



# “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**

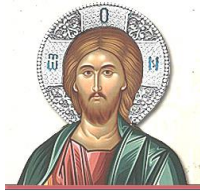
**St. Onuphrius - FOAM LAKE (SK)**

**Whitsuntide (Holy Trinity) - THORSBY**

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

**St. John the Baptist - VEGREVILLE**

**Sts. Peter & Paul - INSINGER (SK)**



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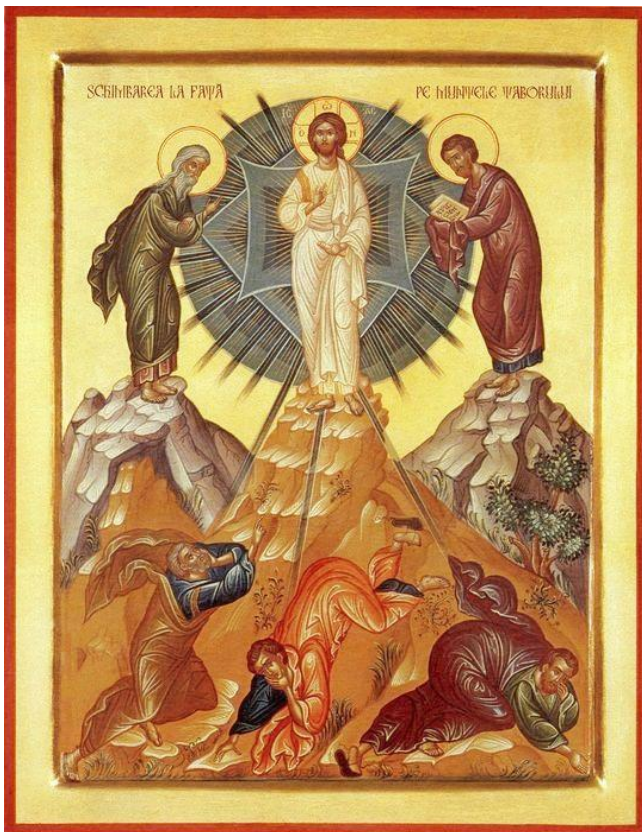
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**August 2021**



## The August Feasts of Hope

The month of August means two Greatest Feasts for Orthodox Christians, the Transfiguration of the Lord – August, the 19<sup>th</sup>, and the Dormition of the Mother of God – August, the 28<sup>th</sup>.

The first is the evidence of the Lord’s Deity before the time of temptation for the Apostles, but also the call for everyone – to transform our lives; the second – to supply the faithful with the divine strength to withstand the last temptation, so that it would be just a dormition (blessed falling asleep), and there is no more death that was waiting for everyone before the Resurrection of Christ, there is no more sorrow for death, there is no fear of it.

And there is another event that encompasses and connects those two feasts, and in a very strong way – gives us God’s grace to perceive the meaning and be partakers of those two events.

This is a period of spiritual tension, but this is a time of joy. This is a time of returning home, a time when we can come to life. This should be the time when we shake off everything that has become dilapidated and dead in us, in order to gain the ability to

live – to live with all the space, with all the depth and intensity to which we are called.

This is the Dormition Fast, that begins on August the 14<sup>th</sup>, on one of the Feasts of the Lord – Procession of the Precious Wood of the Life-giving Cross of the Lord, and ends on the Day of Dormition of the Holy Theotokos.

As Dormition (no matter what our end of life is like – for our soul to be received by the loving hands of the Lord, as we see it on the icon of the Feast) instead of death is the goal of the Christian people. As the One Who bore God for us is now enters the ineffable closeness to her Divine Son and can intercede for us all necessary for our, each of us, despite all our complexity and diversion, for our personal transfiguration in this life and our personal dormition – as the door to the life of the future age and day, that the Lord has made by His Resurrection. Amen.

# THE DORMITION FAST

The Dormition fast was established as preceding the great feasts of the Transfiguration of the Lord and of the Dormition of the Mother of God. It lasts two weeks—from August 1/14–August 14/27 (old style/new style).

