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

October 2018 Sophia Issue #78 Services

Saturday October 6 - Vigil 6pm
Sunday October 7 - Liturgy 10:30am

- *Sunday Evening Vespers - 5pm*

Saturday October 13 - Vigil 6pm
- Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos

Sunday October 14 - Liturgy 10:30am
- Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos

- *Sunday Evening Vespers - 5pm*

Saturday October 20 - Vigil 6pm
Sunday October 21- Liturgy 10:30am

- *Sunday Evening Vespers- 5pm*

Saturday October 27- Vigil 6pm
Sunday October 28 - Liturgy 10:30am

- *Sunday Evening Vespers- 5pm*

Parish Saint's Days

Congratulations to Reader Lucas, Justina, Sergei, and Roman! May God grant you all many, *many*, years!

Thank You – September Church Cleaners Florists & Gardeners

Thank you to Marina and Melania who cleaned the church; to those who arranged the beautiful church flowers, and of course, the outdoor Garden Team!

Thank you! A warm and heartfelt *thank you* to the Allison family for graciously hosting the parish feast day picnic venue, and the use of their outdoor swimming pool for the parish youth! A wonderful time was had by all.

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 and will end in the early afternoon. M Barbara will be coordinating this event with Marina. Volunteer signup sheets will be posted mid-October. There are many important volunteer opportunities which will need filling.

- Helping set up/taking down of the concert chairs upstairs to downstairs
- Baking (with each item securely pre-wrapped 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.

Parish Sisterhood Feast Day

Our Parish *Sisterhood* is also named St. Sophia, but after *another* St. Sophia - St. Sophia and her three daughters: Faith, Hope and Love.

We met on our feast day, September 30th for a lovely lunch provided by the church, followed by a meeting with a large agenda to cover.

The Sisterhood supports our parish through 'behind the scenes' work… Community and International Charities, upkeep of Church Vestments, cleaning and decorating of the church and its icons, Youth Choir, Youth Education, Youth Socials, Parish Fundraisers and Parish Festal Events. The Sisterhood also assists parishioners who may need meals temporarily made for them.

All adult women parish members are welcome to join.

We strive to serve Christ Jesus by supporting the many aspects of parish life, and also by supporting each other - in the spirit of love and friendship… to the glory of God!

Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God

The Protection of the Mother of God is one of the most beloved feast days on the Orthodox calendar is commemorated on October 14/1.

This feast day celebrates the appearance of the Mother of God at Blachernae Turkey, in the tenth century. At the end of St. Andrew's of Constantinople life, he, with his disciple St. Epiphanius, and a group of people, saw the Mother of God, St. John the Baptist, and several other saints and angels during a vigil service in the Church of Blachernae, nearby the city gates.

The church was originally built beside a miraculous fountain of healing water by the Emperor Justinian in the last years of his reign (559-560). He ordered this church to be built beside this holy well, with the remaining construction material from the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.

The Blachernae Palace church was where several of her relics were kept. The relics were her robe, veil, and part of her belt that had been transferred from Palestine during the fifth century.

The Theotokos approached the centre of the church, knelt down and remained in prayer for a long time. Her face was drowned in tears. Then she took her veil off and spread it over the people as a sign of protection… During the time, the city was threatened by a barbarian

invasion. After the appearance of the Mother of God, the danger was averted and the city was spared from bloodshed and suffering.
-From Orthodox Wiki and other sources

Pearls of Wisdom

We live in a time, an epoch, and a civilization engulfed in a dramatic crisis of human identity. In this age, values are being substituted and the formation of the consumer character is taking place which leads one into a life based predominately on self-centered interests. Man has become accustomed to view himself as a slave – as one thrown into this world, and then discarded… Let us not weaken in spirit, for a man who lives in faith, hope and love lives in the Lord's embrace, along with all the saints and angels; the Lord's embrace is our sea of security. - *Bishop Jovan, Bishop of Western America in the Serbian Church; introducing The Lord's Prayer by St. Velimrovic*

… Internal work on oneself is an investment in the Church. This is a gathering in the powers of the Church…in the moral life of Her members. One must serve the Church as the one body of Christ, a single organism, a single substance. Each one's personality is the plot of land entrusted to him for him to labour over, clean up and produce fruit on. In working on ourselves, we work for the whole, for the entire Church, for Its Head, the selfless Saviour. In letting one's plot grow over, neglecting it, condemning it, we bring harm not only to ourselves but also to the Church. By not gathering for our own soul, we scatter what belongs to the Church.
– Excerpts from "How Each of Us Can and Ought to Serve the Church," Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky, 1996.

