

**Edmonton Catholic School District
Parent Newsletters**

April 2019

**Easter, and How God
Chooses the Best in Us!**

This month we enter into the Passion of Our Lord, his death upon the cross, and his glorious third-day resurrection.

As we prepare for and celebrate Easter, I am reminded of a reflection Metropolitan Lawrence Huculak, Archeparchy of Winnipeg, offered when he was in town to bless the relocation of Holy Spirit Seminary from Ottawa to Edmonton.

The story goes something like this, though I've told it so many times now that I probably have embellished it a bit (which is my prerogative as I get older!).

When Metropolitan Lawrence was the Ukrainian Catholic bishop of Edmonton (and all of Alberta, including the Holy City of Lavoy – which is where I'm from), one day he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy at Saint Josaphat Cathedral.

A parishioner came up to him and asked him whether he knew that the artist-iconographer (Julian Buchmaniuk) who painted the icons at the Cathedral was fond of using real live people as models for the faces of Jesus, Mary, the saints, and the angels. Metropolitan Lawrence was aware of this, and he indeed could recognize the faces of several of his fellow Basilian Fathers in the faces of the male religious saints.

Well, the lady parishioner (whom I know well and has confirmed this story) pointed to an angel in the dome of the Cathedral, then pointed to herself, and simply smiled. Metropolitan Lawrence understood well that she wanted him to recognize her face as the model the iconographer had used for the face of the angel.

Metropolitan Lawrence looked at the lady, then at the angel. A second time, he looked at the lady, then at the angel. And a third time, he looked at the lady, then again at the angel. But no matter how hard he looked at the lady and the angel, he failed to see any resemblance whatsoever between the two!

[Students, you know the feeling: it's Mother's Day and you've forgotten to make mom a card!]

[Guys, you know this feeling too: you've forgotten your wife's birthday or your wedding anniversary, again!]

Metropolitan Lawrence was stuck.

However, and I believe divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit, he said, "Ah, I know what the iconographer did! He didn't paint your nose, nor your eyes, nor your lips. Instead, he looked at you and captured the absolute best in you! He saw your kindness and painted that. He saw your love for your family and painted that. Your compassion and love for neighbor, your humility, generosity, patience, joy, and so. And he captured it all!

As I reflect on my own relationship with God, I can't help but think that this is exactly how Jesus looks at us. He sees the absolute best in each and every one of us. And he draws these beautiful gifts out of us each day, along our earthly journey towards our heavenly home. After all, he is the Master Iconographer!

Precious are we in the eyes of God, so precious that he died on the cross for our sins and for our salvation.

As we celebrate Easter, let us take a moment to reflect on Jesus' passion and death upon the cross – the great sacrifice he makes for you and me, and recall his glorious resurrection and the gift of the newness of life that he offers us.

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Bishop David