



“ORTHODOX 9” PARISHES BULLETIN

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN CANADA

Monthly Newsletter for the family of Orthodox Churches including:



St. Mary’s (the Nativity of the Holy Virgin) - NISKU

Sts. Peter & Paul - BONNYVILLE

St. John the Baptist - HOREN

Holy Ascension - CALMAR

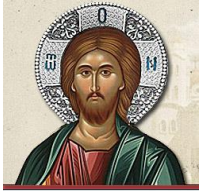
St. Onuphrius - FOAM LAKE (SK)

Whitsuntide (Holy Trinity) - THORSBY

Dormition of Theotokos -MACNUTT (SK)

St. John the Baptist - VEGREVILLE

Sts. Peter & Paul - INSINGER (SK)



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December the 4th, we celebrate one of the Twelve Major Feasts of the Orthodox Church, *The Entry of the Most Holy Mother of God into the Temple.*



In this feast we remember the promises made by Joachim and Anna that, if blessed with a child, they would dedicate that child to the service of God in His Holy Temple. Subsequently, we celebrate the beginning of the fulfillment of that toward which all Old Testament Temple worship symbolically pointed: the Theotokos taking her place in the Holy of Holies as the one who will become the true living Temple of God through the miraculous conception of Christ in her womb.

This feast is placed for us at the beginning of the Nativity fast, and as the Troparion for the feast declares: "Today is the prelude of the good will of God, of the preaching of the salvation of mankind." So, this feast serves for us as a precursor to the Nativity, a prelude to that angelic herald of the Birth of the Savior: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, good will toward men!" This is the opening notes to the beautiful song of salvation we will celebrate in full in a little over a month's time.

But not only a prelude – it is also a good source of instruction for all faithful, who want to properly spend the lent and reach the joy of the blessed Nativity.

The main occupation of the Blessed Virgin in the temple was prayer. To accomplish it, She often retired to solitude. Truly, the prayer performed in the temple, especially during the Eucharist, the Divine Liturgy, is capable for the heart "humble and broken" to open all the heavenly treasures of mercy and bounties.

Mary's favorite pastime was also reading the scriptures. She even received the gospel of the birth from Her of the Divine Savior from the Archangel, when she reflected on the prophecy: "Behold the Virgin will conceive in the womb, and will bear the Son." (Isa. 7.14). Scripture is not far from us. It reveals to us the throne of God, announces the origin of the world around us and of ourselves, the final meaning of all that exists and the will of God about us. It contains all the treasures of divine wisdom, everything necessary for true faith and a saving life.

And those virtues of the Mother of God were made up for by hard labour - a reliable means to combat despondency, sinful thoughts and the desire to judge others.

Congratulations on the feast, and may we, through the imitation of all these virtues, be counted worthy of the mighty and timely help of the Holy Virgin!

How to Live and Rise after a Fall: Two Options

Spiritual advice for the Nativity lent from Archbishop Jacob (Smakouz)

A mental and bodily fall into sin, like a usual, physical fall, can be different. Someone just fell by negligence, like accidentally slipping on ice. Someone had been warned about the danger, and he paid no attention to anyone. Someone fell, deliberately and brazenly breaking all the rules of spiritual life, and his fall is great, like a plane crash or the fall of the apocalyptic “bright star from heaven” (Rev. 8:10). We can see many examples: from Metropolitan Philaret’s terrible fall into a schism to our everyday personal sins and mistakes in thoughts and deeds. Interestingly, the distinction between “sin” and “mistake” can be found in liturgical texts. For example, in a praying litany: “For pardon and forgiveness of our sins and offences (τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν καὶ τῶν πλημμελημάτων ἡμῶν) let us ask of the Lord.” Offence is “error”, “misconduct”, “mistake”, from Greek literally: “singing out of tune.” Indeed, we quickly repent of some sins, get up easier, and after other sins, healing is a longer and more complex process. Especially if one has no experience of repentance, if due to one’s pride or false shyness one does not wish to turn to the Heavenly Doctor and His earthly assistant, who like a paramedic can provide first aid: to the canonical kind priest.



While pushing us to fall, the Devil often inspires the thought that the sin that he, the enemy, proposes to commit is insignificant and God will quickly forgive us. And after committing it he will impose another thought, the opposite one: this sin is very terrible and it is impossible to beg God, that He will never forgive this fall... It is very important for a Christian not to communicate with the seducer, the constant deceiver, not to listen to him, not to fall into despondency and despair, not to destroy yourself completely.

How to live after the fall? There are two options that are described by the monastic “Ancient Paterikon”. With repentant tears, you can constantly pray to God for forgiveness and remember the fall, so as not to fall into that sin again. Or you can joyously thank the Creator that He forgave the sin and helped to stand up, that He did not punish, but had mercy. Both ways are equally saving, and each penitent should choose his own or combine them.

The Gospel parable of the Prodigal Son is a prime example of our steps after any fall. Repentance consists of realizing the distressfulness of the situation, returning home (to the Church) and confessing one’s sins to the Heavenly Father (“Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight” (see: Luke 15:21)). We should honestly recognize the distressfulness of our situation as soon as possible, firmly decide that we should get out of the sinful pit, wash ourselves from the “dirt” in the Sacrament of Penance and go (or rather, run away with all our might) back to our royal house, to our Church, to the Heavenly Father. This first step is very important, and you cannot do anything without it. The Divine help is required here. It is necessary, like the Apostle Paul, to diligently “shout” in prayer to God the words of the spiritual SOS: “Lord, save me, for I perish!” (Matt. 14:30).

