



FULLY ALIVE

Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine

A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Life has change dramatically over the past several months. As we see the ebb and growth of the pandemic in various parts of the world, we have come to realize that this "enemy" is relentless. The moment our guard is let down, if it is near us, it will attack. We have seen in our own province how the virus was contained fairly well for months and then just a few weeks ago it began to explode again. People were again encouraged to become more cautious and follow the recommended practices of wearing masks and physical distancing. We are also realizing that this pandemic is with us for the long haul and that we will have to learn to live with it. How are we coping?

Some people are filled with fear, fearing to even exit their homes (and for good reason). Others are cautiously going about their lives practicing all the precautions. Still others are ignoring all the safety protocols and go about as if the pandemic is not here at all. This latter group is the most dangerous, because they could easily become carriers of the disease and spread it to the vulnerable. This time of the pandemic is certainly calling all of us to become aware of each other (physical distancing) and for the sake of everyone's health to protect ourselves and others by wearing a mask. This heightened awareness is necessary for our health and the health of our society.

During Blessed Vasyl's time people also lived in fear. They feared the Soviet authorities who could arrest you, imprison you or even kill you at a moments notice. One had to conform to the Soviet system and ideology or else you were considered dangerous. For religious people and in particular Ukrainian Catholics, you were afraid to practice your faith in any open fashion. Many stopped practicing altogether and just conformed. Often the elderly, the grandmothers, secretly brought their



A Chapel in Sr. Anhelina's house where Blessed Vasyl celebrated the Divine Liturgy

grandchildren for baptism and perhaps secret catechism and Divine Liturgy. Parents were afraid to lose their jobs if the government authorities found out that they were participating in these religious activities.

What was Blessed Vasyl's response to this situation? Although the danger was very real and at any time arrest could be imminent, his focus was always on the Will of God. His primary purpose was to serve the people with the Word of God and with the Sacraments. Although there was some fear, he courageously continued his ministry. He valued his relationship with God and bringing others to God more than the danger of arrest and persecution. He sought to be in constant communion with the Lord through prayer. He continuously prayed the rosary. The "Hail Mary" was always on his lips. He depended on the Blessed Virgin Mary to protect him as he went to homes to secretly celebrate the Divine Liturgy or to hear confessions or to marry or baptize. Prayer was his constant companion. His faith in God's Providence was strong and constant, gladly receiving any adverse consequences from his active ministry.

From an interview in 2005 with Sister Anhelina Chayka, OSBM, we have the following testimony: " Bishop Velychkovsky was very active and a good Religious. No matter what, he fulfilled the duties of his priesthood. He experienced fear but he was never hindered by it in his ministry. Father Vasyl hung on to the best of his ability. He suffered but he kept doing his work. How many new Religious he welcomed into the



Sr. Anhelina Chayka, OSBM

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monasteries! Without his work all could have fallen apart and no one would have even known. When the Bishop had to go to a home for the first time to receive the vows of some new sisters, I would walk ahead and place a flower before the gate of that house. Once he knew the place, he would go there himself. The Bishop often gave retreats, but always in a different house so that no one would know and no one would get caught. Bishop Velychkovsky suffered much. The KGB constantly persecuted him until his arrest. [...] I remember him telling me 'If you are in a difficult situation, or you are frightened, ask the Mother of God, she will always help you.' This is what I always did and she did help. [...]

"Bishop Velychkovsky lived in an apartment with one small room and a kitchen. When people came for confession, there was no room. The Bishop would then confess the people on the streets, or in the park. He would sit on a park bench and confess

them. There was no other way. I spoke with Bishop Velychkovsky many times. He never said much. He taught that we must be committed to God, live the truth, to refrain from falsehood, to pray and not to be afraid. He loved the Mother of God very much and told everyone that it is necessary to pray and ask the Mother of God for help, for she will always answer."

Although our current situation of the pandemic is not fundamentally a spiritual one, yet we can learn from Blessed Vasyl how to change fear into positive action. Our faith in God and trust in him can help us walk confidently through these new circumstances of life, always adhering to the advice of our medical experts. May Blessed Vasyl strengthen our faith and teach us how to live our Christian life with love and compassion for all. That we, like Blessed Vasyl, may be a light in the darkness. Especially, during these difficult times, may we focus on prayer.

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

VISITORS TO THE SHRINE



**Fr. Yevhen, C.Ss.R., Yorkton SK
(formerly from Kovel, Ukraine)**



**Caroline and Michelle,
Winnipeg, MB**



The Thomas family, Winnipeg, MB



**The Galle family from Thunder
Bay, ON**



**Jean-Marc, Claudia, & Karol
Guenette, Grand Prairie, AB**



**Patrick, Andie, Jacqueline, Sean Jackson &
Marlene and Barb Mackalski, Winnipeg, MB**



Gail and Zenon Horobec Caliento, MB



**Raquel Dancho, MP for Kildonan-St. Paul,
with the Shrine Staff**

GOOD NEWS FROM UKRAINE

Recently we received an update from Sister Julia from the “Home for Girls in Honour of Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky”. This Home for Girls was started by Sr. Julia in the fall of 2016, under the auspices of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Metropolitan of Lviv. She now has a full house of 10 girls ages 10 to 19. Sister Julia literally received these girls “from the street” – some are true orphans, others are those whose parents lost their parental rights. Many were living already on the street involved with alcohol, drugs or prostitution. Some were rejected by other “foster homes” and were abandoned. All came wounded by their past. Sr. Julia has received them and through her compassion, discipline, tough love and genuine caring and commitment, we have seen these girls blossom to become lovely young women. The road is difficult with many challenges both personal and communal. It is not always easy for 10 young girls to live together.

Many of these girls came to Sister Julia with little education. Because some lived by begging on the streets, they never attended school. Besides enrolling them in the regular state schools, Sister has hired tutors to help the girls progress in Mathematics, Ukrainian Language and Literature, History, Biology and English. These girls spent hours each week with tutors. The tutors were preparing some of the older girls for university or college. The hiring of these tutors was only possible through the generous donations of benefactors from Canada like yourselves.

Because of this extra help from the tutors and the hard work of the girls, Sister announced to us that three of the girls have been accepted at universities and one to a college this fall. Diana is entering the Ukrainian Catholic University in the faculty of Social Work. She is waiting yet to receive a full scholarship from that University. Victoria has entered another university into the faculty of law. Because it is a State University, her tuition is paid for by the school. Tanya is entering the University of Physical Education in the faculty of Rehabilitation and Occupational Therapy. Her tuition will also be covered by the school. Svitlana has been enrolled in a College to study Landscape Design. Of course, all these young women will need some financial help with books, school supplies, clothing etc.



Left to right: Diana, Svitlana, Tanya, and Victoria



Left to right: Liliya, Nastya, and Anya

Three other girls are in their last year of “high school” and will be preparing intensely to enter university next year. They are in a pre-university program which costs approximately \$1,000.00 per student. Sister hopes to receive bursaries from the Ukrainian Catholic University to cover these courses. To augment these studies, Sister Julia has arranged for tutors to come and help them achieve their goals. She is counting on financial support from us to pay for these tutors. We expect this will be approximately \$800.00 a month. Nastya is preparing to go to the Ukrainian Catholic University into her undergraduate program. Liliya is preparing to enter a Medical University to study Pharmacy. Anya is planning on entering the Lviv State University in a Psychology program specializing in helping people who have suffered trauma from significant disasters or catastrophes. Meanwhile Andriana, our champion wrestler who has won 1st place in her category in Ukraine, is preparing herself to become a police officer.



Andriana, our champion wrestler

We are honoured to be able to assist Sister Julia in her grace-filled work saving these young girls from a life of poverty and from the dangers of life on the streets. Blessed Vasyl had a heart for “street girls” as is stated in his biography written by Fr. Stephen Bachtalowsky, C.Ss.R. “Fr. Velychkovsky devoted special attention [...] to the village girls that served the ‘gentry’ who were often non-Ukrainian and non-Catholic. These were most exposed to dangers of a moral and national nature.” Fr. Vasyl organized these girls into Marian Sodalties and made them feel at home in the monastery chapel. Thus saving them from moral corruption. If you wish to donate, cheques can be made to “Ukrainian Catholic Mission” in the memo “Orphan Fund”. We are very grateful for your assistance in this holy matter.

