



Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven

pillars: She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her

wine; she hath also furnished her table.

She hath sent forth her maidens:



she crieth upon the highest places of the city,

Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for



him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,



Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.

Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

Sophia



A DEVOTIONAL NEWSLETTER OF ST. SOPHIA PARISH

St. Sophia Orthodox Church
195 Joseph St.
Victoria, BC
V8S 3H6
Canada

St. Sophia Orthodox Church

a Parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

*195 Joseph Street,
Victoria, British Columbia
Canada V8S 3H6*

email: info@saintsophia.ca

website: www.saintsophia.ca

Services are in English

Saturday

Vigil – 6 p.m. – Всенощное бдение

Sunday

Hours – 10 a.m. – Часы

Divine Liturgy – 10:30 a.m. – Божественная Литургия

Vespers – 5 p.m. – Вечерня

*Archpriest John Adams
Priest Philosoph Ublman
Protodeacon Gordian Bruce*



Rejoice and Be Glad!

Glory to God!

Our 26th Annual Pre-Nativity Concert, Arts, Crafts, Bake Sale and Church Mosaic Tour held on the evening of Friday November 24th and during the

day of Saturday November 25th was an amazing success!

Thank you to Annushka, this year's event coordinator and to **all** those who worked so hard on the concert rehearsals, trapeza decorating, creating artistic crafts, sewing, baking, and helping where needed.

Our parish depends solely and completely upon the generosity of parishioners' regular financial donation contributions, for:

General repairs and maintenance, mosaics and beautification of God's House, monthly operating costs (utilities, gas, candles, Communion Wine, prosphora supplies, etc).

Also, we are expected to tithe to the Synod, and it's a regular practice of Orthodox churches to give their own "widow's mites" as it were, to charities both local, and abroad... for those in need.

Thank you for your considerations.

December Parish Saint's Days

Congratulations to Reader Nicholas, Alec, Nikita, Katherine L, Katherine S, Catherine G, Caterina W, Andrew B, Andrew M, Andrei G, Andrei K, matushka Barbara, Julia H, Nicholas Bro., Nicholas Bri., Nicolai, Lucy S, and Naomi C. May God grant you all many, many, years!

November Church Cleaners *Thank you* Ivanov family!

November Church Flowers *Thank you*, Anna P

November Gardeners *Thank you* Melania, and those who helped!

2018 Sign Up Sheets

Three sheets are posted on the bulletin board. These activities are great for families or friends to do together!

- Monthly Church Cleaning
- **Monthly Purchase of Church Flowers for services, and arrangement**
- **The Green Team Gardeners (Melania coordinates)**

Congratulations!

On Saturday November 5th there were two baptisms! Welcome to our newest parish members, Paul and baby Sophia. May God grant them and their godparents John M; Natalia and Ilya many years! *As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, Alleluia!*

Thank you!

Greg W for enclosing the church's kitchen island!