… Life is not found in the head, only the tip of life. Life is in the heart, and only what comes forth from the heart can influence the currents of life.
- St. Theophan the Recluse

…The Mother of God always is and will be with those who are faithful to her Divine Son; who go according to His call to eternal salvation. She, according to St. John Chrysostom, is the first Receiver of Divine gifts and the first Giver of these gifts and blessings to people who seek help from the Lord and mercy from her. Thus it will always be, until the final hour, until

the final second of the life of the world. And let the hearts our faithful, who know the great power of the intercession of the Mother of God, ever fall at the feet of the Mother of God with heartfelt sighing, with their needs and sorrows, in all trials, and in moments of lamentation over sins. She, the Joy of all who sorrow, our heavenly Mother, will spread out upon us her sovereign Protection, intercede for us, save us, and have mercy upon all of us. - *Archimandrite John Krestiankin*

For children who have been watered from a young age on piety: do not have fear for them, and if they stray a little due to their age or because of temptations, they will come back... - *Elder Paisios of Mt. Athos*

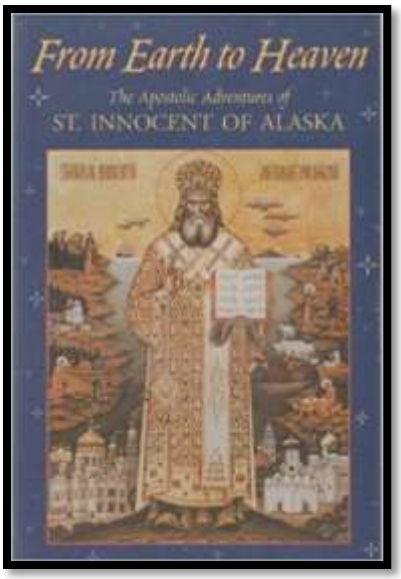
While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. - *II Corinthians 4:18*

It is good to remember these words "LET US ATTEND" from the Divine Liturgy, and to repeat them in one's spirit as we journey through life. As we look at the beauty of God's world, God's creation, it is good to tell oneself "LET US ATTEND." How much evil, pain, irritation, hostility, untruth would begin to disappear from our lives, from our relations with others, if we carry these words beyond the walls of our churches and used them as a lantern as a torch, to shed light on each step we take, each movement we make, each person we meet. - *Fr. George Benigsen*

Prayers during church services have so much power and significance that just the words, 'Lord, have mercy,' surpass all the spiritual exercises performed in one's cell. - *St. Anthony of Optina*

God always was, and always is, and always will be. Or rather, God always Is. For Was and Will be are fragments of our time, and of changeable nature, but He is Eternal Being. And this is the Name that He gives to Himself when giving the Oracle to Moses in the Mount. For in Himself He sums up and contains all Being, having neither beginning in the past nor end in the future; like some great Sea of Being, limitless and unbounded, transcending all conception of time and nature, only adumbrated [intimated] by the mind, and that very dimly and scantily. - *St. Gregory the Theologian*

October Parish Library Features



From earth to heaven: the apostolic adventures of St. Innocent of Alaska

by Andrew Wermuth

In his mission to spread the word of Christ's Truth to the ends of the earth, St. Innocent became a daring adventurer. From traversing the frigid territory of Siberia by reindeer and dogsled to charging the mighty waves of the Aleutian Islands in a small kayak, the Saint braved the harshest elements. St. Innocent painted a masterpiece of beauty out of his life, which spoke of eternal realms. Through his life's example the Saint provides us with a blueprint of how to build our lives and reveals man's true purpose in this world--to link earth with Heaven.

«Отец Арсений». - М.: Изд-во Сретенского монастыря, 2011. - 496 стр. – (Б-ка духовной прозы).

Разные люди в своих историях, написанных простым, безыскусным языком, рассказывают о православном священнике по имени о. Арсений, которого они встречали в лагерях и на воле, о том, как о. Арсений изменил их жизнь. Отец Арсений проповедовал в самые тяжелые годы безверия, во времена массовых сталинских репрессий. В тяжелейших условиях он помог многим выжить физически и спастись духом.

