Master, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel!

Нині відпускаєш у спокої раба Твого, Владико, як і сказав Ти, бо бачили очі мої спасіння Твое, що приготував Ти всім людям, світ на просвіту народів і славу людей Твоїх, Ізраїля.
The LORD said to Moses, "Consecrate to me all the first-born; whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine." (Book of Exodus, Chapter 15)

According to the Mosaic law recorded in Exodus, the first-born son of every observant Jew should be dedicated to God in the Temple at Jerusalem forty days after his birth, where the mother would also complete her ritual purification. Forty days after the birth of Christ is celebrated, and bringing the Nativity cycle of feasts to a close, the dedication of the infant Jesus is remembered as the Feast of the Presentation (or Meeting, or Dedication) of the Lord in the Temple, known in the West as Candlemas, on Feb 2/15.

Beneath the mere outward act of submission to the Mosaic law by Sts. Joseph, Mary, and Jesus lays an epochal point in the history of our salvation. This deeper meaning is revealed in the icons of this feast.

The story of Christ’s dedication in the Temple is described in Luke’s Gospel (Luke 2: 22-40). The elderly St Symeon, described in hymns as a “priest”, is inspired by the Holy Spirit to take up the Christ-child in His arms and declare: “Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation.” Symeon’s recognition of baby Jesus as the Messiah is shown in his deep reverence: bowing low and holding Christ with covered hands. Christ Himself is shown as actively blessing those present, appearing as Lord and Saviour, rather than a helpless babe-in-arms.

The Mother of God has just given her Son into the arms of Symeon, whilst nearby is Anna, recognizable as a prophetess by the scroll she holds: sometimes closed, sometimes open. Completing the scene is Joseph, who brings a sacrificial offering to the Temple. In Leviticus, it states that forty days after the birth of the first-born son, the mother must bring a lamb and a turtledove to the priest as a burnt-offering. ‘And if she is not able to bring a lamb [i.e. she is too poor], then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons—one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering.’ (Lev 12:8) Joseph is shown with two turtledoves, reinforcing the humble background into which Christ was born. He carries the turtledoves on behalf of Mary, the Mother, which reminds us that despite the doubts described in the Nativity Icon, Joseph is finally reconciled to his betrothed and trusts the infant Jesus to be truly the Messiah.

This, then, is the basic story being told in the icon.
The Jewish Temple transformed into the Christian Church

The scene takes place in the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, which was not merely the main temple of Judaism, but the only temple of the Jewish Faith. As is normal for classic iconography, the scene appears to occur in the open, not concealed by walls, with the outside of the Temple shown in the background. The icon of the Presentation is dominated by a four-pillared dome, which was an architectural feature of the inside of the Temple. It is a \textit{ciborium}, in Greek a kivorion (κιβωριον) – a canopy contained in the sanctuary.

Before the building of the Temple, from the time of Moses, the Hebrews had the Tabernacle, which contained the Ten Commandments given to Moses, the manna from Heaven, and an altar. This portable structure was the holy place in which the presence of God was manifest. After the nation of Israel was established, King Solomon built the Temple to house the Ten Commandments and the other contents of the Tabernacle. A permanent tabernacle was created within the Temple, the sanctuary, and this is what is depicted as a \textit{ciborium}.

But the ciborium in the icon is not the tabernacle of the Temple of Solomon, which was destroyed within 50 years of Christ's dedication there. The altar in the icon is behind two gates, reminiscent of Royal Doors. Upon the altar are not the stone tablets of Moses, but a Gospel-book that contains the New Testament. Sometimes the altar cloth is conspicuously decorated with the Christian cross; highly anachronistic, yet reminding us of the real significance of the event: not the observance of the old Mosaic law, but the fulfillment of it in Christ's incarnation. The ciborium itself was a common feature of first millennium churches, covering the altar and having curtains to veil the consecrated host at particular times of the Liturgy.

The icon of the Presentation is therefore clearly and consciously depicting Solomon's Temple as a Christian church, though this is sometimes lost today when ciborium's are not as common in church architecture.

With this "transformation" in mind, it is no coincidence that the infant Christ appears to be handed to St Symeon over the altar. Just as the stone tablets are transformed, in the icon, into a Gospel-book, so too is the heavenly manna of the Jewish tabernacle transformed into the life-giving Lamb of God, Jesus Christ: a food also of divine origin, but inexhaustible, alive, and granting eternal life. Here, the references to St Symeon as "priest" are entirely appropriate, regardless of his actual role at the Temple in Jerusalem, as in the icon he receives the infant Jesus as the life-giving, sacrificial offering at the Christian liturgy. St Joseph even appears like a deacon attending to Symeon, shown in the same posture of supplication.

At the Theophany, we learn that Jesus did not need to receive the baptism of repentance from John in the river Jordan; Christ willingly did this to purify the waters, nature, and the ritual of baptism itself. Likewise, Christ did not need to be offered to the God Who begot Him, nor did any sacrifice for purification need to be given for He Who is spotless. Jesus entered the Temple not to be purified, but to purify others: Sts. Symeon, Anna, and the whole system of Jewish worship. The passing away of animal sacrifices, the Mosaic Law, and Jewish Temple worship, were all heralded with Christ's dedication, forty days after His birth. This feast, coming at the end of the winter and usually occurs close to the beginning of Lent, when the pure sacrifice of "a contrite heart" is required of us, rather than the burnt offerings done away with the advent of Christ.

\begin{quote}
By Thy nativity, Thou didst sanctify the Virgin's womb;

And didst bless Simeon's hands, O Christ our God.

