

# THE WAY ШЛЯХ

Official Publication of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia

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ENGLISH VERSION

## UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CLERGY GATHER FOR SPRING CONFERENCE

**Hershey, PA** – Most people in the United States read the phrase “vision 2020,” and immediately think about their last visit to the eye doctor. But, for the priests of the Archeparchy of Philadelphia, and for that matter, all the bishops, priests, and people of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, it is not about seeing clearly – it is however, about looking to the future of our Church and what we might be in the year 2020. And so, the priests of Archeparchy of Philadelphia, along with Archbishop Soroka gathered together to participate in workshops



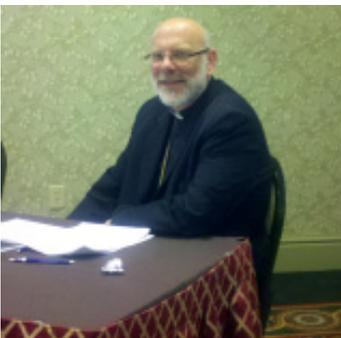
with an agenda presented by Bishop Ken Novakowski, Eparch of New Westminster, Canada, and Fr. Andriy Onuferko, of the Eparchy of Toronto and Spiritual

Director of Holy Spirit Seminary, Ottawa, Ontario. This agenda focused upon the clergy of our Archeparchy becoming the leaders and motivators, who will help enliven our parish churches to be, where anyone who wants to, can experience not merely, religion and ritual, but where all people can come to encounter the living Christ to be saved, nourished, forgiven, healed, consoled, and renewed by the Savior of

the World – in our own Ukrainian Catholic Church.

On December 2, 2011, Patriarch Sviatoslav issued a pastoral letter for our church the world over called, “The Vibrant Parish – a place to encounter the living Christ.” The purpose of the letter was to initiate this campaign to rediscover the mission of our Ukrainian Catholic Church and the work it has to accomplish in the

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**Bishop Ken Novakowski**



**Fr. Andriy Onuferko**

# UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CLERGY GATHER FOR SPRING CONFERENCE

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world. In it, our Patriarch Sviatoslav, acting with the Bishops of our Church, invites all of us to actively engage in the spiritual renewal of our Church, and in the apostolic ministry of the evangelization of all peoples. This mission was entrusted to all of us (bishops, priests, religious, and laity) by Christ Himself.

The key components of this effort for spiritual renewal and evangelization are: The Word of God, Holy Mysteries and Prayer, Serving One's Neighbor, Leadership, Fostering and Serving Unity, and Missionary Spirit of the Parish Community. Actually, none of these endeavors are anything new, but they are, and always have been, the task of the Christian community, and in particular, what all of us who are the Ukrainian Catholic Church must be engaged in, if we are to truly be known as disciples of Jesus.

How do we go about doing this? As part of the strategy, bishops, priests, religious, and laity began to think about what we as a Church have as special, unique, and

authentic practices, traditions, rites, rituals, theology, and spirituality. Moreover, there is also the need for us to appreciate that everything necessary for salvation by Jesus Christ can be found within our own Church. We, as the Ukrainian Catholic Church participate in the Universal Mission (as stated in *Lumen Gentium*) of proclaiming the Gospel to every creature and to bring the light of Christ to all.

The task then centered upon the development of an *Instrumentum Laboris* (practical plan of action) to retrain, reform, and reinvigorate all the faithful of our Church. We are currently at the stage where our bishops, priests, and deacons are being introduced to developing a pastoral plan for our Archeparchy of Philadelphia and each of its 69 parishes and missions. This is why in March 2012, the first workshop was held at our Cathedral in Philadelphia, and most recently from April 23 – 26, workshops were held in Hershey,



Pennsylvania. Future workshops will take place in the early fall of 2012 as the *Instrumentum Laboris* is put into action with the development of pastoral plans and the introduction of these strategic efforts to our faithful throughout our Archeparchy.

The ancient tradition of our Church recounts the story of the Apostle Andrew visiting and announcing the Good News to what would one day become *Kyivan-Rus* and the native land of our ancestors, remarking that one day there will be a great people and a great Church. St. Andrew clearly saw into the future and understood. The future Ukrainian nation although, probably could not even imagine, that one day its people would live all over the globe and the Christian

message first preached by St. Andrew and then given to all of us by St. Vladimir, would be lived out and practiced by the descendents of that ancient land, not only in Ukraine, but all over the world today. The Ukrainian Catholic Church, as any other Catholic Church, has a vital role to play in spreading the Good News of Jesus to all people and anyone who would like to share in the rich treasure of its liturgy, theology, and spirituality. The year 2020 is not that far away. All of us are called to be part of this vision predicted by the Apostle Andrew, given to us by St. Vladimir, strengthened by the blood of our Martyrs, and entrusted to all of us to share with all peoples as we build, live, and dwell in the Kingdom of God, now and yet to come, proclaimed by our living Savior, Jesus Christ.

# **APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITION:**

**Director of Development  
Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia  
<http://www.ukrarcheparchy.us>**

The Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia is seeking an accomplished, hands-on professional as its Director of Development, a new position reporting directly to the Metropolitan-Archbishop. The Director of Development will design and implement a comprehensive fund-raising strategy. This includes setting and achieving goals; cultivating and engaging donors within the Archeparchy, as well as, nationwide. Fundraising will support our seminary, vocations and deacon programs, youth ministry, religious education and evangelization programs, our Treasury of Faith Museum and our Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral.

