



# “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**

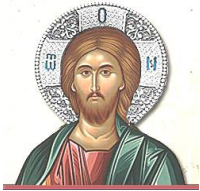
**St. Onuphrius - FOAM LAKE (SK)**

**Whitsuntide (Holy Trinity) - THORSBY**

**Dormition of Theotokos -MACNUTT (SK)**

**St. John the Baptist - VEGREVILLE**

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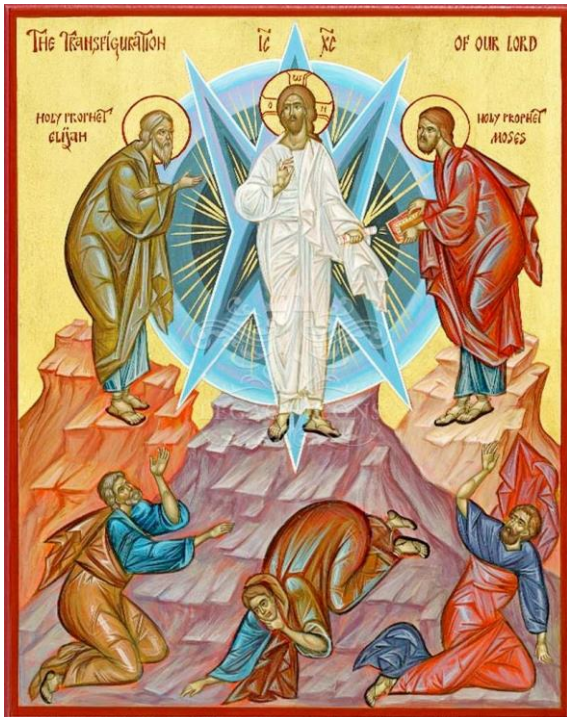
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## Transfiguration



On August 19, the Holy Church solemnly celebrates the Transfiguration of our Savior. What is the inner meaning and significance of this event of the Holy History for the life of a Christian? Transfiguration is a revelation about our Lord Jesus Christ; thus, it is a revelation about God and about man.

Not long before His sufferings on the Cross, our Lord, wishing to encourage and support his disciples, strengthen their faith and show that “His suffering is voluntary”, showed His Divine Glory to His disciples - Peter, James and John. He went with them to Mount Tabor and began to pray. “And when he prayed, His face changed, and His clothes became white, shining” (Luke 9), “His face shone like the sun, but His clothes became white like light” (Matt. 17), “like snow, as on the ground a whitewash cannot whiten” (Mark 9). Suddenly, two great Old Testament prophets - Moses and Elijah - the inhabitants of the Heavenly Kingdom appeared before the Lord, and they had a conversation with Him about His Sacrifice of the Cross. This is how closely, initially in the Lord Himself, and in all the Christians are the glory and the sacrificial sufferings.

By His appearance on Tabor in this extraordinary radiance, the Lord showed to what glory He raises our human nature in Himself, which is also done on our side “freely,” that is, by the effort of our free will. And the path to our Transfiguration - “Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father” (Matthew 13, 43) - the Church reminds us today.

Its main condition is repentance, the meaning of which, unfortunately, is not always understood. Translated from the Greek, the word "repentance" means "change of mind", that is, the change internal, that determines our actions.

The Church gives us a whole treasure of spiritual life for the manifestation of this light and glory: Sacraments (especially Communion), prayers, fasts, alms, reading of Holy Scripture, patristic creations and the lives of saints, pilgrimage to holy places, consecration of water, the fruits at the Transfiguration...

