

**WELCOME TO ALL PARISHIONERS & GUESTS WHO HAVE JOINED US TODAY!**



**ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER PARISH  
ПАРАФІЯ СВ. МИКОЛАЯ ЧУДОТВОРЦЯ**



**Pastor: Fr. Yuriy Vyshnevskyy**

Emergency: 250.891.4507

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Facebook: [facebook.com/stnicholasvictoria](https://facebook.com/stnicholasvictoria)

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**Tue-Fri DL - 9am; Sun DL - 10am**

*The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of New Westminster*

*Bishop: Most Rev. Ken Nowakowski*

[www.nweparchy.ca](http://www.nweparchy.ca)

**TWENTY NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
ДВАДЦЯТЬ ДЕВ'ЯТА НЕДІЛЯ ПІСЛЯ П'ЯТИДЕСЯТНИЦІ**

According to the ancient tradition of the Church, since Saint Anna, the Ancestor of God, was barren, she and her husband Joachim remained without children until old age.

Therefore, sorrowing over their childlessness, they besought God with a promise that, if He were to grant them the fruit of the womb, they would offer their ofspring to Him as a gift. And God, hearkening to their supplication, informed them through an Angel concerning the birth of the Virgin.

And thus, through God's promise, Anna conceived according to the laws of nature, and was deemed worthy to become the mother of the Mother of our Lord.



*The Conception of  
Saint Anna*

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP AFTER DIVINE LITURGY!**

<b>SUNDAY HYMNS</b>			
OPENING HYMN	Хто Там По Дорозі / Who Goes There pg. 106-108		
COMMUNION HYMN	Вірую, Господи / I Do Believe pg. 246-247		
CLOSING HYMN	Боже Великий, Єдиний pg. 264		
<i>Please join us today in singing our Sunday hymns!</i>			
<b>SUNDAY &amp; DAILY SCHEDULE</b>			
SUNDAY, December 9	Divine Liturgy - for the Parishioners of St Nicholas Parish		10:00 AM
MONDAY, December 10	NO SERVICE		
TUESDAY, December 11	NO SERVICE		
WEDNESDAY, December 12	NO SERVICE		
THURSDAY, December 13	NO SERVICE		
FRIDAY, December 14	NO SERVICE		
SATURDAY, December 15	NO SERVICE		
SUNDAY, December 16	Divine Liturgy - for the Parishioners of St Nicholas Parish		10:00 AM
<i>Please Note: to request a Divine Liturgy for a special intention, please see Fr. Yuriy to arrange for it!</i>			
<b>SUNDAY EPISTLE READERS</b>			
DATE	READING	UKRAINIAN	ENGLISH
SUNDAY, December 9	Gal. 3:15-22	Dmytro Maksymiv	Graciela Spaciuk-Schwarz
SUNDAY, December 16	Heb. 13:17-21	Kateryna Yaremyn	William Vanderven
SUNDAY, December 23	Heb. 11:9-10,17-23	Glikeria Iwanuck	Marian Chalifoux
SUNDAY, December 30	Gal. 1:11-19	Motria Koropecy	Robert Herchak
<i>Thank you, Epistle readers, for your service in proclaiming God's Word!</i>			
<b>2018 PARISH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE</b>		<b>PASTORAL MINISTRY &amp; HOLY MYSTERIES</b>	
CHAIRPERSON.....Alec Rossa - 250.472.3374		CONFESSIONS.....1/2 hour before Liturgy	
SECRETARY.....Richard DeMerchant - 250.893.3484		EUCARIST.....for the sick - any time	
TREASURER.....William Vanderven - 250.478.1458		BAPTISMS.....by appointment	
FINANCIAL SECRETARY.....David Newberry - 250.598.8197		MARRIAGES.....six months notice should be given to the parish priest, and he should be contacted before any other arrangements are made	
FUNDRAISING/HALL RENTAL.....Robert Herchak - 250.386.7872		FUNERALS.....by appointment	
MAINTENANCE.....Murray Chapman - 250.658.4769		ANOINTING.....any time	
LITURGICAL COMMITTEE...Motria Koropecy - 250.658.3051		HOSPITAL VISITS.....any time	
MEMBER AT LARGE.....Cindy Lazaruk - 778.677.9072			
<p><b>Bequests &amp; Wills:</b> Leaving a bequeath is a process of giving a donation through your will. It is simply a distribution from your estate to a charitable organization through your last will and testament. It can be as small or as large a donation as you wish. It is important that you talk to your lawyer about the process. In your kindness please remember St Nicholas the Wonderworker Ukrainian Catholic Church in your bequeath and will. If anyone wishes to make such a bequeath in their will, the following clause may be included or added to a will: "I give, devise, and bequeath to St Nicholas the Wonderworker Ukrainian Catholic Parish - 1112 Caledonia Avenue, Victoria BC, V8T 1G1, the sum of \$ _____ (or _____% of my estate), to be used for the benefit of the parish and it's pastoral activities."</p>			

