



НАША ДОРОГА NASHA DOROHA

PM40007760 ♦ осінь/fall 3(82)/2023



Nativity of the Mother of God
Ukrainian Refugees in Medjugorje
Pidpenky Season

Not a vegetable or a fruit, mushrooms are a fungus and are part of a wider species that contains deadly fungi, as well as delightfully tasty ones. They also have a wide range of health benefits and are low in calories yet remain very filling.

Mushroom Facts

1. Portobello, Button, and White (Cremini) Mushrooms are all the same

These three common varieties of mushrooms are all the same species—*Agaricus bisporus*—just at different levels of maturity.

2. Portobello Mushrooms are Filled with Useful Nutrients—More Than a Banana

Portobello Mushrooms' best health benefits come from their high micronutrient content. They contain more potassium than a banana, and two Portobello mushrooms will give you half your daily niacin needs.

3. Some Mushrooms Can Create Their Own Wind

For years people thought mushrooms moved around like other types of seed, through excretion by mammals, wind blowing the seeds around or through the available water supply.

Recent studies from Harvard University show that some mushrooms can actually generate their own wind, pushing themselves up to four inches up and sideways. This means that they can slowly grow and develop a colony of mushrooms across a forest floor.

4. There is an Edible Mushroom that Grows in the Wild that Tastes Nearly Identical to Fried Chicken

This fried chicken-tasting mushroom is called *Laetiporus sulphureus* and is more commonly known as "Chicken of the Woods." It can be found across Europe and North America mainly on oak trees, but can also be found on yew, cherry, and sweet chestnut trees.

5. Bioluminescent Mushrooms

Bioluminescence is when a plant or fungi naturally produces its own light. This requires a compound called oxyluciferin that, when paired with an enzyme and oxygen, releases light. This is also what fireflies use to light themselves at night. Some mushrooms run on circadian rhythms; others glow all the time.



6. Mushrooms Contain Vitamin D

Mushrooms are the only produce source of vitamin D, which is what makes them unique. As mushrooms are closer to humans than plants according to their DNA, mushrooms can absorb vitamin D when exposed to UV light sources like the sun. Some sun-grown mushrooms have more than enough vitamin D for our daily recommended allowance.

7. More than 2,000 new fungi are discovered each year

Every year, over 2,000 new species of fungi are discovered. These come from a variety of places, including a human fingernail one year.

<https://www.campbellsoup.co.uk/blog/7-facts-mushrooms-bet-didnt-know>



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Editor's Note

I don't know where time is going. It feels like just the other day that I was celebrating the joy of summer. And now I'm acknowledging the first signs of fall. Time doesn't stop—I wish it could sometimes. Or rather, just slow down. There are too many moments that should be savoured. I felt like it was yesterday that I was excitedly driving off for summer vacation and now I'm scrolling through the photos of these memories on my phone.

But just as the dog days of summer are slowly passing, *Nasha Doroha* is there for you to enjoy these last moments out in the sun, enjoying fruits of your garden and having a refreshing drink as you peruse the pages. Or perhaps you will be curled up by the firepit, settling in for a good read.

ND submitters have gone out of their way this issue to provide readers with quality work. I'm forever grateful to everyone who is inspired to share their thoughts and labours of love with ND readers. Here are a few things to look forward to.

Ukraine is always in the forefront and always on our hearts. While on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje this spring our group met with a young woman from Ukraine who was gracious enough to share her thoughts on the war with ND readers. Readers will also get an update on Home of Hope in Ukraine and how they are coping during the war and still caring for the vulnerable.

On a much lighter note, for many Ukrainian Canadians, it is mushroom season! For some, it is the most wonderful time of year when, with a pail in hand, you get to leave behind the bustle of the city and walk through the woods as you search for mushroom tops as they peek around old stumps and through the mossy underfoot. There is nothing tastier than a savoury concoction of cooked pidpenky mushrooms mixed in cream and flavoured with dill. A little bit of paradise in the midst of a chaotic world.

And one of the big events on our religious calendar this fall is the Nativity of the Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos. Her feast day is September 8th. It is a gentle reminder to have a continued trust in God even though we feel He may not hear us, or perhaps we feel He has more pressing matters. But in the end, we must have faith in His love for us and that in His own way, and with His own timing, He is in control and wants what is best for us. And this big lesson permeates all aspects of our life. Trust God. Always.

God bless you all, and may you enjoy the upcoming cool and crispness of autumn as we say farewell to summer and set our minds and hearts to the birth of our Lord. After all, winter is around the corner whether we like it or not! I say this jokingly, but Canadians know all too well how quickly the weather can turn.

May God bless Canada and Ukraine! And may He protect all the soldiers and the people of Ukraine as they continue to fight for their beloved homeland.

Glory to God! Слава Богу!



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ДОРОГА

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National Executive mailing address:

Marlene Bodnar, President
1209 Lancaster Blvd, Saskatoon, SK S7M 3V6
Phone: 306-262-1647
presidentnatl@ucwlc.ca

We welcome your letters and written contributions.
Вітаємо співучасть. Просимо пересилати
дописи, листи до редакції. Please send to:

РЕДАКТОР • MANAGING EDITOR
ЛАРИСА ШЕПТАК • LYRISSA SHEPTAK
lyrissas@hotmail.com

АСИСТЕНТ РЕДАКТОРА • ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR
МАР'ЯНА ВОЗНА • MARIANA WASNEA

ТЕХНІЧНА ОБРОБКА • TECHNICAL PRODUCTION
Ігор Кодак • Ihor Kodak
306-934-7125
ikodak@sasktel.net

АДМІНІСТРАТОР • ADMINISTRATOR
Елизавета Загайко • Elizabeth Zahayko
387 Betts Ave, Yorkton, SK S3N 1N3
Phone: 306-783-6232
eazahayko@sasktel.net

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NASHA DOROHA
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Please see back cover for artist bio.

www.ucwlc.ca



Від Крайової Голови ◇ From the National President

Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

In May, I had the privilege to travel to Rome and to be part of the private audience with Pope Francis, as well as attend the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO) General Assembly in Assisi, Italy.

The UCWLC has been affiliated with WUCWO since 1957. For those of you who are not familiar with WUCWO, it was founded in 1910 and now represents nearly 100 Catholic women's organizations worldwide, active in around 50 countries representing around 8 million Catholic women. WUCWO's aim is to promote the presence, participation, and co-responsibility of Catholic women in society and the Church in order to enable them to fulfill their mission of evangelization and to work for human development.

This event brought together representatives from all over the world with the aim of addressing global challenges and analyzing the fundamental role of women in the Church and in promoting peace. A total of 832 participants from 67 Catholic organizations from 38 countries attended this General Assembly.

Meeting ladies from all corners of the globe and learning about their lives and the challenges they face made me appreciate what we have here in Canada. The violence and discrimination women face, especially in Africa and Latin American countries, is staggering. They do not have the power to speak out, or if they do, no one seems to listen.

In June 2021, WUCWO created the World Women's Observatory. The objective of this project is to help give these vulnerable women a voice by working with the Church, governments, and international agencies to find solutions to give visibility to these women. To learn more about this project and how it is transforming the

Слава Ісусу Христу!

У травні я мала честь поїхати до Риму та взяти участь у приватній аудієнції з Папою Франциском, а також відвідати Генеральну Асамблею Світового Союзу Католицьких Жіночих Організацій (ССКЖО) в Ассізі, Італія.

Для тих із вас, хто не знайомий з ССКЖО: ЛУКЖК є філією ССКЖО з 1957 року. ССКЖО було засновано у 1910 році і зараз представляє майже 100 католицьких жіночих організацій у всьому світі, які діють приблизно в 50 країнах, представляючи близько 8 мільйонів католицьких жінок. Метою ССКЖО є сприяння присутності, участі та співвідповідальності католицьких жінок у суспільстві та Церкві, щоб дати їм змогу виконувати свою місію евангелізації та працювати для людського розвитку.

Ця подія зібрала представниць з усього світу з метою вирішення глобальних викликів і аналізу фундаментальної ролі жінок в Церкві та у сприянні миру. Загалом на цій Генеральній Асамблеї були присутні 832 учасниці з 67 католицьких організацій з 38 країн.

Зустрічі з жінками з усіх куточків земної кулі на яких я дізналася про їхні життя і виклики, з якими вони стикаються, змусили мене оцінити те, що ми маємо тут, у Канаді. Насильство та дискримінація, з якими зіштовхуються жінки, особливо в країнах Африки та Латинської Америки, приголомшують. Вони не мають змоги висловитися, а якщо й мають, то, здається, їх ніхто не слухає.

У червні 2021 року ССКЖО створила Всесвітню Жіночу Обсерваторію. Мета цього проекту полягає в тому, щоб допомогти цим вразливим жінкам висловитися, співпрацюючи з церквою, урядами та міжнародними організаціями, щоб знайти рішення та забезпечити видимість цих жінок. Для того щоб дізнатися більше про цей

lives of many of these women, you can visit their website, <https://www.wucwo.org/index.php/en/activities/world-women-observatory>, or follow them on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/invisiblenomore>.

Spending time in Assisi also gave me the opportunity to learn more about and reflect on the life of St. Francis. Like Jesus, St. Francis taught by example, living without worldly goods and aiming to love all creation. We need to follow St. Francis' example, we need to keep our gaze focused on Jesus, who beckons us to follow him and bring about God's kingdom through love.

As well, on behalf of the National UCWLC, we extend our heartfelt condolences to all those affected by the tragic bus accident that took place on June 15, 2023, in Manitoba. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families who have lost loved ones from this devastating accident and those who are currently recovering from their injuries. We especially remember our UCWLC Members Patsy Zamrykut and Nettie Nakonechny. Вічна пам'ять.

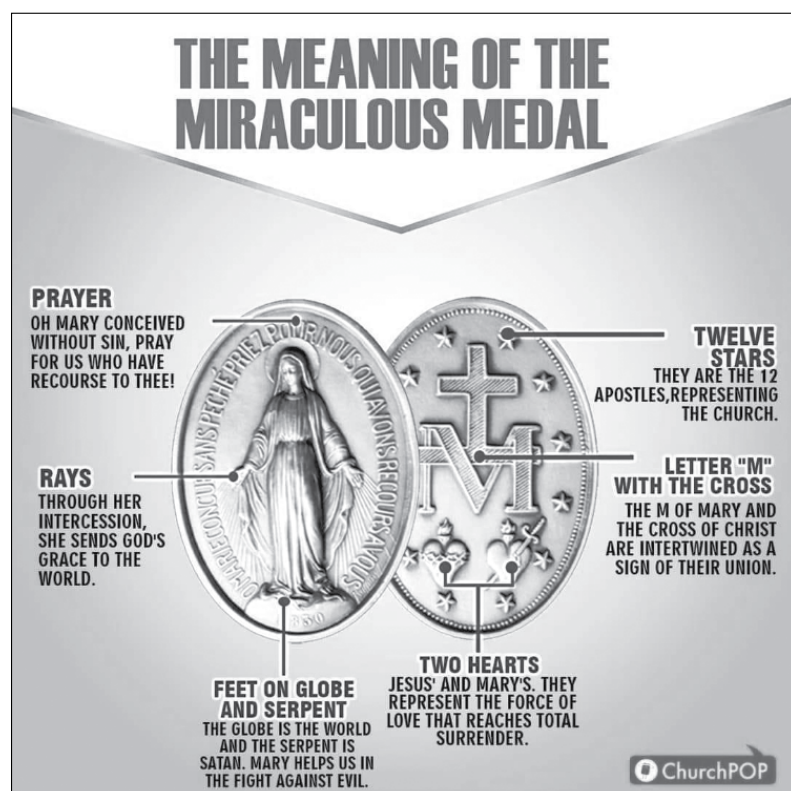
Marlene Bodnar,
UCWLC National President

проект і про те, як він змінює життя багатьох з цих жінок, ви можете відвідати їхній вебсайт, <https://www.wucwo.org/index.php/en/activities/world-women-observatory>, або слідкувати за ними на Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/invisiblenomore>.


Проведений час в Ассізі також дав мені можливість дізнатися більше про життя святого Франциска і поміркувати про нього. Подібно до Ісуса, святий Франциск навчав своїм прикладом, живучи без мирських благ і прагнучи любити все створіння. Ми повинні наслідувати приклад святого Франциска, нам потрібно зосередити свій погляд на Ісусі, який кличе нас іти за Ним і через любов утверджувати Боже Царство.

Від імені Крайової Управи ЛУКЖК висловлюємо щирі співчуття всім, хто постраждав від трагічної автобусної аварії, що сталася 15 червня 2023 року в Манітобі. Наші думки і молитви з сім'ями, які втратили близьких у цій жадливій аварії, і з тими, хто зараз одужує після отриманих травм. Особливо пам'ятаємо наших членів ЛУКЖК Петсі Замрыкут та Нетті Наконечну. Вічна пам'ять.

Марлін Боднар,
Голова Крайової Управи ЛУКЖК



Check out our Facebook group




UCWLC National

The UCWLC has improved its online and interactive presence. Visit the website at

ucwlc.ca

to peruse past editions, mull over recent news, or to drop us a line.



St. Justina and St. Cyprian

Martyrs in the struggle of good and evil

d.304, Feast Day September 26

The lives of the saints not only teach and inspire us... they can surprise us, because sometimes fact is even stranger than fiction! Imagine... a magician of black magic... a scorned lover... a Christian virgin... a love triangle... and how the sign of the cross saved their lives. Does it sound like a movie? These are actually about the incredible lives of St. Justina and St. Cyprian.

Justina and Cyprian lived around the year 304. Justina was from Damascus; her father was a pagan priest, and the family worshipped idols. But this raised questions in Justina, and her prayers led her to hear a sermon from a deacon from Antioch; his message of God and Jesus moved her deeply to become a Christian, and her heartfelt convictions converted the rest of her family as well.

Justina was a very beautiful young lady; it was inevitable that a young man would notice her and want her for his bride. His name was Aglaidas. Justina paid no attention to his overtures; history tells us that, in addition to converting to Christianity, she had also pledged her virginity to God, and had no interest in beginning a romance with Aglaidas.

One thing can be said for Aglaidas: he was determined! When his advances were not getting results with Justina, he formed a more sinister plan. Aglaidas asked Cyprian, a sorcerer known as "The Magician" to use his magic on Justina to win her over and marry him. Cyprian, who came from Antioch, was a skilled sorcerer and studied black magic. As a heathen, he had helped to persecute many Christians, and was later called "a most bitter persecutor of Christ."

Cyprian went to work. He relished the idea, because not only did he think it was a great test of his skills to go after virginal young women, but he was quite attracted to Justina herself. He thought it would be easy to work his magic on Justina, such an innocent young girl. His first attempt of casting a spell on Justina may have caused a few stirrings in her heart towards Aglaidas, but she was now a Christian, and an avowed virgin, and she fasted and prayed to overcome these desires. Strike one against Cyprian.



Cyprian saw that he had to try a little harder, so he called upon a demon to assume the shape of a kindly lady, approaching Justina to discuss faith, and also to throw in a few good words about Aglaidas. Justina sensed that this was all a dark set-up to make her fall in love with Aglaidas, but she dug in her heels against this new temptation, made the sign of the cross, and the demon disappeared. Strike two against Cyprian.

By this time, Cyprian was starting to panic at his failure to win over Justina. He began trying new spells on her, but her resolve and faith in God was so strong, along with her outward action of the sign of the cross, that finally Cyprian saw that he and his evil spells were powerless; in his time he himself made the sign of the cross and turned his

back on his evil studies and on Satan. Strike three against Cyprian's old life of evil.

Three times Cyprian tried to work his dark magic in Justina, and all attempts were rebuffed by her faith and outward sign of the cross. Beaten, Cyprian denounced Satan. Cyprian himself was attacked by Satan for his desertion, but remained firm in his newfound faith. He burned his evil books on black magic and spells, and was baptized into the church and eventually became a priest and then a bishop.

And what of Justina? In time she became the head of a convent.

But their story does not end there, and the story does not have a happy ending. Both Justina and Cyprian were arrested during the Diocletian Persecution and taken to Damascus. This period was a time of the most severe persecution of Christians: they had no legal rights, were forced to worship gods, and many, many were tortured and put to death.

