



# “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**

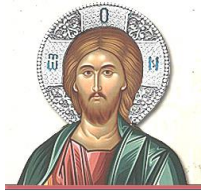
**St. Onuphrius - FOAM LAKE (SK)**

**Whitsuntide (Holy Trinity) - THORSBY**

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

**St. John the Baptist - VEGREVILLE**

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



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## The commemoration of the Holy Martyrs Catherine and Barbara



**The holy Great Martyr Catherine** (Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>). A young girl, of a rich and noble family, an unusual beauty, she had every opportunity to rely on so-called “success in life.” There were many contenders for her hand—they were drawn by her nobility, and wealth, and her amazing beauty. From her life we know that the Lord Himself called her to Himself in a miraculous manner, in numerous visions. And when He placed a ring upon her maiden hand and said, “Know not an earthly bridegroom,” then she wholly made haste to the Heavenly Bridegroom and was prepared to endure any suffering and even death for Him. Terrible agonies, which present themselves as fearful to man, are described in her life, but the young maiden endured rejoicing that she could prove her love to her beloved Bridegroom and her faithfulness to Him. What a touching example! Nobility,

wealth, youth, and beauty—all sacrificed for the sake of the Lord our Savior...

Soon will be the memory of **the Great Martyr Barbara** (Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>) who is similar to her. She was also a noble, also rich, also a girl of astounding beauty, and even younger —quite young, a young teenager, she went to her suffering, rejoicing that she could show and prove and bear witnesses to her faith, fidelity, and love for Christ.

This is why the holy martyrs are known precisely as witnesses. Their testimony of faith and of the truth of Christianity is preserved by the Church, not falling silent. Their examples have inspired a host of New Martyrs in our homeland, who glorified God by their faith, patience, and martyric deaths, when they, like the ancient martyrs were oppressed and persecuted, and were prepared for everything. The ancient martyrs testified to the later New Martyrs about that Truth for which they suffered and died. Their example inspired our New Martyrs. The Church offers their example to our attention, that we, inspired by their resolve, would be faithful to our Savior to the end, and that that to which the Lord so loftily calls us in the Apocalypse would be fulfilled in our lives: Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life (Rev. 2:10). Unto death, and an arduous death were all the holy martyrs faithful—for which they received that crown of life which the Lord has prepared for those who love Him. May the Lord help us to follow their high and holy example. Amen.

**(from the sermon “On the Holy Martyrs by Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky), New York)**

# THE FAST BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

*Prayer is good with fasting and alms more than to lay up treasures of gold (Tob. 12:8)*

The Nativity fast is the final extended fast of the year. It begins on November 15/28 and continues to December 25/January 7; it is forty days long and is therefore called in the Church rubrics, Forty Days (like Great Lent), or the Lesser Forty Days.

The Nativity fast was established so that we would prepare ourselves for day of Christ's Nativity, purifying ourselves by repentance, prayer, and fasting, so that with a pure heart, soul, and body we might reverently greet the Son of God Who has appeared to the world.

The gastronomical content of the fast is not a goal but only a means for a correct spiritual life, based upon prayer and the sacraments of Confession and Communion. A fast without prayer is no more than a diet.



The establishment of the Nativity fast, like other extended fasts, goes back to ancient times of Christianity. Already by the fourth century, Sts. Ambrose of Milan, Filastrius, and Blessed Augustine mention the Nativity fast in their works. In the fifth century, St. Leo the Great wrote about the antiquity of the Nativity fast: “As the Lord has generously bestowed upon us the fruits of the earth, so must we be generous to the poor during this fast.”

Because the eve of the fast falls on the commemoration day of Apostle Phillip (November 14/27), this fast has often been called the Phillip's fast (which somewhat distorts the meaning of the fast as preparation for the day of Christmas).

The rule of taking food during the fast shown in Church calendars relates to the monastery rule—this is the ideal norm. Laypeople can receive a blessing from their priest to relax the fast, depending on specific life and health conditions.

**Come to earth is Christ, the source of love and life. He has come to save us, to redeem our sins, to enlighten us with the light of the Gospel; He has come to make peace between man and God the Father, to deliver people from eternal death and show the path to salvation, to the Kingdom of Heaven!**

This is a joyous event, and therefore the fast is joyful and not strict—during this fast, when a polyeleos service is held in church, we are blessed to eat fish.