Now Thou hast come and saved us through love.

Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians, O only Lover of man.

(Kontakion of the Feast)
\end{quote}
Glory to Jesus Christ!

Today we celebrate the feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the same spirit as we celebrate the Nativity and Epiphany. Nevertheless Meeting of the Lord is commemorated by the Holy Orthodox Church as the feast of Theotokos (Mother of God).

"Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD"). St. Luke 2:22-23

What is occurring in these verses of the Gospel sounds familiar – we also read a prayer over the mother that had a child before she enters the church. The child after the baptism is also presented to the church. But what makes it extraordinary, what is described in today’s Gospel reading according of St. Luke, is that Most Holy Theotokos, Pure Virgin Mary who needs no purification, is coming to the Temple bringing the Child Eternal God, present before the beginning of the World, and by His Birth, purified all.

As St. Andrew Archbishop of Crete says: "This Virgin is the Theotokos, Mary, the Most Glorious of God, from Whose womb the Most Divine came forth in the flesh, and by Whom He Himself arranged a wondrous temple for Himself. She conceived without seed and gave birth without corruption, since Her Son was God, though also He was born in the flesh, without mingling and without travail".

By doing so (coming to the Temple), the Most Holy Theotokos shows to us once more her absolute obedience to the law of God and humble acceptance of His will. As a chosen one, the Birthgiver of our Salvation, she incorporates within her all qualities of piety and purity. With understanding of whom she is holding in her arms, she willingly came to place herself and the Child, among the regular people. She came to place the child who is a new hope, a true light and salvation of the World. She did this for the people, and by doing so, showing God’s acceptance of human nature and human flesh.

When we are present in the church and attentive to the service, to everything that we sing and read, we then have a better understanding of the meaning behind, and the teaching of the Church regarding, the celebrated event. On this Holy Day everything is directed to concentrate our attention on Child Jesus, Most Holy Theotokos and Joseph. But also on other people, Simeon and Anna that were chosen by God to be part of His plan, guided by the Holy Spirit to meet The Savior of all nations in the Temple of Jerusalem.

And as we read: "Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day". St. Luke 2:36-37

Tomorrow as we commemorate St. Simeon the God-Receiver and the Prophetess Anna we may reflect in more detail about them. But today I would like to share with you some of my thoughts and feelings. In the Gospel certain qualities of both were revealed to us by St. Luke that greatly explain why they were chosen by God. Simeon and Anna met the Lord and saw Salvation of the people of Israel (People of God). I think about it each time we sing during the vespers the prayer of St. Simeon and after each Holy Liturgy as I take off my vestment and say the same prayer. I am thinking about that great blessing and unbelievable Grace of God that was granted to us in the form of the Holy Liturgy and Eucharist. We are able to receive and to become one with our Savior Jesus Christ, and not necessarily because we carry the same qualities of Simeon and Anna, but because of God’s unconditional love to us. For Simeon and Anna, the meeting of the Lord becomes the most important moment of their lives, since everything was dedicated to that absolute culmination. And today dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I wish to all of us to have that very same feeling, each time we meet our Lord and Savior through the mystery given to us, and culminating, in the Holy Liturgy. And those candles that we blessed today, holding in our hands, will symbolize not only the true light of God who is our Savior Jesus Christ but also the purity of our souls and our oneness with Him.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, Now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Fr. Dmitri Belenki
Beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord!

As we mark the solemn occasion of the second anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, our hearts are heavy with sorrow for the ongoing suffering endured by our beloved ancestral homeland and her people. We stand in prayer and solidarity with all those affected by this senseless violence and aggression.

As disciples of Christ, we are called to stand against all forms of injustice and oppression. In this time of darkness, let us shine the light of truth and justice by bearing witness to the suffering of our Ukrainian brethren and advocating for their rights and dignity.

We condemn in the strongest possible terms the heinous crimes committed against the Ukrainian people, including acts of violence, displacement, and cultural cleansing. The genocide perpetrated by the Russian forces has inflicted deep wounds upon the soul of Ukraine, and its effects will be felt for generations to come.

As members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, we reaffirm our unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We condemn in the strongest terms the illegal occupation of Ukrainian territories and the continued violation of human rights by the aggressor.

We urge the international community to uphold its commitment to peace and justice and to take further decisive action to hold the perpetrators accountable. Silence and avoidance to act, in the face of such grave crimes only serve to perpetuate the cycle of violence and suffering.

In this time of trial, let us turn to prayer, seeking solace and strength from the Almighty for our brothers and sisters enduring the hardships of war. Let’s continue to extend our hands in solidarity and support to those who are displaced, injured, or grieving the loss of loved ones.

As we offer our prayers and support, let us also renew our resolve to be ambassadors of peace and reconciliation in our communities and beyond. Together, let us strive to build a world where justice, compassion, and respect for human dignity prevail.

May God grant comfort to the afflicted, strength to the weary, and peace to the troubled land – our ancestral homeland Ukraine.

Beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord!

Улюблені та дорогі брати і сестри у Христі!

У ці миті молитовного вшанування другої річниці російського вторгнення в Україну, наші серця дійсно переповнені скорботою, беручи до уваги тривалі страждання, які зазнали наша улюблена Україна та її народ. Ми щоденно зносимо свої молитви до Господя та залишаємось солідарними з усіма, хто постраждав та страждає від цього безглуздого насильства та агресії.

