



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



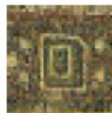
him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,



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*

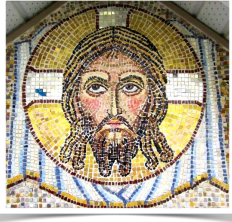
195 Joseph Street,  
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email: [info@saintsophia.ca](mailto:info@saintsophia.ca)  
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Archpriest John Adams  
Priest Philosoph Uhlman  
Protodeacon Gordian Bruce  
Deacon Olexandr Savitskyi

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## March Services

Sat. Mar. 2 Vigil - 6:00 p.m. (Confession following)

Sun. Mar. 3 [Sunday of the Prodigal Son](#) - Liturgy - 10:00 a.m.

Sat. Mar. 9 [Pannykhida 5:30 p.m.](#) and Vigil - 6:00 p.m. (Confession following)

Sun. Mar. 10 [Sunday of the Last Judgement](#) (Meatfare Sunday) Liturgy - 10:00 a.m.

Sat. Mar. 16 Vigil - 6 p.m. (Confession following)

Sun. Mar. 17 [Forgiveness Sunday](#) (Cheesefare Sunday) Liturgy - 10:00 a.m.

*Followed immediately with Sunday Evening Vespers, attached to the end of the Liturgy.*

First Week of Great Lent - Mon. Mar. 18 - Thurs. Mar. 21

*Reading of the [Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete](#) at 6:30 p.m.*

Sat. Mar. 23 [Vigil](#) - 6:00 p.m. (Confession following)

Sun. Mar. 24 [Liturgy](#) - 10:00 a.m.

Sat. Mar. 30 Vigil - 6:00 p.m. (Confession following)

Sun. Mar. 31 Liturgy - 10:00 a.m.

## March [Saints' Days](#)

Congratulations to Theodore and Chad. God grant you many years!

## Thank You Church Cleaners and Floral Designers

Thank you to all who cleaned and created during February. Volunteer positions for March and April are available on the bulletin board. If you have any questions, please contact Emmanuelle.

## Sisterhood Charitable Donations

Father John blessed \$50 each to:

[Holy Cross Monastery](#)

[Russian History Foundation · Support Your Museum - Jordanville](#)

Bethany School Funds for Assistance – 2024 Bethany Appeal

[Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem ROCOR](#)

[Orthodox Arts Journal](#)

[Victoria Cool-Aid Society](#)

[Victoria Youth Empowerment Society](#)

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During the week days of Lent, we say the prayer of St. Ephraim.

O Lord and Master of my life, a spirit of idleness, despondency, ambition  
and idle talking give me not. *Prostration*

But rather a spirit of Chasity, humble-mindedness, patience, and love,  
bestow upon me Thy servant. *Prostration*

Uea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my failings and not condemn my  
brother, for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen. *Prostration*

Then 12 repetitions of "O God, cleanse me a sinner." (bowing each time)

And the prayer is said once more in full, with one prostration at the end.

[Lenten Prayer](#) (.pdf printout)  
of [St. Ephraim the Syrian](#)



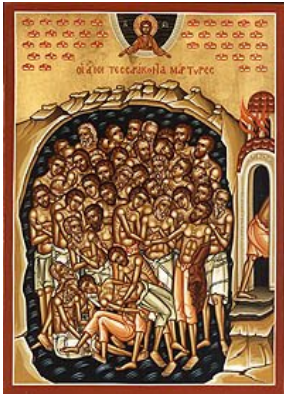
[Great Lent](#)

From the [Parish Youth Quarterly: The Ark](#)

On Pages 10 & 11

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## The Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste & [Tradition of Sky Lark Buns](#)

The feast day of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste falls on March 22/9, during Great Lent. They were all soldiers in the Roman army who steadfastly believed in the Lord Jesus.

When the persecution of Christians began during the reign of Licinius, (320 AD) they were brought to trial before the commander, and after the endurance of many sufferings, and death, they attained the joyous reward reserved for those who give their lives for Christ.

The Holy Fathers of the Church refer to Great Lent as a fasting spring, when the souls of the faithful are sown with seeds of divine grace - thence yielding up a harvest of good deeds throughout the year that follows.

The unwavering endurance of the forty martyrs exemplifies to the faithful; perseverance to the end... in our "small" case... to the end of the forty days of the fast, to attain the great and joyous heavenly reward of celebrating Holy Pascha, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

A special prayer mentioning these Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste is also placed in the Orthodox Wedding Service (referred to as a "crowning") to remind the bride and groom that spiritual crowns await them in heaven also, if they remain as faithful to Christ as these saints of long ago.



