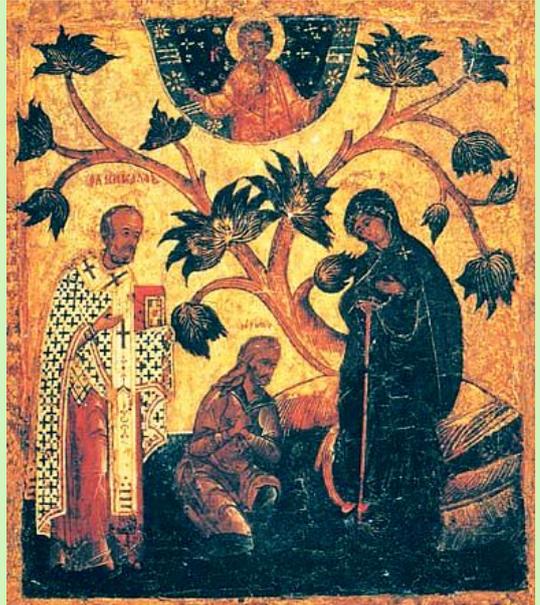


"Besednaya" Icon 14 / 27 August

In 1383, soon after the miraculous appearance of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God, a pious sexton named George was sent to herald to the surrounding villages the day of the consecration of the church dedicated to the appearance of the Icon, and to proclaim a fast. On his way back, some distance from Tikhvin, George suddenly saw the Mother of God, sitting on a pine log and shining forth with an indescribable light; in her hand, she held a crimson staff, and before her stood Holy Hierarch St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. The Most-holy Theotokos ordered George to tell the clergy that a wooden, and not an iron, cross should be put atop her church.



George carried out her command. However, the people lent no credence to his words, and began to install the iron cross already prepared for the church.

A sudden storm threw the worker holding the iron cross from the roof without causing any harm either to the worker or to the cross.

On the site of the apparition, a church dedicated to St. Nicholas was erected. A cross made from the pine log was installed atop that church.

Seven years after the consecration of the church on the Tikhvin, as the result of a candle not being extinguished, the wooden church burned down; the Miraculous Icon of the Mother of God was invisibly removed from the fire, and was found about ½ kilometer away in a juniper. At the same time, so did the chapel built on the site of the apparition of the Mother of God to sexton George. Just like the Icon, the cross made from log upon which the Most-holy Theotokos had sat, was carried by some invisible force away from the flames and was found in the juniper bush. A new church and chapel were erected on the original sites, but five years later, both the church and the chapel simultaneously burst into flame. The Icon and the Cross were again miraculously spared. For the third time, they erected a wooden church and chapel. One hundred five years later, the chapel caught fire, but the fire was extinguished and the Miraculous Cross was saved. The entire church was consumed by the flames, but the priests were able to remove the Icon of the Mother of God from the conflagration.

Word of the miracles flowing from the Tikhvin Icon reached Great Prince Vasily Ioannovitch, who, after the church had burned down for the third time, ordered a stone church to be erected. Just as construction of the church was being completed, while they were finishing the courtyard, suddenly the scaffolding collapsed, crushing twenty workers. Everyone thought that the workers had been crushed to death. However, to everyone's surprise, after three days of clearing away the stones, they found all of them alive. The Queen of Heaven had saved them. In 1515, at the direction of Great Prince Vasily Ioannovitch, a wooden church dedicated to the Mother of God and to St. Nicholas was erected in the wilderness where the chapel had stood. A men's monastery also established there was called the Besedniy Monastery (i.e. Monastery of the "Beseda," or

"Conversation"), in honor of the past appearance of the Mother of God and St. Nicholas and their tender conversation with one of the humblest of servants of the Orthodox Church. The Icon depicting this apparition is known as the Besednaya Icon.

The Besedniy Monastery is in the Tikhvin District of Novgorod Province.

icon from www.pravoslavie.ru