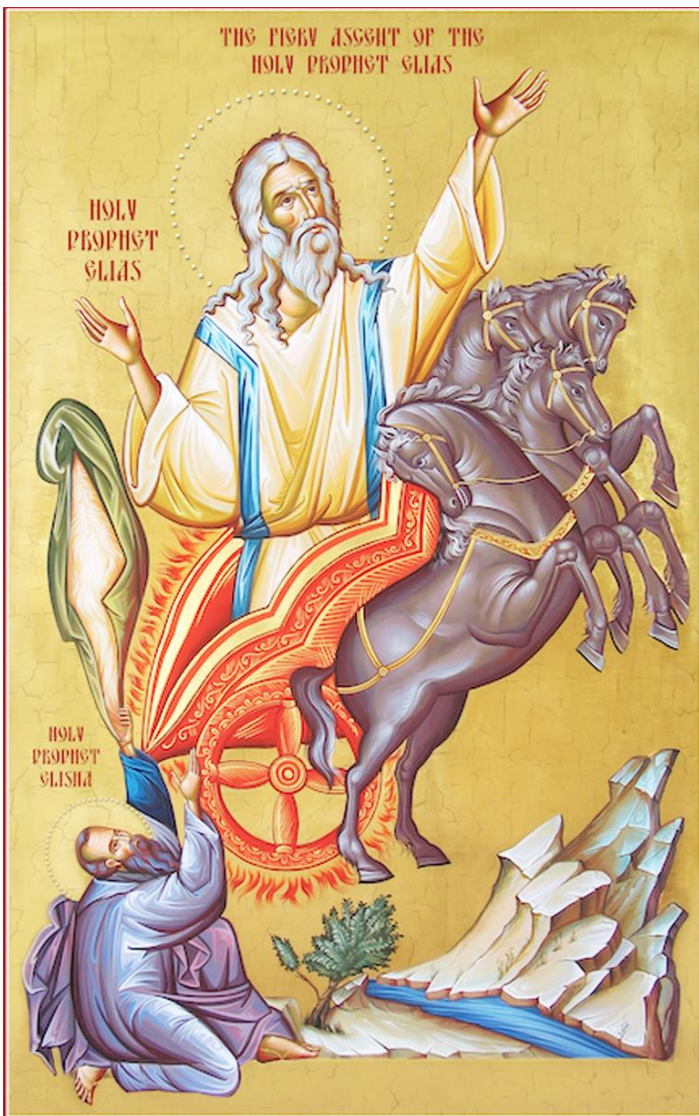
And the Lord will transform us by this if we ascend to our Tabor - translated from the Hebrew - "a place of purity and light"! Amen.

St. prophet Elijah is one of the Old Testament saints, revealed during the Transfiguration of the Lord. Today I would like to present a sermon said on the day of his commemoration 25 years ago by the one who is considered to be a saint of our days, of our time and epoch – archimandrite John Krestyankin (passed away in 2006).



Very often when we read about the saints of the ancient past, we feel like they are too far away and almost unreal. To step into this vaguely felt reality I would recommend reading a book of a contemporary Christian Orthodox bishop Tikhon Shevkunov, with the author of this sermon (f. John) being one of the main characters of the novel. The name of the book is “Everyday Saints and Other Stories”. It can be found on the internet, but if you will experience any difficulties with that, please certainly contact me. Have a blessed reading!

## *Sermon on the feast day of the prophet of God Elijah*



Today, beloved, we glorify one of the Old Testament prophets, who lived 900 years before the birth of Christ - the glorious prophet Elijah! Among other Old Testament prophets, he is the most ardent preacher of faith and denouncer of idolatry.

By the Providence of God, the ancient prophets were entrusted to awaken the human conscience, rescue perishing humanity that fell into idolatry, and lead people through repentance to righteousness.

During the time of the prophet Elijah, most of the God's chosen Jewish people abandoned the faith of their fathers and, turning to idolatry, formed the kingdom of Israel.

The Prophet Elijah, being a great zealot for the glory of God, could not endure that his fellow tribesmen worship wooden and stone idols.

He had a warm heart and courageously spoke out in denunciations. But by this he incurred the wrath of King Ahab and the wicked gentile queen Jezebel, who decided to kill him. The Prophet had to hide in the desert, in a cave, and endure hunger and thirst. He also endured great spiritual sufferings because his fervent appeals did not bring the desired results.

His sufferings were so great that he even asked God for a death for himself.

But God loved His faithful servant and did not give him death. God invisibly strengthened him... The birds brought him the food he needed to sustain his life.

And Elijah lived for several more years in the labors of preaching the true faith.

At the command of God, the prophet Elijah returned from his exile and put the pagan priests to shame, publicly showing the falsity of their faith and the vanity of relying on idols.

The people came to their senses when, through a short prayer of the prophet Elijah, fire descended from heaven on his altar. The pagan priests cried out to their idols for a long time, but fire did not descend on their altar.

Unfortunately, King Ahab did not come to his senses with this obvious miracle, which showed that the God in whom Elijah believes is, indeed, the true God. And the prophet Elijah had to hide in the wilderness again.

Many Old Testament righteous people, including the prophet Elijah, could not understand God's longsuffering. A completely natural bewilderment arose in their souls: "Why does not God punish wicked people? How long will the stench of their sinful life defile the land of God?"

But, my dear, God is longsuffering because of His ineffable love for people. After all, the image of God is imprinted in every human soul. And until even the smallest hope for repentance disappears, the Lord does not strike him with death, but with hope awaits his repentance. He waits because in the soul of the most desperate sinner there is at least a grain of the good he has done. And for this little good, for this ray of light in the souls of the apostates, God is patiently waiting that, perhaps, they will come to consciousness and abandon their wickedness.

Even in the days of the Old Testament, the Lord told people: "Turn to Me, and I will turn to you," we read in the Prophet Malachi (Mal. 3: 7).

God only calls to Himself. He does not force anyone to believe in Himself. He does not take away from any of us the gift that He bestowed upon our immortal soul - its free will. He expects us to turn our hearts to Him.