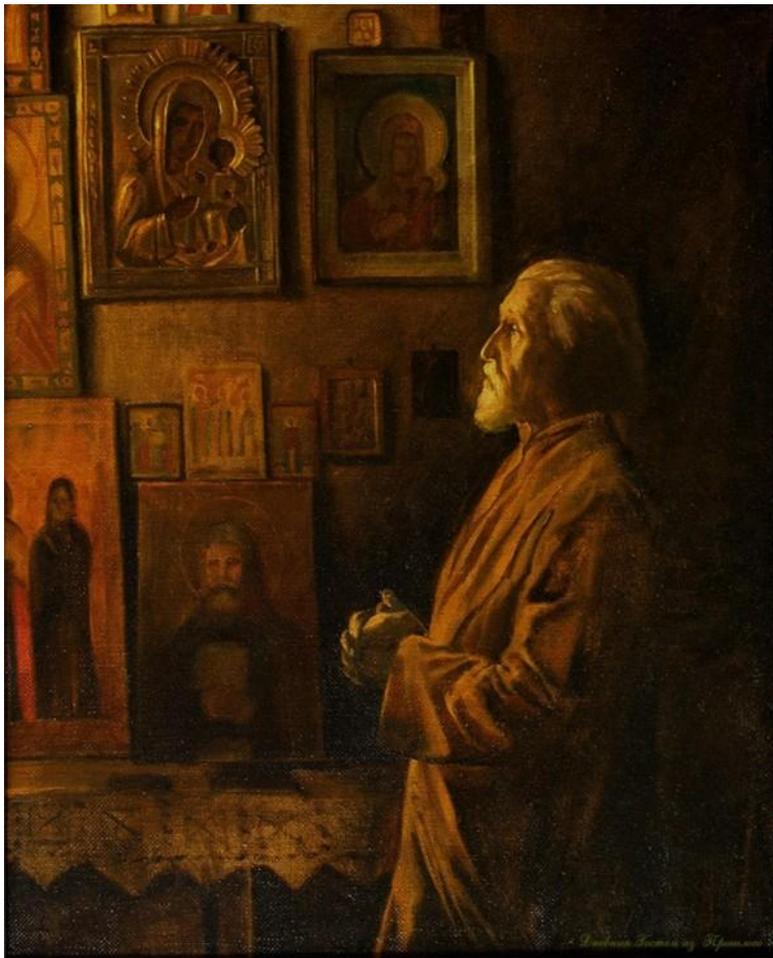
Bodily Fasting for the Soul's Benefit

The Nativity fast ... was instituted by the Church so that we would worthily greet the feast of the Nativity of Christ after having cleansed our hearts by prayer and repentance.

The establishment of the Nativity fast, like many other long fasts, dates back to the early days of Christianity. Already in the fourth century, St. Ambrose of Milan, Philastrius, and Blessed Augustine recall the Nativity fast in their works. St. Leo the Great wrote about the antiquity of the Nativity fast in the fifth century.

The Nativity fast is the final long fast of the year. It begins on November 15/28 and goes until December 25/January 7, forty days in duration, and therefore it is called the Forty Days in the Church typicon, just like Great Lent. Because the last day before the fast falls on the commemoration day

of the Apostle Phillip (November 14/27), this fast is also called the St. Phillip fast.



The Nativity fast is a winter fast; it serves to illumine the end of the year for us with a mystical renovation of our spiritual oneness with God and our preparation for the feast of the Nativity of Christ.

St. Leo the Great writes, “The very observation of abstinence is marked by four periods, so that throughout the course of the year we would know that we continually have need of purification, and that with a distracted life we always need to strive through fasting and almsgiving to eradicate

sin, which multiplies through the frailty of the flesh and unclean desires.”

According to the words of St. Leo the Great, the Nativity fast is a sacrifice to God for the fruits we have gathered. “As the Lord generously gave us the fruits of the earth,” writes the holy hierarch, “so should we also be generous to the poor during the fast.”

In the words of St. Simeon of Thessalonica, “The forty days of the Nativity fast is an image of the fast of Moses, who having fasted for forty days and forty nights, received the words of God inscribed on stone tablets. But having fasted for forty days, we gaze upon and receive the living Word from the Virgin, inscribed not on stones, but incarnate and born, and we partake of His Divine flesh.”

The Nativity fast was established so that by the day of Christ's Nativity we would have cleansed ourselves through repentance, prayer and fasting; so that with a pure heart, soul, and body we could reverently meet the Son of God Who has appeared to the world, and so that besides the usual gifts and sacrifices we would bring Him our pure heart and desire to follow His teaching.

The rule of the Church instructs what we must abstain from during the fasts... Foods from which we should abstain during the fasts are: meat, cheese, butter, milk, eggs, and sometimes fish, depending upon which of the holy fasts...

From December 20-25 (old style) the fast is intensified, and fish is not blessed even on Saturday and Sunday. Meanwhile, the civil New Year falls on these days [for those observing the Julian calendar], and we



Orthodox Christians have to be especially focused, so that we might not break the strict fast by parties, eating, and drinking wine.

Fasting bodily, we must also fast spiritually... Fasting is first of all man's spiritual struggle with his passions. St. John Chrysostom warns, "He is mistaken who thinks that the fast consists only in abstinence from food. True fasting is departing from evil."

