

St. Mary's Newsletter

St Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Parish
550 West 14th Ave Vancouver BC V5Z 1P6
www.stmarysbc.com 604-879-5830



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Newsletter email: orestbohdan@outlook.com editor: Orest Kernycky

Divine Liturgies

Sundays: 8:30am English (spoken)
10:30am Ukrainian (sung)
Mon-Sat: 7:30am (Chapel)
Holy Days: 10:00am
Fr Joseph Pidskalny OSBM (Admin)

Faith lives in many places

Our parish has called many places home over the past 100 years.

The first Divine Liturgy for Ukrainians in Vancouver was celebrated on **May 24, 1911**, at **Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church** (Campbell & Keefer Street).

In **1927**, the parish was officially named **St. Stephen's Greek Catholic Church** and held services at **3525 Fraser Street**. By **1936**, the Divine Liturgy moved to the side altar of **Holy Rosary Cathedral**, then returned to Sacred Heart, and finally, in **October 1937**, regular services resumed at the Fraser Street property.

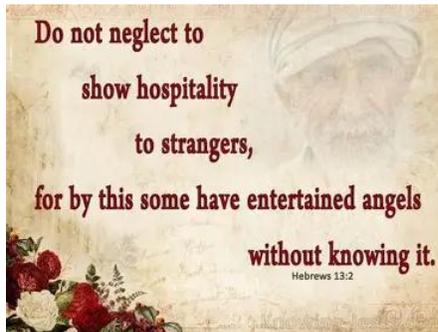
In **1941**, land at **Quebec Street and 7th Avenue** was purchased with hopes of building a new church. However, in **1944**, the parish acquired the **Swedish Lutheran Church** at Princess & Pender instead, selling the Fraser Street and Quebec Street properties.

That same year, **St. Stephen's Greek Catholic Church** was renamed **Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary**, now known as **St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Parish**.

With future growth in mind, the parish purchased land at **Fraser Street and 29th Avenue** in **1958**. In **1961**, a larger site at **Oak Street and 41st Avenue** was considered, and in **1962**, the parish acquired its current **6.4-acre property**.

Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the present Catholic Centre beginning in **1963**, and in **1968** moved to the temporary church—today known as the **Recreation Centre**.

On **October 31, 1982**, the long-awaited new church was completed at **14th & Ash, Vancouver**



Hospitality has always been at the heart of Christian life, but Scripture invites us to see it as something even deeper than kindness. In welcoming the stranger, we open our doors not only to another person, but to the possibility of encountering God's grace in unexpected ways.

This verse reminds us that divine moments rarely arrive with fanfare. They come quietly - in the face of someone who needs a seat at our table, a warm greeting at the church door, or a moment of our time. The people we meet may carry burdens we cannot see, hopes we cannot guess, and dignity that deserves to be honoured.

Ukrainian tradition understands this well. Our ancestors taught that every guest is a blessing, every visitor a chance to practice love, and every act of generosity a seed of holiness. Even today, when we offer bread and salt, share a meal, or simply smile at someone new, we participate in this ancient, sacred rhythm.

As we continue our parish life together, may we cultivate hearts that notice, hands that welcome, and spirits that remain open to the hidden angels God places in our path.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ukrainian TV Network

BC. Programming can be found on OMNI 1 (Ch. 8 on Shaw) Sunday at 8 am, Mondays at noon, Thursdays at 3 pm.

Nash Holos: Ukrainian Roots Radio is a bilingual variety show featuring contemporary and traditional Ukrainian. Nash Holos Vancouver AM1320 CHMB **Saturdays 6-7pm PST**

Nash Holos Nanaimo CHLY 101.7FM **Wednesdays 11am-12pm PST**

New Year Night Party

Wednesday December 31, 2025 9:30pm
Kozak Gastown

Malanka

Saturday January 3, 2026 4-8pm
St. Ann's Catholic Church Abbotsford

Malanka

Saturday January 10, 2026 pm
Ukrainian Cultural Centre Surrey

Malanka

Saturday January 10
Ivan Franko Richmond BC

St. Mary's Parish Christmas Dinner

Sunday January 11, 2026
St Mary's Parish Vancouver BC

Malanka

Saturday January 17, 2026
Auucvancouver.ca

Friday Night Supper

February 20 4-6:30pm
Ivan Franko Richmond BC

Daughters of Donbas Music

Sunday February 22 8pm
St James Community Square Vancouver

Check with the venue for details or updates

Malanka

Malanka takes place on the night of January 13, according to the Julian calendar, and it's a celebration that blends ancient Slavic winter-solstice rituals with later Christian traditions. Over centuries, it has grown into a vibrant folk carnival filled with music, satire, costumes, and community spirit.

Long before calendars and clocks, our ancestors marked the winter solstice with rituals meant to bring fertility, protection, and prosperity for the coming year. Many of the characters you'll see in Malanka — the Goat, the Bear, the Devil, the Doctor, and the Baba — come from these ancient stories.

The Goat symbolizes fertility and the well-being of livestock. The Bear represents strength and brute force. The Devil brings mischief and chaos, only to be defeated or mocked. The Doctor restores order, often in hilarious ways. These characters appear in villages across Ukraine, especially in Bukovyna, Pokuttia, and the Hutsul regions, where Malanka has been preserved with incredible creativity.

With the Christianization of Kyivan Rus', these older rituals didn't disappear — they transformed. Malanka became associated with Saint Melania, whose feast day falls at this time of year. The result is a uniquely Ukrainian blend of folk carnival and Christian celebration, where humor, satire, and community joy all come together.

Under the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union, the celebration was censored, restricted, and sometimes outright banned. Performers were even arrested or exiled for keeping the tradition alive.

But communities — especially in Western Ukraine — held onto it. Malanka became a quiet act of cultural resilience, a way of saying: our identity lives on.

In modern Ukraine, Malanka is a full-scale carnival. Villages like Krasnoilsk host massive parades with elaborate masks, hand-made costumes, and performances that mix humor, folklore, and social commentary. Some groups even incorporate modern elements — from tractors to pickup trucks — while still honoring the ancient characters.

And of course, no Malanka is complete without food: kutia, borscht, pork aspic, honey, and other dishes that symbolize generosity and abundance for the year ahead.

Ukrainians brought Malanka to Canada and the United States in the early 1900s. It became a major celebration in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and cities like Winnipeg, Edmonton, Toronto, and communities across the prairies.

Here, Malanka grew into a beloved community event — part dinner, part dance, part cultural showcase. It helped immigrants maintain their identity, build social ties, and pass traditions to the next generation.

