



“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

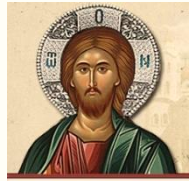
St. Onuphrius - FOAM LAKE (SK)

Whitsuntide (Holy Trinity) - THORSBY

Dormition of Theotokos -MACNUTT (SK)

St. John the Baptist - VEGREVILLE

Sts. Peter & Paul - INSINGER (SK)



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Christ is Born! – Let us Glorify Him!

ХРИСТОС РАЖДАЕТСЯ – СЛАВИТЕ!

Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. (Luke 2, 15)

This is the call that we have heard these bright days, the call from the Angels, the call from Heaven, from the Lord.

For He is ready to share the misery of His prodigal creation, so that to lead us back and up to where we belong, to his Fatherly dwelling, to Heaven, to Himself.

The hope of all nations and all centuries and epochs came to life, as the Divine Infant comes to life today!

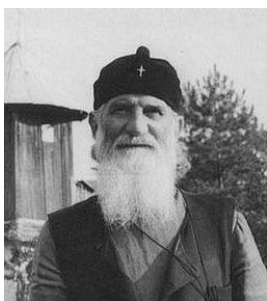
The feeling of safety, protection and peace, we feel today with all who were vouchsafed to see the Baby: He was born like we and our parents, and our children were, but with a great salvific difference – without sin!

And they stand there and, maybe, do not even imagine, that sinless is not immortal – that Baby, and that is on purpose – to add our life to this peaceful Godly life by this fearful and glorious means.

But today we have this very peaceful moment of our salvation, the moment when He came down from heaven, and incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, was born by this Lady full of grace, and became man “for us men and for our salvation”.

May, just like that night, the poor cave of our soul become the most beautiful place and palace, as it is filled with this ineffable joy, and may the Newborn find, if not the best place in the universe, but, like the manger of that poor cave – the best possible place of our inner world, that truly belongs to Him, and cannot be happy and blessed without Him – the softest and safest, and the warmest place of our heart and soul! Amen.

GOD ENTERED INTO THE DEPTHS OF HUMAN LIFE



In truth God as a man was born on earth! Why? That we might live through him (1 John 4:9). For without the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ, human life is wholly and completely a suicidal absurdity, and death is truly the most outright and horrible absurdity on earth. To comprehend death means comprehending life in all its depth, height, and limitlessness. This can only be done by the All-man-loving Lord, Who by His immeasurable love becomes man and forever remains the God-man in the human world. Only as God-life, life in God, can human life acquire its eternal meaning. But outside of God, life is the most ridiculous absurdity, filled with offense and bitterness. Your life, O man, can find its only reasonable, rational, logical meaning in God alone. And your thought, brother, your human thought finds its divine and immortal meaning only in God, only as God-thought. Human thought only becomes God-thought in the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the same with your senses, O man—only in God do they find their divine, immortal meaning. Without this, your senses are your most merciless torturers, continually crucifying you on an eternal cross, after which there is no resurrection. And the conscience? Where does this violent stranger come from in us, people? It too only unites with its divine and eternal meaning as God-conscience. Without this, human conscience is a ferocious and ghastly absurdity. And your death, and my death, and the death of all people—isn't it the cruelest torture for human beings throughout the world? Yes, it truly is. But it too, only as the death of the God-man, gains its eternal meaning through the resurrection of the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ; for through Him and only through Him does victory over death happen and death in the human world can be comprehended. Thus, also everything human, the entire human with all his innumerable infinities, only as the grace-filled God-man in the deified and all-vivifying Body of the God-man Christ—the Church—gains his divine, eternal, God-human, and higher meaning.