Bodily fasting without spiritual fasting does not bring salvation of the soul; to the contrary, it can even be spiritually harmful if in abstaining from food a person is filled with an awareness of his superiority, knowing that he fasts. True fasting is bound up with prayer, repentance, refraining from passions and vices, uprooting evil deeds, forgiving offenses, abstaining from marital relations, avoiding parties, entertainment, theatres, and

watching television. Fasting is not a goal but a means- a means of humbling our flesh and cleansing it from sins.

Without prayer and repentance, fasting becomes no more than a diet...

St. Ignatius Brianchaninov: Learn to have restraint in food- by temperance you will bring health and strength to the body and vigor to the mind, so needed for the work of salvation...

St. Isaac the Syrian: Fasting with discernment is the spacious dwelling-place of all goodness. Whoever is lazy in fasting brings all goodness to wavering, because fasting was the commandment given to our nature from the beginning as a precaution to eating food, and by breaking the fast our first created fell.

St. Ambrose of Optina: You must fast sensibly; try to conduct the coming fast judiciously, considering your physical strength.

-The Joy of All Who Sorrow Church, Michurinsk



Of these, the First Hour is an extension of Matins and is connected with it. The central prayer of each Hour is the Lord's Prayer. In addition, each Hour has a set of psalms, hymns and a distinctive prayer for that Hour.

Each Hour has a particular theme, and sometimes even a sub-theme, based upon some aspect of the Christ-event and salvation history.

The general themes of each of the Hours are: the coming of the true light (First); the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (Third); the crucifixion and passion of the Lord (Sixth); the death and burial of the Lord (Ninth).

The Orthodox Church measures the day from one sunset to the next. Accordingly, the evening marks the beginning of each day.

All days, whether ordinary, feast, or fast days, begin liturgically at sunset with the vespers service.

Genesis 1: 3-5 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. **And the evening and the morning were the first day.**

Pearls of Wisdom

And the Word became flesh! ...in order to make us earthly beings into heavenly ones, in order to make sinners into saints; in order to raise us up from corruption into incorruption, from earth to heaven; from enslavement to sin and the devil – into the glorious freedom of children of God; from death – into immortality, in order to make us sons of God and to seat us together with Him upon the Throne as His royal children. - *St. John of Kronstadt*

All that you can take with you is what you've given away. - *Unknown*

Let us make the sign of the Cross over our doors, and on our brow, and on our breast, and on our lips, and over every member of our body, and let us arm ourselves with this invincible weapon of Christianity, the vanquisher of

death, the hope of the faithful, the light of all the ends of the earth, the key that opens Paradise and overcomes heresies, the confirmation of the Faith, the great preserver and the saving boast of the Orthodox. We shall, O Christians, wear this weapon on our person in every place, by day and by night, and at every hour and every minute. Do nothing without it, whether you sleep, or rise from sleep, work, eat, drink, find yourself along the way, or sail upon the sea, or cross a stream – adorn all the members of your body with the life-giving Cross, and no evil will come to you, and no wound will touch your body (cf. Psalm 90:10). - *St Ephraim the Syrian*

I do not know how to explain to you the sublime mystery of Holy Communion, my sisters. It is beyond my power...Whenever I myself have thought about this, out of nowhere the question enters my mind: Can you really explain what air is, what bread is or what water is, and yet you cannot live without air, bread or water for even a little while? And this brings me peace... - *Abbess of Ljubostinja*

How can we love God if we don't love even ourselves? If we loved ourselves, we would do all the things that we do differently: we would consider the consequences. We often don't care about the consequences of what happens to us. It is almost as if we are riding a bicycle downhill without brakes. The wind is fresh, of course, but when we encounter an obstacle, we are unable to stop. However, we climb that hill over and over again, for the hundredth or a thousandth time. Still, the experience that we get every time makes us hope to change for the better, to become more careful, attentive, and cautious. Over time, if the Lord allows us to live to an advanced age, we will start to treat things that happen around us with greater circumspection. Or won't. At least, we would like to. - *Priest Valery Zakharov*