The Dormition fast comes down to us from the early days of Christianity.

We find a clear reference to the Dormition fast in a conversation of Leo the Great from around the year 450 A.D. “The Church fasts are situated in the year in such a way that a special abstinence is prescribed for each time.

Thus, for spring there is the spring fast ]—the Forty Days [Great Lent; for summer there is the summer fast... [the Apostles’ fast]; for autumn there is the autumn fast, in the seventh month [Dormition fast]; for winter there is the winter fast [Nativity fast].”



[Fresco of the Dormition of The Mother of God](#)

St. Symeon of Thessalonica writes that, “The fast in August [Dormition fast] was established in honor of the Mother of God the Word; Who, foreknowing Her repose, ascetically labored and fasted for us as always, although She was holy and immaculate, and had no need for fasting. Thus, She especially prayed for us in preparation for being transported from this life to the future life, when Her blessed soul would be united through the Divine spirit with Her Son. Therefore, we also should fast and praise Her, emulating Her life, urging Her thereby to pray for us. Some, by the way, say that this fast was instituted on the occasion of two feasts—the Transfiguration and the Dormition. I also consider it necessary to remember these two feasts—one which gives us light, and the other which is merciful to us and intercedes for us.”

The Dormition fast is not as strict as the Great Fast, but it is stricter than the Apostle’s and Nativity fasts.

On Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays of the Dormition fast, the Church rubrics prescribe *xerophagy*, that is, the strictest fast of uncooked food (without oil); on Tuesdays and Thursdays, “with cooked food, but with no oil”; on Saturdays and Sundays wine and oil are allowed.

On the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, the Church rubrics allow fish. After that day, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, the fruits of the new harvest would always be included in the meals.

The spiritual fast is closely united with the bodily, just as our soul is united with the body, penetrates it, enlivens it, and makes one united whole with it, as the soul and body make one living human being. Therefore, in fasting bodily we must at the same time fast spiritually: “Brothers, in fasting bodily let us also fast spiritually, severing all union with unrighteousness,” the Holy Church enjoins us.

The main thing in fasting bodily is restraint from abundant, tasty and sweet foods; the main thing in fasting spiritually is restraint from passionate, sinful movements that indulge our sensual inclinations and vices. The former is renunciation of the more nourishing foods for fasting food, which is less nourishing; the latter is the renunciation of our favorite sins for exercise in the virtues which oppose them.

The essence of the fast is expressed in the following Church hymn: “If you fast from food, my soul, but are not purified of the passions, in vain do we comfort ourselves by not eating. For if the fast does not bring correction, then it will be hateful to God as false, and you will be like unto the evil demons, who never eat.”

The Great fast and the Dormition fast are particularly strict with regard to entertainment—in Imperial Russia even civil law forbade public masquerades and shows during these fasts.

### **The Dormition fast begins on the feast of the “Procession of the Wood of the Life-Giving Cross of the Lord.”**



[Icon of the Veneration of the Cross, Novgorod. \(Preserved in the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.\)](#)

In the Greek horologion of 1897, the origin of this feast is explained: “Because of the illnesses that occur very often during August, the custom was established in Constantinople of processing the Precious Wood of the Cross through the roads and streets to sanctify places and prevent disease.

On the eve of the feast it was carried out of the royal treasury and placed upon the holy table of the Great Church (the Hagia Sophia, dedicated to the Holy Wisdom of God).

From that day until the Dormition of the Most Pure Theotokos, lityas were served throughout the city, and the Wood of the Cross was then offered to the people for veneration. This was the procession of the Precious Cross.”

In the Russian Orthodox Church, this feast was linked with the remembrance of the Baptism of Russia in 988. The memory of the day of the Baptism of Russia was preserved in the Chronologies of the sixteenth century, which state that, “Grand Prince Vladimir of Kiev and All

Rus was baptized on August 1.”

