted place and it is already late. Dismiss the crowds so that they may go to the villages and buy some food for themselves.” Jesus said to them: “There is no need for them to disperse. Give them something to eat yourselves.” “We have nothing here,” they replied, “but five loaves and a couple of fish.” “Bring them here,” he said. Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed and broke them and gave the loaves to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the people. All those present ate their fill. The fragments remaining, when gathered up, filled twelve baskets. Those who ate were about five thousand, not counting women and children.

At the conclusion of every Divine Liturgy we say an additional prayer  
for peace in Ukraine until the end of the war and in the whole World: **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 7, текст з книги "Божественна Літургія Святого Івана Золотоустого"; стт. 102-104

**Апостол: До Коринтян першого послання св. Апостола Павла читання:** (Кор. 1, 10-18)



Браття і Сестри, благаю вас ім'ям Господа нашого Ісуса Христа, щоб ви всі те саме говорили; щоб не було розколів поміж вами, але щоб були поєднані в однім розумінні й у одній думці. Я бо довідався про вас, мої брати, від людей Хлої, що між вами є суперечки. Кажу ж про те, що кожен з вас говорить: «Я – Павлів, а я – Аполлосів, а я – Кифин, а я – Христов.» Чи ж Христос розділився? Хіба Павло був розп'ятий за вас? Або хіба в Павлове ім'я ви христилися? Дякую Богові, що я нікого з вас не охрестив, крім Криспа та Гая, щоб не сказав хтось, що ви були охрищені в мое ім'я. Охрестив я теж дім Стефана; а більш не знаю, чи хрестив я когось іншого. Христос же послав мене не хрестити, а благовістити, і то не мудрістю слова, щоб хрест Христа не став безуспішним. Бо слово про хрест – глупота тим, що погибають, а для нас, що спасаємося, сила Божя.

**Євангеліє:** (Мт 14,14-22)

У той час, вийшовши, Ісус побачив силу народу і змилювався над ними та вигоїв їхніх недужих. Якже настав вечір, підійшли до нього його учні й кажуть: "Пусте це місце та й час минув уже. Відпусти людей, нехай ідуть по селах та куплять собі поживи." А Ісус сказав їм: "Не треба їм відходити: дайте ви їм їсти." Вони ж мовлять до нього: "Ми маємо тут тільки п'ять хлібів і дві риби." Тоді він каже: "Принесіть мені їх сюди." І, звелівши народові посідати на траві, взяв п'ять хлібів і дві риби, підвів очі до неба, поблагословив і розламав ті хліби, і дав учням, а учні – людям. Всі їли до насити й назбирали куснів, що zostалися, дванадцять кошів повних. Тих же, що їли, було яких п'ять тисяч чоловіків, окрім жінок та дітей. І зараз же спонукав учнів увійти до човна й переплисти на той бік раніше від нього, тим часом як він відпускав народ.

**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, every person who knowingly and unknowingly for the other people thoughtfully make donations, care and help our parish community in various ways and projects by keeping and sharing their Christian love, unity by 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 (July 19<sup>th</sup>) Divine Liturgy donation was \$ 248.00
- Dormition of The Mother of God Parish in Kelowna: Sunday (July 19<sup>th</sup>) Divine Liturgy donation was \$ 360.00

**DONATIONS!** Amid Covid-19 outbreak causing these challenging times we continue to rely on your generosity. **Please continue to support our parish financially by e-transfer via [dormitiontransfer2020@gmail.com](mailto:dormitiontransfer2020@gmail.com) or mailing a cheque payable to Dormition of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church 1091 Coronation Ave., Kelowna, BC V1Y 7A8**

**"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 for many, happy and blessed years of life to Mr. Lawrence and Mrs. Judy Syrnyk on their wedding anniversary (July 26<sup>th</sup>), 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 / Many and Blessed Years of Life!

**NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**LIVE STREAMING of church services from Dormition of the Mother of God**

**Ukrainian Catholic Church in Kelowna, B.C.:** <https://www.facebook.com/dormitionkelowna.parish.5>

**You can also view 24 / 7 many inspiring videos, articles, pictures, etc. are regularly published by the pastor. Please visit our parish Facebook page: [DormitionKelowna Parish: https://www.facebook.com/dormitionkelowna.parish.5](https://www.facebook.com/dormitionkelowna.parish.5)**

**⚭ Please also welcome to visit our Cathedral Facebook page for live-stream videos of the liturgical services at Holy Eucharist Cathedral. <https://www.facebook.com/holyeucharistcathedral/>**

**THANK YOU FOR PRAYING TO GOD AT THE CHURCH, YOUR HOMES AND ON-LINE TODAY!**

**Wishing you and all your dear ones to be blessed by God with health, hope, joy, peace and Christian love!**

***Liturgical and Sacramental Services are celebrated by your spiritual father-pastor at the church during this week:***

**SUNDAY, July 26<sup>th</sup> at 8:15 a.m.** Rosary: (Service in Kelowna, BC)

at 9:00 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for all our parishioners, relatives, and friends.* (in English and Ukrainian)

Mon., July 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.–The Divine Liturgy: *Rest of the soul of Mr. Mahadeo Daulat* (requested by Mrs. Marilyn Daulat and Family)

Tue., July 28<sup>th</sup>– Fri., July 31<sup>st</sup> **NO SERVICES. In case of emergency please phone: (250) 299-7249**

Sat., Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for Mr. Robert and Mrs. Roberta Leiby on their 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary* at 3:40 p.m. Lectio Divina / Bible Studies: (Studies and Service in Penticton, BC)

at 4:00 p.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for all parishioners* (in Eng. & Ukr.)

**SUNDAY, August 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8:15 a.m.** Rosary: (Service in Kelowna, BC)

at 9:00 a.m. The Divine Liturgy: *God's blessings for all our parishioners, relatives, and friends.* (in English and Ukrainian)



**PLEASE REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR:** Most Reverend Bishop-Emeritus Severian Yakymyshyn, Lucy D., Janet F., Volodymyr P., Ivan L., Ray Saranchuk, Cameron V., Rose Ostopowich, Keyton A., Danny M, Jordan M., Kit C., Shirley C., Olga Kuzyk, George 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 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, Marilyn Daulat and Family, Shelley Zemliak, Bill and Anne Boitson and all members of our parish family and those who are not able to join actively in our community, your families, relatives, friends and neighbours; governments and armed forces, especially the shut-in or those in the hospitals, traveling, working or studying, nursing and senior homes, 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, those who love us and those who hate us, and all people who have asked us pray for them. Please, also in your kindness keep praying those daily for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Remember to ask for special blessings to all Christian families and yourselves! **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:** 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 Твоєю 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 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 євангельського 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.



**YOUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPECT OF OTHERS:** 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. In consideration of other Christians, please do not leave any items 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 safe and clean. Thank you very much for your understanding, help and care!

**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](mailto:Donoharmclinic@gmail.com) or phone: 250-212-4899

**Express Depot Recycling:** We have this set up for parishioners to use. They enter the church's phone number and place the sticker on the bag. All monies will then be able to be transferred (after \$10 ) or check ( after \$50). It can help with donations for those unable to attend and financially support the church. <https://www.return-it.ca/express/>



✚ **Devotional Services to Blessed Vasyi Velychkovsky:** Every Wednesday at 7:00 pm, Live-Streaming on the YouTube Shrine Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Og0D2DhlpU> Website: Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine: <https://bvmartyrshrine.com/>

✚ **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 HELP IS ALWAYS NEEDED:** to help out with weekly cleaning in the church, cutting the grass and maintaining the lawn, 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! **Every parishioner is personally responsible before God for our spiritual home-parish church!** **NOTE: If you wish to place your message or announcement into our weekly parish bulletin, please sent it by email to the office at [dormitionkelowna@gmail.com](mailto:dormitionkelowna@gmail.com) by no later than 3:00 p.m. on Thursday.**

✚ **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](http://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, possitive and generous!**

✚ **2 volunteers are needed** each time before and right after Divine Liturgies on Sundays to welcome parishioners and follow all required COVID 19 safety rules and regulations, fill up Parish Sign-In List/ Questionnaire and clean by sanitizing the church after each service.

✚ **Please, continue to support financially** our parishes in Kelowna, BC and Penticton, BC. Amid Covid-19 outbreak causing these challenging times we continue to rely on your generosity. **Please continue to support our parish financially by e-transfer via [dormitiontransfer2020@gmail.com](mailto:dormitiontransfer2020@gmail.com) or mailing a cheque** payable to **Dormition of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church** 1091 Coronation Ave., Kelowna, BC V1Y 7A8 Thank you for your support and care at this uneasy time for all of us.

