



“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

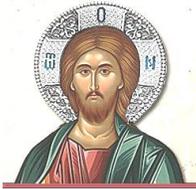
St. Onuphrius - FOAM LAKE (SK)

Whitsuntide (Holy Trinity) - THORSBY

Dormition of Theotokos -MACNUTT (SK)

St. John the Baptist - VEGREVILLE

Sts. Peter & Paul - INSINGER (SK)



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September the 21st – The Nativity of the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary



With the Patronal Feast, dear brothers and sisters, the parishioners and friends of St. Mary's Church in Nisku!

Today is the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos—the Mother of God, whom we, Orthodox Christians, venerate as the intercessor for the Christian people.

This reverence and love for the Mother of the Lord, and

some difficulty in finding words that could express the mystery of the Theotokos, is reflected in Orthodox worship: “What shall we call you, O Full of Grace? Heaven? For through you the Sun of Righteousness has shone. Paradise? For you have brought forth the Flower of incorruption. Virgin? For you have remained undefiled. Pure Mother? For you held in your holy arms the Son, the God of all. Entreat Him for the salvation of our souls” (Theotokion of the First Hour).

Today, we commemorate the time relating to the very beginning of Her earthly life, to Her most glorious Nativity. Before becoming the Mother of God, Mary, like all people on earth, had to be born of a father and a mother, to grow and be perfected in piety.

(continuation on the next page)

The Virgin Mary was a long-awaited child, born through the prayers of her parents, Joachim and Anna. And this is not just a family story; it is a story of faith. It is well known that Joachim and Anna were already a very elderly couple when they conceived a child.

St. Gregory Palamas poses this question: “And why was the Most Holy Virgin Mary conceived by her parents at such an advanced age?” And he answers: “Mary was born so that through Her, joy might be incarnated in the world for all people.” And She begins to bestow this joy first upon her parents—to those who for years had prayed to God for a child, who were already considered incapable of having children. And then, suddenly, such happiness, such joy!

The liturgical hymns of the Feast convey to us these experiences of her parents and the state they were in: “What is this festive sound? Joachim and Anna secretly celebrate, saying: ‘Rejoice with us, Adam and Eve, for today, the paradise that was closed by the ancient transgression has given us a blessed fruit, the God-maiden Mary’...” “Joachim rejoices, and Anna celebrates, crying out: ‘The barren one gives birth to the Theotokos and Nurturer of our Life’...” “O, wondrous miracle! The Source of Life is born from a barren woman, and grace brightly begins to bear fruit.”

Thus, the birth of Mary to parents who were considered barren became the beginning of the joy that the Virgin Mary bestows upon all who honor Her and await Her intercession. And although She Herself would face terrible trials: “a sword will pierce your own soul” (Luke 2:35), She was born to grant all people joy and salvation through Her Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This feast is also the glory of the parents of the Theotokos—the Holy and Righteous Joachim and Anna. The birth in this family of the One who would become the Mother of the Lord points to the holiness of this couple. For the Scripture says: “who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one” (Job 14:4). This means that She whom we call the Most Pure had to come from parents who were pure and righteous. And the Church honors not only the Theotokos but also Her parents as saints, bestowing upon them the title “holy and righteous Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna.”

Brothers and sisters! We celebrate in honor of the Nativity of the Theotokos—that event in sacred history without which, in the words of St. Photius the Great, “there could be none of the other feasts connected with Her name and deeds.” There would have been no Entry into the Temple, no Annunciation, no Dormition, not even the Nativity of Christ itself, if the Nativity of the Virgin Mary had not occurred. For She was born to become the Theotokos—the Mother of God Himself: “Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man.” Whoever honors the Mother also honors the Son. Because between the Mother and Her Divine Son there is such a unique bond, about which St. John of Damascus says: “Between the Mother and the Son, there is no distance.”

God arranged it so that, in general, between parents and children, between a mother and a son, there is a special, unique connection. And in relation to the Theotokos and the Lord Jesus, this connection acquires a special, salvific meaning for other people.