In the *Discussion of active rites of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church on the Dormition*, written in 1627 at the request of Patriarch Philaret of Moscow and All Russia, the feast on August 1 is described: “During the procession on the day of the Precious Cross, there is a blessing of the waters for the enlightenment of the people, throughout the cities and villages.”

On this day, a feast was established of the All-Merciful Savior Christ God, and of the Most Pure Virgin, in honor of the victory of Grand Prince Andrei Bogolubsky over the Volga Bulgars, and of the Greek Emperor Michael over the Saracens.

According to Orthodox Church tradition, on this day the Cross is venerated (according to the rubrics of the Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross during Great Lent), and a lesser blessing of the waters is served. Together with the blessing of the waters, new honey is also blessed. (This is where the Russian folk name for the feast, “Savior of the honey,” comes from.)

[Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate](#)

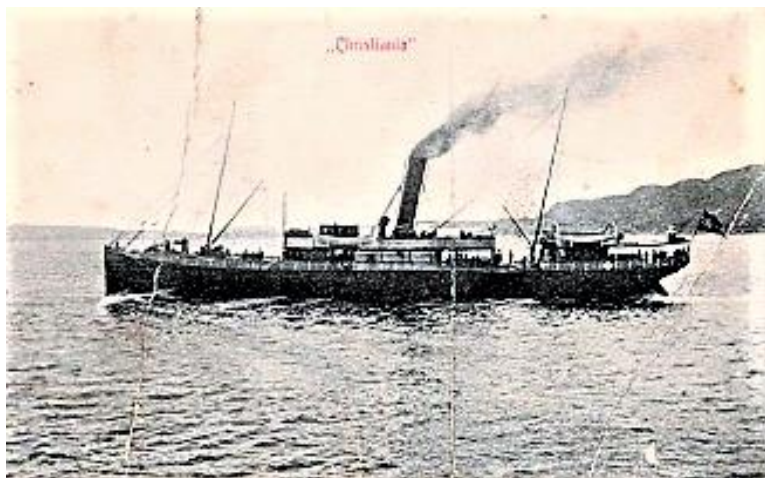
[Translated by Pravoslavie.ru/OrthoChristian.com](#)

## 2022 - 120 anniversary of the first orthodox temple at Rabbit Hill – the construction of the Orthodox Temple of the Holy Ascension

125th anniversary of arriving to Canada of the founder of the church



There is another anniversary that is linked with it – and this is the 125th anniversary (1896) of arriving to Canada of Theodore Pavlovich Fuhr (1864-1942) and Anna "Maria" Fuhr (born Borys) (1864-1939), the founders of the Orthodox Christian mission in Rabbit Hill near Edmonton, Alberta



S S Christiania

Theodore Pavlovich had arrived in Canada early in 1896. Theodore's wife, Anna, arrived in Alberta with her daughter Katherine and with her mother-in-law Anna later in 1896. Theodore's mother was Anna Szczyrbiak, who had been born in Wysocko, Jaroslaw, Galicia. She had then been married in about 1863.

When this family arrived in Canada, they were one of many families who had emigrated from different villages of the Jaroslaw county in Galicia. However, Theodore Fuhr and his family were alone amongst these newcomers to settle to the southwest of Edmonton . There, at Rabbit Hills, southwest of Edmonton, Theodore received a portion of land for homesteading at : SE-2-51-25-W.4.M.

However, he cancelled his application because he found a pre-existing homestead, which by then was a developed farm, and which he bought from a German family. A couple of horses, a cow, a plough were amongst his assets. Some neighbours, the Millers, watched over for Theodore and they taught him the ways of the land. This property amounted to a half-section of land (1.3 square km : 320 acres, or 130 hectaress). Theodore knew carpentry from Galicia, and he built his own buildings from the best wood that he could find.

His decision to settle in this region opened the way for many others to do similarly, and his presence there smoothed the way for them.

### **The first Slavic landowner in Canada**

In making this purchase, Theodore became the first Slavic landowner in Canada. Had he begun simply with the homestead, it would have taken several years of hard work in construction and cultivation before he would have been able to own the land he worked.

Another immigrant family (Ivan and Anna Borys and their son Simeon) arrived from their homeland and settled nearby. They were relatives of the Fuhrs.

When Anna joined Theodore near the end of 1896, she found him already established, and the foundation of a community was just beginning to be formed.

The Church was vital to life. Theodore and some others now comprehended that they were no longer obligated to belong to the Uniat church (as previously in their portion of Galicia). Theodore had already begun to gather the neighbours who were willing to listen to him. Theodore was articulate and well-read, and he was able to convince his Ruthenian neighbours about the fulness of the Orthodox Christian Faith. There was a strong positive response.

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So, Theodore Fuhr was the first Ukrainian in Canada to own land and to hold the clear title to the land (he had paid in cash).

By 1898, Theodore Fuhr and his family had been joined in this region by the Dobko, Pidhirny, Olekshy (also spelt Olekshii), Sereda, Borys, Workun (also spelt Vorkun), Pyrch, Manchak, Khimera, Fytsovyh families, and many others.

### **Establishment of a Ukrainian Catholic parish nearby, 1900**

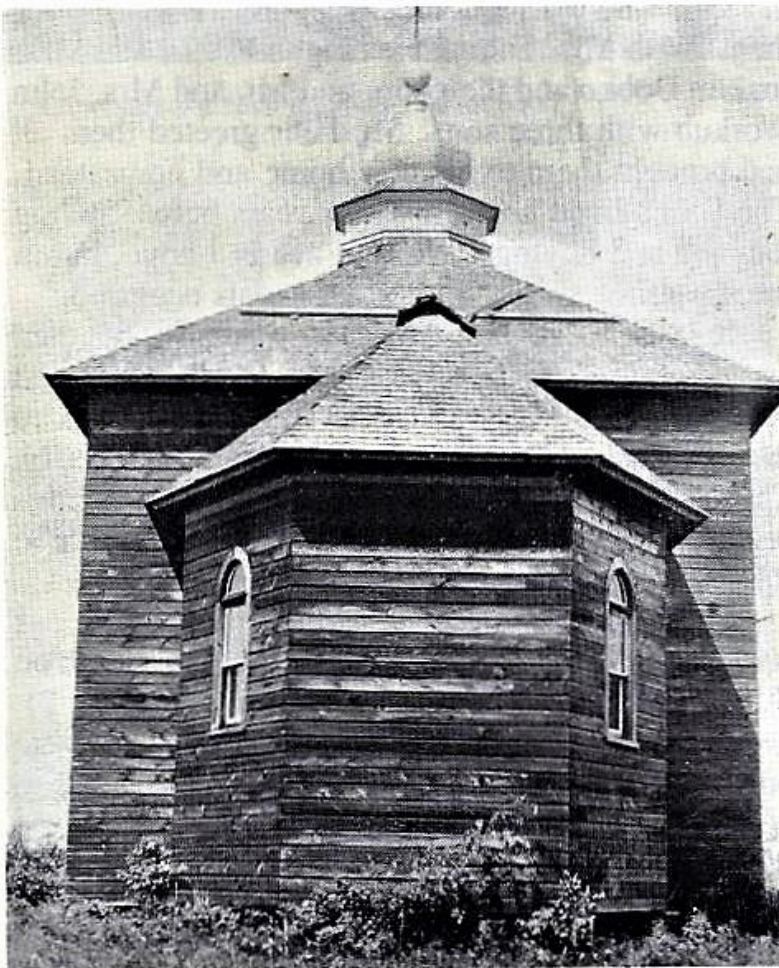
In the month of January, 1900, local community families resolved to begin the task of building a Temple. A sum of 100 dollars was raised, and construction was to begin on 26 March, 1900. The name of the new Temple was to honour the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God.

On 18 December, 1900, the newly-constructed temple was consecrated by the Ukrainian Catholic Priest Ivan Zacklynski.

### **Construction of the Orthodox Temple of the Holy Ascension, 1902**

During the course of these developments, because he had fulfilled the requirements, Theodore Fuhr had been granted Naturalisation as a Canadian British Subject on 5 November, 1900.

In 1902, the Temple for which the land had been donated by Theodore Fuhr was later erected, and it was named after the Feast of the Holy Ascension. Space for a cemetery was included in the property donated.



Ascension Church built in 1902 on Fuhr's farm.

Holy Ascension Church Rabbit Hill

## Visit of Bishop Tikhon, 1902

In 1902, Bishop Tikhon of the Aleutians and North America (who later became the Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus', and who was in time glorified as a saint) visited the congregation. In 1904, he again visited the Rabbit Hill area and led services at Holy Ascension Church.

This time, he stayed at the Fuhr home, and he presented Theodore Fuhr with a commendation (a "gramota"), dated 12 August, 1904, for his efforts in building the Holy Ascension Church, and for his work towards the return of many Uniats to Orthodoxy. It was during this visit that Bishop Tikhon helped the family by watching over the children while the parents did work in the harvest-season. The children remembered this encounter with the holy bishop for the rest of their lives.

Forty more fruitful years followed before the repose first of Anna in 1939 and then of Theodore in 1942.

By the end of the first decade in the new century, many families from the Greek Catholic Parish of Saint Mary's (usually identified with Nisku) wished to unite with the Orthodox congregation of Holy Ascension. With the spirit of Orthodoxy growing in strength, the union of the 2 parishes took place under the condition that the future services were to be held in Saint Mary's Church (formally known as the Nativity of the Theotokos Church), since it was the larger building.

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This temple is nowadays hosting all orthodox believers of the former Rabbit Hill region, and those who want to join the salvific worship in this beautiful house of the Lord.

<http://orthodoxcanada.ca/>

## The restoration of the church services!



Dear brothers and sisters! On August the 15<sup>th</sup> we are going to have our first in-church service in St Mary's church in Nisku, the event very much long-awaited. Blessed be the Lord Who granted this to us! And may the Lord bless everyone who supported our humble online services!

After the Liturgy we shall serve a panikhida for the founder of the first orthodox church in Rabbit Hill

area, as to the request of his pious descendants.

We hope that all the churches of Orthodox IX will be able to join this godly initiative, and the situation will finally change for the better.

May God bless us!

# The fulfillment of St Mary's Church restoration

## *photo report*

In July the reconstruction of the southern side of the church was finished!

The cement was poured on July 16 by Darcy Doblanko and his Volunteers that were working hard that day! The new sidewalks look wonderful now!



July 21, Darrell Lecapoy and Darcy Doblanko finished leveling black dirt and seeding grass.

As the years go by more and more upkeep is needed to have our church, cemetery and hall maintained. With the decrease in memberships and donations it has become harder and harder to do so.





**Thank you to those who have kept their memberships up and made donations in either their name or their families name, you have helped us keep our heritage alive!**





If you are looking to make a donation or renew your membership you can now send an e transfer to [kwasiluk@shaw.ca](mailto:kwasiluk@shaw.ca) or text 780-902-4082. Please feel Free to call Kevin Wasiluk with any questions at 780-902-4082. Or you can mail a cheque to 25437 HWY 19 Leduc County, AB T9G 0A8.

All looks really good now and our Forefathers would be very proud.

**Thank you again to everyone who has assisted with this wonderful project and everyone who has already donated towards the cost of this large undertaking.!**

**May God Bless Us All! May God Grant Us All Many Years!**

photos by Natasha Borys,

[Facebook.com/St. Mary's Russian Greek Orthodox Church](https://www.facebook.com/St.MarysRussianGreekOrthodoxChurch)

*The parishioners of Orthodox IX extend our deepest and sincere condolences to the relatives of the newly departed Alexandra! May God comfort you with His compassion, and may God settle His maidservant, where the light of His countenance shall visit! The Kingdom of Heaven and Memory Iternal!*

## **Alexandra Elizabeth Dobko**

**APRIL 15, 1927 – JULY 23, 2021**



Alexandra Elizabeth Dobko of Salem Manor, Leduc passed away on July 23, 2021 at the age of 94. Alexandra is survived by her daughter Colleen McIlroy and her husband James, son Randall and his wife Katherine and their daughters Mykala and Shelby, son Jeffrey and his wife Kimi and his sons Gary and Jordan, grandson Tyson Dobko and his wife Lily, and sons Robert and Brian. Alexandra is also survived by her youngest sister Edith Bukieda and her sister-in-law Olia Yuzel.