Buns shaped like birds are traditionally baked to celebrate the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste's feast day. Lark Bird buns are baked for the day, and are also shared after church on the first Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Martyrs.

These remind us of the Forty Martyrs' steadfastness, and inspire our souls, to soar heavenward upon the wings of divine love - looking unto Jesus, the Author and finisher of our lives.



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## How to Make the Larks

- Take a piece of risen yeasted bread dough, about the size of a medium egg, and roll it out on a lightly floured board into a long ropey piece, about 5 inches long.
- Tie it loosely into a knot, with approximately equal length protruding from both ends.
- Put on lightly greased cookie sheet.
- With a pair of scissors, cut a "beak" on one end of the knot, and on the other end of the knot, cut a "tail" into about 3 or 4 feathered strands.
- Push 2 peppercorns firmly into the head as eyes.
- Do not put birds on cookie sheet too closely together, as they spread a bit as they bake.
- Cover, let rise again for about half an hour.
- Pop into a preheated 375\* oven and bake about 15 - 20 minutes or until golden brown, depending on your oven.
- To make tastier larks, sometimes honey is added to the dough, as well as lemon or orange zest. Some people prefer to use currants for the eyes.
- Birds are easy to bake ahead of time to freeze and when needed, thaw for a couple hours. (Fallen eye-peppercorns during freezing can be readily inserted back into thawed birds.)



## Pearls of Wisdom

*...Just as the Israelites dedicated to God a tithe or a tenth of their produce, so Christians dedicate the season of Lent to God as a tithe or a tenth of the year. The part is offered in token of the whole: by rendering back to God a tenth of what he has given to us, we call down His Blessing upon the remainder and acknowledge that all material goods and all moment of time are a gift from His Hand... ~ Lenten Triodion*

*Every Lent...should be another re-entering into inner calisthenics, interior exercise. It implies a renewal, a re-engagement in trying to be better people; it implies a review of how we have been doing spiritually; it implies a re-examination of our "spiritual temperature"; it is a revitalization of our practice of our faith. It means a recommitment to the Lord and our faith.*

*~ Archimandrite Laurence Mancuso; Being Good: Responding to Our Faith: Notes From a Poor Monk*

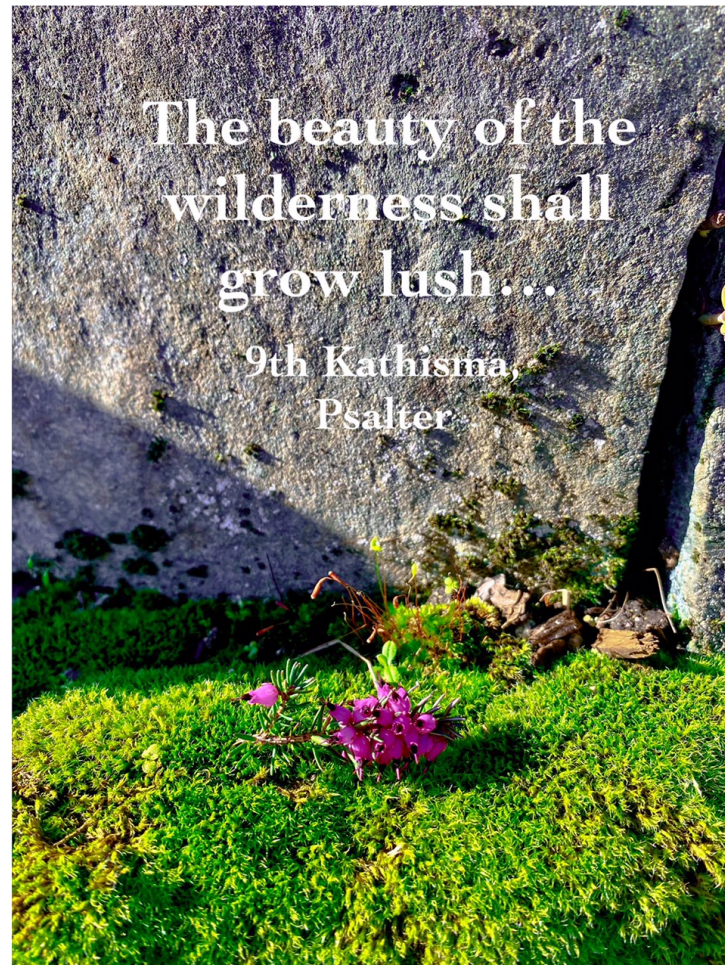
*Metropolitan Kallistos Ware once spoke of the words of the Lenten Triodion in an interview, "Lent is spiritual springtime. Not winter, but spring. The world of nature is coming alive round us during the Lenten season. And this should be a symbol of what is to happen in our own hearts. The dawning of springtime... We shouldn't just have a negative idea of repentance,*

