



# FULLY ALIVE

*A Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine Publication*

## 10th Anniversary of Enshrinement

Almost 10 years have passed since the enshrinement of the holy relics of Blessed Bishop and Martyr Vasyl Velychkovsky, C.Ss.R. in St. Joseph's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Winnipeg, MB. As we prepare to celebrate the event on September 20th - 23rd of this year, I wish to reflect upon the event and the past ten years.

Preparation for the enshrinement began in the late spring of 2001, when it became clear that Blessed Vasyl would be numbered among the group of martyrs to be beatified by Blessed Pope John Paul II on June 27, 2001 in Lviv, Ukraine. Once we obtained permission from the late Metropolitan Michael Bzdel to have the relics transferred to St. Joseph's Church, plans were made for constructing two rooms attached to the Church, one for a museum to tell the story of his life, and the other as a shrine/chapel to house his holy relics. A committee was established to deal with the construction. Books and pamphlets were written. Videos were created. Gift shop items were designed and produced. Another committee was established to oversee all the events of the Enshrinement itself: the promotion; inviting of guests from across the world; arranging facilities (tents, audio-visual, etc.) to celebrate the Divine Liturgy for some 1,400 people; organizing a memorial concert and the scheduling for the all-night vigil at the Cathedral; the blessing of the newly-built rooms and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of St. Joseph's parish which corresponded with the weekend of the transfer of relics; and the gala banquet which followed the event.

Of particular importance were the details of the transfer itself. The transfer of the relics had to follow strict Vatican protocol. All those involved in the actual exhumation and recognition were to be appointed by the Metropolitan. The containers for the relics had to be prepared with precise specifications. The relics were to be placed in a zinc (stainless steel) container (one that would not corrode). An unbroken silk ribbon was to be tied around the container. This ribbon was to bear the ecclesiastical seal of the bishop, and the stainless steel container had to be placed in a wooden container. After conversing with the chief medical examiner, it was determined that we should prepare a container the size of Blessed Vasyl, since we would find at least an intact skeleton.

The day of the exhumation arrived (September 16, 2002). After gathering at All-Saints cemetery and confirming

from eye-witnesses that Blessed Vasyl was indeed buried there, the casket was exhumed. It was then transferred to St. Boniface Catholic Hospital, where a team of medical experts were to examine his holy body and record whatever they found. Since the Redemptorist Postulator from Rome (Fr. Antonio Marrazzo, C.Ss.R.) could not be present, he assigned me to be the postulator for this event. My duty was to see that all was fulfilled according to the protocol and to collect

relics for distribution to the churches and the faithful. After singing the Acatist Hymn in honor of Blessed Vasyl, we opened the casket only to find that his holy body was fully intact with all its muscle mass. We were all filled with awe and incredible peace and joy. We venerated his holy relics, bowing before them and kissing them. Within hours the casket started to disintegrate, his vestments fell apart, but his holy body remained as it was, in full body mass. In doing a full examination of the holy body, we discovered that the extremities of his toes had fallen off. He had frozen them severely while in prison and they were black during his life-time. I was pleased because now I had 1<sup>st</sup> Class relic toe bones (ex ossibus) for the churches and the faithful. We also discovered particles of his skin on his pant legs. These too became 1<sup>st</sup> class relics (ex linteis).

After a thorough examination and recording of the data, Blessed Vasyl's holy body was re-vested in new episcopal vestments and placed in the stainless steel sarcophagus which was welded shut and tied with a silk maroon ribbon. Hot wax was poured on three intersections of the



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**Blessed Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine**

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ribbon and the Metropolitan's ecclesiastical seal embedded in the red wax.

The holy relics were brought to the convent of the Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate, where the faithful, especially those from Holy Family Nursing Home, could venerate them. On Friday (September 20), they were solemnly brought to the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of Ss. Volodymyr and Olha. That evening a memorial concert was held in Blessed Vasyl's honour, featuring choirs from Lviv, Edmonton and Winnipeg. Various parishes and groups from Winnipeg took turns in keeping vigil from Friday evening until Sunday morning. On Sunday (September 22), the relics were processed from the Cathedral to St. Joseph's Church. More than 2,000 people took part in the procession of 3.5 kilometers. Ukrainian Catholic Bishops and Redemptorists from across North America and the world participated in the celebrations. During the Divine Liturgy at St. Joseph's the holy relics of Blessed Vasyl were enshrined in the shrine/chapel purpose. The day was a glorious day, filled with emotions of joy and exhilaration.