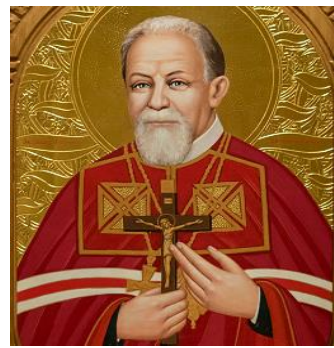
✚ **Traditional and Very Delicious Ukrainian Food is available for sale at our parish:** Perogies – \$ 7.00 per dozen, Cabbage Rolls – \$ 7.00 per dozen, Kovbasa/Sausage – \$ 10.00 per a pound. If you need more information or to place your order, please contact Mrs. Alice Pelechaty at 250-763-4870 or Mrs. Olena Fedorov at 778-821-0759.

✚ **Camp Saint Volodymyr 2020 Update:** As more information on COVID-19 has emerged, the Camp Committee has made the difficult decision to cancel 2020 camp for the safety of our children and staff. Please stay tuned for upcoming summer programs for children and youth this summer.

✚ **Rachel's Corner:** *"I won't remember what happened with fear or tears. Now I will remember with peace, because now I know and believe they are with Jesus. I used to feel I was the only one in the whole world. I didn't want to tell anyone. Now I know I am not alone."* - Testimonial

Feeling like you are the only one and not wanting to tell anyone is something most men and women feel after their involvement in an abortion decision. Come on a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat for men and women and meet others who have been down a similar road. Give yourself the chance to be free from what is destroying you on the inside. You won't be sorry you did.

Is your wounded heart a constant reminder of guilt, grief and regret to you? Come with us on a Rachel's Vineyard™ Retreat and see how close God really is, and has been all along, and how His hand is outstretched inviting you to be free of that burden. Allow His merciful love to heal those wounds [www.RachelsVineyardKelowna.com](http://www.RachelsVineyardKelowna.com) [info@rachelsvineyardkelowna.com](mailto:info@rachelsvineyardkelowna.com) 250-762-2273 Like us on Facebook: [Rachel's Vineyard Kelowna](https://www.facebook.com/RachelsVineyardKelowna)



## Stewardship Prayer

O God, the Father of every gift, all that we are and have comes from your hand.

In Jesus Christ, your Son, you have given us the greatest of all gifts.

Fill our hearts with his love, so that we may be parish communities of faithful, caring people.

Grant us the grace to be good stewards who, in the name and spirit of Jesus, share our gifts of time, talent and treasure for the building up of your Kingdom in our Diocese and throughout the world.

May we see Our Pilgrimage of Faith Appeal as our way to live gratefully and give generously for your honor and glory.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen



## Catholic, Eastern Orthodox Churches to observe day of mourning for Hagia Sophia



*Hagia Sophia, which will be inaugurated as a mosque July 24.  
Credit: Daniel Ibanez/CNA.*

CNA Staff, Jul 21, 2020 / 02:01 pm MT ([CNA](#)).- The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said Tuesday that July 24 “is a Day of Mourning” for Hagia Sophia. The former church and museum in Istanbul will that day be inaugurated as a mosque.

In a July 21 tweet, the USCCB said that it joins the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America “in offering our prayers for the restoration of Hagia Sophia as a place of prayer and reflection for all peoples.”

Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan signed a decree July 10 converting Hagia Sophia into a mosque. The decree followed closely on a ruling by the Council of State, Turkey's highest administrative court, which declared unlawful an 80-year

old government decree which converted the building from a mosque into a museum.

Hagia Sophia was built in 537 under the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I as the cathedral of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. After the Ottoman capture of Constantinople in 1453, the basilica was converted into a mosque. Under the Ottomans, architects added minarets and buttresses to preserve the building, but the mosaics showing Christian imagery were whitewashed and covered.

In 1934, under a secularist Turkish government, the mosque was turned into a museum. Some mosaics were uncovered, including depictions of Christ, the Virgin Mary, John the Baptist, Justinian I, and Zoe Porphyrogenita. It was declared a World Heritage Site under UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in 1985.