Through His incarnation, through becoming man, becoming human, has God in the most manifest way entered into the very womb, the very bowels of human life, into the blood, into the heart, into the center of all existence. Squeezed out by voluntary human sin from the world, from the body, from the human soul, through the incarnation, by becoming man He returns to the world, to the body, to the soul. He wholly becomes a man, and being a man, He labors for man, settles into the world and among creatures, takes care of the creature, enlightens the creature, saves the creature, transforms the creature, and deifies the creature. God's incarnation is the greatest upheaval and the most providential event, both on Earth and in Heaven, for the miracle of miracles has happened. If up until then the creation of the world from nothing was the greatest miracle, the incarnation of God in man has without a doubt surpassed it in its miraculousness. If at the creation of the world the words of God were clothed in matter, then at the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ God has clothed Himself in a body, in matter, in flesh. Therefore, the incarnation of God became providential throughout the whole creation—for every individual, for every being, for every creature.

You, too, live by Him—live by the God-man and you will be healed of all deaths, all sins, all passions, and all diabolism. May your life become a God-life. In this is your whole heavenly-earthly mystery, O man, the moment you become a member of the church—a member of the God-man Body of Christ. And how should we live in the Church of Christ? We should live through the Holy Mysteries and holy virtues. That is why there is a fast before the Nativity. Fasting is the first virtue, and prayer is always with it. These two foundational virtues bring a person to the God-man and teach him with divine wisdom how to live by Him and in Him. What should we do with the body given to us from God? Purify it, free it from all uncleanness, from all passions, from all evil, from every demon. And what does this mean? It means cleansing it of every sin, for in every sin a devil is hiding, in every sin a devil works apart from your free will. In a great sin is a prince of demons, in a small sin is an imp. You and I and every person has been given all the necessary means to conquer those demons, all the passions, all sins, and all deaths in us and in the world around us. Prayer and fasting are in the first place. The all-true lips of the All-true Lord Jesus Christ have pronounced also this life-creating truth: This kind goes not out but by prayer and fasting (Matt. 17:21)—all kinds of sins, all kinds of passions, all kinds of demons.

The Nativity is before you, before me, before us, brothers and sisters: God is born as a man, "so that we would receive life through Him" and thus be filled in soul and body with God. And this is most readily acquired by prayer and fasting. They cleanse and purify the body and the soul, so that wondrous joy would settle into them, and the sweetest God-infant, our Lord Jesus and God would fill completely our human existence, all of its enumerable infinities. It is for this reason, O man, that your body and your soul were created—to be filled with God and to live with God in the divine world on high. Our God-given teachers in this work are humble prayer and humble fasting—these holy foundational Gospel virtues. May they fly with us, may they precede us and ceaselessly announce to all people throughout the world the all-saving and all-joyful glad tidings:

Christ is Born!

From St. Justin Popovic. On the path of the God-man.

Translation from the Russian translation by Nun Cornelia (Rees)

pravoslavie.ru

Gratitudes from Orthodox IX Christian Community!



🔔 The warmest gratitude to the priesthood headed by Bishop Matthew of Sourozh, and the dean father Igor, and all our clergy with their godly families, of Patriarchal Parishes, as well as OCA and ROCOR, and all sister Churches, for the care and support, guidance, and co-serving; and all our parishioners of Orthodox IX, and St. Barbara Cathedral, and Orthodox V, and the parishioners of all the sister Churches for participation and contributions to our common Liturgical labour and glorification of the Holy Trinity!



🔔 The warmest gratitude to constant and devout members of our Church Boards (Parish Councils) for providing your special care for organizing and leading the church life and the tendance over the church buildings, the parish halls and festive meals, cemeteries and all the church territory and inheritance!



🔔 The warmest gratitude to all those, who generously and timely donated funds, items and supplies, contributed with your voluntary work, time and effort to support our Parishes last year. May God grant you His Treasure Incorruptible – the Grace of the Holy Spirit and keep you safe through the difficult times for many years!

Heartfelt Congratulations on the 100th Birthday!