The soul of a person who fasts is like a soaring bird—it freely rises to the Lord. But the soul of a person who does not fast is like a bird with broken wings; it would like to fly upwards but it can't, because it lives on earth and has become the frequent catch of predators—the evil spirits.

When someone fasts for the Lord's sake (that is, who keeps the fasts blessed by the Church, and not simply goes hungry), his soul becomes calm and peaceful; and if during bodily fasting a person leads a pure life and prays, he feels the Lord near him and is steadfastly sure that the Lord exists.

*From: Azbuka.ru  
Translation by OrthoChristian.com*

# THE ACCOUNT OF THE APOSTLE PHILIP'S TOMB DISCOVERY

In summer of 2022 the news broke that the Apostle Philip's tomb was found at Hierapolis, in Phrygia.

The discovery was made by Professor Francesco D'Andria, director of the archaeological mission. D'Andria teaches archaeology at the University of Salento-Lecce and is the director of the School of Specialization in Archaeology of that university. He has been working in Hierapolis for more than 30 years, looking for St. Philip's tomb and, since the year 2000, he has been director of this mission.

This is the story of St. Apostle, and the discovery of his burial place, told by Professor Francesco D'Andria.

*(continuation; beginning – in November bulletin)*



A typical Roman tomb that went back to the first century after Christ. In a certain sense, its presence could be justified by the fact that in that area, before Christians built the proto-Byzantine shrine, there was a Roman necropolis. However, examining its position carefully, we realized that that Roman tomb was at the center of the church. Hence, in the fifth century the church had been built precisely around that pagan Roman tomb, to protect it, because, evidently, that tomb was extremely important. And immediately we thought that perhaps that could be the tomb where the body of St. Philip was placed after his death.

In the summer of 2011, we carried out extensive excavation in the area of this church with the coordination of Piera Caggia, research archaeologist of the IBAM-CNR, and extraordinary elements emerged that confirmed our suppositions fully. The tomb was included in a structure in which there is a platform that is reached by a marble staircase. Pilgrims, entering in the narthex, went up to the higher part of the tomb, where there was a place for prayer and they went down on the opposite side. And we saw that the marble surface of the steps was completely consumed by the steps of thousands upon thousands of people. Hence, the tomb received an extraordinary tribute of veneration.

On the façade of the tomb, near the entrance, there are nail holes which undoubtedly served to support an applied metallic locking device. Moreover, there are grooves in the pavement that make one think of an additional wooden door: all precautions that indicate that in that tomb there was an inestimable treasure, namely, the apostle's body.

And on the façade, on the walls there are numerous graffiti with crosses, which in some way have consecrated the pagan tomb.

Excavating next to the tomb we found water baths for individual immersions, which undoubtedly served for healings. After venerating the tomb, sick pilgrims were submerged in the baths exactly as happens in Lourdes.

However, the main — I would say mathematical — confirmation which attests, without a shadow of a doubt, that that construction is really St. Philip's tomb comes from a small object that is in the Museum of Richmond in the United States. An object in which there are images that up to now could not be fully deciphered, whereas now they have an obvious significance.

It is a bronze seal about 10 centimeters (four inches) in diameter, which served to authenticate St. Philip's bread to be distributed to pilgrims. Icons have been found that represent St. Philip with a large loaf in his hand. And, to be

distinguished from ordinary bread, this bread was marked with the seal so that pilgrims would know that it was a special bread, to be kept with devotion.

There are images on the seal. There is the figure of a saint with a pilgrims' cloak and an inscription that says "Saint Philip." On the border is a phrase in Greek, an ancient phrase of praise to God: Agios o Theos, agios ischyros, agios athanatos, eleison imas (*Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us*). All the specialists of Byzantine history, who know that seal, have always said that it came from Hierapolis.

However, what is most extraordinary is the fact that the figure of the saint is presented between two buildings: the one on the left is covered by a cupola, and it is understood that it represents the octagonal Martyrion; the one on the right of the saint has a roof like the one of the church of three naves which we have now discovered. The two buildings are at the top of a stairway. It seems that it was an image of the complex then existing around St. Philip's tomb. A photograph made in the sixth century. Moreover, in the image of the seal there is an emblematic element: a lamp hanging at the entrance, typical signs that served to indicate a saint's sepulcher. Hence, already indicated in that seal is that the tomb was in the basilica church and not in the Martyrion.

We concluded a work begun 55 years ago. The news has gone around the world. And it has attracted scholars and the curious to Hierapolis. Among others, at the end of last August, hundreds of Chinese arrived, as well as numerous Koreans and journalists of several nationalities.

