



40 years of faithful service

This spring, on the occasion of its nameday (Hram), *Saints Constantine and Elena* parish of Edmonton, AB, Canada, celebrates 40 years since the consecration of the church. This anniversary offers all of us the opportunity to thank God for the history of this church, for the example of steadfast faith, fruitful service on Canadian soil and the sharing from generation to generation of our Romanian traditions.

The history of this parish is linked to that of the first Romanian immigrants to Alberta, who came in 1898 from Boian of Bucovina. Their settlement received the name of their native village, and the church which they built was a copy of the one where they prayed on Bucovinian land. Fifty years later, their descendants founded *Sts. Constantine and Elena* parish of Edmonton. The love of God, the faith in the Savior's Resurrection, the desire to pass on the Orthodox values to their children and grandchildren, contributed in time to a better organization and the growth of the parish.

Subsequent to the building of the Hall, in 1965, the effort to build the church had begun. The holy place of worship was achieved as a result of much sacrifice, for the Church of Christ was founded on His sacrifice on the Cross and continued through the sacrifice of the martyrs and the faithful. In 1972, this sacrifice was rewarded with the consecration of the church. The names of those who worked earnestly were written among the founders and placed, together with the holy relics, in the foot of the Holy Table on which the bloodless sacrifice will forever be offered.

Throughout the years, the church has been adorned with Byzantine iconography and many other projects have changed the entrance and the general outlook of the church.

Everything that the founders and the benefactors of *Saints Constantine and Elena* parish started, must be continued. Now that the parish is blessed with such a beautiful place of worship, the responsibility of its present faithful is to continue this sacrificial ministry. And our sacrifice, as the Christians of the 21st century, is to confess and profess our faith to our children and grandchildren and to those who fell from the faith or those who never new the faith because they lacked the teachers and the confessors of the faith. If we fulfill our mandate, our names will be written among the church founders. If we confess Christ here on earth, we shall have a good response before Lord's judgment.

At this anniversary hour, we congratulate the Parish Priest, Fr. George Bazgan, the Church Board, the Ladies Auxiliary and all parishioners of *Saints Constantine and Elena* of Edmonton!

We pray that our Savior Jesus Christ reward plentifully all those who sacrificed for the strengthening of His Church and guide them on the path to salvation!

† Nicolae,

Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of the Americas