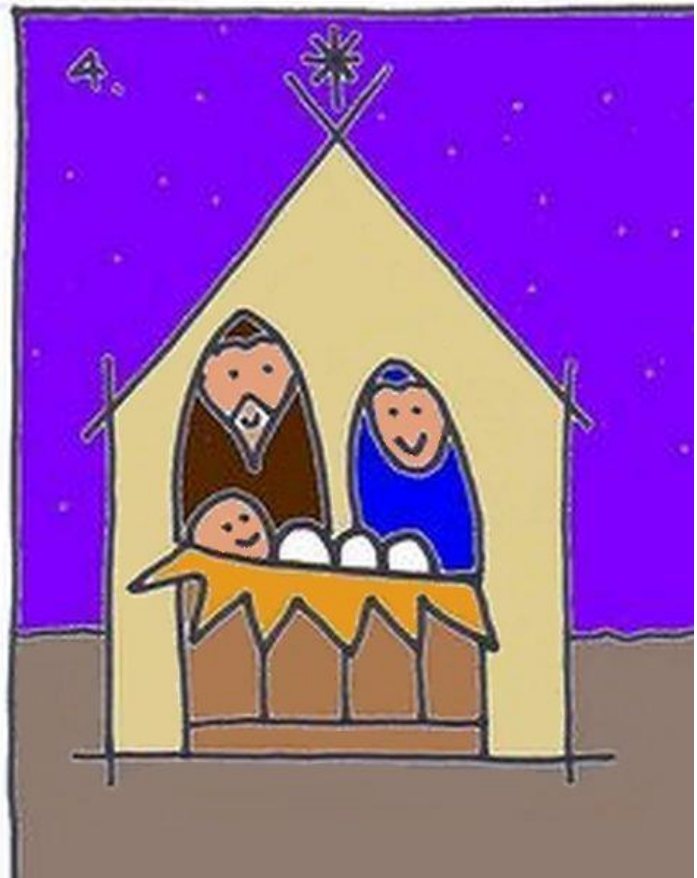
We cordially greet Mr. William (Vasy) Shewchuk, the elder of Holy Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God Church at MacNutt on the blessed anniversary of 100 years!

May the Almighty Lord, through the prayers of the Mother of God, for Whose church you have been tending, with your wife Anne and your children, for the most of your life, grant you many more long years of life, spiritual and bodily powers, strengthen all your efforts to continue your Christian way.

This is a remarkable celebration and, we believe, a sign of God's grace to our whole family of Orthodox IX parishes!

May God continue to bless, comfort, and keep you and your big and friendly family always in His tender, loving care!

Let's draw Christmas with the little ones!



January 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				<u>6</u> Christmas Eve 2:00 p.m. – Christmas Vespers & Matins - Nisku	<u>7</u>  Nativity of Christ 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy	<u>8</u> Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos
<u>9</u> 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy at St. Barbara	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u> Circumcision of the Lord, St. Basil the Great, Julian New Year	<u>15</u>
<u>16</u> 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy at St. Mary's Church at Nisku	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u> Epiphany Eve (strict fast) 	<u>19</u> The Baptism of our Lord 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy (Nisku) with water & houses blessing	<u>20</u> Synaxis of John the Baptist 	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>23</u> 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy Thorsby (online)	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>30</u> 10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy	<u>31</u>	2022- Dates to remember and celebrate! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2022 – the 125th Anniversary of the first Liturgy in Canada ○ 2022 – St. John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church of Horen, Alberta - Celebrating 70th Anniversary (1952-2022) ○ 2022 – the 70th Anniversary of Consecration of Sts Peter and Paul Church in Bonnyville ○ February 26. Saturday – 10:00 am – Divine Liturgy; 11:30am – The Annual Diocese meeting will be held at St. Barbara Cathedral (TBC). ○ March 5. Saturday – 10:00 am – The Annual “Orthodox IX” Parishes meeting will be held at St. Mary Parish Hall, Nisku. ○ March 12. Saturday – 1:00 pm – The Annual St. Mary’s Parish meeting will be held at Parish Hall, Nisku. ○ March 7. Monday – GREAT LENT BEGINS. ○ March 13. – Sunday of Orthodoxy ○ April 24. – Easter Sunday – HOLY PASCHA – THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST 				