Since the enshrinement, many thousands of pilgrims have come to pray at the shrine. Many graces, blessings and healings have been recorded. It has truly become a place of

solace for many. It has become a place of encounter with God's mercy and consolation. Many have traveled from far (Ukraine, Poland, Europe, South America, Australia, all of North America including Nunavit) to bring their petitions before Blessed Vasyl. Many have written to us sharing the blessings they received. How many unreported blessings have been experienced!

The Shrine has been blessed with many volunteers who dedicate time every month to welcome and guide pilgrims. Many of these volunteers have been with us since the beginning. Our staff has grown over the years. Much information and artifacts with regards to Blessed Vasyl have been collected from our yearly trips to Ukraine. We have been able to obtain KGB documents about his arrests and imprisonments (2000 pages). In Ukraine, the apartment where Blessed Vasyl lived has been converted into a museum in his honour. Slowly, Blessed Vasyl is becoming known across the world and his intercession is being sought.

Our 10th anniversary celebrations will take place from September 20th to the 23rd. Note the schedule on page 4. We invite all to come and join us to mark this milestone. Make it a time of pilgrimage. We pray that Blessed Vasyl continue to intercede for all of your needs. He is our great Champion!

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

## PILGRIMS VISIT THE SHRINE



**Christ the King School  
Grade 5 class make their  
annual pilgrimage**



**Holy Eucharist Parish  
come for their 8th  
Annual Pilgrimage**



**Jay Korban giving a tour to Fr. Stephen  
Wojcichowsky, Director of the Sheptytsky  
Institute and Fr. Andrea Spatafora MSF,  
Dean of St. Paul's University, Ottawa**



**Redemptorist  
SERVE group**



**Youth group from St. Peter's  
Roman Catholic Church, Winni-  
peg**



**Social Justice group from Prince Albert,  
SK travel to Winnipeg to be at the Shrine  
and the Welcome Home**



**Children of Mary and Altar Servers from Ss.  
Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Parish  
in Saskatoon**

# 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 March 1st 2012 until May 15th 2012.*

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Edward & Anne Faseruk
- +100**  
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Canon Luhovy Assembly #374  
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Dmytro Sikora  
Iris Smellie  
Fr. Andrea Spatafora, MSF  
Stanislawa Stasiewicz  
Walter & Joanne Wandzura  
Fr. Stephen Wojcichowsky  
Alex & Mary Zimrose
- In Memory Of...**  
**Juanito Abrenica Sr.**  
Henry Alcudia  
**Julian & Olena Bachynsky**  
Maria Bachynsky  
**Kazimer & Mary Burtney**  
William and Olga Kondra  
**Archbishop Michael Bzdel, C.Ss.R.**  
W. Allan Bailey  
Peter and Grace Chorney  
Emil M. Maybo  
Emile and Sylvia Picklyk  
**Carrabre Deceased Family members**  
Thomas and Alma Carrabre  
**Cheremika family**  
Mike and Margaret Chemerika  
**Mary & Michael Chomyn**  
John M. Chomyn  
**John Chyzowski**  
Vera Chyzowski  
**James Derkach**  
Annie Derkach  
**Mary Hayka**  
Millie Lefko  
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Mrs. Mary Kuzminski  
**Helen & John Huska**  
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**Dr. M.S. Jahanger**  
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**Mary Kohuch**  
St. Basil's UCWLC, Wpg  
**Sam and Mary Kondra**  
William and Olga Kondra  
**Leschyshyn & Keyowski families**  
Leonard and Kasie Leschyshyn  
**Feodosia Luczka**  
Steven and Mary Gregorish  
**Nim Nagasaka**  
Larry and Evelyn Tycholis  
**Nat Brezden & Helen Sawchuk**  
Rosina Brezden  
**Alied Nechwediuk**  
William J. Karlicki
- Nester & Chemerika family & Zinnia & Bert Wabiuk**  
Mike and Margaret Chemerika  
**Deceased family members**  
Bernie and Carol Ogrodnick  
**Rev. Mitrat Ihor Shpytkovsky**  
Wsevolod Andrew Shpytkovsky  
**Patriarch Joseph Slipyj**  
Fr. Bohdan Borowec  
**Peter & Anee Perepeluk & William & Lena Moroz**  
Peter and Verna Moroz  
**Grace Prokop**  
Orest and Margaret Fedorchuk  
Kaye Snatenchuk  
**Zenon Rapczewski**  
Ron and Olga Ruff  
**Metro Sakundiak**  
Dan and Gloria Lischinski  
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Alexander and Olga Boychuk  
**Olga Wolanik Swystun and Jeffrey Babey**  
William and Edna Hunchak  
**Michael, Michola & Anna**  
Walter and Nellie Wowczuk  
**John Zatwarnitski**  
Adela Zatwarnitski  
**Zubyk Family, Mike Skakun & Mathias Kushko**  
Fr. Methodius Kushko
- In Honor Of...**  
**Oksana and Bohdan Bobetskyj**  
Mariya Shymonovych  
**Children, grandchildren, & great grandchildren**  
Alexander and Olga Boychuk  
**Frances Chikowski**  
Michael Chikowski and Frances Chikowski  
**Linda Dudar**  
Metro Lukie  
**Alain Durand**  
Cecile Durand  
**Fr. Isidore Dziadyk**  
Casper and Violet Stoski  
**Children & grandchildren**  
Mary Kokolski  
**Mechelle Monroe**  
Yvonne Mason  
**Urrutia Family**  
Marian Urrutia

