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

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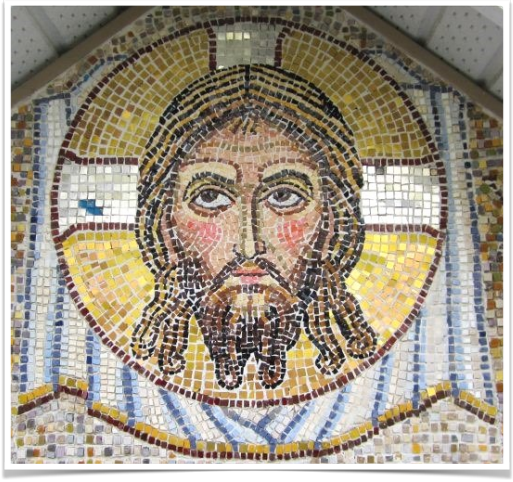
Archpriest John Adams
Priest Philosoph Uhlman
Protodeacon Gordian Bruce
Deacon Olexandr Savitskyi

SOPHIA NEWSLETTER

Issue #112 August 2021



AUGUST SERVICES

Sat. July 31 - Vigil 6 pm; Confession following
Sun. Aug. 1 - Divine Liturgy 10:15 am
Sun. Aug. 1 - Evening Vespers - 4 pm

Sat. Aug. 7 - Vigil 6pm; Confession following
Sun. Aug. 8 - Divine Liturgy 10:15 am
(*No Sunday Evening Vespers tonight*)

Sat. Aug. 14 - Vigil 6 pm; Confession following
Sun. Aug. 15 - Divine Liturgy 10:15 am
Sun. Aug. 15 - Evening Vespers 4 pm

Wed. Aug. 18 - **Vigil 6 pm**; Confession following
Thurs. Aug. 19 - **Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ** Liturgy 10:15 am
(Also known as the Apple Feast, bring your garden's first fruits to be blessed. - More information will be emailed)

Sat. Aug. 21 - Vigil 6 pm; Confession following
Sun. Aug. 22 - Divine Liturgy 10:15 am
Sun. Aug. 22 - Evening Vespers 4 pm

Fri. Aug. 27 - **Vigil 6 pm**; Confession following
Sat. Aug. 28 - **Dormition of our Lady Theotokos** Divine Liturgy 10:15 am
Sat. Aug. 28 - **Vigil** 6 pm; Confession following
Sun. Aug. 29 - **Icon Not Made by Hands, Parish Feast** Liturgy 10:15 am
(Followed by Parish Festal Potluck at the Allison's Home. For those inclined, bring your swimsuits! More information will be emailed to parish members.
** No Sunday Evening Vespers tonight.*

AUGUST SAINTS' DAYS

Congratulations to Clara-Marie, Maria D, Angelina, Elias, and Madelaine!
God grant you many years!

SOPHIA NEWSLETTER

Issue #112 August 2021

Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young - a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. ~ Psalm 84:3;

Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell; they sing among the branches. ~ Psalm104:12

PARISH FEAST DAY & WELCOME LUNCH FOR OUR NEW DEACON AND FAMILY!

On Sunday, August 29th we will be blessed to celebrate our parish feast day ***together***, ***again***! It will be a doubly joyful occasion and welcome meal for our new deacon, Fr. Olexandr, matushka Nataliya, and family. This potluck will be held at the Allison's home, and those inclined, may bring swim suits for the outdoor pool. More information will be emailed to parish members.

SISTERHOOD DONATIONS

$55 CDN to Funds for Assistance

A Providential circumstance, the re-opening of St. Sophia for public services fell on the same weekend commemorating St. John Maximovitch, July 3rd & 4th which included a Thanksgiving Moleben. With Archpriest John's blessing, the Sisterhood tithes donations collected in the Candle Box for various charities, both local and international.

PEARLS OF WISDOM

When Thou wast transfigured, O Saviour, on a high mountain, having the chief disciples with Thee, Thou hast shone forth in glorious majesty, proving that those who excel in the height of their virtues shall be counted worthy of the divine glory. Talking with Christ, Moses and Elijah showed that He is Lord of both the living and the dead, the God Who spake of old through the law and the prophets. And from the cloud of light the voice of the Father testified to Him: Hear Him, Who through His cross harrows hell and gives the dead eternal life! ~ *Stychira on Lord I Have Cried, at Transfiguration*

