



St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Orthodox Church

12104-129 Avenue, Edmonton T5L 3J1

Parish Hall, 12918-121 Street

Office (780) 454-8385

Email: stmichaeluoc@shaw.ca

October, November, December, 2024

Why fast before the Nativity?

Question: Have you wondered why we fast before Nativity. The Lenten fast seems more obvious. Also, from what foods do we normally fast from during the Nativity fast?

Answer: We fast before the Great Feast of the Nativity in order to prepare ourselves for the celebration of Our Lord’s birth. As in the case of Great Lent, the Nativity Fast is one of preparation, during which we focus on the coming of the Savior by fasting, prayer, and almsgiving.

By fasting, we “*shift our focus*” from ourselves to others, spending less time worrying about what to eat, when to eat, how much to eat, and so on in order to use our time in increased prayer and caring for the poor. We learn through fasting that we can gain control over things which we sometimes allow to control us—and for many people, food is a controlling factor. [We live in the only society in which an entire TV network is devoted to food!] While fasting from food, however, we are also challenged to fast from sin, from gossip, from jealousy, from anger, and from those other things which, while well within our control, we all too often allow to control us.

Just as we would refrain from eating a lot before going to an expensive restaurant for dinner—if we “ruin our appetite” we will enjoy the restaurant less—so too we fast before the Nativity in order to more fully feast and celebrate on the Nativity itself.

During the Nativity Fast, we are called upon to refrain from meat, dairy, fish, wine, and olive oil. At the same time, we are challenged, within this framework, to fast to the best of our ability, and to do so consistently. If we must modify the extent to which we fast within this framework, it is of course possible, but in every instance our fasting should be consistent and regular, for Christ does not see fasting as an option, but as a “must.” In Matthew Christ says, “*WHEN you fast, do not be like the hypocrites,*” not “*IF you fast*” or “*IF YOU CHOOSE to fast.*”

Finally, it seems quite odd that in our society—a society in which people gladly and freely spend huge sums of money for diets, most of which recommend that one refrain from red meats and dairy products—fasting is not more widely embraced. How odd that a Jenny Craig consultant or diet guru or physician will tell us to refrain from eating meat or cheese or butter and we will gladly embrace—and pay large sums of money for—his or her advice, while when the Church offers the same advice [at “no cost”] we tend to balk, as if we were being asked to do the impossible.

Thus let us fast!

No. 25

Clergy

Rt. Rev. Protopresbyter

Victor Lakusta

780-439-6289

1-204-333-7810 (cell)

vmakusta@gmail.com

Parish President

Dorothy Stachniak

780-476-3646

UWAC Women’s President

Mary Paltzat

780-472-2337

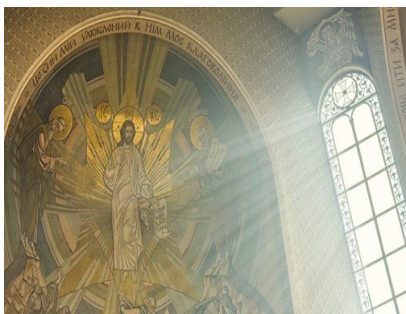
Hall Rental

Jim Kniazky

780-474-4394

Check out our Parish Website
uocc-stmichael.ca

Let Us Worship



St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Parish

Our Fall Services 2024

Note Schedule changes!

16th Sunday After Pentecost, October 13th—Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Thanksgiving is a time for Canadians to express gratitude for the harvest and blessings of the past year. Thanksgivings prayers will be offered.

- ◆ Epistle: 2 Cor. 6:1-10
- ◆ Gospel: Luke 8:5-15

17th Sunday After Pentecost, October 20th—Liturgy, 10 a.m.

- ◆ Epistle: 2 Cor. 6:16-7:1
- ◆ Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Whereas our service was originally scheduled for October 27th is being cancelled due to the Western Eparchy Assembly being held on October 26–27

20th Sunday After Pentecost, November 10th—Liturgy, 10 a.m.

**Celebrating our PARISH PATRON FEAST DAY—XHRAM
“Synaxis of Archangel Michael: (Nov.8th)**

- ◆ Epistle: Gal. 1:11-19
- ◆ Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Beginning of the Nativity Fast—Nov.15th...

22nd Sunday After Pentecost, November 24th—Liturgy, 10 a.m.

- ◆ Epistle: Gal. 6:11-18
- ◆ Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

24th Sunday After Pentecost, December 8th—Liturgy, 10 a.m.