In the Sacrament of Confession, the penitent has an amazing chance to start his life from scratch, having been born again. When the head of the penitent is covered with the orarion, the sinner dies with all his sins and falls. And when the orarion is removed after reading the prayer, when he rises from his knees, raises his head bent over the Cross and the Gospel, then he is spiritually reborn, healed and becomes spiritually pure like a baby. He has again joined the Church of Christ, from which he had fallen away upon sin, had broken off like a dry branch from a

tree trunk. It is no accident that repentance is referred to as the “second baptism” in the Church. In his repentance, the sinner who “was dead is alive again” (Luke 15:24). The main thing after this is to try to no longer repeat the one-time sin, to not become like a washed animal, which rolls with pleasure in the mud again. And for this it is necessary to avoid those places where it is easy to fall, to keep a safe distance from those who can push you into sin. A vivid example is the former fornicatress, who became a great saint and an example of repentance for us: Mary of Egypt.

Christ the Savior always sets us on our “feet”; the grace of the Holy Spirit heals our weaknesses. Repentant tears become a healing “balm” for the soul. And virtue, the opposite of our sin, is the most powerful cure for a sinful disease. Humility in spiritual life, true obedience to Christ and His Church can be called “preventive” means that increase our spiritual “immunity” and keep us from falling in the future.

pravmir.com

Translated by Alyona Malafeeva

Source: pravlife.org

Special Thank you! God bless you!

*The parishioners of St. Mary’s Church in Nisku warmly thank **Kevin and Anna Wasiluk** for generous, timely and exceptionally needed donation of a snow blower and a storage shed for St. Mary’s Church and Hall in memory of Kevin’s late father - Evhane Wasiluk!*

*The Church Board and the parishioners of Orthodox 9 would like to express their gratitude **to all the members** for regular payments of the membership, as many things and expenses need our permanent funding and inputs!*

In Memoriam

IN LOVING MEMORY



JOHN BASIL MARGITICH
AUGUST 25, 1946 - NOVEMBER 9, 2019

On November 9, 2019, John Basil Margitich passed away peacefully with his loving family by his side after his courageous battle with cancer.

John was born into a priest family - to Father John and matushka Helen Margitich in the United States on August 25, 1946. In 1956, when John was only 10 years old, his Father Very Rev. John was appointed as a missionary priest and as the rector of St Barbara’s parish in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

John loved church music - he lived by this and always had a deep concern about church singing.

Since 1965, John has led the congregation’s singing in the Sunday morning Pro-Liturgy services celebrated in the English language and also lead tenor in the cathedral choir for many years.

He repaired many old music books and spent countless hours repairing the pages and printing in letters and words that had faded away. He led the small church choir singing the Divine liturgies for the feast days on the weekdays and Saturdays. John was also an altar helper and an instructor for youth.

The fond memory of a faithful servant of God, John Margitich will live on in the memories and hearts of those many people, Orthodox 9 parishioners who knew John, respected him and loved him so much.

In a blessed falling asleep, grant, O Lord, eternal rest unto Thy newly-departed servant John and make his memory to be eternal! Vechnaya pamyat! Memory eternal!

Pushenia 2019

November, the 24th again many people gathered to pray at the liturgy at St. Mary's Church and to continue the celebration at St. Mary's Hall at our Fall Social – Pushenia.



The service was decorated with an accordant singing of our choir directors and many guests from different orthodox parishes.



As well as the temple that day lovingly embraced all our parishioners and guests.

After the Divine Liturgy everyone was invited to the church hall to the Pushenia event, which is our annual joyous pre-lent event, which helps us make a proper entrance to the Christmas



fasting.

It's always a way of sharing and enjoying a good communication and meal. Besides, we have one of the most generous ruffles – our friendly lottery, where you can by a small donation win an excellent and useful prize!





Together with our guests we try to do our best in cooking for that day, and that results in many delicious special dishes, including our national pirohis and cabbage rolls and every family's best dishes – a lot of salads, meat dishes, sauces, as well as a rich variety of desserts: cakes, cookies, puddings, candies.

As always, a lot of different and numerous pleasant and useful prizes were prepared by the parishioners and guests, that were gathered and artfully presented by our Women's Aid, with the tickets to distribute to the people.

Again, we had the moments of sheer joy when people were winning the prizes, some people – several, or even many times! Congratulations!

When there was no any prizes left, the dessert sale (cooked and artfully packed by our parishioners) was also ruffled to the happy winners. Well, if there was anyone whose number was not named – may God generously make it up for you! Good luck next time!

May God remember those people who used to be here last year, but have recently departed this life, in His Kingdom and grant them a place of light and repose!

We would like to thank all who laboured for the sake of that joy – our Women's Aid, the church Board, our guests and all the people for giving you time and support and donating funds and items!

Thank you very much everyone who participated and attended our Fall Puschenia on Sunday! It was so great to have so many people and children together and celebrate in fellowship. Even the Great Cup didn't prevent us from having a good Fall Social this year!

**God bless you!
Have a good Christmas lent!**



**Photos by Natalia Borys
and Ann Wasiluk**

December 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<u>1</u> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy – Nisku	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u> The Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple 	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>8</u> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy – Nisku	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> 7:00 p.m.- St. Mary's Church Board Meeting, Nisku Parish Hall	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>15</u> 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy at St. Barbara Cathedral, <i>St. Barbara's Patronal Feast!</i> The service is led by His Grace Bishop Matthew of Sourozh	<u>16</u> Great-martyr Barbara 	<u>17</u> 10:00 a.m. - Liturgy at St. Barbara Cathedral – St. Barbara Day	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u> St. Nicholas the archbishop of Myra in Lycia 	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>22</u> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy – Nisku	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>29</u> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy – Vegreville	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>				