Gregory Palamas stated that the light on Mt. Tabor, while similar to physical light, was totally different by nature. That light shone brighter than sunlight and was whiter than snow, but still it did not cause blindness; it warmed without burning. Its shining was accompanied by the sensation of great felicity. Unlike regular light, the light of Tabor was called by St. Gregory Palamas 'unmade divine energy.' The substance of this light was inseparable from the eternal substance of God because God is indivisible. God is not comprehensible in His substance, but still His actions and energy, being inseparable from His divine essence, are comprehensible for us created in His image, after His likeness. And the Son of God became a man in order to associate us into His Divine nature, to deify us. We sense God's presence with our soul, not our fleshly eyes. St. Gregory Palamas explains that the ability to see the Divine light is delivered to a human

by the Holy Spirit who translates one from the state of flesh to the state of spirit (Homily 34 On Transfiguration). It is like a curtain falling down from the eyes of the seer at the moment of the vision, making him able to see the divine shining. Action of the spiritual light in this life touches the soul. But in the future life it will also extend to the renewed bodies of the righteous, as it is said, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." *~ fatherlexander.org*

The visible sun was eclipsed by the rays of Thy divinity, when it saw Thee transfigured on Mount Tabor, O my Jesus. Glory to Thy power, O Lord. ~ *Irmos, Second Canon at Transfiguration*

O unchanged Image of the One Who Is, O Seal that cannot be removed or altered, Son and Word, Wisdom and Arm, Right Hand and Strength of the Most High, Thee do we sing with the Father and the Spirit. ~ *Ode 9, First Canon on Transfiguration*

As long as they (Christ's Disciples) were in Palestine, holy Mary spent time with them, helping them confirm themselves in the Saviour's commandments, encouraging them to all goodness and cheering them. But when the disciples departed from Palestine to distant lands alien and unknown, She remained in John's house. She did not waste Her time with trifles, but used every minute for the benefit of mankind, the very human race that crucified Her innocent Son! She dedicated her labours and care to visiting the sick and the imprisoned; she comforted, taught, and instructed anyone who needed support or counsel. She lived strictly according to Her Son's commandments and therefore she could assuage people's sorrows. She was a source of healing, and shade, and all who drew from that source felt freshness and relief and were fortified by heavenly love. The good works to which she entrusted Herself filled her soul with great blessedness and consolation, which were the reward for the woes and calamities she previously bore. For only after Her Son was resurrected did her eyes open to what had happened, and hope arrived. ~ *St. Nikolai Velimirovic*
(Excerpt from The Theotokos on Her Deathbed)

St. Ambrose Bishop of Milan (330-397), wrote: "*Mary's life, is a rule of life for all.*" …It is important that as Orthodox Christians we know and examine the life of the Theotokos who, after Christ Jesus, so influenced every creature, both the bodiless ones and the earthborn, before, during, and after her earthly sojourn. ~ *From The Life of The Virgin Mary, The Theotokos, written and compiled by Holy Apostles Convent* ***(in our church library)***

When was such a wonder of wonders ever seen by men? How does the Queen of all lie breathless? How has the Mother of Jesus reposed?
Thou, O Virgin, was the preaching of the prophets; thou art heralded by us.
All the people venerate thee: the angels glorify thee.
Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee, and through them, with us. With Gabriel we hymn thee; with the angels we glorify thee; and with the prophets we praise thee…
~ St. Hierotheos, *from The Life Of The Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, written and compiled by Holy Apostles Convent* ***(in our church library)***

DORMITION TRADITIONS

Venerable Bede (7th century), likened the Virgin Mary to a white lily... symbolizing her purity, innocence and virginity. The floral centre of golden anthers (where pollen is produced), are as the radiance of her soul.

An old English name for the Hosta garden plant, is Assumption Lily, as it blooms close to the Dormition.

The liturgical colour for feasts honouring the Theotokos is blue. The clergy wear blue vestments, and the faithful sometimes wear a bit of blue too, in her honour. In icons, while her veil is red…the colour of divinity, as she is the *Theo(God) tokos(Bearer)*, her clothes under the veil are green or blue, the colours of humanity. Also, upon her veil, are three stars, which represent her eternal virginity: before, during, and forever after the birth of Our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, she remained a pure virgin. At weddings it is still traditional to wear "a little something blue" in honour of the Theotokos.

SAINTS OF THE BRITISH ISLES LITURGICAL PROJECT

The veneration of the Saints who flourished in the lands of the west before the Great Schism has always been a distinctive part of the charism of the Church Abroad, as particularly modelled by the great twentieth-century saint of the diaspora, Vladyka St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco…

It is well known that when he was Archbishop of Western Europe, the Ruling Bishop of this Diocese, St. John would carefully research the lives of the ancient saints of the first millennium of whatever locality he happened to be in… how we can continue this great legacy of St. John by cultivating devotion to the local Saints who shone forth in the British Isles, whose spiritual foundations go right back to Apostolic times, the missionary labours of St. Joseph of Arimathea, St. Aristobulus of the Seventy and St. Simon the Zealot. (*Editor's note: Almost 1000 years before the Christianization of Russia*)

It was this Apostolic foundation that led to the formation of a beautiful family of saints embracing Celtic and Roman spiritual traditions, and which stretched across the whole archipelago of these isles from Iona in the north to the Channel Isles in the furthest south, and from East Anglia to Wales, Cornwall and Ireland in the west. One of the foundational building blocks of cultivating devotion to the local saints of the British Isles is ensuring that there are full services available for the faithful, so that parish rectors can have the option of serving divine services in their honour.