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 16th until August 31st, 2020

1000+

Michelle Blanchard
In honour & thanksgiving for the
grandchildren
Marlene MacKalski

500+

Margaret Saray
In memory of Joseph Velychkovsky
George & Christine Welleck

100+

Vasilij & Eugenia Bartos
Bl. Bishop Velychovsky Prayer
Group, Brandon, MB
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Michael Buyachok
Terry & Vicki Chaikovsky
Father Shyshkovich Kof C Council
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Jean-Marc & Karol Gue nette
Ed Jelinski
Connie McCorrister-Moravek
Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic
Church (Fr. Dat Vu), Boise, Idaho
Steve Prokop
Walter & Pauline Prystai
Rayner Agencies Ltd.
Jimmy Sawchuk
Anne Shymko
James Simmons
Henry & Iris Spilchuk
St. Joseph's U.C.W.L.C.

<100

Peter Adams
Jonathan & Annette Gustave
Catherine Holmes
William & Linda Kalbhen
Anne Pawelek
Richard & Marietta Persian
John & Yvonne Sirdar
Iris Smellie
Sam & Guyla Smilski
Fred Stoyka
Nisha Thomas
Jeannine Tinguely
William Vanderven

In Memory of...

Baryluk Family
John and Elsie Baryluk
Anna Babey
Marianne Wawrykow & Chris Kowal
Elizabeth Banera
Anna Banera
Nick Banera
Anna Banera

Genevieve Berezny

William Berezny

Agnes Bilowus

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Violet Matwichyna

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Cathy Kowbel

Alice Krusznski

Vladimir & Marlene Solman

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Grace Chorney & family

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Patricia Ouellette (Leniuk)

Phyllis Shindak

Chris & Mary Winchar

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Dennis & Steffie Wawrykow

John Pawlychyn

Ed & Nancy Prociuk

Grace Prokop

Steve Prokop

Redemptorist Fathers C.Ss.R.

Stan & Luba Sirdar

Nelon Remenda

Elsie Remenda

Tom Rodeck

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Br. Thomas Sommerfield

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Michael Szadiak

Theodore & Helen Michaels

Joseph Velychkovsky

George & Christine Welleck

Marianne Waynert

William Berezny

Olga Werhun

Stan & Luba Sirdar

Vladimir & Marlene Solman

Bill & Mary Yakiwchuk

Robert & Shirley Erstelle

John G. Zatwarnitski Jr.

Adela Zatwarnitski

In Honor of...

In thanksgiving to Bl. Vasyl

Lise Anglin

Fr. Bohdan Borowec

Robert and Iris Cesmystruk

Bill & Olga Katerynuk

Brenda and Don Gulchak

Michelle Blanchard

Stan & Luba Sirdar

John & Mary Hykawy

Olga Szutiak

Eileen Kuzenko

Michelle Blanchard

Pat and Mickey

Ollie Babick

MacKalski grandchild

Marlene MacKalski

For the Health of...

Protection from the COVID-19
virus

Olga Hlus

Loraine Kozakawich & Chris Scott

Thomas Bailey & Terri Scott

Lenox York Abrenica

Clarita Abrenica

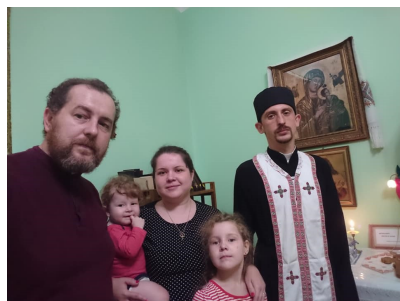
Boychuk Family
Olga Boychuk
Brenycz Family & Friends
Ewen & Stephanie Brenycz
Kevin Chorney
Grace Chorney & family
Zenon Derkach
Zenon Derkach
Linda Dudar
Daria Kyba
Ann Faseruk
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Olga Szutiak
Kenneth Fedorchuk
Theresa Antoniuk
Feeney Family
Frank & Agnes Feeney
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Darlene Sidak
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Mary Kokolski
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Sophia Demjanew
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Katerynuk family
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Fr. Methodius Kushko, C.Ss.R.
Rudy & Josie Macsymach & Family
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Olga Sakundiak
Teresa, Frank, David and Brian
Joseph & Elizabeth Senderewich
Phyllis Sianchuk
Mary Jane Kalenchuk
Iris Smellie
Ty Skelley
Tom & Cheryl Haughton
Eileen Yurchak
Sylvester & Eileen Yurchak
Joanne Zulak
Olga Szutiak

