

FULLY ALIVE

Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine

EMBRACING THE CROSS—HOPE IN THE RESSURECTION

The war in Ukraine has now entered its second year. As the war continues, one can see an attitude change in the Ukrainian people. For the most part, they have become "acclimatized" to the terrors of war. Life continues, and they bear the dangers and unknowns of this war daily. A missile can strike anywhere and at any time. The people continue with their daily work amid the uncertainties of the time. The Ukrainian soldiers continue to lay their lives on the line to defend their homeland, not knowing if they will see tomorrow. They do this with conviction and with love for their country and the Ukrainian people. In some way, one can say that they are all carrying the cross daily, accepting their circumstances in life. They bear the cross of uncertainty and conflict that has been placed on their shoulders at this time of war. The people bury the dead and continue in the war effort in whatever way they can. The enemy cannot and will not break their spirit.



What does it mean to embrace the Cross of Christ? This article is being written during the week of the Veneration of the Holy Cross. To embrace the Cross is not just to bow down and kiss the Holy Cross as we make this journey of the Great Fast. It does mean bearing life's burdens, knowing that Jesus did the same. In the end, Jesus won the victory over evil through the carrying of the Cross. Blessed Vasyl embraced the cross in his life.

Most of Blessed Vasyl's life was spent in some form of persecution. As a young priest and missionary in the Volyn region of Ukraine, Blessed

Vasyl endured the hardship and poverty of his mission work as he ministered to the poor immigrants. He had to contend with the criticisms and accusations from the foreign political government and church, who accused him of anti-Polonization. After the adversaries appealed to Rome, Blessed Vasyl was forced to leave Volyn and return to Western Ukraine. He did all this without complaining but rather accepted it as the Will of God.

Shortly after, the Second World War began. He now experienced persecution under the Soviets. Arrested in Ivano-Frankivsk for a procession in honour of our Mother of Perpetual Help, he placed his hands in the Blessed Virgin's and trusted that God's Will would be accomplished. He confidently embraced this cross, knowing that the Lord was with him and would be

victorious in the end. This same attitude accompanied Blessed Vasyl throughout his arrest in Ternopil in 1945, his interrogations, his time on death row, and his severe life and imprisonment in the far north coal mines in Vorkuta. Blessed Vasyl continued daily to live his life, remaining faithful to prayer and compassion for his fellow prisoners. In prison, because he embraced his cross with joy and faith, he became a beacon of hope and light to those who lived with him and, at the same time, was a threat to the enemy guards. Evil cannot bear to see the Cross carried with hope.

When he returned from prison and came to Lviv, Blessed Vasyl continued to do his priestly work faithfully and courageously. Despite the constant persecution and the watchful eyes of the KGB, he continued to secretly celebrate the Divine Liturgy, organize monasteries, give retreats to the sisters, organize seminaries, and

encourage and guide fellow priests to do the same. Later as a bishop, he ordained some 40 priests and consecrated Bishop Volodymyr Sterniuk, who continued Blessed Vasyl's work after he was exiled from Ukraine.

Embracing the cross for Blessed Vasyl meant that he lived a full, faithful Christian life with joy, hope, and love amid his circumstances. Despite the difficulties of the persecution, his eyes were



set upon Jesus, the Blessed Mother, and their promise of the Resurrection. This faith allowed him to bear the burden of the cross with joy and hope.

We can learn how to embrace the Cross in our life from the example of Blessed Vasyl and the people of Ukraine. We need not focus on the pain, the burden, and the injustice of circumstances, but rather see the Cross as an opportunity to give our life to God. For us, the Cross becomes the sign of victory over evil and all its consequences. United with Christ, we are then able to bear our crosses with joy and hope in the final victory. The people in Ukraine are refusing to allow the evil aggressor to extinguish their hope of victory by bearing their daily crosses and living their lives with faith in God's power. May Blessed Vasyl help us to do the same.

MINISTRY IN UKRAINE

The war in Ukraine continues until today. Despite the dangers of indiscriminant shelling, terrorizing the people of Ukraine, our Blessed Vasyl ministry continues. The Museum/Apartment in Lviv has visitors and regular services. Oleh and Tanya continue their presentations even into the war zone. They have now extended their ministry to visiting wounded soldiers in military hospitals.

Presentation (that was also live-streamed to over 7,000 people) at the Protection of the Virgin Mary Church in Dnipro.





Blessed Vasyl Icon in the city of Dnipro.









Young carolers bring greetings to the Museum/Apartment in Lviv



Pilgrimage to the Franciscan Church

Presentation at the Church of St.