Як послідовники Христа, ми покликані протистояти всім формам несправедливості та гноблення. У цей затяжений страждальний час освітлюймо життєвою дорогу правди та справедливості, свідуччи перед світом про страждання наших братів-українців та намагаючись захистити їхні права та гідність.

Ми найрішучіше засуджуємо жахливі злочини, вчинені проти українського народу, включаючи акти насильства, вимушене переселення мільйонів по світу та низцювання культурної спадщини нашого народу. Геноцид, здійснений російськими військами, завдав глибоких ран душі України, і його наслідки будуть відчуватися ще поколіннями.

Як вірні діти Української Православної Церкви США, ми і надалі підтверджуємо нашу непоколебну підтримку суверенітету та територіальної цілісності України. Ми рішуче засуджуємо незаконну окупацію українських територій та продовження порушення прав людини агресором.

Ми закликаємо міжнародну спільноту дотримуватись своєї відповідальності за збереження миру та справедливості та впити подальших рішучих заходів, щоб притягнути винних до відповідальності. Мовчання та уникнення викриття заходів для безпеки людей перед лицем таких серйозних злочинів лише сприяють продовженню циклу насильства та страждань.

У цей час випробувань звернімося до молитви, шукаючи розради та сили у Всевишнього для наших братів і сестер, які переносять лютість війни. Давайте продовживати простягти наші руки на знак солідарності та підтримки тим, хто є вимушено переселений, поранений або сумає через втрату близьких.

Підносячи наші молитви та підтримку, давайте також відновимо нашу рішучість бути посланцями миру та примирення в наших громадах і за їх межами. Давайте разом прагнути побудувати світ, де панують справедливість, співчуття та повага до людської гідності.

Дайте Богу зрозумість, силу змужнення, спокій збентеженій землі – миру нашій рідній Україні.
The Ukrainian Orthodox Community of New Jersey stood in solemn remembrance as they marked the Day of Resistance at the Spiritual Center of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA (South Bound Brook/Somerset, NJ), commemorating the 10th anniversary of Russia’s occupation of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, along with the second anniversary of the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Gathered together in a show of solidarity and resilience, members of the community welcomed dignitaries from around the state capitol in Trenton, NJ, as they came to address the Ukrainian-American community.

The event was a poignant display of unity and determination, with children taking a prominent role in the proceedings. As representatives of the future generation, they presented Governor Phil Murphy, the high-energy support of the people and nation of Ukraine during these challenging times of war.

Governor, your steadfast commitment to standing in solidarity with Ukraine has been a source of immense encouragement and hope for all those who are affected by the ongoing war. Your advocacy for peace, justice, and humanitarian assistance reflects the values of compassion and solidarity that define our shared humanity.

In times of crisis, it is the support of allies like you, the highest representative of our Great State of New Jersey, truly MAKES STRONGER our resolve and uplifts our spirits. Your efforts to raise awareness about the plight of the Ukrainian people and to mobilize resources for humanity.

As we continue to navigate the complexities of this conflict, your advocacy remains instrumental in shaping policies that promote peace and stability in the region. Your dedication to upholding the principles of freedom, democracy, and human rights serves as a beacon of hope for all those who aspire.

As Americans and New Jerseyans… we see, in Ukraine, our own proud history…

...we see, in Ukraine, that same, quote, “yearning to be free” that is not only emblazoned on a plaque inside the Statue of Liberty… but emblazoned, as well, into our national psyche…

...and we see, in Ukraine, a struggle for independence that will shape the future our entire world… our shared future.

And you need not look far to find proof of the American people’s deep, abiding commitment to the Ukrainian cause.

Just drive through nearly any town — and you will find flags, bumper stickers, yard signs… all featuring the glorious blue-and-yellow flag of Ukraine.

And that enduring commitment to Ukraine is reflected within our state government, as well.

As your Governor, I promise you: we will continue providing support to Ukraine any way we can…

...We will continue pushing Congress to pass this aid — immediately…

...And we will always keep fighting to ensure Ukraine remains a free nation.

Thank you. And God bless you all.”
His Eminence Metropolitan Antony, the spiritual father of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, delivered a stirring address to the gathered assembly. His words echoed with a sense of resilience and determination, urging the community to remain steadfast in their commitment to the cause of Ukrainian sovereignty and independence.

The presence of local and state authorities underscored the significance of the occasion, reaffirming the unwavering support of the American government for the Ukrainian people in their struggle for freedom and self-determination. Archbishop Daniel and Natalia Honcharenko served as masters of ceremonies, guiding the proceedings with grace and dignity.

As the program unfolded, the atmosphere was filled with the stirring cadence of poetry and song, as seminarians from St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary offered heartfelt recitations and melodic hymns in tribute to their homeland. The voices of children from the local St. Andrew School and SUM (Association of Ukrainian Youth) resonated with youthful vigor and passion, as they performed traditional dances and songs, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Ukraine.

In commemorating the Day of Resistance, the Ukrainian Orthodox Community of New Jersey reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the principles of freedom, democracy, and human dignity. Through their collective efforts and steadfast determination, they stand as a beacon of hope for all those who seek to uphold the needs of communities and shaping public policy.

In a gesture bridging faith and governance, Archbishop Daniel, assisted by Very Rev. Fr. Vasyl Pasakas, presented the Governor of New Jersey with a memorable coin of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA prior to the presentation of the state’s 2025 fiscal year budget. This symbolic exchange underscored the significance of cultural diplomacy and highlights the role of religious leaders in fostering meaningful connections with governmental authorities.

