

## **MISSIONARY SPIRIT**

*Witness of our life in Christ, Invitation of other to take part*

### **From the Pastoral Letter of His Beatitude Sviatoslav**

#### **The Missionary Spirit of the Parish Community**

Jesus Christ said to His disciples: “You are the salt of the earth... you are the light of the world” (Mt. 5:13-14), and by this He calls us to reach outside our church communities to carry Christ’s teaching into the world, to transform the world with the Spirit of Christ. A church community, renewed in the Holy Spirit, by its very life becomes a living sermon of Christ and His presence. Here it is worth mentioning one of the favorite phrases of Blessed John XXIII, that “the parish is the fountain at the center of the village, to which all come to quench their thirst.” It is our wish that our parishes become such spiritual well-springs so that people would be drawn to them, and be able to find support and strength, love and grace - in one word, salvation.

Returning to the Lord’s commission with which we began this letter, we will note: Jesus Christ teaches us that we are to be ready to bear witness to Him not only with our life, but also in word. Frequently it is the case today that Christians are ashamed to acknowledge their faith, hiding it by their silence and passivity, instead of defending the Church of Christ and standing in the defense of the rights and dignity of the human person. Our pastoral initiatives, catechesis, Divine services, the reading of God’s word, etc. should make us strong and unwavering in our faith, as well as always ready “to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Pt 3:15).

With particular recognition and thanks, I would like to mention today those priests and religious, who, guided by a missionary spirit, provide spiritual care to our faithful outside of the territory of our homeland - in particular, to our emigrants. I also acknowledge those who preach the word of God in prisons, in the military, and to all who have yet to know and encounter Christ in their lives. Our Church as a whole must support them and pray that they may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit in this most important ministry.