Alexandra was predeceased by her husband Steve in 2006, eldest son Dennis in 1996, brother Tim Yuzel in 2004, sister Emily Brewster in 2007, brother Carl Yuzel in 2018, father Paul Yuzel in 1975, and mother Mary in 1973.

Alexandra Elizabeth Dobko grew up on a farm northwest of Calmar in the Wilton Park district. Alexandra's mother Mary (nee Tancowny) was born in the Nisku area and her father Paul Yuzel was born in the western Ukraine which was then part of Austria-Hungary. Alexandra went to the local Wilton Park School from Grade 1 to 10; her future husband Steve also attended Wilton Park School at the same time. Alexandra attended West Glen High School in Edmonton for Grade 11 and 12. While living in Edmonton Alexandra lived with Irene Parlby who was Alberta's first female cabinet minister and a pioneering activist for women's rights in Canada.

Alexandra married Steve Dobko on November 2, 1949 and for the first two years of their marriage Alexandra and Steve, along with Steve's younger sister Stella and her husband Mike Babiak, all lived with Steve's parents, Peter and Kate Dobko, in their tiny farm house. In 1952, Alexandra and Steve moved into their new home where they lived for over the next fifty years.

Alexandra and Steve raised a large family of five boys and one girl: Dennis (1951), Robert (1954), Brian (1955), Jeffrey (1957) Colleen (1964), and Randall (1967). Alexandra was a devoted mother and wife who worked extremely hard taking care of her large family. Alexandra loved to cook, and her children have fond memories of coming home from school to the delicious aroma of freshly baked bread, cinnamon buns, and doughnuts. Alexandra was also a very keen gardener, and she took great pleasure in working among the beautiful flower beds that surrounded her house.

Alexandra was always a very devoted member of the Holy Ascension Russo-Greek Orthodox Church and she loved to sing in the church choir. Alexandra was also a very active member of the Wilton Park Community Club for many years.

As their children got older, Alexandra and Steve were able to spend a lot of time travelling. They visited eastern Canada, Florida, California, and Hawaii, but their favorite place was always Victoria. In their later years, Alexandra and Steve often would spend over a month there each winter. After Steve passed away, Alexandra's daughter Colleen took her on several memorable trips: to Britain and Ireland, on an Alaskan cruise, and to Mexico for her grandson Tyson's wedding.

In 2004, Alexandra and Steve left the farm and moved into a condo in Leduc. After Steve passed away in 2006, Alexandra continued to live in their condo until 2012 when she moved into Plainview Manor in Leduc. In 2016, poor health forced Alexandra to move into Salem Manor where she resided until she passed away.

Donations in memory of Alexandra Dobko may be made to the Holy Ascension Russo-Greek Orthodox Church, Salem Manor, or the charity of one's choice.

*Children's Corner: Drop in with your children and great & grand children!*

*And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will  
reap, if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9*

*Add Colours To This Good Works Picture And Try To Do Likewise!*



# August 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> <b>Prophet Elias (Elijah) (9 c.b.c.)</b> 	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u> Mary Magdalen (1st c.) 	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>8</u>	<u>9</u> Great-martyr and Healer Panteleimon (305) 	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u> Martyr John the Soldier (361-63) 	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u> <b>Procession of the Precious Wood of the Life-giving Cross of the Lord</b>
<u>15</u> <b>10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy at St. Mary’s Church, Nisku</b>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u> <b>Transfiguration of the Lord</b> 	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>22</u> 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy at St. Barbara’s Cathedral	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u> St. Tikhon, bishop of Voronezh 	<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>	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>				