"My son, give your heart to Me ..." - says the Lord to the man (Proverbs 23:26). The Lord is waiting, patiently waiting for the conversion of people who have lost their faith ...

Believe in God - your Creator. Open your heart before Him, perhaps it has suffered, and has been sick over the years of apostasy. And you will feel how abundantly a stream of God's grace will flow into him. You will feel how the Lord encourages, comforts, and strengthens the heart that believes in Him.

But know - God does not need a dead faith, but one that lives in the entire inner being of man. When all our thoughts are directed to the Lord. When our heart longs to live with God, not parting with Him. When our will wants to fulfill the commandments of God, to follow the Lord to the end of our days.

Such a living faith inspires, is the driving force along our entire life path, saves us, makes the happiness of our life.

This is the kind of faith that the prophet Elijah had. And all of us, my dear ones, must work to ensure that our faith is exactly the same, if we consider ourselves children of God. The Holy Prophet Elijah is one of the chosen great men of piety, who, like the stars, shone on the firmament of the Old Testament Church, representing the coming into the world of the Sun of Truth - Christ the Savior. And with his zeal for the glory of God he teaches us to always remember our calling - to be true followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, strict executors of His holy will.

We must accustom ourselves to keeping the commandments of God. To cultivate in ourselves such a mood in which life away from God is simply unthinkable for us.

By this we will come closer to the life that the prophet Elijah led.

...

Many miracles are associated with the life of the prophet Elijah. But the miracle most striking to our minds happened at the end of his life. As we all well know, he was ascended to heaven alive on a chariot of fire. In his life, the prophet Elijah stood out among other Old Testament righteous people with a special love for God. His zeal for God was so great that he seems to us to be enveloped in flames. And at the end of his earthly life, a fiery whirlwind on a fiery chariot carried him to heaven. There was no such thing either before him or after him. And, probably, this will not happen again.

When we, beloved, think of the saints, we think of their greatness, they appear to us as heroes of the spirit. But "the power of God is made perfect in weakness."

Let us also dare, according to our strength, to imitate the now glorified prophet of God in anything.

Great was the faithfulness to God and the power of the prayer of the prophet Elijah. So, let's make it a rule in our life to imitate him in this. And first let us check ourselves whether we live according to our faith.

One and a half thousand years before the birth of Christ, it was said: "Pay attention to yourself if you want to be saved!"

Let us check whether we live in such a way that at the end of our life we will not have bitter regret, that we have been walking the wrong road all our lives? Have we used those days, years, given to us by the Lord, to prepare ourselves for the eternity? Do we strive to adorn our souls with the beauty in which we must appear before God?

Let us remind ourselves that God will require from us works of love, humility and meekness, and patience in our labors.

Dear ones, earthly life is given to each of us only once. Test yourself while there is still time for the one who has gone astray to find the right path.

Let us try to live so that the Lord recognizes His children in us and does not turn away from us.

Festivals honoring saints help us do these tests. We cannot afford their lives. But we must strive for their exploits.

Glorifying today the prophet of God Elijah, let us ask him so that through his prayers we have unshakable faith, undoubted hope, unfeigned love, ardent prayer and zeal for the glory of God.

We will ask the saint of God to help us strengthen our faith, prayer, and desire to live according to God's righteousness.

*"We magnify you,  
holy prophet of God Elijah,  
and we honor your glorious  
ascent on a chariot of fire!"*

August, the 2<sup>nd</sup> 1986

# Elijah

Elijah, the prophet, performed many miracles. Some of those miracles are found in 1 Kings 17 and 18. The following words are taken from those chapters. Find the words in the word search.

W I D O W L Z W T U C A  
 B D L P A B A R R X L E L O O  
 U O M S E R E P H A Y D E B  
 L W R R E R A H B E N S O  
 O B A D I A R A V E X T O I  
 K I S H O N T W X A I N L  
 X E L I J A H R A I N L

- ELIJAH
- PROPHET
- AHAB
- DEW
- RAIN
- BROOK
- RAVENS
- ZAREPHATH
- WIDOW
- BARREL
- MEAL
- OIL
- BREAD
- SON
- DIE

- BED
- PRAY
- OBADIAH
- BAAL
- CARMEL
- WOOD
- BULLOCK
- CUT
- ALTAR
- FIRE
- WATER
- KISHON
- SEA
- CLOUD



## Elijah is Fed by the Ravens

During a period of drought, wild birds and ravens brought food for the prophet Elijah. Can't you find what is missing in this picture of Elijah and the ravens? There are nine missing items.

# August 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<u>2</u> <b>Prophet Elias (Elijah) (9 c. b. c.)</b>  10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>9</u> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>16</u> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u> <b>Transfiguration of the Lord</b> 	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>23</u> 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy at St. Barbara's Cathedral	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u> <b>Dormition of the Mother of God</b> 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy – <b>Patronal Feast</b> – MacNutt 	<u>29</u>