

# Edmonton Eparchy launches new plan to reach out to Ukrainian Catholic faithful

Bishop David Motiuk of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton has used the Eparchy's first online fundraiser, the Armchair Gala, as a launching pad for the top priorities in the new year and beyond.

The Armchair Gala was a fundraiser for eparchial wide ministry, this year the gala managed to raise more than \$39,000.

During the Dec. 17 virtual event, Bishop Motiuk also announced his new evangelization plan, called Evangelization 2021. The plan contains three main priorities that Bishop believes will better "respond to the faith journeys of our parishioners during the global pandemic, with a focus on the parish."

Currently, with Alberta Health restrictions, many parishes within the Eparchy have multiplied the number of Divine Liturgies offered to accommodate the number of faithful wanting to attend, while maintaining health protocols.

Most parishes have seen the number of Divine Liturgies double, some have seen even more to accommodate social distancing. Many parishes have also made the leap to livestreaming their liturgical services, including wedding, funerals and baptisms.

Bishop Motiuk believes that livestreams reach not only regular parishioners, but also those individuals who do not attend for one reason or another. "They are still our faithful and parishioners, it's a matter how we can reach out to them with love and caring," Bishop Motiuk said.

Evangelize 2021 is a three-point campaign that will better respond to the needs of the Ukrainian Catholic faithful in Alberta. The first priority, Parish Hub, will be an online resource designed to strengthen and support parishes, providing training and resources and improving communication between parishes and the Eparchy. This initiative will be launched in May 2021.

The second priority is the development of lay leadership and diaconal programs to empower and support a new generation of Catholic leaders and those called to service in the Church. The Eparchy of Edmonton intends to partner with Newman Theological College to help strengthen leaders in our parishes through unique educational opportunities.

The third priority is the development of a new religious education program, Image to Likeness. To be developed in partnership with Edmonton Catholic and Elk Island Catholic schools, Image to Likeness will serve an updated religion

curriculum for use in Ukrainian Bilingual Schools, the parish, as well as at home.

In addition to bishop's three priorities for 2021, there are numerous other ways the Eparchy plans on furthering outreach. Other initiatives include continued financial support of youth projects through the Evangelization Fund, which has funded more than \$300,000 in youth projects over the past five years.

This Evangelization Fund has funded eparchial youth groups, created family rooms in parishes, helped children's Sunday schools to operate and much more. The Evangelize 2021 campaign also is planning for the creation of a new eparchial logo, and further development of the Eparchy's Religious Education Centre to help parishes effectively serve the faithful and reach out to newcomers.

The Eparchy's Religious Education Centre, located in the pastoral offices, is launching a new Catechesis Resource Centre in January available for the public. The Religious Resource Centre also includes a store for purchasing icons and books, and also provides religious education with Eparchial wide presentations, events, and writes content relevant to parishes.

*-Ben Jacob Windsor is a communications specialist with the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton*