

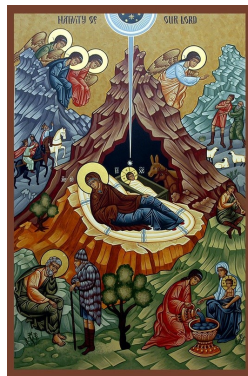


FULLY ALIVE

Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Our Byzantine Church prepares for the coming of Christ, the birth of our Saviour, with a forty day period known as St. Philip's Fast, or 'Pylypivka'. It begins after the feast of St. Philip in which we hear in the Gospel of St. John the words "Come and see." This season invites us to become more aware of the Light of Christ that shines in the darkness. In the northern hemisphere the world becomes darker and darker as it approaches the winter solstice. The Church chose this time to celebrate the birth of Jesus to proclaim loudly that God has definitively broken into our world by taking on our humanity and conquering the power of darkness. He is the Light of the world. Our Lord transforms all the dark moments of our lives into moments of spiritual growth by the light of His resurrection. God also chose to come into this world in poverty. He was born in a stable in the cold of winter and not in luxury and plenty. His cry becomes the cry of the poor. It is a plea to others to reach out and respond with charity and compassion.



This winter in war-torn Ukraine will be a very difficult one for the people. We have seen in recent weeks how the aggressor has tried to destroy the infrastructure of the country forcing people to live in darkness with no electricity, heat and running water. The people in Ukraine are sharing in the poverty of Christ. They too are calling out for compassion and help to survive these difficult circumstances. On the internet, one can see scenes of people helping each other with whatever they have. They are helping each other to rebuild their homes destroyed by shelling. They call out to the whole world to assist them in restoring the power grid, knowing that it could again be destroyed by the enemy's missiles. What is amazing is



that life continues. People are in high spirits and are ready to endure these hardships. Much of this is due to their deep faith in

God. God will not abandon them. Life is more than food and drink. It is found in their relationship with God and their love for freedom and dignity. The Ukrainian people are witnessing before the world the power of the human spirit when it is immersed in the presence of God - His Truth and His Life. They are witnessing to the power of the Light of Christ to overcome the darkness of their present circumstances.



The lights are out but prayer will not be interrupted.
Fr. Taras C.Ss.R.

Blessed Vasyl lived in similar circumstance for most of his life. As a young man he experienced the hardship of the First World War. As a young soldier he was captured, tortured psychologically, and imprisoned. In the darkness of the prison, young Vasyl experienced the light of God's call to dedicate himself as a priest. "This would be the best way that I could help Ukraine and its people." (A History of the Miraculous Icon of our Mother of Perpetual Help by Bl. Vasyl) After the war he entered the major seminary and later became a Redemptorist and a priest.

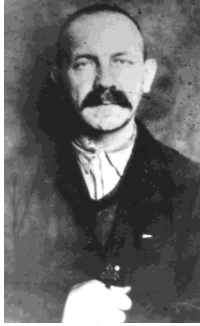
As a missionary priest, he shared in the poverty of the people of Volynia. Often, while he was on missions, he



Blessed Vasyl arriving in Volyn

would sleep in the barns on the hay because there was no room in the villager's house. He accepted this poverty for the sake of the Gospel so as not to place any obstacles in proclaiming the Good News. He had much success with the people of Volyn, forming dozens of parish communities.

After Blessed Vasyl's first arrest on August 7, 1945, he experienced poverty and torture in the various prisons where he was before his trial. During his trial he was sentenced to die by firing squad. When the sentence was read to him, he rejoiced because now he would be able to truly witness to Christ through a martyr's death. In the dark packed prison cell, which he shared with many others who were on death row, Blessed Vasyl in these dark circumstances began to evangelize his fellow prisoners.



They were open to the words of life that came from Blessed Vasyl's mouth. All were catechized, received the Mystery of Confession and the Holy Eucharist. The darkness in these prisoners' lives, who were facing imminent death for their crimes, was changed to hope and joy as they experience the generous mercy and love of God. Blessed Vasyl was for them a light in the darkness.

In the dark coal mines of Vorkuta, Blessed Vasyl continued to be an inspiration for his fellow prisoners. Boris Mirus, a fellow prisoner, called him their Chaplain. Blessed Vasyl gave them hope and a purpose to continue living and to interiorly fight the evil that was around them. Blessed Vasyl was always hopeful and

immersed in prayer. His presence gave his fellow prisoners the Light of Christ. Boris Mirus said that without Blessed Vasyl's presence with them, it would have been hard to survive.

This hope in the presence of Christ, in all the difficult circumstances of life continued, as Blessed Vasyl organized and inspired the activities of the underground clandestine Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Under his influence, encouragement and inspiration, this church grew strong, because it knew that God was more powerful than all the evil around them.

May Blessed Vasyl's faith and confidence in God be an inspiration for the people of Ukraine in these difficult times of war. May he also be a source of hope for us when we come face to face with trials and difficulties. May he change our darkness into light.

