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 Uhlman
Protodeacon Gordian Bruce

November 2018 Sophia Issue #79 Services

Saturday November 3 - *Pannykhida 5:30pm;* ***Vigil 6pm***
Daylight Savings! "Fall Back" 1 hour at midnight!
Sunday November 4 - Liturgy 10:30am

- *Sunday Evening Vespers - 5pm*

Saturday November 10 - Vigil 6pm

Sunday November 11 - Liturgy 10:30am

- *Sunday Evening Vespers - 5pm*

Saturday November 17 - Vigil 6pm
Sunday November 18- Liturgy 10:30am

- *Sunday Evening Vespers- 5pm*

Saturday November 24- Vigil 6pm
Sunday November 25 - Liturgy 10:30am

- *Sunday Evening Vespers- 5pm*

November Parish Saint's Days

Congratulations to Victoria, Dimitri, Demetrius, Gregory, Michael A., Anastasia, and Stephanie. May God grant you many, years!

One of the guest speakers at the October 27th conference is St. Sophia parish's Reader Igor K

Igor Krasnov

Reader Igor's Conference Topic: **Nicholas II and the Sacredness of a Monarchy: Truth and Myth Behind the Relations between the Power and Christianity**. We look forward to reading his dissertation in future Sophia issues. Reader Igor has also been providing the Sophia with Monthly Parish Library Book Features in Russian, as well as other material found from various sources regarding the past **100 Years without the Tsar.** *Thank you* Reader Igor!

Home Stays Wanted

This year, the World Accordion and Tango Festival will be held for the first time in Canada. Traditionally, this competition offers a *home stay* for contestants coming from far away. These talented young musicians are usually billeted with local families. It would be amazing if a few Victoria families or individuals could billet one Russian, one Lithuanian, and a Lithuanian father with a 13 year old. They will be arriving November 10th and leaving November 16th. They will be at the UVIC School of Music or attending events most of the time while in Victoria. If you can help, please contact Aleksandar at donmaconi@gmail.com Thank you.

Thank You – October Church Cleaners, Florists & Gardeners

Thank you to those who cleaned the church; who arranged the beautiful church flowers, and gardened in October.

Upcoming 27th Annual Nativity Concert, Arts and Crafts Fair, Bake, Preserves Sale, Raffle Church Mosaic Tour

Time to start thinking *and* doing!

The Pre-Nativity Concert is 7 – 8 pm and the 1 hour grand opening of following the event from 8 – 9 pm, Friday November 23rd. It begins again the next morning Saturday November 24th at 10 am, the Mosaics Tour will be at noon, and the Arts and Crafts Fair will end at 1 pm. Posters and Invitations will be coming soon. M Barbara and Marina will be coordinating this event. Please keep an eye out for the volunteer signup sheets which will soon be posted on the bulletin board. There are *many* important volunteer opportunities which will need filling.

- Filling in the cashiering shifts needed for one hour on Concert Night and the next day from 10 am – 1pm
- Helping set up/taking down of the concert chairs upstairs to downstairs
- Baking (with <u>each</u> item securely <u>pre-wrapped</u> with listed ingredients)
- Making preserves of jam, jellies, relishes, and chutneys
- Crotchet, knitted, sewn arts
- Arts, crafts, cards
- Kitchen help with the tea/coffee/hot cider
- Clean up *both* Friday night and Saturday morning/afternoon

Two Parishioners' Italian Visit

On the tiny Venetian island of Torcello, sits a masterpiece of Byzantine mosaic art within the

7th century Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta. (Cathedral of the Assumption of St. Mary)

The original building, its renovated exterior and the traces of the original Baptistery date back to 639.

The grounds behind the church were fenced into quadrants and part of an active archeological exploration.

Inside, the mosaics are dated 11th to 13th century; and are stunningly powerful, vast in size and extensively cover the forward central Apse; the forward right Apse, and the rear wall of the Cathedral.

Attempting to be mindful of the request to not take photos inside the Church, we purchased a printed copy of the largest mosaic, but snapped a couple of shots in our child-like wonder!

