



FULLY ALIVE

A Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine Publication

THE GIFT OF MARTYRDOM

When the NKVD arrested Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky and asked to deny his faith in Christ and his church, he answered clearly and emphatically "No, Never!" When threatened further and offered freedom, he reiterated his resolve: "I have said NO once and for all; and you can shoot me, and kill me, but you shall get from me no other word!" Blessed Vasyl made a choice for Christ, a choice that would change his life. This choice was a result of a life-time of choices for Christ. This choice led him to the privilege of sharing in the Cross of Christ.

The martyr shares deeply in Christ's Passion. He or she imitates Jesus not only in His compassion and mercy for others, not only in sharing words of Good News with them, not only in sharing in the virtues that Jesus had, but precisely in sharing His sufferings and His Cross. As the martyr embraces the Cross, new profound divine life is rekindled in him, the life of the Resurrected Christ. He joins Jesus in his death and thus he joins Him in His Resurrection.

As we journey through the Great Fast (Lent), often we meditate on the Passion of Christ. We meditate on His sufferings as He carried His Cross to Calvary. We meditate how we can see this same suffering Christ in the everyday faces of our brothers and sisters. We meditate how we can embrace this Way of the Cross, in order to experience more fully the power of the Resurrection. The holy martyrs and Blessed Vasyl in particular show us that embracing the Cross can be very real.

We live in a world that seeks pleasure and enjoyment as the hallmarks of a successful and happy life. The martyrs point to something much deeper that brings us true success, true happiness in life. It is only when we are fully united with Jesus Christ that we find the full meaning of our life. The martyrs reveal to us the infinite value of suffering for the sake of Christ. In a world that wants to eliminate all suffering at all cost, even at the cost of our integrity, the martyrs reveal to us the new life that comes from being faithful to our faith in Christ and our commitment to follow Him at all costs.



Blessed Vasyl in 1972 in Rome shortly after his release from imprisonment

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NEW WEBSITE

Please visit
www.bvmartyrshrine.com

EXERPT FROM THE AKATHIST HYMN - IKOS 8

With many others you suffered greatly in the dark coal mines of the North, sharing in the Cross of Christ. Secretly you offered the Sacrifice of the Lord and fed the multitudes. Courageously you professed your faith even to the ungodly. Though punished severely, you fixed your gaze upon Jesus and therefore we sing to you:

Rejoice, for you received the **crow**n of thorns!
Rejoice, for you were bound to the **pill**ar of pain!
Rejoice, for you carried the full **weight** of the Cross!
Rejoice, for you were stripped **before** the ungodly!

Rejoice, for you drank the cup of **sor**row!
Rejoice, for you were baptized in the **bath** of pain!
Rejoice, O **Light** of Christ!
Rejoice, O **Joy** of the kingdom!

Rejoice, for you bore **ins**ults for Christ!
Rejoice, for you were **false**ly accused!
Rejoice, O **Glor**y of Christ!
Rejoice, O Flame un**ext**inguished!

Rejoice, O Bishop and Martyr Vasyl,
glorious Champion for Christ!

Blessed Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine

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Chapter III Jesus – The Martyr

Exerpt from ***Clothed in White Robes***
by Bishop Michael Hrynchyshyn,
C.Ss.R.

As we reflect upon the grace of martyrdom our eyes are instinctively directed to Jesus, “the faithful witness” and the model of all martyrs. Jesus gives the supreme witness of His fidelity to the mission entrusted to Him by the Father. He willingly accepted His death. “The Father loves Me because I am willing to give up My life, in order that I may receive it back



Bishop Michael Hrynchyshyn C.Ss.R.
preaching at the enshrinement

again. No one takes it from Me. I give it of My own free will” (Jn 10:17-18). At the moment of his condemnation Jesus declared: “I was born for this, I came into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth” (Jn 18:37).

In his passion Jesus exemplified the features that define the martyr:

- There is the comfort of God’s grace in hour of agony. “An angel appeared to him, coming from heaven to give him strength.” (Luke 22:43)
- Silence and patience before accusations and insults. “So he questioned him at some length; but without getting any reply.” (Luke 23:9)
- Innocence acknowledged by Pilate and Herod. “Pilate then said to the chief priests and the crowd: ‘I find no case against this man.’” (Luke 23:4)
- He rises above his own suffering. “Jesus turned to them and said: ‘Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for

your children.” (Luke 23:28)

- Jesus accepts the repentant sinner. “Indeed, I promise you, today you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)
- Jesus grants pardon to Peter. “At the instant, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed, and the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter.” (Luke 22:61)
- Jesus pleads for forgiveness for the persecutors. “Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34)

The meaning of martyrdom is the full imitation of Christ. “If they persecuted me, they will persecute you, too.” (Jn 15:20) He promised his companions: “The cup that I must drink you shall drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized you shall be baptized.” (Mk 10:39)

Blessed Vasyl exemplified these same characteristics as Jesus. In his sufferings he became the face of Christ for all of us.

Testimony of graces received

Dear Father John,

This is a collection of the details regarding the assistance of Blessed Vasyl in my baby’s birth.

The year 2003 was a challenging year. I miscarried three times, February 14/03, June 8/03 and finally December 6/03. I was between 10 and 16 weeks pregnant at each miscarriage.

On March 1/04 I found out we were expecting again. This was my 11th pregnancy as we are blessed with 6 children and besides the 3 miscarriages in 2003, I miscarried in 1999.