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*as feeling sorry, gloomy and somber about our failings. But repentance, rather, is new hope. An opening flower. How our lives can, by God's grace, be changed.” ~ [Kristina Garrett Wenger](#)*

*Scripture Art by Juliana*



*Lent is the time for the search for meaning: meaning of my professional life in terms of vocation; meaning of my relationship to other persons; meaning of friendship; meaning of my responsibility. There is no job, no vocation, which cannot be “transformed” – be it only a little – in terms not of greater efficiency or better organization but in those of human value...and if our faith has any meaning, it is to be related to life in all its complexity. ~ Great Lent by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann*

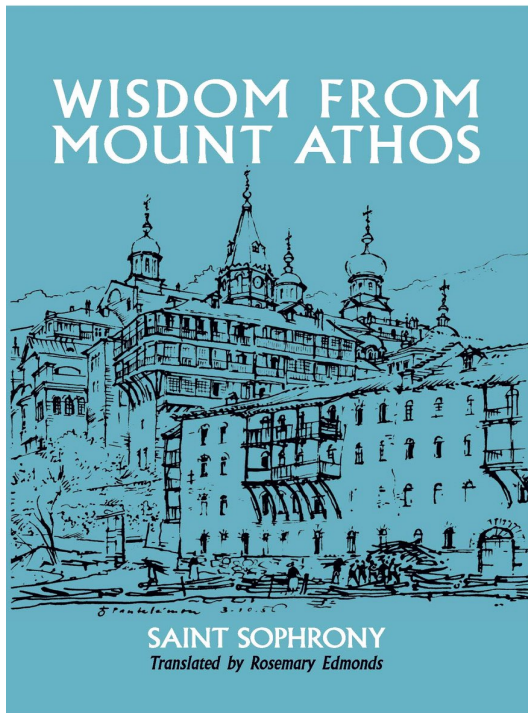
*.... giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. ~ 2 Peter, 1:5-7*

*The Scripture is very clear: If you want to find yourself, lose yourself; you want to fulfill yourself, empty yourself; you want to be great, be the least; you want to be first, be the last; you want to be rich, become poor; you want to be wise, become a fool. If you want to rule, become a servant...really, Orthodoxy is 'paradox'. That's just what it is. ~ Fr. Thomas Hopko*

*Together with the renewal of the mind the Holy Fathers are concerned with that of the heart, about changing its habits and feelings. It is harder to renew or cleanse the heart than the mind; the mind, convinced of the fairness of new thinking, easily sheds the old and adapts to new ways of thinking. But to replace one skill with another, or one character quality with another character quality, one feeling with another feeling, one that is opposite to the first kind, is intense, relentless labour, which is an incredible struggle... ~ St. Ignatius Brianchaninov*

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## Parish Library

*The Writings of [Staretz Silouan](#) 1866-1938  
by [Saint Sophrony](#)*

*[St. Silouan](#) was a Russian peasant whose only formal education consisted of two winters at the village school.*

*But on Mt. Athos, he was taught of God and attained wisdom and spiritual maturity akin to that of the Desert Fathers.*

*Wisdom from Mount Athos is a collection of the notes which Staretz Silouan penciled on odd scraps of paper. On the whole, his writing recalls the splendor of the great liturgical texts of the Orthodox Church.*

## Links & Resources

- [St. Sophia Parish Website](#)
- [Come and Dine](#) *St. Sophia Parish fasting recipes*
- [2017 St. Sophia THE ARK Youth Quarterly](#)
- [2018 St. Sophia THE ARK Youth Quarterly](#)
- [2019 St. Sophia THE ARK Youth Quarterly](#)
- [Orthodox Christianity](#)
- [The Rudder](#) *Streaming Orthodox Christian sacred music 24/7*
- [Synodal Website](#)
- [Western America Diocese Official Site](#)
- [Montreal and Canadian Diocese](#)
- [All Saints of Alaska Orthodox Church](#)
- [Abbreviated Prayerbook](#)
- [The Sacramental Life](#)
- [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*  
*Orthodox*  
*Church*

*the ceremonies of  
other nations.”*

**W**ith 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.*