

British Columbia & Yukon Deanery REPORT

For the Archdiocese Assembly in Ottawa, August 21-24, 2013

Your Grace Bishop Irene, Chairman of the Assembly, delegates and guests!
Christ is in our midst!

I am Archpriest Michael Fourik Rector of Holy Resurrection Sobor in Vancouver. Three years ago at the Assembly in Victoria, I was appointed Dean of British Columbia and Yukon.

I would like to give a summary report about church life in our Deanery.

In BC Deanery and Yukon, we have one Monastery of All Saints of North America in Dewdney, Two Hermitages: Holy Transfiguration Hermitage in Gibsons, and St. Nicholas Hermitage in Gibsons as well. There are three churches- Holy Resurrection Sobor in Vancouver, St Herman of Alaska Church in Langley and All saints of Alaska Church in Victoria.

There are four officially blessed Missions in BC:

Holy Apostle Barnabas Mission in Comox Valley, St Aidan Mission of Lindisfarne in Cranbrook, St John of Shanghai and St Nina of Georgia mission in Vancouver, St Nikolai, Bishop of Zhitsa mission in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. We organize a Deanery meeting once a year with BC clergy, and have a conference call to discuss urgent matters, keeping in touch.

1. Holy Resurrection Sobor in Vancouver is served by Archpriest Michael Fourik. The parish was founded in 1924, but our church at its present location exists since 1954. The church was built by Russian immigrants, memory eternal to all of the founders of the church. Besides the church there is a hall which is currently rented out for Montessori School on weekdays.

At present time the services in the church are celebrated in Church-Slavonic and English. Divine services are Vigil on Saturday evening and Divine Liturgy every Sunday morning, and on feast days during the week. We also serve Akathist to the Mother of God, Surety of Sinners on every first Saturday of the month. Every Saturday after Vigil, there is an Orthodox teaching of faith, presented by me. Attendance in church is about 20-40 faithful for Vigil, and 150 close to 200 on Sundays. Half of parishioners receive Holy Communion every Sunday. Regular Memorial Saturdays (Panikhidas) are very well attended by many parishioners.

I am very delighted to say that our Church School is well established now. There are five dedicated teachers for different age groups. Pre-school and Grade 1 group has two teachers, then group of Elementary school children up to age 12 also is instructed by two teachers, and Group of young adults and teens. All groups meet regularly every Sunday, learning the word of God, making crafts and participating in activities. The teaching is in Russian and English.

Once a year there is Annual Parish Meeting in spring, and church council members meet together once a month.

During the last three years our parishioners had an opportunity of a life-time to venerate the relics of St Vladimir, Iveron Icon of Theotokos from Hawaii, and in May of this year the Kursk-Root Icon of Holy Virgin Mary visited our church. These were memorable events in the history of our community.

At the Annual General Meeting in 2011, members of our church voted for the Renovation and Extension of our church, because the number of parishioners is growing and the Interior of the church

is not wide enough. At present time there are many infants and toddlers in the church, and the plan allows to create a special room for them as well. The Renovation Planning Committee was organized and the documents were sent to the Municipal administration. We have received a positive approval from the City Hall in May of this year.

2. Monastery of All Saints of North America, Dewdney, BC. Archbishop Lazar is the rector. Bishop Varlaam, Igumen Moses, D

eacon Philip and novice Efrem live and serve in the monastery. Services are conducted in English, Slavonic, Romanian and Greek on Sunday and feast days. It became a tradition to have an Anointing with oil service every year on Sunday of All Saints. Many Orthodox Christians try to attend this service from Greater Vancouver area. Molebens and Panikhidas are served every day. There are also many Weddings, Baptisms and Funeral Services. The following activities take place: Collection to Food Bank, children concerts, Broadcasts on You-tube, Publishing new books, Translation of service Books, new Blog site opened. Monastery has Education Classes. Renovations took place at the Monastery this year, the New Church Construction is in final stages, parking lot is extended Library repainted and reorganized.

3. Hermitage of Holy Transfiguration in Gibsons, BC. Igumen Gregori, Hieromonk Samuel and Monk Moses dwell at the skit. Services are every day. The service is conducted in English.

