



Українська Католицька Парафія
Покрова Пресвятої Богородиці

*Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Ukrainian Catholic Parish*

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*The No. 1 priority for ... the church is evangelization:
preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in today's world*

12 Травня, 2013

Volume 58 No. 19

May 12, 2013

Служби Божі/Divine Liturgies

В Неділю/Sunday

8:30 am partially sung

10:30 am sung

У Свята/Holy Day of Obligation

10:00 am and 7:00 pm

Щодня/Daily Scheduled

8:25 am in church

First Friday - 8:25 am Divine Liturgy followed
by Moleben to the Sacred Heart of Jesus or
Mother of God

Сповіді - 30 хвилин перед Службою Божою
або наперед домовитися під час тижня

Confessions - 30 minutes before the Divine
Liturgy or by appointment during the week

Baptism by appointment - membership in
Parish is required

Marriages by appointment made at least six
months in advance. Membership in Parish is
required

Funerals by arrangement in the Parish Office

oo. Василян/ Basilian Fathers serving this
Parish

Father Josaphat Tyrkalo, OSBM, Pastor
Most Rev. Severian Yakymyshyn, OSBM
Bishop Emeritus

**Неділя Святих Отців Нікейського
Собору
Йоана 17:1-13**



**Sunday of the Nicene Council Fathers
John 17:1-13**

**SPECIAL NOTICE – Do not park in the
RESERVED stalls in front of St. Mary's
Gardens when you come for the Sunday
Divine Liturgy. Your car will be towed.**

Парафія Покрова Пресвятої Богородиці вітає всіх гостей, приятелів та рідних які зєдналися сьогодні разом брати участь в цій Службі Божі. Нехай наш Господь через заступництво Покрова Пресвятої Богородиці благословить Вас і Вашу родину.

Місячний намір Святішого Отця Папи Римського – на Травень

Загальний намір: Агенти справедливости. Щоб ті, що здійснюють справедливість, завжди діяли всесторонньо і з добрим сумлінням.

Місійний намір: Церкви - знак воскресіння. Щоб семінарії, особливо в місійних землях, виховували пастирів на зразок Христа, цілковито посвячених голошенню Євангелії.

- Тропарі і читання в синій книжці на стор. 9, 10 і 11

- Кава і солодке сьогодні після Служби Божої о год. 8:30 і 10:30 рано у вітальні під церквою.

Люди не клякають під час освячення і перед і по Причастю від Воскресіння до Зіслання Святого Духа.

В цьому часі тільки один священик буде служити в парафії. Щоби вз'яти участь у Св. Сповіді, заохочуємо Вас приходити до церкви 30 хвилин скоріше перед Св. Літургію. Ви можете також наперед домовитися і прийти до Каплиці в нашій резиденції під час тиждня.

Сьогодні, 12 Травень, Неділя: *Святих Отців Нікейського Собору*

- 9:50 ранку – Молебень до Пречистої Діви Марії.

- Парафіяльна Катехитична програма під час Служби Божої в 10:30 рано і буде продовжуватися кожної неділі.

16 Травень, Четвер:

- 7:00 вечора – Поширення зрозуміння нашої віри у вітальні під церквою.

19 Травень, Неділя: *Зіслання Святого Духа*

- 9:50 ранку – Молебень до Пречистої Діви Марії.

- Парафіяльна Катехитична програма під час Служби Божої в 10:30 рано і буде продовжуватися кожної неділі.

23 Травень, Четвер:

- 7:00 вечора – Поширення зрозуміння нашої віри у вітальні під церквою.

FLEA MARKET – Saturday May 25: Table rentals \$25. Call: Olga: 604-274-9804 or Mary: 604-271-1131 or Marlayne: 604-274-3164.

26 Травень, Неділя: Перша Неділя по Зіс. Святого Духа - Всіх Святих

- 9:50 ранку – Молебень до Пречистої Діви Марії.

- Парафіяльна Катехитична програма під час Служби Божої в 10:30 рано і буде продовжуватися кожної неділі.

27 Травень, Понеділок:

- 7:00 вечора – Сходина Парафіяльної Ради у Борд Румі.