The act of presenting a coin holds historical resonance, often symbolizing honor, respect, and camaraderie. In this context, Archbishop Daniel’s gesture serves as a tangible expression of gratitude for the Governor’s leadership and a symbol of the enduring bond between the Ukrainian-American community and the state of New Jersey.

The coin itself likely bears intricate designs and inscriptions reflective of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church’s rich cultural heritage and spiritual tradition. Its presentation serves as a reminder of the values shared between the Ukrainian-American community and the broader society, including principles of compassion, solidarity, and resilience. Such gestures of cultural exchange contribute to the fabric of diversity and inclusivity that defines the state of New Jersey, fostering connections across different faiths, cultures, and traditions.

In his opening remarks, Governor Murphy stated: “... My fellow New Jerseyans. Last night, I had the honor of joining His Eminence Metropolitan Antony and His Eminence Archbishop Daniel of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States of America to commemorate the Day of Resistance to the Occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol, which began 10 years ago this month. We joined together — alongside members of New Jersey’s Ukrainian American community — to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine in their ongoing and heroic fight for freedom.

This past Saturday marked the second anniversary of Vladimir Putin’s barbaric invasion of Ukraine. And on Friday, I was with the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States — my very good friend — Oksana Markarova.

For more than two years, the Ukrainian people have sacrificed everything. Their homes. Their loved ones. Their entire way of life. And there is no starker contrast to their remarkable bravery than the inaction of the Members of Congress who are refusing to pass urgently needed humanitarian and military aid for Ukraine. They must pass this funding immediately. And let me be absolutely clear: Here in...
New Jersey, we stand — and we will always stand — with Ukraine. As long as it takes.

And I am incredibly honored that Archbishop Daniel is here in the well with us today.

Slava Ukraini. And may God be with the free People of Ukraine!

Vladyka Daniel’s presence at the budget presentation in Trenton, NJ reflects a broader commitment to civic engagement and social responsibility within the Ukrainian-American community and beyond.

The invitation extended to the hierarch of the Church highlights the recognition of religious leaders as important participants in the governance process. As representatives of diverse faith communities, religious leaders bring unique perspectives, values, and insights to discussions on public policy and community development. Their involvement enriches the dialogue, fosters greater understanding between religious and secular institutions.

Attending the presentation of the 2025 fiscal year state budget provided Archbishop Daniel with an opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of the government’s priorities, allocations, and initiatives. This insight equips him to better advocate for the needs of his congregants and the broader community, particularly in areas such as education, healthcare, and social services.

The budget presentation in Trenton offered the archbishop a platform to engage with elected officials, policymakers, and community leaders on issues of mutual concern. Through dialogue and cooperation, religious and governmental leaders can work together to find innovative solutions to pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges, advancing the common good and promoting a more just and equitable society.

In conclusion, Archbishop Daniel’s attendance at the presentation of the 2025 fiscal year state budget in Trenton, NJ, at the invitation of the Governor, underscores the importance of interfaith dialogue, civic engagement, and partnership in governance. By participating in such events, religious leaders like His Eminence Archbishop Daniel contribute to the democratic process, advocate for the needs of their communities, and foster greater understanding and cooperation between religious and governmental institutions.

In a remarkable display of recognition and appreciation, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA recently received Ukrainian State Awards, sent directly from the representatives of the Ukrainian government. The President of Ukraine, the Minister of Defense, and the Commander of the Ukrainian Armed Forces bestowed these prestigious awards upon the UOC of the USA in acknowledgment of her exemplary efforts in providing charitable humanitarian aid during the challenging period of war in Ukraine.

This unique award presentation in the time of war, presented to His Eminence Archbishop Daniel, underscores the extraordinary circumstances under which these honors were conferred. The ongoing Russian invasion of the sovereign nation of Ukraine has presented numerous challenges, including logistical complexities that necessitated innovative approaches to the aid distribution by various charitable organizations and non-for-profit organizations, such as the UOC of the USA, that have been actively involved in humanitarian efforts.

The budget presentation in Trenton offered the archbishop a platform to engage with elected officials, policymakers, and community leaders on issues of mutual concern. Through dialogue and cooperation, religious and governmental leaders can work together to find innovative solutions to pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges, advancing the common good and promoting a more just and equitable society.

The Minister of Defense Rustem Umierov, highlighted the strategic importance of the UOC of the USA’s engagement in humanitarian aid by presenting Archbishop Daniel the medal “For the Assistance in Defense Efforts”. This award underscores the critical role played by the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA in complementing the efforts of the Ukrainian medical armed forces by addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by communities affected by the war.

The Commander of the Ukrainian Armed Forces General Valerii Zaluzhnyi presented the Church, in the person of Archbishop Daniel, with the medal “For the Assistance in Defense Forces” which truly conveyed the significance of collaboration between the Church and medical and logistical needs of those that serve with dedication in the medical field of the Ukrainian armed forces. This award acknowledged the UOC of the USA’s impact and tangible support to the affected regions and represented a token of appreciation for the Church’s commitment to unity and solidarity. The presentation of the award to the hierarch of the UOC of the USA highlighted the Church’s role not only in providing spiritual solace but also in delivering tangible support such as food, medical supplies, and shelter. This holistic approach significantly contributes to the well-being of the affected population.

