

BISHOP VELYCHKOVSKY MARTYR'S SHRINE TOUR

When one enters the Shrine, one is walking on holy ground. In the shrine are the **First Class Relics of Blessed Bishop and Martyr Vasyl Velychkovsky**. His sacred body, which suffered unto the point of death for the sake of Christ, is found in a sealed stainless steel sarcophagus. Before these relics pilgrims come and pray, asking Blessed Vasyl to intercede for their needs before the Almighty God.

“Blessed are they that are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Mt. 5:10

ITS SYMBOLISM

The Shrine is filled with symbolism and artwork which help the pilgrim enter into an atmosphere of prayer and into the presence of the Holy. It was designed by Ben Wasylshen of Winnipeg.



Throughout the floor there are 33 pairs of red oblong tiles, reminding the pilgrims of **footsteps**, the footsteps of Christ and the footsteps of Blessed Vasyl. Their maroon color remind us of the blood that he shed for Christ. As pilgrims enter the shrine, these footsteps remind them that they too are called to follow Christ just as the martyr has.

As one enters the shrine one is met with the **sacred icon** of Blessed Martyr Vasyl. This icon was written by iconographer Marianna Savaryn of Edmonton. After this icon was written it was solemnly blessed and consecrated, and thus is an object of veneration representing the presence of the holy one. In his hand is a rosary revealing Blessed Vasyl's closeness to Mary the Mother of God.



**“A child of Mary is never lost.”
Bl. Vasyl**

A second icon, **Our Mother of Perpetual Help** greets the pilgrims. This icon was very dear to Blessed Vasyl. His devotion to Mary under the title of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, became the reason for two of his arrests. This icon is an exact copy of the original icon in Rome and is certified by the Redemptorist Superior General Fr. L. Buijs, C.Ss.R..



The **White Angel** of the Resurrection points the way for the pilgrims. It points to the empty tomb, proclaiming that "He is alive!" The angel also points the way to holiness seen in the symbolic circles and squares : following the 10 Commandments, embracing the 7 Sacraments or Mysteries of the Church, and living the Way of the Cross (14 stations).

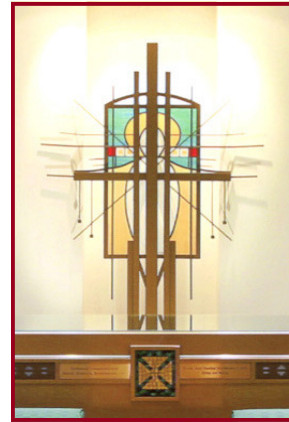


The **sarcophagus** was made according to the prescription of the Vatican: the holy relics, his full vested body was placed in a stainless steel container which was then sealed. This was tied with a silk ribbon which was then sealed with the Metropolitan's insignia. The stainless steel sarcophagus was then placed into a decorated wooden container. Because these are martyr's relics, and following the ancient Christian tradition, the sarcophagus is so made that the Divine Liturgy could be celebrated on the martyr's relics.



“The one who perseveres to the end will be saved.” Mt 24:13

Behind the sarcophagus is the **Cross of the Resurrection**. Blessed Vasyl, like Jesus, embraced the Cross. It is through the Cross that new resurrected life erupts. Blessed Vasyl now is 'Fully Alive' in Christ, radiant with His glory. To depict the suffering of the Cross, two droplets of blood were placed on either side of the Cross. The rays of light emanating from the Cross proclaim the new resurrected life.



“Whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it.” Mk 8:36

Further symbolism is found in the tiled **floor pattern** which imitates the Cross of the Resurrection. The use of the triangle symbolizes the presence of the **Holy Trinity**. The sarcophagus itself is placed on a triangular floor pattern to say to the pilgrim that Blessed Vasyl is now fully alive in the Holy Trinity. This same triangular pattern on the Cross of Resurrection tells us that Blessed Vasyl now reflects to us the Face of Jesus.

As one leaves the shrine, next to the guest book, there is an opportunity to make **prayer intention** requests. These intentions are prayed for every Wednesday evening during the devotional service at the Shrine.

The **main purpose** of the shrine is to give pilgrims the opportunity to offer their prayers before Blessed Vasyl, or to spend some prayerful time in the presence of his holy relics. You are invited to take time to be in prayer before him

Many favors, graces and miracles have already occurred through the intercession of Blessed Vasyl. A martyr's grave is a fountain of God's grace. Approach Blessed Martyr Vasyl with confidence that he will intercede for your needs before the Almighty God.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

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 favor _____ for your Name is glorified forever. Amen.

Imprimatur
+Metropolitan Michael (Bzdel), C.Ss.R.