This was the fate of Justina and Cyprian. After suffering unspeakable agonies, they were both beheaded around the year 304.

Their journey to death was horrible; even after they died, their poor bodies lay unburied for days, until finally Christian sailors saved their earthly bodies from further desecration by taking them to Rome. Here, a woman of noble birth, Rufina, gently and kindly treated their remains with dignity and had them buried at her estate. The bodies were later buried in a Lateran basilica.

Their feast day is September 26.

What can we learn from these saints, who went from the unbelieving pagans to fervent believers and martyrs? We see the marvellous strength of prayer and faith, as well as the frightening strength of evil that can lead us down roads we do not want to go if we are not vigilant.

How can we emulate them? Like Justina and Cyprian, we can live by the "sign of the cross," to live as Jesus did. We can try daily to overcome evil with good. Evil will win in our lives if we give in to behaviour or thoughts that place our own desires and wants ahead of good things for others.

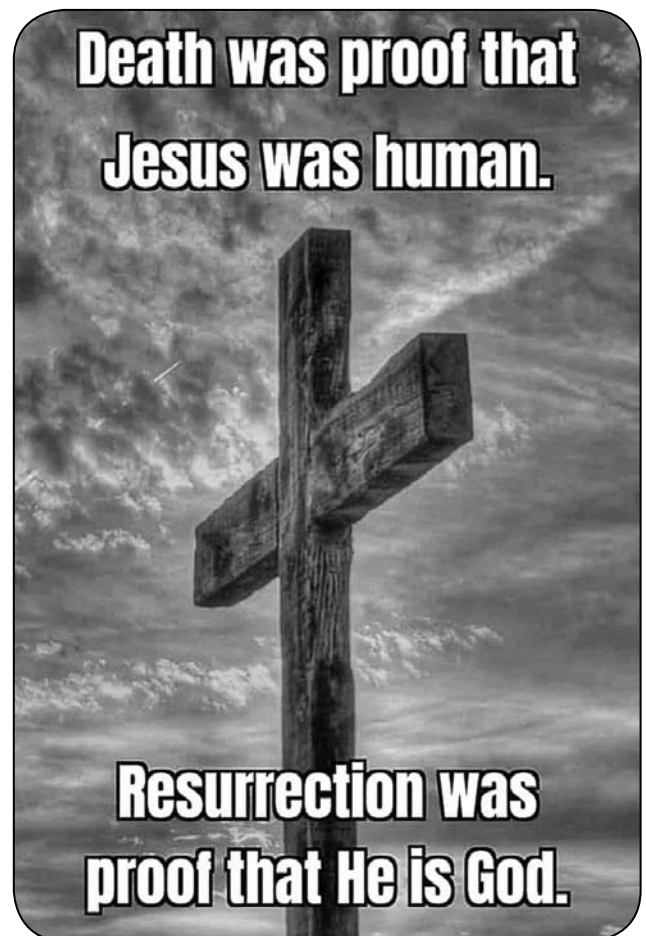
Evil will always be present in many obvious and subtle ways in our world, and evil is a determined opponent if we don't keep our guard up. But if we can "keep the faith" and be as "Christ-ian" as we can, evil will struggle and dissolve like the mist

when faced with our courage of faith. Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Saints Justina and Cyprian show us that they followed Christ and found their way to the Father; they now wear shining crowns of sainthood in Heaven.

Saints Justina and Cyprian: you abandoned pagan gods to follow the way of Christ. You faced persecution and condemnation and placed your trust in Christ, entrusting your souls to the Master who loves mankind. Guide us, holy martyrs, and in faithfulness to God's loving calling, we thank God for sending us your holy examples of faith. We see that abundant reward is given, and Heaven awaits, those who do the will of God. Guide us, O Lord, and protect us from evil. Amen.

By Debbie Hayward



The Light on St. George's Hill

By Cornelia Mary Bilinsky

It was the middle of the night. The streets of the city of Lviv were all dark. Up on St. George's hill, the domes of the Cathedral glistened in the moonlight. In one of the windows of the Archbishop's palace, a light was shining.

Outside, hidden in shadow, the Rabbi stood looking up at the light, trying to decide his next move. His sons, Benjamin and Levik, were crouched in the bushes beside him.

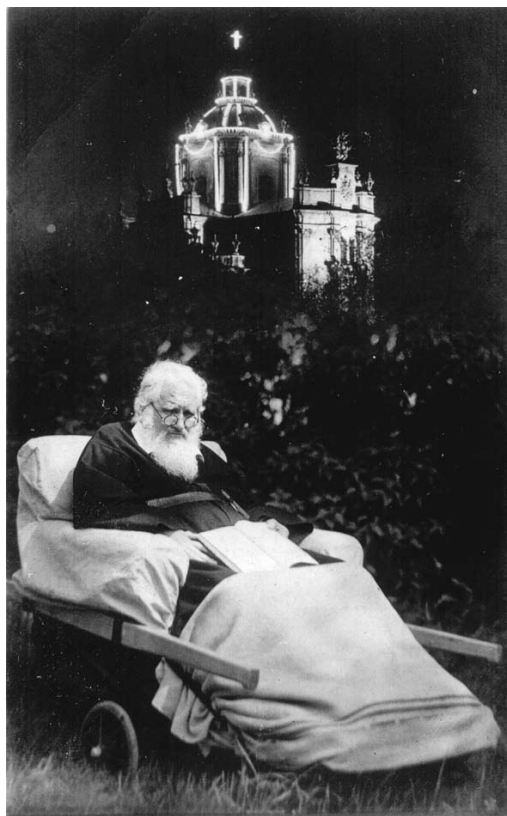
"Why must we hide like this, Father?" wailed Benjamin. He was only seven years old and could not understand why he had been made to leave his home so suddenly.

"Ssh! We must be quiet," his older brother Levik whispered. "It is not safe anywhere for Jews. Father is taking care of us!"

The Rabbi bent down and spoke quietly to the boys. "Stay here and do not move or make a sound. I am going to talk to the good Bishop."

Inside the palace, in a tiny chapel, Archbishop Andrei sat in his wheelchair saying his prayers. His fingers moved slowly along his knotted prayer rope.

"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us sinners," he prayed, as his thoughts flew to the war that was going on in the world. Terrible things were happening all over Europe. Now the Nazi army had taken over his beloved country, Ukraine. As the leader of the Church,



Archbishop Andrei knew he had to stand up for what was good and right. He looked up at the cross on the chapel wall.

"Lord, help us to be strong in this time of trouble. Help us to be faithful to your commandments."

Just then Fr. Marko knocked gently on the door. "Your Grace," he said, "I see you are not asleep. You have a visitor."

"Someone must really need me to come so late at night," the Archbishop replied. "Who is it?"



Cornelia Mary Bilinsky

"Your Grace," Fr. Marko said, "it's a Jewish Rabbi."

The Archbishop sighed sadly. The Jews were in the greatest danger of all. The Nazis were arresting them and taking them somewhere far away. The Archbishop was very worried about them.

"Send him in," he told Fr. Marko. "The Jews are God's people and they are my friends."

"Peace be to you, Your Grace!" the Rabbi greeted the Archbishop as he entered.

"Peace be to you, Rabbi!" said the Archbishop. "What can I do for you?"

The Rabbi spoke quickly, his voice trembling. "I saw the light in your window.

I've been told you are a good friend of the Jews. Please, Your Grace," he cried, "my family is not safe any longer. I have two young sons..."

The Archbishop thought for a moment. If he helped this man, he would be putting himself into danger. He had seen how cruel and brutal the Nazi soldiers were. But his heart ached for this man and his family. He remembered what Jesus Christ had said: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." →

“Where are your sons now?” he asked.

“I left them outside, hiding in the bushes,” said the Rabbi.

“Then bring them here, and quickly.”

The Rabbi soon returned with his two boys. With frightened eyes, Levik and Benjamin stood silently and stared at the grey-bearded old man in the wheelchair.

“Come here,” the Archbishop said gently. Somberly the boys came forward. The Archbishop patted each one on the head.

“Follow me,” he said. He wheeled his chair into a room nearby. It was a library, lined with tall wooden bookcases.

“Fr. Marko,” he called to his assistant, “please show our guests to our little hideaway.”

Fr. Marko moved aside one of the large heavy bookcases. Behind the bookcase was a secret door and behind the secret door was a little room.

“They will be safe here,” said the Archbishop. “We will take care of them until the danger is over.”

“You would do this for us?” asked the Rabbi.

“My Lord Jesus Christ taught us that we must love one another,” said the Archbishop, “That means helping our neighbors in time of need.”

“How can I ever thank you?” The Rabbi took the Archbishop’s hand and kissed it reverently. Turning to Benjamin and Levik, he said, “Do whatever he tells you.”

The boys hung on to their father, crying. “What will happen to us? Do you have to leave us, Father?”

“I’m afraid so,” replied the Rabbi. “As soon as we can, your mother and I will find you and we will be together again.” With tears in his eyes, he turned quickly and left.

Fr. Marko led the boys into the secret chamber. “Stay here,” he said, “while I fetch some blankets and something for you to eat and drink. Be as quiet as you can.”

When the boys were settled, Fr. Marko moved the bookcase back into its place and turned to the Archbishop.

“You know they cannot stay here for long. The Nazis have already warned the people about hiding Jews.”

The Archbishop furrowed his brow. “That is true. But we will not stand by and do nothing. I have an idea. For now these boys are no longer Jewish.”

“What do you mean?” asked Fr. Marko.

“They are orphaned Christian boys. We will give them Ukrainian names and dress them in Ukrainian clothing. When it is safe to do so, you will take them to our monastery in Univ, where the monks will take care of them.”

“Oh, yes,” said Fr. Marko, smiling, “I understand.”

Seeing the Archbishop’s weary face, Fr. Marko continued, “You must be very tired, Your Grace. Shall I help you to bed?”

“Yes, please,” replied the Archbishop.

As Fr. Marko pushed the wheelchair out the library door, the Archbishop raised his hand and stopped him.

“One more thing, Father... Don’t turn off the light in the chapel. I expect we will have more visitors in the nights to come.”

“Good idea,” said Fr. Marko. “We’ll keep the light on all night... every night.”



Among the most heinous crimes of humanity is genocide—the deliberate killing of masses of people in order to destroy their nationality. The Venerable Metropolitan Archbishop Andrei Sheptytsky, leader of the Ukrainian Catholic Church from 1901 until his death on November 1, 1944, preached extensively about the sin of murder, that is, the willful destruction of human life. But he didn’t just preach.

In the last years of his life, witnessing the Nazi atrocities committed against the Jews during World War II, he set up an underground organization that worked to save Jews from arrests and certain death. It is said that he saved up to 200 children alone, sheltering them in monasteries or convents and even in his own residence. The above story is an imaginative recounting of the courageous actions of this holy man.

Theotokos

By Brent Kostyniuk

Ukrainians have a deep devotion and love for the Mother of God. In fact, along with other Byzantine traditions, they have a unique title for her—*Theotokos*.

The term *Theotokos* is a compound of two Greek words: Θεός (Theo), meaning God, and τόκος (tokos), meaning childbirth or offspring. A literal translation would be God bearing one, although a customary English translation is Mother of God.

Use of the term *Theotokos* is very ancient. As early as the Third Century, Christians were turning to the *Theotokos*, as evidenced in this Coptic prayer of that time. “Under your protection we seek refuge, holy Mother of God.”

It is known that Athanasius of Alexandria used it in 330, Gregory the Theologian in 370, and St. John Chrysostom in 400. It has been suggested that Origen (d. 254) was the first to use *Theotokos* in reference to Mary. The use of *Theotokos* was formally affirmed at the Third Ecumenical Council held at Ephesus in 431. *Theotokos* has deep theological meaning for Eastern Christians; Mary truly became the Mother of God by the human conception of the Son of God in her womb.

Christ Our Pascha, the catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church explains it this way.

“The Church of Christ, teaching about the Mystery of the Incarnation, focuses on the Person whom Mary conceived, and to whom she

gave birth... The title *Theotokos* means that it was the eternal Son of God who was born in the flesh from the Virgin Mary and became human. ‘From the God-bearing One, Jesus took flesh and became one in being with our human nature.’ (John of Damascus) In a spe-



cial way the Church expresses this unity in being with the Icon of Tenderness, in the embrace of Mother and Son.” (Chapter 187)

Along with her special title, Byzantine Christians also have their own version of the Hail Mary prayer. Although translations vary, a common English language version is: *Rejoice Virgin full of grace, O Theotokos the Lord is with thee. Blessed are thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, for you have given birth to the Saviour of the world.*

October 1 is celebrated as the Protection of the Mother of God, one of the 12 great feasts of the Byzantine church calendar. It honours a miraculous intervention which took place in the Ninth Century. According to the ancient chronicles of Nestor, the inhabitants of Constantinople prayed that the Mother of God would protect them from an attack by a large Rus’ (the early Slavic nation) army at a time when Rus’ was still pagan. The *Theotokos* appeared to St. Andrew the Fool for Christ inside Blachernae church in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul). Early in the morning of Sunday October 1, St. Andrew saw the dome of the church open and Mary enter, floating in the air above him, surrounded by angels and saints. St. Andrew saw Mary kneel and pray for all faithful Christians throughout the world. She also asked her Son Jesus to accept the prayers of all those who turned to Him for protection through her intercession.

Afterwards, Mary rose and spread her veil over all the people in the church as a sign of her protection. Following the appearance of the Mother of God, the invading enemy was thwarted and the city spared disaster.

The name of the feast—Protection—is a translation of the Ukrainian word *Pokrova*. However Protection does not convey the full significance of *Pokrova*. It refers to a cloak or shroud, but it also means protection or intercession. For this reason, the name of

the feast is also translated as the Veil of Our Lady, the Protecting Veil of the Theotokos, or the Intercession of the Theotokos. We are given the mental image of a caring and loving mother, spreading her cloak to shelter her children from harm. In the Protecting Veil icon, the palms of her hands are turned upwards towards heaven, with her

pokrova spread between her outstretched arms.

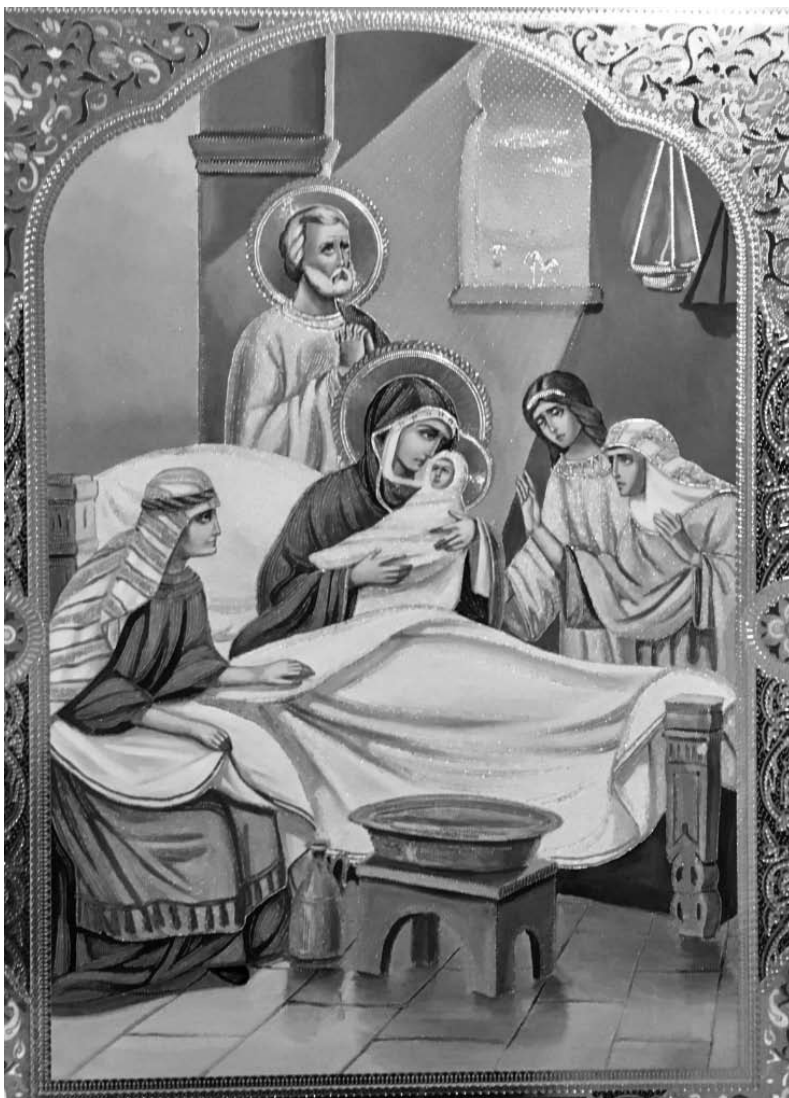
The kontakion for the Feast of the Protection expresses our desire for that motherly intercession. *Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church, and with choirs of saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and bishops worship, apostles and prophets rejoice together, since*

for our sake she prays to the pre-eternal God.

