

Feast Day of the Convent of the Protection of the Mother of God in Bluffton, Alberta, Canada

On October 1, 2012 (Old Style), the eight nuns of Convent of the Protection of the Mother of God, an historic monastic community in Bluffton, Alberta, Canada, belonging to the American Exarchate of the Holy Synod in Resistance, celebrated its annual Feast Day with special splendor. It was joined by some sixty pilgrims as three Priests—Protosindjel Father Dionisije, who is serving Priest at the Convent, Father Yakov Ferens, who serves our Exarchate parish in San Diego, CA, and Father Andrew Kencis, from the parish of our Sister Church, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, in Edmonton, Alberta—concelebrated the Divine Liturgy.

The convent has of late confronted tremendous trials and difficulties. It is involved in a costly legal dispute over the ownership of its property, after decades of struggle in rebuilding the convent, which is located in the wild forests of Alberta—reminiscent of ancient monastic communities in Siberia. As well, its Abbess and spiritual guide, the indefatigable and beloved Schemanun Mother Ambrosia, was seriously injured in an automobile accident earlier this year. Though slowly recovering from her injuries, she suffers tremendous pain and is confined to bed for the greater part of the day. The wonderful feast and the many visitors were thus of special significance to the community.

See, below, the blessing of the convent property, following the Divine Liturgy, and some of the pilgrims, who were offered a festive Apape Meal after the services. Visible in the first photograph are, left to right, the three celebrating Priests, Fathers Dionisije, Andrew, and Yakov, and against the Church, with her staff and wearing a pectoral Cross, Abbess Mother Ambrosia.