### Vibrant Parish Prayer

O God, Creator of Heaven and Earth! Because of your indescribable love for us, you sent your Only-Begotten Son, Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ - The Way, The Truth, and The Life - and our Salvation. In His name, we turn to You. Strengthen our hearts and minds in Christian love and in unity of purpose as we strive to build a Vibrant Parish. Give us the grace to model our lives according to the Word of God. Instill in us the desire to pray and to celebrate the Holy Mysteries as one Christian Family in our Parish Community. Inspire us to follow Your great command to be a servant to the less fortunate among us! Grant this, O Lord, through the mercies and love for mankind of Your Only-Begotten Son with whom You are blessed, together with Your All-Holy, Good and Life-Giving Spirit, now and forever and ever. Amen!



#### ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

#### A PLACE TO ENCOUNTER THE LIVING CHRIST

Through the word, the Holy Mysteries & Prayer,  
Serving One's Neighbor, Leadership  
Fostering & Serving Unity and Missionary Spirit  
(His Beatitude Sviatoslav)



### Молитва Живої Парафії

Господи Ісусе Христе, Пастирю Добрий, як колись Ти пригорнув заблуканих овечок, щоб вони пізнали Твій голос і були Твоїм стадом, так і сьогодні глянь ласкаво з небесних висот на нашу парафію та зішли на неї Твого Святого Духа, щоб вона була місцем пізнання радості Доброї Новини. Скріплюй нас Твоєю присутністю та єднай нас кожночасно в молитві. Даруй нам духа служіння ближньому, щоб у нашій парафії кожний міг зустріти Тебе, милостивого Бога. Благослови наш духовний провід Твоєю мудрістю і дай, щоб ніхто з нас не шкодував ні часу, ні талантів, ні матеріальних дібр для розбудови Твого царства. Єднай нас у мирі та злагоді, щоб ми були Твоєю спільнотою любові. Всели в нас місійного духа, щоб ми стали тим світилом євангельського слова, молитви і добрих діл, що кличе кожного до участі в Божественному житті, щоб славилось, Спасе, Твоє Ім'я з безначальним Твоїм Отцем та пресвятим, благим і животворящим Твоїм Духом нині, і повсякчас, і на віки віків. Амінь.

### DIVINE LITURGY PROPERS

*The Divine Liturgy - An Anthology for Worship: Liturgy - pg. 270-318; propers - pg. 737*

*The Liturgy prescribed for today is that of St. John Chrysostom.*

**Troparion, Tone 4:** Today the chains of barrenness are shattered,\* for having heard the prayer of Joachim and Anna,\* against all hope God has openly promised\* the birth of the Maiden of God,\* from whom the very Infinite One will be born as a man,\* the One who commanded the angels to cry to her.\* Rejoice, O full of grace, the Lord is with you.

**Glory: Now: Kontakion, Tone 4:** Today the whole world celebrates\* the conception by Anna,\* which was brought about by God himself,\* for she has ineffably borne the one who will bear the Word.

**Prokimenon, Tone 4:** God is wonderful in His saints,\* the God of Israel. *Verse:* In the churches bless God, the Lord from the fountains of Israel.

**Epistle - Gal. 4:22-31 - A Reading from the Letter of Saint Apostle Paul to Galatians:** Brothers and Sisters, For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the freeborn woman. The son of the slave woman was born naturally, the son of the freeborn through a promise. Now this is an allegory. These women represent two covenants. One was from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; this is Hagar. Hagar represents Sinai, a mountain in Arabia; it corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery along with her children. But the Jerusalem above is freeborn, and she is our mother. For it is written: "Rejoice, you barren one who bore no children; break forth and shout, you who were not in labor; for more numerous are the children of the deserted one than of her who has a husband." Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of the promise. But just as then the child of the flesh persecuted the child of the spirit, it is the same now. But what does the scripture say? "Drive out the slave woman and her son! For the son of the slave woman shall not share the inheritance with the son" of the freeborn. Therefore, brothers, we are children not of the slave woman but of the freeborn woman.