In the Central Forward Apse; the Church's Namesake, **we see the mosaic our parish copied into our own altar, the mosaic of The Most Holy Mother of God.**

Unlike the busy city of Venice, Torcello is a sleepy little island. Torcello is hospitable to tourists and studded with pomegranate and olive trees, which added pleasant impressions to this 'magnificent' visit.

On Christian Parenting

St. Gregory the Theologian writes; "This is the intent of God who for our sake was made man and became poor, in order to raise our flesh and restore his image and remake man, that we might all become one in Christ, who perfectly became in all of us all that he is himself, that we might no longer be male and female, Scythian, slave or freeman, the distinctions of the flesh, but *might bear in ourselves only the stamp of God* by whom and for whom we were made, so far formed and modeled by him as to be recognized by it alone…"

To be "known as Christ's" means that we are stamped by God and recognized by that stamp alone. To implement his vision for Christian parenting he develops at least five basic principles.

1. The parents' love for Christ has a direct relationship to how the children love Christ.
2. The parents must set an example through their ascetic life (and efforts).
3. The parents must constantly struggle to mature their prayer lives.
4. Parenting begins prior to conception and ends at the time of the death of the child.
5. The family's participation in the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church is central to the formation of the child.

In light of these five points, it should be noted that none of these points is mutually exclusive, but integral to the whole process of child-raising.
- Excerpted from "*Glory and Honour; Orthodox Christian Resources on Marriage*."

In Raising them Right, **St. Theophan the Recluse** writes…. "A great influence is exercised on the child by frequently taking him to Church, by having him kiss the Holy Cross, the Gospel, the icons, and by covering him with the veils. Likewise, at home frequently placing him under the icons, frequently signing him with the sign of the Cross, sprinkling him with holy water, the burning of incense, making the sign of the Cross over his cradle, his food, and everything connected to him, the blessing of a priest, the bringing into the house of icons from Church, the service of molebens – and

in general everything from the Church, in a wondrous way warms and nourishes the life of grace in the child, and is always the most safe and impenetrable protection against the attacks of the invisible dark powers who everywhere are ready to penetrate into the developing soul so as to infect it by their activity. Behind this visible protection there is an invisible one: the guardian angel placed by the Lord to protect the child from the very minute of his Baptism.

A prayer for parents from **Elder Porphyrios:**

"Lord Jesus Christ, give Your light to my children. I entrust them to You. You gave them to me, but I am weak and unable to guide them, so, please, illuminate them."

St. Alexander of Munich

The Holy Martyr **Alexander Schmorell** was a medical student during World War II and one of the founding members of the anti-Nazi group, the White Rose.

Along with the other members of the White Rose, he tried to rally popular support amongst Germans to try to resist Hitler and the Nazi regime.

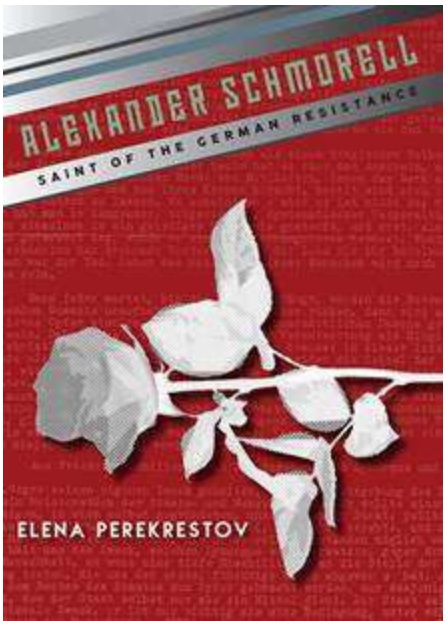
He was arrested in February 1943 and was executed on July 13, 1943, at Stadelheim Prison in Munich.

On 5 February 2012, he was glorified at the Cathedral of the Holy New-Martyrs and Confessors of Russia in Munich, Germany. He is commemorated by the Church on July 13.