The thousand-year experience of the Orthodox Church testifies to and shows the full truth of our trust and hope in the Most Holy Theotokos and Her intercession. And today, by magnifying the Theotokos, we thereby glorify Her Son—our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory, honor, and worship forever and ever! Amen.

Jubilee 25th St. Tikhon Orthodox Children's Camp



By the grace of God, from July 27th to August 3rd, 2025, the 25th St. Tikhon's Orthodox Children's Camp was held! Following a long-standing tradition, it took place in the picturesque setting on the shores of Pigeon Lake in Alberta—our “children's monastery” with its beautiful blue and white church—once again gathering children and volunteers from the Patriarchal Parishes in Canada, as well as our sister-Churches. **This year was particularly special, as we**

celebrated a quarter-century – 25 years – of our shared history, full of friendship, love, prayer, joy, and God's grace!

This year's theme—“Fundamentals of Orthodox Christian Worship”—allowed the children to delve deeper into the meaning and beauty of Church life. The lessons, led by the clergy—Father Igor Kisil, Father Evgeniy Protsenko, Father Alexios Surayev, Protodeacon Andrei Boldireff—and the experienced Sunday school teacher Olena Ivanova, were not just lectures, but lively conversations with a great number of illustrations, and quizzes at the end. The children learned about the daily, weekly, and annual cycles of services, the structure of the temple, and the language of the Church.

A particularly memorable event was the hands-on lesson in baking proshpora under the guidance of Valentina (the experienced proshpora baker from St. Barbara's Cathedral). The children were able to take part in this sacred craft with their own hands, understanding how much labor, patience, and prayer is invested in it.



Morning and evening prayers united everyone in our sacred space—the Church of the Archangel Michael. And during the two Divine Liturgies, the hearts of all were filled with the angelic singing of the St. Barbara's Cathedral choir, under the direction of Irina Trutnieva.

Life at the camp was bustling from morning until late in the evening! The day began with invigorating morning exercises, and after a hearty breakfast and a cleaning, the children hurried to their lessons. The afternoon was a time for active recreation: fun sports competitions, quests, relay races, and, of course, swimming in the lake.

Every day was special. And on one of the days, the traveling zoo visited us again! Allan and Carol Borys once again brought immense joy to the children with their adorable pets. The kids could pet, hug, feed, and simply play with them.

Another unforgettable moment was the meeting with Father Andrei, who brought an icon with a relic of St. John of Shanghai and shared the amazing story of his personal encounter with this great saint. All the children were anointed with consecrated oil—it was a true miracle and blessing.

The evening campfires became a warm tradition. With songs, conversations, and delicious treats—watermelon, apple pastries, and of course, marshmallows—the children, counselors, and mentors would close out the day, admiring the sunset over the lake.

We are immensely grateful to the camp directors, Father Igor Kisil and Father Evgeniy Protsenko, for their tireless work, spiritual guidance, and brilliant organization. The success of the camp is the achievement of a huge team of people who poured their hearts and souls into it.

Our wonderful counselors were true older friends to the children. They organized games, offered support, helped with everything, and shared their talents, working from dawn until late in the evening.

In the crafts sessions, children created true masterpieces under the guidance of Matushka Olga Protsenko, Olena Ivanova, and Svetlana Storozhenko.

A separate topic and a special joy was our kitchen! Head Chef Natalia Ilna and her team worked true culinary magic. Borscht with pampushky, Italian pasta, plov, pizza, “Olivier” salad, and of course, the hit of the season—pigs in a blanket! Every meal was a celebration.



Our kind and attentive nurse, Tatiana Popovskaya, was responsible for the children’s health around the clock, while professional psychologist Olha Lipinchuk looked after their emotional well-being.

Elena Diyanova managed the illustrated history of the camp, with a huge number of magnificent photos, allowing parents to check in with us “online.”

The anniversary camp concluded with a grand concert, where each group showcased their theatrical and singing talents, and a 25th-anniversary celebration with a huge cake!

