

Fr. Charles Baxter Bio

Father Charles Baxter, a devoted and accomplished leader in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, was born and raised in Vestal, New York. He is the youngest of four children born to George and Rose Baxter. Growing up in a close-knit neighborhood, Father Charles shared a special bond with his cousins, becoming a "big brother" to the children of his aunt and uncle, Shirley and John Buchma. His journey with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church began early, as he attended pysanky classes and dance rehearsals at St. John Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Johnson City, where he was baptized.

After graduating from Vestal Senior High School, Father Charles enrolled at the State University of New York College at Oswego in the fall of 1979. He graduated in the spring of 1984 with a focus on writing, journalism, and publishing. His career started at a community newspaper in Fulton, NY, and later at Publishing Services at Syracuse University. It was during this period that the Pastor at St. John's parish encouraged him to consider a vocation in ministry. In response to this calling, Father Charles enrolled at St. Sophia Seminary, located at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of USA's headquarters in South Bound Brook, New Jersey. He graduated in 1994 with a Master of Divinity Degree and was ordained to the Holy Priesthood on June 26, 1994, by Archbishop Antony.

Father Baxter's first pastoral assignment was at Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Youngstown, Ohio, where he served from October 1994 until February 2007. During his tenure, he led a large and vibrant parish community, overseeing numerous developments including the construction of a rectory, a choir director's residence, a pavilion, an Orthodox Center, and the consecration of an Orthodox Cemetery and Chapel. The parish continues to thrive with various active groups such as the sisterhood, altar servers, youth group, Ukrainian Orthodox League chapter, choir, and church school.

In February 2007, Father Baxter transitioned to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, receiving a Canonical Release from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. He was assigned to the Vancouver Island District, serving Saint George in Victoria, BC, and leading the reformation of St. Mary Protectress from Port Alberni to a new mission in Parksville, BC. Under his guidance, the parish successfully acquired a new church building in Parksville.

Father Baxter joined the Canadian Armed Forces as a Chaplain, with the rank of Captain, in the summer of 2009. After completing Basic Officer Training in December 2009, he served at the Canadian Forces Training Base in Wainwright and became the first Orthodox Priest to serve as a Chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces since World War II. His military service included postings in Edmonton, Alberta, 17 Wing Detachment in Dundurn, SK, and his final posting in Kingston, Ontario as the Chaplain to the Canadian Forces Joint Signal Regiment (CFJSR). He retired from the forces in August 2021 and resumed his pastoral ministry at Saint Anne Parish in Scarborough, Ontario.

In January 2023, following his election as Chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada at the 24th Sobor, Father Baxter moved to Winnipeg to fulfill his new responsibilities, continuing his lifelong dedication to his faith and community.

Father Baxter is thrilled to join All Saints Parish and looks forward to bringing his extensive experience and deep commitment to serving the parish community. He is eager to work with the parish family to foster spiritual growth, strengthen community bonds, and continue the rich traditions of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.