Lviv Prison Chapel



Ministry in a Military Hospital, 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 National Martyr's Shrine. May Blessed Vasyl bless each one of you.

Contributions listed below are from November 22, 2022 until March 15,2023

In memory of Vera & John Chyzowski

Terri Chyzowski

Fallen Soldiers in Ukraine

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In memory of Steve Sianchuk

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Valerie Stanowski
Chris Topar
Helen Stockburn
Orest Zahayko
Orest & Elizabeth Zahayko
Volunteer Staff of the Shrine
Phyllis Shindak

IN MEMORIAM

Lillian Sianchuk, one of the first volunteers of the Blessed Velychkovsky Martyr's Shrine, passed away February 25, 2023. Her devotion to Blessed Vasyl was a big part of her daily life. She volunteered for years and rarely missed a devotional service over the past twenty years. May her memory be eternal. Вічная Пам'ять!



Alicia Topor





HOSPITALITY MINISTRY

I always look forward to the days I volunteer at the Shrine. I am thrilled to welcome pilgrims from Ukraine and other parts of the world. Local regulars consistently come to pray before the sarcophagus of Blessed Vasyl, light a candle, make a donation or request prayers for special intentions. I truly enjoy greeting them and their families. Visitors often chose to share a little about their faith journey and I treasure meeting them.

Personally, these hours allow me to think less of the business of the outside world and listen to God speaking to me; helping me discern where He wants me to focus my energy every day. At home, my intentions to pray and meditate are often interrupted, but when at the Shrine, I am surrounded by the grace and mystery of the presence of Blessed Vasyl as I strive to listen to God's word. It is also a time to pray for all the intentions of our pilgrims and add my own intensive prayers for Ukraine, my family, community, friends and relatives.

My family feels a very strong connection with Blessed Vasyl and his power of prayer and intercession. It is interesting to note that my husband and grandson are both named Vasyl!

I would encourage all who are able, to contact the Shrine Office to schedule a time to serve in this very precious ministry. I find it be to an extremely rewarding and inspirational experience.

Maryka Chabluk—Shrine Volunteer

DEVOTION TO BLESSED VASYL IMPACTING LIVES TODAY

Having the Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky Shrine in Winnipeg is like a miracle to me. To be so far away from home but at the same time to have a place where you can feel to be at home is a miracle. The Shrine is a special place for my family and me: very sacred, pure and, at the same time, vulnerable. Knowing how much Blessed Vasyl went through, his sacrifice and dedication to our Mother of God, makes this place holy. He worried for Ukraine a lot, his prayers were for his people, and he suffered for his Church and his country.

War in Ukraine impacted us all so much, we could not sleep, eat, even sometimes pray. At the beginning, there was a feeling of guilt that we are so far and cannot be there to support our family, friends, and our people. However, the Shrine was a place where I spiritually could feel connected to my nation, their suffering and pain, the place where I could and still can ask for help in a prayer through the intercession of Blessed Vasyl. He went through a lot of pain and injustice; he knows how it is to suffer and knows the feeling of being far away from home.

Also, I have experienced miracles in my life through the intercession of Blessed Vasyl, asking God for help if it is His will for that. There were times when things looked impossible for others but turned out possible for me and my family.

I am so glad there is a rosary asking for Blessed Vasyl intercession that I often use as a lullaby for my son when he has trouble sleeping. This was and still is a very sweet experience in this, sometimes, bitter experience of life.

Священномучениче Василіє, моли за нас Ісуса і Марію!

Halyna Deva is from Ukraine, she now lives in Winnipeg, Canada with her husband Roman and their son Marko



Introducing a New Video Series

Now available on the
Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine
YouTube Channel.

Episode 1—Book on the Mother of Perpetual Help

Episode 2—The Lost Church in Zboisk

Episode 3—The Cross: Great Faith and Courage

Episode 4—The Cross: Power of Prayer

Episode 5—The Broken Spoon

.....more to come

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.

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



facebook

SAVE THE DATE!

June 27, 2023

Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky Feastday

Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Death of Blessed Vasyl

On June 27th, we will also celebrate the Deaconal ordination of Sub-Deacon Ivan Dzhur, C.Ss.R. by Bishop Bryan Bayda, C.Ss.R.at 10 a.m.

The Feastday celebration will begin in the evening of June 26th and continue in the afternoon of the 27th. Details to be in the next Shrine Newsletter.

If you would like to receive a detailed schedule prior to the day please call or email the Shrine Office.

Wishing all our supporters and their families a Blessed Easter!

XPUCTOC BOCKPEC! BOICTUHY BOCKPEC! CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

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.

SHRINE SCHEDULE

Monday: Shrine is closed 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

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