**Alleluia, Tone 3:** *Verse:* The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; He is their protector in time of trouble. *Verse:* The Lord will help them and rescue them; He will deliver them from sinners and save them, for they hoped in Him.

**Gospel - Lk 8:16-21** - "No one who lights a lamp conceals it with a vessel or sets it under a bed; rather, he places it on a lampstand so that those who enter may see the light. For there is nothing hidden that will not become visible, and nothing secret that will not be known and come to light. Take care, then, how you hear. To anyone who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he seems to have will be taken away." Then his mother and his brothers came to him but were unable to join him because of the crowd. He was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside and they wish to see you." He said to them in reply, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act on it."

*Instead of "It is truly..." we sing:* O my soul, magnify the most glorious conception of the Mother of God.

Let us magnify the Mother of God,\* wellspring ever-flowing and life-receiving,\* the light-bearing lamp of grace,\* the living temple and tabernacle all pure,\* even more spacious than heaven and earth.

**Communion Verse:** Rejoice in the Lord, O you just; praise befits the righteous. Alleluia, alleluia,\* alleluia!

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**Prayer After Holy Communion:** Having been made worthy to partake in a mystical way of Your immaculate Body and precious Blood, O Christ our God, I acclaim and bless, worship and glorify You, and proclaim the greatness of Your saving acts, now and for ever and ever. Amen. (*more Prayers After Holy Communion on pg. 324-326 in the Anthology book*).



**Тропар, глас 4:** Днесь узи бездітности розрішаються,\* Йоакима бо й Анну, вислухавши,\* Бог проти надії явно обіцяє,\* що вони родитимуть Богодівицю,\* з якої сам родився неописаний,\* що, ставши чоловіком,\* ангелові повелів співати їй:\* Радуйся, благодатна. Господь з тобою.

**Слава: І нині: Кондак, глас 4:** Празнує днесь вселенна зачаття Анни,\* що сталося від Бога,\* бо вона породила понад усяке слово ту,\* що родила Слово.

**Прокімен, глас 4:** Дивний Бог у святих своїх,\* Бог Ізраїлів. *Стих:* У церквах благословляйте Бога, Господа, з джерел Ізраїлю.

**Апостол - Гал. 4:22-31 - До Галатів Послання Святого Апостола Павла Читання:** Браття і сестри, Написано бо, що Авраам мав двох синів: одного від рабині, а другого від вільної. Та той, що від рабині, народився за тілом, а той що від вільної - за обітницею. Це має інше значення: оті дві жінки - то два завіти; один з гори Синаю, що рабів родить, це - Агар; а гора Синай в Арабії і відповідає теперішньому Єрусалимові, що дійсно поневолений з дітьми своїми. А вишній Єрусалим -вільний, він мати всім нам. Написано бо: “Звеселися, неплодна, що не родиш! Викликуй, рада та весела, ти, що мук не знала, бо у покинутої більше дітей, ніж у тієї, що має чоловіка.” Ви ж, брати, як Ісаак, діти обітниці. Та як тоді, хто народився за тілом, гонив того, хто родився за духом, так і тепер. Тільки ж що Письмо каже: “Прожени рабиню та її сина, бо син рабині не успадкує з сином вільної.” Отак, брати, ми сини не рабині, а вільної.

**Алилуя, глас 4:** *Стих:* Спасення праведним від Господа і оборонець він їм у часі скорби. *Стих:* І допоможе їм Господь, і избавить їх, і забере їх від грішників, і спасе їх, бо повали на нього.

**Євангеліє - Лк 8:16-21 -** Ніхто не засвічує світила, щоб його вкрити посудиною або поставити під ліжку, а, навпаки, його ставлять на свічнику, щоб ті, що входять, бачили світло. Нічого бо нема захованого, що б не стало явним, ані нічого тайного, що б не стало знаним і на яв не вийшло. Вважайте, отже, як слухаєте: бо хто має, тому дасться; а хто не має, заберуть і те, що йому здається, нібито має.” Мати його й брати прийшли були до нього, та зачерез народ не могли до нього доступитись. Його повідомили: “Мати твоя і брати твої стоять надворі, хочуть побачитися з тобою.” Він же у відповідь сказав їм: “Мати моя і брати мої це ті, що слухають слово Боже й його виконують.”