4. St. Herman of Alaska church in Langley, BC presently served by it's Rector Fr. Lawrence Farley, Deacon Gregory Wright. Fr. Richard Rene is attached to the church. Approximately 110 faithful come to pray at the services. The present building is obviously small, that is why parishioners decided to build a new bigger church. Funding this project is challenging the Parish's financial resources. Divine Liturgy is served every Sunday, preceded by Matins. Vespers is served every Wednesday and Saturday evening, services are held on feast days as well. Pot-Luck Lunch is served every Sunday, followed by an hour of Catechumenal instruction by Fr. Lawrence. Fr. Lawrence gives a lecture at the Regent college every fall, and does a Podcast five days a week for Ancient Faith radio. He continues his writing ministry with regular Publications by Conciliar Press. The Parish Diaconia programme distributes chili to the homeless every Sunday, organized by Deacon Gregory, as well as clothing. It also provides for the local food bank as well as doing other projects.

5. St. John of Shanghai and St Nina Orthodox Church-Mission, Vancouver BC.

Served by Fr. Justin Hewlett and Deacon Peter Choi.

Services are held every Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday. On Wednesdays there is Orthothox Study after Little Compline. In January this year the Church school started. Kursk-Root Icon visited the parish this year and in September of 2011, church members had an opportunity to venerate the Myrrh-streaming Iveron Icon from Hawaii. In November 2012 there was a record attendance at the service 87 people. We are thankful to Fr. Justin and his helpers who keep our Orthodox Camp for children going this year in BC. It is actually 10 years this summer since the camp of All Saints of North America was organized in BC.

6. All Saints of Alaska Parish in Victoria, BC is served by Fr. Larry Reinheimer who was assigned to the church in January 2012. At present time parish council is working on a plan for the future development and growth of the community which will include a day retreat in October. The parish has regular services on Saturday and Sunday, continuing to baptize infants and converts, burying the reposed, communing the faithful, feeding the homeless, serving various services.

7. Holy Apostle Barnabas Mission, Courtney-Comox, BC is served by Fr. Alexis Nikkel. Great Vespers are served every Saturday and Divine Liturgy every Sunday. Vespereal services are served on the eve of Feast days. In January this year, His Grace Vladika Irene, protodeacon Nazari and myself, three of us, visited this Mission. We had a chance to pray at the Vespers and then there was a Tea time and Vladyka was able to socialize with the parishioners of the Parish and with the family of Fr. Alexis.

8. St Nikolai, Bishop of Zhitza, Mission in Whitehorse, Yukon

Orthodox people of Whitehorse continue to meet every week for Reader Hours and Obednitsa every Sunday morning. Very well organized mission with a good plan. Fr. Matthew Francis was assigned as a priest-in-charge as of December 2012 and people are happy that they have one priest who is going to take care of them. At present time people gather at the Roman Catholic church building for Sunday services. It was of special importance that Fr. Matthew could come for the Passion week and Pascha this year. The services were held on Holy Thursday, Friday and Paschal day.

9. St. Aidan Orthodox Mission in Cranbrook, BC.

The Mission was served for many years by Fr. Richard Rene. This Parish was able to function first of all by the Grace of God, by the support of rector and its parishioners and the Archdiocese of Canada helping them financially. The Mission has been receiving the Mission Planting Grant, which was allowed for the priest Fr. Richard Rene to conduct his ministry without a secular job. I would like to thank Fr. Richard for his excellent pastoral service in this small and very unique Mission-Parish.

At present time the Mission is served by priest John Kaleeg Haisworth who lives in Vancouver.

Fr. John is having service in this Parish every 5-6 weeks. When priest arrives there is Great Vespers on Saturday then on Sunday Morning Matins and the Divine Liturgy. Average attendance in the Church is 30-35 people. After the Vespers there is Confession available for the faithful and he is providing some teaching for adults. For the youth he has teaching after the Divine Liturgy.

In June I phoned to the President of the Mission and I was told that there is a desire to be transferred to Alberta Deanery which locally is much closer than Vancouver.

10. Archangel Michael Mission in Kelowna, BC is served by me, Fr. Michael Fourik. The mission was organized 3 years ago, and now has services 6 times a year. There are about 30-40 people present at the service. There were two weddings and a few Baptisms at the mission. The services are celebrated at the Serbian Orthodox Church building. This year Kelowna Orthodox community is expecting our Grace Bishop Irene to visit them in the fall. Parishioners organized their website www.OrthodoxKelowna.org

In conclusion, I would like to say that I am grateful to the Lord for our church community in BC Deanery, I am thankful to all the clergy who carry their work on the field of pastoral duty and also parishioners for their faithfulness.