Now, as Ukraine faces the horrors of a war brought on by foreign invasion, that kontakion brings special meaning and renewed hope that the Theotokos will once again spread her protective *pokrova* over our ancestral homeland and all its people.

This article was originally published September 8, 2022 on the blog The Byzantine Life at <https://thebyzantinelifelife.com/nativity-of-mary>

Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary



On September 8th we celebrate the Nativity of Mary, which is one of the 12 major feast days. It is also the first major feast in our new liturgical year.¹

Tradition is that Joachim (a descendant of King David) and Anna (of the tribe of priests/Levites) were pious but childless into their later years. Due to the negative association with barrenness in Jewish culture, the couple suffered public ridicule and embarrassment. This did not stop the couple from praying together for a child, who recalled the example of Abraham receiving Isaac in his elderly days. So they continued to pray past childbearing years, and promised God that they would dedicate their child to the Lord's service. There is also a tradition that the High Priest would not accept a feast day sacrifice from Joachim since he thought the couple's childless state was a sign of unworthiness. But God answered Anna and Joachim's continued trust in Him, and Anna gave birth to Mary, who would become the Theotokos.

There is no record of Anna and Joachim in the bible, although we do have a record of them in the Protoevangelium of James.² →

¹ <https://thebyzantinelifelife.com/byzcatholic/new-year-for-us-byzantines>

² <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0847.htm>

Nativity of Mary Icon

In icons of the Nativity of Mary, Anna is shown reclining on a bed. Anna is shown in the same position as Mary is in corresponding Nativity of Christ Icons. Often Mary is pictured as being washed in a basin by midwives, which parallels Christ being washed by Salome at the bottom right of Nativity icons. Other icons have Mary in a cradle that is richly adorned, in a position mimicking Christ being laid in a manger. Our icon of the Nativity of Mary has Anna holding the baby Mary, but the wash basin is nearby. Also paralleling each other, Joseph and Joachim are pictured standing in the background of their respective icons.

Both Anna and Mary are shown to be attended by midwives. Generally, the icon expresses a far more extravagant birth for Mary than Christ's humble beginnings in a cave. Mary is born in a house adorned in beauty, within a city. This shows the honour and love God has for the child God has chosen to bring Christ into the world. In fact, our family Nativity of Mary icon, pictured above right, is one of the most simple Nativity of Mary icons that I've seen. I just happen to like sofrino icons.

The icon reminds us of the fruitfulness of faithful prayers and trust in God. It is also the image of God's promises being kept: the birth of she who was prefigured in the Old Testament, the new Eve.

Nativity of Mary Prayers and Tropars

Troparion: (tone 4)

Your nativity, O Mother of God, has made joy known to all the world, for from you dawned the Son of Righteousness, Christ our God. He abolished the curse and gave the blessing, and by making death of no effect, He bestowed upon us eternal life.

You can listen to this troparion in different languages at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sCbbg1A_WI.

Kontakion: (tone 4)

By your birth, O immaculate one, Joachim and Anna were freed from the reproach of childlessness, and Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. And your people, redeemed from the guilt of their sins, celebrate as they cry out to you, "the barren one gives birth to the Mother of God and nourisher of our life."

Prokeimenon: (tone 3)

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Irmos: (tone 4, replacing the "it is truly right")

O my soul, magnify the Virgin Mary born from a barren womb. Virginitly is alien to mothers, and childbearing is foreign to virgins, yet in you, O Mother of God, both of them came together. Therefore, we and all the nations of the earth without ceasing magnify you.

Ways to Celebrate

Sing hymns to the Theotokos, or ones about Joachim and Anna. Salve Regina, this Roman Hymn for the Nativity,³ or check out this rendition of this Byzantine Irmos for the Nativity.⁴

Go to Church! It is one of the twelve major feasts!

Use blue to decorate your home. Blue has been the traditional colour for the Theotokos since the Byzantine empire. There are several reasons for this. Blue is the colour for empresses in the Byzantium. Byzantine icons use blue to symbolize the divine, transcendence and mystery. So Mary wears a blue inner garment representing how she

carried Christ within her humanity (outer red garment). Blue is also a biblical colour associated with the people of Israeli and following the ten commandments/the will of God (Numbers 15:38-39). And is the colour for covering the Ark of the Covenant (Numbers 4:6-7).

You can also wear blue clothing if you have any. Remember that we too are made new because of the work of Mary as the new Eve.

Get a birthday cake or another special birthday treat to celebrate the birthday of the Mother of God! If you are ambitious, consider making a cupcake rosary.

Pray the Akathist to the Blessed Virgin Mary,⁵ or the Roman Rite Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.⁶ Offer prayers and ask Mary to distribute the graces where she feels they are most needed. Also, you can pray the Hopeful Mysteries of the Rosary.⁷

And, of course, offer prayers and hymns to Jesus. Because honouring her son, honours Mary too!

Kyla "Kyleshka" P. lives with her husband and three children in Saskatchewan. She writes



articles about Byzantine Catholic traditions and her journey as a homeschooling mother at TheByzantineLife.com.

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-vPv6kmPdI>

⁴ <https://mci.archpitt.org/books/DL/page.html?245>

⁵ <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=249>

⁶ <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=329>

⁷ <https://thebyzantinelifecom/theotokos-byzantine-rosary>

Lessons from Medjugorje

By Lyrissa Sheptak

THIS PAST MAY MY HUSBAND AND I had the wonderful experience of going to Medjugorje.¹ It was a long-awaited pilgrimage. Over the years, I've known many people who have visited there. Everyone seemed to have had a unique experience—some in big ways, others in more quiet ones. But I'm sure everyone would agree that it touched their hearts and spirits in a significant and permanent way.

Medjugorje is a special place where the Presence of both Our Lady and Our Lord is very real. It is a place of serenity, community, learning, and healing. Daily life of the whole town revolves around the Lord, vis-à-vis Our Mother, the apparitions, her messages, and her work... **all for her Son.** It feels like a Catholic bubble where strangers can pray together, learn together, share experiences, and support one another. What a concept, especially when I come from a painfully divided and woke country like Canada.

Over the years, I have read many books on Medjugorje, and watched YouTube videos and documentaries. Some people have experienced strong conversions (to the point where they have later entered the Religious Orders). Others have experienced intense physical, emotional, or spiritual healing. Then there are the other types of miracles: miracle of the sun spinning or dancing, a staircase down Cross Mountain (FYI, there is no staircase),

beautiful flowers growing on the mountain out of season. And then there are those who receive the “illumination of conscience.” No one can deny that there are great things happening there. And Our Lady still appears to the visionaries daily. Her presence feels tangible. So it is only natural that people wish to see Our Lady themselves or experience heavenly phenomena.

But that shouldn't be the main reason to go there, although as a first timer, it's kind of part in parcel until you settle down into what a pilgrimage is truly about. It can be overwhelming at first. And who wouldn't want to be so honoured as to see Mother Mary? But people should go to Medjugorje to draw closer to the Lord; to slow down and find a heart connection with Jesus, and deepen their faith. As for miracles, I saw one—the amount of people going to daily Mass and receiving Eucharist. The church, which held multiple Masses every day, was always at standing room only. Tight as it was, it was utterly lovely. It is the universal church. People come from all corners of the world, and everyone prays the same prayers, sings the same songs, and praises God the same way. Hundreds of people kneel and bow to the King of Kings at the same time. The altar was full, with over 20 or so priests. And when it was Transubstantiation, there was a real holiness present when they all took part and their hearts were focused on the Lord. I remember having the overwhelming need to

pray for our priests... and for *more* priests... because without them we wouldn't ever be able to receive the Sacraments. Take a moment to consider that. That's why it is important for our religious to go on retreats (and if they can, to go to Medjugorje) so they can return to their parishes healed, supported, and rejuvenated in the Lord.

So if I didn't see a miracle or an apparition of Mother Mary, why was my experience valuable? A lot of little reasons. These are but a few things I learned, especially about myself. →



Prayer for Priests

Dear Lord, we pray that the Blessed Mother wrap her mantle around your priests and through her intercession strengthen them for their ministry. We pray that Mary will guide your priests to follow her own words, “Do whatever he tells you” (Jn. 2:5). May your priests have the heart of St. Joseph, Mary's most chaste spouse. May the Blessed Mother's own pierced heart inspire them to embrace all who suffer at the foot of the cross. May your priests be holy, filled with the fire of your love seeking nothing but your greater glory and the salvation of souls. Amen.

Saint John Vianney, pray for us.

¹ On June 24, 1981, Our Lady appeared to a group of local kids for the first time (of a long series of apparitions still in progress) to deliver to the world a message of peace and conversion through prayer and fasting.



Lyrissa on Apparition Hill (on an evening when the rain held off for a couple of hours).

1 Rain doesn't stop anything. We were expecting the normal 25-degree Spring weather. It not only rained... but it absolutely poured... for about 90 per cent of the visit. We had umbrellas, bought ponchos, and warmer clothes (my husband's luggage was lost by the airline). For some reason God wanted us to experience Medjugorje in the rain. It wasn't as big a deal as I thought it would be.

Lesson: Medjugorje reminded me to be malleable and approach dramas in life with poise. I think the Lord used those rainy circumstances as a place for me to park my selfish behaviour and replace it with more positive virtues like patience, self-control, and cheerfulness.

2 We are all there for a healing of some sort, so be compassionate to others. There are a lot of broken people in the world, and we are fooling ourselves if we think we are

so together that we don't need the Lord's healing hand. So be kind, be compassionate, and don't forget to offer a smile to someone and even a prayer. A big part of this healing in Medjugorje is through the Sacrament of Reconciliation; it's kind of a requirement, or highly encouraged. My experience was truly unique. There weren't many English-speaking confessors the night I went. I stood in line for two hours, with it raining off and on. *Two hours!* I was the last in line. There came a point when I was just so invested that I told myself I wasn't leaving. I asked other priests who spoke other languages if they could do a Confession in English since their lines were empty. They'd say, "I don't know English" (in perfect English). And I'd tell them how good their English sounded. But for some reason, God wanted me in the line I was in, and I'd come back to the spot that

someone graciously saved for me.

I ended up making friends with the people in front of me. They were a young couple from Ireland who, for some reason, opened up to me about the heaviest things about their lives that weighed on their hearts. Time passed quickly after befriending them. We joked around and encouraged each other with a few laughs so no one would dash away from their Reconciliation when their turn came. And when one or the other of us came out with tears, there was a quiet nod of compassion and understanding. My Reconciliation in Medjugorje was truly special, there was a reason why God kept me in that line. Have compassion for one another, and urge friends and loved ones to go to Reconciliation.

Lesson: True healing only comes from the Lord. Confession is a must. And then, when we learn to truly accept our forgiveness and love ourselves, then we will be able to see and appreciate God in others.

3 Peace exists. I'm not telling you fake news. Living in a high-paced country, I almost started believing that peace only existed in a church. It is elusive. But it is alive and well in Medjugorje by way of the daily pilgrimage schedule, daily Mass, and constant prayer and fellowship. When God is the focus, everything else falls into place. I felt it was my responsibility to find a way to bring that peace back to my home in Canada. Peace exists when we make God a priority. We *can* feel the peace of Christ. When we try to pray during the day, spend time reading Scripture, or meditating on the Rosary, peace exists.

Lesson: Our busy or stressful lives won't change if we relegate God to Sunday Liturgy and evening prayers. We have to invite Him into our daily moments.



4 Community and fellowship exist too; we just need to do our part.

It is no secret that Christianity in North America isn't winning the popularity contests. Just look at surveys asking people their religious affiliation. There are what seem to be 101 reasons contributing to this lack of church attendance. I learned that just because Christianity in North America is suffering, doesn't mean it is suffering all over the world. On the contrary. Our group went to the town of Siroki Brijeg to see where 65 Franciscan monks were massacred between 1942 and 1945. Twenty-four of them are buried there. The Communists wanted to thwart Christianity and wreck the morale of the locals who loved these monks for their dedication to the faith, teaching the faith, feeding the people, educating them, and building hospitals and infrastructure. The Communists proclaimed to them that God was dead. In turn, they told the monks that if they would reject Christ, they could live. All the Franciscans refused and died martyrs. We timed our visit with evening Sunday Mass. What a highlight. With the fall of Communism, the Franciscans and the locals eventually rebuilt, even stronger. The huge church was at standing room only for Mass. It was full of young people and families, a youth choir, and 16 altar boys. The Spirit was strong there. After Mass, we got to talking with one of the older altar boys who said the church's youth group had 250 members. 250 youths and young adults! I was speechless. It is possible through the leadership and determination of our own priests and bishops for there to be a rejuvenation. It will take time and hard work, but every single one of us who are pained over the lack of numbers and youth in our churches have to do our bit. We need to build community

again by personally inviting people back to church. We need to offer programs, we need adult faith formation, our youths want to be noticed and included. The youth of today are looking for people who stand strong for their faith, that means us. May the martyrs of Siroki Brijeg be an example to us. The seeds of their martyrdom blossomed into a thriving parish legacy.

Lesson: Make an effort with others. Build churches, communities, and a God-led nation. Things won't change unless we get involved. Christians won't be taken seriously if they don't start taking a stand.

5 The meek and humble will truly be blessed. Our group was honoured to receive an invitation to a castle that a couple from Canada built so the religious who visit Medjugorje could have a free place to stay. This couple gives their testimony daily (it is a tear-jerker), and feeds groups of pilgrims who need help with meals and other types of care. We were called in to serve lunch to a group of severely disabled children and their parents. We were encouraged to make them feel extra special because the circumstances surrounding their visit to Medjugorje were heart-wrenching. There was live praise music while we served with smiles, friendliness, conversation, and love. How could you not? Those children were so sincere.

Then we also visited an addictions centre and heard the testimonies of two young men and how they are doing in their recovery. The Holy Spirit was present in both of these activities because for the first time in a long time I was able to see God in each person. I didn't seek it out, God was just there, in each one. It got me thinking about making an effort to see God in people when I returned home. Sometimes that's the hardest,

especially with people we may take issue with. But I think that is one of the true messages. Don't judge a person on how they look. Don't judge a person by the mistakes they have made. Only love them and try to help. It isn't easy for me to get out there and just act loving to everyone. But I can try, because I saw what a difference it made to those people in that moment. And I think we need to remember that—moments count.

Lesson: All of those people I encountered, along with the broken-hearted or tormented ones climbing the mountain barefoot or crying at the base of the cross, they shall inherit the earth, because they *know* God is their answer. They wait on the Lord. They are my example of true faith.

I learned several other lessons on my pilgrimage. I walked Apparition Hill and Cross Mountain, and during those moments, I had my own conversations with the Lord. I did not leave without my own personal spiritual breakthrough. Medjugorje might be full of broken people—people desperate for a miracle—aren't we all? But it is also full of holy people, and my conclusion? I have a *lot* of room for spiritual development and improvement. I learned lessons from the oldest to the youngest in my group. From the wisest Catholic to the newest convert, I learned. My biggest lessons? It's always the same answer. Love. We have to love. A lack of love is why there are so many problems in this world. Forgiveness is a form of love—for the perpetrator, but also for us. Patience is love, after all, we are all works in progress.

Lesson: Love is a choice. I can judge someone by their circumstances, their looks, and their sins. Or I can just choose to love and showcase the power of the Lord that way. If we want to change the world, we must remember to choose wisely.