*Замість “Достойно ...” ми співаємо:* Величай, душе моя, преславне зачаття Божої Матері. Життєприймаюче джерело, завжди текуче,\* світлоносний світильник благодаті,\* храм одушевлений,\* скинію пречисту,\* від небес до землі просторішу\* – Богородицю, вірні, величаємо.

**Причасний:** Радуйтеся, праведні, у Господі, правим належить похвала. Алилуя, алилуя, алилуя!

**Молитва По Святім Причастю:** Таїнственно удостоївшись бути причасником Твого пречистого тіла і чесної крові, Христе Боже, оспівую і благословлю, поклоняюся, і славлю, і величаю спасіння Твої, Господи, нині і повсякчас, і на віки вічні. Амінь. *(більше Молитов По Святім Причастю на ст. 80-87 в маленькій книжечці “Божественна Літургія”).*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ **THANK YOU** to all those who came yesterday and helped with selling, serving, cleaning etc. during our Annual Christmas Food Fair bake sale. May God bless you all for your stewardship.
- ◆ **ST. NICHOLAS PARISH PRAZNYK:** Sunday, December 16. The 10:00 am celebratory Divine Liturgy will be followed by a Praznyk Lunch in our parish hall. We cordially invite all of our parishioners and friends of the parish to share in this annual celebration. A potluck lunch is planned with a special visit from St. Nicholas.
- ◆ **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please keep in your prayers GORD HRYHORYSHEN and other members of our parish, our family and friends who are ailing, in hospitals, nursing homes and those who are not able to join actively in their community.
- ◆ **PLEASE NOTE:** as Fr. Yuriy will be between 27 Nov-11 Dec. Fr. Joe Ostopowich will be celebrating Liturgies on Sundays, Dec. 2 & Dec. 9. In case of emergency please phone a hospital chaplain at 250.889.3761 or at 250.388.5571. In the event of the funeral please contact Fr. Joe at 604.763.3639
- ◆ **ST. NICHOLAS BOOK STORE:** The Divine Liturgy An Anthology of Worship - **\$25**; “Christ Our Pascha” Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church/“Христос Наша Пасха” Катехизм Української Католицької Церкви - **\$25**; “Sing to Our God” hymn book - **\$15**; Молитовник “Прийдіте Поклонімся” - **\$10**; “The Rosary - The Prayer Rule of the Mother of God in the Ukrainian Catholic Church” - **\$10**.
- ◆ **SVYAT VECHIR DINNER:** The Ukrainian Studies Society is hosting Ukrainian Christmas Eve Traditions, “Svyatay Vechir” ( Holy Night ) dinner on Saturday, January 5th, 2019 at 6.00 PM at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre. This celebration features a traditional meatless buffet

dinner of 12 dishes and carolling by the Luna Ensemble. Advanced ticket sales only. Adults: \$45.00, Students: \$20.00, Children 4-6: \$8.00. Call the Ukrainian Cultural Centre (250-475-2585) to purchase or reserve your tickets.

- ◆ **PARISH CALENDAR OF BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:** If you would like to be included in our Parish Calendar of Birthday and Anniversary celebrations, please put date in our calendar located at the church vestibule. Each week, we will list the names in our parish bulletin so we can celebrate these happy occasions together!
  
  - ◆ **JOIN OUR CHOIR:** Do you enjoy singing? Please consider joining our St Nicholas Parish Choir and remember that we ALWAYS looking for new members! Contact Motria Koropeccky for details at 250.658.3051.
  
  - ◆ **CATECHISM ANNOUNCEMENT:** *"And they were bringing to Him also the infants, in order that He may be touching them; but after the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Himself and said, Let alone the little children to come to Me, and cease hindering them; for of such is the kingdom of God."* We are happy to welcome all children to our St. Nicholas The Wonderworker catechism program. Weekly classes are scheduled Sunday morning during Divine Liturgy. We want your children to learn more about their Catholic faith, sacred scripture, feast days, and religious practices and customs of the Ukrainian Catholic church. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Marian Chalifoux at 250.507.1005.
  
  - ◆ **THRIFTY'S PRE-PAID FOOD CARDS** - We all have to buy groceries. Why not have 6% of it returned back to the church at no extra charge! Cards are available in \$100, \$200, and \$500 denominations. Talk to Alec after today's liturgy to pre- order your cards. We need to sell A LOT of them! We encourage you to consider purchasing them for yourselves as gifts too.
  