## COME & CELEBRATE

the Feast Day of the Ukrainian Catholic Martyrs at  
**Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine**

**WEDNESDAY  
JUNE 27, 2012**

### DAY PROGRAM

9:00 Divine Liturgy  
10:00 Rosary  
10:30 Moleben to  
Blessed Vasyl  
with anointing

Lunch available

1:15 Video Presentation  
2:00 Acafist Hymn  
in honor of Blessed  
Bishop and Martyr  
Vasyl Velychkovsky,  
C.Ss.R.



### EVENING PROGRAM

7:00 Divine Liturgy  
Pilgrimage Procession  
Veneration of Relics  
Anointing for Healing

### LOCATION:

**ST JOSEPH'S UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH  
BISHOP VELYCHKOVSKY MARTYR'S SHRINE**

250 Jefferson Avenue, Winnipeg, MB  
for more information call: 338-7321

## 10th ANNIVERSARY

To mark the 10th Anniversary of the Enshrinement of Blessed Vasyl's holy Relics the following program is planned:

### Sept. 20 - Thursday 7:00pm

Moleben in honour of Blessed Vasyl  
with **MISSION** Sermon

### Sept. 21 - Friday 7:00 pm

Acathist in honour of Blessed Vasyl  
with **MISSION** Sermon

### Sept. 22 - Saturday 10:00 am

Divine Liturgy with **MISSION** Sermon  
and Anointing for Healing

**4:15 pm** Vespers

**5:00 pm** Divine Liturgy followed by anointing  
Reception & program in Church auditorium

### Sept. 23 - Sunday 10:00 am

Divine Liturgy with anointing.  
Reception & program in Church auditorium

Mission conducted by Fr. John Sianchuk, C.Ss.R.  
Weekend Sermons by Fr. Larry Kondra, C.Ss.R.

**COME AND JOIN US**

## EWTN

Watch for the airing of "Steadfast and Faithful: a Martyr's Journey" on the life of Blessed Vasyl which is usually aired on June 30.

## SHRINE SCHEDULE

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

Shrine is open to the faithful during the times of Liturgical Services. The Museum is open 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](mailto:info@bvmartyrshrine.com)  
Website: [www.bvmartyrshrine.com](http://www.bvmartyrshrine.com)

**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 to:  
Bishop Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine  
250 Jefferson Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R2V 0M6  
Canada  
or E-mail: [info@bvmartyrshrine.com](mailto:info@bvmartyrshrine.com)