 **METROPOLITAN** **ARCHEPARCHY OF PHILADELPHIA**

**Ukrainian Catholic**

**810 N. Franklin Street**

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19123-2097**

**Phone (215) 627-0143 Fax (215) 627-0377**

**ukrmet@ukrcap.org**

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## This Number Should be Prefixed to Your Reply

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**PASTORAL OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY OF THE U.S.A.**

**“CALL TO PRAYER IN OUR FAMILIES”**

***TO OUR CLERGY, HIEROMONKS AND BROTHERS, RELIGIOUS SISTERS, SEMINARIANS AND BELOVED FAITHFUL***

The Lord, who loves every human being in the world, gifted each one of us with a unique and unrepeatable life. When we contemplate our life, then we see how much effort we expend in order to feel happy. In this materialistic world, each one of us associates his/her happiness with one thing or another. All of us achieve something, however nothing satisfies us, and again, we apply immense effort to obtain and achieve the next perception of “happiness”.

This is the way the rest of our entire life could pass us by. The problem is that we identify ourselves with our body and aspire to attain happiness on the physical level. However, the human being is comprised not only of a body, because there is also a soul. That is why, Saint Augustine, reflecting on this understanding of our nature, says: “My heart is restless until it finds its rest in the Lord”. Our dwelling with the Lord, our prayer, fills us with the understanding as to how and what we should do, what to avoid, and how to build relationships with people. In this manner, we begin to be ever more aware of what God really wants of us in this case or in a different situation. The quality of our prayer may be seen from the way we are afterwards. Our prayer puts an imprint on our entire life!

We can frequently think that conversation with God, which is prayer, is a useless waste of time. The reason might also be that we ourselves do not completely understand how important it is for us to abide with our Creator. We are materialistic because we live in this materialistic world. Throughout life, we devote much time to everyday matters or concerns, although we see how little time we spend in prayer. Very often, owing to a lack of prayer, we stumble upon a mistaken conviction and make the incorrect choice. We can be certain that the root of all our negative conditions, problems, and crisis is the same ― neglect of prayer. From personal experience, each one of us knows that, when we are “watchful” about prayer, then everything else also goes well, in harmony and uniformity with God.

Exactly for this reason we call upon all Christian families to nurture shared morning and evening prayer in the family circle. Especially we encourage you to gather together and pray as a family in your homes at 9:00 o’clock in the evening (regardless of time zones). We should pray, each one for their needs: for the family as well as the parish, for the eparchy and the entire Church, for peace in Ukraine and USA, for vocations and other intentions. Therefore, let us begin this year with prayer together, with reflection on God’s Word, in selfless service to one another and with trust in God!

 As a basis for our prayer we can use the “Introductory Prayers” starting with “Heavenly King”, through the “Our Father” and adding the “Hail Mary”.

Introductory Prayers

In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. (Three times.)

Glory be to You, our God; glory be to You!

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth! You are everywhere present and fill all things. Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life, come and dwell within us, cleanse us of all stain, and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us (Three times.)

Glory be to the Father +and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; O Lord, cleanse us of our sins; O Master forgive our transgressions; O Holy One, come to us and heal our infirmities for your

Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy! (Three times.)

Glory be to the Father + and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Hail Virgin Mary, Mother of God, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb; for you gave birth to Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of our souls.

 We also encourage our pastors to facilitate weekly or periodic prayer meetings with the faithful. It can be an opportunity to share experiences about prayer and to grow in our faith. The Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church can serve as an excellent source for learning and reflection on our faith. Excerpts read during the prayer meetings and before or after our worship gatherings may facilitate greater insight into the power of faith in our daily life.

 Your hierarchy of the Ukrainian Catholic Church join in solidarity with you with our fervent and steadfast prayers offered for all. Let us gather in our families at home, and in our parish and eparchial families for shared prayer. We love you and we pray for you.

+Stefan Soroka

Archbishop of Philadelphia for Ukrainians

Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States

+Paul Chomnycky, OSBM

Eparch of Stamford

+Benedict Aleksiychuk (author)

Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago

+ Bohdan J. Danylo

Eparch of St. Josaphat in Parma

+John Bura

Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia

+Andriy Rabiy

Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia

January 2018