His Eminence Metropolitan Antony, speaking on the behalf of the fulness of the UOC of the USA, issued a statement expressing deep gratitude for the recognitions, stating that the Ukrainian Government’s...
awards bestowed upon Archbishop Daniel symbolized the collective gratitude of the Ukrainian government and armed forces. The recognition extended beyond an individual to encapsulate the collaborative efforts of the entire membership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. The awards reflected the Church’s unwavering commitment to the principles of compassion, empathy, and service to humanity.

In his acceptance of the awards, Archbishop Daniel expressed humility and gratitude on behalf of the entire UOC of the USA. He emphasized that the Church’s mission goes beyond religious duties, encompassing a responsibility to be a source of comfort and assistance to those facing adversity. The awards, according to Archbishop Daniel, serve as a reminder of the collective strength that arises when communities, religious institutions, and government entities come together in the spirit of solidarity.

In conclusion, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA’s reception of Ukrainian State Awards highlights the resilience and adaptability of the Church amid challenging circumstances. The awards not only recognize the UOC of the USA’s outstanding contributions but also symbolize the enduring spirit of unity and collaboration needed to navigate the complexities of war. These awards serve as a testament to the extraordinary efforts of the Church in providing charitable humanitarian aid, even in the face of logistical challenges posed by the ongoing war in Ukraine.

УПЦ США ОТРИМАЛИ НАГОРОДИ УРЯДУ УКРАЇНИ З ВДЯЧНІСТЮ ЗА НАДАНУ ГУМАНІТАРНУ ДОПОМОГУ В ЧАС ВІЙНИ.

У заключному висновку, Українська Православна Церква США нещодавно отримала Українську Державну Нагороду, надіслану безпосередньо від представників українського уряду. Президент України, Міністр Оборони та Головномандувач Збройних Сил України вручили ці високі нагороди Українській Православній Церкві США на знак визнання її здатності у наданні благодійної гуманітарної допомоги у складний період війни в Україні.

Вручення нагород, під час війни, його Високопреосвященства Архієпископу Даниїлу, підкреслює надзвичайні обставини, за які ці відзнаки були присвоєні. Російське вторгнення в суверенну державу України, що триває досі, спричинило численні виїзди, включаючи матеріально-технічні потреби та інноваційних підходів щодо надання допомоги релігійним об'єднанням та неприбутковими організаціями, такими як УПЦ США, які активно беруть участь у гуманітарних зусиллях.

Вручення Президентом України Володимиром Зеленським медалі «За сприяння обороні» від Уряду України підкреслює незважаючи на матеріально-технічні проблеми, які необхідні для подолання складних обставин. Нагороди, за словами Архієпископа Даниїла, служать нагадуванням про спільну вдячність Української Православній Церкві США за непокітність ієрарху УПЦ США підкреслило роль Церкви в які висловив глибоку вдячність за відзнаки, які необхідні для подолання складних обставин. Нагороди є визнанням чудових зусиль Церкви та медицини в вирішенні цілей, які вітчизняні громади, які постраждали від війни.

Головномандувач Збройних Сил України генерал Валерій Залужний вручив Церкві, в особі Архієпископа Даниїла, медаль «За сприяння обороні», яка передала важливість співпраці між Церквою та медичними та матеріально-технічними потребами, які віддано служать у медичній сфері здобутками, які відіграють роль в медичних Силах Збройних Сил України.

Високопреосвященство Архієпископу Даниїлу визнало відзнаки, які відіграють вірні Української Православної Церкви США Державних Нагород, які можна зазначити, що отримання Українською Православною Церквою США Державних Нагород підкреслює стійкість і здатність Церкви впливати на важливі питання, які виникають у рамках гуманітарної допомоги.

Високопреосвященій Архієпископ Даниїл висловив сприяння між церквами і державними установами об'єднується в дусі солідарності. Він відзначив, що нагороди, за словами Архієпископа Даниїла, служать нагадуванням про спільність, яка виникає, коли громади, релігійні інституції та державні установи об'єднуються в дусі солідарності.

Високопреосвященний Митрополит Антоній ієрарху УПЦ США підкреслило роль Церкви не лише у наданні духовної розради, але й у наданні матеріальної підтримки, як-от ієрархічні відзнаки, які відповідають значній роля у наданні швидкої допомоги, яка відіграє ключову роль у вирішенні важливих викликів, з якими стикаються громади, які постраждали від війни.
The responsibility of priests in the Orthodox Church is multifaceted, encompassing sacramental administration, pastoral care, spiritual guidance, and educational leadership. Their presence is integral to the cohesion and growth of the Orthodox Christian community, providing a spiritual foundation that sustains and nurtures the faithful in their journey of faith, and leads them to salvation in Christ.

In order to be prepared to take on such aheavy responsibility, the candidate for priesthood undergoes years of study, practice, and preparation. Graduating from the Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary with a Degree of Master of Divinity, Deacon Andrii Vatrych was about to enter the ranks of millions of men before him, who had heard the call of Christ to follow Him and become fishers of men. On this day Deacon Andrii would become a priest in the Orthodox Church, through the laying on of hands by His Eminence Archbishop Daniel, Ruling Hierarch of the Western Eparchy and Consistory President of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA.

Clergy and faithful gathered in the Three Holy Hierarchs Seminary Chapel, on Saturday the 17th of February to witness the ordination, and to celebrate the chapel Feast Day. Overnight it had snowed, and as everyone arrived for the celebration. Inside the chapel the icons seemed to glow warmly, welcoming the guests in from the cold. As the chapel filled the local clergy, vested in brilliant vestments of blue and gold gathered at the entrance to great Archbishop Daniel as he arrived. Rev. Vasyli Pasakas greeted the hierarch and presented him the cross with which he blessed all those present.

