



“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

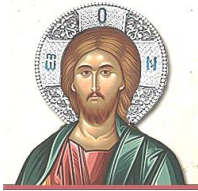
St. Onuphrius - FOAM LAKE (SK)

Whitsuntide (Holy Trinity) - THORSBY

Dormition of Theotokos -MACNUTT (SK)

St. John the Baptist - VEGREVILLE

Sts. Peter & Paul - INSINGER (SK)



Very Rev. EVGENIY PROTSENKO, Parish Priest

10812 - 108 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 3A6

Home Phone: (780) 426-5163 Cell Phone: (780) 818-7343

Facebook.com/St. Mary's Russian Greek Orthodox Church

E-mail: pokrova70@gmail.com; web: <http://www.orthodox-canada.com>



Volume 24, Issue 6

July 2020

Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles princes Olga and Vladimir – the dawn and the sun of Christian faith for our people



Rev. Nestor the chronicler narrates: "Blessed Olga from an early age sought wisdom, which is the best in this world, and found the most valuable pearl - Christ."

Saint princess Olga came to Christianity through the fire of personal and state tribulations, searching with the inquiring mind the Truth; and she was not afraid in the high princely chambers, among the pagans, to confess the crucified Christ as God.

She went to Byzantium’s capital, where she and the people escorting her were baptized by the Patriarch, with the Emperor being her Godfather. Then Olga went back to Russ with some priests, icons, Holy Scripture, and the liturgical books, and built first churches over the first Christian prince martyr’s grave and more churches later.

Then sadly the pagan relapse followed for Russ, but all she did and all she became after the baptism was one of the strongest arguments for her grand-son Vladimir in his choosing the True Christian faith.

His ambassadors brought from the Christian capital and the Sophia (Wisdom of God) Cathedral the good news of the service, at which they “didn’t realize whether they were on earth or in Heaven”; Vladimir himself went there receiving the Holy Baptism there and brought this salvific gift to all his people.

Then was the baptism of the Kiev capital city and all the big family of people throughout the young Russ state; the idols were banished, a lot more churches were built, and the Holy Eucharist was given to the people.

Following the example (and with his generous benefits) of the Equal-to-apostles prince, Russ began its uneasy and thorny but graceful path of Christian Orthodox state and church.

Our Holy Church celebrates the memory of saint great princess Olga and great prince Vladimir on the 24th and 28th of July, praying to them as the intercessors before God for us, their grateful descendants and inheritance before the Lord.

55 years anniversary of the new St Mary's church

This year of 2020 is a 55 anniversary of building of and first Liturgy at the contemporary St. Mary's church at Nisku. As well as it is 35 years since "Echoes of Faith" were published, the great collection of the holy history of Ukrainian immigrants, nourished by their faith and perseverance. Additionally, we have just had the sad anniversaries of some of the characters of this living story.

To the God's glory and the memory of our people, both having made and cherished the history, is dedicated this article, extracted from the afore mentioned historical work.

At the Annual meeting of St. Mary's congregation, held in January 1964, it was decided, after much discussion and deliberation, to build a new church. A special Building Committee was elected as follows: President — Andrew Stachnik, Devon; Vice-President — Dmetro Borys, Leduc; and Secretary-Treasurer — Peter Fedor, Leduc. The Board of Directors were: Alex Dublenko, Mike Doblanko, Mike Harysh and William Sycz. Nick E. Stroich was hired as architect, and later Alther Construction Ltd. of Edmonton was hired as the main contractor.



An important meeting was called for Sunday, May 31, 1964 to discuss a set of preliminary drawings and sketches prepared by Mr. Stroich. This preliminary church design resembled the new St. John the Baptist Church under construction at this time in Chipman, Alberta. More discussions were held; and plans were finalized at a special meeting on June 17, 1964. The final approval was given to Architect N. E. Stroich to design a church building, within a budget not exceeding \$65,000.00.

Following the decisions reached at the annual congregational meeting held on January 21, 1965 the new Building Committee of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Nisku, began its fund-raising program for the construction of a new church. Tenders were received and the contract was awarded on May 16, 1965 to Alther Construction of Edmonton for \$59,900.00.

A great responsibility was placed upon the shoulders of Andrew Stachnik and Peter Fedor in the summer of 1965. They spent many days driving many miles, collecting donations toward the Church Building Fund. Many important decisions had to be made regarding choice of brick, carpeting, painting, etc., during the course of the construction. Many a day Hope Fedor had to do

chores by herself and many a time, the cattle got out because there was no time for fencing that summer.

On May 23, 1965 the site for the new church was chosen and blessed by Reverend John Margitich. The honour of sod-turning was given to the late Richard Yaremko. Immediately, the excavation of the basement followed, and construction progressed rapidly.

The Cornerstone of the new church was dedicated and blessed on August 22, 1965. According to church records, the first donation of \$500.00 to the Building Fund, was given by William Simon Borys of Calmar on December 15, 1964. After this, the members of St. Mary's quickly rallied and responded with generous donations. Mr. Richard Yaremko started the landslide with his first \$1,000.00 donation. We also received numerous donations from friends and neighbours of different faiths, from Park Memorial Ltd., Hainstock Funeral Home and from St. Barbara's Cathedral.