St. Alexander was born in Russia of a German father, a doctor, who had been established in Russia for years, and a Russian mother. It was for this

reason that Alexander was christened into the Orthodox faith. And indeed, Alexander was raised Orthodox, despite the fact that both his father and his step-mother were Roman Catholic. He participated in catechism classes, went to church frequently and was regularly to be seen with a Bible. That he was familiar with texts of the Church Fathers was obvious even from his correspondence.

In May, 1942, the White Rose leaflets spread throughout all of Munich, typewritten texts calling upon the people of Germany to resist Hitler and sabotage all Nazi endeavors. Christian values and culture were showed opposing pagan Nazism. People would find these leaflets, which denounced "the clique that has yielded to base instinct," calling for the renewal of the "gravely-wounded German spirit from within," on bulletin boards and telephone booths, in doorways and store shelves. After some time, the White Rose epistles were sent by the thousands in the mail to addressees on the territory of the Third Reich. The lofty language in elaboration of these thoughts revealed that the authors were from the intelligentsia. But no one could imagine that the fight to the death against Hitler was spawned in the city called the "capital of the National Socialist Movement," by students from Munich University.



You may read about this 'Modern Saint' – *Alexander Schmorell, Saint of the German Resistance*, in our Saint Sophia Parish Library.

Pearls of Wisdom

Understanding… Whatever our limited mind cannot understand should be resolved with the following answer: "God is our Lord and the Master of everything that exists in the cosmos. He reveals His will to us through the

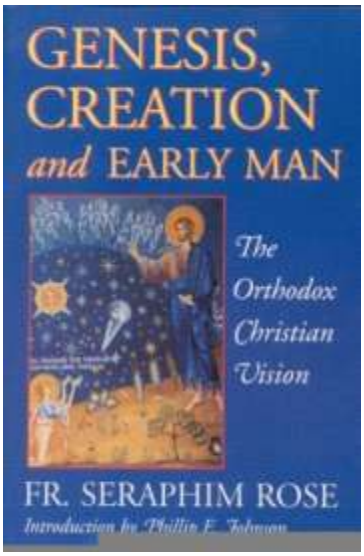
Holy Scriptures and through the activity of His providence for His creation. He commanded us to act according to His Will without any doubt in its holiness, wisdom and justice. For He is the Lord with a pure conscience, fulfilling His holy will in that calling or profession into which He has had the goodwill to place us. - *St. John Tobolsk* in *"The Sunflower"*

Faith... Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. - *Hebrews 11:1, KJV*

Wisdom - From the Elders of Optina... We are obliged to love everyone but we don't dare demand that everyone love us. - *St. Anatoly*

The most difficult thing is prayer. Every virtue becomes habit out of practice, but we need to force ourselves to pray right up until death itself. By prayer our "old man" is opposed, and the enemy especially rises up against a person who is praying. - *St. Barsanuphius*

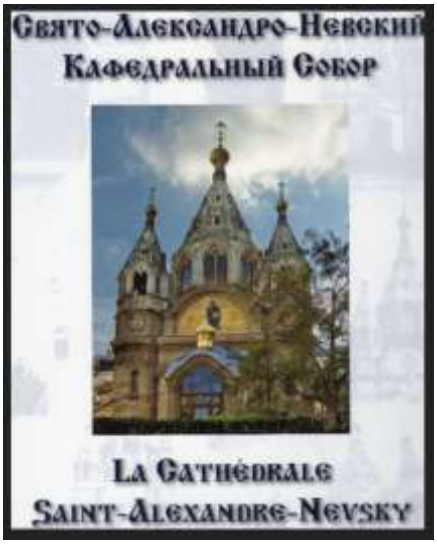
November Parish Library Features



Genesis, Creation and Early Man: the Orthodox Christian Vision

By Fr. Seraphim Rose

Amidst the creation/evolution debate that is now raging, with evidence being offered for both sides, few have made use of what Fr. Seraphim Rose called "the missing evidence:" the teaching of the ancient Orthodox Holy Fathers on the events of creation, the first-created world, the natures of created things, and the original nature of man. A vital answer to the contemporary "crisis of meaning," this book sheds startling new light on the mysteries of our origin. The Divine vision of the ancient Fathers opens up unforeseen dimensions of the creation: deeper levels of reality that cannot be reached through rational or scientific means.