In the presence of and with the blessing of Metropolitan Antony, Prime Hierarch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the UOC of the USA and Diaspora, Archbishop Daniel began serving the Divine Liturgy. As the Seminarians of the St. Sophia Seminary chanted the hymns, prayers and responses, those faithful who were present felt transported to the heavenly realms.

The Gospel Reading was Luke 17: 3-10 where the Lord advised the apostles how to increase their faith, and how to remain humble in their service to God and others. Archbishop Daniel stepped down from the ambo and delivered a moving sermon. In the small nave the sermon felt intimate, as if the bishop was speaking to each person individually.

With everyone moved by the teachings of the archpastor, the Divine Liturgy continued as the Archbishop, clergy, and faithful prayed for God’s mercy, peace, love and visitation, remittance of sins, and strength, along with peace in the world.

At the conclusion of the Great Entrance, Deacon Andrii who had stepped to the back of the nave, was joined by Deacons Pavlo Vysotskyi and Roman Marchyshak. As the Cherubic Hymn faded away, Deacon Pavlo loudly called out “Command!” at which the candidate to the priesthood, holding the Aer over his head prostrated, was assisted back to his feet by the other two deacons and brought forward. Once again he loudly proclaimed, “Command!” and Deacon Andriii prostrated, and was then led up the steps to stop before the Royal Gates, where having once again prostrated, and upon rising was presented to Archbishop Daniel who was awaiting them by the deacons who proclaimed, “Command! Holy Master, bless him who is before thee.”

The archbishop, wearing his mitre, was seated in the bishop’s chair which had been placed just to the side of the altar. As the candidate kneeled before His Eminence, the archbishop blessed him and gave him counsel. He removed the Aer from the deacon’s shoulders and placed it upon the Altar table, as two priests came forward, Very Rev. Yuriy Siwko and Rev. Vasyli Pasakas, and taking Deacon Andrii by the arms led him around the altar table, stopping to kiss each corner. Reaching the Northwest corner, Deacon Andrili kneeled before the sitting Archbishop and kissed his Epigonation/Palitza, which is the diamond shaped cloth that hangs from his right hip, and denotes him as a “soldier” of Christ, and symbolizes the Word of God, fighting the wiles of the enemy.

Once again two priests, Very Rev. Milorad Orlic and Rev. Ivan Tchopko led Deacon Andriii around the altar table, repeating the process, while the clergy sing:

Hear us, you martyred Saints who have fought the good fight and received crowns, entreat the Lord, to have mercy on our souls.

Glory to you, Christ our God, the Apostles’ boast and pride, the Martyrs’ fervent joy whose preaching is the consubstantial Trinity.

O Isaiah dance with joy, for the Virgin is indeed with child and brought forth a son, Emmanuel. Who came both as God and man, Day-at-the-Dawn is his name, and by magnifying him, we call the Virgin blessed.

During his final rotation, Deacon Andrii was escorted by Very Rev. Vasyli Sendeaha and Very Rev. Vitaliy Pavlykivs’kiy. With three rotations completed, the young deacon kneeled at the Southwest corner of the Altar table leaning his head upon his hands which rested on the table itself. Vladyka Daniel covered the deacon’s head with his Epitrachelion and his right hand, as he read the Prayers of Chirotonia over him, while the clergy, the choir, those present at the Liturgy, and those attending over the live stream all prayed and sang “Lord, have mercy!”
As prayers from around the world were raised, His Eminence prayed,

The divine grace, which always heals that which is in infirm and completes that which is lacking, ordains the most devout Deacon Andrii to the office of Priest. Let us, therefore, pray for him, that the grace of the All-Holy Spirit may come upon him.

O God, great in might and inscrutable in wisdom, marvellous in counsel above the sons of men: You the same Lord, fill with the gift of Your Holy Spirit this man whom it has pleased You to advance to the degree of Priest; that he may become worthy to stand in innocence before Your altar, to proclaim the Gospel of Your kingdom, to minister the word of Your truth, to offer to You spiritual gifts and sacrifices; to renew Your people through the font of regeneration, that when he shall go to meet You, at the second coming of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, Your only-begotten Son, to serve the Lord and is also a sign that he is bound to Christ.

Andrii's head as he held the very Body and Blood of Christ. Mnohaya Lita! Axios! Axios! Axios! Photos by Subdeacon Maksym Zhuravchyk and Mykola Stefanyk

Archbishop Daniel then raised newly ordained priest Andrii to his feet and removed the deacon's stole and presented each item of the priestly vestments to the faithful proclaimed "Axios!" and vested the new priest. The epitrachelion, which translates to "what is worn around the neck." The epitrachelion represents the priesthood. The New Testament symbolizes the neck as He was bound and dragged to His passion. This garment reminds the priest of his royal dignity and is an illustration of divine light, righteousness, and joy. And finally the Archbishop hung a gold cross around the young priest's neck.

After the consecration of the Holy Gifts, Father Andrii came and stood before the Altar as Archbishop Daniel handed the consecrated Lamb saying: "Receive this Divine Trust, and preserve it whole and unharmed until your last breath, because you will be held to an accounting therefore in the Second and Awesome Coming of our Great Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ, at which time He will demand It from you."

