



# FULLY ALIVE

*A Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine Publication*

## SECOND VELYCHKOVSKY PILGRIMAGE

### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF A MARTYR

This past summer 18 pilgrims from across Canada traveled to Ukraine to follow in the footsteps of Blessed Vasyl. This was a prayerful journey, seeking to come to know Blessed Vasyl in a deeper way and to offer our prayers and sufferings for our needs and the needs of the Church.



Celebrating the Acatist Hymn to the martyr in Shuparka, the church of Blessed Vasyl's childhood.

We visited the city of Stanislaviv (now Ivanno-Frankivsk) where he was born (1903); the church where he was baptized and where he received the seal of the Holy Spirit. We visited the parish church in the village of Shuparka, where he grew up as a young boy and received his first Holy Communion from the hands of his father, Fr. Volodymyr. It was also the place of his first Solemn Divine Liturgy. Here we prayed (with some local parishioners) the Acatist Hymn to our Martyr. We visited the province of Volyn and in particular the city of Kovel, where he was an untiring missionary among the Orthodox and Ukrainian Catholic faithful from 1928-35. A new church has been built in this city in honor of Blessed Bishop and Martyr Nicholas Charnetsky & Blessed Vasyl. While in Ivanno-Frankivsk, we visited the site of the former Redemptorist monastery, where Blessed



The pilgrims celebrated a Divine Liturgy in the newly built church dedicated to Blessed Nicholas Charnetsky and Vasyl Velychkovsky in Kovel.



Velychkovsky pilgrims with the Sisters of Mercy in Yaremche, Carpathian mountains.

Vasyl was the Superior from 1935-41. His plans to build a church here were cut short by World War II. Now, a new church is being completed on this site and will be blessed in September in his honor. This was also the site of his first arrest at the end of June 1940. He was released several days later when the NKVD witnessed the protests of young women and parishioners. We went to the fortress city of Kamianetz-Podilsk, where Blessed Vasyl was sent to re-establish the Ukrainian Catholic Church in 1942. He had great success, although it was short-lived.

In Ternopil, we celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the rebuilt Redemptorist church. The original church was demolished by the Soviets in 1963. Here Blessed Vasyl was the Superior during WW II and where he was arrested on July 26<sup>th</sup>

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**In Ternopil we prayed a Panahyda before Blessed Vasyl's mother's grave, Sr. Emilia.**

1945. It was here that he made known to the NKVD that he would not deny Christ or the Catholic Church. He suffered the consequences and now wears the martyr's crown.

In Kyiv we prayed "clandestinely" before the former KGB prison, where Blessed Vasyl was on death row in 1946. This building is still the headquarters of Ukraine's Secret Service or police force (the SBU). Unfortunately, we were unable to go to Vorkuta, to northern Russia, to see the laager camp where he was imprisoned until 1955.

We had the privilege of celebrating the Divine Liturgy on the same altar that Blessed Vasyl celebrated everyday in his apartment in Lviv. He lived in this apartment from 1955 until his arrest in 1969. From this apartment, he organized the activity of the underground church. It became a spiritual centre to which many Catholics came seeking the mercy of confession or advice. From here he was arrested again on January 27, 1969. This apartment has now been restored to its original state and is a museum and shrine.



**We began and concluded our pilgrimage with a Divine Liturgy in Blessed Vasyl's holy apartment.**

We prayed before the prison in Lviv where he was kept for 9 months. In this prison, he was pronounced dead and was being taken to the morgue when it was discovered that Blessed Vasyl was alive. We prayed before the court house where he was sentenced on criminal charges for the book he wrote on our Mother of Perpetual Help. Unfortunately, we could not travel to the prison in Komunarsk in Eastern Ukraine where he was tortured physically, chemically and with electrical currents.

