

The Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God

[taken from **Ss. Peter & Paul Parish, Saskatoon website:**
<http://www.sspp.ca/Pokrova.htm>]



The Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos: "Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church, and with choirs of Saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and Bishops venerate Her, Apostles and prophets rejoice together, since for our sake she prays to the Eternal God!"

An apparition of the Mother of God in the tenth century at Constantinople is commemorated by the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God on October 1st.

In 911 AD, Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, was under military threat and the people were praying for God's

help in the Blachernae Church in the suburb of the city. It was in this church that the omophor or veil of the Virgin Mary was reserved as a most precious relic.

According to tradition, the Holy Virgin appeared, accompanied by St. John the Forerunner, St. John the Evangelist and several saints. The Theotokos approached the center of the church, knelt down and remained in prayer for a long time. Her face was covered in tears. Then she took her veil off and spread it over the people as a sign of protection. After the appearance of the Mother of God, the danger of barbarian invasion was averted and the city was spared from bloodshed and suffering.

This Feast came to Ukraine with the reception of the Christian faith. Ukraine, being a land abundantly blessed, was often in danger from invaders. The reminder of a Mother who protects - not only from, but in - times of distress was and is so appealing! Thank God for this wonderful Mother He gave to His Son - and to us. Thank God for her strong, loving protection!