- ◆ Epistle: Eph, 2:14-22
- ◆ Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

Celebrating “St. Nicholas the Wonderworker” (Dec, 6th)

Sunday Before the Nativity, December 22nd—Liturgy, 10 a.m.

- ◆ Epistle: 1 Cor, 4:9-16
- ◆ Gospel: Luke

“The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ”, Wednesday, December 25th—Liturgy, 10 a.m.

- ◆ Epistle: Gal.4:4-7
- ◆ Gospel: Matt. 2:1-12



Theophania: The Orthodox feast of Epiphany January 6th, 2025

In Eastern Christianity, the feast of Epiphany, mostly known as Theophany (Theophania in Greek) is one of the most important holidays, and is among of the **Twelve Great Feasts** of the Eastern Orthodox Church. “Theophany” means the revelation of God to humans, and this aspect is common in both versions of the feast.

Challenges to Faith / What is Faith

Before delving into the challenges to our Christian faith, let's first define the word "faith." When someone "takes something on faith," they are in essence, believing something without seeing it or fully comprehending it, or doing something without knowing the outcome.

Faith comes in when the outcome is not fully known. This means that I am trusting a complete stranger with my life, because once that plane gets up in the air, there is not way for me to get off of it and he or she will be the only one who can land it.

For those of us who have been under general anesthetic, we may know our doctor, but we probably don't know the anesthesiologist, and even if we did know that person, we are still trusting someone to take us out of consciousness and bring us back when the procedure is over.

My point in writing these examples is because many people say they struggle with the idea of faith, or faith in an unseen God, and we don't realize that acts of faith are part of our everyday lives, whether we believe in God or not. In fact, if we had no "faith" in anything, we wouldn't have much of a life. We wouldn't fly, or have surgery, or get married.

Faith is based on trust, and trust is based on experience. I've flown many times. Even though I may have to put faith in the pilot on a given flight, I have the experience of flying many times so that makes it easier to put faith in pilots I don't know. When someone recommends a dentist or a handyman that I don't know, I place my trust in someone I don't know, based on the trust that someone I do know has in them. Thus, faith is based on experience—our own experience, or the experience of someone around us that we trust.

This also holds true for our faith in God. Our faith in God is based on our own experience of God, and other's experience of God. For many people, their first experience of God comes from parents who take them to church, or who pray at home. Faith in the life of parents is among the greatest precursors of faith in their children. I never remember a time when I didn't go to church, nor do I remember my parents asking us as small children if we wanted to. It's what we did.

Of course, at some point, the faith of parents is not enough. Faith has to become personal to each of us. At some point, people must decide to believe for themselves, to worship in church because they want to. **For me it was when I entered pastoral studies.** It is the obligation of a parent (and a Godparent) to make sure that their child (Godchild) develops their own sense of faith. And this is done first by sharing their own experience of faith with their child.

There are people who say that they have no faith in anything. I would respectfully disagree. We all have faith in something because we all do things for which we do not have complete knowledge. Where there is not complete knowledge, the gap between doing something and not doing it is filled with faith. We do not have complete knowledge over everything. Thus, we all have some deal of faith in something. The question is, what/who are the things/people we have faith in?

Lord, before I can have faith in You, help me to understand what faith is, and how I actually have faith in so many things. And as I have faith in so many things, help me to connect the idea of faith to faith in You. Help me to have my own experience of You, and as I seek my own experience of You, surround me with trustworthy people who have had their own experience of faith in You, who will encourage me through their example, so that I can find my own experience of faith in You. Amen.

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX PARISH

President's Message — Dorothy Stachniak

Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory be Forever!

The past three months in our parish have been busy. Building maintenance requires constant attention. Thank you to the men and women who very loyally assist with keeping our premises functional. Our website has a new polished look and the public is checking it out. The public is inquiring about renting our facility, whether it is the hall or the lower level. Church attendance has increased slightly. The interaction between people attending church services and then sharing fellowship is wonderful. People want to visit and talk as well as enjoy the fellowship luncheon. Ukrainians new to Canada are attending services, getting married and having children baptized. These people have found us on the internet.

It is so important to make everyone welcome, whether it is that old 30-year member who has difficulty walking or a new Canadian. There is a saying *you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar*. Furthermore, let's not forget our own people. It is so important to keep in touch and make them welcome.

The next three months, will most certainly be very busy.

THANKSGIVING

Sunday, October 13

This is the time that garden produce is blessed. The small basket could contain a potato, carrot, tomato, parsnip, cucumber, cabbage, corn, etc. or a small container of wheat, oats, barley, canola could be brought for blessing. We are so thankful for a plentiful harvest.

HARVEST SOCIAL Supper & Dance

Saturday, November 2

See the poster in this bulletin advertising the event. There will be excellent dance music and great food complete with a late lunch. Support the parish and attend.

KHRAM

Archangel Michael Patron Saint Day,

Sunday, November 10

This is our patron saint. The parish will be celebrating 65 years. There will be a banquet following the Divine Liturgy.

ST. NICHOLAS DAY

Sunday, December 8

This is a very special day for children. Encourage your grandchildren and great grandchildren to come to church and then attend fellowship luncheon. It is our expectation that St. Nicholas will come and bring a little gift for all children.

CHRISTMAS DAY,

Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Wednesday, December 25, 10:00 a.m.

This is the day that we proudly sing all those timeless Christmas Carols rejoicing in the birth of Jesus. This is such a joyous time.

CALENDAR

The 2025 Ukrainian Orthodox Calendar will once again be sponsored by Park Memorial Funeral Home. These calendars should be available in December. Thank you to Park Memorial for your generosity.

On behalf of the Church Board, I wish all our members and potential members good health. I invite you to continue to attend worship services at St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church.



Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada

St. Michael's UWAC Branch = Mary Paltzat ,President

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Summer is over---back to work ! After an extensive summer break, we had 2 cabbage-blanching sessions in August. We also gave the hall kitchen a thorough cleaning. Jim Kniazky has scheduled our church to have a spic-and span cleaning on September 21. Come to assist him if you can.

St. Anthony's Ukrainian Orthodox Parish will celebrate its 50th anniversary on September 22. Let's support our sister parish.

Our next UWAC meeting is scheduled for October 1. Please attend, to help us plan workshops and activities for the remainder of 2024.

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Dear Alberta/BC Members of the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada,

Слава Ісусу Христу!

Як голова Альбертської Управи Союзу Українок Канади, я звертаюся до Вас. Щиро запрошую на Річні Збори.

You are cordially invited to attend our Biennial General Meeting to be held in Edmonton at St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor on Saturday, October 19, 2024. We are joining the AUSRL for our annual convention October 18-19. Please receive additional information which I have provided with this notification, including the Notice of Meeting and Registration Information from your Branch President. Don't forget to bring an apron or фартух and its background story! Join us for the Wine and Cheese Friday night, too! Looking forward to seeing all 330 of our members...

Leona Faryna Bridges, President UWAC-APE



Special Donations to the Church June, July, August 2024

In Memory of Dobrodyka Jeannette Rauliuk

Ed & Nina Barabash
Frances Tarnowetz
Ivan & Vera Tkaczuk

In Memory of John & Marg Samoil

Barb Samoil—Selk

In Memory of William & Marie Magega

Gladys Marie Magega

General Donations for Church Operations

Nadina Brow
Ron & Elaine Kluchka
Marshall & Joan Pankiw

Your generosity is greatly appreciated in financially supporting of our parish's ministry.

If anyone was missed, please contact me.

- Gladys Maris Magegs, Parish Treasurer

On the Eve of the Nativity of Christ



St. Gregory of Nyssa writes that **“even the pagans and the philosophers heard the thunder from Mt. Sinai.”** From that dramatic and earth-shaking theophany came the Law, the Ten Commandments which were meant to curtail the barbarity of the people, to teach them how to take a single step towards paradise. That step was to turn away from idolatry and treat one another with justice. We are still in need of these commandments.

To what great depths the human race had fallen from Eden!

On the Eve we are called to focus carefully. This theophany is a quiet one. There is to be no thunder and fire. If we are not still, we will miss it. Instead of thunder and fire God comes in absolute humility. Instead of Ten Commandments, God offers the promise of peace for which there is no law, no reason, no condition – not a peace as the world gives, but a peace that passes understanding.

On the Eve we are called to hear the murmur of a new-born child who is at once perfect man and perfect God, who while lying in his cradle holds the universe together by the word of his power, but who had truly become a human being, needing to nurse, needing his diapers to be changed, needing to be protected from the very elements he had created. He bore the weaknesses of humanity and, as St. Leo wrote in his Tome, sparkled at the same time with miracles.

This is the perfect theophany: God as humble, God as vulnerable, God as meek and mild, God as the Great I Am, God as a child who reveals his unlimited power in the perfection of weakness.

This theophany is the beginning of the final message from God. It is the beginning of the revelation that will cause Jesus to proclaim from the Cross **“It is complete.”**

The Nativity is, in this way, the beginning of his earthly passion and in this tiny baby all that God is and all that God does becomes flesh.