We walked and prayed in the footsteps of Blessed Martyr Bishop Vasyl. This journey gave us a deeper sense of his presence and a closeness to him as we breathed the air he breathed and experienced the



**We participated in the Divine Liturgy in Zarvanytsia, a holy Shrine to the Mother of God, with hundreds of thousands of pilgrims.**

places he experienced. His presence was also felt as we visited the sites of other fellow martyrs: Bishop Nicholas Charnetsky, C.Ss.R. in St Josaphat's Redemptorist Church; Blessed Zenon Kowalyk C.Ss.R., the prison where he was crucified; Blessed Sister Olympia SJS and Sister Lawrentia SJS at the motherhouse of the St. Joseph Sisters, which are all located in Lviv; and Blessed Father Nicholas Konrad & Cantor Volodymyr Preyima in Stratch. We visited and prayed at the gravesites of his parents. Our pilgrimage joined several hundreds of thousands of pilgrims for the "All-Ukraine Pilgrimage" in Zarvanytsia, where there is a beautiful Shrine to our Mother of God. There, we took part in the services of the all-night vigil, the candlelight procession, the hymns, the Pontifical Divine Liturgy with Patriarch Lubomyr and the veneration of the icon of our Lady of Zarvanytsia.

Our pilgrims had the opportunity to receive Holy Water which flows abundantly at this site.



**We were very blessed to be the first pilgrimage group to celebrate the Liturgy in the new Patriarchal Sobor still being constructed in Kyiv. After the Liturgy we renewed our baptismal vows in celebration of the feast day of St Volodymyr.**

The whole pilgrimage was a spiritually uplifting experience, a time of prayer and a time of penance. We thank Blessed Vasyl for guiding us through his homeland and inspiring us in so many ways.

*Submitted by Fr. John Sianchuk, C.Ss.R.*

## My Pilgrimage to Ukraine

On July 4th 2010, several people gathered in the Shrine of Blessed Velychkovsky, Winnipeg, to ask for God's blessings on our pilgrimage and to help us follow in the footsteps of Blessed Vasyl and other martyrs in Ukraine.

Arriving in Lviv, we were bussed to Holosko, the Redemptorist monastery and seminary where Blessed Vasyl and many of our Redemptorist fathers studied. Immediately, I had a feeling of "This is Holy Ground" and I had a sense of deep respect which carried on throughout the whole pilgrimage.



Prisoners scratched their names and last words to their loved ones on a basement prison wall in Nahirna.

We visited seminaries, and churches with gold plated domes. The interiors were breathtaking in the designed iconostasis, with frescos and icons of Jesus, the Blessed Mother, the apostles and many saints. There were times I was mesmerized by the splendor of a saint reaching out to me in radiance, causing me to lose the awareness of time and space. There were also feelings of sadness while visiting the prison in Kyiv, where Blessed Vasyl was on death row. I was depressed in Nahirna at the U.P.A. museum, which was a prison and torture chamber for those who would not give up their faith. Seeing the names of people, who left messages to their loved ones, scraped on the cement walls. I can not deny the eerie feeling of their sufferings, interrogations and tortures by the enemies of the church. Yet, at the same time, there was an awareness of the power of God in these holy people, who had the spiritual strength of the cement walls that held them prisoner.

There were several times during the pilgrimage, where I was aware of the presence of God. The celebrations at Zarvanytsia are comparable to the Shrines in Lourdes and Fatima. The shrine at Zarvanytsia is known for its miracle working icon of the Mother Of God. After Liturgy, Panahyda and Blessing of Water, there was a candle light procession at midnight. I felt truly blessed to be able to stand on the balcony of our hotel and watch an estimated 800,000 people coming towards the church. The faces could not be seen, but each candle was a bright light in the darkness of



Patriarch Lubomyr Husar arriving in Zarvanytsia

our sad world. Each candle represented the Holy Spirit of the person carrying it. In my mind's eye, I imagined all these thousands of little lights joining together, forming one great flame, and expressing our love for God as did Blessed Vasyl. He did not suffer and die in vain. Let us continue to pray that the enemies of the church be converted to God.

May the Blessed Mother who loves the Ukrainian people take all of us under the protection of her mantle and bring closer the bond between God and people.

I came home tired but my experience of the pilgrimage was awesome. It certainly deepened my spiritual life. With sincere appreciation and heartfelt gratitude, I thank Blessed Vasyl for all his sufferings. Through him, I had a journey of a life time rich in prayer and gained greater hope for our world.



The Velychkovsky pilgrims pose before the beautiful Shrine of Zarvanytsia after a day and a night of prayer.

