

St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Newsletter

St Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Parish
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Issue 44

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)
Fr. Dionysiy Zavedyuk OSBM (Assistant)

Forgiveness Unites

Coming Clean: Why we need to tell our sins Why should we go to confession? When we were baptized, God completely forgave all our sins. Because of this, we are united as God's children and are members of his Church.

When we sin, we break this union, so we need to go to confession to ask God to forgive us and to help us be better children. When we do this, we are again in union with God.

What is sin? We sin when we think, do or say things that hurt other people or ourselves: when we do this, we also hurt God.

Why do we confess to a priest? You are confessing to God, through the priest. You confess in this way because Christ wants you to. During His life on earth Christ forgave sins. Since He knew He would not always be with us. He gave the power to His priests who hear our confessions and forgive us in God's name.

Anything you say to a priest in confession is a secret. The priest teaches about God's forgiveness and love and tells you how to be better. He may tell you to say a prayer or do something else also, such as asking someone to forgive you or return something that is not yours.



The Awakening

For years, Mark moved through life on autopilot. Work, errands, sleep—repeat. Faith was something he respected from a distance, like a church seen from across the street: familiar, but never entered.

One quiet Sunday, he stepped inside.

The moment he crossed the threshold; the scent of incense wrapped around him like a memory he didn't know he had. Candles flickered before the icons, each flame steady and alive. The choir was singing the "Our Father", and the sound rose like a single breath shared by everyone in the room.

Mark didn't understand every word, but something in him softened.

During the Liturgy, he felt as though Christ's voice reached through the centuries and spoke directly to him: "*Come to me, all you who are weary.*" It wasn't dramatic. It wasn't thunder. It was a gentle pull—an invitation.

When the priest lifted the Eucharist, Mark felt a clarity he had never known. Not certainty, but longing. A desire to step toward the One who had been waiting for him all along.

He returned the next Sunday. And the next.

Little by little, the Liturgy became the place where his restless heart found rest. In the quiet of prayer, he discovered that awakening isn't a sudden blaze—it's a steady light, growing brighter each time he says yes.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ukrainian Radio in Canada
Vancouver 96.1 FM

Victor Patrascan –Comedy in broken English
Saturday August 1, 6pm
SFU Goldcorp Centre Vancouver

BC Day
August 3 2026

Dovbush Ukrainian Summer Dance Camp
August 10-14 9-3pm
AUCC Vancouver

Ukrainian Independence Day
August 22
1pm Rally – Abbotsford City Hall
3pm Ukrainian Picnic
Abbotsford BC RIY Vancouver

Ukrainian Day at Otter Trail Winery
Sunday, August 23 • 4:30 - 9:30 pm
Otter Trail Winery Langley BC

Потяг Червона рута "Red Rue Express"
Sunday August 23 7-8:30pm
Alliance Francaise Vancouver BC

Ukrainian Independence Day
August 24
Public Holiday in Ukraine

YVR Screen Scene for Ukraine
Wednesday September 9 6-10pm
VIFF Centre Vancouver BC

Ukrainian New West Fest
Saturday Sept 19 12 pm
New West Ukrainian Cathedral

22nd Eparchial Convention (UCWL)
Saturday Oct 17, 2026
New West Ukrainian Cathedral

Ukrainian Christmas Fair
Saturday November 28 11am- 4pm
Ukrainian Catholic Centre Vancouver

Check with the venue for details or updates

The Baptism of Kyivan Rus': Volodymyr the Great's Path to a New Faith in 988

Volodymyr the Great, ruler of Kyivan Rus' in the late tenth century, transformed the future of Eastern Europe when he abandoned the old gods. His conversion wasn't sudden inspiration—it was the result of political pressure, military strategy, and personal ambition.

Origins of a Controversial Prince

Born to Malusha, a servant in Princess Olha's household, and Prince Sviatoslav, Volodymyr grew up under stigma and mockery. Raised by his uncle Dobrynia, he learned resilience early. When Novgorod demanded a prince of Sviatoslav's bloodline, Volodymyr was sent north, where he built crucial alliances with Varangian warriors.

The Battle for Kyiv

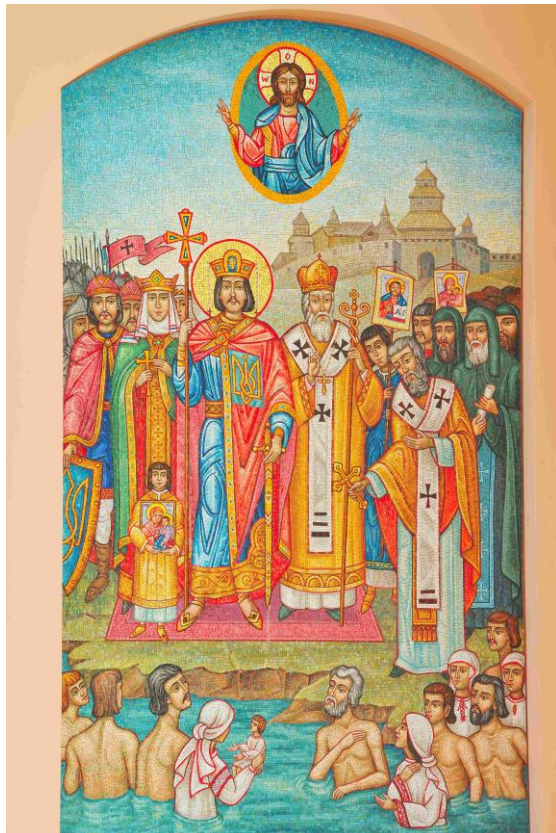
After Sviatoslav's death, his sons fell into conflict. Volodymyr fled to Scandinavia, returned with a Norse army, seized Polotsk after a humiliating rejection, and ultimately took Kyiv by orchestrating Yaropolk's death. By his mid-twenties, he ruled all of Rus'.

Why Paganism Failed

Volodymyr tried to unify Rus' by elevating pagan idols, but regions resisted. Meanwhile, monotheistic powers dominated international politics. Envoys from Islam, Rome, Judaism, and Byzantium presented their faiths, but Byzantine Christianity—already available in Slavic translation—stood out. Reports from Constantinople's dazzling worship sealed his interest.

The Siege That Changed History

In 988, Volodymyr besieged Chersonesus, using its capture to demand marriage to Princess Anna of Byzantium. Emperor Basil II agreed—on the condition that Volodymyr accept Christianity. He did, securing both baptism and an imperial alliance.



Baptizing the Realm

Returning to Kyiv, Volodymyr destroyed pagan idols and ordered a mass baptism in the Dnipro River in 988. Through the will of Grand Prince Volodymyr, the people of the capital were baptized, and the course of history was changed.

Beyond Kyiv, conversion was slower and often violent: Novgorod resisted fiercely, Rostov expelled bishops, and the Vyatichi fought Christianization for generations.

A New Christian Rus'

After converting, Volodymyr supported the Church, encouraged education and architecture, and married his children into Europe's major courts. Though succession struggles followed his death, his decision anchored Rus' within the Christian world for centuries.

The Icon which is located on the front right side of St Mary's Ukrainian Catholic church in Vancouver BC shows the baptism of Kievan Rus' residents in the Dnieper River 988 AD.