To this end, in May 2020, His Grace Bishop Irenei of London and Western Europe established the Saints of the British Isles Liturgical Project, chaired by

two deacons of the Diocese, Deacon Mark Tattum-Smith of the Mettingham Parish and Deacon Mark Fisher of our Parish in Cardiff.

Over the course of the first year of the project, and in accordance with the first phase of His Grace's decree, work has begun on systematically cataloguing all the extant hymnography to the British Saints into one definitive liturgical index. To coincide with the Feast of All Saint of the British Isles, which ROCOR parishes in the UK joyously celebrate on the third Sunday after Pentecost, we are pleased to be able to present an extract from the index as a 'first fruit' of the labours of this project.

It consists of a simple table which lists all the Saints of the British Isles for whom we have a complete service. In some cases this may only consist of hymnography for Small or Great Vespers but normally this includes hymnography for Vespers, Matins and the Divine Liturgy. In total there are entries for 85 services in three liturgical languages, composed by nine authors.

What is immediately clear, from even a cursory glance at the table, is the towering contribution which Monk Joseph (Lambertson), of pious memory, made to this endeavour. We are especially grateful to Monk Joseph's literary executor, Xenia Nenchin, for her assistance in supplying the original texts as they were finally shaped by Monk Joseph before his repose in 2018.

For each of the listed services, contact has been made with the liturgical authors, or their literary executors, to ensure that permissions are in place to proceed to the next phase of the project which will involve the careful editing of the hymnography so that they are consistent with the idiom and phraseology of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia as expressed in its ever-expanding catalogue of English-language liturgical publications.

Click here for a copy of the current table listing of Saints and their services

All ye Saints of the British Isles, pray to God for us!

Time Line of Orthodoxy in the British Isles

TRADITION OF CONSECRATING GRAPES & FRUIT

It is the tradition of the Day of Transfiguration to consecrate grapes, apples and other fruit after the Divine Liturgy. The custom of bringing fruit to the temple for consecration originates in the Old Testament time (Gen. 4:2-4; Ex. 13:12-13; Num. 15:19-21; Deut. 8:10-14).

The Apostles brought this tradition to the Church of the New Testament (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Instruction regarding bringing fruit to temple is found in the Third Rule of the Apostolic Canon, the earliest collection of ecclesiastic laws (canons), known since the second century. In Greece, August is the month of ripeness of fruit, mostly grapes and new ears of corn. Since old time, the faithful have been bringing them to temple for consecration and as Thanksgiving to God. St. John Chrysostom wrote, "Plowman receives fruit from the earth not so much for his labour and diligence, as out of goodness of God Who grows this fruit, because neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

Grapes are brought to temple because they are directly related to the Eucharistic sacrament; that is why in the prayer for consecration of grapes the priest says, "Bless, Lord, this new fruit of vine which reached ripeness because Thou kindly provided good weather, drops of rain and stillness. Let eating this fruit of vine make us joyful. And give us the honour of offering this fruit to Thee, as the gift of purging of sins, altogether with the Holy Body of Thy Christ."

In the first centuries of Christianity, the faithful brought forth to the temple the fruit and crops of the new harvest: bread, wine, oil, incense, wax, honey etc. Of all these offerings, only bread, wine, incense, oil and wax were taken to the altar, while the rest was used for the needs of the clergy and the poor whom the church was caring for. These offerings were to express gratitude to God for all goods, but at the same time help servants of God and people in need…
~ *fatheralexander.org*

LINKS

- Fund for Assistance to help others in the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia
- Come and Dine St. Sophia Parish fasting recipes
- Morning Offering by Abbot Tryphon
- Orthodox Christianity
- Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia
- The Rudder Streaming Orthodox Christian sacred music 24/7
- Orthodox Northwest Bulletin Board for Events and Happenings
- Western America Diocese Official Site
- Abbreviated Prayerbook
- Official Site of the Montreal and Canadian Diocese
- Blisswood

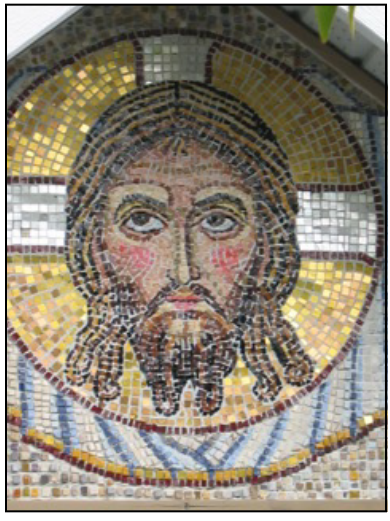
"We knew not whether we were in heaven or earth… We only know that God dwells there among men, and their service is fairer than the ceremonies of other nations."

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.