



**Chancery Office
Eparchy of New Westminster**

To The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy, Religious and Lay-Faithful
Of the Eparchy of New Westminster

10 December 2019

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

By the publication of this letter in our Eparchy and in our Parishes, I am proclaiming the beginning of the process of the New Westminster Eparchial Sobor 2020.

Every four or five years, the Patriarch of our Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church announces a Patriarchal Sobor, or it could also be called a Patriarchal (meaning worldwide) Assembly. These Sobors/Assemblies always follow a theme. In the past we have had Sobors on the themes of “The Vibrant Parish” (held in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine in 2015), “Monastic and Religious Professed Life” (held in Prudentopolis, Brazil in 2011), and “The Youth” (held near Kyiv in 2007). Prior to the Patriarchal Sobor, each Eparchy is mandated to hold its own Sobor to discuss certain questions related to the Patriarchal Sobor, and then, based on these discussions, make recommendations to the organizing committee of the Patriarchal Sobor to bring into the discussion of the Patriarchal Sobor.

In 2020, the Patriarchal Assembly-Sobor (including the bishops, clergy, religious and faithful of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church from all continents) will gather for its VII session in Lviv, Ukraine, August 26-29. This is a very important event in the life of our Church, as the Patriarchal Assembly-Sobor is not only an advisory body for the Head of the Church and the Synod of Bishops, but also expresses the fullness and unity of all the members of our Church.

The theme of the VII Patriarchal Assembly-Sobor in 2020 is “Emigration, settlements and the global unity of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.” The main motto is: “The Church is with you always and everywhere.” As mentioned in the post-synodal Pastoral letter of this year on Communion and Unity in the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, “Our Church is no longer a local reality, limited to a particular territory or pastoral context. Today she is at the same time global and particular, Ukrainian and multi-national.” The VII Patriarchal Assembly-Sobor aims to broadly analyze the challenges

which stand before the global Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, to help us find the best ways to “gather those who have been dispersed,” and to grow in the communion of our autonomous Church. Therefore, its chief task is a common search for mechanisms to build our unity at the parish, eparchial/exarchial, metropolitan and global levels.

Each Eparchy is to hold a pre-Patriarchal Sobor meeting. Given that our Eparchy covers a huge territory, and that it might be difficult for all of our parishes to actively participate in one Eparchial pre-Patriarchal Sobor meeting, we will hold a few regional meetings.

1. The North (our parish in Prince George): on Thursday, January 9, 2020.

6:30 p.m.	Welcome and moleben to the Holy Spirit in the Church
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Discussion on the questions previously submitted to you for discussion at the parish level (see below)
8:30 p.m.	Refreshments

2. The Interior (our parishes in Kamloops, Kelowna, Penticton, Vernon and Grindrod): Saturday, February 8, 2020 at our parish in Kamloops.

10:30 a.m.	Welcome and moleben to the Holy Spirit in the Church
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Discussion on the questions previously submitted to you for discussion at the parish level (see below)
1:00 p.m.	Lunch, followed by departures

3. Vancouver Island (our parishes in Victoria and Nanaimo): Saturday, February 15, 2020 at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Nanaimo.

11:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy
12:30 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Discussion on the questions previously submitted to you for discussion at the parish level (see below), followed by departures

4. Greater-Vancouver (our parishes in Vancouver, New Westminister, Surrey and Richmond): Saturday, February 22, 2020 at Holy Cross Parish in Surrey.

10:30 a.m.	Welcome and moleben to the Holy Spirit in the Church
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Discussion on the questions previously submitted to you for discussion at the parish level (see below)
1:00 pm.	Lunch, followed by departures

At these regional meetings, I would like to request that three delegates and the parish priest represent each parish. Of course, other parish members who would like to attend and provide their input also are invited to the meeting in their area. Please confirm to me one week prior to your regional meeting the exact number of persons who will be attending including yourself. This will allow us to have any printed materials prepared in advanced ready and also to insure that we are able to provide those present with hospitality (food, refreshments, etc.).

I would like to invite those parishes with an active UCWLC branch to also ensure that there is at least one delegate extra from that parish attending the regional Sobor. Furthermore, I would like to invite the executive of the Eparchial UCWLC to participate in the Greater Vancouver regional Sobor on 22 February by sending three delegates.

In order to assist you in preparing for these regional meetings, please discuss the following questions at the parish level (and at the UCWLC Eparchial Executive level). This may be done either on a formal basis or even informally. You may wish to print out these questions on paper and at a few Sundays prior to our regional meeting at the coffee/social time after Divine Liturgy spend some time discussing this together and taking rough notes as to what has been proposed. These questions also can be discussed at your parish council meetings.

Regional Sobor Questions:

Question 1: Connecting with our heritage – Why have you remained or what has led you to become a Ukrainian Greek Catholic? What aspects of UGCC’s spiritual heritage and history, or cultural heritage and history, are especially important to you?

Question 2: Engaging with our present – Why are you a Ukrainian Greek Catholic today? Which spiritual practices or cultural practices are important to your engagement with your faith today? Do you know the faith stories of the other people in your parish?

Question 3: Ideas for our future – How can the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church’s expression of our Christian faith continue to remain important in your life, in the life of your community, and for our future generations?

The parish priest and the parish delegates should be well aware of the local responses to these questions and bring them to the regional Sobor as a basis of further discussion.

Fr. Andriy Malysh, our parish priest in Surrey, who is also an advisor to Patriarch Sviatoslav, will join me at these regional meetings. Fr. Andriy will be one of our delegates to the Patriarchal Sobor. Mrs. Christine Riek, a parishioner of our Cathedral parish in New Westminster will also join us at these regional meetings. Fr. Malysh and Mrs. Riek will assist me in the formation of our Eparchial recommendations that we will be submitting to the Patriarchal Sobor/Assembly Secretariat soon after we have completed our Eparchial regional Sobor meetings.

After the Patriarchal Sobor/Assembly the Secretariat of the Patriarchal Sobor will compile all of the deliberations and recommendations brought forward during the meeting in August by the delegates representing our Church structures from around the world to the annual Synod of Ukrainian Catholic Bishops. Our recommendations will then assist our Patriarch and the Bishops to further develop pastoral plans that will be implemented and become part of our ministry with regard to “Emigration, settlements and the global unity of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.”

As we prepare for our Eparchial regional Sobor meetings, I would like to ask that our Lord send His Holy Spirit to lead us in our discussions and deliberations on this topic at our parishes and at our Eparchial regional Sobor meetings.

With prayerful best wishes,



+ Ken
Eparchial Bishop