30 Травень, Четвер:

- 7:00 вечора – Поширення зрозуміння нашої віри у вітальні під церквою.

Saturday, June 1:

- **Seventh Annual FAMILY NIGHT – from 5 pm to 11:30 pm – All families of the Parish are invited to participate.** Parents or adult family members must accompany all children. Light dinner will be served from 5:30 to 7 pm. Games for children, “limbo” and more! Entertainment & Dancing from 7 to 11:30 pm. TICKETS \$10/person; persons 18 & under: no charge. For tickets call 604.421.8977 or 604.879.5830

HIS BEATITUDE SVIATOSLAV HAS INVITED YOU TO KYIV for a special Divine Liturgy to celebrate the 1,025th anniversary of the baptism of Kyivan-Rus (Ukraine) on Sunday August 18 2013! Join the Bishops of Canada on an official pilgrimage to Ukraine 7-21 August. Beginning in Western Ukraine visiting Lviv, Zarvanytsia, and Ternopil before proceeding to Kyiv for the major celebrations. Solaway Travel has been commissioned to assist in arranging travel plans and accommodations. Please contact: Myrna Arychuk of Solaway Travel: 3819 Sunset Street, Burnaby, BC V5G 1T4 Tel: 604.430.6789 Fax: 604.430.2244. myrna@solawaytravel.com,

PRAYER FOR EVANGELIZATION ‘YEAR OF FAITH’ - O God, who wills that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of truth, pour out Your Spirit upon us and grant that we may respond zealously to Your urgent call to lead back to the Church those who have strayed. Prepare their hearts and minds to be receptive to the saving Gospel of Your Son. Send us workers to gather in Your abundant harvest, so that all Your people, obedient to the Word and sustained by the power of the Sacraments, may advance in the way of Salvation and love. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

You may purchase a DVD of Major Archbishop Sviatoslav’s September 1 visit. The cost of this commemorative DVD is \$10. This DVD contains the complete Divine Liturgy celebrating Bishop Budka’s hundredth anniversary of arrival to Canada. Please indicate how many copies you would like.

A quiet, studious parishioner in 4th year University student is looking for room and board close to or along a bus route to UBC for September. Please inform the parish office .

The Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish welcomes all guests, friends, visiting relatives and Parishioners in celebrating this Divine Liturgy together. **We especially welcome Father Joseph Pidskalny, OSBM who is covering for me while I am on retreat and visiting my mother.** May our Lord, through the intercession of our Blessed Lady, the Mother of God, bless you and your family!

Monthly Papal Intentions for MAY

General Intention: - Administrators of Justice - That administrators of justice may act always with integrity and right conscience.

Missionary Intention: - Seminaries - That seminaries, especially those of mission churches, may form pastors after the Heart of Christ, fully dedicated to proclaiming the Gospel.

- **Tropar, Kondak & readings** in the blue booklet pages 9, 10 & 11
- **Coffee and sweets** are available today following the 8:30 am and 10:30 am Divine Liturgy in the Fellowship Room. All guests and parishioners are invited.

WE DO NOT KNEEL during the consecration as well as **before and after Holy Communion from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday inclusive. WE STAND WHILE EVERYONE COMES TO COMMUNION** - you sit only if you are elderly, weak or ill.

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE - there will be **only one priest serving the parish. To participate in the Mystery of Reconciliation, (Confession), we are encouraging you to come 30 minutes before the Divine Liturgies.** You may also make an appointment to come during the week to the chapel in the rectory.

TODAY: Sunday, May 12: *Sunday of the Nicean Council Fathers*

- **9:50 am Moleben to the Mother of God.**
- **Parish Catechism Program for Pre-Schoolers** during 10:30 am Divine Liturgy following the reading of the Gospel.

Thursday, May 16: "THE CREED" A STUDY OF OUR FAITH at 7 pm in the Fellowship Room. Workbook - \$29.00 each. Other material will be provided.

Sunday, May 19: *Descent of the Holy Spirit - Pentecost*

- **9:50 am Moleben to the Mother of God.**
- **Parish Catechism Program for Pre-Schoolers** during 10:30 am Divine Liturgy following the reading of the Gospel.