-Александро-Невский Кафедральный Собор / Le Cathedrale Saint-Alexandre-Nevsky. - Paris: Edition du Conseil Paroissial, 2011, 127 p. илл.

Свято-Александро-Невский Кафедральный Собор – старейший православный собор в Париже. Он был освящен 12 сентября 1861 года. В начале 20-го века этот храм стал духовным центром всех православных духовных страждущих, которые бежали от безбожной власти и гонений в России. Это красочное русско-французское издание подготовлено к 150-летию святыни, в нем рассказывается о ее истории, архитектуре и реликвиях.

St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral is the oldest Christian Orthodox place of worship in Paris. It was consecrated in 1861 for Russian emigrants, and it provided spiritual consolation to thousands of Russian refugees in the beginning of the 20th century. This Russian-French lavishly illustrated book provides information about the Cathedral's history, architecture and relics.

Our Own Personal Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit:

When the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, St. Peter the Apostle fled from the Cross… St. James the Apostle fled from the Cross… and St. Andrew the Apostle fled from the Cross!

In fact, the only Apostle who stood fast by Jesus in His hour of greatest trial … was St. John - and he was a mere youth! Where

were the Apostles, the chosen disciples, those future leaders of the Orthodox Church? Hiding! Scared for their lives! As far from the Cross as they could possibly be in Jerusalem!

…Many of us Orthodox Christians, sad to say, are spiritual cowards who would flee from the Cross before its shadow could even darken our path…

…In today's Gospel for the Sunday after the Holy Cross, our Lord exhorts whoever would follow Him to "deny himself and take up his cross". "His cross" - that means you and I, our own personal cross!

…We wear the cross as a reminder of our fidelity to Christ and to witness on behalf of our Orthodox Christian faith to others. A terrible means of torture, dishonor, and painful, ignominious death has become for us Christians a symbol of victory, love, forgiveness, and salvation!

But is that all that our Crucified Savior means when He bids us to take up our cross? Is wearing a cross enough? Is venerating the Holy Cross in church today enough? Is singing, "Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship," enough?

…Our Lord declares, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. What "cross" has our Lord assigned to you? What is your personal cross?

Perhaps you have a chronic illness or physical defect that simply won't go away. That may be your cross!

Perhaps you have a weakness for a particular passion or vice such as anger, or lust, or gluttony, or envy, or pride. That may be your cross!

Perhaps there was something terrible you did or something good you did not do earlier in your life, which you deeply regret and which simply won't fade from memory, the guilt persisting and convicting you of sin, even after you've confessed it in Holy Confession. That may be your cross!

Perhaps you have a bad marriage or a poor relation with a son or daughter or mother or father or brother or sister, and, no matter what efforts you make, nothing seems to help. That may be your cross!

Perhaps someone you know and love suffers from a fatal disease or a burdensome handicap, and there's nothing you can do about it except pray for that person and care for that person. That may be your cross!

Whatever your personal cross happens to be, know that you have one. Each of us Christians has one - perhaps more than one. It stands squarely in the doorway to the Kingdom of Heaven. There's no way around it. If we wish to enter our Lord's Kingdom, we will, sooner or later, have to pick up that cross and carry it with us into the Kingdom.

May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ give each of us the strength to do so. Amen. - *Excerpts from Father Alexander Webster, Dean of Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary The V. Rev. Archpriest Alexander F.C. Webster, Ph.D.* https://orthodoxlife.org/editorial/cross-sunday-after-2018/

100 Years without the Tsar

Why the Royal Martyrs Matter Today

(from various Russian and English-language sources)

2018 has been the year of the 150th anniversary of Tsar Nicholas II; it has also marked 100 years since his martyrdom together with his family and servants at the hands of godless and cruel commissars.

Both these dates have prompted numerous discussions and heated argument in the popular media, including books, conferences and movies.

So, we can ask ourselves, why does it matter to commemorate Tsar Nicholas II, his family and their servants after so many years? What bearing do their lives and martyrdom have for us today?

