

14. Downing

Saint Paroskovia Ukrainian Orthodox Church

The congregation in Downing dates back to 1916. However, the church sign suggests a founding year of 1918, while another source indicates 1917. That year, a cemetery was established on six acres of land purchased from Zenovia Kozak. This site would later be used for the construction of the church. Work on the sanctuary began in 1921, relying on donated materials and volunteer labor from parishioners.

By 1924, the tripartite sanctuary was completed. It featured two small cupolas over the narthex and sanctuary, as well as a central galvanized dome. The first liturgy was celebrated in June of that year, purportedly by Rev. T. Horbey. However, records indicate Horbey was affiliated with the Old Catholic Church from 1920 to 1925 and referred to the church as “Saint Elias the Prophet.”

A significant milestone occurred on June 20, 1933, when Archbishop Ioan Theodorovich formally consecrated Saint Paraskeva. The episcopal service was attended by notable figures, including Isidore Goresky, a member of the Alberta legislature, and Michael Luchkowich, a federal parliamentarian.

In 1948, a large wooden bell tower was added to the churchyard. The sanctuary was further enhanced in the early 1950s with the addition of a roofed porch.



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Priests

I. Kusey (1924–1926)
T. Horbey (1926–1932)
E. Olendy
M. Fyk (1944–1945)
L. Diachina (1973–1975)
L. Kubin (1975–1987)
J. Puk (1987–1988, supply)
V. Lakusta (1987–1988, supply)
O. Hudema (1988–1991)
T. Udod (1991)
P. Kosacki (1992)
T. Udod (1992–)
J. Plewa (1995–2003)
B. Ambrosie (2003 to present)

Location and Feast Day

At 58377 Range Road 142, near its junction southwest of Vilna. It is located between Secondary Highways 857 and 859, north of Secondary Highway 652, at NW 23-58-14 W4, County of Smoky Lake. *GPS Coordinates:* 54.034614, -111.984265 | The congregation celebrates its *Feast Day* on August 2nd.

Cemetery

The church cemetery is located adjacent to the sanctuary on the same parcel of land.



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