Thursday, May 23: "THE CREED" A STUDY OF OUR FAITH at 7 pm in the Fellowship Room. Workbook - \$29.00 each. Other material will be provided.

FLEA MARKET – Saturday May 25: Table rentals \$25. Call: Olga @ 604-274-9804 or Mary @ 604-271-1131 or Marlayne @ 604-274-3164.

Sunday, May 26: *Sunday of All Saints*

– 9:50 am Moleben to the Mother of God.

– Parish Catechism Program for Pre-Schoolers during 10:30 am Divine Liturgy following the reading of the Gospel.

Monday, May 27:

– Parish Council Meeting at 7 pm in the Board Room.

Thursday, May 30: “THE CREED” A STUDY OF OUR FAITH” at 7 pm in the Fellowship Room. Workbook – \$29.00 each. Other material will be provided.

Saturday, June 1:

– **Seventh Annual FAMILY NIGHT – from 5 pm to 11:30 pm – All families of the Parish are invited to participate.** Parents or adult family members must accompany all children. Light dinner will be served from 5:30 to 7 pm. Games for children, “limbo” and more! Entertainment & Dancing from 7 to 11:30 pm. TICKETS \$10/person; persons 18 & under: no charge. For tickets call 604.421.8977 or 604.879.5830

PRAYER FOR A VIBRANT PARISH - O God, Creator of Heaven and Earth! Because of your indescribable love for us, you sent your Only-Begotten Son, Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ - The Way, The Truth, and The Life - and our Salvation. In His name, we turn to You. Strengthen our hearts and minds in Christian love and in unity of purpose as we strive to build a Vibrant Parish. Give us the grace to model our lives according to the Word of God. Instill in us the desire to pray and to celebrate the Holy Mysteries as one Christian Family in our Parish Community. Inspire us to follow Your great command to be a servant to the less fortunate among us! Grant this, O Lord, through the mercies and love for mankind of Your Only-Begotten Son with whom You are blessed, together with Your All-Holy, Good and Live-Giving Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen!

Special Petition for Vocations - We also pray for those in the religious and monastic or consecrated life and for those in vocation discernment, we pray to the Lord.

CANCER RELAY FOR LIFE - Our parish is once again participating in this annual fundraiser being held on Saturday June 8 at Mahon Park in North Vancouver from 10am-10pm. This is an excellent opportunity to support our church team by giving a donation and even coming out to walk a lap in honour of someone who is battling cancer. We do need your support and need at least 2 more members on our team. Contact Barbara Ballhorn (604-732-3166) for further details.

A quiet, Catholic female student from Mexico, fluent in Spanish, English, speaks intermediate French, and a little bit of German is looking for room and board in a Ukrainian Catholic family as soon as possible. If you can help please call the parish office.

YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE

“THE CREED” A NEW STUDY DURING THIS YEAR OF THE FAITH” on Thursday evening beginning at 7pm

This twelve (12) part series - “The Creed - is A Journey through the Catechism”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church comes alive, showing you how your personal faith journey fits into the amazing story of salvation. **The Catechism** is far more than a list of “faith facts” it provides a map for you to easily navigate and enrich your life.

In this Series - “THE CREED” - you will:

- 1. Learn why the Catechism should be treated less like a fact book and more like a **roadmap for our faith journey.****
- 2. Learn what **God’s innermost secret** is and how we are called to participate in it.**
- 3. See that our journey of faith is a journey from *Blessing to Blessing*, that the God who made us **wills that we return to Him.****
- 4. Discover how the Catechism can be seen as a new Catechesis for the **New Evangelization.****
- 5. Learn how **what we believe** emerges from the **living story** of salvation history.**
- 6. Discover the role the angels play in aiding our salvation, and how they are truly present to us. and much more**

Workbooks are available for the program - \$ 29.00/each - contact Susan Lazaruk or come to the Parish office.

To Request Prayers for: yourself, your family, or a friend - please submit the name to the Parish Office or place a note and on the collection plate.

