



FULLY ALIVE

A Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine Publication

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF EPISCOPAL ORDINATION

CLANDESTINE CONSECRATION

In October 1962, Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council. Bishops from across the world gathered in Rome for this historic council. The Major Archbishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, Archbishop Josyf Slipyj, was unable to attend as he was incarcerated in a Soviet laager camp. Pope John XXIII demanded that the Soviet Union release Archbishop Josyf so that he could attend this ecumenical council.

That same month, the Cuban missile crisis occurred between the United States and the Soviet Union. As a result of this crisis, President John F. Kennedy also interceded that Archbishop Josyf be released from imprison-



Nine years after his consecration in 1972, Blessed Vasyl meets with Patriarch Josyf Slipyj in Rome, after Blessed Vasyl was released from imprisonment and exiled

ment. The Soviet Government relented and finally released Archbishop Josyf on January 23, 1963. He was taken to Hotel Moskva in Moscow, awaiting his transfer to Rome. On January 29, he wrote a letter to Sister Yefremia of the Sisters of Mercy that she tell Fr. Vasyl Velychkovsky to come to Moscow, because he had need of him. He also said that Fr. Vasyl should bring an empty piece of luggage with himself as he had something to pass on to him. (These were secret code words to be understood that he had something of extreme importance to pass on to him.) Fr. Vasyl was in Lviv when he received this news. He immediately took the train to Moscow and on February 4, 1963, he arrived at the Hotel Moskva - room 624.

Blessed Vasyl related the following events to the late Bishop Michael Hrynychyshyn, C.Ss.R. when Blessed Vasyl was exiled to Canada in 1972. Blessed Vasyl arrived at the Hotel and came to Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj's room. The Metropolitan had already received news that he would be leaving soon for Rome. He had some people in the room that he trusted and was about to pass on some information and material things, when Blessed Vasyl entered. The Metropolitan was overjoyed that Blessed Vasyl arrived, he ushered the people outside saying that he would have no need of them. He also asked the guards to leave him alone with his "relative". As soon as the room was cleared, the Met-

ropolitan asked for some food from Blessed Vasyl. He had refused to eat what they gave him for fear of being poisoned. Blessed Vasyl shared the little food he had with him. Then the Metropolitan asked Blessed Vasyl to kneel down. From memory, the Metropolitan began the rite of ordination, elevating the priest Vasyl Velychkovsky to the episcopacy. The Metropolitan passed on his simple walking cane as a crosier telling Blessed Vasyl that now he was in charge of the church in Ukraine. Just as he finished the humble yet glorious rite, the guards began banging on the door. The Soviet authorities came in and took Metropolitan Josyf to the train station and on to Rome. Blessed Vasyl was left alone in the hotel room contemplating his new responsibility. At that time, he was the only bishop in Ukraine. There



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were however, two other underground secret bishops, but both were in prison. It is then through Blessed Bishop Vasyl that new bishops were ordained, namely, Bishop Volodymyr Sterniuk, who led the church after Blessed Vasyl's exile in 1972 until the church became free again in 1991.

This year, we commemorate this historical event in the life of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The persecuted church in Ukraine not only survived those periled times, but grew strong under the courageous leadership of Blessed Vasyl and his successor Bishop Volodymyr Sterniuk.

God works in mysterious ways and does not abandon his Church.

REFLECTIONS

The following homily was delivered by Fr. Frank Szadiak, C.Ss.R. during the Wednesday Shrine devotions on the feast of the Three Holy Bishops:

Today we are celebrating the Feast of the Three Holy Bishops: Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, and John Chrysostom. Each of these three were very popular, gifted, and exceptional leaders in the church and the Christians of Constantinople had their favorite as to who was the greatest. A dream, quite providential in nature, helped to resolve the issue. In it the three Saints appeared to the pious Bishop John of Erichedia. They revealed that they were equal in the eyes of God and asked him to use his influence to initiate a common feast for all three of them.