On March 7, I started cramping quite a bit. I journalled a lot during this time. “Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven” “Oh Lord, it is so nerve racking not knowing if I should get excited.” “I am dreading the fatigue and nausea but hopeful to find the strength in You. I would love one more child. Help me to cope and be the best wife and mother I can be. I love You, Jesus, help me to love You more.”

On the feast of St. Joseph, March 19, I journalled - “We went to the fish fry at St. Joseph’s and visited Blessed Vasyl’s Shrine.”

During our visit I placed my hand on his tomb and dedicated my unborn child to Blessed Vasyl.

I had some spotting and cramping previous to this visit. On March 21 I wrote “Here I am falling down on my face before You. I was really startled and disappointed. I started spotting. I’m so hoping it will stop but I am cramping! Thy will be done Jesus - I feel so devastated but Glory to Thy Will. I’ve never spotted and not lost the baby, but I am still hoping.”

November 1/04 “Had a wonderful visit to Blessed Vasyl’s Shrine.” I had decided to name his middle name William after Blessed Vasyl if it was a boy. I prayed to Blessed Vasyl for a safe delivery during the visit. Martin William was born November 12, 2004. December 9 on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, our family went to Divine Liturgy at St. Joseph’s and visited Blessed Vasyl’s Shrine and I thanked him for the gift of a healthy son and placed my baby on the tomb.



Kelly and baby Martin William



Kelly Duplak
West St. Paul, Manitoba

THANK YOU!!!

Your generous donations make it possible for us to conduct our ministry at the Shrine and to promote the knowledge of Blessed Vasyl throughout the world. Thank you to all the contributors to the Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine. We are grateful to those who have named the Shrine as a beneficiary in memory of their loved ones. May Blessed Vasyl bless each one of you.

Contributions listed below are from December 1st 2004 until January 31st 2005.

1000 +

In memory of Fr. Morris Dzurman, C.Ss.R.

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In memory of our parents John & Olga
Mezibroski
Dr. Joe S. & Janice Mezibroski
Ukrainian Catholic Mission – Yorkton, SK

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In honour of Ratushniak & Hrywkiw families
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Julia Saganski
In memory of Rt. Rev. Ihor Shpytkovsky
John & Marta Baluta
Lidia Kotowycz
Wsevolod Andrew Shpytkovsky
In honour of our grandchildren
Ronald & Adel Slobodian
St. Paul's High School
Michael & Sophia Tataryn
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U.C.W.L.C. Blessed Virgin Mary Branch
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(Portage la Prairie)
Peter & Joan Washchysyn
In memory of our parents
Walter & Nellie Wowczuk

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In honour of Bob & Anne Artymko
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Contributions to the Shrine are cumulative. Once a donor has contributed a total of \$1000, their name is placed permanently on the beautifully designed Donor Wall in the museum. The other categories are: Sponsor \$5,000+; Benefactor \$10,000 +; and Patron \$25,000+.

**BLESSED VIRGIN MARY UKRAINIAN
CATHOLIC CATECHISM PARENTS
AND STUDENTS VISITS SHRINE**

"I felt very happy, but very sad because I got to see his relics, but sad because he died.

I would like to meet him in person and see what his life was like.

If I would be able to just see what his life was like I would understand a whole lot more."

Amelia Harik Grade 5

"I really like the shrine. I really felt touched when you gave us the tour. In the morning, I didn't feel like going, but I am glad that I did go. My mom started to cry when you told us about his life. Now I really know a lot about martyrs .

Thank you."

Tyler Spenser Grade 5

"Thank you for the excellent tour of the museum and shrine. The children were shown what the life of a real modern time martyr is like. The thought that this man lived among us is absolutely incredible. Surely he was sent as a gift to help us understand that our faith is a gift."

Doreen Burdey Teacher

**Please consider Bishop Velychkovsky
Martyr's Shrine when planning your estate.**

SHRINE SCHEDULE

Monday: Shrine is closed
Tuesday to Friday: 10 am to 5 pm
Saturday: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm
Sunday: opened until 1:00 pm

Shrine is open to the faithful during the times of Liturgical Services. The Museum is opened on weekends after each Divine Liturgy.

Group tours are available.

For pilgrimage group tours call for reservations
204-338-7321 or e-mail: **bvshrine@mts.net**

EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING - 7:00 pm
Liturgical Service to Blessed Vasyl
(Acafist or Moleben) followed by an anointing with Holy Oil blessed by his relics.



"The tour at the Shrine was very interesting.

To hear about the things he had to endure was horrific, but it was very interesting to hear how his faith in God allowed him to live.

Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky is an amazing martyr and it is very interesting that he is buried here in Winnipeg and that this is where his shrine is."

Simeon Rusnak Grade 8

Call in Prayer Requests

For a special intention and prayer request you may call or e-mail us. Your prayer request will be placed in the shrine and remembered in prayer every Wednesday evening after the Service in honour of Blessed Vasyl.

**Prayer to Blessed Martyr
Bishop Vasyl**

*O Lord God, You are praised by the whole world for the marvelous works in your saints. I thank you for the grace you gave to **Blessed Martyr Vasyl Velychkovsky** to be a faithful witness to You unto the point of death. Through his intercession I ask for the following favour _____ for your Name is glorified forever. Amen.*

Please inform the shrine of any favors received to:

Fr. Provincial
 250 Jefferson Avenue
 Winnipeg, MB R2V 0M6
 Canada