Пам’ятайте помолитися: за Вашу родину, за членів Парафії, а особливо за тих які знаходяться в лікарнях, або тих що очікують Божої відповіді на їхні молитви, або радіють Божою відповідю, або за тих які відзначають уродини, або роковини, або за тих що покликані до їхньої вічної винагороди, або за родину яку вони залишили.

Remember to pray for: your family; fellow parishioners; those confined to their hospital beds or their homes; those seeking God’s guidance or rejoicing with God’s favour; or for those celebrating a birthday or anniversary; or have been called to their eternal reward or for the family they leave behind; as well as any other need.

Please remember in your prayers: Bishop Severian Yakymyshyn, OSBM, Fr. Josaphat Tyrkalo, OSBM, Fr. Steven Basarab, Mary Balsevicius, Joseph Bayduza, Frances Bethune, Elizabeth Duda, Mary Earl, Quenten Fabiano, Catherine Hladij, Alice Humenick, Bohdan Karpinski, Emily Kuzyk, Bodzie and Shirley Lawryshyn, Ben Marchinkow, Joseph Nadelko, Roma Nowakowski, (Bishop Ken’s mother), Orest Obuck, John Pura, Mary Scott, Dave Shelast, Kaiya Williams, Tiny Zarski.

Please Visit: our Parishioners in their homes or in the hospital. They need your visit, your phone call, as well as your prayers.

Please pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

If there are people you visit requesting prayers, please inform the Parish office.

Це пригадка для всіх вірних. Просимо приходити вчасно на Службу Божу. Будьмо готові разом заспівати початковий гімн. Зрозумійте, якщо Ви прийдете до Церкви після Великого Входу, Ви пропустили більшу частину Служби Божої, і дійсно не вислухали приписаної Служби Божої на неділю.

Церковна Етика: Будьмо свідомі, що беручи участь у Св. Літургії ми мусимо одержати кінцеве Благословення перед тим як ми залишимо Службу Божу. Ми рівнож просимо не виходити з Церкви перед закінченням Служби Божої. Ми просимо Вас не спілкуватися в Церкві перед, під час і після Служби Божої. Прошу це робити в притворі Церкви або у Вітальні під церквою. Залишім наву (Nave) церкви для вірних які моляться.

A SPECIAL NOTE to ALL PARISHIONERS: Please come on time for the Divine Liturgy. Realize that when you come into the Church proper after the Great Entrance, you have missed most of the Divine Liturgy and have not really attended the prescribed service for a Sunday.

Church Etiquette: Just a reminder that to have attended the entire Divine Liturgy one must be in Church and have heard the reading of the Gospel as well as the homily, participated in the responses for the consecration and received the final Blessing before leaving the church. We also ask that you do not visit in the main part of the Church (the Nave) before during or after the Service. Please use the Vestibule or the Fellowship room to conduct your conversations - leave the Church proper for those that want to pray.

Special Petition for Evangelization – *Let us ask our Heavenly Father for His gifts of wisdom & courage in our efforts of spreading the Good News and building up God's kingdom on earth, let us pray to the Lord.*

CAMP ST. VOLODYMYR August 18 – 25th, 2013 Camp St. Volodymyr will be celebrating its 30th anniversary. We have been enriching campers in their Ukrainian Catholic Faith and Culture since 1983. Located in Kelowna campers spend a week participating in age tailored activities such as Ukrainian dancing, arts & crafts, singing, catechesis, sports and water activities. Camper fees: \$260 before July 4, \$310 after July 5. 3rd/4th child from same family is \$150 each. Bus transportation is available from New Westminster. Registration forms can be downloaded from the eparchial website at www.nweparchy.ca/. For more information contact Jennifer Sawka @ 604.876.5691 jennsawka@hotmail.com. Register early. Space is limited!