You can't lie a little, sin a little, love a little. You either love or you don't. You either lie or you don't. - *Priest Artemius Tonoyan*

Each time we participate in the Sacrament of Sacraments, the Eucharist, the Divine Liturgy, we become the Body of Christ. We are in anticipation of the glory to come. We are already in that glory, we already enjoy this divine

life, we are already sitting to the right side of God the Father, and we are already exalted to the Heaven with Christ. This is what happens in the Church. This is what the Church is all about. - *Archpriest Demetrius Basalygo*

Lying before you and me, before all of us, brothers and sisters, is the Nativity: God is born as a person “so that we might receive life through Him” and so that through God we might perfect both soul and body. That is something easiest to achieve through prayer and fasting, which cleanse and purify both body and soul, so that the sweetest Divine Infant, our Lord Jesus, might joyously come to dwell in them, and that by God our human essence, in all its infinite variety might be fulfilled and perfected. For that was why your body and your soul, O man, were created, so that they might be fulfilled through God and [you] might live in God in God’s kingdom above. Our God-given teachers in this matter are humble prayer and fasting with humility. They are sacred and fundamental virtues [found in the] Gospels. May they soar with us, may they anticipate and proclaim to us and to all people throughout Creation the all-salvific and all-joyous Good News: Christ is born! -Ven. St. Justin (Popovich) *Nativity 1970*

From Birth to Baptism: The Glory of Christmastide

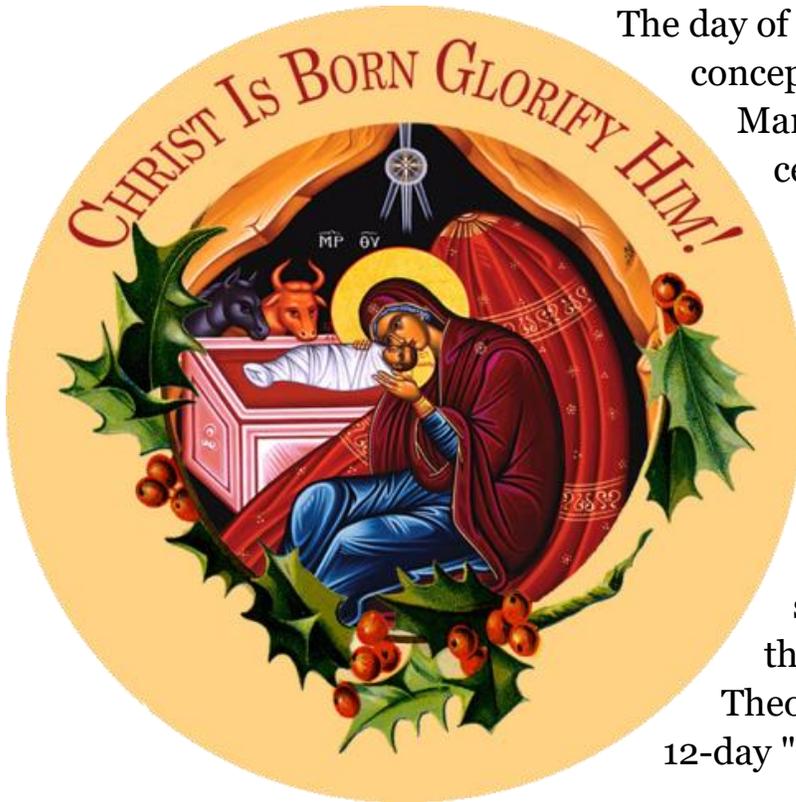
One of the many wonderful aspects of the Orthodox-Catholic celebration of the birth of Christ is the traditional season of "Christmastide" or the "12 Days of Christmas."

*Editor's Note: Christmastide begins on the Nativity, not before it.

This is one of those rare periods in the life of the Church where all fasting is suspended and where the fulness of Christ's Incarnation is on display in the following days.

Thankfully, people have come to understand more and more that the feast of Christmas was not established as a replacement of a "pagan holiday" (as is proposed in popular discussion), but is rather an intentional celebration of the unique birth of our Lord according to the flesh. The Annunciation

(celebrated March 25/April 7) was celebrated as a feast much earlier in the life of the Church, and the tradition of Christmas was originally established (in the west) that Christ was born nine months later on December 25/January 7.