No longer are we limited to seeing God either in creation, or of only listening to prophets or reading from a holy book. We see him now in person, in living flesh, in living color.

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life...we declare to you,” writes the Great Mystic and Theologian John the Beloved Disciple.

But Christ the Lord has not only been born for us who believe. He has been born for everyone; He has come for the sake of everyone and everything. He has come for the life of the world, the solar system, the universe, for everything in and outside of it. And where his name is not known to be Jesus, where the Holy Trinity is unknown by name or doctrine, the Lord is at work anonymously, loving, forgiving, wooing and saving. The yeast is making the whole loaf rise and one day we will see the results, when Christ shall be revealed as **“all in all”**.

Sermon Preached by Fr. Antony Hughes

Praise God for the gift of Christ’s birth, for the gift of our lives and for all the people we love.

Ecclesiastical Church Year!



*On September 1st, the Church enters a new liturgical year. This is a practice that goes back to the early centuries of Christianity. It is the day we remember Christ preaching in Nazareth that Isaiah's prophecies of the Messiah were true 'today'. It's also the day that the Early Church said the universe was created. According to old Byzantine calendars, we are now entering the 7533 year since the creation of the universe, Let us live each and every day of this year in the presence of our Saviour Jesus Christ.
GLORLY BE TO GOD!*



Western Eparchy Assembly Oct. 26-27

@ St. John's Cathedral

- ◆ General Assembly—Saturday, Oct. 26th
- ◆ Youth Acknowledgment Banquet that evening
- ◆ Hierarchical Divine Liturgy—Sunday, Oct. 27th.

Join us in worship !

Our Parish Fellowships of late have been well received. I wish to thank all who have provided for the Fellowships, physically or financially. If you wish to provide a fellowship lunch, please contact Dorothy,

“Do not do anything without signing yourself with the sign of the Cross! When you depart on a journey, when you begin your work, when you go to study, when you are alone, and when you are with other people, seal yourself with the Holy Cross on your forehead, your body, your chest, your heart, your lips, your eyes, your ears. All of you should be sealed with the sign of Christ’s victory over hell. Then you will no longer be afraid of charms, evil spirits, or sorcery, because these are dissolved by the power of the Cross like wax before fire and like dust before the wind.”

- ELDER CLEOPAS OF ROMANIA -

Harvest Social Supper & Dance

Saturday, November 2nd, 2024

St. Michael's Parish Hall

Music by

“The New Lumberjacks”

Supper: 6:00 p.m., Dance to follow

Advance Tickets: \$60./person

Jim: 780-474-4394

Korneil: 780-475-3951

Shirley: 780-475-5875

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Christmas Bake Sale Saturday, November 30th

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*St. Michael's Parish
Reserve the date now!*

Details forthcoming.

Various food items will be for sale.

For further information call

Mary: 780-472-2327



Hall For Rent

St. Michael's Parish Hall
12918 – 121 Street

Wheel Chair Accessible
Air Conditioned
Seats 180 for Banquet
Plenty of Parking
In house catering & bar service available.
\$500.00 rent plus damage deposit.

For more information visit our website:
uocc-stmichael.ca.

For booking contact:
Jim Kniazky – 780-474-4394

ENTERING AND EXITING AN ORTHODOX CHURCH

We should never just waltz into or out of a church, blasé and irreverent. Instead, we must prepare ourselves spiritually and understand what behavior is and is not acceptable once we enter the church. Before entering the house of God, you should consider doing any or all of the following:

- Saying a prayer
- Crossing yourself
- Lighting a candle
- Venerating the icons in the narthex

Not only should we take care in *how* we enter or exit, but also *when* we should enter or exit the church. Arriving before the service starts gives us plenty of time to say personal prayers, light candles, venerate icons, find a spot in the nave, and spiritually prepare for the service. If you are a visitor, it also gives you the opportunity to take in everything around you.

When we arrive late, we distract those around us. We also send the unconscious message – to our children, families, and friends – that church isn't important, since we don't mind showing up late. We never go to work late. Why should we show up late to worship our God?

If you do happen to be late, enter quietly and locate the priest. Where is he? What is he doing? Generally, if the priest is standing in front of the Holy Doors in the center of the church, you should wait until he goes back into the altar before finding your seat.

WE KISS ICONS TO EXPRESS OUR LOVE!

Contrary to what most people believe, we do not worship the icons, but instead venerate (or pay respect) to them. Not only that, but it also conveys to them the honor they should receive for being icons of Christ, shining examples for us that teach us how to live the Christian life.



Your Prayer Corner!