



FULLY ALIVE

Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine

Light in the Darkness

The light of Christ always shone brightly within Blessed Vasyl despite all the darkness of possible imprisonment and death that followed and surrounded him.

In 2004, Fr. John Sianchuk interviewed Sister Mykola Pandrak, a Sister of Mercy, who shared some of her experiences and observations of Father Vasyl Velychkovsky.



Sr. Mykola Pandrak
Sister of Mercy

"When Fr. Velychkovsky returned from imprisonment to Lviv in 1955, he lived together with Brother Irene in the home of an old lady, who was suffering with her legs. He was an extraordinary good father for many priests, religious and laity. He was a father for their souls - it was breathtaking. He and his home were open to everyone.

Father Velychkovsky had no free time, because from morning to night, many priests came to him and among them married priests, who, because of fear of imprisonment, accepted the Moscow Orthodox Church in 1946 and now wanted to return to the Catholic Church.



Entrance to his apartment

Father fought to have our Church become liberated. Lying in her bed, the elderly Polish lady living with them often said: "Let Fr. Vasyl go nowhere, because they will put him in prison again."

To which Father Velychkovsky responded: "That is why I became a priest, in order to fight for and defend the Church and our people and not to be afraid of prison. I came from prison and will return to prison. This I know." Father Vasyl Velychkovsky was extraordinarily good, courageous and he begged others to be courageous and not be afraid to suffer for our Lord God and for the Church. He also was very zealous. When he gave retreats or sermons on the Mother of God, he would cry. He loved the Mother of God very much and talking about her, he would dry his eyes and never let the rosary leave his hands."

Sister Mykola was Father Velychkovsky's cook. Because of this, she was grateful to have the opportunity to get to know him better.

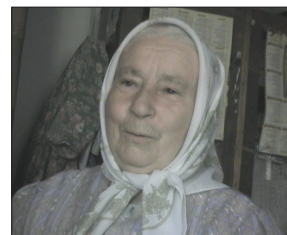
Father often would say "Sister, may not one priest leave this place hungry. If you run out of the main course, then give him some soup and a piece of bread." He would give Sister money to go to the bazaar and buy produce. He told her what to prepare. Sister did not always know how to prepare what he wanted. Father Vasyl would help her with the preparations.



Apartment kitchen today

"Those were terrible times, but Father Vasyl was very courageous and supported all of us. He preached beautiful sermons and was able to calm us down and said: "It has to be this way, for it is God's will. But we pray and certainly we will come out of that situation." That gave us a push, not to be afraid to sacrifice ourselves for God. Unfortunately, Bishop Velychkovsky was not able to see that day of freedom." Sister Mykola Pandrak.

In 2005, Father John met Anna Kakalyuk, a lay person that often went to confession to Father Vasyl. In her interview she remembered that once she came to his apartment early and was in time for Liturgy. *"During the homily, Fr. Vasyl related that during his first imprisonment, he was placed on death row with others, who were also sentenced to death. The prisoners together asked him "Who are you?" They heard the answer: "I am a Catholic priest." "If you are a priest, then baptize us, confess us, for we are going to our death." For several months, as Fr. Velychkovsky waited for his sentence to be fulfilled on death row, he prepared his fellow prisoners for their inevitable death. When it was his turn and he heard the words: "Vasyl Velychkovsky, come out.", he expected to be shot, but his sentence was changed to 10 years in labour camps. That was God's grace!*



Anna Kakalyuk



Blessed Vasyl's apartment today

Anna went on to relay "I remember a story which Father Velychkovsky shared and which happened to him when he returned from exile.

Father was walking through the streets of Lviv praying the rosary, when he met his "tail", who was assigned to follow him. His "tail" recognized him and asked him: "So Father, you have already returned from prison? Did you sign to become Orthodox?" Fr. Velychkovsky answered: "No, I did not sign it nor will I." The "tail" said to him: "Come tomorrow to my office. You will either sign to become orthodox or you will go again to prison." "I am ready now. I don't even have to go home. It is better that I go immediately to prison, rather than sign that document." The "tail" forcefully said: "No, go home. Tomorrow, you will come."

The next day, Fr. Vasyl took with himself a bottle of water, some biscuits in a bag and his walking stick, which he always used. He came to the KGB officer and was told to

wait. Father sat and waited for the officer to call him in. Finally, he received Father and again asked him: "You will sign your transition to Orthodoxy." Father answered: "NO!" and pointed upward to heaven: "I must prepare myself for that place and not sign to become Orthodox... I will never betray Jesus."



