



FULLY ALIVE

A Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine Publication

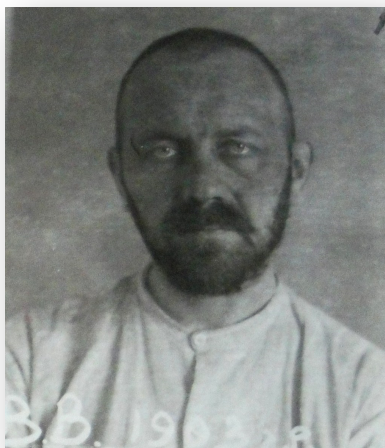
A JOURNEY OF FAITH

Blessed Vasyl—An Example of Dedication

As we travel the journey of the Great Fast and then of the Resurrection, we are reminded that darkness is overcome by light and death by life. Blessed Vasyl lived the latter part of his life under a regime that offered darkness and death. Blessed Vasyl lived that time in hope, with great missionary zeal, always aware of the truth that life overcomes death through the cross of our Lord Jesus. His confidence in our Lord's victory and providence was evident in the way he lived his life in those oppressive circumstances. Neither the prison bars, nor the bitter cold during his exile, nor the cruelty of the pawns of the enemy regime were obstacles for him. He simply saw people, who needed spiritual care, who needed God. Therefore, under any type of circumstances, he strove to bring them to the Merciful Father.

"It is already evening. They bring me in, to the long corridor of my new section. We march along, and pause before the final cell. The door is opened. The cell is full. Everybody lying down: it is night! ...I say my prayers, and calmly fall asleep. In the morning, after breakfast, the cell chief, formerly a worker at the Kyivan Arsenal, begins: "Reverend Father, we'd like to ask you to talk to us. We want to listen to you." I

reply: "And I'd like to ask you to let me have some peace, because what you would like to hear, I am not able to talk about; and, on the other hand, what I would like to talk about, you would not want to hear." "Whatever you want, Reverend Father... After all, we are all facing death, and this may be the final day for some of us, so we want to hear about Godly matters: about prayer, about confession. In fact, we don't even know our prayers... Please teach us!" And the teaching began! First item: each of them had to write out, on bits of paper, the prayer "Our Father" and "Hail Mary"... They wrote and they memorized. Next day, early in the morning, the guard



Bl. Vasyl when he was being sentenced to death row in July, 1946 at the age of 43

opens the door, to let the prisoners take out the so-called "perfume pot"... Ordinarily, at that moment, there was much noisy activity, because almost everybody wanted to exit the cell to pick up a stray cigarette butt or something. But now, this morning, there is a deep silence; all the men are on their knees... the guard is astounded, and mutters to himself, "They're praying? Well, I'll come by later....," and closes the door...Lessons continue on the Holy Mysteries: on confession, Holy Communion, and other subjects. At last, their confessions. Oh, how ardently these people aspired to this Holy Mystery of God's love and forgiveness. Finally, all had made their confession, and, early in the morning, received Holy Communion. After a common thanksgiving, we sat down for breakfast. And after that, it was as if they had all agreed upon certain arrangements. That night they again threw in a new prisoner, and removed one of the old." *from Blessed Vasyl's autobiography.*

Blessed Vasyl untiringly worked for Christ, caring and empathizing with each person. He was "fearless and very courageous. He always gave everyone this instruction, that when doing things for God and for faith, one should not fear. He said: 'For this reason I am a priest, that I defend the Church and our nation and not fear imprisonment. I returned from prison once and I know that I will be there again.' Father Vasyl knew how to gently calm us saying; 'God is with us. The Greek Catholic Church is undefeatable. It is built on a Rock. We have nothing to fear. It is a privilege in these days to suffer for God, for our nation, for our Church. It will not always be like this. This is our chance to achieve merits and to witness to Christ at this time.' " (from an interview with the late Bishop Myhaylo Sabryha.)

Blessed Vasyl's resolve, courage, together with his fatherly care and love, attracted others to

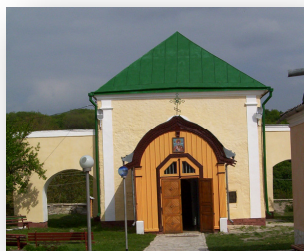


Bishop Myhaylo Sabryha, C.Ss.R., who knew and worked with Bl. Vasyl

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him, inspired them and gave them life. He was able to speak to their soul, and help them open their hearts in the Sacrament of confession. Mr. Boris Mirus, a fellow prisoner, said in an interview: "He spoke softly. Whenever Father spoke, I was always impressed by his prudence and gentleness. I was always glad to listen to him. He was able to give counsel and to put one at peace. He had such strength that if a person was depressed or hopeless, he was able through his soft speech, his logical and philosophical mind, but at the same time, using common language, to give this person hope. He was never unapproachable, but he could talk with the ordinary person as well as the intellectual. He found a way to connect with everyone and how to counsel the unenlightened, the uncultured and the base person. I believe that Father was just filled with goodness."



St. Nicholas Church in Kamianetz Podilsk, built in 1378

During the Second World War, Blessed Vasyl was sent to Greater Ukraine, which had been under Soviet control, to do missionary work. There he saw first hand the power of God and the power of the resurrection.