Glicaria Bilinsky  
Winnipeg, MB

## AN EXTRAORDINARY GIFT FOR THE FEAST DAY

This year on June 27<sup>th</sup>, we again gloriously celebrated the feast day of Blessed Martyr Vasyl Velychkvosky. Since it fell on a Sunday, more people benefited from the graces that flowed from this sacred day. We began with Saturday evening Vespers in honor of the martyrs. After the evening Liturgy there was a small reception in the Church auditorium, followed by the play "Fragments of a Martyr's Life" performed by the youth. This theatre group has been performing the play since 2007 and did a superb and mature production.



**Evhenia & Vasily Fedorko-Bartos**  
who witnessed to us about  
the wonders of God.

On Sunday, the Divine Liturgy was filled with people from Winnipeg and beyond. Each pilgrim was blessed at the end of the Liturgy with the sacred oil of Blessed Vasyl. Some pilgrims come yearly from rural Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the United States. After the Liturgy, we heard wonderful testimonies from Evhenia & Vasily Fedorko-Bartos of Calgary. Everyone was moved by their witness. The following is their story:

Evhenia Fedorko comes from a priestly family in Ukraine. She was very active during the underground church in Ukraine and had to escape arrest in 1987 by fleeing the country. She ended up in Canada. In 1993, she married Vasily, who had fought in the Bosnian war. He suffered from the effects of the war with post-traumatic war syndrome. Two years ago, while praying, Evhenia received a spiritual gift. Holy oil began appearing on her body, especially the face and hands. After consultation with the parish priest, she began visiting the sick, praying with them and anointing them with this holy oil. Many were healed. The demand increased, so Evhenia prayed before the statute of Our Lady of Grace in her home and asked the Mother of God to intercede, because her face was not producing enough oil. On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the statute began to weep with holy fragrant oil. This phenomenon continued, especially on Fridays and on feast days. The Bishop was informed and the due process began

with informing the Vatican. One of Evhenia's fervent prayers was for the healing of her husband, especially for him to become more religious. In the summer of 2009, Evhenia visited the Blessed Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine in Winnipeg and brought back some holy cards and third class relics.

Her husband Vasily, had a dream several months earlier. In that dream, he was at a shrine and a saintly Bishop came to him and told him that he would be healed. After that dream, he secretly began to say the rosary. He was "driven" to say it.

When his wife brought back the holy cards from the Shrine, he recognized the face of that Bishop in his dream as Blessed Vasyl. When he discovered that the Bishop had the same name as him, his fervor increased. He began now to pray openly together with his wife and children before the oil-weeping statute of the Mother of God. His prayers were often attached to an intercessory prayer to Blessed Vasyl. In early October 2009, as he was praying early one Sunday morning, after having said the intercessory prayer, he looked at the third class relic (which was nowhere near the statute) and noticed that it too was weeping oil. After calling the Shrine office, a small icon of Blessed Vasyl was sent to him. In November, the icon itself began weeping holy fragrant oil. At the end of November, Vasily gave this fragrant icon to be kept in the Shrine in Winnipeg. It is there today. Much of Vasily's illness has been healed, although at times he still struggles with it.



**The priests lift the petitions of the people in prayer.**



**Our Lady of Grace weeping fragrant oil.**

Vasily and Evhenia brought the statute of our Lady of Grace with them for the feast day to Winnipeg .



**Blessed Mother Teresa's Sisters of Mercy and others pray before the oil-weeping Statute of our Lady of Grace.**

While in St. Joseph's Church, it began to weep holy oil. Its fragrance filled the church. The faithful were able to go and pray before it and be blessed with this holy oil. They received much grace. Evhenia shared some stories about this statute. Two of these stories are as follows:

One time a Jewish man came with others to pray before this statute. Actually, he wanted to see if it was real. As the others were praying, they noticed that all of a sudden the statute dried up. The oil stopped flowing. Then it began to flow again from different areas of the statute and that each area had its own unique fragrance. Upon questioning him, he confessed that he was testing God and that he had asked for these phenomenon to happen. He was baptized a Catholic this past Easter.

In early May, a family (grandmother, mother and children) came to pray before the statute in Vasily's and Evhenia's home. The youngest child was just over a year old and was still being breast-fed. At one point, this child insisted on being fed. The statute of Our Lady of Grace was on the coffee-table before her. All of a sudden, the child turned to the statute and began a 15 minute "conversation" with the statute, with the Mother of God. The child giggled as if someone was playing with it and spoke baby babble, while focusing upon the statute of Our Lady at all times. Those in the room, were in awe.