The Royal Passion-Bearers bring about multiple connections both for the world and for Russia today. We will touch just a few of them. A thorough study of the influence they have made would take volumes, and these volumes will be published as the world is just beginning to understand and to appreciate the values that they represented, the messages that they have left.

It has taken the world a century because the untruths or half-truths about the Royal Passion-Bearers and their times had taken very deep roots in the world, and the Russian society in particular.

The truth has just begun to surface; it is at times stunning, and it is being actively discussed, as in the conference "Nicholas II: Emperor, Tsar, Saint" organized in London in October 2018 by an American Romanov enthusiast Paul Gilbert, or in the book "The History of Russia, Which Was Ordered to be Forgotten.

Nicholas II and His Time" by Russian historian A. Borisyuk which exposes fundamental falsehoods about the Tsar Russia that have long been "common knowledge" both in Soviet Russia and abroad.

The Royal Passion-Bearers matter today and always because they are saints and as such they daily lead multitudes to Our Father and intercede actively for the rest of us to Him. They are an example of a life in Christ which we must strive to achieve.

Just like us, they fell repeatedly and struggled spiritually only to time and again rise to their feet and continue their journey in repentance and humility, acquired through the realization of their human weaknesses. Being quite powerful, they learnt to unconditionally trust in God's good will, a spiritual property of great price, and through their trust, struggles and repentance they have become spiritual vessels themselves giving us access to the holy wisdom of Orthodox Christianity.

Secondly, the story of the Tsar Nicholas II illustrates that especially today much remains to be said about the benefits of a monarchy, particularly when it is represented in a mystically anointed and pious king.

Since childhood we have heard a lot about how bad some monarchs were, but rarely it has been pointed out that it is the monarchy that has brought the world to its current state of prosperity. Indeed, there were bad kings and queens but there were great kings and queens too. Whatever the monarch was they upheld such order which protected and supported religion, science and culture. The monarch would also represent the institution of the third-party trial, thus removing the violence from conflicting parties.

It is safe to say that without the monarchy the lives of separate people would have always been "poor, nasty, brutish, and short", and our history probably would not have made it up to the current moment. So, historically, monarchy has been one of the keys to mankind's survival.

For a nation to forcefully reject a monarchy would always mean trouble: civil disorder, economic setback, famine, moral degradation, mass migration…

Contemporary monarchies are not just the beacons of charity, tradition and good old-time quality. The hereditary royal powers stand above the four-year election cycle and sometimes they might take on an important and active role in situations of the "Judgement of Solomon" type, after an Old Testament famous king, of course. Assuming that the readers are familiar with this story (3 Kings 3:16-28), it should be mentioned that King Solomon represented third-party wisdom and impartiality faced with a very heated discussion that would have not been resolved wisely from within.

Such impartial judgement served well recently in 2011 in Great Britain when Queen Elizabeth II visited Ireland in order to help calm the political turbulence, or in 2016 when Queen's representative in Canadian British Columbia avoided one leader's call for another costly election by asking the tied leader to be the new premier.

Monarchy is something that stays with people, just like their collective soul. And like the soul of a person, the monarch can be good or bad. Nicholas was a very good monarch, a pious one, and his country was flourishing with him as a result. There is a lot of new research today proving his innocence and good will in infamous tragedies that were exploited by Bolshevik propaganda: Bloody Sunday, Khodynka Tragedy, Abdication, etc. The country made giant strides with Nicholas because God was with him and Russia.

Thirdly, the royal family today is particularly important as traditional values are being incessantly and mercilessly attacked by popular media. For instance, there is almost no place in contemporary popular movies, books and even laws for a traditional family, which would praise and defend it rather than make fun or discredit it. Things that have always been marginal or simply inappropriate are being forcefully made the *new normal* today.

In today's confused world it is so refreshing and inspiring to know that really normal relationships do take place and are rewarding indeed. Such were the relationships in the royal family. They had many challenges: tremendous political pressure, a lot of time spent apart from each other as the Tsar was performing his duties, incurable sickness of their child Alexei, challenges of raising five children in humility rather than in luxury, etc. But their love, support, appreciation of each other, trust in God were so great that everything negative in their lives would diminish and disappear and their family would come out stronger from every crisis.

