



Religious Education Newsletter

Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton
Українська Католицька Едмонтонська Єпархія

September—October 2011



СЛАВА ІСУСУ ХРИСТУ!
GLORY BE TO JESUS CHRIST!



СЛАВА НАВІКИ!
GLORY BE FOREVER!

Welcome back! I hope that you had a wonderful summer and warm greetings, to all of our new parishioners and readers.

September...where has the summer gone? Time to bid adieu to vacation, warm days and relaxation. No longer within our reach is beer, lemonade, sunscreen or bug spray, instead we have been laden with overflowing heaps of papers — registration forms for school, supply lists, membership renewals, sports registrations, etc. We moan and groan that summer went by too fast and now, with much hesitation, we slowly kick start our engines to get back up to speed and the start of “everything”. Our focus, as ought to have been during the summer, should still be on Church and God. Work, school and meetings all abound in anticipation of our returned presence. Really, where did summer go?

September is the start of several new things. September 1st is the start of the New Church Liturgical Year. Also a new year of school, college or university begins and thus provides for meeting new friends.

When you hear the word “new”, what comes to mind? Let us look to September, the New Liturgical Year, as a new

beginning — a chance to start out fresh with no baggage, no worries, no regrets, no qualms and no tribulations. Go outside your comfort zone and do something you wish you could do but have not had the courage to do. God wants us to challenge ourselves. He puts things in our paths that we can either ignore and go about doing what we have always done or we can stop and do what God wants us to do. Begin this New Liturgical Year off right—reNEW yourself, reNEW your spirit, reNEW your love of the church and reNEW your love for God.

The theme for this newsletter is “The Cross.” Firstly, on September 14/28 we celebrate the feast day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The cross is an instrument of our salvation, a token worn around our necks to remind us of who we are — Christians — the bridge between us and God. So what does the cross mean to you? For many, they would say salvation...and some...Christ’s greatest sacrifice, yet others, our burdens. As we journey through this new liturgical year, take a moment to reflect what it is that the cross means to you, what it meant for Jesus and what it means for our salvation.†

Larysa Durda, Editor

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Nativity of the Mother of God

September 08 (G)



Різдво
Пресвятої
Богородиці

210го вересня (J)

The birth of the Mother of God is not recorded in the Bible but is found in non-scriptural books and supported by the Tradition of the Church found in the book known as *The Protevangelion of St. James*.

The Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron.

The couple was without child since St. Anna was barren. Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Sts. Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered within the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin and, therefore, Sts. Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feast days at the Temple in Jerusalem, Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless. St. Joachim, in deep grief, went into the wilderness and prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. St. Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God and to them would be born a most blessed daughter, Mary, through Whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God.†



September 1—Beginning of the Church Year

Do you know why the first day of September marks the beginning of the Church year? At one time the civil calendar began on September 1st and then changed to January 1st, but the church has maintained September 1st as the beginning of the liturgical year, since it was set by the first Ecumenical Council in the year 325. This day is also called the *Indiction*, which means announcement or proclamation. The liturgical year enables us to relive the whole life of Christ.

*"The Spirit of the Lord has been given me, for He anointed me...to
proclaim the Lord's year of favor."
(Luke 4:18-19.)*




It challenges us to unite ourselves with Christ in His birth, growth, suffering, dying, triumphal rising and His being with us in the Church. According to Holy Tradition, Christ entered the synagogue in Nazareth on September 1 to announce His mission to mankind. He read from the scrolls the words of the prophet Isaiah...



*If people concentrated on the really important
things in life, there'd be a shortage of fishing poles.*

Doug Larson

HOW TO MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

 Symbolism is a wonderful tool of our faith, but it can be an insignificant, meaningless gesture if we do not know what it is that we are doing and why we are doing it!

The symbol of the Christian Faith has been and will always be the Cross, for it is the sign of our Redemption by Our Lord Jesus Christ Who came to earth to suffer for us by being crucified upon the Cross.

When people wish to show that something is dedicated to Christ they mark it with a cross. The Cross is placed on church buildings, on the Holy Gospel, on sacred vestments, on banners and over the graves of the departed—but **do we truly understand what it is that we are doing when we make the sign of the Cross upon ourselves?**

Making the "Sign of the Cross" is an Act of Consecration

The sign of the Cross is a visible expression of our faith and more importantly it is an act of "Consecration" to God. When we make the sign of the Cross upon ourselves, we are allowing the body to share in the honour and glorification which our whole self is rendering to God—our creator. Also, when we make the sign of the cross, we proclaim our *Faith* in the Redemption. Like our faith, the symbols of our Catholic and Apostolic Faith must also live, they must have meaning, usage

and importance to each of us in our daily lives, our daily prayers and worship. They must never be allowed to become meaningless, empty gestures done without our full knowledge of what they mean and how they benefit us in our relationship to God.