Father Arseny" is a collection of essays written by people who met father Arseny in GULAG and afterwards. Father helped a lot of people not only to survive the atrocities of the Stalin time, but also to save their immortal souls in the Orthodox Christianity.

100 Years Without the Tsar

Tsar Russia as seen by various National Geographic authors
(from Russian and English-language sources)

In our time of “fake news” and “distorted truths” it is important to present a balanced view of Russia under Tsar Nicholas II, a view which is based on impartial accounts of his rule.

After all, Nicholas II is called the greatest ruler of Russia, during her one-thousand-year existence. This is a significant claim.

Was it really so, or nostalgia for “good old times” plays a trick on us today?

In search of the true Tsar Russia let us turn to the voices of such Nicholas’ contemporaries who hardly had any bias towards Russia. Here is a list of quotes that correspondents of the American National Geographic magazine published in their articles about Russia at the time of Nicholas’ reign between 1900 - 1914.

These correspondents had differing views on the personality of the Russian Tsar and the results of his work, but nevertheless many comments, even critical ones, acknowledge his political wisdom, his care for his country, his righteousness - as a person and a tsar.

Here is an illustration of the political climate of Russia under the late Tsar Nicholas, found in the article “The Revolution in Russia (May 1907, by William Eleroy Curtis): “Three times during the Douma [the sitting of the Russian Parliament] he [the Tsar] offered the Liberals the opportunity to form a ministry, and if the leaders of the Constitutional Democratic party

had possessed a particle of common sense, they would have met him half way and accepted his olive branches. The first time he offered them the administration of the government rejected his overtures in the most contemptuous manner they could devise. The second time they gave the matter serious reflection and discussed it for several days. Finally, they agreed to accept, but adopted a program so preposterous and absurd that their reply was not worthy of attention. **They would not be content with gradual reform; they insisted that everything should be done in an instant…** The leaders of the first Russian parliament, had they been willing to allow a gradual development of democratic ideas and liberal forms of administration; might have had the opportunity to guide and control the regeneration of Russia; but they would not listen to reason; they demanded all or nothing."

A tsar having such inflexible opponents should indeed proceed with a lot of caution ruling the country. No wonder the correspondent writes that "[Nicholas II] had a vacillating [mild, indecisive] way to rule Russia and was being "the continual victim of misrepresentation and bad advice" but also noted that "Nicholas II has a very gentle disposition, a kind heart, and a desire to promote the welfare of his subjects… **He has a deep vein of religious sentiment**."

Most of reports from Russia are very supportive of Nicholas' work. Take for example this quote from "The Growth of Russia," May 1900, by Edwin A. Grosvenor praising Russian Tsar for his famous peacekeeping initiative. As is known from history, on 24 August 1898, at their weekly reception at the Foreign Office in St. Petersburg, the ambassadors and ministers of the major nations accredited to the Russian Court were presented a written statement to be forwarded to their respective governments. In it, the Tsar invited the governments to join an international conference on peace and disarmament. According to the Tsar, he thought it would be better for the prosperity and progress of mankind if governments sat down and talked and concluded agreements instead of being divided and hostile towards one another. About this manifesto Edwin A. Grosvenor wrote: "How far the peace manifesto of Nicholas II was prompted by philanthropy or by profound but selfish statecraft it is impossible to know. If philanthropy,

that manifesto remains the noblest and most memorable document ever issued by a Christian monarch; if political sagacity, that manifesto is in appreciation of the future, the most astute utterance ever made by the occupant of the Russian throne. But it is unbecoming to question the hidden motives of a deed in itself sublime. History will record no more than this: **that at the close of a century more crowded with bloodshed and war than any other since time began, Russia through the voice of her autocratic Czar put forth a plea to all mankind in favour of universal brotherhood and peace.**"

This Manifesto was the precursor of what is now known the United Nations established only in 1945, 47 years after the idea of collective protection of the international peace and security was put forward by the Tsar. This is another proof of how much better off Russia and the world would have been had the Russian monarchy survived.