Ministry in Ukraine

The ministry of promoting Blessed Vasyl in Ukraine continues even despite the horrors of war.



Presentation to the parish in Kozova



Pilgrimage to Krekhiv



Children from St. Andrew's Parish, Lviv visiting the Museum



Pilgrimage to Zarvanytsia Way of the Cross



A group visiting the museum from St. Demetrius Parish, Lviv



Pilgrimage to Zazdrist

ORPHAN MINISTRY IN UKRAINE

We have been supporting Sister Julia and her work with orphans in Ukraine for a number of years. For a number of years now Sister has a ministry caring for young girls at risk, becoming their "foster" mother. Her place is called "Home for Girls in honour of Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky". She is now under the patronage of the Archbishop of Lviv, Metropolitan Ihor Vozniak, C.Ss.R. When she officially made her vows and commitment before him, Metropolitan Ihor gave her the name 'Sister Natalia'. We now will be referring to her as Sister Natalia.

Sister Natalia also works as the director of an orphanage in Lviv. When the war broke out, her first task was to ensure the safety of her girls, not only the girls living with her but also the orphans. This she did by sending them to Poland and later to Italy. She continued to receive new orphans from the war torn zone and the front lines in eastern Ukraine. Her orphanage became one of the centres for humanitarian aid. She personally took many caravans to the front with medical, food, clothing and other supplies. In early June, she began to suspect that something was wrong in Italy where the girls and children



Sister Natalia with her girls before leaving Italy.

were staying. She personally went there to discover that they were all in great danger of being trafficked. With much difficulty and through legal means and the intervention from the Ukrainian government, she was able to

bring these children and girls back to Ukraine.

Through your financial help, she was able to provide summer rehabilitation camps for the orphans and addiction rehabilitation camps for her girls. When the new school year began, tutors were provided for the young girls to help them improve in their studies. Most of the young girls had dysfunctional backgrounds with almost no education. These tutors were possible through your support. The cost of the tutors is approximately \$1,700.00 a month. Some of the young girls who have been with Sister Natalia have now left as they have completed their higher studies and a few of them are working with her in the orphanage. We have seen and are seeing miraculous transformations of these young girls as they become responsible young women.

This summer Sister Natalia received two new young girls. The first was ten-year-old Veronica. Her apartment was shelled in the Donbas region. Her parents and grandparents were killed in the attack and she was severely wounded. After undergoing many surgeries, she still has many permanent scars: fingers missing, shrapnel in her head and neck, and the loss of sight in one eye. Veronica is now Sister Natalia's foster child. She will require additional financial help especially with medical and psychological therapy and healing.



Sister has also taken in a thirteen-year-old orphan who is pregnant. She did this to protect the unborn child and to provide support and guidance for the very young mother to be. The road ahead will be difficult.

With the recent missile attacks on Ukraine, two of the missiles fell near the apartment where Sister lives with the girls. They fell only a few hundred yards from their place. The experience was traumatic. This has affected the living conditions for Sister and the girls. Sister is searching to find new accommodations outside the city of Lviv for the safety of the girls. Since the power grid has been badly damaged by the war, the city of Lviv continues to experience blackouts causing lack of electricity and heat.

We invite you to help make a difference in the lives of these orphans and girls at risk. Financial support goes a long way to enable Sister Natalia in her charitable mission especially during this difficult time of war.

Cheques can be made to **"Ukrainian Catholic Mission"**. 250 Jefferson Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2V 0M6. In the memo, please indicate, "orphan war relief".

We thank you in advance for your generous and continued support.

Fr. John Sianchuk, C.Ss.R.

Mary Jane Kalenchuk

Through the intercession of Blessed Vasyl—the Shrine Staff prays that you experience the Light in the darkness this Christmas. May it be filled with peace, hope and health. May this be a source of your strength throughout the New Year.

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 September 1 until November 21, 2022

+ \$1,000

Dolores & Jack Daniels

+ \$500

Sylvia Bock

Paul & Lynne Kyba

Walter & Adele Mychasiw

+ \$100

Mark & Sonya Galarnyk

Joyce Gannon

Archbishop Borys Gudziak

Gertrude Karapita

William & Phyllis Kobitowich

David Newberry

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Sonya Pawliw

Fr. Robert Polz

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Women's League of Canada

Fred Stoyka

Paul Tinguely

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Jim & Helen Adamko

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Nicholas & Hazel Borodey

Alan Chanway

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Maureen Delorme

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William Vandervan

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William Berezny

Taras Berezny

William Berezny

Myron Bielak

Judy Bielak

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Mitrat Michael Buyachok

Marie Gwozd

Helen Jakimeczko

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Marilyn Krawchuk

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Yaroslava Demko

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Sir Knight John Tymkiw

Deacon Victor & Mary Humniski

Peter Iwanuck

Vladimir & Marlene Solman

Nick & Mary Winchar

Chris Winchar

In Honor Of...