Memorial funds were set up and gratefully received in memory of deceased parishioners. The Ladies' Aid of St. Mary's went out full force in their fund-raising efforts, and donated almost \$25,000.00 towards the Building Fund. Any donations, large or small, were graciously accepted for this worthy cause. The red aisle rug was donated by Mrs. Olga Fedor; and the large crystal chandelier was donated by Mrs. Matrona Wolcov of Red Deer, Alberta.



Mr. Nicholas Stroich, architect of the new edifice, received many compliments and praise for the design and completion of this church. The building, rectangular in shape, was built from concrete blocks and brick, with five aluminum-covered domes and the interior was finished in plaster. A red carpet covers the center aisle and all the floor area in the Sanctuary.

St. Mary's Church is a beautiful landmark, set in picturesque rural surroundings.

In the amazingly short time of seven months, the new church was completed with the installation and complete renovation of the Iconostasis from the old church. On December 5, 1965 the first Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the new church by Rev. Constantine Stakhovsky, pastor of the parish, and Rev. John Margitich of St. Barbara's Cathedral. The happy, proud and faithful Orthodox parishioners of Nisku were joined by many visitors from near and far, who came to witness the celebration of this first Divine Liturgy. The new church was crowded with approximately 300 people that day.

“The Building of the New Church of St. Mary's — 1965-1966 submitted by Hope Fedor”. Echoes of Faith

Saint John, archbishop of Shanghai and San Francisco



This saint of the latter times was born June 4, 1896 in the province of Kharkov. At baptism he was given the name Michael. As a child he was serious for his years and he later wrote: "From the first days when I began to become aware of myself, I wished to serve righteousness and truth. My parents kindled in me a striving to stand unwaveringly for the truth, and my soul was captivated by the example of those who had given their lives for it."

Following the desire of his parents, he entered law school in Kharkov. He was a naturally gifted student but spent more time reading the Lives of Saints than attending academic lectures. "While studying the worldly sciences," he wrote, "I went all the more deeply into the study of the science of sciences, into the study of the spiritual life."

After the Revolution, he was evacuated together with his family to Belgrade where he entered the faculty of theology at the University. In 1926, a year after his graduation, he was tonsured a monk and given the name John, after his own distant relative, St. John of Tobolsk. In November of that same year, he was ordained hieromonk. Soon he became a teacher at the Serbian Seminary of St. John the Theologian at Bitol. More than once the bishop there, St. Nikolai Velimirovich, would say, "If you wish to see a living saint, go to Fr. John."

Ascetic

It was his own students who first became aware of Vladika's great feat of asceticism. At night they noticed that Vladika would stay up, making the rounds of the dormitories and praying over the sleeping students. Finally, it was discovered that he scarcely slept at all, and never in a bed, allowing himself only an hour or two each night of uncomfortable rest in a sitting position, or bent over on the floor, praying before icons. This ascetic feat he continued for the rest of his life.

At the age of 38 he was elevated to the episcopate of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, and was sent to Shanghai, China. There he restored Church unity, took an active interest in the religious education of youth, encouraged and participated in various charitable organizations founded an orphanage, and himself gathered sick and starving children off the streets. He always wore clothing of the cheapest Chinese fabric and often went barefoot, sometimes having given his sandals away to some poor man. Vladika celebrated Divine Liturgy and received Holy Communion daily, as he did for the rest of his life.

Wonderworker

In Shanghai it became evident that Vladika was not only a righteous man, but a true ascetic, a man of prayer and a wonderworker. Once in Shanghai Vladika John was asked to the bed of a dying child, whose case had been called hopeless by the physicians. Entering the apartment, Vladika John went straight to the room in which the sick boy lay, although no one had managed yet to show him where this was. Without examining the child, Vladika immediately fell down in front of the icon in the corner, which was very characteristic of him and prayed for a long time. Then, assuring the relatives that the child would recover, he quickly left. And in fact the child became better towards morning and he soon recovered, so that a physician was no longer needed.

Vladika loved to visit the sick and if the condition of a patient would become critical, he would go to him at any hour of the day or night to pray at his bedside. There were cases when patients would cry out to Vladika in the middle of the night from their hospital beds, and from the other end of the city Vladika would come.

Man of Prayer

With the coming of the communists, the Russians in China were forced once again to flee, most through the Philippines. At one time 5,000 of the refugees were living in an International Refugee Organization camp on the island of Tubabao, located in the path of the seasonal typhoons.

When the fear of typhoons was mentioned by one Russian to the Filipinos, they replied that there was no reason to worry, because “your holy man blesses your camp from four directions every night.” They referred to Vladika John, for no typhoon struck the island while he was there.

In trying to resettle his flock, Vladika went to Washington, and through his intervention, almost the whole camp was miraculously able to come to America – including his orphanage.