At the conclusion of the Liturgy, as the choir sang, Father Andrii came out to recite the prayer behind the ambo, as Archbishop Daniel gave the final blessing and dismissal, before reading aloud the proclamation and declaration of Fr. Andrii's priesthood. With a final blessing, Fr. Andrii fervently expressed his deep gratitude and humble realization of the great responsibility entrusted to him. He thanked the hierarchs for their unwavering support and encouragement, before thanking his brother seminarians, his wife and family, and all the faithful for their love and prayers.

Before the conclusion of the service, Fr. Andrii's wife, Anna, stepped up before the icon of the Holy Birth-giver of God, as Archbishop Daniel prayed over her, blessing her, and asking the Lord's Grace upon her as she works alongside her husband in the Lord's vineyard.

The joyous event continued as everyone made their way to the seminary dining room to enjoy a delicious lunch and spend time encouraging the young priest, sharing stories, giving advice, and simply enjoying the joy of the moment in the company of their church family.

May the Lord bless Fr. Andrii and Dobroduiya Anna, as they start their journey together leading others to Christ. Mnohaya Lita! Axios! Axios! Axios!

Photos by Subdeacon Maksym Zhuravchyk and Mykola Stefanyk
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INGREDIENTS

For Cutlets:
1 pound ground beef
1 large onion
1 large egg
1 tablespoon fresh dill
3 slices French bread
1 1/2 tsp salt
freshly ground black pepper
1 to 1 1/2 cups panko bread crumbs

For Gravy:
10 white mushrooms, sliced
1 tbsp butter
2 medium shallots, diced
1 large carrot, grated
3 minced garlic cloves
1 1/2 tbsp flour
salt, and pepper
1/2 tsp smoked paprika
2 cups beef broth
1 cup cream or half-and-half
1 to 2 tbsp fresh dill

For Serving:
1 pound egg noodles,
or mashed potatoes

Prepare the cutlets first. Using a cheese grater, grate the onion into a large bowl. You can also use a food processor. To the bowl, add the ground beef, egg, and season with salt, pepper and fresh dill. Soak the bread in a bowl of water and squeeze out a bit of water if too much is absorbed; I like to use a 6-inch piece of baguette.

Break the baguette into small pieces and add to the bowl. Using your hands, mix all the ingredients together until a uniform mixture forms. Use a measuring scoop (mine was 3 tablespoons) to portion the mixture into cutlet sized portions. Place the panko bread crumbs into a small bowl. Press each cutlet into a flat oval shape, then drop into the bread crumbs, coating well all over.

Preheate a large frying pan with a few tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat. Add the cutlets to the pan, spacing them out evenly. Avoid over-crowding the pan; cook the cutlets in batches. Fry the cutlets for 4 to 6 minutes on each side, until golden brown. Make sure cutlets cook all the way through; check with a meat thermometer if need - it needs to reach 160F. Remove the cutlets onto a tray lined with paper towels to absorb any excess oil; keep warm until ready to serve.

Next, prepare the mushroom gravy. Melt the butter in a large sauté pan, along with a bit of olive oil, over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and sauté for 4 to 5 minutes, until the mushrooms are nicely browned. Season the mushrooms with a bit of salt once they’re browned, then remove them from the pan into a large bowl.

Into the same pan, add the diced shallots and grated carrot. Sauté the two for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion is tender. Add the garlic, season with salt, pepper and smoked paprika; cook for another minute or two. Next, add the flour and toss with a spatula until the veggies are coated; cook the flour for about a minute.

Begin adding the beef broth, a little at a time and scrape the flour from the bottom of the pan. Wait for the sauce to thicken before adding more broth. Return the mushrooms to the pan and cook the sauce over medium heat for 4 to 8 minutes, until the sauce reaches desired consistency. Add the cream and fresh dill last and cook for a few minutes, until simmering.

Serve the gravy over cooked egg noodles or mashed potatoes with 2 to 3 cutlets on the side.

TatyanaEverydayFood.com
When Jesus was a little baby, only 40 days old, Mary, His mother, and Joseph, her betrothed, took Him to the Temple in Jerusalem. The Temple was the greatest and holiest church of the Jewish people. They bought 2 young pigeons to give to the priests of the Temple as an offering in thanks for the little baby, as was the custom of the Jewish people. Now at that time, there lived in the city of Jerusalem a very old man whose name was Symeon. Symeon had been told by God that he would not die until he saw God’s Son. On this day, Symeon woke up very early; God told him to go to the Temple and wait. There was also in the Temple a very old woman named Anna who was also waiting for God’s Son. Suddenly, Symeon saw Mary and Joseph coming into the Temple, carrying the baby Jesus and the cage with the birds. Symeon came right up to Mary and took the baby in his arms; he knew that Jesus was the long-awaited Son of God. Symeon thanked God with a special prayer that we use in vespers to this day (see inside front cover).

On this day we bless candles in church because Christ is the Light of the World, and on this day we celebrate that Light being presented to mankind to illuminate our dark world. These blessed candles should be placed in our icon corners, and we should light them when we pray, especially in times of trouble or when we are afraid.

Decorate and bring candles with you to Divine Liturgy to have them blessed afterwards.

On the next page is a paper “candle”. Color the image and cut it out (see below). Fold on the lines and glue the ends together leaving a slight bulge in the front.


Kopie Jr., Michael of Port Elizabeth, NJ on November 22, 2020 at the age of 89 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Orest Poukhalski of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Millville, NJ.

Koslowsky, Alexandria of Millville, NJ on February 10, 2022 at the age of 16 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Orest Poukhalski of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Millville, NJ.