"Metropolitan Andrew sent me into Greater Ukraine to Kamianetz Podilsk, where people were asking for a Greek Catholic priest....And I chose in the center of the old town near the *kostel*, the small stone

wall-enclosed Church of St. Nicholas, together with the empty parochial residence...I looked over the church, which, during the soviet interval, had been a place to repair broken-down automobiles. Soon many people gathered around...I had left the church to go over to the hotel for my valises; and when I returned, I did not recognize the church—it was so cleaned up, so dressed up, so decorated. Simply a miracle!... That evening I celebrated Vesper Vigil, preached a sermon,... 'I will immediately begin to hear confessions' ...But the people all stand around, everyone! Nobody leaves. 'Anyone for confession?' I ask. Everyone. They withdraw a pace or two, and I begin to hear confessions. By midnight, I barely manage to stop: the rest I would still finish tomorrow morning. Next morning, as day breaks, I am already confessing again: meanwhile, the people sing Matins. About one o'clock in the afternoon, I finish the solemn Liturgy. I am completely enraptured. Wonderful work! Very good people! And all the intelligentsia is here, as well as the youth! And all this because of one short sermon, right?...No, this is obviously impossible! This is not the result of brief human words, no matter how good they might be. These are the results of the almighty power of God's grace, which illumines, motivates, and attracts. " *from Bl. Vasyl's autobiography*

May Blessed Vasyl inspire us to be filled with hope in the power of God to transform whatever is dead and hopeless in us into joy and life, as we journey through this Lenten time towards the glory of the Resurrection.

INTERCESSOR FOR ADDICTS

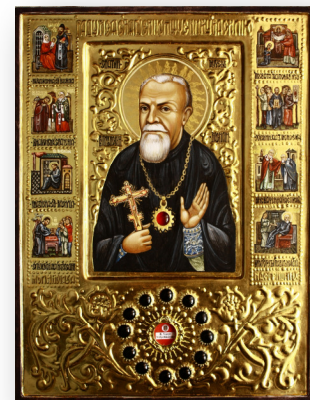


Fr. Ihod Shved, director of Nazareth Rehabilitation Centre in Ukraine



Icon of Bl. Vasyl being poisoned by drugs

In December 2016, we had a visit from Fr. Ihor Shved, a priest from Drohobych, Ukraine. When Mary Jane and Fr. John were in Ukraine in 2012, Fr. Ihor took them to a new project he had organized in abandoned army barracks. The project was named "Nazareth". After years of renovations and construction, they now have a rehabilitation centre. They offer specialized support for people released from prisons, who are addicted to drugs or alcohol. There is a team of psychologists, consultants, priests and religious who provide a 12 Step program together with therapeutic community living. Since its beginnings in 2004, in dilapidated conditions, over 680 men have gone through this program. In the past two years in the newly renovation facility 111 participated in a rehabilitation program of which over 60 have remained clean and sober. In 2012 Mary Jane and Fr. John brought with ourselves a 1st Class Relic for "Nazareth". Kseniya Kavats, one of our employees visited there earlier that year and informed us of this request. One of the participants from rehabilitation painted a beautiful icon into which was placed the 1st Class Relic. The icon is flanked by eight small images depicting different events in Blessed Vasyl's life. What was most interesting is that the last image is of Blessed Vasyl receiving an injection of poisonous drugs during his last imprisonment – the drugs which eventually caused his death. The residents, especially those suffering from drug addiction, identify with this image. May Blessed Vasyl be their patron and intercessor as they struggle to be set free from their addictions.



Icon of Bl. Vasyl written by a resident of Nazareth

BLESSED VASYL MINISTRY IN UKRAINE



**Presentation and Divine Liturgy
at Novyi Rozdil.**



**Prayer meeting in Apartment/ Museum
in Lviv**



**5 presentations were done in St.
Andrew's Church in Lviv**



**Presentation in a
Nursing Home**



Veneration of Bl. Vasyli's relics in Dolyna



**Presentation for children from Joseph
Slipyi Catholic School. In Lviv**



**A Priest celebrating Moleben
before the presentation
in Dolyna**



**Yaroslav, a University of
Manitoba student, visited the
Apartment/Museum.**



**A group of NGO "I am a Christian"
volunteers visited the Apartment/
Museum in Lviv**

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 November 23, 2016 until February 28, 2017.

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Estate of William & Kaye Zambrick
William & Linda Skromeda

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Harry Yassenkj
Agnes Yassenko
Orest Zabinsky
Vi Zabinsky

Zabinsky/Sass families
. Vi Zabinsky
In Honor of...
Andriko's son Ivan & family
Paul Shumay
Vladimir and Marlene Solman
Peter & Glikeria Iwanuck
30th anniversary of his ordination
Rev. Protodeacon Stefan & Maria
Tyrawski

For the Health of...
Glicaria Bilinsky
Mary Bernatsky
Mary Glicaria Bilinsky
Peter & Glikeria Iwanuck
Sheona Bilon
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Chris, Mary & Kolia Winchar
Mathias & Krista Krohn
Darcy, Brent, Patrick and their families
Nestor Myktyshyn

CORRECTIONS

We apologize for the errors and omissions.

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St. Basil's UCWLC

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Marge Chemerika

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

SHRINE PILGRIMS



Janet Monks and children (Abbey, Eden & Ben) and friend Karen Markelkepp



Joseph and Stephanie Silva from Yorkton, SK



Sara Francis, Christopher Loftson and Erin Cotter -All from Calgary



Luke Savard—past volunteer and Sebastion Aguilar from St. Vital Parish.

IN MEMORIAM



Dmytro Kalenchuk & his daughter May Jane

We express our deepest condolences to Mary Jane Kalenchuk, our Shrine Administrator, on the passing away of her father, Dmytro (Dan) of 93 years. Her father, Dmytro, was vacationing with her in

Phoenix, when he took ill, and died shortly thereafter on February 14th. Dmytro was a faithful Ukrainian Catholic, always involved in church life throughout his life, serving his parish for many years as the church elder (starshey brat). His faith in God was the foundation of his long life and his 70 years of marriage to his wife Bella, who passed away two years ago. They were generous supporters of the Shrine ministry. May God grant him Eternal Rest.

ВІЧНА ПАМ'ЯТЬ!

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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
(Acatnist 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
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