The KGB officer tortured him for some time with words and Father thought that the officer would beat him. However, the officer didn't touch Father, but rather came to him, patted him on the back, and asked: "Father, will you baptize my two children? You would not betray your own faith and you will not betray me." Father replied: "You said that I would go to prison?" "No, you will not go to prison, but you will baptize my children." Fr. Velychkovsky baptized his children and remained free."

May the examples of Blessed Vasyl's life kindle the light of Christ within you. May you share that light of kindness and love with those in need.

In 2025, the Catholic faithful around the world are invited to participate in the Jubilee Year – Pilgrims of Hope



The logo shows four stylized figures, representing all of humanity, coming from the four corners of the earth. They embrace each other to indicate the solidarity and fraternity which should unite all peoples. The figure at the front is holding onto the cross. It is not only the sign of the faith which this lead figure embraces, but also of hope, which can never be abandoned, because we are always in need of hope, especially in our moments of greatest need. There are the rough waves under the figures, symbolizing the fact that life's pilgrimage does not always go smoothly in calm waters. Often the circumstances of daily life and events in the wider world require a greater call to hope. That's why we should pay special attention to the lower part of the cross which has been elongated and turned into the shape of an anchor which is let down into the waves. The anchor is well known as a symbol of hope. In maritime jargon the 'anchor of hope' refers to the reserve anchor used by vessels involved in emergency manoeuvres to stabilize the ship during storms. It is worth noting that the image illustrates the pilgrim's journey not as an individual undertaking, but rather as something communal, marked by an increasing dynamism leading one ever closer to the cross. The cross in the logo is by no means static, but it is also dynamic. It bends down towards humanity, not leaving human beings alone, but stretching out to them to offer the certainty of its presence and the security of hope. At the bottom of the logo is the motto of the 2025 Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of hope.³

Pope Francis, in announcing this Jubilee, teaches us that "the Christian life is a journey calling for moments of greater intensity to encourage and sustain hope as the constant companion that guides our steps towards the goal of our encounter with the Lord Jesus."¹ For a practical way of striving for these moments of greater intensity, he proposes that this year would have a special focus on the ancient custom of pilgrimages: "Pilgrimage is of course a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life. A pilgrimage on foot is a great aid for rediscovering the value of silence, effort and simplicity of life. In the coming year, pilgrims of hope will surely travel the ancient and more modern routes in order to experience the Jubilee to the full."²

The **Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine** is designated by the local ordinary (local hierarch—Metropolitan Lawrence Huculak) as an official sacred place for pilgrimages during Jubilee 2025. If you have not visited the Shrine, we invite you to plan your pilgrimage during this holy year. The Shrine will be offering opportunities for additional prayers, Liturgical services, reconciliation and anointing.

¹ https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/bulls/documents/20240509_spes-non-confundit_bolla-giubileo2025.html

² *ibid*

³ <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/logo.html>

**INTERESTED in planning
a Pilgrimage to the**

**Bishop Velychkovsky
National Martyr's Shrine**

Call—204-338-7321

Email: info@bvmartyrshrine.com

Visitors to the Shrine

In October, a group representing Jesus Youth Manitoba embarked on a Walking Rosary Pilgrimage. They processed 8 km through downtown Winnipeg from the Grotto at Holy Cross Church to the Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine while praying the rosary.



*Inessa McIntyre
Edmonton, Alberta*



Prison Ministry Volunteers from Winnipeg



Canadian Military Chaplains



Mary, Mother of the Church Parish (Archdiocese of St. Boniface) recently made a Pilgrimage to the Shrine. They were joined by their Pastor Fr. Jean Baptiste Anh Duy Nguyen — "Fr. JB"

DEVOTION TO BLESSED VASYL IMPACTING LIVES TODAY

When attending the Blessed Vasyi Feast Day this past June 27th, I prayed and put my petitions in. I was healed from a 20 year addiction. At a later time I spoke to my brother and he said the very exact same day he was healed from a cocaine addiction. He quit dealing drugs that day as well! Also, the co-worker I was praying for got his permanent residency in Canada!

Praise the Lord and Blessed Vasyi for his petitions to the Lord for me!