VOLUNTEER STAFF Camp St. Volodymyr is again looking for counsellors to help with the planning, teaching, coordinating, and carrying out activities and guiding campers in their personal growth, and daily living skills. These positions are ideally suited for outgoing individuals who enjoy working with children and enjoy being outdoors. Counsellor application forms can be downloaded from the website and are due May 15, 2013. **This year we are looking for a volunteer to help us out with singing. Please contact us asap if you are interested.**

Support our Camp! Donations are always greatly appreciated. We are always happy to accept food donations of vegetables, fruits, cereals, and treats for children, as well as monetary donations. Tax receipts can be issued with donations of \$25 or more.

The Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea 'Arians among us, and the relevance of Nicea.'

A Post festive Day of the Ascension*
Acts 20:16–18, 28–36; John 17:1–13.



* Some older editions of the Typikon refer to this Sunday as the Seventh Paschal Sunday. However, in the Typikon in force in the Byzantine Ukrainian usage, the day before Ascension Thursday is the Leave-taking of Pascha: the burial shroud of our Lord is removed from the Altar, and the Paschal additions to the Liturgy are no longer used. This Sunday falls within the Post-festive period of Ascension, so the Ambon Prayer and Dismissal for Ascension are used; and the Tropar and Kondak for the Council Fathers are sung along with those for the Ascension. In some other traditions, Pascha might be observed right up until Pentecost, though this does not seem to be consistent with the most ancient observances.*

Next Sunday is Pentecost. ... Today we must visit with the Fathers of the First Ecumenical

Council of Nicea, to whom this particular Sunday is dedicated.

St. John, whose Gospel we read on this feast of the Council Fathers, is so good at describing the transcendent mystery of Christ; which is appropriate, since it was the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea which taught us so many things about the Mystery of Christ.

You might recall that, about two or three years ago on Easter Sunday, I recounted the story of when I left my job to go to the seminary, and how a Buddhist man who worked with me gave me a going-away gift consisting of a book about Jesus written by his local imam (Islamic teacher); and I mentioned that the book, although very beautiful and well written, completely ignored the fact that Jesus is God and not just a social teacher or philosophical guru. I do not have that book anymore, but I held on to it for a long time; and, as the years progressed through the seminary, I began to realize that what this imam was

saying in this book was very much the same thing that was being said back in the third century, that the Bishops of the Church met in the city of Nicea in Greece in 325 to discuss: is Jesus just a good and wise man, or is he God? That was the question that preoccupied a priest in Alexandria named Arius. Like many priests of his time, perhaps even of our time, he was looking for a way to make Christianity more palatable to the pagans around him; and he concluded that, if the Church could only see her way clear to present Jesus in the same way the Greeks presented their philosophers, like a philosophical teacher without all this religion stuff getting in the way, people would be more inclined to accept the Church's message. If we could just leave out all that stuff about morality, and sexual purity, and all these complicated rituals and liturgies, and just preach Christianity as a philosophy of brotherly love, then all kinds of people would flock to the Church. Needless to say, Arius became very popular; and, for a while, his heresy, which became known as Arianism, was so popular that, at one point, most of the world's bishops and priests believed and were preaching it.

And for a while it worked: all kinds of people joined the Church once they were taught that, as a Christian, you did not have to really do or believe anything in particular: all you had to do was love one another. It worked, that is, until the first imperial persecutions came along; then everyone left the Church and went back to being pagans again. After all, you need to believe in some kind of God in order to be a martyr; no one is going to give his life for a mere philosophy, unless you are Socrates. And when the persecutions were over, and a lot of these people wanted to come back and join the Church again, the Church had a big problem on its hands. You see, the Christians who had remained faithful, who believed in Jesus as God, who lived a moral life, who had accepted torture and death because they believed, were reluctant to have these people back who did not really believe in anything and had left the Church at the first sign of trouble; and it was ripping the Church apart. So, the Emperor Constantine called this council of the world's bishops at Nicea in 325 to decide once and for all whether Jesus was merely a social teacher who should be followed, or was in fact a God who should be worshipped.