In 1951 Vladika was sent to Western Europe. Here too his reputation for holiness spread – and not only among the Orthodox. In one of the Catholic churches of Paris, a priest strove to inspire his young people with these words: “you demand proofs, you say that now there are neither miracles nor saints. Why should I give you theoretical proofs, when today there walks in the streets of Paris a saint – Saint Jean Nu-Pieds (St. John the Barefoot)”.

Finally, in 1962, Vladika was sent to San Francisco in response to the urgent request of thousands of Russians who had known him in Shanghai. The Russian community was bitterly divided over the building of a new cathedral. Vladika became embroiled in this dispute and this eventually led to his persecution. But the Truth finally won out and a measure of peace was restored, the paralysis of the community ended, and the cathedral was finished.

Alive after Death

On June 19/July 2, 1966, during a visit to Seattle with the wonderworking Kursk Icon of the Mother of God, Vladika peacefully gave his soul to the Lord Whom he had served so faithfully during his earthly life. His unembalmed body was flown to San Francisco where for six days it lay in the cathedral in an open coffin, while thousands of the faithful came to say their last farewell to the beloved archpastor. Even after the sixth day it was noticed that there was no sign of decay.

Archbishop John was laid to rest in a small basement chapel under the altar of the cathedral after the San Francisco Board of Supervisors amended the City law to permit the burial of prelates in their cathedrals. His sepulchre became a place of pilgrimage for hundreds of people in need of his strong intercession before the throne of God. The many cases of answered prayer only confirm Vladika’s words to one of his devoted servants when, after his death, he appeared to her in a dream and said: “Tell the people: although I have died, I am alive!”

On June 19/July 2, 1994 St. John Maximovitch was canonized in San Francisco and his relics rest today in the Joy of All Who Sorrow Cathedral for all the faithful to venerate.

Holy Hierarch John, pray to God for us!

St. John is commemorated on June 19 on the calendar of the ancient Church (July 2, on the New Style calendar)

From "The Law of God". For Study at Home and School. Compiled by Archpriest Seraphim Slobodskoy. Chapter 65 "The Schism of the Roman Church. The Enlightenment of the Slavs"



"...When it became known that a Russian prince was seeking another faith, representatives of various religions began to come to him: Mohammedans, Jews, German Catholics, and Greek Orthodox. The Greek Orthodox representative made the deepest impression on Vladimir. In concluding his conversation, he showed Vladimir a picture of the Last Judgement.

Vladimir said, "It would be good to be with the righteous that are on the right side."

"Be baptized, and you will be with them," answered the representative.

Prince Vladimir consulted with his boyars, members of the Russian aristocratic order, who advised him to send ten wise envoys to the various countries to discover which faith was the best.

The envoys visited the countries from which the representatives had come. Returning to Kiev, they told the prince everything they had seen, and they praised the Greek Orthodox faith. They said that there was neither faith better than the Greeks' nor such people as they. "When we stood during the service in the Greek Church, we were not sure whether we were on earth or in heaven," they said. And then it came to be that having tasted sweetness, they no longer wanted the bitter. Having found the Greek Orthodox faith, they no longer wanted to worship their idols.

The boyars remarked to Vladimir about this, "If the Greek Orthodox faith was not better than the others, then your grandmother, Princess Olga, would not have converted to it, for she was the wisest of people."

Having converted to Christianity, Vladimir changed in every way. From a coarse and savage pagan, he became a pious and merciful Christian. He ordered all the poor people to come to his royal court and receive there everything they needed: food, clothing, and even money. Furthermore, carts were loaded with bread, meat, fish, vegetables, honey, and kvass and sent around to the cities and villages for all the sick and needy who were unable to come.

The people loved their Grand Prince and nicknamed him "Beautiful Sun;" and as to the sun, the people turned to him and with him walked toward God..."

(See page 7 for the continuation)

*Let us colour these icons of our holy enlighteners with Christian faith – great princess Olga (Helen – in baptism) and her grand-son – great prince Vladimir (Vasil – in baptism)!
(looking at their colourful pictures on page 6)*



July 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			<u>1</u> Canada Day 	<u>2</u> St. John Maximovitch archbishop of Shanghai and San Francisco (1966)	<u>3</u> 	<u>4</u> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy – Patronal Feast – <u>Vegreville</u> (Blessing of water)
<u>5</u> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy – (Patronal Feast – <u>Horen</u>)	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u> Nativity of St. John the Baptist	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> St. Barlaam of Khutyn	<u>11</u>
<u>12</u> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy St. Peter and Paul Day 	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u> The Placing of the Honorable Robe of the Most Holy Theotokos at Blachernae (5th c.).	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>19</u> 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u> Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos (1579). 	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u> St. Anthony of the Kiev Caves, (1073). 	<u>24</u> Blessed Equal-to-the-Apostles Princess Olga (969)	<u>25</u>
<u>26</u> 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy at St. Barbara's Cathedral	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u> Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Great Prince Vladimir (1015)	<u>29</u> Virginmartyr Julia of Carthage (440). 	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>	