- Brittany

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. Through the intercession of Blessed Vasyl may each of you be blessed.

Contributions listed below are from September 20 until November 22, 2024

\$5,000 +

In memory of Paul Gulka

Chabluk Family

\$1,000 +

Steve Prokop

Helen Stockburn

\$500 +

In memory of Fr. Boris Kyba, C.Ss.R.

Paul & Lynne Kyba

Bishop Emeritus Peter Stasiuk, C.Ss.R.

In honour of our Parents

Janice Tycholis-Lloyd & Mark Lloyd

\$100 +

Greg & Erica Barrett

Michelle Blanchard

Helen Byskal

Bert & Val Galay

Roland LaFleche

Andrew Mathuik

Edgar & Carmelita Natarte

Olga Nazar

Salbatora Scaletta

Henry & Iris Spilchuk

<\$100

Peter Adams

Mhei Alcos

Leila Bock-Freeman

Diana Borys

Ken & Irene Bosiak

Bernardito Cornejo

Marie Del Rosario

Noel Delaquis

Michael Issigonis & Mary Egan-Issigonis

Rosaria Jajalla

Fr. David Misbrenner

Gardana Nikolic

Ariadna Ochrymovych

Ken & Hedy Pawluk

Richard & Marietta Persian

Marfe Prado

Allan Prychitko

Theodore Reznowski

Ivan Savka

Steven Schmaltz

Robert & Lydia Sliva

Iris Smellie

Fred Stoyka

William Vanderven

Fr. Stephen & Maria Wojcichowsky

In Memory Of...

H.P. Demchuk Family

Edward & Josephine Demchuk

Rick Frenzel

Evelyn Kardynal

Marcella Garner (Drosdoski)

Darlene Sidak

Kelly L. & Walter Harack

Marilyn Krawchuk

Irene Holowaty

Michael & Mary Gnutel

Harry & Mark Kardynal

Evelyn Kardynal

John & Barabara Karlicki

William J. Karlicki

Jim Keller

Hoosli Ukrainian Folk Ensemble Inc.

Gary & Janis Lukie

Isabel Lukie

Fr. John Kracher

Dirk Schmid

Alice Kulyk

Garr & Helene Kukura

Fr. Methodius Kushko, C.Ss.R.

Tom & Julie Abrametz

William Berezny

Clarence & Helena Demchuk

Walter Lytwyn

John & Martha Baluta

Harry & Doreen Boychuk

Sonia Domitruk

Joanne Hindbjorgen

Kukura Family

Vera Marchuk

Josie Macsychmach

Gary & Janis Lukie

Dennis & Steffie Wawrykow

Kevin Mandziuk

James & Elaine Mandziuk

Blaine Manyuk

John & Martha Baluta

Edward & Josephine Michealycia

Marilyn Krawchuk

Norris Pawlychka

Gary & Janis Lukie

Jo-Ann Prodor

Julian & Barbara Koziak

Joan Sikorsky

Henry Rymarczuk

Edward & Anne Faseruk

Hans Schmid

Dirk Schmid

Stan Sirdar

John & Yvonne Sirdar

Marlene Solman

Gary & Janis Lukie

William G. Valko

Mary Valko

Elizabeth Veert

Olga Szutiak

Leshia Zabudney

Helen Jakimeczko

Zdan, Zalluski, Zuke & Ryzner Families

Rick & Tara Ryzner

In Honour Of...

Diane & Bob Gingera

Mary Kokolski

Elise Tin

Mary Valko

Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky

Rev. Protodeacon Stefan

& Maria Tyrawski

Father Michael Winn

Elaine Bowman

Health Of...

William Berezny

William Berezny

Vicki Chaikowsky

Terry & Vicki Chaikowsky

Edwardo Contreras

Clarita Abrenica

Margret & Quinton

Jean Derhak

Merlito Garcia

Clarita Abrenica

Metropolitan Lawrence Huculak, O.S.B.M.

Rev. Protodeacon Stefan

& Maria Tyrawski

John & Mary Hykawy

Orest & Margaret Fedorchuk

Spencer & Olga Katerynuk

Olga Katerynuk

Chilo Mendoza

Clarita Abrenica

Laurel Pasternak

Jerry Pasternak

Nataliya, Ivan, Stefan, Danylo,

Tia, Noelle

Ivan Roman & Nataliya Markevych

Zlata Sakharniuk

Rev. Protodeacon Stefan

& Maria Tyrawski

Michelle Scott

Ted & Amelia Malfair

Bishop Emeritus Peter Stasiuk, C.Ss.R.