  - ◆ **BE A STEWARD:** Have you ever wondered what more can you do to help our parish? Here are some suggestions: **Steward of property security**; **Steward of grounds cleaning**; **Steward of cleaning church**; **Steward of church linen**; **Steward of outreach**; **Steward of caring**; **Steward of prayer**; **Steward of service**. Quite often, our homebound or senior members, once active in their younger years, want to find purpose in their senior years. It's not only about doing but about "BEING" present to others. Contact Fr. Yuriy **OR** Darlene DeMerchant for more information. You will be amazed how "BEING" can make a difference.
  
  - ◆ **PARISH LIBRARY:** please visit our parish library and browse through the books on spirituality, church history, iconography, history of the Ukrainians in Canada, children's books and more... The library is located in the church vestibule. Please use a library book sign out form when borrowing a book.
  
  - ◆ **SUNDAY COFFEE VOLUNTEERS** act as hosts and serve light refreshments following the Sunday morning Divine Liturgy, providing an opportunity for the faithful to socialize with
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friends and visitors following their shared worship experience. We thank all of our parishioners who kind volunteer to serve refreshments. Whether you are new to the Parish, or are a long-time members, please join us for coffee. Please speak with Robert if you would like to volunteer.

◆**WE SHARE THE AIR:** Please keep it healthy and fragrant free. Someone in this area is scent-sensitive. The chemicals used in scented products can make some people sick, especially those with fragrance sensitivities, asthma, allergies and other respiratory ailments. PLEASE DO NOT \*wear perfume, cologne, lotion, aftershave and other fragrances; \*USE unscented personal care products. Be Sensitive to Others. Thank you for your understanding. *St. Nicholas parish.*

◆**VESELKA** is sponsoring the Ukrainian Supper on November 30 so bring your family and friends to support their efforts. Veselka is available for performances throughout the year. Please submit requests online. Also Veselka will be hosting a Silent Auction next spring to fund raise for their trip to Ukraine in August 2019. Date: TBA. The dancers are also selling frozen perogies to raise funds for their trip. Visit their website at [veselkadancers.com](http://veselkadancers.com) for more information, call their office at 250.475.1174

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR ICONOSTASIS



### Myrrhbearer and Equal of the Apostles Mary Magdalene

July 22

A woman whose name has entered forever into the Gospel account was born and grew up in a small city of Magdala. The Gospel tells us nothing of Mary's younger years, but Tradition informs us that Mary of Magdala was young and pretty, and led a sinful life. It says in the Gospels that the Lord expelled seven devils from Mary (Luke 8:2). From the moment of her healing Mary led a new life, and became a true disciple of the Savior.

The Gospel relates that Mary followed after the Lord, when He went with the Apostles through the cities and villages of Judea and Galilee preaching about the Kingdom of God. Together with the pious women Joanna, wife of Choza (steward of Herod), Susanna and others, she served Him from her own possessions (Luke 8:1-3) and undoubtedly shared with the Apostles the evangelic tasks in common with the other women. The Evangelist Luke, evidently, has her in view together with the other women, stating that at the moment of the Procession of Christ onto Golgotha, when after the Scourging He took on Himself the heavy Cross, collapsing under its weight, the women followed after Him weeping and wailing, but He consoled them. The Gospel relates that Mary Magdalene was present on Golgotha at the moment of the Lord's



Crucifixion. While all the disciples of the Savior ran away, she remained fearlessly at the Cross together with the Mother of God and the Apostle John.

The Evangelists also list among those standing at the Cross the mother of the Apostle James, and Salome, and other women followers of the Lord from Galilee, but all mention Mary Magdalene first. Saint John, in addition to the Mother of God, names only her and Mary Cleopas. This indicates how much she stood out from all the women who gathered around the Lord.

She was faithful to Him not only in the days of His Glory, but also at the moment of His extreme humiliation and insult. As the Evangelist Matthew relates, she was present at the Burial of the Lord. Before her eyes Joseph and Nicodemus went out to the tomb with His lifeless Body. She watched as they covered over the entrance to the cave with a large stone, entombing the Source of Life.

