

**St. Mary's Ukrainian Church 100th Anniversary Dinner**

**May 07, 2017**

**[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]**

Good evening everyone. My wife Kyleigh and I are incredibly pleased to be joining you tonight as we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Marys' Ukrainian Catholic Church.

I'd like to recognize some of our distinguished guests tonight: First we have Bishop Steven Chmilar, Bishop for the Eparchy of Toronto and Eastern Canada. As well, we also have His Excellency Bishop Marcel Damphousse, Roman Catholic Bishop for Northeastern Ontario with us. Welcome gentlemen.

A hundred years is a long time. For any institution to persist for that long takes sustained effort and dedication from successive generations. The fact of us being here tonight speaks to the efforts that so many of you—as well as your parents, grandparents, and many family members—have made to make the church a vital and vibrant part of the community.

Since its founding in 1917, your church has featured prominently in the lives of our community's Ukrainian families. Not only has it served as a place of worship and spirituality, it has also provided a link to Ukrainian cultural traditions, foods, language, and dance.

Changes have happened over the years. The original church on Pittsburgh Avenue was expanded and renovated in 1958. In 1987, construction began on the Church's present location on St. George's Avenue, with the official consecration taking place in 1989.

After 100 years, the church remains an important faith community in Sault Ste. Marie. Not only does it Minister to families of Ukrainian descent, it has expanded to include families of many other national backgrounds.

The church also serves as a hub of activity in the community, hosting fundraising events, monthly brunches and popular events such as Lobsterfest. Its hardworking kitchen volunteers have become deservedly famous for their perogies and cabbage rolls, which of course we have enjoyed as part of this evening's meal.

So tonight, on behalf of the Office of Mayor and Sault Ste. Marie City Council, I'd like to extend my congratulations to the parishioners, clergy and volunteers of St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church. I'd also like to recognize all of the past builders and community members who have had a hand in its success.

We're very grateful to have you as part of our City and for contributing to its betterment in so many ways. I wish you all a great centennial year and more success in the years ahead.

Thank you again for inviting Kyleigh and myself to share in your celebration, and please enjoy the rest of the evening.