Christians must honor the precious cross as they were taught by the fathers of our Church. We honor the precious cross first and foremost by crossing ourselves properly. How many Ukrainian Catholics believe that they are crossing themselves correctly? How many of us actually understand what we are doing when we cross ourselves? Some modern-day Christians are embarrassed to cross themselves when the need arises; they do not do it properly as the Church expects it to be done. They do it with a quick motion of the hand which is not the sign of the cross but a dishonour. Some believers who have been attending church services for years make the sign of cross utterly incorrectly. Some wave their hand around as if they are driving flies away or fanning themselves, others put their fingers together as if not to make the sign of the cross, but for putting salt over themselves, and still others beat their fingers into their forehead with all their might as if driving nails into it. Needless to say that the most widespread mistake is when the hand does not go as far as the shoulder, but is kept above the neck.

Continued on page 7...



The Holy Cross is an ever-living symbol of God's everlasting love toward us sinners, a symbol of Christ's total self-sacrifice, a symbol of our redemption and salvation, a symbol of Christ's victory over death and Satan. By venerating the holy Cross we honor Christ's sacrifice, passion and death. Whenever we sign ourselves with the sign of the holy Cross, we profess our faith in our Saviour.

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross



September 14

Воздвиження Чесного Хреста

27ого Вересня



*To Your Cross, O Master, we bow in
veneration, and we glorify Your
holy Resurrection.*

On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross we honor the Holy Cross by which Christ redeemed the world. It is one of the twelve great feasts of our Church which do not commemorate some occasion in the life of Christ or the Virgin Mary. The feast has a one day pre-feast and a seven day post-feast.

One must remember that in celebrating this feast, we are not concerned with the ordinary veneration of the holy Cross, which takes place on the third Sunday of the Great Feast, but with the aspect of the feast which is expressed in the name of the feast itself—EXALTATION or ELEVATION — of the Holy Cross, a solemn rite connected with the veneration and glorification of the holy Cross.

The public veneration of the Cross of Christ originated in the 4th century. St. Helen, mother, of the Emperor Constantine, found the true cross while on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 326 A.D. Relying upon the oral tradition of the faithful, St. Helen found the precious Cross together with the crosses of the two thieves crucified with our Lord.

The date of the feast, September 14(G)/27(J), marks the day in the year 335 when the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was dedicated. The true Cross was elevated inside the Church on that day for all to venerate, hence the name of the feast: Universal Exaltation / Elevation of the life-giving Cross. This Feast also gives the Church an

opportunity to relish the full glory of the Cross as a source of light, hope and victory for Christ's people. Christians "Exalt" the Cross of Christ as the instrument of our salvation.

The cross represents the One Sacrifice by which Jesus, obedient even unto death, accomplished our salvation. It is a symbolic summary of the Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ – all in one image.

The Cross – because of what it represents – is the most potent and universal symbol of the Christian faith. It has inspired both liturgical and private devotions: The crucifix is a constant reminder and witness of Christ's ultimate triumph, His victory over sin and death through His suffering and dying on the Cross. †

"The Cross is the will of the Father, the glory of the Only-begotten One, joy of the Spirit, ornament of the angels, fortress of the Church, the Glory of Paul, stronghold of the Saints and the light of the whole world"

St. John Chrysostom



We were called to be witnesses,
not lawyers or judges.

Many folks want to serve God,
but only as advisors.



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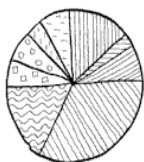


Thanks to Carl Serkland

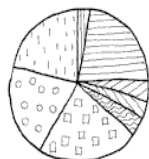
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JUST ANOTHER BEAR WE HAVE TO CROSS

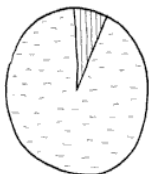
WHAT THE CLERGY DO ALL WEEK



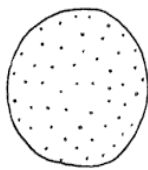
WHAT
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DO



WHAT
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CLERGY DO



WHAT THE
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CLERGY DO

- GO TO CHURCH, PRAY ETC
- PREPARE SERMONS
- GO TO MEETINGS
- VISIT THE SICK
- HELP PEOPLE BE BORN, GET MARRIED AND DIE

- SURF THE INTERNET
- PLAY GOLF
- KEEP UP TO DATE WITH POPULAR CULTURE (TV, MUSIC ETC)
- NOTHING
- TO BE HONEST IT IS NOT SOMETHING I HAVE SPENT MUCH TIME THINKING ABOUT

CartoonChurch.com

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08-02-1999

YOU THINK YOUR DEVOTIONS ARE ROUGH? ...
WHEN I WAS A KID WE HAD TO READ THE
ENTIRE BEGAT SECTION THREE TIMES PER DAY
... IN KJV ... WHILE WALKING THROUGH A
BLIZZARD

Autumn is Here!

GENESIS 1:1 - Sign Language

Write the letter for each sign to spell out the Bible verse, Genesis 1:1



The Letters



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Покрова Пресвятої Богородиці *Protection (Patronage) of the Most Holy Mother of God*



“Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church, and with choirs of Saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and Bishops venerate Her, Apostles and prophets rejoice together, Since for our sake she prays to the Eternal God!”

