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March 15, 2016

**Easter Greetings To The Faithful Of The Eparchy Of Saskatoon
On The Occasion Of The Resurrection Of Our Lord, 2016**

To the Very Reverend Clergy, Monastics and Religious, Seminarians and Laity of the Eparchy of Saskatoon:

Christ Is Risen! Indeed He is Risen! Христос Воскрес! Воісину Воскрес!

“Jesus is risen from the tomb, as He foretold, and granted us everlasting life and great mercy.” (*Paschal Matins*).

Many times in scripture Jesus restores human dignity to those who have been judged. Regardless of their sinfulness, Jesus gives people hope in life, hope in Jesus, hope in the Kingdom of God, hope in the resurrection. This is how we sample the resurrection in everyday life, one moment at a time. This is how we are invited to experience Jesus our Pasch, receiving it and sharing it with others.

In Chapter 7 of the Gospel of Luke Jesus dines with a Pharisee named Simon yet it is a repentant woman that washes his feet with her tears and dries them with her hair only to anoint them in the end. Here, we have a powerful example of God’s great mercy. “Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”

So as not to dilute the Holy Father’s words, I quote his homily at the outset of the Holy Year:

This Extraordinary Holy Year is itself a gift of grace. To pass through the Holy Door means to rediscover the infinite mercy of the Father who welcomes everyone and goes out personally to encounter each of them. This will be a year in which we *grow ever more convinced of God’s mercy*. How much wrong we do to God and his grace when we speak of sins being punished by his judgment before we speak of their being forgiven by his mercy (cf. Saint Augustine, *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum*, 12, 24)! But that is the truth. We have to put mercy before judgment, and in any event God’s judgment will always be in the light of his mercy. In passing through the Holy Door, then, may we feel that *we ourselves are part of this mystery of love*. Let us set aside all fear and dread, for these do not benefit men and women who are loved. Instead, let us experience *the joy of encountering that grace which transforms all things*.

May you encounter the living Christ in your community, your vibrant parish, your Branch, your Council and in your home. Enter into the mystery of His mercy. Then be that mercy for others, inviting people to encounter Christ. The blessings of the Risen Lord be with you and your family, as your voice and actions proclaim – *Христос Воскрес! Воісину Воскрес! Christ Is Risen! Indeed He Is Risen!*

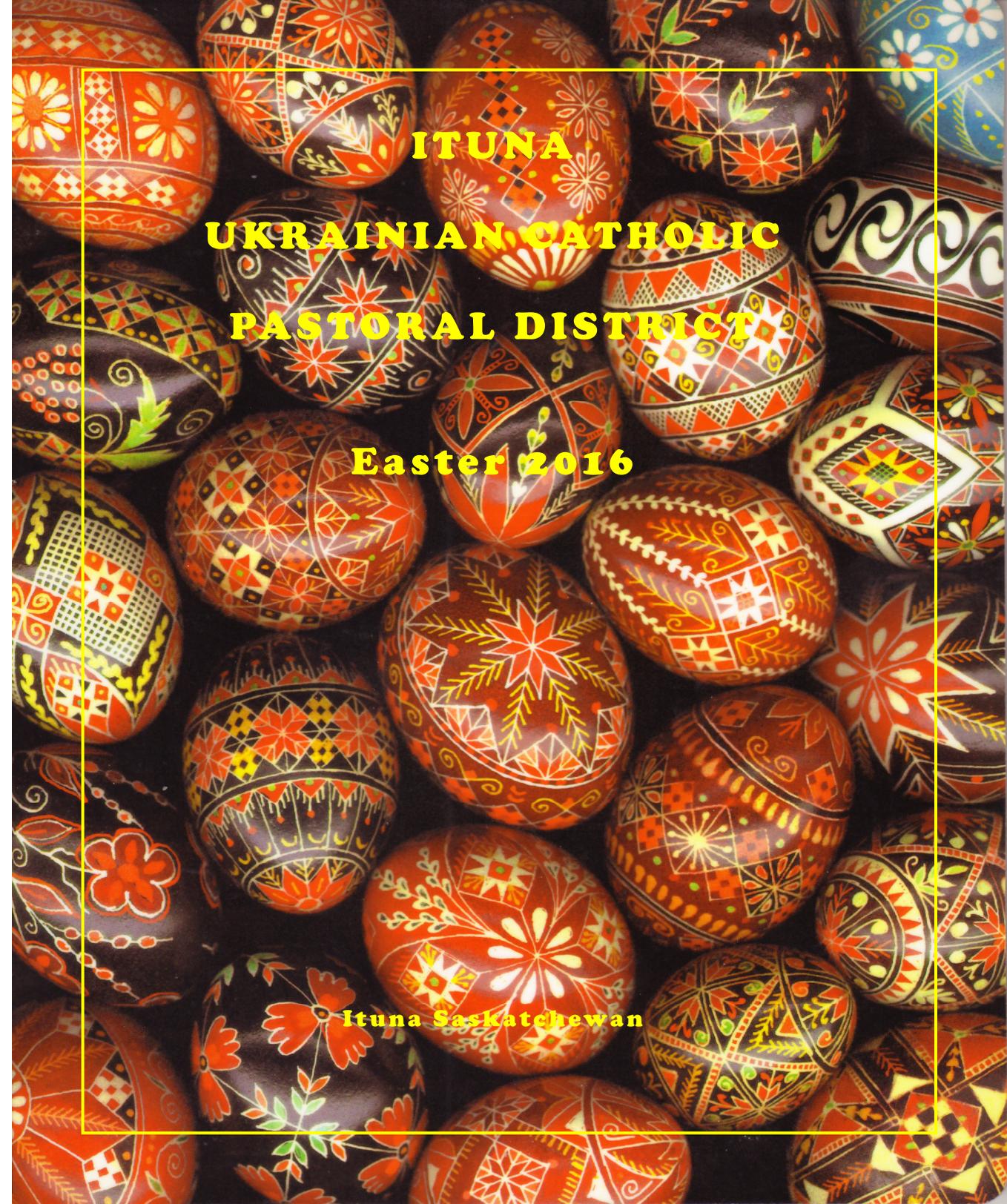
With continued service to Christ, I remain