**Donations to the Shrine
can be made ONLINE
visit
www.bvmartyrshrine.com**

BLESSED VASYL MINISTRY IN UKRAINE



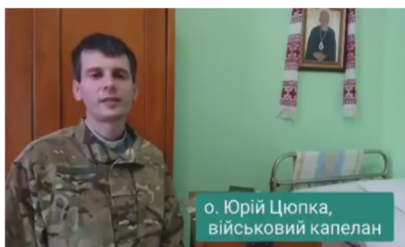
Moleben to Our Mother of Perpetual Help in Blessed Vasyl's apartment/ museum



Fr. Andriy Rak, C.Ss.R. celebrating Great Vespers on Blessed Vasyl's feastday



Bishop Peter Loza, C.Ss.R. celebrating Acatist in honour of Blessed Vasyl



Fr. Yuriy Tsiupka speaking about Blessed Vasyl's life in one of the "Witness for Christ" series, June 2020



Sr. Yelena, our new staff member, is given an orientation of the apartment/ museum by Sr. Epiphania

Fr. Yuriy Tsiupka speaking about Blessed Vasyl's life in one of the "Witness for Christ" series, June 2020



ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD



On August 15, 2020 Deacon Jay Korban was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan Lawrence Huculak. Fr. Jay was a long-time volunteer at the Shrine, beginning when he was still in high school. Fr. Korban acted in a short play on Blessed Vasy's life performed by a youth club on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the

Enshrinement. The play was taken across Canada (Saskatoon to Toronto) and later in 2012 became a short film called "Fragment of His Life" which is on our website.

Fr. Korban has been assigned to pastoral duties in the Rossburn District in Manitoba. We wish Fr. Jay and his wife Sophia and family all of God's blessings as he begins this new ministry. May Blessed Vasy always guide him and inspire him to be a good holy priest.



ONLINE MINISTRY

We are presently **LIVE STREAMING** from the Shrine chapel our **Wednesday evening** devotional services at **7 pm CST**. Through this new ministry we give you the opportunity, no matter where you are, to participate with us in these prayer services.

Our **Feast Day services** which took place June 27, 2020 can be found on our website YouTube channel. In particular, **please view the two testimonies.**

Summer Student

We were pleased again to have a student, **Eric Kolsun**, come back to work for the Shrine. Eric has been a long-time volunteer with the Shrine, especially on weekends. He brought his expertise in computer skills and with that helped to organize shrine files and update the website. His extensive volunteer experience enabled him to conduct pilgrimage tours for the pilgrims who came to visit the shrine. May God bless Eric as he continues his university studies.



Call in Prayer Requests

For a special intention or prayer request you may phone, email or submit on our website. Your prayer request will be placed in the Shrine and remembered in prayer every Wednesday evening after the service in honour of Blessed Vasy and during the morning Divine Liturgy in the Shrine.

Prayer to Blessed Martyr Bishop Vasy

*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 Vasy 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.*

COVID-19 SHRINE SCHEDULE

Monday:	Shrine is closed
Tuesday to Friday:	10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Saturday:	10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Because of the **Covid-19 pandemic**, the Shrine is not open after weekend Liturgies. Group tours are not available at this time.

EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING - 7:00 pm
Virtual Liturgical Service to Blessed Vasy
(Acafist or Moleben) is streamed on our YouTube Channel

For more information: **204-338-7321**
e-mail: info@bvmartyrshrine.com

Blessed Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine
250 Jefferson Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R2V 0M6
Tel: 204-338-7321 Email: info@bvmartyrshrine.com
Website: www.bvmartyrshrine.com