Discovering Spiritual Accompaniment in the Christian Tradition

Commonly known as Spiritual Direction – A companion on our walk of faith

Written by Denise Laverdure

A little about my journey...

As a teenager and young adult, I felt called by God to serve Him in a special way. At that time a religious nun from Holy Cross community journeyed with me as I discerned a call to religious life. God however, had a different plan in store for me! I married and became a mother and Dobrodijka (Ukrainian word for “priest’s wife”)!

I discovered the ministry of Spiritual Direction/Accompaniment when I moved to Edmonton in 2007. I was working as a host at Providence Renewal Centre in Edmonton and came to know that they were offering a two-year formation program in Spiritual Direction called “Presence.” I became curious since I somehow thought that Spiritual Direction was reserved for priests or religious.

After doing the initial interview, I was accepted into the 2-year “Presence” formation program at Providence Renewal Centre where I graduated in 2012. The formation opened the door for me to offer spiritual accompaniment and to lead women’s retreats.

This past year I became part of the “Peace Retreat Team” offering the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius in Grande Prairie Alberta. I have been part of Peace Retreats since 2018 and I am also a member of the Canadian Fellowship of Christian Spiritual Directors. Through this nonprofit organization, I receive ongoing training that helps me grow in my faith and in my ministry.

Spiritual Accompaniment in the Christian tradition

Even though it is called “Spiritual Direction” the preferred term for many of us is the Ministry of “Spiritual Accompaniment in the Christian Tradition” or being a spiritual companion. The word direction can be misleading. We are not there to direct or tell people what to do but to walk alongside (accompany) them in their faith journey.

My colleagues and I in the ministry of Spiritual Accompaniment have discovered that, although this is by no means a new ministry in the Church, it is still relatively unknown. From this realization came the idea of writing this article.

Some of the information given below comes from online sources and some references given by a

colleague from Peace Retreat as well as some of my sharing from my own experience.

What is Spiritual Accompaniment?

“Now Behold, two of them were travelling the same day, to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.” (Luke 24,17).

This scripture reading found in the Gospel of Luke captures, for me, the ministry of Spiritual Accompaniment. It is a place of encounter between two individuals where the Risen Christ walks alongside.



It is being present, offering holy listening to a person on their journey. It is a place where the Holy Spirit is the Director of the conversations and Christ is the model. The spiritual companion offers a safe and sacred environment to share. A place where trust is built, guards can come down, and where God's love is manifested. When we are living through a period of darkness and desolation, it helps foster trust in God our Father's plan. The spiritual companion can have an important role in helping the pilgrim to discover the voice of our Creator and discern His Will.

We go through many things in life, grief, suffering, sickness of a loved one; Spiritual Accompaniment offers a sacred space to share the joy and suffering of life in the light of faith.

Where did it come from?

In the 1st century the Desert Fathers who sought God in solitude of the desert became so renowned for their wisdom and holiness that people began to come to them for spiritual guidance. The tradition continued as monasteries and religious orders were formed and lay people (including kings and queens) sought direction from wise and holy people in religious life. Over the centuries, many lay men and women also have supported the faith journey of others with Christian spiritual guidance and living example. In recent times, lay people from many Christian denominations have discerned a call to this ministry of Spiritual Accompaniment and have sought formal training.

Spiritual Directors and authors William A. Barry and William J.

Connolly describe Spiritual Accompaniment as:

“Help given by one Christian to another which enables that person to pay attention to God's personal communication to him or her, to respond to this personally communicating God, to grow in intimacy with this God, and to live out the consequences of the relationship.”

What happens during a session?

We trust in God's presence and guidance in the one who accompanies and in the one that receives accompaniment. Trusting in God's loving presence, the companion listens without judgement, contemplatively and compassionately to the person's personal life experiences and helps them discover God's presence in all aspects



ЛІГА УКРАЇНСЬКИХ КАТОЛИЦЬКИХ ЖІНОК КАНАДИ Крайова Управа

UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE of CANADA National Executive

A wonderful opportunity exists for our Ukrainian Catholic young people at the university level. The **Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada National Executive** offers two scholarships to post-secondary students enrolled in Ukrainian Studies and Religious Studies.

The Vera Buczynsky Ukrainian Language Studies Scholarship

for **\$1,000** is offered to a person of Ukrainian Catholic descent who is enrolled in Ukrainian Language Studies at the post-secondary level. Criteria and applications are available online at www.ucwlc.ca and can be submitted electronically to:

Vera Buczynsky Ukrainian Language
Studies Scholarship Committee
ucwlcnationalscholarships@gmail.com

The Mary Dyma Religious Studies Scholarship

for **\$1,000** is offered to a lay woman of Ukrainian Catholic descent who is enrolled in Religious Studies at the post-secondary level. Criteria and applications are available online at www.ucwlc.ca and can be submitted electronically to:

Mary Dyma Religious Studies
Scholarship Committee
ucwlcnationalscholarships@gmail.com

Deadline for receipt of completed applications is October 1.

of their lives. They are reminded that they are a child of God and that they are loved by God. The spiritual companion may ask questions, help clarify or articulate experiences, name, suggest resources, encourage, and sometimes challenge. They may use different approaches depending on the person offering the accompaniment. Primarily the companion listens for the voice of God in the person's story and is attentive to what comes to their own consciousness while they listen. The accompanier is always acutely attentive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit while listening to the persons even as he/she prepares for the session. A thought or word may come to the spiritual companion while listening to the person. I always pray for God's guidance in choosing the opening and closing prayer. This may take the form of Scripture reading, a reflection, a faith-oriented poem, song, or spoken prayer. On occasion I will ask the companion seeker to begin or end our session with a prayer. As I listen, I often pray the Jesus prayer. The spiritual accompanier commits to pray for the seeker in between the times that they meet. He/she must also commit to living a life discipline of prayer and to partake in the Holy Mysteries (sacraments) of the Church depending on the tradition they belong to.

What Spiritual

Accompaniment is not

Spiritual accompaniment **is not counselling!** Through formation, the accompanier is formed in basic counselling but is not a trained counsellor. If issues arise during the session which require psychological help, the spiritual accompanier will encourage the person to seek help to work on a specific

area of their lives. They may refer the person to the appropriate resources.

The role of spiritual accompanier is to assist, foster and support a person's journey with God, not to provide answers. By attentively listening to the Holy Spirit, asking questions, and listening, the person seeking companionship will discover the answers themselves.

Many people today experience restlessness and a nameless longing for "something more." St. Augustine said: "Our hearts are restless, Lord until they rest in you." One goal of Spiritual Accompaniment is to assist a person to identify and give voice to the Holy Spirit crying within them.

Spiritual direction is not only for "the religious." It is for all people seeking to hear God's call in their life.

When a person receives Spiritual Accompaniment, the focus is on the spiritual life of the person seeking direction. It is not a mutual sharing of spiritual journeys. **It is not just a chat between friends.**

How do I know it is a right fit?

Your first meeting with a Spiritual Accompanier is an opportunity to meet and to discuss your understanding of Spiritual Accompaniment and your purpose for seeking it. It is a time to get to know each other a little. If you wish to continue with this person, it is usually recommended that you meet for two or three sessions to ensure compatibility. A good "fit" is essential, and if you are not comfortable with one accompanier, it is recommended that you look for another.

How often do we meet?

Meetings are normally about one hour long and commonly occur monthly, but the schedule will

depend on the individual situation. It is important, however, that sessions occur on a regular basis. The sessions may be terminated at any time, but it is important for both parties to discuss the termination beforehand. Most spiritual accompaniers will have their own spiritual accompanier and supervisor who is trained in Spiritual Accompaniment supervision.

Does Spiritual Direction/ Accompaniment cost anything?

It really depends on the person offering Spiritual Accompaniment. Some people will accept a suggested donation, while others will use a sliding scale. During your introductory meeting the spiritual accompanier should talk to you about their preference.

How do I find a Spiritual Director/Accompanier?

Retreat Centres or schools that offer the Spiritual Direction Formation program across Canada will often have a list of Spiritual Directors. In Alberta there are two Retreat Centres that offer Spiritual Direction formation and that have lists of Spiritual Accompaniers: Providence Renewal Centre and Star of the North.

Another place to look is:

- Canadian Fellowship of Christian Spiritual Director (CFCSD)
- Spiritual Director International (SDI)

You can also contact your Eparchy which may have a list of Spiritual Directors.

Denise Laverdure can be reached by e-mail at dflsych@icloud.com. She resides in North Central Alberta.

Embroidered Apron

Edmonton UCWLC Museum, submitted by Joyce Howell

The artifact featured for the Museums submission is an apron in the Edmonton UCWLC Museum collection, received December 2010. The registration sheet tells us that Olia Kolodiy embroidered it in the early 1930s. The fabric is black wool and there are four floral bands worked in cross-stitch. Although not specified, Olia would have most likely used waste canvas to achieve such beautiful stitching.

Note the complexity of the designs. There are three bands using bugle beads, and each feature a different style of flowers separate from the cross-stitch bands. The apron measures 75 cm long x 63 cm wide (29 ¾ inches long x 25 inches wide). The bottom edge features a beautiful hand knotted fringe.

By definition, aprons are used to keep clothes clean and tidy. In a Google search of www.aussiechef.com.au/blog/history-of-aprons

I read “throughout history, aprons have been used for many practical, decorative and ceremonial purposes.” I can only guess, but I feel that this featured apron was embroidered as a “special purpose apron.”

Other aprons in the museum collection belong to a specific regional costume. I referred to the book *Ukrainian Folk Costumes*, published by the World Federation of Ukrainian Women’s Organizations in 1992, to learn more. Covering 17 regions,

I looked for “aprons” under each women’s costume description. These areas, Dni-pro, Kyiv, Poltava, Chernihiv, Kharkiv make reference to the apron being worn with a *plakhta*. This makes sense since a *plakhta* secures in the front and that needs to be covered.

Other regions used aprons to go over skirts, such as in the Lemko, Yavoriv, Volyn, Polissia, Kholm areas/regions. This book features the traditional special clothing, not everyday wear. Therefore, I have no answer if Ukrainian women wore an apron (much easier to launder), to keep their everyday clothing clean and tidy.

If you are interested in fun facts about the history of aprons, please go to www.aussiechef.com.au/blog/history-of-aprons, you will not regret taking a few moments to reminisce.

At left: The three bands using bugle beads, with each featuring a different style of flowers



Baba's Apron

By Marion Mutala

The main purpose of baba's apron was to protect baba's dress and it may have done that...
 Yes, it definitely did that...
 but from the babas I know and experienced, their apron was much more than that



The apron collected all kinds of things
 And could be many, vibrant colours
 It served as a potholder when cooking all those
 delicious meals and removed hot items from the oven
 It dried many children's tears and cleaned numerous
 dirty ears

It was useful for carrying eggs from the chicken coop
 to the house and fussy baby chicks and sometimes
 even fetched warm half-hatched eggs to be warmed
 in the oven

I remember many children hiding shyly behind baba's
 apron when company came to visit
 In cold weather, wrapped in baba's arms it kept you warm
 Chips and kindling wood, garden vegetables, fallen
 apples and nuts, all were carried in baba's apron

Baba waved her apron at the working men in the field
 when it was time to eat

Baba's apron could dust furniture when unexpected
 company came, quickly shell peas or carry out the
 hulls from apples
 Baba's apron gave comfort when needed physically or
 internally
 It was versatile, cozy and wonderfully warm
 It was often full of peppermint candies or scotch mints
 Baba's apron... not just decoration... But a practical
 piece fit for any beautiful baba

Marion Mutala has a master's degree in educational
 administration and taught for 30 years. With a
 passion for the arts, she loves to write, sing, play
 pickle-ball and guitar, travel, and read. Marion has
 written 19 books to date. She is the author of National
 Bestselling, award-winning children's books. *Baba's
 Over the Moon*, her 19th book, was just released.

Please visit her website www.babasbabushka.ca for
 a list of all her publications and follow her on social
 media at: Twitter@Babamarion, and www.facebook.com/marion.mutala.



CULINARY TREASURES

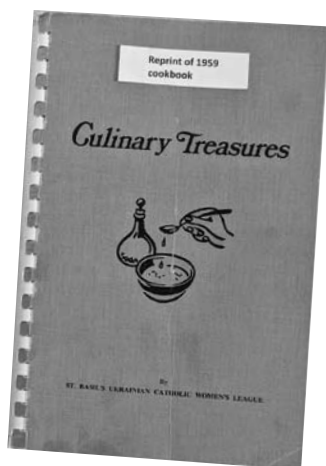
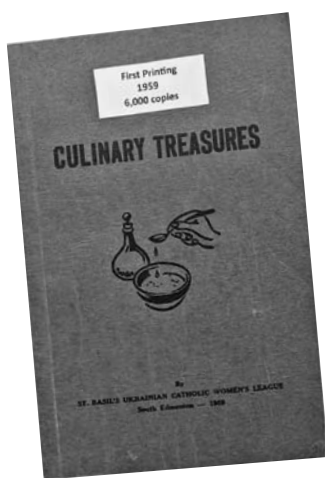
By Joyce Howell

St. Basil's UCWLC, Edmonton, celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2023. Thanks to the work of several members, much archival searching was done for the National UCWLC "Save the Cookbooks" project.

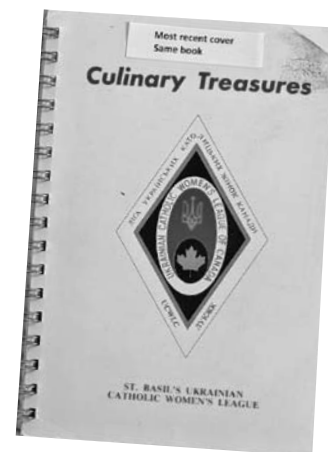
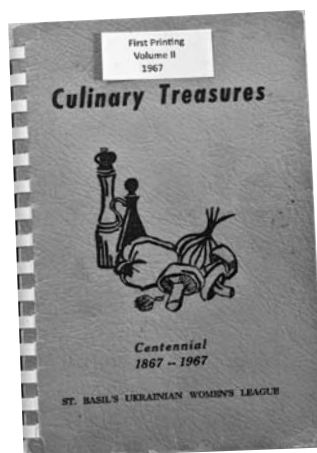
I hope you enjoy reading a little of this branch's history through their cookbooks. Copies of *Culinary Treasures*, *Culinary Treasures Volume II*, and *Smachnoho* were received for the library project.

In 1974, 3,000 copies were re-ordered. This reprint is in the white comb binding style. 14,000 copies of the 1959 *Culinary Treasures* exist(ed) across North America!

An interesting note is included at the back (p. 159) of the 1959 cookbook, "we are starting to collect recipes for our second edition." From the research done, work on a second cookbook began in 1965. Submitted recipes were tested at the homes of



First printing 1959 (6,000 copies); reprint of 1959 cookbook.



First printing Volume II 1967; most recent cover same book.

Lena Sloboda was the president of this branch in September 1956, and she suggested that the branch print a cookbook. With some initial minor hesitation, a committee was struck in January 1957. Paid advertisements would be included in the cookbook. Letters asking for recipes were sent in April 1957 to all UCWLC members, not only to St. Basil's ones. This finally answered a question for me. When I purchased a copy of the reprint edition (1974) I wondered how a recipe for fruitcake was included from a lady that I knew in Erickson, Manitoba. Other recipes were received from Vernon, BC; Fort William, Ontario; Vegreville, Toronto, and several other cities.

The script was ready in May of 1959 and sent to the Basilian Press in Toronto. 6,000 cookbooks arrived in January 1960, and the rest is history! By 1963 all copies were sold and 5,000 more were printed. Those familiar with the cookbook may have a pink covered copy or a blue one. The cookbook is book

committee members. The cookbook title remained *Culinary Treasures*. The inside front page mentions Volume II. The first printing of 12,000 cookbooks has on the cover *Culinary Treasures Centennial 1867-1967 St. Basil's Ukrainian Women's League*.