The day of the Annunciation (Christ's conception in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit) was first celebrated on April 6 in the eastern churches, and the totality of Christ's Incarnation (birth, circumcision, and baptism) was also celebrated nine months later on January 6. Once St John Chrysostom brought the celebration of Christmas (from Rome) to the Church of Antioch, it soon spread throughout the rest of the eastern churches. The feast of Theophany was kept as the end of this 12-day "Christmas season."

This period of Christmastide is fast free, but not because we are fulfilling the desires of our flesh and embracing gluttony. Instead, it is fast free because we are celebrating the purification and redemption of creation that is wrought by Christ's Incarnation (whereby all foods are "holy" and acceptable for Christians). We will traditionally give gifts to one another, imitating both the magi of the east (who brought gifts to the Savior) and the Theotokos who offered Christ as a gift for the life of the world.

On the day after Christmas (Dec. 26/Jan. 8), a synaxis- a coming together or gathering- of all the feasts and the whole life of the Theotokos is celebrated; first and foremost because by giving birth to Christ, she became an instrument of our salvation through his Incarnation. Mary served as the prototype of a living "temple of the Holy Spirit," and those of the Church after her- both individually and collectively-imitate her in this regard.

This celebration of Mary is followed by the commemoration (Dec. 27/Jan. 9) of the first Martyr of the Church ("Protomartyr") after Christ's ascension: the deacon Stephen. The Kontakion of this feast tells the story beautifully, in that: "Yesterday the Master arrived in the flesh; today the servant departs from the flesh. Yesterday he who reigns was born; today the servant dies for him by stoning." As a holy martyr, Stephen was a true "witness" (which comes from the Greek word for "martyr") of the importance of Christ's Incarnation.



On the 29th of December, we remember the horrific slaying of approximately 14,000 infants at the behest of Herod, whose jealousy of the coming Messiah was manifested in this slaughter (and including his own child). This day implores us to emphatically not be like Herod in our own attempted destruction of Christ in our lives. A life in Christ is a life of

martyrdom (as shown by Stephen) and submission (as shown by Mary); in other words, it is a life of humility. By fearing this humility, Herod "lamented that his power would soon be destroyed" (Kontakion) and sought to destroy Christ instead.

The Sunday after Nativity serves as a commemoration of many of Christ's relatives "according to the flesh." These "ancestors of God" serve as the first examples of how we are to both worship and imitate our newborn Savior: Joseph the Betrothed, the elderly man entrusted with the care of the virgin Mary, believed in the Lord through an angel and overcame the temptations of Satan. With the magi of the east, he too bowed down and worshipped the newborn King. David, the king and psalmist, serves as an Icon of true repentance and provided the people of God with an abundance of prayers and songs for both our own acts of repentance and the continual praise of Christ. These psalms, of course, also serve as beautiful reminders of Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection. And finally, James, the "brother of God"

(being either the son or nephew of Joseph), was the first leader of the Church of Jerusalem: "As the Lord's disciple, O righteous One, you received the Gospel; as Martyr, you have unwavering courage; as the Lord's brother, you have forthrightness; as Hierarch, intercession" (Apolytikion).

The circumcision of Christ is then celebrated (Jan. 1/14), not only as a beginning to his fulfillment of the Law, and the transition of God's revelation to mankind (after the fall) from "shadow" (Heb. 8:5) to reality, but also as the occasion of the naming of the child as Jesus (which means "Saviour"). We too receive a new name through the Church in the mystery of Baptism- the Christian fulfillment of circumcision- after the example of Christ. Through this, our whole life is dedicated to Christ through the



intercession of saints (Heb. 12:1; Rev. 8:4) and the protection of angels (St. Matt. 18:10; Jude 1:9).

On January 3/16, the holy prophet Malachi, the last of the so-called "minor

prophets," is commemorated. Malachi prophesied in the middle of the 5th century before Christ (B.C.), within the Persian court of Artaxerxes, that the "Sun of Righteousness" would soon enter the world, with "healing on his wings" (Mal. 4:2).