From the bottom of our hearts, we thank the Orthodox IX and Orthodox V church districts, the Parish Council of St. Barbara’s Cathedral, and all of our donors and benefactors for their donations and support!

Thank you to all the parents who entrusted their children to us. Thank you to every volunteer, teacher, cook, and counselor—everyone who made this week unforgettable. The camp became one big family. We are not saying goodbye, but rather, “See you again in 2026!”

Holy Father Tikhon, pray to God for us!



Heartfelt Congratulations on the 100th Blessed Birthday!

We warmly congratulate **Mr. Harry Nazarenko** on the remarkable jubilee of **100 years**.

May the Almighty Lord, through the prayers of the Mother of God, grant him many more years, health of soul and body, and the consoling help from above. May God bless, comfort, and keep him and his family always in His tender, loving care.

Many blessed years—Mnohaya lita!

Heartfelt Thanks from St. John the Baptist Church (Vegreville)

With sincere gratitude, we thank John Holubowich, Ernie Kusinsky, and Audey Sen for their generous help to our small, humble parish community. One of the hardest regular summer tasks for our parishioners is cutting the grass: our church grounds are extensive, and simply getting to the church takes time—especially as our parish family today consists largely of ladies.

We also extend warm thanks to the families of Beverly and Janet Mihalcheon for your coordination and for supplying the lawnmower and gas.

Your kindness and practical support have lightened our burdens and encouraged our hearts.

May God grant you many good years, keep you, and reward your labors a hundredfold.

With love and prayers,

On behalf of the clergy and faithful of St. John the Baptist Church



Heartfelt Gratitude from St. John the Baptist Church of Horen



With sincere thanks, we recognize John Prokopuk, Stanley Koscielny, Randy Panchuk, and Derrek Veroni for cleaning St. John's Church (Horen). After an unfortunate act of vandalism, the church required substantial interior cleaning, and your prompt, generous work made a true difference. We are also deeply grateful to Peter Yakimchuk for cutting the grass and tending for the church.

A joyful milestone is ahead: the restoration of services at St. John's Church in Tomahawk. On Saturday, September 6, 2025, we will celebrate the first Divine Liturgy after a long break. Our heartfelt thanks go to all people of good will who have long hoped and prayed for this day and who supported the priest with their initiative.

We warmly invite everyone to participate in the Divine Liturgy on Saturday, September 6 (10 am), as we celebrate a Thanksgiving service.

May God grant you many blessed years, keep you in His tender care, and reward your labors a hundredfold.

With love and prayers,

On behalf of the clergy and faithful of St. John the Baptist Church of Horen

In Memoriam

The parishioners of Orthodox IX extend our deepest condolences to the relatives of the newly departed.

May God comfort you with His compassion, and may God settle your Mother and Grandmother, where the light of His countenance shall visit. Memory Eternal! The mercy of God, the Kingdom of Heaven!

Katy Bonar **August 1, 1929 - August 26, 2025**



We are sad to announce that on August 26, 2025, we had with much sorrow to say goodbye to Katy Bonar (Foam Lake, Saskatchewan).

A dedicated and life-long faithful parishioner, and loving and beloved Mother of the St. Onuphrius Church at the Foam Lake fell asleep in Christ at the age of 96 years at her family by her side, and the Church praying for her soul.

She showed her faith from her works which she first substantiated in the lives of her children and grandchildren, having passed to them the treasure of the Orthodox Faith and Christian Love.

Many years Katy laboured for the upkeep and operation of the St. Onuphrius Orthodox church, her and her husband's spiritual inheritance.

With the remarkable dedication to the holy temple throughout the decades, she has not only cared for the church building and cemetery, but has consistently shown kindness and gracious hospitality to all the bishops, clergy, church choirs, altar helpers, and all the parishioners, who have served and prayed here, several generations of grateful servant of God.

Thus she performed her special service, also writing letters and calling clergy to make sure that they have everything necessary for the service, and to make sure the parishioners will have all the necessary information and the church calendars in due time, and to make sure her brother of the blessed memory Michael had Holy Communion.