Another amazing victory of the Tsar, this time on the internal front, of which we know quite little, is documented in November, 1914 issue by Gilbert H. Grosvenor, National Geographic editor: "**The abolition of the sale of intoxicants in Russia represents the greatest prohibition victory of the age**. With one dash of the pen one-sixth of the earth's surface and one-tenth of its population went "dry". Heretofore vodka-drinking has been the curse of the Russian masses. Being a government monopoly, the officials of the government encouraged the sale of vodka, and the constantly and rapidly growing revenues from that source showed that they did so with success... Overnight hundreds of thousands of government dram shops were closed. The response of the Russian people to this order was one of the surprises of Russian history. Everywhere it was received with acclaim, and there were such widespread and universal evidence of the approval of the government's stand in the matter that it soon became evident to the Tsar that what he had intended as a temporary measure could be made permanent..."

This achievement was completely lost during the Soviet times, and unfortunately today Russia is among the highest of drinking countries in the world. But we can and should study this forgotten Tsar initiative and

learn from its lessons. It deserves close attention and deep research by today's historians.

In February 1905 "Russia" by Charles Emory Smith (formerly minister to Russia and Ex-Postmaster General), the author explains the reason for the failures that took place during the Russian - Japanese war of 1904 - 1905: "**The present Czar is conscientious and devoted in public purpose and amiable and exemplary in personal life**. He has been surrounded by conflicting influences, and each of the opposing forces has appeared at one time or another to be dominant. The Czar's disposition and tendency have been liberal, as was indicated in the noble impulse which convoked the Hague Conference. If at times there has been a backward movement it was because reactionary elements outside of the throne gained a temporary ascendancy, and if lamentable errors plunged the empire into a war for which she was so ill-prepared, it was because irregular influences, outside of the ministry, that were mistakenly trusted, gave evil counsels".

In the article under the telling title "**Young Russia: The Land of Unlimited Possibilities**" (November 1914, by Gilbert H. Grosvenor, National Geographic editor) praises the way the immense potential of Russia is being tapped by wise state policies which were pursued by Tsar Nicholas II: "This land of Orient and Occident boasts countless people, mineral wealth, timber, and burgeoning agriculture, but until recent years Russia has had little opportunity to fulfill her immense potential… The princes of Moscow were shrewd and patient, their people the most enduring and prolific in history. [T]he present dynasty [of the Romanovs] brought stability, immense growth, and enormous power to Russia…

When stern old Alexander [III] gave orders to the tutors to the then heir to the throne [Tsarevich Nicholas], he said to them: "Neglect nothing that can make my son truly a man."

But with all the ignorance and poverty of the masses in Russia in the past, the leaven of national intelligence has begun to work. The progress of the time has also brought the moving picture and the telephone and the railroad into a thousand remote communities, and has set to work forces

that inevitably will spell the doom of illiteracy and ignorance and make Russia in fact the land of unlimited possibilities."

Special attention deserves the following quote from this article: "[Russia's] 172.000.000 people are the most fecund on earth. During the 40 years from 1872 to 1912 European Russia... doubled her population and the larger ratio of that growth was toward the end rather than toward the beginning of that period. Assuming that the same ration will keep up, at the end of the present [20th] century Russia will have over six hundred million people – enough to offset the present population of all the continents except Asia."

Open statistical resources allow us to quickly check that the population of Russia at the end of the 20th century was around 146 million people – as opposed to 600 million projected by Gilbert Grosvenor. Even if we add the population of all 15 independent now republics that were part of Russia under the Soviets as well as Finland which was also with Russia at the time of the writing of this National Geographic article, we would get roughly 300 million people. That's 300 million people short of the projected estimate based on the ration proposed by Grosvenor. In other words, in rejecting the monarchy and Christianity, 300 million people, or half of Russian population, were not born. This is the real result of the most destructive political experiment in the Russian, and probably, in the world history.

The Ark

Volume 7
October – December 2018

St. Sophia Parish Online Youth Quarterly

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

Practical Tips

Leaving Before the Dismissal

Leaving church before the Dismissal at Liturgy is rude and deprives us of a blessing.

Worship has a beginning ("Blessed is the Kingdom…") and an end ("Let us depart in peace…").

To leave immediately before or after Communion is to treat church like a fast food restaurant where we come and go as we please. We live in a fast-paced world where we seem to be hurrying from place to place.

But in God's presence, we need to make every attempt to fight this pressure to move on to the next thing on the day's agenda.

We deprive ourselves of blessings by not being still and participating in God's holiness. Eat and run at McDonald's - but stay in church and thank God for his precious gifts. *–Fr. David Barr*

Gratitude and Thanksgiving

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.