Each of these bishops were staunch pillars of the Eastern Catholic Church and courageous defenders of Catholic doctrine against the heresy of Arius, who denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. They were charismatic Shepherds of their flock of believers. St. John Chrysostom was an exceptional preacher and noted liturgist, especially honored today for the Liturgy which bears his name.

As we look at these three men, we are struck by their influence. They were lights in a very confused world. They served as bishops during a critical point in the history of Christianity. The basic Christian truths had yet to be formalized and Arius was already leading many astray. These three made the truths of our faith clear and lucid and helped to entrench Christianity and assure its existence.

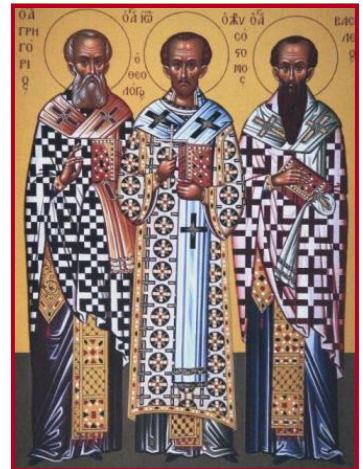
God calls individuals to his service and always at the right time. In the 20th century He called Blessed Vasyl, who served the Lord and his Church for 38 years as a Redemptorist priest and 10 years as a bishop. He was a gifted missionary with a true Redemptorist heart for the poor and abandoned, for the persecuted and captive. He too, was a light and a source of continuity in the shepherding of the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine.

Just as the path of the three hierarchs of the early church was not easy, so too was the path of Blessed Vasyl. He encountered the darkness of a godless regime, who were bent on destroying the church, beginning with its bishops and priests. He defied authorities by secretly celebrating the Divine Liturgy for small groups of people, instructing them in the faith, ordaining new priests, and carrying on the role of leadership in the underground church. In 1969, once again Blessed Vasyl is arrested for anticommunist propaganda accused of not performing the role of a Soviet citizen, for listening to Vatican radio broadcasts, and for writing a spiritual book on the Mother of God. He is given a three year sentence.

This time, he endures torture of both a physical and psychological nature. In a short time, his health breaks down and he develops a heart condition, which is intensified by the administration of adverse drugs. On his release, he eventually arrives in Winnipeg, where his heart finally gives out. What a light to all of us! What a source of inspiration, a true witness to Christ!

Blessed Vasyl lived the Christian constitution – the Beatitudes – and we look up to him and seek his intercession. I conclude with God's word: "Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness...Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me... Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."

Fr. Frank Szadiak, C.Ss.R.



GRACES AND BLESSINGS

I had a lady come into the Shrine on Dec. 30 that shared 2 stories of blessings that she said that she has received from Blessed Vasyl. Her name is Day Miniano. She came from the Philippines a few years ago and had been looking for a job for quite some time with no luck. She had been coming to the shrine to pray before Blessed Vasyl and asked Blessed Vasyl to help her get a job by Oct. 18. On Oct. 17 she still had no job, she came home very sad that afternoon, the phone was ringing, she answered it and it was Lifetouch calling her on her job application and it was late in the afternoon but she said she could come for the interview immediately. She had the interview late Oct. 17 and started her job the next day on Oct. 18. She felt very blessed by Blessed Vasyl that she received this job.

The next story she told me was that her mother was in a car accident in the Philippines and was in the hospital with a broken leg and it was not healing. The doctors told the family that the bone was not fusing together and they did not know why. She came to the Shrine to pray and bought some Holy Oil and sent it to her sister in the Philippines to take to the hospital to rub on her mother's leg. Then her mom's leg started to heal and the doctors were amazed by this as well.

Sincerely,
Dolly Kuzyk (Volunteer at the Shrine)



Benedictine Community visiting the Shrine
November 12, 2012

Merry Christmas to all who facilitate the Shrine of Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky Bishop and Martyr.

In this joyful season I want to acknowledge and give thanks to the Lord for a healing through Bl. Vasyl's intercession: the lengthening of my right leg, which all my life has been slightly shorter than my left one. Through prayer and the application of Bl. Vasyl's relic, both are now the same length. This happened on the morning of Nov. 12, 2012, the very day a group of us came to Winnipeg to visit his Shrine.