+ Bryan Bayda, C.S.B.

Most Rev. Bryan Bayda, C.S.B.
Eparch of Saskatoon



Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon Українська Католицька Єпархія Саскатуну
214 Avenue M South Saskatoon, SK S7M 2K4 Canada
Office: (306) 653-0138 Fax: (306) 665-2569 email: uwitness2bishop@gmail.com



**ITUNA
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC
PASTORAL DISTRICT**

Easter 2016

Ituna Saskatchewan

**PASTORAL LETTER
OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS IN CANADA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD**



***Christ is Risen!
Indeed He is Risen!***

“And He granted us eternal life...”

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

On that first Easter morning, the myrrh-bearing women went to the tomb of Our Lord to perform one more act of love: to complete the burial ritual—which was hastily performed owing to the approaching Sabbath—and to anoint Jesus’ body with aromatic spices.

As they approached the tomb, suddenly “there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightening, and his clothing white as snow.... The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, he has been raised from the dead’” (Matthew 28: 2-7).

And we, in turn, this Easter cry out with joy over and over again, “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and to those in the tombs giving life!”

Life. New life. Resurrected Life.

This is the day of the Resurrection. Christ, our God, has brought us from death to life, and from earth to heaven. He who is the author of life could not be contained by the chains of death. Christ descended into the realm of death, and broke the bonds of those held captive there. He arose from the tomb on the third day.

We too were once dead, held spellbound by the sin of Adam and Eve, who dared to equate themselves with God. Having been expelled from Paradise, we were held ransom by death itself. O Christ, yesterday we were buried with you, but today we rise, resurrected with you. Yesterday we were crucified with you on earth, O Saviour. Now glorify us with you in your heavenly kingdom.

Jesus is the salvation of the world. And in saving the world, Jesus leads us back to life.

Life. New life. Resurrected Life.

Jesus, the Giver of Life, brought Adam and Eve back to life. And he leads us back to life, to immortal life, to eternal life. “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3: 16).

And so, what should our response be this Easter to the saving-act of Our Lord, who endured his passion, crucifixion, and death upon the cross for our sake? He who pays the ultimate price with his own life

that we may be freed from sin and death and inherit eternal life?

In our response, let us echo the words of Pope Francis, who writes in his letter, *The Joy of the Gospel*:

“I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them.

“The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.

“Now is the time to say to Jesus: ‘Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into your redeeming embrace.’”

“No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unfailing love. With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew.

“Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus, let us never give up, come what will. May nothing inspire more than his life, which impels us onwards!” (*Evangelium gaudium*, 3).

May the joy of the Resurrection grant you and your family new life, love and hope today, tomorrow, and for ever.

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!

Christ is Risen!

Indeed He is Risen!

- + Lawrence Huculak, Metropolitan Archbishop of Winnipeg
- + Michael Wiwchar, Bishop Emeritus of Saskatoon
- + Severian Yakymyshyn, Bishop Emeritus of New Westminster
- + David Motiuk, Eparchial Bishop of Edmonton
- + Stephen Chmilar, Eparchial Bishop of Toronto
- + Ken Nowakowski, Eparchial Bishop of New Westminster
- + Bryan Bayda, Eparchial Bishop of Saskatoon

Ø day of Resurrection!

Let us beam with celebration.

And, embracing one another.

Let us say: “Brothers!”

**And to those who hate us, let us forgive
everything because of the Resurrection.**

And then let us sing thus:

**Christ is risen from the dead, trampling
death by death, and to those in the
tombs giving life.**



May the blessings of Christ’s Resurrection always be with you and your family!
Bishop Michael Wiwchar, C.Ss.R. - Fr. Peter Pidskalny, C.Ss.R. - Fr. Boris Kyba, C.Ss.R.
The Redemptorists of Ituna