On October 1/14 the Church celebrates the Feast of the Protection of the Theotokos. This feast is neither one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church nor is it a commemoration of any events in the earthly lives of our Lord or His Mother.

Through this feast we celebrate the appearance of the Mother of God in Constantinople in the tenth century. During the reign of the Emperor Leo the Wise, barbarians from (what was called) Russia, were besieging the capital city of Constantinople. People gathered at the Blachernae Church to celebrate an All-Night Vigil. During the all-night vigil, when the church was full of people, St. Andrew, known as the Fool of Christ, saw the Theotokos above him walking in the air. She was full of eternal light— Saint John the Baptist, Saint John the Evangelist, and other saints and angels surrounded her. Our Lady knelt and in tears began to pray for the Christians of the world. After much time in prayer, Mary stood and approached the altar where she continued her prayer. Mary then took the veil from her head and spread it above the people as a protection against all enemies. St. Andrew looked at this picture with trembling, turned to his pupil who was standing next to him and asked if he, too, saw the apparition. He replied: “Yes, I see it.” These two alone saw the vision, but everyone else in the Church felt Mary’s presence and the comfort of her protection. The Theotokos then asked her Son, Jesus, to accept the prayers of all the people who were praying to Him and asking for her protection. A short time later, for no explicable reason, the barbarians turned and left the city.

From this veil, which in Slavonic is called “*pokrov*”, the feast got its name: “*Pokrova Presvyatoyi Bohorodytsi*” (The veil (or Protection) of the Most Holy Mother of God). The veil became the symbol of protection and intercession of the Blessed Virgin.

On this feast, let us be encouraged that the Lord, through the prayers of His Mother, is quick to help not only the Church, but also the people immediately around us. Asking for her intercessions as from our own mothers, let us also take stock of all the good things that the Lord has already done for us.†



There are two days in every week about which we shouldn’t worry.

One is yesterday, with its mistakes and cares, its aches and pains. Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control.

The other day is tomorrow, with its possible adversities and blunders. Until its sun rises, we have no stake in tomorrow, for it is yet unborn.

That leaves only one day — today. Anyone can fight the battle of just one day. It is only when we add the burden of those two eternities — yesterday and tomorrow — that contentment will escape us.

Anonymous



How to Make the Sign of the Cross continued...



How to make the sign of the Cross

As the sign of the cross is an important expression of our faith it is used frequently during liturgy. In the Ukrainian Catholic Church, the sign of the cross is always made with the right hand. The thumb, the index finger and the middle finger of the right hand are joined at the tip to symbolize the Holy Trinity. The other two fingers are bent towards the palm signifying the descent of the Son of God to earth from Heaven—the two bent fingers represent the two Natures of Christ — He is truly God and truly man united in the Incarnation of one divine person: Jesus Christ.

Making the "Sign of the Cross" is an Act of Faith

There are *four* distinct movements in making the sign of the cross: forehead, stomach, right shoulder then left shoulder. Once we join the fingers of our right hand, we lift our hand to our *forehead* which touches the highest part of the cross, calling on GOD to be in our mind (i.e. to Consecrate our minds to Him), then we move our fingers over and past our *hearts*, calling upon God to be in our love, affections and sentiments (i.e. Once again to consecrate them to Him). We continue all the way down to our stomach which touches the lowest point of the cross. We then move our joined fingers to the "right shoulder" first to symbolize Christ, (Who sits at the Right Hand of God), calling upon God to be in all of our good actions and to consecrate all of our actions to God. Then we complete the "Sign of the Cross" by moving our joined fingers to the "left shoulder." For in this fourth step we create the cross beam by the extended arms of the cross in which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, our Lord's hands extended to gather all the nations scattered to the ends of the earth *into one* in Him and thereby asking God to *forgive* us our sins.

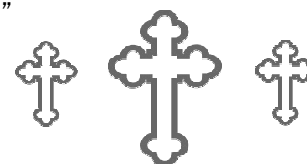
When we cross ourselves we are acting out the Greatest Christian Commandment—we are saying, "*I love You, Lord, with all of my mind, with all of my heart, with all of my soul and with all of my strength.*"

Typically, while making the sign of the cross upon ourselves, we pray:

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Another, more personal prayer, which can be said while making the sign of cross is:

Lord, I give You my mind. Lord, I give You my Heart and my love. Lord, I give You all of my good thoughts, actions and behaviour. Lord, forgive me all of my sins.



The sign of the cross is typically made when we begin and end our prayers, when we enter and leave church, when we kiss an Icon, at the mention of the Trinity, when the priest blesses the congregation, at the beginning and the end of the readings of the Holy Gospel, when we start and finish our meals and on many other occasions. We also generally always make a bow when crossing ourselves—this gesture is called a "Reverence".

Its frequent repetition, when we are mindful of its significance, can become to us a source and fountain of every blessing. †

Sometimes your medicine bottle has on it "Shake well before using." That is what God has to do with some of his people before He can use them.

V. Havner