Joseph & Elizabeth Senderewich

Elise Tin

Mary Valko

Hazen Mateo Valdes

Sonia Valdes

Austin Zatwarnitski

Adela Zatwarnitski

When planning your charitable donations remember to include the

Blessed Vasyl Martyr's Shrine

It is also a wonderful way to remember family and friends by choosing to make your donation a tribute Gift in memory, in honour, or for the health of someone special.

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

NEW—the Shrine now accepts
E-Transfers

Call 204-338-7321 for more information.

Ministry in Ukraine

Thank you to all those who responded to our request to help with our ministry in Ukraine. Your support is helping to purchase a van enabling our staff to share Blessed Vasyl throughout the country.



The van has been purchased. However, we still need more help to reach our financial goal.



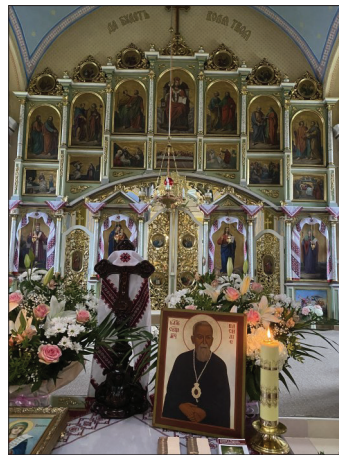
Museum staff visit Rohatyn, in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast in western Ukraine



Hrushiv, Drohobych district



Presentation at the Church of St. Nicholas in Berdykhiv, Yavoriv district. Lviv region



Church of St. Nicholas in the village of Pidluby, Yavoriv district. Lviv region

Orphan Ministry & Military Aid

Sister Natalia continues to care for and educate at-risk girls during this uncertain time of war. Many are now studying in universities and colleges. Your donations have paid for tutors, who have helped these girls. She also shared with



us the trauma that her girls are experiencing, because of the constant air raid sirens and threats of missile strikes. Besides the orphan ministry, we are also involved in providing military aid to the soldiers whom we know through Sister Natalia. We were able to purchase a surveillance drone ('eyes in the sky'), to protect the soldiers from enemy attacks and capture. A group of our Ukrainian immigrants from St. Joseph's Ukrainian Catholic Church raised funds for medical supplies and winter clothing. God bless you for your generous donations to the orphan ministry and military aid.



Donations can be made to **Ukrainian Catholic Mission**—250 Jefferson Avenue Winnipeg, MB R2V 0M6.
PRAY FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE!

*On behalf of the Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine Staff
We pray through the intercession of Blessed Vasyl
that you have a blessed Christmas filled with peace, hope and health.
May this be a source of your strength throughout the New Year.*

**Looking for a unique gift idea
Visit the Shrine Gift Shop**

<https://bvmartyrshrine.com/>



Items include: rosaries in various colours
Icon of Blessed Vasyl
Various Books
Candles
Holy Cards
Keychains.....and more

**Hand-crafted Rosary in honour of
Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky**

This special order rosary contains a 3rd Class Relic of Blessed Vasyl. In the centre medallion is a piece of cloth that touched his holy body when it was exhumed. Each rosary is prayerfully created by Winnipeg Artisan, Chantal Bishop.

During the process of creating the rosary, Chantal offers prayers of intercession to Blessed Vasyl for the needs of the person that will be receiving the rosary.

To pre-order a rosary visit the Shrine Gift Shop online.



Please notify the Shrine of any graces or blessings received through the intercession of Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky.

Call 204-338-7321 or
Email: info@bvmartyrshrine.com

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

You are invited to 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 - every Wednesday

Praying for Ukraine - 1:30 p.m. CST
Devotional Services - 7 p.m. CST
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
Sunday: Shrine is open during Divine Liturgies.
The Museum is open after the Divine Liturgies

Group tours are available. To make a reservation call 204-338-7321 or e-mail: info@bvmartyrshrine.com

Website: www.bvmartyrshrine.com

EVERY WEDNESDAY:

8 a.m. Divine Liturgy in the Shrine
1:30 p.m. Praying for Ukraine
7 p.m. Devotional Service to Blessed Vasyl (Acatlist or Moleben)

Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine
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