The power of old-fashioned family relationships, its ability to fulfill life of all its members is to be deeply admired and appreciated. That's what God intended for us. The Romanov family stands today as a live and powerful example reminding us that traditional family happiness is not a myth, that it is achievable, although it does take a significant effort on the part of all its members. But it is a good effort because it brings very valuable result.

Think of the Royal Passion-Bearers, of their lives and martyrdom and you would certainly find something very special for you personally. Fortunately, there are plenty of resources today, and new valuable resources are being created right now as their story is just beginning to make sense to the world. They will surely help you resolve your life puzzles, find firm guidelines and precious pearls of God's wisdom in the times of "fake news", "augmented realities" and disappearing guidelines.

If you can, try travelling to the places connected with the Romanovs and what they valued, both in and outside of Russia. Open yourself to them and they will change your life for the better!

(The colorization above was made by the acclaimed Russian artist Olga Shirnina)

Practical Tips

Candle Etiquette

Lighting candles and placing them in the candle stands is an important part of Orthodox worship. We do this as we pray, making an offering to accompany our prayers. This is a good and pious practice.

The ideal time to light candles and place them in the candle stands is upon entering the church, after venerating the icons (preferably before service begins).

Yet it has always been so, that some faithful light and place their candles at various times during the service, especially if they arrive late. Sometimes

later-comers are unable to light a candle until the faithful who are about to partake of Holy Communion go up to venerate the icons.

However, if the Liturgy is already in progress, and the Royal Doors of the Iconostasis are open, one should wait until the doors are closed to light and place candles. (It's always safe to tend during litanies: "Let us pray to the Lord – Lord have Mercy.")

The faithful should not be occupied with placing or tending candles in the candle stands during the Epistle, the Gospel or the homily, Cherubic Hymn (Let Us Who Mystically…) …or during the Anaphora – A Mercy of Peace - (from "Let Us Stand Aright" through the hymn to the Theotokos). This is a matter of observing good church order, and "honouring God who wishes that all should be done decently and in good order." (I Corinthians)

– Excerpts from https://russianreport.wordpress.com/religion-in-russia/orthodox-worship-understanding-etiquette/

When Lighting a Beeswax Taper Candle: Light your candle from *an already lit beeswax candle - in the candle stand*. Please <u>don't</u> lean over the lit candle stand to light your beeswax taper from a distant olive oil lampada (hanging in front of a large wall icon). The beeswax melts and drips into the olive oil and onto the floor below. The oil and wax don't work well together. Also, if an olive oil lampada is touched/accidently tilted, bits of olive oil may spill/drip onto the floor below. This is also difficult for oil lampada maintenance and cleanup.

Only Light Olive Oil Lampadas <u>with Matches</u>: If you use a beeswax taper it melts and drips into the olive oil. The oil and wax don't work well together. This is also difficult for oil lampada maintenance and cleanup.

Lighting an Unlit Taper Candle from a Glass Votive on a Shelf: Please <u>don't</u> reach up and hold your beeswax taper straight upside down into the votive flame! This causes beeswax drippings on the icon

shelves, wood floor and rugs. It is very difficult to later clean and scrape off the wax drops. Instead, please (*and carefully* as it may be hot), remove an already lit full glass votive from icon shelf, hold it in front of yourself, tilt it gently to side, and light your taper easily from its white wax wick. Thank you!

Links

St. Sophia Orthodox Church, Victoria BC
http://saintsophia.ca/

St. Sophia Parish Youth Quarterly: The Ark
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 Montreal and Canadian Diocese
http://mcdiocese.com/en/

Official site of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia
http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/synod/indexeng.htm

The Rudder: Streaming Orthodox Christian sacred music 24/7
http://www.myocn.com/rudder/

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Vancouver BC
http://russianorthodoxchurch.ca/en/

Morning Offering by Abbot Tryphon
http://blogs.ancientfaith.com/morningoffering/

"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.