Blessed be God! He has shown himself wonderful in his saints. May the Lord shower you with special graces in this Year of Faith, 2013

In gratitude to God & His friends

Roseanne Sharpe

Bethlehem Community of Benedictine Oblates

Bathgate, North Dakota

Dear Staff members of the Blessed Vasyl Martyr Shrine:

My name is Father Michael Polosky of Saints Peter & Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. I especially wanted to share some information with Father John Sianchuk. I hope this information will be able to reach him through this e-mail. Several months ago Father John gave a retreat to the Priests of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of St. Josaphat in Parma, Ohio. I was in attendance. He spoke in great detail about Bishop Vasyl and the shrine. He distributed to the priests holy cards, icons, and third class relics of Blessed Vasyl. I received a few of these relics and, when appropriate, distributed them to parishioners of my parishes in Ambridge and Aliquippa. Several weeks ago I gave a relic to Mrs. Deirdre Manasterski. Her family has been through much in the last several months. Her husband, Greg, was diagnosed and treated for cancer in the last 6 months. Thankfully, he is doing quite well and slowly returning to normalcy. In the midst of his treatment, Deirdre was diagnosed with breast cancer and underwent a double mastectomy. I gave her a relic of Blessed Vasyl, prayed over her, blessed her with the relic and asked her to take the relic home and pray with it regularly. At that time she was very concerned because she was due to begin chemotherapy shortly. A week or so ago, a very happy and enthusiastic Deirdre approached me after Divine Liturgy. She had great news - the doctors reported that she no longer, at this time, needed to undergo chemotherapy. She was thrilled and overjoyed. She said to me that she contributed this unexpected blessing to the intercession of Blessed Vasyl and her using the relic to pray with on a regular basis.

Prayerfully,
Rev. Michael J. Polosky, Pastor

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. May Blessed Vasyl bless each one of you.

Contributions listed below are from December 1, 2012 until February 28, 2013.

+1000

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Don & Karen Solman
Elsie Tymchak

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For the Health of... Luz Cruz
Luz Cruz

Doug & Karl
Mary Kindred

Marilyn Jessap
S. Demjanew

Please consider Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine when planning your estate. This will help to secure the future of this ministry. Thank you.

Our Donors are remembered each Wednesday during the 8:00 am Divine Liturgy in the Shrine Chapel.

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

WE WELCOME YOU TO JOIN US FOR THESE SERVICES

Call in Prayer Requests
204-338-7321
info@bvmartyrshrine.com

For an intention or prayer request please phone or email us. Your prayer request will be placed in the Shrine and remembered in prayer at the Wednesday evening services honouring Blessed Bishop Velychkovsky.

SHRINE VISITORS



Blessed Virgin Mary Parish,
Winnipeg - catechism class



Catholic Youth Directors of Western
Canada (WCACYM)



University of North Dakota student prayer group
visit the Shrine on Martin Luther King Day



Grade 5 class from Christ the
King Parish, Winnipeg, make
their annual visit to the Shrine



Youth from Lloydminster, AB
make a pilgrimage to the Shrine

SHRINE SCHEDULE

Monday: Closed
Tuesday to Friday: 10 am to 5 pm
Saturday: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm
Sunday: opened until 1:00 pm

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

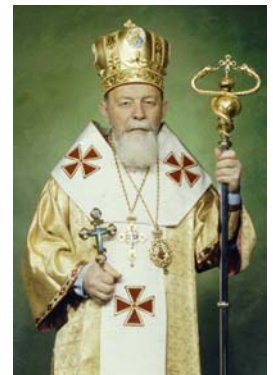
Group tours are available.

For pilgrimage group tours call for reservations
204-338-7321 or e-mail: info@bvmartyrshrine.com

EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING 7:00 pm
Liturgical Service to Blessed Vasyl
(Acatlist 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, Manitoba Canada R2V 0M6
Tel: 204-338-7321 Email: info@bvmartyrshrine.com Website: www.bvmartyrshrine.com