**A living rosary was held in church in the afternoon by all the pilgrims.**

The feast day was a great blessing for all the pilgrims who attended. The day concluded in the afternoon with an Acatnist Service to Blessed Vasyil and a living rosary. An anointing with Blessed Vasyil holy oil followed.

May Blessed Vasyil continue to inspire us to experience the wonders and goodness of God.

## PILGRIMS VISIT THE SHRINE



**A devout family from Kansas traveled to Winnipeg in pilgrimage to the martyr's shrine.**



**Participants of SERVE 2010, a Redemptorist summer program for youth, pray at the Shrine.**



**Visitors from across the whole of the United States spend time at the Shrine while attending Folklorama in Winnipeg.**

# THANK YOU!!!

Your generous donations make it possible to conduct the ministry of the Shrine and promote the knowledge of Blessed Vasyl throughout the world. Thank you. 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 May 1st until August 15th 2010.

## +1000

In memory Dukacz & Prystai parents  
*Walter & Pauline Prystai*  
In honor of my 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
Priesthood  
Fr. Thaddeus Krawchuk

## +100

Louis Balcaen  
Luz Cruz  
Bert & Val Galay  
Dr. Peter Gnanapragasam  
Elizabeth Haughton  
Dr. Cliff Hrankowski  
Dan & Bella Kalenchuk  
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Edith Kotyk  
Walter & Isabel Lukie  
Gerald & Regina Muench  
Honesto & Wilhelmina Navarro  
Judy Odger  
Jimmy Sawchuk  
Robert & Lydia Sliva  
St. Anne Ukr. Cath. Church  
Olga Welichka  
Joseph & Susan Zeleny

## >100

Albin and Lorraine Anderson  
Maria Aus  
Flora Beaulieu  
Olivia Borgonia  
Hazel J. Borodey  
Terry & Vicki Chaikowsky  
Sr. Chrysostom, OSBM  
Perry Dayanghirang  
Marianne Derkach  
Vasily & Evhenia Fedorko-Bartos  
Alexandra Fedoruk  
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Winnie Rumore  
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D. Sikora  
Mary Sinclair  
Richard & Alice Small  
Iris Smellie  
Emelia Soriano  
Mary Stasiuk  
Myrna Tycholaz  
Deacon Jude von Mann  
Alex & Mary Zimrose  
Rosanne Zulak

## In Memory of...

Boychuk & Solotki family  
*Alexander & Olga Boychuk*  
Mary Cherewyk  
*Bob & Darlene Famulak*  
Mary & Mike Chomyn  
*John M. Chomyn*  
Deceased parishioners  
*Christ the King Ukr. Cath.*  
Church  
Reginald Dixon  
*William & Anne Chick*  
Fr. Yaroslaw Dybka, C.Ss.R.  
*Mary Lazurko*  
*Ivan Roman & Nataliya*  
*Markevych*

*Jean Rubel*  
Dziadyk & Kury families  
*Andrew & Adeline Dziadyk*  
Maria Dzumyba  
*Xenia Derez*  
Fr. Morris Dzurman, C.Ss.R.  
*Ange Gretchen*  
Metro & Anne Glute  
*Bob & Darlene Famulak*  
Dr. Yaroslaw Gorski  
*John & Martha Baluta*  
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*Diane Hood*  
Donn Hrycak  
*Bev Rolston*  
Michael Kszyk  
*Erika Kszyk*  
John LeVay  
*Lisa Anglin*  
Mary Jean Marcyniuk's parents  
*Fr. Harry & Joan Chuckryk*  
Zenon Musey  
*Peter & Glikeria Iwanuck*  
John & Anne Paley  
*Ron Paley*  
George Palmer  
*Olga Palmer*  
Halley Patterson  
*Stan & Luba Sirdar*  
Olga Pekarsky  
*Tom & Marlene Kraemer*  
*Management Group CCSC*  
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*Ewhen & Stephanie Brenycz*  
 Helen & Philip Stattin  
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 Olga Stefaniuk  
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 Zenon Swydneyck  
*Jenny Swydneyck*  
 Jakiw Szegryn  
*Xenia Deresz*  
 Wasyl Welhasch  
*Anna Banera*  
*Gordon & Gerri Kilcup*  
 Annie & Nicholas Zemliak  
*Olga Nakonechny*