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Bill & Olga Katerynuk

Mary Kushner for her 100th Birthday

Marie Gwozd

Elizabeth Mary Sliva & Family

Robert & Lydia Sliva

Mando & Elisea Tagarda

Marfe Prado

The Holy Souls

Henri & Miriam Ragetti

Peace in Ukraine

Anonymous

People of Ukraine
Orest Pidwerbeski

For the Health Of...

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Helen Stockburn

Dennis & Pat Beyak

Edward & Anne Faseruk

Czemerynski Family

Krystyna Czemenynski

Zenon Derkach

Zenon Derkach

Orest Eveneshen

Orest & Evelyn Eveneshen

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Romeo & Maria Miniano

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Mykytshyn Familiy

Nestor Mykytyshyn

Lillian Sianchuk & Family

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Helen Stockburn

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Paul & Kristya Thullner

Paul Thullner & Kristya Matwychyna

Valarie Zaporzan

William & Mary Zaporzan

*When planning your charitable donations,
remember to include the*

Blessed Vasyl National Martyr's Shrine

*All gifts are used for the upkeep of the Shrine and
Museum, and for the ministry to promote the
knowledge of and devotion to Blessed Vasyl.*

*Donations can be mailed in, called in or made online
through the Shrine website.*

Thank you

NEW TO THE SHRINE

**The Blessed Vasyl National Martyr's
Shrine can now except gifts of
public traded securities.**

Your gift of securities entitles you to a **donation receipt for the
full market value** of your contribution.

For more information contact the Shrine Office
at 204-338-7321 or email your request to
info@bvmartyrshrine.com

DEVOTION TO BLESSED VASYL—IMPACTING LIVES TODAY

Since first visiting Blessed Vasyl's shrine many years ago, we have been inspired by his story and have sought his intercessory prayer on several occasions. Because of this, while expecting our second child, we decided to name him Josiah Vasyl in Blessed Vasyl's honor, and invoked him as a patron saint. The pregnancy went smoothly, however there were complications during birth that resulted in our son failing to breathe on his own. Although emergency medical staff were called in to assist, additional interventions were not needed, as Josiah suddenly started breathing normally on his own. He suffered no ill effects from the lack of oxygen and continues to be a healthy, active toddler. Although we were extremely relieved and grateful at the time, we didn't learn until later on the role that Blessed Vasyl's intercession played.

When we called my parents in Winnipeg later and told them about the name we had chosen, my mom shared with us.... *"Dad & I had heard in the evening there were some challenges with labor and decided to pray a rosary but felt strongly drawn to pray the rosary before the Holy Relics of Blessed Vasyl which is posted*

on the website. We were aware that it was available there but had not prayed with it before. Last night we just knew it was something we had to do and now we know why. Blessed Vasyl has interceded for Josiah and he has been healed! We did not know that you were naming him in honour of Blessed Vasyl, yet we knew that we were called to pray that particular rosary for him. We are amazed....and so very grateful!" We too were amazed to hear of how through the promptings of the Holy Spirit, prayers of our parents and intercession of Blessed Vasyl, our child was healed and protected.



Although we aren't able to visit the shrine very often, devotions to Blessed Vasyl continue to be a central part of our family prayer, and we are appreciative for all the work being done to promote his cause. We pray that many will continue to be blessed by encountering Christ through his life story and intercession.

*Wendy Bredeman—Abbotsford, BC
Daughter of Sandy & Norm Dobson*

Visitors to the Shrine



Fr. Robert Polz (Winnipeg) with visitors from the Philippines



Fr. Vasyl & Natalia Hoy

Thank you to all those who take time to visit the Museum and spend time in prayer before the Holy Relics of Blessed Vasyl. Here are only a few photos of some of the recent visitors



Saint Basil's Ukrainian Catholic Parish (Winnipeg) Youth, Children & Families

Sts. Vladimir & Olga Cathedral Ridna Shkola visited the Shrine and Museum. They participated in workshops, tours and concluded with intercessory prayers for their intentions and for Ukraine.



Call in Prayer Requests

If you have a special intention or prayer request and would like it placed in the Shrine you can call the office, email or submit it through the website. Every Wednesday during the morning Divine Liturgy in the Shrine and at the evening devotional service in honour of Blessed Vasyl, these intentions are remembered in prayer.

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.*

ONLINE MINISTRY

Pray before the Holy Relics
The Rosary

The Blessed Vasyl Chaplet

all are available at anytime on the
Blessed Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine
YouTube Channel.

LIVE STREAMING of the
Devotional Liturgical Services are broadcast
every Wednesday - 7 p.m. CDT on



SHRINE SCHEDULE

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

The Shrine is open after weekend Liturgies.
Group tours are available,
to make arrangements contact the Shrine Office

Join us **EVERY WEDNESDAY** at 7:00 pm
For a Liturgical Service in Honour of Blessed Vasyl
(Acathist or Moleben)

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

Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine

250 Jefferson Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R2V 0M6

Tel/Fax: 204-338-7321 Email: info@bvmartyrshrine.com Website: www.bvmartyrshrine.com