



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
March 21, 2023

Dear friends,

I pray that you and your family are safe, and I pray that you are experiencing a grace filled Great Lent and we will celebrate the Easter in a beautiful manner together this year.

Bishop Nil Lushchak, the bishop of our mother church in Mukachevo, Uzhhorod, has sent a heartfelt plea for more stipends for priests. The priests are giving away their own food and money to care for refugees and still have families of their own to feed and clothe. They also care for women with families whose husbands have been killed. The cost of heating has skyrocketed because of missile attacks on the utilities. Many priests with families receive no salary, only stipends. I would very much like to continue helping these priests through this difficult time. I believe that stipends for Divine Liturgies have many advantages. Here are some key points:

- 1) A stipend for a Divine Liturgy goes directly to the priest. No one is allowed to take a fee or percentage from the stipend by Church law.
- 2) The Eparchy of Passaic will pay the administrative costs, so that 100% goes to a priest and his family who need the help.
- 3) Your name will not be sent with the stipend. Only the nature of the request and initials of the person to be prayed for.
- 4) People in need are happier if they can do something in return for their assistance.
- 5) Prayers for the dead are an ancient and laudable custom.
- 6) Prayers for a sinner will not be wasted. God hears them and answers them at the best time.
- 7) In other European countries, the government pays the priests, not so in our mother eparchy.
- 8) There is no limit to the number of liturgies you may request, stipend forms are available online or through your pastor.
- 9) NB Stipends are not tax deductible. You will receive a thank you, but not a "tax letter".

If you choose to participate, God will bless you doubly, for the prayers and also for helping those in need. I commend you to the care of the all holy Mother of God.

Your servant,

Most Rev. Kurt Burnette
Bishop of Passaic