She herself always participated in all the Liturgies, Confessions and was always eager to receive Holy Communion, even when burdened with ailments, and even till the last service on the Patronal feast in June 2025.

May the Almighty God receive her in His holy mansions, where the faces of the saints shine like the stars of heaven.

Beyond this world of suffering and tears, Christ has promised us another world where there is no sickness, sorrow, or pain. We will miss our kind grandma very much, but our consolation is that sooner or later, we will join those whom we love beyond the veils of this temporal existence.

A prayer will be held on Tuesday, September 2nd, 2025, at 7:00 PM at the Chapel of Narfason's Funeral Chapel (412 Royal St, Foam Lake, SK S0A1A0). A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, September 3rd, 2025, at 9:30 AM at the Russian Orthodox Church (310 Royal St, Foam Lake, SK S0A1A0).

The Mercy of God and the Kingdom of Heaven! Vichnaya pamyat'!

**On September 21 (September 8, accord. to the old style)
we celebrate the Birthday of the Mother of God Mary!**

The Nativity
of the Theotokos

The Twelve Great Feasts for Children



By Mother Melania
Illustrations by Bonnie Gillis

Long ago, in the land of Israel, there lived a righteous couple named Joachim and Anna. They were descended from the great Jewish kings, David and Solomon. But there was one thing that made Joachim and Anna very sad – they were very old and had not been able to have any children.

Among the Jewish people, a family was worthless if there were no children. So, Joachim and Anna were very sad. But they loved God very much and went every day to the Temple to give gifts. Finally, one day, the Temple servants refused to accept their gifts and told Joachim and Anna that they were cursed since they could have no children.

Anna cried and went home. But Joachim was so sad that he went out to a mountain. There he fasted and prayed for forty days. At the end of the forty days, God sent an angel to Joachim and Anna with a marvelous promise. The angel had wonderful news: even though they were so old, they would have a baby girl. And this little girl would be the one spoken of by the prophets many years before – the one chosen by God to be the mother of His own Son. The angel told them to dedicate the daughter to the service of God.

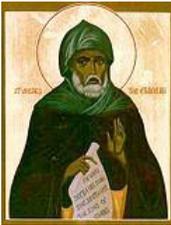
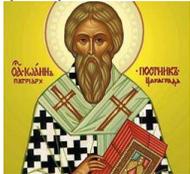
So, Joachim and Anna had a baby girl and named her Mary. And Mary is known to this day as the Theotokos – the Mother of God. We remember Joachim and Anna every Liturgy when the priest reads their names at the end.

Nativity of the Theotokos

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

September eighth	Mother of Jesus	Theotokos
Nativity	Promise	Joachim
Prayer	Angel	Birth
Anna	Mary	Old

September 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u> 10:00 am – Liturgy at Horen, St. John’s Church – Thanksgiving Service
<u>7</u> 10:00 am – Liturgy – VEGREVILLE Thanksgiving Service	<u>8</u> Vladimir Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos 	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> St. Moses the Black, of Scetis (ca. 375) 	<u>11</u> <i>Beheading of the Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John</i> 	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u> Hieromartyr Cyprian, bishop of Carthage (258) 
<u>14</u> 10:00 am – Liturgy – Thorsby Thanksgiving Service Church New Year	<u>15</u> St. John the Faster, Patr. of Constantinople (595) 	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u> St. Ioasaph, bishop of Belgorod 	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u> The Nativity of the Mother of God  6:00 pm – Vespers & Matins – Nisku
<u>21</u> 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Water Patronal Feast, Festive Luncheon at St. Mary’s Church, Nisku	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u> St. Paul the Obedient, of the Kiev Caves 	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u> New Martyr Alexis, fool-for- Christ, near Kineshma (1937) 	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u> 9:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy – Mac Nutt – Thanksgiving Service Elevation of the Holy Cross
<u>28</u> 9:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy – Foam Lake – Thanksgiving Service	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u> Martyrs Sophia and her three daughters, Faith, Hope, and Love 				