Faithful to the Law in which she was raised, Mary together with the other women spent following day at rest, because it was the great day of the Sabbath, coinciding with the Feast of Passover. But all the rest of the peaceful day the women gathered spices to go to the Grave of the Lord at dawn on Sunday and anoint His Body according to the custom of the Jews.

It is necessary to mention that, having agreed to go on the first day of the week to the Tomb early in the morning, the holy women had no possibility of meeting with one another on Saturday. They went separately on Friday evening to their own homes. They went out only at dawn the following day to go to the Sepulchre, not all together, but each from her own house.

The Evangelist Matthew writes that the women came to the grave at dawn, or as the Evangelist Mark expresses, extremely early before the rising of the sun. The Evangelist John, elaborating upon these, says that Mary came to the grave so early that it was still dark. Obviously, she waited impatiently for the end of night, but it was not yet daybreak. She ran to the place where the Lord's Body lay.

Mary went to the tomb alone. Seeing the stone pushed away from the cave, she ran away in fear to tell the close Apostles of Christ, Peter and John. Hearing the strange message that the Lord was gone from the tomb, both Apostles ran to the tomb and, seeing the shroud and winding cloths, they were amazed. The Apostles went and said nothing to anyone, but Mary stood about the entrance to the tomb and wept. Here in this dark tomb so recently lay her lifeless Lord.

Wanting proof that the tomb really was empty, she went down to it and saw a strange sight. She saw two angels in white garments, one sitting at the head, the other at the foot, where the Body of Jesus had been placed. They asked her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She answered them with the words which she had said to the Apostles, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid him." At that moment, she turned around and saw the Risen Jesus standing near the grave, but she did not recognize Him.

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He asked Mary, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” She answered thinking that she was seeing the gardener, “Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him.”

Then she recognized the Lord’s voice. This was the voice she heard in those days and years, when she followed the Lord through all the cities and places where He preached. He spoke her name, and she gave a joyful shout, “Rabbi” (Teacher).

Respect and love, fondness and deep veneration, a feeling of thankfulness and recognition at His Splendor as great Teacher, all came together in this single outcry. She was able to say nothing more and she threw herself down at the feet of her Teacher to wash them with tears of joy. But the Lord said to her: “Stop holding on to me,\* for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

She came to herself and again ran to the Apostles, to do the will of Him sending her to preach. Again she ran into the house, where the Apostles still remained in dismay, and proclaimed to them the joyous message, “I have seen the Lord!” This was the first preaching in the world about the Resurrection.

The Apostles proclaimed the Glad Tidings to the world, but she proclaimed it to the Apostles themselves.

Holy Scripture does not tell us about the life of Mary Magdalene after the Resurrection of Christ, but it is impossible to doubt, that if in the terrifying minutes of Christ’s Crucifixion she was at the foot of His Cross with His All-Pure Mother and Saint John, she must have stayed with them during the happier time after the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ. Thus in the Acts of the Apostles Saint Luke writes that all the Apostles with one mind stayed in prayer and supplication, with certain women and Mary the Mother of Jesus and His brethren.

Holy Tradition testifies that when the Apostles departed from Jerusalem to preach to all the ends of the earth, then Mary Magdalene also went with them. A daring woman, whose heart was full of reminiscence of the Resurrection, she went beyond her native borders and went to preach in pagan Rome. Everywhere she proclaimed to people about Christ and His teaching. When many did not believe that Christ is risen, she repeated to them what she had said to the Apostles on the radiant morning of the Resurrection: “I have seen the Lord!” With this message she went all over Italy.

Tradition relates that in Italy Mary Magdalene visited Emperor Tiberias (14-37 A.D.) and proclaimed to him Christ’s Resurrection. According to Tradition, she brought him a red egg as a symbol of the Resurrection, a symbol of new life with the words: “Christ is Risen!” Then she told the emperor that in his Province of Judea the unjustly condemned Jesus the Galilean, a holy man, a miracleworker, powerful before God and all mankind, had been executed at the

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instigation of the Jewish High Priests, and the sentence confirmed by the procurator appointed by Tiberias, Pontius Pilate.

Thanks to Mary Magdalene the custom to give each other paschal eggs on the day of the Radiant Resurrection of Christ spread among Christians over all the world. In one ancient Greek manuscript, written on parchment, kept in the monastery library of Saint Athanasius near Thessalonica, is a prayer read on the day of Holy Pascha for the blessing of eggs and cheese. In it is indicated that the igumen in passing out the blessed eggs says to the brethren: "Thus have we received from the holy Fathers, who preserved this custom from the very time of the holy Apostles, therefore the holy Equal of the Apostles Mary Magdalene first showed believers the example of this joyful offering."