**In Honor of...**

Barbara  
*Stanislawa Stasiewicz*  
 Mike & Marge Chemerika  
*Louis & Elaine Bowman*

John Dion  
*Larry Tycholis*  
 Eloy Dmingo  
*Veronica Domingo*  
 Bill & Carrie Drosdoski  
*Darlene Sidak*  
 Fr. Isidore Dziadyk  
*Marjorie Romanik*  
*Tony & Vicky Stastook*  
 Shirley & Ed Filipowich  
*Morris & Iris Smolinski*  
 John & Mary Hykawy  
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 Mike Swydneyck  
*Jenny Swydneyck*  
 Fr. Michael Tapajoa  
*Kelly Fisher*  
 William Tkachuk  
*Zirka Tkachuk*

Josie Warga  
*Judy Odger*  
 Marcel & Verna Wozny  
*Emile & Sylvia Picklyk*  
 Jody Yakabowski  
*Metro Lukie*

**Corrections:**

We apologize for the errors in previous newsletters, namely:

In memory of Zabinsky, Sass, Seabrooke, Kerr, Scarlett & Goode families  
*Orest & Vi Zabinsky*

## Testimony of Grace

*I am writing to share some good news about my little niece.*

*Gwen is four months old, and has had terrible eczema since she was about a month old. Her mother has done everything that she can do to try and help the baby's skin. Her mother has changed her diet completely (the baby is breastfed and eczema is often associated with food allergies), seen doctors and tried all types of treatments. But little Gwen continued to suffer and her skin was so very, very inflamed despite all her efforts.*

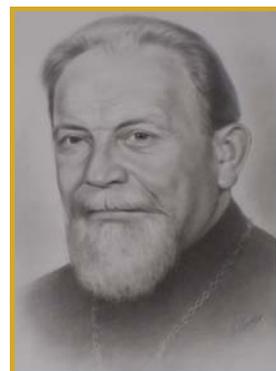
*A few weeks ago, I was praying at the shrine and it occurred to me that I could ask for intercession for Gwen's eczema. I wrote a little prayer request and left it with Blessed Vasyl amidst my many, many prayers.*

*I have just returned from a trip away and had family dinner and to my surprise, my little niece was smiling happily on her mother's knee. Her skin was virtually clear and the remaining eczema dry and nearly healed. Her mother smiled and said: I don't know what happened. She just started to clear up.*

*I told her about the prayers I had left at the shrine, and the intercession of Blessed Vasyl. She smiled back (she is not a Catholic, nor even a Christian, but a good person and quite used to our Catholic ways) and said: whatever works. I am grateful.*

*I will keep you posted.*

*sincerely,  
 Dr. Kelly Fisher*



## COMMENTS FROM A PILGRIM

Dear Fr. John & Mary Jane,

Your love and dedication to Blessed Vasyl and the Holy Martyrs, the church and the people of Ukraine totally moved me as we visited the places where they lived, preached, suffered, died and were buried. The sufferings they endured and their faith in God has left an imprint on my heart and soul that I will treasure and remember always. The churches we visited and celebrated Liturgies and other services, as well as the information and history that you have gathered and shared with us has made an impact on my prayer life and has given me a new outlook on life. . . I now take the time to make room for God's presence in my daily life.....

Visiting the orphanage and spending time with the orphans at the summer camp was an overwhelming experience that made me realize how simple things made those children happy, and made me rethink what and where I have been putting my priorities with my own children and grandchildren.

Christine Gartner  
Saskatoon, SK



Orphans from Synye-Vydno display the gifts they received from the pilgrims

Searching for photos and videos of Blessed Vasyl between June 1972 and June 1973. If anyone has any information about who may have filmed his arrival or banquets and Liturgies he attended, please inform the shrine. (204)338-7321

### Call in Prayer Requests

For a special intention or prayer request you may phone or email 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.

### 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](mailto: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.**

### 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:  
Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine  
250 Jefferson Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R2V 0M6  
Canada

**Blessed Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine**  
250 Jefferson Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R2V 0M6  
Tel: 204-338-7321 Fax: 204-339-1062 Email: [bvshrine@mts.net](mailto:bvshrine@mts.net)  
Website: [www.bvmartyrshrine.com](http://www.bvmartyrshrine.com)