This cover was used for the 1972 and 1978 reprints. The 1978 binding is wiring coil. When reprints were needed in 1980, the cover was changed to the UCWLC logo on a white background. The inside page honours Alberta 1905-1980. One observation of this cookbook from this era is the inclusion of a section called Chinese Dishes. Christmas Dishes and Easter were separate categories. Over 55,000 copies of Volume II have been sold since 1967. The cookbook continues to be sold. Elsie Yermiy would welcome inquiries at jmen@telus.net.

The third cookbook, *Smachnoho*, was printed in April 2010. This was a project of the Sadochok committee to honour Sr. Petronella Dybka SSMI. Sister had been

teaching the program for 41 years, a program under St. Basil's UCWLC. (*Special note: Sister Petronella, now resides in Winnipeg, and is celebrating 75 years as an SSMI.*)

A recipe from each of the first two editions of *Culinary Treasures* is below. I urge you to give them a try. The recipe for Poppy Seed Cup Cakes was brought to our attention recently when Jeanette Bayduza baked them for a function at our hall. Found on page 124 in the 1959 *Culinary Treasures*, it was submitted by Lena Sloboda.

From Volume II, "Mushrooms in Sauce" is a recipe I have been using for many years for Sviat Vechir. It's easy, tasty, and works. It's made the old-fashioned way, by browning flour. Not familiar with this? Flour is browned, no grease in the pan. This gives a golden colour and lump-free gravy. I have faithfully stayed to the recipe, but feel free to try vegetable broth, or others.

IT IS WITH LOVE and sincere congratulations that the St. Basil's UCWLC honours Sr. Petronella Dybka on her 75th Anniversary of being a Sisters Servants Mary Immaculate. We wish you God's continued blessings; you hold a special place in our hearts. We thank you for your constant love and prayers, and we will continue to lift you up in our prayers as well! Многая літа!



RECIPES

■ Poppy Seed Cup Cakes

- 1 ½ cups poppy seeds
- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup butter or margarine
- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups sifted pastry or cake flour
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- ⅛th teaspoon salt
- 4 egg whites

Soak seeds in milk one hour or longer.

Cream butter, add sugar and continue creaming until light. Add vanilla and milk to the seeds. Mix just to blend. Sift flour, baking powder and salt together and add to mixture and beat well. Beat egg whites until stiff and fold into the mixture. Fill greased muffin tins, two-thirds full. Bake at 375° F for 15-20 minutes. Sprinkle with icing sugar.

Please note: Pastry flour was used quite often in baking. For optimum results, use it. However, it is not necessary to run out and purchase a bag just to make this recipe. The recommended change is to substitute all-purpose flour, sift, measure, then remove 2 tbsp. per cup and add back 2 tbsp. cornstarch per cup.

■ Mushrooms in Sauce

- 2 cans mushrooms, sliced or pieces
- ½ chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic (crushed)
- 3 tbsp. flour
- salt and pepper to taste
- green dill & parsley (optional)
- ¼ cup cooking oil
- 1 cup cold water
- mushroom liquid

Sauté onions in oil until very tender. Add drained sliced mushrooms. (Save liquid.) Add salt and pepper and simmer for 15 minutes. Brown flour slightly in heavy skillet. Add cold water to make a smooth paste, stirring constantly. Add mushroom liquid and stir. Combine flour mixture with mushrooms. Add garlic and simmer gently for 20 minutes. Add more water if a thinner sauce is desired.

What to do with Dried Mushrooms?

Our UCWLC cookbooks offer a wealth of information, besides just recipes. The Ukrainian Catholic Women's

League of Dauphin, in their 2007 cookbook *Traditional and Family Favourites* offer a special recipe on page 43. Thanks to the branch,

a copy of the cookbook was presented to me for the "Save the Cookbooks" project, when I attended their May 2022 meeting.

■ Smorzhie (Morels) with Potatoes

- 1 c. cooked smorzhie
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 4 tbsp. (¼ cup) vegetable oil
- 1 c. cooked potato cubes (½ inch)
- salt and pepper to taste

Smorzhie were also often dried to preserve them, as were the *pidpenky*, or other edible wild mushrooms as canning and freezing were a difficult or impossible means of food preservation in those days. The mushrooms were cleaned and thoroughly washed, drained, and set to dry in the hot sun either in a pan, or strung on a string and hung on a line. In bad weather a very low temperature oven was used to dry them. To cook these dried mushrooms, they were first soaked in water overnight, then cooked in some salted water.

When cooking mushrooms, skim off the scum from the top when they are starting to boil. Cook the mushrooms for 30-40 minutes, then rinse and drain. They are then ready to use in the recipe.

Sauté onion in the oil and pour over the potatoes and mushrooms. Salt and pepper to taste and simmer together for 10 minutes in a nonstick pan, stirring constantly to prevent scorching. Serve hot.

(On occasions other than Christmas Eve, these mushrooms are also great when prepared in a cream sauce. The cream sauce is made by cooking double the onions with salt and pepper in at least 2 or 3 times the amount of whipping cream instead of the vegetable oil. Makes this dish very rich and sinfully delicious.)

■ Christmas Eve *Pidpenky*

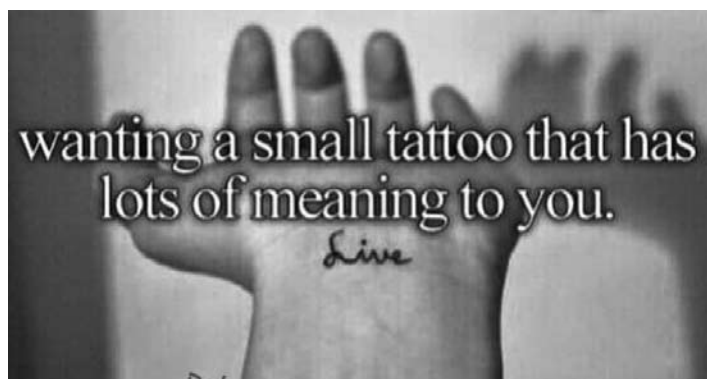
This recipe is similar to the one from *Culinary Treasures Volume II*, but reflects how Helen Lesiuk could create it for a few or many, and likely one way our babas would have prepared *pidpenky*.

- pidpenky**
- onion**
- garlic**
- margarine**
- browned flour**

(Have browned flour on hand for thickening.)

Soak dried mushrooms (*pidpenky*) overnight. Rinse well in several different waters. Add fresh water and bring to boil. Drain, add fresh water again, and boil about 20 minutes or so. Drain again.

Fry onion and garlic in margarine. Sprinkle browned flour on onion and garlic. Add enough water to make gravy. Add mushrooms and more boiling water to make desired thickness. Simmer on low heat. (Recipe from page 48 *Traditional and Family Favourites*, season to taste.)



Pidpenky

DURING THE LATE 1950S and throughout the 1960s picking mushrooms was a favourite activity for our family. Every fall after the first frost my mom, dad, brothers, and I walked across the road, crossed the bridge, and walked a quarter mile south on a grassy country road to pick mushrooms. The best spot for pidpenky was found on the right side of the road next to a small pond-size marsh.

Pidpenky mushrooms are light brown in colour with white stems and dark gills. They first pop out of the ground looking like yellowish-brown buttons. These mushrooms grow in old decaying vegetation and fallen trees covered with new growth. The syllable “pid” means “under” in English—growing under a canopy of poplar trees.

If my brothers and I could walk the quarter mile on our own, we were allowed to accompany Mom and Dad. Otherwise, we needed to stay home with Gido.

Mom and Dad each carried a pail and we kids walked along with them, excited to help pick mushrooms. We could tell it was autumn because the leaves and foliage were turning colours. The sunlight shining through the tall trees made the woods look magical. The smell of fall was in the air.

We listened to the birds singing and the insects buzzing in the nearby marsh as we concentrated on finding the pidpenky. Every once in a while, we heard the excited words: “I found one!”

After a time, with pails filled with mushrooms, we walked back

to the house, tired, but content with our find. Gido and the younger children were happy to see us return. The kitchen was warm from the small fire burning in the wood stove. The oven racks were



lined with brown paper ready for the mushrooms to be placed for drying. Several stands of two-foot lengths of string and a large needle lay ready on the kitchen table. The string used in the drying process was string mom collected from used cotton and sugar bags. The brown paper was saved from the packaging of groceries bought at Valley River or Dauphin.

Mom and Gido shared the task of getting the pidpenky ready for the process. Each mushroom had to be dusted of dirt and the stem cut off. The middle of the stem was carefully pierced with the needle and the mushroom was moved into

the string. As many mushrooms as possible were put onto the string, being careful not to have them touch each other. If some mushrooms broke in this process they would go onto the brown paper in the oven. The oven door would remain open so the oven would not get too hot.

Mom would turn them over so they would dry on all sides. The mushrooms would be in the oven for six or so hours. Several strings of mushrooms would hang on a nail behind the stove to dry. All day the air in the house was filled with a powerful pungent smell like burnt dirt.

The strings of mushrooms would eventually be hung in the summer kitchen so they could get completely dry. This may take two to three weeks. Eventually the dried mushrooms are stored in a cotton bag tied with a string and laced in the cupboards in the summer kitchen.

The pidpenky were used for flavouring gravy or in a cream sauce with dill during the fall and winter seasons. Mom always made sure some pidpenky were saved for one of the twelve dishes on Christmas Eve.

Thank you to Lynda Paziuk, daughter of Kay Slobodzian, for her recollections.

The family farm is across the road from The Cross of Freedom in Trembowla, near Valley River, Manitoba. Nasha Doroha summer 2023 issue #81 features the Trembowla Centennial Cookbook.

ЗУПИНІТЬ ПЛАНЕТУ!..

Зупиніть цю планету, я маю зійти!
 Бо не можу я жити в цьому світі
 Де в підвалах лежать матері і жінки
 Ну а поруч згвалтовані діти...

Руки ноги солдати зв'язали малим
 Гвалтували ті душі маленькі
 Катували до смерті дітей і старих
 На очах помирали рідненські

Як повірити в це?! Як з оцим можна жити?!
 Мізки плавляться від божевілля...
 Немоżliво було нам таке уявити
 Що можливе настільки свавілля

STOP THE PLANET!

Stop this planet, I must get off!
 Because I can't live in this world
 Where mothers and women lie in basements
 While there are raped children nearby...

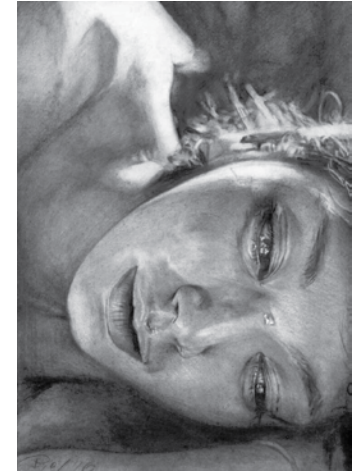
The soldiers tied the hands and feet of the children
 They raped those little souls
 Children and the elderly were tortured to death
 Relatives were dying before our eyes

То не звірі — у звірів хоча б є душа
 То чорти повилазили з пекла!
 Боже милий, відправ їх, будь ласка, назад
 На довічні муки запеклі!

Ну а всіх янголят ти собі забери
 Воз'єднай матерів з діточками
 Закатовані сім'ї ти в рай заведи
 Приготуй їм житло з квіточками

Щоб забули жахи що були на землі
 Щоб на небі лиш хмарки мякенькі
 Боже милий, почуй ти молитви мої
 Хай покояться 🙏 душі маленькі

Автор: Інна Романюк-Тригуба



Take all these angels for yourself
 Reunite mothers with their children
 Bring tortured families to paradise
 Prepare them a home with flowers

To forget the horrors that were on earth
 So that there are only soft clouds in the sky
 Dear God, hear my prayers
 May little souls 🙏 rest in peace

*Translated by Mariana Wasnea
 Author: Inna Romanyuk-Tryguba*



Ні, це не дощ...
 Це плаче моя Україна...

A little boy stands with his eyes closed,
 On his face there is a wound, his jacket is all dirty,
 To his mouth he raises his hands
 And in the Kremlin Satan is rejoicing!

Where is home, where did the toys go?
 Where is the crib in which I slept quietly?
 Where is the warm blanket? Under it my daddy and I kept warm,
 When frost was pinching on the nose.

Стоїть малюк, закривши оченята,
 На личку рана, куртка вся брудна,
 До ротика підносить рученята,
 А у кремл! радіє сатана!

Де дівся дім, де іграшки поділись?
 Де ліжечко, в якому тихо спав?
 Де теплий плед, під ним із татом грілись,
 Коли мороз за носика щипав.

Де книжечка із добрими казками?
 Машинки, ними грався з дідусем.
 А де усе, що так любила мама?
 Куди, скажіть, поділося усе?

Where is the book of good fairy tales?
 The cars grandpa and I used to play with.
 And where is everything that my mom loved so much?
 Where, tell me, where did everything go?

The little boy stands, he cannot understand
 What bad did he do to someone.
 Why are children sitting with tears
 And someone's daddy moans in grief.

Стоїть малюк, не може зрозуміти,
 Що він зробив поганого комусь.
 Чому сидять заплакані діти,
 І стогне чийсь згорьований татусь.

Бабуся в крик і падає на землю,
 Благає всіх: "Рятуйте, допоможіть!"
 Бо десь отам, у цій руїні темній
 Її донька з онуками лежить.

Це будуть перші згадки із дитинства:
 Руїни, сльози, страх і крик людей.
 Навіки закарбується це звірство
 У душах всіх скалічених дітей. 😞😞😞

Автор: Оля Киця

Grandma screams and falls to the ground,
 Begging everyone: "Save, help!"
 Because somewhere over there, in this dark ruin,
 Her daughter and her grandchildren are.

These will be the first memories of childhood:
 Ruins, tears, fear and cries of people.
 This atrocity will be forever imprinted
 In the souls of all maimed children. 😞😞😞

Author: Olya Kitsya

ХЕРСОН ПІД ВОДОЮ (Уривки)

Вероніка Голота | 08.06.23

— Мам, а скільки на даху нам ще сидіти?!
 — Тримайся, рідний, інакше нам не жити...
 — Я їсти хочу, мамо, хочу пити...
 — Ще трохи, милий, треба потерпіти...
 — А як же песик наш, він десь там унизу...
 Це мій найкращий друг, за ним я попливу!

— Mom, how much longer do we have to sit on the roof?!
 — Hold on, dear, otherwise we will not live...
 — I want to eat, Mom, I want to drink...
 — A little more, dear, you need to be patient...
 — What about our doggie, he's somewhere downstairs... He is my best friend; I'll swim after him!
 — Don't bother, son, I didn't find him...

— I'm cold, Mommy, and I want to drink... Probably, we will live no longer...
 — Nonsense, dear, they will save us, Let me hug you tighter!
 — Mom, will God take us to heaven? It's high there, and the water won't get us... And Dad is there, that's for sure... I know that! Heroes go to heaven after death!
 — Hold on, son, they will save us, Let me hug you tighter...

— Це марно, синку, його я не знайшла...
 — Я змерз, матуся, й хочу пити...
 Напевно, нам уже не жити...
 — Дурниці, рідний, нас врятують, Давай тебе міцніше обійму я!

— Мам, а Боженька нас забере на небеса? Там високо, і не доставе нас вода...
 І тато там, це точно... я це знаю!
 На небо після смерті Герої потрапляють!
 — Тримайся, синку, нас врятують, Давай тебе міцніше обійму я...



Afanasiivka, Kherson

TWITTER.COM

YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO UKRAINE'S VICTORY

- Say a prayer. Even better, ask your parish priest to say a prayer together during each service. Togetherness is powerful!
- Hold a support meeting or form a support group at your church for newcomers—especially with people separated from loved ones back in Ukraine and part of the war effort. They're alone and afraid.
- Have a meeting inviting all parishioners to discuss trauma felt due to Russia's hate and carnage brought about by its needless war on Ukraine. We need common comfort.
- In support of Ukraine, encourage the people in your neighbourhood to display flags or pro-Ukraine symbols on their businesses, cars or homes. Dauphin High School flies a Ukrainian flag, so does the police station in Syracuse, NY.
- Find a non-Ukrainian parish for a joint prayer session or fundraiser for Ukrainian orphans, the maimed, the homeless, for single moms, etc. Provide them with donation contacts including the League's choice of charity to support.
- Offer a Ukrainian family's human-interest story to your local media. Just call them. Pitch your story and introduce the contact person. Canadian readers love these human interest stories!
- Call your MPP, MLA, or MP. Ask/thank them for supporting Ukraine. Have the politician meet newcomers at a coffee event to hear their thank-you to Canada or their stories of hardship.
- Have a fundraising concert for Ukraine's war effort using parish community talent. Put on an art exhibit! Do it with a non-Ukrainian group!
- What city in Ukraine is yours twinned with? Do something together!