On the following day, the original "seventy apostles" of Christ are commemorated (cf. Luke 10:1-16), who were first sent into the world with the Gospel message. These men and women remind us that, as we have received the infant Christ in his Nativity, it is now our turn to share him

(imitating Mary) with the rest of the world. We must take this message of an infant King of Kings, along with the good news of his life, death and resurrection, into all creation (St. Mark 16:15), just as these first apostles and disciples of Christ did.



And finally, we conclude the Christmastide with the Great Feast of the Theophany (sometimes called Epiphany) on January 6/19th. In the baptism of Christ, by the hands of the servant John (the Forerunner), the Divinity of Christ and the full mystery of the all-Holy Trinity are revealed. "Theophany" means "divine manifestation," and we are reminded continually, in the life of the Church and her worship, of this manifestation of Christ as the "God-Man," along with the

unique and incomprehensible mystery of the Trinity.

In fact, the abundance of our rituals regarding the sanctification of this created order- including within our churches- is a reflection of this Incarnational mystery: "Our reverence, our veneration is never related to 'matter,' but always to that which it reveals, of which it is an epiphany, i.e., a manifestation and presence ... consecration in the Church is not a creation of 'sacred objects' ... but their referral to their original and at the same time ultimate meaning" (Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 61). Along these lines, we hear in the Kontakion: "You appeared to the world today, and Your light, O Lord, has left its mark upon us." We must share this light with the "darkness" of the world, as "little Christs" (i.e., "Christians"), cooperating with the Spirit of God in the redemption of creation through Christ Jesus.

Christ, who entered this world with the humility of a child born to die- being wrapped in the swaddling burial cloths of death- who by his own death defeated death itself.

Ultimately, then, the meaning of both the Nativity of Christ (i.e., Christmas), and the entirety of the Christmastide, is the receiving and giving of Christ, who is truly the Gift and the Giver, the Receiver and the Received.

In this Eucharistic Mystery, we are called to imitate Christ's Mother in our sharing of Christ with the world; to imitate Stephen in our being a true "witness" (i.e., "martyr") for Christ, to this world that would seek to imitate Herod; to imitate a life of true repentance like David and a life of simple, prayerful obedience like the elderly Joseph; to imitate the Theophany of Christ with our own manifestation of the light of Christ in the darkness of this world; and to be a true reflection of the all-Holy Trinity through our unity, communion, and mutual love within the Church.

We receive the uncreated light of the Christ-child on the day of Nativity, and are made ready to share that light with the whole world by the end of the Christmas season. May we all come to fervently appropriate the commemorations and feasts of this wonderful time of the year; not only for our own sakes, but especially for the life of the world. - *Vincent Martini*
-<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/58528.htm>



Righteous Joseph the Betrothed

When the Virgin Mary became of the age when unable to remain living in the Temple, the priests met in council and discussed the matter. They said to Zacharias the High Priest, “Do you not stand before the altar of the Lord and enter into the holy place? Petition the Lord concerning her and whatsoever the Lord makes manifest to you, that you must perform.”

This he did. While they all prayed he entered the holy place wearing the vestment called the breastplate of judgment and petitioned God about how Mary would be cared for.

An angel came to Zacharias and said, “Go forth and call together all the widowers among the people and have each man bring his rod or staff. And the one to whom the Lord shall show a sign, shall be the husband of Mary.”



The matter concerning to whom the virgin should be given and be betrothed would be resolved in accordance with the prophecy of Isaiah, where he says, ‘there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a blossom shall come up from his root’ [Is 11:1]. In this way God told Zacharias to betroth the virgin so that the devil might overlook her as the possible virgin of Isaiah’s prophecy.

One of the priests by name Abiathar stood up and said, “Hear me, O sons of Israel, and receive my words into your ears. Since the time when this temple was built by Solomon, there have been in it virgins, the daughters of kings and the daughters of prophets, and of high priests and priests. They were great and worthy of admiration. But when the maidens came to the proper age they were given in marriage and followed the path of their mothers; and they were pleasing to God. However, Mary has found a new order of life, for she has vowed to remain a virgin to God. Wherefore, it seems to me, that by the answer we

received as a result of our inquiry, we should try and ascertain to whom Mary should be entrusted.”