I had the honor of presenting the discovery, at the Pontifical Archaeological Academy of Rome, to scholars and Vatican representatives. Also, Bartholomew the Patriarch of Constantinople wished to receive me to know the details of the discovery, and on Nov. 14, feast of St. Philip in the Orthodox Church, he celebrated Mass precisely on the tomb found in Hierapolis. And I was present, 1,000 thousand years, the chants of the Greek liturgy resounded among the ruins of the church..."

*orthochristian.com*

**With Christmas approaching we remember our good traditions, and one good source of recollecting them is our 'Centennial Cookbook' of St. Mary's Church that was compiled in 2010 with the parishioners' best recipes.**



### **Ukrainian Christmas Eve Supper**

Christmas Eve Supper (Sviata Vecheria) on this Holy Night, no meat or animal byproducts are used in the twelve dishes; which symbolize the twelve apostles who shared the last supper. The meal begins when the first evening star is visible. Guests and family are greeted with the traditional "Krystos Razdayetsia" and respond "Slavite Yaho" (Christ is Born) response (Let us Glorify Him).

#### **12 Traditional Dishes:**

1. Kutia - the origin of Kutia dates back five thousand years when the Ukrainian people first cultivated wheat. It is thought that the dish perhaps symbolizes family unity or an ancient religious custom.
2. Kalach - rich braided ring-shaped bread. The ring is a symbol of good health and prosperity. Three loaves are placed upon each other and a candle in the middle. The round shape symbolizes eternity, the three loaves the Holy Trinity.
3. Borsch - meatless
4. Broad Beans or mashed beans
5. Beets with Mushrooms
6. Pyrohy - potato, sauerkraut or prune
7. Mushrooms (pidpenky with gravy)
8. Pickled Herring
9. Sauerkraut and peas
10. Holubtsi (cabbage rolls)
11. Compote (dried fruit)
12. Pampushky - sweet fried pastries filled with poppy seeds, jam or sweet cooked fruit. Medivnyk - spiced honey cake  
Chrustyky (ears) Makiwnyk - sweet poppy seed and honey nut filled bread roll.

# Fall Social Pushenia at St. Mary's 2022

On November the 20<sup>th</sup>, after a two years break due to the unfortunate restrictions, our traditional Fall Social – Pushenia – was again held at St. Mary's Russian Greek Orthodox Church at Nisku.

This is an annual pre-lent event similar to the pre-Easter Maslenitsa (on Cheesefare Week); with a similar goal of having a good time in communicating, enjoying a good meal, winning awesome prizes at the very friendly lottery, and donate for the St. Mary's Church and Church Hall; to leave it all behind (Ukr.- ot-pustiti) and fast during the lent period for the sake of preparing for the greatest joy – the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



The event was hosted by St. Mary's Church Hall, with the Church Board preparing the premises.

This year in addition to the Lottery, there was Silent Auction with a lot of nice and valuable articles to bid. It was like a whole Christmas bazar



with things to eat, and to wear, and to drink, and to read, and some pieces of our parishioners' art, and certainly candies.



Rig Hand Distillery donated a Gift Certificate for a complimentary tour and tasting 12-30 people!

The editor of our facebook page Natasha Borys arranged and was conducting the event, with her nephews and nieces helping to install beautiful New Year and Christmas decorations!

But before – the people were treated with a lot of delicious dishes, that were prepared by the Parish Council and all the people, with a lot of our traditional food such as cabbage rolls and piroghis, and also meat dishes, a lot of different salads, and various desserts, with a little bit of wine for friendly toasts.



We were greatly pleased with a lot of young people, and especially children, that were joyously playing around! And the organizers of the feast prepared for them games and presents.



There were some very funny occasions during the lottery, and many people were glad to obtain things useful and beautiful! May God bless the organizers of the feast!

**Have a good Christmas lent!**

## **The celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of the rector of St. Barbara's Cathedral and Dean of the Patriarchal Parishes Right Reverend Igor Kisil**



The Festivities dedicated to the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of the rector of St. Barbara's Cathedral and Dean of the Patriarchal Parishes Right Reverend Igor Kisil took part in St. Barbara Cathedral on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> after Pentecost.

At the Liturgy Father Igor was assisted by the Rector of the Orthodox IX Parishes, archpriest Yevgeny Protsenko and the deacons of St. Barbara's Cathedral Andrei Boldyreff and Stephan Nagi. And all the altar helpers, in full force, also came to participate in the Divine Liturgy and for the sake of the Celebration.