HERE ARE SOME PROJECT IDEAS

The Ottawa Community is:

- Protesting the war in front of the Russian Embassy.
- Organizing summer camps for newly arrived Ukrainian children.
- Holding a fundraiser for a Ukrainian children's choir with a non-Ukrainian women's choir.
- Showing Ukrainian movies.
- Enlisting nearly 2,000 followers on the Ukrainian Canadian Social Services Facebook page.
- Organizing Café Ukraїna at the CYM facility for informal social gatherings and English conversation sessions.
- St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church opposite Canada's parliament buildings exhibits a huge blue and yellow flag with a sunflower on it in support of Ukraine's victory over Russia's brutality.

EDMONTON's Ukrainian community lobbied to keep the Russian pavilion out of this year's heritage festival. War criminals and terrorists are not wanted! Now let's keep them out of the Olympics!

LET NASHA DOROHA KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING IN YOUR PARISH COMMUNITY, PROVINCE and CANADA-WIDE TO HELP UKRAINE WIN THE WAR.

HELP UKRAINE WIN AGAINST TERROR

So many give their lives for freedom and justice, others can help financially.

The National UCWLC has chosen to support the First Female Veterans Space ReHub which specializes in treating female-specific medical issues and provides counselling and support for female members of the Ukrainian military. Anyone wishing to support the ReHub may send their donation to the UCWLC-National, marking their cheque accordingly. Donations should be mailed to: UCWLC National Treasurer, 426 Nicklaus Drive, Warman, SK, S0K 4S1. Tax receipts for the donations will be mailed out early in the new year.

Individuals wishing to provide immediate more general support to families in Ukraine should make their donations directly through CNEWA (Catholic Near East Welfare Association) indicating their wish that the funds be used for their assistance programs in Ukraine. The address of the CNEWA Canada is: 223 Main Street, Ottawa, ON K1S 1C4.



ST. BASIL UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA IN EDMONTON, ALBERTA CELEBRATES 75 YEARS AS A BRANCH

In 1948 the St. Basil UCWLC Branch, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada was formed. Over the years, many ladies crossing multi-generations have dedicated their time and service to

Basil's Cultural Centre. We had a fantastic turnout with over 100 guests including Fr. Gabriel Haber, OSBM Protohegumen, Provincial Superior; Fr. Thomas Kobak, Pastor of St. Basil's; Fr. Iryney Valyavka, OSBM Pastor Lamont District Parishes; and Spiritual Advisor, Sr. Zoe Bernatsky, SSMI, with other sisters (from Edmonton, Winnipeg and

and congratulatory messages from branches St. Stephen Protomartyr, St. Nicholas, and Sts. Peter and Paul were read. Sister Petronella Dybka, SSMI, sent well-wishes from Winnipeg. Our guest speaker was Isabella Sheptak who spoke on her trip to Assisi, Italy as a youth representative attending the General Assembly of the



our church and League activities. On June 11, 2023, the branch celebrated its 75th Anniversary.

A 75th Anniversary Committee was formed to plan the banquet, and members included: Judy Heisler, Krystyna Sendziak, Michelle Zolner, Elizabeth Olynyk, Sheryl Zolner, Gloria Turchenek, and Violet Kully. Our celebration included a Moleben with His Grace Bishop David Motiuk followed by a dinner and short program at St.

Mundare). HLMs Lena Sloboda, Olga Hlus, and Barbara Hlus, as well as several Past Presidents, and many members of our League and their guests were also in attendance. Guests from other branches and Leagues attended as well.

The program consisted of greetings from Bishop David Motiuk, Fr. Gabriel Haber, UCWLC National Executive Barbara Hlus, HLM; UCWLC Edmonton Eparchy executive member Namisha Greening,

World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO).

Our musical entertainment was a memorable performance from New Life Choir, with Fr. Yosafat Khaimyk, OSBM. As well, Victoria Kostyniuk, Gabrielle Sheptak, Isabella Sheptak, Tomiko Johnson, and Alicia Chichak—Sadochok Alumni—performed songs.

As with previous anniversary celebrations, a 75th Anniversary Commemorative Booklet was

compiled, with layout and design by Sheryl Zolner. Included was a brief history of the Branch from 1948 to the present (2023). Also included were names of members of the first executive, the current executive, as well as the 75th Anniversary picture of our current membership. Throughout the history, it shows the Branch's strong connection to community, the church, and the ability to tackle challenges which lead to positive outcomes. The history also showed how, over the years, the Branch adapted to

the development of technologies and societal advancement. During the COVID-19 pandemic, St. Basil's branch ventured into the virtual world of using Zoom to keep ladies connected during periods of lock-down. Zoom was also used when offering new online activities to engage members who were able to connect online. Each table at the banquet had assigned a set of historical years, and everyone was encouraged to read about the years that their table represented, which provided good conversation!

During the historical review of the last 75 years, it was discovered that there were two connections to our original first executive—one direct and indirect—which showed strong generational connections within our membership. A digital archive was also completed—some highlights included: total years of service combined over the 75 years was 8,572 years; membership in 1948 was 8 members and in 2023, 106 members; and 1977, 162 members (highest membership year). Number of members with years of



service of 60 or more was 10; 50-59 years of service, 15 people; 40-49 years of service, 44; and 30-39 years of service, 55.

God Bless all our members as we continue to grow as a League with the next generation of UCWLC members. Многая літа!

Michelle Zolner, MA
Vice-President, Correspondence
Secretary, Press and Publicity
St. Basil Branch



Jessica Trainor, Olga Szuiac, Helen Bially (seated),
Janet Kuchma, Stephanie Trainor

PROFILES ♦ ОСОБИСТОСТІ

HELEN BIALLY CELEBRATED HER 90TH BIRTHDAY on Sunday, April 23, at the Tolstoi Ukrainian National Home with the beautiful attendance of family and friends from near and far. The hall was decorated in a Ukrainian theme along with displays of memorabilia.

A program was held to honour Helen, which included speeches, well wishes, and a slide presentation. As well, Helen's great-nieces provided a lively Ukrainian dance performance that had the crowd entertained and engaged. Family, faith, friends, fun, and food were the theme of the celebration. To support this theme, a delicious traditional Ukrainian meal was served.

Helen is proud to be a founding member of the UCWLC of Canada, Tolstoi Branch (1964). Helen has been whole-heartedly involved in serving in many executive positions including her current role as President.

Special thanks are extended to Deacon Twerdun who held a Divine Liturgy for Helen in honour of reaching her milestone birthday. Liturgy was held at the St Basil the Great Catholic parish in Winnipeg on May 8th.

Helen and her family are thankful and blessed for the endless memories made during this birthday celebration.

God Bless.

Submitted by the family of Helen Bially

Current Guidelines for Nasha Doroha submissions

Branch events	no cost
UCWLC Member Profile - 200 words with a photo	no cost
In Memoriam - up to 50 words and photo	\$.35.00
51 - 100 words and photo	\$.55.00
101 - 150 words and photo	\$.75.00
Announcements - anniversary, birth, wedding, etc.....	same as In Memoriam
General Articles - between 500 and 600 words	no cost
Sea to Sea Reports - no longer than 75 to 100 words	no cost

Photos are a choice. For the above articles, **send cheque payable to "UCWLC National" with a copy of the article to:**

**ND Administrator
c/o Elizabeth Zahayko
387 Betts Avenue, Yorkton, SK S3N 1N3**

ALSO please send the original copy to your Eparchial Nasha Doroha Representative who will forward to our editor, Lyryssa Sheptak. All articles should be typed.

Вітання з Меджугор'є

Greetings from Medjugorje



Fr. Dan Wach invited Solomiya to share her story with the group from Edmonton and Calgary who accompanied him to Medjugorje this past May. This is a photo with Solomiya sitting in the middle (with the sweater) surrounded by some members of the group.

Слава Ісусу Христу. Усім вітання з Меджугор'є. Мене звати Соломія, мені 27 років. Я з міста Червонограда, це Захід України. У мене є молодший брат Тарас, він служить в Житомирі прикордонником. Мама Сніжана і Тато Василь залишилися волонтерами в Червонограді. Я зараз в Меджугор'є.

Хочу розповісти вам про ситуацію в Україні, а також про силу молитви та як Господь діє під час війни.

Війна в Україні почалася ще в квітні 2014 року, але 24 лютого 2022 року, жорстокий напад Росії на мирних жителів збудив не лише увесь світ, але й всю християнську спільноту. Кожна церква розпочала духовну боротьбу.

Одними із перших хто кинувся нам на допомогу це були брати і сестри з Канади. Задзвонили церковні дзвони, закликавши кожного християнина до посиленої молитви за Україну. Країну, котра

Glory be to Jesus Christ! Greetings from Medjugorje to all. My name is Solomiya. I am 27 years old, from the city of Chervonohrad in western Ukraine. I have a younger brother, Taras, who serves as a border guard in Zhytomyr. My mother's name is Snizhana, and my father is Vasyl. They are still in Chervonohrad and are volunteers, but I am living in Medjugorje right now.

I want to tell you about the situation in Ukraine, as well as the power of prayer and how God works in times of war.

The war in Ukraine started back in April 2014. But on February 24, 2022, Russia's brutal attack on civilians shocked not only the entire world, but the entire Christian community. [Since then] every church has embarked on a spiritual fight.

Our brothers and sisters from Canada were one of the first to come to our aid were. The church bells

дала Канаді не одне покоління розумних і видатних українців. Ненька знову закликала своїх дітей розкиданих по цілому світу на допомогу. Страшні звірства російських солдатів стали величезною раною на серці кожного українця, але Господь почув ревну молитву своїх дітей.

Перше чудо, яке зробив Господь, це підняв українців до боротьби і Путін не зміг взяти Київ за 3 дні.

У Харкові люди свідчили про ракети що не зірвалися, а у Києві про зображення на небі Архангела Михаїла. Багато людей зі сходу України, котрі були невіруючими та були неохрещеними, приїхавши на Захід України, повірили в Бога і охрестилися. Люди об'єдналися, побачили один одного і почали допомагати один одному.

Особисто я маю свідчення про мого брата.

Під час мінометного обстрілу він спав у бліндажі після наряду. Одна з мін попала в бліндаж. Мій брат проснувся і почав молитися. Один із його побратимів накрив Тараса собою.

Він сказав йому: “Не молися, Господь нас все

одно не чує.” Тарас продовжив молитву і дякувати Господу в нього лише було поранення ноги, а побратим мав легкі поранення. Опісля, в лікарні, Тарас сказав своєму побратимові: “Лише тому що була молитва і Віра в Ісуса, ми з тобою живі.” На жаль той хлопець, що був на посту загинув. Але Господь зумів зберегти два життя.



Solomiya in Medjugorje

Є дуже багато свідчень коли ракети пролітали мимо, або не зірвалися, коли люди молилися будучи в підвалах. З молитвою вони мають менші впливи посттравматичного синдрому. Також є свідчення як Господь вивів солдат з оточення. У мене є знайомий командир, він веде блог про війну. В одному з відео він розповів як Ісус зберіг не лише його, але і увесь його підрозділ. Вони саме попали в оточення і Назар почав просити: “Господи, прошу тебе, допоможи мені вивести моїх побратимів.” Тоді Господь відповів йому: “Я виведу тебе і їх, не бійся.” Дякувати Господу вони всі залишились живі.

Молитва кожного з вас стала щитом для солдатів і для кожного українця. Віра в Ісуса і молитва

rang, calling every Christian to pray intensely for Ukraine—the country that gave Canada more than one generation of intelligent and outstanding Ukrainians. The motherland again called on her children, scattered all over the world, for help. The terrible atrocities of Russian soldiers have become a huge wound in the heart of all Ukrainians.

But the Lord heard the fervent prayer of His children. The first miracle that the Lord did was to raise the Ukrainians to fight, and Putin was unable to take Kyiv in three days.



Ukrainian refugees in Medjugorje organized a picnic thanks to the donations of the pilgrimage members.

In Kharkiv, people testified about missiles that did not explode, and in Kyiv people [saw the] image of Archangel Michael in the sky. Many people from eastern Ukraine who were non-believers and were not baptized, came to western Ukraine [where they became] believers in God, and were baptized. People united and began to help each other.

My brother told me this story.

During the mortar shelling, he was sleeping in a dugout after his post. One of the mines hit the dugout. My brother woke up and began to pray. One of his brother-in-arms covered Taras with his own body.

He said to my brother, “Don’t pray, the Lord doesn’t hear us anyway.” But my brother continued to pray and thank the Lord. He only had a leg injury, and his brother-in-arms had minor injuries. Later, in the hospital, Taras said to his fellow soldier, “Only because there was prayer and faith in Jesus are we alive”. Unfortunately, the [soldier] who was at the post died. But the Lord saved two lives.

When people prayed in basements, there was a lot of evidence of rockets flying by not exploding.

спонукала мільйони людей допомогти українцям, а саме: прийняти в дім, нагодувати, відігріти, напоїти, полюбити свого ближнього. Ісус достукався до усіх людей, навіть до невірних. Завдяки нашій молитві ми виграємо цю війну. Ісус допоможе кожному українцю загоїти рани від болю втрати рідних, дітей, мам, солдатів. Моліться і жертвуйте, тому що кожна ваша допомога є важливою для нас. Кожна ваша молитва відкриває українські серця. Ісус дбає про вас і ваші родини коли ви молитесь за інших.

Особисто мене Марія дуже направила через молитву Розарію. Вона навчила мене віддавати увесь біль, ненависть, бажання помсти за Україну в її руки і молитися за ворогів, та вірити що Господь проведе мій народ через цю Голгофу.

Дякую кожному з вас. Дякую що прочитали до кінця. Моліться і віруйте, що Господь має для вас свій план.

Я закінчу словами Ісуса: *“Нехай серце вам не тривожиться! Віруйте в Бога, і в Мене віруйте!”*



Solomiya in Medjugorje

Дякую ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥



Some Ukrainian refugees in Medjugorje

Prayer has also lessened the impact of post-traumatic syndrome. There is also testimony of how the Lord led the soldiers out of an encirclement. I know a commander who blogs about the war. In one of the videos, he described how Jesus saved not only him, but also his entire unit. They were surrounded, and Nazari began to [pray], “Lord, I am asking you, help me to lead my brothers out.” Then the Lord answered him, “I will bring you and them out, fear not.” And thank the Lord, they all survived.

The prayer of each of you has become a shield for the soldiers and for every Ukrainian. Faith in Jesus and prayer prompted millions of people to help Ukrainians, take them into their homes, feed them, warm them, give them something to drink. It taught them how to love their neighbour. Jesus reached out to all people, even unbelievers. I believe that through prayer, we will win this war. Jesus will help every Ukrainian to heal the wounds from the pain of losing relatives, children, mothers, soldiers. Please pray and donate, for every little thing you give is important to us. Every prayer of yours opens Ukrainian hearts. Jesus cares about you and your families when you pray for others.

Personally, Mary converted me greatly through the prayer of the Rosary. She taught me to surrender all the pain, hatred, and any desire to get revenge into her hands, and to pray for the enemies and to believe that the Lord will lead my people through this Calvary.

Thanks to each and every one of you. Thank you for reading to the end. Pray and believe that God has a plan for you.