The others approved of what he said. A lot was cast by the priests on the twelve tribes and it fell to the tribe of Judah. Then all the eligible widowers of Judah were summoned. They called out, “Let every man who has no wife come and bring his rod in hand.”

At that time there was a widower named Joseph who was about eighty years of age. He was of the tribe of Judah and the royal house of David. He had been married for forty years and was a widower... He was a carpenter by trade and lived honourably. His first wife Salome had borne seven children: James, Jude, Simon and Joses; and three daughters: Salome (future mother of Apostles James and John the Theologian), Esther and a third girl.

Joseph came with other widowers and handed his rod over to the high priest. The angel told the priest to place the rods in the Holy of Holies where they



were to remain until the following day. The sign that was to be shown was that out of whoever’s rod a flower budded forth was the one to whom the virgin was to be betrothed.

The next day all the widowers assembled and the high priest went into the altar to retrieve the rods. After they had been distributed no sign appeared. The priest then put on the sacerdotal robe and the twelve bells and entered the Holy of Holies offering a sacrifice. As he entered an angel pointed out to him that there was the shortest rod which had not been taken out with the others. The angel told him to take it and the sign will appear. The rod was that of Joseph. Joseph since he was very old had not requested his rod back feeling he was too old for this task anyway. The priest called to him, “Joseph, come and receive the rod; for we are waiting for thee.”

Joseph was trembling as he came forward. As soon as he touched the rod a flower budded and flowered from its top.

All those gathered congratulated Joseph for the blessing he had received in his old age. The priests said to him, “Take her, because of all the tribe of Judah you alone have been chosen by God. Take the virgin of the Lord and keep her for Him.”

Joseph, at first resisting this responsibility replied that he was a very old man with children and grandchildren... but not wanting to despise the will of God, then agreed to be her guardian. - <http://www.stgeorgegreenville.org/our-faith/feasts-of-theotokos/entry-to-temple/selecting-husband>



FOOD ITEMS

peanut butter
jam
cookies
hot chocolate
granola or fruit bars
bottled water

CLOTHING/GOOD USED OR NEW

socks
toques
gloves
sweaters
jackets
sweat pants and shirts
hoodies

AND

sleeping bags
blankets
lip balm
tooth paste and toothbrushes

CARTS

During the Nativity Fast we have several ways to remember others who have less.

Please remember the donation box, as we are asked for donations towards many churches, monasteries, and organizations.

The hamper is also available for non-perishable foods until the Yolka.

The **CARTS** hamper is also available.



Juliana's Story: How One Girl Raised Funds for Orphans in Haiti

Juliana threw a party for Orthodox orphans in

Haiti. For her own birthday this year, she asked her mother if she could do something special.

Juliana wanted her friends to come to a party with a bigger meaning and an emphasis on someone other than herself. She invited some of her friends to bring 12 non-perishable food items to her party, rather than a gift for her.

Once 'the groceries' arrived, mother and daughter set them up in a large room, to 'play store'. Each girl was given a bag, and had to 'shop around' to fill their bag with the collected items. This helped divide and share the items evenly. They later took the food to a local food bank.

Juliana also asked her friends for a donation for the orphans in Haiti. She had heard about the orphans at the Orthodox Mission in Haiti at her parish, and felt compelled to help them: "Because it would be sad not to have a mother and father."

"The girls embraced it and what happened amongst these non-Orthodox girls, some of whom do not even belong to a Church, was completely Christian. Beautiful, to say the least. I feel blessed to have been a witness," said her mother.

Juliana and her friends collected \$36.11 for the orphans and sent the money to the Fund for Assistance. What a beautiful way to teach children to care for others! Thank you, Juliana! <http://www.fundforassistance.org/>

Practical Tips

Don't Be Shy!

There are some who upon arrival to church simply won't venerate the icons. When we enter church for service, it is customary and proper for all Orthodox Christians to venerate the holy icons.