I do not have to tell you how it turned out, because we are going to be singing the words of the Council Fathers in just a few moments: the Creed that we sing at every Divine Liturgy is the document that those Fathers produced in response to the Arian heresy; and they decreed that anyone who would call himself a Christian would have to say those words and mean them: "I believe in God, Creator of Heaven and Earth ... in one Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God ... true God from true God ... one in essence with the Father; through whom all things were made ... that he came down from heaven as a man, that he suffered and died and rose from the dead, that he ascended into heaven and will come again to judge me according to my deeds." And it is the reason that we sing them just before we pray the great Anaphora which transforms simple bread and wine into the real body and blood of Jesus: because I have no right to receive him, nay, even to look upon him in that form, unless I truly believe.

The sad fact is that Arianism never really died with the First Council of Nicea; and you know just as well as I that there are still people, both inside and outside the Church, who think that Jesus is primarily worth something only as a social teacher, that true Christianity means soup kitchens and concern for the homeless and caring about the poor, and has little to do with going to Church or living a moral life. That book that my friend gave me just before I left for the seminary I can excuse, because it was written by someone who was not a Christian; but, the fact is, that many people who are Christians, or who claim to be, could read that book today and not find a single thing wrong with it. And that is the reason we celebrate this particular Sunday; because in celebrating a Sunday dedicated to these Council Fathers, we reject the idea that Christianity is a social philosophy, reaffirm our faith in Christ the God-made-man, and rededicate ourselves to the reality that our religion is not only one of doing good deeds, but of living a good life, and worshipping Christ as the God he truly is.

DO YOU LIVE IN GREATER VANCOUVER?

HAVE YOU MOVED INTO GREATER VANCOUVER RECENTLY?

We encourage you to register your name and address and e-mail with the parish. People come to arrange for baptisms, marriages, funerals, or special blessings. Only then do the fathers discover that they have been participating in the Liturgical Services for years but have not registered as Parishioners. We may recognize you, we may see you in church but we do not know your name or address. **Please print your name, address, telephone number, e-mail and postal code** on your donation envelope, or contact the Parish Office.

REMEMBER: To be considered a member of this Parish one must be registered in the Parish, attend the Divine Liturgy regularly and make regular contributions to maintain the Parish.

Спеціальне прохання: після закінчення Служби Божої просимо замкнути молитвенники і співаники і поставити їх на відповідне місце. Рівнож просимо не залишайте бюлетенів і других матеріалів в лавках. Будьмо господарними в нашій церкві і допоможим, щоби наші лавки були чисті й акуратні.

A SPECIAL Request: At the conclusion of each Divine Liturgy, please 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 pews clean and neat. Thank you.

Food Bank Donations: We encourage all parishioners to contribute to the Food Bank on the first and third Sundays of every month. PLEASE ADD YOUR SUPPORT.

Просимо всіх Парафіян приносити продукти для потребуючих, які не псуються (non-perishable) в першу і третю неділю кожного місяця. Просимо допомагати!

Meaningful Speech by Pulitzer Prize winner Anna Quindlen at the graduation ceremony of an American university where she was awarded an Honorary PhD.

"I am a novelist. My work is human nature. Real life is all I know. Do not ever confuse the two, your life and your work. You will walk out of here this afternoon with only one thing that no one else has. There will be hundreds of people out there with your same degree: there will be thousands of people doing what you want to do for a living. But you will be the only person alive who has sole custody of your life. Your particular life! Your entire life! Not just your life at a desk, or your life on a bus, or in a car, or at the computer. Not just the life of your mind, but the life of your heart. Not just your bank accounts but also your soul.

People do not talk about the soul very much anymore. It is so much easier to write a resume than to craft a spirit. But a resume is cold comfort on a winter's night, or when you are sad, or broke, or lonely, or when you have received your test results and they are not so good.

Here is my resume: I am a good mother to three children. I have tried never to let my work stand in the way of being a good parent. I no longer consider myself the center of the universe. I show up. I listen. I try to laugh. I am a good friend to my husband. I have tried to make marriage vows mean what they say. I am a good friend to my friends and they to me. Without them, there would be nothing to say to you today, because I would be a cardboard cut out. But I call them on the phone, and I meet them for lunch. I would be rotten, at best mediocre at my job if those other things were not true. You cannot be really first rate at your work if your work is all you are. So here is what I wanted to tell you today: Get a life!