And I will end with the words of Jesus, *“Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in Me!”*

Thank you ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Home of Hope and War in Ukraine

Submitted by Luba Kowalchuk

HOME OF HOPE is in Lviv, Ukraine, and it houses orphaned and poverty-stricken girls who wish to continue their education. Currently, 23 girls live in Home of Hope with Sister Magdalena, Sister Vira, and Sister Eronima who is the Home of Hope Administrator. This year will be 10 years since Home of Hope opened its doors to unprivileged young women, and since then we had over 80 girls finish post-secondary education and work in their chosen professions. For young women living in Home of Hope, the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate of Ukraine have come to replace their mothers and loved ones. The Sisters love them as their own. It was a happy home until the war came to their doorstep and changed their lives forever. For families from eastern Ukraine, Home of Hope became a safe place to stay. As long as there was room on the floor to sleep, refugees were welcomed. Girls in Home of Hope made food packages and sent them to soldiers on front lines. Girls baked bread and cookies, wishing to contribute in whatever way they could to fight for the freedom of their country. Talking with the Sisters and girls, it was asked if anyone wanted to come to Canada and the answer was, "No, our country needs us, and we want to stay and help in the fight for peace." This submission was written by a former Home of Hope resident, Diana, who is now married with two children, and Sister Eronima, the Home of Hope Administrator, who comments about life during the war.

My name is Diana, I live in Lviv. I am 22 years old. I have a husband and two daughters aged 2 and 5. My husband is originally from Crimea and left his home back in 2014, when Russia occupied the peninsula. From the first days of the war, he went to help set up checkpoints at the entrance to the city. And I went abroad with my children to Poland, with the support of a charitable foundation.

Later we returned home. Despite the fact that we were all helped and fully supported, our souls were heavy. We missed our home and relatives who remained in Ukraine. And since it was relatively calm in Lviv compared to



«Дім надії» та Війна в Україні

Люба Ковальчик

«ДІМ НАДІЇ» знаходиться у Львові, Україна, де проживають осиротілі та бідні дівчата, які бажають продовжити свою освіту. Наразі там живуть 23 дівчини разом з сестрою Магдаленою, сестрою Вірою і сестрою Єронімою котра є директоркою центру. Цього року виповниться 10 років з того часу, як «Дім надії» відкрив свої двері для студенток із соціально вразливої категорії. Відтоді понад 80 дівчат закінчили професійну освіту та працюють за обраним фахом. Для молодих дівчат, які там проживають, Сестри Служебниці Непорочної Діви Марії України замінили їм матерів та близьких. Сестри любили їх, як своїх. Це був щасливий дім, поки до них не прийшла війна і назавжди змінила їхнє життя. Для сімей зі Сходу України «Дім надії» став безпечним місцем для проживання. Поки на підлозі було місце для сну, біженців приймали. Дівчата в «Домі надії» збирали продуктові набори і відправляли їх воїнам на передову. Вони пекли хліб і печиво, бажаючи зробити внесок у боротьбу за свободу своєї країни. Розмовляючи з сестрами та дівчатами, я спитала, чи хтось хоче поїхати до Канади, і відповідь була негативною: "Ми потрібні нашій країні, і ми хочемо залишитися та допомагати в боротьбі за мир." Я подаю запис однієї з колишніх мешканок «Дому надії» Діани, яка зараз одружена, має двох дітей і також директорки центру, сестри Єроніми, про життя під час війни.

Мене звати Діана, я живу у Львові. Мені 22 роки, я маю чоловіка та дві донечки 2 і 5 років. Мій чоловік родом з Криму і покинув свій дім ще у 2014 році, коли Росія окупувала півострів. З перших днів війни він пішов допомагати облаштовувати блокпости на в'їзді в місто. Я з дітьми виїхала за кордон до Польщі, за підтримки благодійного фонду.

Згодом ми повернулися додому. Незважаючи на те, що нам усім допомагали та всебічно підтримували, проте було тяжко на душі. Сум

за домом та рідними що залишилися в Україні. Так як у Львові відносно спокійно в порівнянні з іншими

other cities of Ukraine, we returned home. Nevertheless, we constantly feel anxiety each and every day. Alarming are the air raid sirens, the news about casualties and, especially, the suffering of civilians and children. The first months were very scary, everyone cried a lot and was afraid. Over time, no matter how strange it may sound, we got used to it. Our fear grew into anger and a desire for revenge. We realized that our tears do not change anything, and we began to turn our anger and hatred into donations. Whether it is 5 or 5,000 hryvnias, they accelerate our victory. Currently my husband serves in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and my children and I live a normal life: kindergarten, walks, home. Of course, fear is still present, especially after the recent events with the Kakhovka hydro power plant. We do not know what will happen tomorrow or whether we will be here tomorrow. However, we must do everything possible and impossible to stop the genocide of the Ukrainian people, and to ensure that our children have a carefree childhood no matter what, they deserve it.

Glory to Ukraine!

Glory to Jesus Christ! I will share with you some events from our life. We recently had a good holiday—several internally displaced people who live with us received their first Holy Confession and solemn Holy Communion. I had catechesis with



them for a month, then there was a Divine Liturgy in our chapel and a festive breakfast. They were very touched and pleased! These are people from the Kherson region. Their village is under occupation and the Russians are committing the same atrocities there as in Bucha and in our other occupied cities and villages—killing, raping, torturing people, robbing houses and burning them. They still managed to leave, but the rest who remained are not being released by the *moskali*. That is why it was a great gift for them to come into our home and get closer to God, as they said.

Thank God! Despite the war, we continue to fulfill our mission at the House of Hope! 23 girls from different regions of Ukraine will live in the social centre during the 2022-2023 school year. We strongly believe that the war will not become an obstacle to acquiring knowledge and that our defenders will be able to stop and destroy the Russian horde!

містами України, ми повернулися додому. Звісно на душі тривожно постійно і щодня. Тривожно коли лунають повітряні тривоги і коли в новинах ми дізнаємося про втрати, а особливо коли страждають цивільні та діти. Перші місяці було дуже страшно, усі багато плакали та боялись. Проте згодом, як би дивно це не звучало, ми звикли і наш страх переріс у гнів та бажання помсти. Ми зрозуміли що наші сльози нічого не змінюють і свій гнів й ненависть ми почали перетворювати в донати. Нехай це 5 чи 5 000 гривень, але вони прискорюють нашу перемогу. Зараз мій чоловік служить в ЗСУ, ми з дітьми живемо звичним життям — садочок, прогулянки, дім. Звісно страх присутній досі, особливо після останніх подій з Каховською ГЕС. Ми не знаємо що буде завтра і чи будемо завтра ми, проте ми повинні робити все можливе і неможливе задля припинення геноциду українського народу, і для того, щоб наші діти мали безтурботне дитинство, незважаючи ні на що. Вони цього заслуговують.

Слава Україні!

Слава Ісусу Христу! Поділюся з вами деякими подіями з нашого життя. Ми на днях мали гарне свято—декілька осіб з переселенців, які живуть у нас прийняли першу Святу Сповідь і урочисте Святе Причастя. Я мала з ними катехизацію протягом місяця, а потім в нашій каплиці була

Божественна Літургія і потім — святковий сніданок. Вони були дуже зворушені і задоволені! Це люди з Херсонської області, їхнє село в окупації і росіяни чинять там такі ж звірства, як в Бучі і інших наших окупованих містах і селах — вбивають, гвалтують, катують людей, грабують дома, спалюють. Вони ще встигли виїхати, а решта, хто залишилися — маскалі вже їх не випускають. Тому для них потрапити в наш дім і ще й зблизитися з Богом було великим дарунком, як вони казали.

Слава Богу! Попри війну ми продовжуємо виконувати свою місію в “Домі надії”! 23 дівчини з різних регіонів України проживатимуть в соціальному центрі протягом 2022-2023 навчального року. Дуже віримо, що війна не стане перешкодою до здобуття знань і наші Захисники зможуть зупинити і знищити російську орду!



COURTESY PHOTO

My Three Stresses

By Oksana Bashuk Hepburn

IF YOU'RE LIKE ME there are stresses in your life. I'm not quite sure that I believe in "stresses," preferring to get on with life regardless of any little inconveniences. But a stress is something

to me that doesn't evaporate with a good night's sleep, a good read, or a quiet meditation.

There is nothing to be done about old age. It's inevitable if you're fortunate enough to get to it in the first place. It arrives with an arthritic ache in your knees, or attacks your ears and eyes. Sometimes it's okay, as you don't want to hear the complaints others offer about their predicament. But most of the time, you're surprised with the onset and become worried. Then there's memory loss.

Yes, you don't want to hear the daily menu of the sleepless nights, the difficulty in ??, or recalling where the man you've called husband for all these decades has left his phone.

You wish he'd stop, but he can't, and you stress about what will



OLIVIER HOSLET (EPA-EFE) / RADIOSVOBODA.ORG

happen to both of you in the future. He no longer can drive. What if you have your licence suspended due to old age issues too?

It helps to have younger family living nearby. They help with that darn computer foul up, and picking up this and that, driving to and from those endless medical appointments, and even to the garden. But they have their own lives, their own demands and interests. Besides, you prefer to be independent and frankly, they're not as good as you'd like them to be. Is that a crotchety old age comment creeping in?

So there you have it—old age and partner stress. Then there's Ukraine.

All my woes pale in comparison to the agony experienced there.

I look at those wonderful defenders and cheer with every drone that brings down a Russian missile. I see ruined city after city and fear for what lies ahead for the homeless

ones. I read about the tortures, rapes, and abduction of women and men by the bestial enemy and weep. But most of all I weep for the stolen children abducted from their homes, on the street, orphanages, and even from their parent's arms to be taken to a foreign land, away from their families... from their nests.

How often have the nasty Russians populated their stolen lands with stolen children from Ukraine and elsewhere? How often have they used non-Russian ethnics to fight their needless wars or do their dirty work? When is enough, enough?

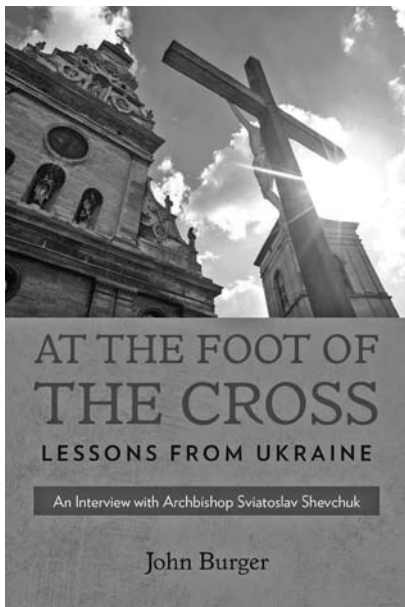
Day after day these stresses visit me. I get a cup of coffee and try to deal with them.

I cannot deal away old age. So I dwell on the good that it has brought me. Because of it my head is full of ideas and experiences that I can turn to for good thoughts and memories. Oh, the joy of memories. They're at their best when you've had years of life.



Did you buy a gift subscription or two of NASHA DOROGA for your favourite people? For their birthday or anniversary? Please see page 41.

Чи Ви передплатили журнал НАША ДОРОГА (або два) у подарунок на Уродини чи Річницю Вашим найдорожчим? Див. стор. 41.



AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS: LESSONS FROM UKRAINE by John Burger is a true gem that captivates with its thought-provoking insights, moving stories, and profound wisdom. This book is an inspiring and informative read that offers insights into the Ukrainian Catholic Church as well as a personal history of Patriarch Sviatoslav Shevchuk. Whether you're seeking guidance on your spiritual journey, searching to understand more about the Ukrainian Catholic Church, or looking for some factors that led to the invasion, this book will provide some insight. It will help you understand more about what is important for our Church and provide a glimpse into the values of our Patriarch.

The book is written as a series of questions posed to the Patriarch. In his answers, we glimpse the Patriarch's life experiences and deep wisdom. The book covers many topics including a brief history of Ukraine, the Patriarch's family history, and his experiences growing up in the underground church during Soviet times. He

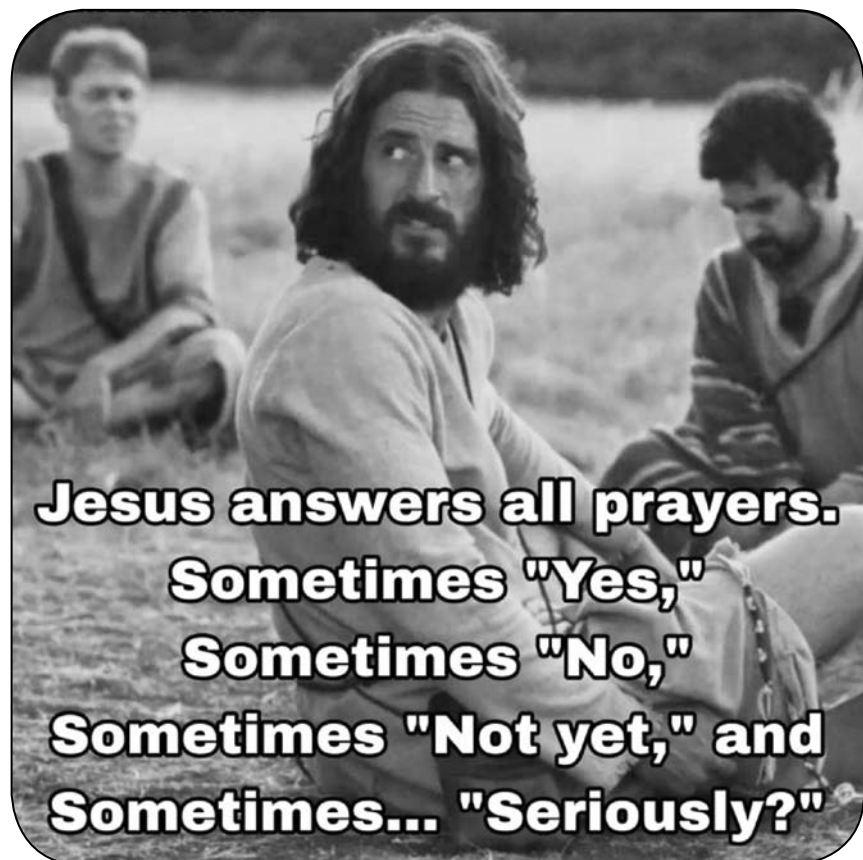
also shares his experiences in the army as a field medic, his doctoral studies in moral theology, and his time teaching at a seminary. Throughout the book, the Patriarch emphasizes the importance of the Ukrainian Church and his wish that our Church be welcoming to all as we experience the beauty of Byzantine worship.

At the Foot of the Cross also has many words of wisdom from the Patriarch. One example is that we cannot use force or coercion to impose a Christian Faith, rather we need to be good witnesses of the faith. Another example of wisdom is shared when the Patriarch reflects on his days teaching moral theology. He emphasizes that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is supposed to be "mediated through the service of the Church in

order to enlighten people's concrete human situation in light of the Gospel." (p. 176)

This book also provides insights into some factors leading to the invasion of Putin's army at the beginning of 2022. With great courage, the Patriarch refused to leave the capital city of Kyiv, stating that he would stay with his people. The Patriarch tries to publish messages on social media assisting the faithful to pray and seek refuge in the church during the invasion. In very moving words, he tells us, "We are praying for peace, an end to the war, but peace always has to be connected with truth and justice. An unjust and inauthentic peace would be the imitation of peace." (p. 212)

Overall, John Burger's book is a good read, as it provides insights into the history and

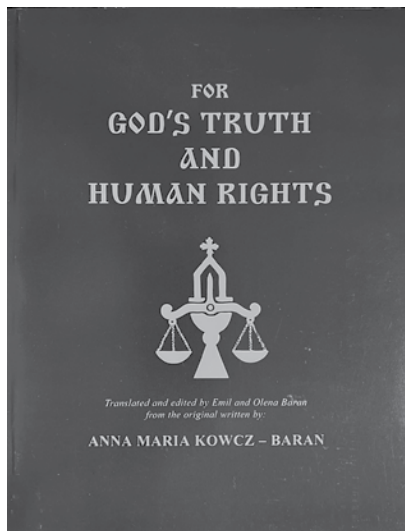


wisdom of our Patriarch. As well, it provides some history and present-day commentary on what is happening in Ukraine. We recommend you pick up this book and read it for yourself.

At the Foot of the Cross: Lessons from Ukraine. An Interview with Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk. Our Sunday Visitor: Huntington, Indiana, 2023.

Written by Marcia-Coulic Salahub and Deacon Harrold Salahub

Marcia is the Spiritual Development Chair for the National UCWLC and Deacon Harrold is the Metropolitan's representative at National UCWLC meetings.