It is disrespectful not to greet our Saviour's icon, or His Holy Mother's, or the festal icon if there is one.

It is customary when venerating an icon, to make two reverences (sign of the cross followed by a bow), sign of the cross a third time followed by kissing the icon, then a final reverence (sign of the cross followed by a bow).

When done with love and reverence, you simply can't get it wrong!

Parish Lenten Recipes

St. Sophia Parish's FREE Lenten Cookbook Recipes "Come and Dine"
<http://comeanddinerecipe.blogspot.ca/>

Links

St. Sophia Orthodox Church, Victoria BC

<http://saintsophia.ca/>

St. Sophia THE ARK, Children's Quarterly

<http://www.saintsophia.ca/the-ark/>

St. Sophia Parish's FREE Lenten Cookbook Recipes "Come and Dine"

<http://comeanddinerecipe.blogspot.ca/>

Official site of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

<http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/synod/indexeng.htm>

Official site of the Montreal and Canadian Diocese

<http://mcdiocese.com/en/>

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Vancouver BC

<http://russianorthodoxchurch.ca/en/>

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Vancouver BC

http://www.stnicolaschurch.ca/home_eng.html

Pravoslavie.Ru

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/>

Morning Offering by Abbot Tryphon

<http://blogs.ancientfaith.com/morningoffering/>

Holy Trinity Monastery Jordanville, New York

<http://www.jordanville.org/>

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Vancouver BC

<http://russianorthodoxchurch.ca/en/>

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Vancouver BC

http://www.stnicolaschurch.ca/home_eng.html

Pravoslavie.Ru

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/>

Morning Offering by Abbot Tryphon

<http://blogs.ancientfaith.com/morningoffering/>

Holy Trinity Monastery Jordanville, New York

<http://www.jordanville.org/>

Western America Diocese Official Site

<http://www.wadiocese.org/en/>

*“We knew not whether we
were in heaven or earth...*

*We only know that God dwells
there among men, and their
service is fairer than
the ceremonies of
other nations.”*

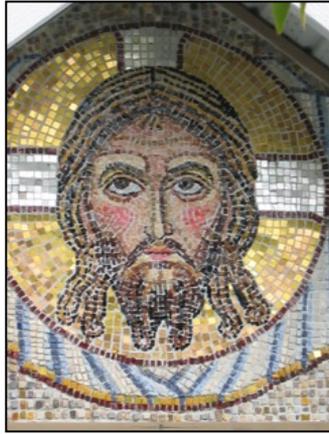
The Orthodox Church

With these words, envoys sent from Russia by Prince Vladimir in the year 987 recorded their impression of Constantinople's awesome Orthodox Cathedral, Hagia Sophia. They had been sent to search for the true religion. Within a year of their report, Prince Vladimir and the Russian people were baptized in Christ by Orthodox missionaries. Today, as in Prince Vladimir's time, the Orthodox Church – fully aware that man is a union of body and soul – uses all the beauty of creation to move her faithful children to prayer and worship: icons, beautiful singing, sweet-smelling incense, and majestic services.

The Greek word 'Orthodoxia' means 'correct praise' or 'correct teaching' and in the Orthodox worship the praise and teaching are closely interwoven.

Jesus Christ founded His Church through the Apostles. By the grace received from God at Pentecost, the Apostles established the Church throughout the world. In Greece, Russia, and elsewhere, the True Apostolic Church continues to flourish, preserving the Faith of Christ pure and unchanged.





*“Christ the Power of God,
and the Wisdom of God”*

- First Corinthians

Troparion in the Second Tone

*We bow down before Thine all pure image, O Good One,
asking forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ God; for
Thou wast well pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh of
Thine own will, that Thou mightest save what Thou hadst
created from slavery to the enemy. Wherefore, we cry out to
Thee in thanksgiving: Thou hast filled all things with joy,
O our Saviour, Who hast come to save the world.*

Kontakion in the Second Tone

*O uncircumscribable Word of the Father, knowing the
victorious image, uninscribed and divinely wrought, of Thine
ineffable and divine dispensation towards man, of Thy true
incarnation, we honour it with veneration.*