The Cathedral was filled with the parishioners and many guests from all our parishes.

After the Liturgy Father Yevgeny on behalf of the parishioners and the clergy said the words of congratulation to the Celebrant, and deacon Andrei lead the singing of Many Years to Father Igor, Matushka Natalia and their sons Andrew and Alexander.

Everyone was invited to the Cathedral Hall for the festive dinner with a lot of special and delicious dishes, cooked and arranged by the Ladies Aide of the Cathedral and their helpers among parishioners, and a wonderful celebration program prepared by the Secretary of the Patriarchal Parishes in Canada Roman Lopushinsky.

Father Igor, his family and the parishioners commemorated the very event of their arrival to Canada and the first celebration of Liturgy, with gratitude to all those Archpriests, priests and people who used to lend them helping hand during the first period of adaptation and on; all the hard work of all these years and the fruits of it. Many people, including Father Igor and his family, shared their memories of the God's blessings, remembering all the solemn and amusing events and occurrences.

"Many Years" echoed in the hall many times during the celebration, and the wishes of another no less than 25 years graceful period of service, and happiness, good health, and God's furtherance to the Family!

*Here is a verse to learn and a picture to color!*

## **Jolly Old St. Nicholas**

*Jolly old St. Nicholas,  
Lean your ear this way!  
Don't you tell a single soul,  
What I'm going to say;*



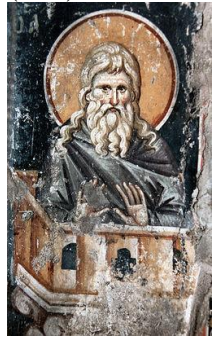
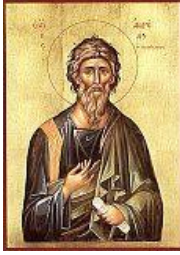


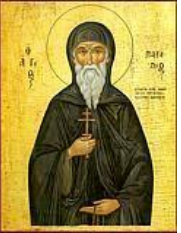


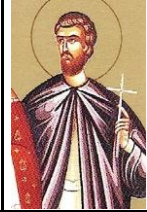
*Christmas Eve is coming soon;  
Now, you dear old man,  
Whisper what you'll bring to me:  
Tell me if you can.*

*When the clock is striking twelve,  
When I'm fast asleep,  
Down the chimney broad and black,  
With your pack you'll creep;*

*All the stockings you will find  
Hanging in a row;  
Mine will be the shortest one,  
You'll be sure to know!*



# December 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p><u>4</u>  <b>The Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple</b></p>  <p>10:00 a.m. –            Divine Liturgy at St. Mary's Church, Nisku</p>	<p><u>5</u></p>	<p><u>6</u></p>	<p><u>7</u>            Great Martyr Catherine (305-313)</p> 	<p><u>8</u></p>	<p><u>9</u>            St. Alypius the Stylite, of Adrianople (640)</p> 	<p><u>10</u></p>
<p><u>11</u>            10:00 a.m. –            Divine Liturgy at St. Mary's Church, Nisku</p>	<p><u>12</u></p>	<p><u>13</u>  <b>Holy and All-Praised Apostle Andrew the First-Called</b></p> 	<p><u>14</u></p>	<p><u>15</u></p>	<p><u>16</u>            Prophet Zephaniah (Sophonias) (635-605 b.c.)</p> 	<p><u>17</u>  <b>Great Martyr Barbara</b></p>  <p>10:00 am –            Liturgy &amp; banquet at St. Barbara Cathedral</p>
<p><u>18</u>            10:00 a.m. –            Divine Liturgy at St. Barbara Cathedral</p>	<p><u>19</u>  <b>St. Nicholas Day</b></p> 	<p><u>20</u></p>	<p><u>21</u>            St. Patapius of Thebes (7<sup>th</sup> c.)</p> 	<p><u>22</u></p>	<p><u>23</u></p>	<p><u>24</u>            St. Daniel the Stylite, of Constantinople</p> 
<p><u>25</u>            10:00 a.m. –            Divine Liturgy at St. Barbara Cathedral</p>	<p><u>26</u></p>	<p><u>27</u>            Martyr Leucius</p> 	<p><u>28</u></p>	<p><u>29</u>            Martyr Marinus</p> 	<p><u>30</u></p>	<p><u>31</u>            Martyr Sebastian</p> 