A real life – not a manic pursuit of the next promotion or the bigger pay cheque or the larger house. Do you think you would care so very much about those things if you blew an aneurysm one afternoon, or found a lump in your breast? Get a life in which you notice the smell of salt water pushing itself on a breeze at the seaside, a life in which you stop and watch how a red-tailed hawk circles over the water, or the way a baby scowls with concentration when she tries to pick up a sweet with her thumb and first finger. Get a life in which, you are not alone. Find people you love, and who love you. And remember that love is not leisure – it is work. Pick up the phone. Send an email. Write a letter.

Get a life in which you are generous. And realize that life is the best thing ever, and that you have no business taking it for granted. Care so deeply about its goodness that you want to spread it around. Take money you would have spent on beer and give it to charity. Work in a soup kitchen. Be a big brother or sister.

All of you want to do well. But if you do not do good too, then doing well will never be enough. It is so easy to waste our lives, our days, our hours, and our minutes. It is so easy to take for granted the colour of our kids' eyes, the way the melody in a symphony rises and falls and disappears and rises again. It is so easy to exist instead of to live.

I learned to live many years ago. I learned to love the journey, not the destination. I learned that it is not a dress rehearsal, and that today is the only guarantee you get. I learned to look at all the good in the world and try to give some of it back because I believed in it, completely and utterly. And I tried to do that, in part, by telling others what I had learned. By telling them this: Consider the lilies of the field. Look at the fuzz on a baby's ear. Read in the back yard with the sun on your face. Learn to be happy. And think of life as a terminal illness, because if you do, you will live it with joy and passion as it ought to be lived."

The Date With Mom

After 21 years of marriage, I discovered that a new way of keeping alive the spark of love. A little while ago I had to go out with another woman. It was really my wife's idea. "I know that you love her," she said one day, taking me by surprise. "But I love YOU," I protested. "I know, but you also love her."

The other woman that my wife wanted me to visit was my mother, who has been a widow for 19 years, but the demands of my work and my three children had made it possible to visit her only occasionally. That night I called to invite her to go out for dinner and a movie. "What's wrong, are you well?" she asked. My mother is the type of woman who suspects that a late night call or a surprise invitation is a sign of bad news. "I thought that it would be nice to spend some time with you," I responded. "Just the two of us."

She thought about it for a moment, and then said, "I would like that very much." That Friday after work, as I drove over to pick her up I was a bit nervous.

When I arrived at her house, I noticed that she, too, seemed to be nervous about our date. She waited in the door with her coat on. She had curled her hair and was wearing the dress that she had worn to celebrate her last wedding anniversary. She smiled from a face that was as radiant as an angel's.

"I told my friends that I was going to go out with my son, and they were impressed," she said, as she got into the car. "They can't wait to hear about our meeting." We went to a restaurant that, although not elegant, was very nice and cosy. My mother took my arm as if she were the First Lady.

After we sat down, I had to read the menu. Her eyes could only read large print. Halfway through the entrees, I lifted my eyes and saw Mom sitting there staring at me. A nostalgic smile was on her lips. "It was I who used to have to read the menu when you were small," she said. "Then it's time that you relax and let me return the favour," I responded. During the dinner we had an agreeable conversation – nothing extraordinary – but catching up on recent events of each other's life. We talked so much that we missed the movie.

As we arrived at her house later, she said, "I'll go out with you again, but only if you let me invite you." I agreed. "How was your date?" asked my wife when I got home. "Very nice. Much more so than I could have imagined," I answered.

A few days later my mother died of a massive heart attack. It happened so suddenly that I didn't have a chance to do anything for her. Some time later I received an envelope with a copy of a restaurant receipt from the same place mother and I had dined. An attached note said: "I paid this bill in advance. I was almost sure that I couldn't be there but, nevertheless, I paid for two plates, one for you and the other for your wife. You will never know what that night meant for me. I love you."

At that moment I understood the importance of saying, in time: "I LOVE YOU" and to give our loved ones the time that they deserve. Nothing in life is more important than your family. Give them the time they deserve, because these things cannot be put off till "some other time".