

September 14, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Slava Isusu Christu! Glory to Jesus Christ!

Throughout the year, various religions and cultures commemorate the beginning of a new year differently. The civil calendar begins on January 1st, the Jewish calendar begins in the fall and the Chinese celebrate the new year in the winter. These dates vary every year. For Orthodox Christians, the Church New Year is September 1st or September 14th according to the Julian calendar.

The traditional new year greeting is "Happy New Year". However, I don't believe that "Happy New Year" is appropriate at this time, especially with the coronavirus all around us. Yet, in spite of all the death and confusion among all the nations on earth, we believe that God will give us the strength to endure and that there will soon be a vaccine to combat this pandemic. When you feel down and depressed, remember the words of Scripture:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart" (Proverbs 3:5)

"Cast all your anxieties on Him because He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7)

For those who are alone and depressed because you are confined to your home, your clergy are always available to help you. We are only a phone call away.

Please remember that our parish is open for regular services on Sundays and Holy Day. In order to ensure proper distancing in church, you must phone Tamara Host at (440) 477-3596 for the English Liturgy and Natalia Boechko at (440) 212-4185 for the Ukrainian Liturgy, to let them know that you are planning to come to church. Please do not arrive earlier than 8:15 a.m. or 10:15 a.m. - 15 minutes before the Liturgy. Masks must be worn. We practice serious social distancing. Keep in mind that our Liturgies can be seen on Facebook and kindly let others know that they can watch the Liturgy if they are unable to attend church.

I most sincerely thank all volunteers who work to sanitize the church between Liturgies, thus insuring a safe, healthy environment.

I understand the fear of parishioners 65 years of age and those with health issues not wanting to enter the church building. However, I have difficulty understanding parents who allow their children to play in the school band and participate in various sports but do not attend church. The first school football game was played at Byers Field this past weekend. With all the precautions being taken, surely the church is a much safer place to be than mingling with players and fans at these activities. Obviously, during this pandemic, we must go out to buy food and other essentials at Marcs and Giant Eagle. However, our spiritual nourishment is just as, if not more, important. Please take these words to heart. Church has a much safer environment than the grocery store.

We invite the Altar Boys to return to the altar and all children to attend church with their parents. Their spiritual lives and development are important for their wellbeing both now and in the future. Please phone the clergy if you have any questions or comments.

The clergy and Parish Board most sincerely thank everyone for sending in their contributions to help maintain the parish. Remember that bills have to be paid monthly. Please contribute whatever you can on a regular basis.

We would ordinarily enclose the Parish Calendar of Events for 2020-2021 with this letter. However, with so much uncertainty, we are not printing one at this time. All parish news will be posted on the parish web page and Facebook.

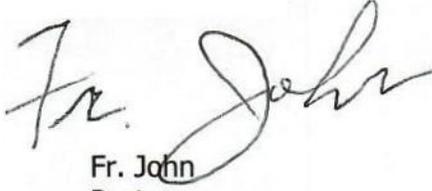
Also, as I informed the Board at the September meeting, after almost 34 years of typing our weekly Bulletin, my wife will no longer be able to continue this task, for health reasons. Although the parish printed a bulletin from time to time, it was not done on a regular basis. One week after arriving in Parma in 1987, we started our weekly publication and Mr. John Norka agreed to translate the Bulletin into Ukrainian. Since then we have had 5 individuals who worked on the Ukrainian translation of the bulletin and my wife has typed the English bulletin the entire time. The last bulletin was printed on March 15th and it was the 1,330th bulletin. I thank her most sincerely for the tremendous amount of love, talent and time she has devoted to this task.

This Sunday, September 20th, our parish will be honored to have His Eminence Archbishop Daniel visit us in Parma. There will be one 9:00 a.m. bilingual Divine Liturgy. Please note that you MUST call Tamara Host or Natalia Boechko for reservations. The phone numbers are listed above.

As always, if Fr. Michael or I can be of any assistance with regard to your spiritual needs, please feel free to phone us and we can arrange a time for a personal discussion. Do not hesitate to call.

May God bless you abundantly!

Yours in Christ,



Fr. John
Pastor