As a mosque, the mosaics in Hagia Sophia will have to be covered during prayers, as will as the seraph figures located in the dome.

The members of the eparchial synod of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America wrote July 19 that considering the inauguration of Hagia Sophia as a mosque, which they called a “program of cultural and spiritual misappropriation and a violation of all standards of religious harmony and mutual respect, we call upon all the beloved faithful of our Holy Archdiocese to observe this day as a day of mourning and of manifest grief. We urge you to invite your fellow Orthodox Christians and indeed all Christians and people of goodwill to share in the following observances.”

The observances are “that every Church toll its bells in lamentation on this day. We call for every flag of every kind that is raised on the Church property be lowered to half-mast on this day. And we enjoin every Church in our Holy Archdiocese to chant the Akathist Hymn in the evening of this day, just as we chant it on the Fifth Friday of the Great and Holy Fast.”

“Let us, in this time of grief and mourning, appeal to the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary,” the Greek Orthodox bishops wrote. “She is the ‘only Hope of the hopeless’, and as we chant to Her in the Akathist, ‘the Repository of the Wisdom of God, the Treasury of His Foreknowledge’.”

The Greek Orthodox bishops concluded: “Therefore, with complete faith in the Foreknowledge of our Trinitarian God, and in the Divine Plan for our salvation, we entrust the future of our beloved [Hagia Sophia] to His Wisdom, and we supplicate She who is the very Treasury of that Knowledge and the Repository of that Wisdom to intercede for us, to comfort us, to give us Her strength, and to manifest to us Her counsel, that we may ever do and say that which is pleasing in the sight and in the hearing of Her Son, our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father, Who together with the Holy Spirit is worshipped One God, unto the ages of ages. Amen!”

Dr. Elizabeth Prodromou, director of the Initiative on Religion, Law, and Diplomacy at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, told CNA last week that the July 24 date for the inauguration of Hagia Sophia as a mosque is “rife with symbolism.”

The day is the anniversary of the Treaty of Lausanne, signed in 1923 after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, which established the borders of the modern Turkish state and included explicit protections for Christian minorities there.

Erdoğan “has stated indirectly – and increasingly, directly – that he sees Lausanne as something that should be abrogated,”

Prodromou said. It’s also a signal to Turkey’s NATO allies and fellow countries that it “is not interested in continuing within the context of treaties that are meant to provide stability and order in the region.”

Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles and Bishop Joseph Bambera of Scranton, the US bishops’ president and ecumenical chair, respectively, said July 14 that “we join Pope Francis and our Orthodox Christian brothers and sisters in expressing deep sadness over the decree by Turkey’s president to open Hagia Sophia as a mosque.”

“For many years now, this beautiful and cherished site has served as a museum where people of all faiths can come to experience the sublime presence of God. It has also stood as a sign of good will and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims and an expression of humanity’s longings for unity and love.” Edward Clancy, director of outreach for Aid to the Church in Need-USA, said July 17 that the 1934 decision to secularize Hagia Sophia, “which also allowed for the restoration of Christian iconography plastered over by Ottoman authorities – made it a symbol of inter-religious harmony, a place where Islamic and Christian heritages could meet in peace. The loss of that privileged place of inter-religious encounter is incalculable.”

“Hagia Sophia has held the promise of peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims, an acknowledgement of humanity’s yearning for unity and love. Turning Hagia Sophia into a mosque also sends a painful message to Christians throughout the Middle East who have suffered persecution and cultural cleansing at the hands of ISIS and other Islamist groups,” Clancy continued.



He said the decision to convert the building into a mosque "reflects Turkey's ambition to recapture Ottoman glory and power in the region, an aggressive posture evident in the country's military incursions into Syria and Iraq and bound to further destabilize an already volatile region that remains a battlefield of political interests and religious values."

In November 2019, the Council of State ruled that Chora Church, another Istanbul museum that was built as a church and was later made a mosque, should be converted back into a mosque. Despite this, the city's official museum tourism website continues to feature Chora Church as one of its destinations.

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholic-eastern-orthodox-churches-to-observe-day-of-mourning-for-hagia-sophia-49007?fbclid=IwAR2rN69QuGPeQCottIC--AFsngGCl5Ige419GaHwBYKghonChBdHWmjAzgU>

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