Written by Sylvia Baran

FOR GOD'S TRUTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS is a biographical story about the life of a humble priest, Father Emilian Kowcz, who died in 1944 at the Majdanek concentration camp while imprisoned by the German Nazis.

Written in 1994 by his daughter, Anna Maria Kowcz Baran, the book describes what life was like living in a territory

struggling for independence from various ruling empires and communist ideology. *For God's Truth and Human Rights* is a historical collection of family memoirs and photographs together with recollections from others who personally knew Father Kowcz.

As a military chaplain and parish priest, he went beyond the spiritual and moral leadership of his flock, providing leadership in all activities of his community. Father Emilian shared the hardships and risks of daily life during the war years when Ukrainian people suffered much discrimination. Despite forced restrictions, he put himself at the centre of the struggle to protect the rights of Ukrainian people and their Ukrainian Catholic Church, often making hard decisions that had a lasting effect on his family. He defended independence. He bravely resisted. He rose above the terror. He defended people of all faiths and nationalities with his life.

While facing death at Majdanek, Father Emilian Kowcz

wrote these words to his family:

"Here I see God, Who is the same for everybody, regardless of religious distinctions which exist among us."

How can reading about the life of a man who died almost 80 years ago be significant for us today? Consider this: How would Father Emilian serve his community in defending against the current genocide on Ukrainians? Could we find strength to follow his lead and believe in his mission? Could we give our life to God's truth and to human rights, as he did?

On June 27, 2001, in Lviv, Father Emilian Kowcz was beatified as a Blessed Martyr by His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

* The English translation of the book is available for purchase from Musée Ukraina Museum in Saskatoon and at Koota Ooma in Toronto. The original, "За Божі Пrawdę і Людські Права", written in Ukrainian is out of print, but available by request in pdf.

Anna Maria Kowcz-Baran was born in 1914, in Kozarets, Yugoslavia to Rev. Father Emilian Kowcz and Maria Dobrianska. She arrived in Canada with her husband Theodore and their oldest three children in 1949 after four years as a refugee.

Anna Maria became an active member of the Saskatoon Ukrainian community, where she became involved in organizational, cultural, educational, and journalistic work. She was co-founder of the UCWLC Museum of Ukrainian Culture, now Musée Ukraina Museum, and served as vice president of the national UCWLC.

Among her many literary achievements was bringing the first editions of *Nasha Doroha* into publication.

Submitted by Anna Mycyk

“We have loved [her] in this life; let us not abandon [her] in death, but rather by our prayers, let us conduct [her] to the bliss of eternal glory.”

St. Ambrose

“Ми любили (її) в цьому житті; не покидаймо (її) в смерті, а радше своїми молитвами провадьмо (її) до блаженства вічної слави.”

Св. Амвросій

† **Bessie Lashin**

1916-2023



Mrs. Bessie Lashin (née Statkewich) was born September 30, 1916, on a homestead near Arran, Saskatchewan. She passed away on May 4, 2023, at 106 years old.

Bessie told an interviewer for a video on seniors when she was 98 that she never wanted to live on a farm and moved to Winnipeg in the 1930s. She and her husband moved to Vancouver, where he worked in the shipyards during the Second World War.

They raised seven children in East Vancouver since 1946, and Bessie's legacy lives on through her family, who all remember her as a loving and kind matriarch who always put family first. Her impact on their lives will be felt forever.

Bessie is survived by her sister Jean, children Marianna (John), Grace, Rita (Leo), Robert (Emiko), Teresa (Edward), James (Christine), daughter-in-law Judy, 23 grandchildren, and 38 great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her parents, John and Mary; sisters Anne and Lena; brother Steve; husband Samuel; and son Ross. A prayer vigil and funeral services were held at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church, where she was a longtime member and faithful attendee of the Sunday Divine Liturgy as recently as this year.

May her memory be eternal.

† **Lillian Saranchuk,**

HLM



Lillian Saranchuk, HLM, past president of New Westminister Eparchial UCWLC and Holy Eucharist Cathedral Branch, passed away peacefully surrounded by family on July 27, 2022, at Crossroads Hospice at age 70 years.

Lil was a loving wife, a highly involved mother, a proud baba, a devoted Ukrainian Catholic, a loyal colleague, and a cherished friend.

Born on February 20, 1952, in Winnipeg to Nick and Rose Lozinski, Lillian relocated to

Vancouver, where she eventually met her future husband, Ray. They were married on September 1, 1973, and settled in Coquitlam welcoming their sons, Christopher and Nicholas.

Lillian is survived by her husband, Ray; her two sons Christopher (Laura) and Nicholas (Jennie); four grandchildren Kylie, James, Ethan and Emily; as well numerous relatives and friends. Lillian was predeceased by her parents and her baby brother, Ron.

A funeral service/Divine Liturgy was celebrated at Holy Eucharist Catholic Cathedral in New Westminister, BC. UCWLC members acknowledged her 34 years of dedicated service and many lifetime accomplishments, honouring her, as well, with a deeply touching eulogy.

Vichnaya Pamyat!

Let us remember those who have departed in our prayers.

Send announcements and tributes to *Nasha Doroha*.



Згадаймо тих, що відійшли у Вічність, у наших молитвах.

Надсилайте до редакції посмертні згадки про ваших рідних, друзів, знайомих.



SISTER DOLORETTA SHALAGAN, SSMI

Following God's Plan

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE "ABUNDANCE" OF LIFE, and what is true abundance? Abundance of life is founded in a strong faith, an inner conviction of the Truth lodged firmly in our heart. It is a sense of being loved and treasured by a God who never leaves us and invites us to live with Him forever.

My abundant life of grace, my greatest gift that could ever have been given to me, has been my sublime call to consecrated religious life. Could I have ever imagined God's plan for my life from the moment of creation!

The seed of my vocation to enter religious life was implanted 64 years ago. At the end of Grade 11, I was attracted to a career in dental assisting. Within my parish of St. Josaphat's Cathedral in Edmonton, AB, I was involved in several parish activities, one being the Sodality of Mary. It was here that my devotion and love for Mary brought me into a deep intimate union, with Her as my dearly loved heavenly Mother. I vividly recall the day of my religious calling during a weekend parish youth retreat. The evening

before we were to depart from the retreat centre, I was praying in the chapel before Mary when I distinctly heard Her voice within my heart saying, "My Son has a gift for you." Not at all understanding the meaning of this message, and somewhat bewildered, I left the chapel and went to my room. As I entered, my eyes fell upon the crucifix before me on the wall. Again, I heard within my heart, coming from Jesus, "Follow Me." There was absolutely no doubt or hesitation within me as to the meaning of these words. Though I had never considered such a calling before, yet my entire being, my inner true self responded, much like I believe Mary did at her Fiat, I replied to Jesus, "Yes, I want to be yours with all my heart." Through my 63 years as a religious, I have never doubted my calling, nor have I ever regretted, even for one second, my response to this sublime vocation.

Guided by a spiritual director, I was advised to wait for one year before entering. It was thought that during this time, I could ease the unbearable pain my mother was experiencing in considering our dreaded separation. My dearly loved mother experienced several losses in her life.

When immigrating from Ukraine to Canada to join her husband who had immigrated one year earlier, she was never again to see her loving parents and family. Three of her young children died very early in life, one having died on the ship sailing to Canada. Her dear husband, my father, died at a very young age from leukemia. At

the time of his death, mother was pregnant with their seventh living child, having given birth to ten children, I being the ninth.

Learning of my religious vocation, mother interpreted my calling as another loss, whereby God was taking another child from her. From the day of my entering to, eventually, my departure to Ontario, complete communication ceased between us for four years because, for my mother, I was no longer her daughter.



Before our Mother of God in our Ancaster shrine

In the fourth year she considered the possibility of my visit on Mother's Day. In the years following, mother began to take great pride in knowing that God had chosen her daughter to be His alone forever. We never referred to the painful past resulting from the onset of my religious vocation.

Twenty-five years later during one of my visits home, I was overcome with emotion when my mother said to me, "I am so sorry for the way I treated you when you shared with me your desire to enter the convent. I just could not understand. Through the years I have seen the great joy radiating from your eyes—something I have not seen from any of your siblings. I am so sorry." My mother died very peacefully six months later.

During my years as a religious, I served as Financial Administrator in our Willingdon Hospital, and later at St. Paul's Nursing Home in Dauphin, MB. I also served as Secretary and Financial Bursar for ten years in our Provincial Home in Toronto, ON. Further assignments included being the director of our retreat centre in Ancaster, ON. I also did recreation therapy with the elderly in our nursing homes in Dauphin and Winnipeg; as well, I partook in parish work with First

Holy communicants, Sodality members, and people on retreats.

In 1992, in celebrating 100 years of the founding of our Congregation, many Religious Orders were approached by lay men and women, begging the Sisters to share with them, out of their abundant life of prayer, a means of on-going spirituality for their thirsting souls.



With my brother Peter and sister Anna, on my 50th anniversary (Toronto chapel)

Two of our Sisters in Edmonton began what has been called our SSMI Associate Program. A year later I was approached by our SSMI governing body to continue our Associate Program throughout Canada, within all of our missions.

It has now been 30 years for me, journeying with these beautiful faith-filled women and men, sharing with them our SSMI spirituality and charism through a commitment of prayer and service. For me this journey has been a pure gift—communicating God's gift of life with others. Together with them it is our divine vocation to live "holiness"—to become the eyes and hands and Heart of God in this world, and to manifest the presence of God's love and peace by being Christ's Light for every creature.

I praise and thank God for the marvelous grace to work with Him in this awesome task of inspiring others to fall in love with Jesus and to make Him central to their lives.

НАША ДОРОГА ♦ NASHA DOROHA – Subscription Form

1 year/рік \$20 2 years/роки \$40 (or equivalent in international funds plus \$10 postage)

Ось мій список. Here's my list. I understand each friend will receive a card announcing the gift subscription.

I've enclosed \$ _____ for _____ gifts at \$20 each (\$25 US for USA and \$30 US for overseas*).

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UCWLC – National
387 Betts Avenue
Yorkton, SK S3N 1N3

* to be paid as American Money Order or Foreign Draft in Canadian Funds

Meditation on the “Hail Mary”

HAIL, MOTHER OF GOD:

Greetings, Dear Mother, from your child, who needs your tender, loving care.

VIRGIN MARY, FULL OF GRACE:

Mary Most Holy, you who are the Mediatrix of all Graces. Fill my heart with peace and love.

THE LORD IS WITH YOU:

I need Him with me too, Dear Mary, please intercede for me, that His presence may be real to me always.

BLESSED ARE YOU AMONG WOMEN:

Mary, Most Holy—help me to remember my inherent worth as a child of God. Let me not doubt my value or question my worth. Help me, also, to respect the God-given worth and dignity of others.

AND BLESSED IS THE FRUIT OF YOUR WOMB:

Blessed is every child of God’s creation. Help me to be like Jesus. Help me reverence life and to value all of God’s people. Help me, especially, to be receptive to the needs of children.

FOR YOU HAVE BORNE CHRIST:

My Lord, my Teacher, my trusted Friend. Thank you, Dear Mother, for bringing Him into the world and into my life. Never let me separate myself from Him for anyone or anything.

THE SAVIOUR AND DELIVERER OF OUR SOULS:

Loving Mother Mary, meet me at the Cross, which speaks both of pain and of hope. Show me the power of God’s love that bought my redemption. Pray with me and help me to grow in His love and bring me to eternity with Him forever.

Amen



Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary

(Feast Day September 8/21)

“She is the only one who introduced Christ, and Christ alone, into the world for the salvation of souls.”

— Vespers, Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady

By Father Jeffrey Stephaniuk

My first memory of going to church for this Marian feast day was as a fifteen-year-old in Grade 10 at St. Vladimir’s College in Roblin, Manitoba. Father Wiwchar arranged the vespers for the students, which was also a new experience for me. By way of preparation, I remember him introducing us in general terms to the idea of fostering a devotion to Mary. Being in an all-male environment of the minor seminary and away from home and parents, various aspects of such a feast day, including the blue vestments, offered a tangible comfort for me as a young teenager. I was first introduced to the melodies of prayer at that time, and recognize the power and value in such songs as *Pid Tvoiu Mylist* (Під Твою Милість – Under Your Protection). Now as an adult, I am conscious of including Marian themes in such projects as retreats for fellow priests, and at home I am happy that my wife encourages a family rosary.

Ukrainian People (September 2018) presents an article on the birth of Mary in the context of its reception in Ukrainian culture, beginning with its place in other Marian feast days. Dormition is honoured in rank of the first holy day, where Mary is transferred from life to Life at her death; then the Nativity of Mary; and third being the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple when she is a little girl.

In their article, the authors quote from a book by Oleksa Voropai, *The Customs of Our People*. One of the themes of the Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary is prayers for fertility and pregnancy, and a custom is explained in which someone hoping to bring a child into this world would first request a Divine Liturgy for that intention, and then invite people, especially the poor, to a meal, asking them to pray that such possibility becomes a reality. Another custom on this feast day is for newlyweds to go and visit members from each other’s family as a way of building extended family ties for the sake of strengthening their marriage. This feast day occurs in early fall, and it is associated as well with prayers for a successful harvest.

Those with a role in our salvation are completely human. We know who their family is and where they come from. It is a principle of Christian realism that such an assumption is reliable and reasonable: Mary lived, therefore she was born of her mother Anne, and her birth can be celebrated, along with the Christian theological custom of celebrating the conception of those like John the Baptist, Mary, and Jesus.



Icon of the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God (XVI century, village of Nakonechne, Lviv Oblast, Ukraine) in Synod of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, *Христос – Наша Пасха*. Lviv: Svichado, 2011.

We in the modern world have received a treasure and a gift from the biblical world, that at conception one is already fully human and a person, and that a mother carrying a child during one’s prenatal time of development is “with child.”

In her book, *Particles of Faith: A Catholic Guide to Navigating Science*, Stacy A. Trasancos describes this Christian realism as the philosophy that gave birth to science, crediting Fr. Stanley L. Jaki with the proposition that “modern science was born from the nurturing womb of Christianity after being still-born in other ancient cultures.” The reason is the value Christianity places on the physical world, making observations and conclusions based on what is and not on what one wishes were there, as shown for example in Psalm 143: “I meditate on all your works / and consider what your hands have done.”

All these feast days of the Church acknowledging conception and pregnancy and birth reinforce a principle I have learned in the pro-life ministry of Rachel’s Vineyard retreats, during which participants grieve the loss of a child, namely that a child won’t ruin your life, but rather, a child will save your life. Perhaps this is why Mary’s mother, Anne, is so prominent in the icon of the Nativity of the Mother of God. And further, Christianity’s gift to the protection and advancement of civilization is that the highest achievement of human culture is a mother and child: “Mary the maiden of God is being given to us as a blessed fruit. She opens up the entrance of Paradise to all of us.”

Fr. Jeffrey is in ministry in the Eparchy of Saskatoon. He is also the priest for Rachel’s Vineyard Saskatchewan. The article he refers to, and translated some text from, is at <https://ukrainianpeople.us/різдво-пресвятої-богородиці-або-ж-дру>.



Biography

ANDRII LYSENKO was born in Ukraine in the Carpathian region. Since childhood, he loved to draw everything that caught his eye. He especially admired his homeland's natural beauty. He graduated from art school with honours and won many regional and interregional exhibitions. After graduating from university, he started working in the energy field. However, he continues painting during his leisure. He especially likes to paint with oil as it creates depth and incorporates real life. He also likes to do graphic painting with pencil.

Above: *The Easter Morning*, 2010

Біографія

АНДРІЙ ЛИСЕНКО народився в Україні на Прикарпатті. З дитинства він любив малювати все, що потрапляло йому на очі. Особливо захоплювався красою природи рідного краю. Закінчив з відзнакою художню школу, та був переможцем багатьох регіональних та обласних виставок. Після закінчення університету почав працювати у сфері енергетики. Він продовжує малювати у вільний час. Особливо любить малювати олійними фарбами, оскільки вони допомагають створювати глибину та відображати реальне життя. Також любить графіку олівцем.

Зверху: *Великодній ранок*, 2010