Lazor, Eva F. of Hamburg, PA on January 3, 2024 at the age of 98 years, officiating clergy Rev. Richard Jendras of St. Mary Parish, Allentown, PA 18102.

Massie, Jarry D. of, on June 19, 2020 at the age of 71 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Rostyslav Tsapar of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Millville, NJ.

Mokienko, Victor of Franklin Twp., NJ on December 18, 2019 at the age of 91 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Rostyslav Tsapar of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Millville, NJ.

Nikitich, William of Vineland, NJ on March 25, 2023 at the age of 87 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Orest Poukhalski of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Millville, NJ.

Pidluski, Olga of Fairfield, CT on January 18, 2024 at the age of 96 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Stephen Masliuk of St. Mary’s Protection Parish, Bridgeport, CT 06606.

Redka, William of Williamstown, NJ on August 14, 2021 at the age of 89 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Orest Poukhalski of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Millville, NJ.

Safonot, Katarzyna of Vineland, NJ on January 16, 2020 at the age of 86 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Rostyslav Tsapar of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Millville, NJ.

Shevchenko, Nina of Vineland, NJ on March 25, 2023 at the age of 87 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Orest Poukhalski of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Millville, NJ.

Sirick, John of Newington, CT on January 1, 2024 at the age of 93 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Andrii Pokolyko of St. Mary’s Parish, New Britain, CT 06051.

Stretch, Kevin of Vineland, NJ on September 5, 2022 at the age of 61 years, officiating clergy V. Rev. Orest Poukhalski of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Millville, NJ.

THE FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD
always gives us those beautiful words from the prophet Simeon: “My eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

This feast recognizes that our God is the God of encounter, a God who comes from the heavens to be near to us, who comes down to join His life to our life in love. This is the beautiful reality of the Incarnation—God with us.

Today we are called to imitate the Holy Family, to present ourselves to God. What do we — our work, our love in our families — all this can be something we present to Him. We are called to dedicate our whole life to serve God, to follow Christ.

Archbishop Daniel

PROTOPRESB. TARAS CHUBENKO FEBRUARY 3, 1980
REV. VASYL DOVGAN FEBRUARY 12, 2013
V. REV. OLEH HUCUL FEBRUARY 12, 1995
V. REV. CONSTANTINE G. CHRISTO FEBRUARY 17, 1991
V. REV. ROSTYSŁAV TSAPAR FEBRUARY 23, 2002
REV. SAMUEL SEAMANS FEBRUARY 23, 2017
V. REV. VOLODYMYR MUZYCHKA FEBRUARY 28, 1982
DN. VALENTINE OLYNYK FEBRUARY 9, 2019

PROTOPRIEST ANTONY BERYK
PRIEST LEONTIJ KWARTYRIUK
PRIEST JOHN ZAZWORSKY
PROTOPRIEST DMYTRO SAWKA
PROTOPRESBYTER ANDREW BECK
PROTOPRESBYTER MYKOLA CHERNIAWSKY
PROTOPRESBYTER MICHAEL ZEMLACHENKO
PROTOPRESBYTER MICHAEL KUDANOVICH
PROTOPRESBYTER GEORGE HNATKKO

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17th 1965 - PROTOPRIEST ANTONY BERYK
12th 1966 - PRIEST LEONTIJ KWARTYRIUK
16th 1986 - PRIEST JOHN ZAZWORSKY
18th 1989 - PROTOPRIEST DMYTRO SAWKA
2nd 1990 - PROTOPRESBYTER ANDREW BECK
20th 1991 - PROTOPRESBYTER MYKOLA CHERNIAWSKY
25th 1991 - PROTOPRIEST MYRON PACHOLKO
6th 1999 - PRIEST JAMES MILLER
13th 2006 - MITRED PROTOPRIEST MYROSŁAW HLYNSKY
26th 2013 - PROTOPRESBYTER MICHAEL ZEMLACHENKO
28th 2015 - PROTOPRESBYTER MICHAEL KUDANOVICH
14th 2022 - PROTOPRESBYTER GEORGE HNATKKO

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February Celebrations

7 St. Gregory the Theologian
Свт. Григорія Богослова

12 Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs: St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St. John Chrysostom
Собор вселенських учителів і святителів: Василя Великого, Григорія Богослова і Іоана Златоуста

15 The Meeting of Our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ
Стрітення Господа Бога і Спаса Нашого Ісуса Христа

25 Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee Fast-Free Week
Неділя про митаря та Фарисея
Седміця всієї дня

March Celebrations

3 Sunday of Prodigal Son
Неділя про блудного сина

9 Memorial Saturday
Поміжна субота

10 Meatfare Sunday, of the Last Judgment
Неділя м'ясопустна, про страшний суд

17 Cheesefare Sunday - of Forgiveness
(Expulsion of Adam from the Paradise)
Неділя сиропушна - прощення
(спомин про вигнання Адама з раю)

18 1st Week of the Great Lent
Початок великого посту

24 1st Sunday of the Great Lent: Triumph of Orthodoxy
Неділя 1-ша великого посту: Торжество Православ'я

30 Memorial Saturday
Поміжна субота

31 Second Sunday of the Great Lent: St. Gregory Palamas
Неділя 2-га великого посту: Свт. Григорія Палами
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  - FAST FREE WEEK
  - February 25

- **Cheeseafare Sunday**
  - March 17

- **Sunday of the Prodigal Son**
  - March 3

- **Start of Great Lent**
  - March 18

- **Memorial Saturday**
  - March 9

- **Meatfare Sunday**
  - March 10

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