Mary Magdalene continued her preaching in Italy and in the city of Rome itself. Evidently, the Apostle Paul has her in mind in his Epistle to the Romans (16: 6), where together with other ascetics of evangelic preaching he mentions Mary (Marian), who as he expresses "has bestowed much labor on us." Evidently, she extensively served the Church in its means of subsistence and its difficulties, being exposed to dangers, and sharing with the Apostles the labors of preaching.

According to Church Tradition, she remained in Rome until the arrival of the Apostle Paul, and for two more years following his departure from Rome after the first court judgment upon him. From Rome, Saint Mary Magdalene, already bent with age, moved to Ephesus where the holy Apostle John unceasingly labored. There the saint finished her earthly life and was buried.

Her holy relics were transferred in the ninth century to Constantinople, and placed in the monastery Church of Saint Lazarus. In the era of the Crusader campaigns they were transferred to Italy and placed at Rome under the altar of the Lateran Cathedral. Part of the relics of Mary Magdalene are said to be in Provage, France near Marseilles, where over them at the foot of a steep mountain a splendid church is built in her honor.

Formerly immersed in sin and having received healing, she sincerely and irrevocably began a new life and never wavered from that path. Mary loved the Lord Who called her to a new life. She was faithful to Him not only when He was surrounded by enthusiastic crowds and winning recognition as a miracle-worker, but also when all the disciples deserted Him in fear and He, humiliated and crucified, hung in torment upon the Cross. This is why the Lord, knowing her faithfulness, appeared to her first, and esteemed her worthy to be first to proclaim His Resurrection.

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## READING THE CATECHISM “CHRIST - OUR PASCHA”



### 1. Consecrations and Blessings

#### *c. Blessings*

**#505** A blessing is an action of God for the good of human persons and their salvation. God blesses Adam and Eve so that they might grow and multiply (see Gn 1:28); and after the Flood he blesses Noah (see

Gn 9:1). God blesses Abraham to become a blessing for all the nations of the earth (see Gn 12:2-3). This divine blessing is realized in Jesus Christ (see Gal 3:14-16). Through the liturgical act of blessing, the Church communicates the blessing of Christ to the whole world. When the priest blesses with his hand, he configures his fingers to form the letters IC XC, which is the Greek abbreviation for “Jesus Christ.” This means that through the priest it is the Lord who blesses, “because it is not the human being that blesses, but God who blesses by his hand and words.

**#506** The Church, as a caring Mother, embraces persons with prayers and blessings on the very first day that they come into the world. She then prays on the eighth day after birth, when they receive their name, and also blesses the mother and child with special prayers on the fortieth day. When children begin going to school the Church blesses their educational endeavours. If a couple does not have children, the Church blesses them for fertility with a blessing of the nuptial bed. Those striving on the path of sanctification in marriage are blessed by the Church on the twenty-fifth and fiftieth anniversaries of their marriage. When people are sick, the Church prays at their bedside; and she accompanies the dying with “Prayers at the Soul’s Separation from the Body.”

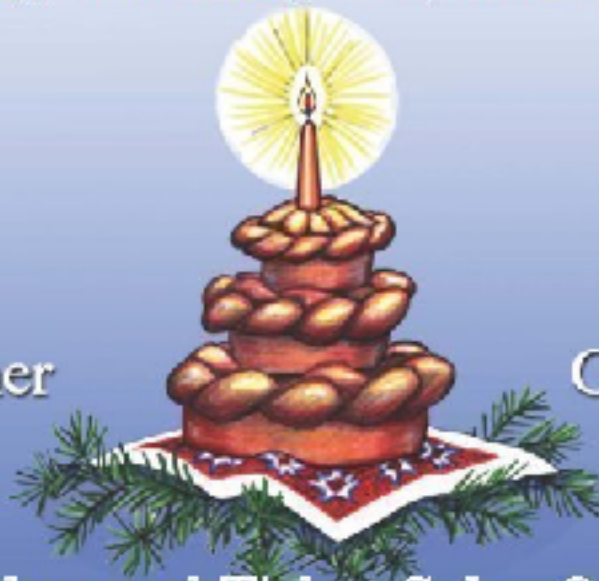


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