## Qualifications:

- A bachelor's degree and prior professional experience are required
- Candidates must demonstrate excellence in organizational, managerial, budgetary, and communications abilities
- Strong computer skills and hands-on experience with popular donor-relationship programs are essential
- Proven track record in achieving revenue targets
- Related experience in a mission-driven organization
- Ability to think strategically and apply strategic principles to analysis and problem-solving
- Demonstrated ability to prospect, cultivate, motivate, and manage new donors
- Experience in major gift fund-raising (\$25,000 and above)
- Experience in searching and applying for grants
- Skilled in the use of web-based and interactive media to promote donor relationships
- Proven management and leadership capabilities
- Experience working collaboratively with senior-level executives, staff, and volunteers
- Strong verbal skills and the ability to write clearly and persuasively

The Archeparchy of Philadelphia offers a competitive compensation package commensurate with a candidate's experience and qualifications. Our benefits package includes medical and dental plans.

Please send a letter of interest, a resume and names of three references to the attention of

Rev. Monsignor Peter Waslo, Chancellor  
827 North Franklin Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19123-2097

We will respond to all applications. Pre-employment background screening is required for this position.

## **APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITION:**

**Archbishop's Secretary  
Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia  
<http://www.ukrarcheparchy.us>**

The Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia is seeking an experienced and professional person to serve as personal secretary to the archbishop. This is a full-time position. Duties principally involve assisting the archbishop with all forms of correspondence, arranging appointments, assisting in preparation of meetings, maintaining information and files, reviewing translations, and general reception duties.

Applicant would preferably be an active and practicing Ukrainian Catholic; be proficient with information technology; possess strong computer/typing skills; have experience working collaboratively with staff and people; possess strong and effective communication skills; able to strictly adhere to confidentiality and being discreet; possess proficiency in English and Ukrainian languages.

The Archeparchy of Philadelphia offers a comprehensive compensation package commensurate with a candidate's experience and qualifications. Our benefits package includes excellent medical and dental benefits.

Please send a letter of interest, a resume and the names of three references to:

Rev. Monsignor Peter Waslo, Chancellor  
827 North Franklin Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19123-2097

Pre-employment background screening is required for this position.

### **Just a reminder...**

**"The Way"** is the online newsletter of the  
Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia.



- 1) Access the newsletter for free on the internet at **[www.ukrarcheparchy.us](http://www.ukrarcheparchy.us)**
- 2) Receive it electronically for free by e-mailing your e-mail address to **[theway@ukrarcheparchy.us](mailto:theway@ukrarcheparchy.us)**
- 3) "Like Us" on our **Archeparchy of Philadelphia** Facebook page to receive "The Way" via Facebook.

# PAROCHIAL ASSIGNMENTS BY METROPOLITAN STEFAN FOR THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC ARCHEPARCHY OF PHILADELPHIA

**EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2012**



Very Rev. Andriy Rabiw

1. Very Rev. Andriy Rabiw is relieved of his responsibilities as Pastor of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church, Reading, PA and assigned as the Assistant to the Archbishop. Very Rev. Rabiw continues to serve as Vice-Chancellor of the Archeparchy.



Very Rev. Archpriest  
John Fields

2. Very Rev. Archpriest John Fields is relieved of his responsibilities as Pastor of St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church in Frackville, PA and of St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church in Maizeville, PA and is assigned as Communications Director for the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia. Fr. Fields will take on major responsibilities for enhancing communications of the Archeparchy's planned thrust in catechetical and evangelization efforts.



Rev. Stepan Bilyk

3. Rev. Stepan Bilyk is relieved of his responsibilities as Pastor of Transfiguration of Our Lord Ukrainian Catholic Church in Shamokin, PA and as Administrator of Patronage of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church in Marion Heights, PA and is assigned as Pastor of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Phoenixville, PA. Rev. Bilyk is also assigned as Catechetical Director of the Archeparchy with primary responsibility for the implementation of the Vision 2020 Evangelization Program in the Archeparchy.



Rev. Ruslan Romanyuk

4. Rev. Ruslan Romanyuk is relieved of his responsibilities as Administrator of St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church in Cherry Hill, NJ and Administrator of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Williamstown, NJ and is assigned as Pastor of Transfiguration of Our Lord Ukrainian Catholic Church in Shamokin, PA and Administrator of Patronage of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church in Marion Heights, PA.

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# PAROCHIAL ASSIGNMENTS BY METROPOLITAN STEFAN FOR THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC ARCHEPARCHY OF PHILADELPHIA

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Rev. Roman Pitula

5. Rev. Roman Pitula is relieved of his responsibilities as Pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church in Hillsborough, NJ and Administrator of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church in New Brunswick, NJ as of July 31, 2012 and is assigned as Pastor of St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church in Frackville, PA and as Administrator of St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church in Maizeville, PA as of August 13, 2012.



Rev. Taras Lonchyna

6. Rev. Taras Lonchyna is relieved of his responsibilities as Pastor of Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church in Silver Spring, MD and is assigned as Pastor of St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Church in Trenton, NJ.



Rev. Roman Petryshak

7. Rev. Roman Petryshak is relieved of his responsibilities as Administrator of Transfiguration of Our Lord Ukrainian Catholic Church in Nanticoke, PA and as Administrator of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Plymouth, PA and is assigned as Pastor of Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church in Silver Spring, MD



Rev. Volodymyr Popyk

8. Rev. Volodymyr Popyk is relieved of his responsibilities as Pastor of St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Church in Trenton, NJ and is assigned as Pastor of Transfiguration of Our Lord Ukrainian Catholic Church in Nanticoke, PA and as Administrator of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Plymouth, PA.

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# PAROCHIAL ASSIGNMENTS BY METROPOLITAN STEFAN FOR THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC ARCHEPARCHY OF PHILADELPHIA

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Rev. Mykola Ivanov

9. Rev. Mykola Ivanov is relieved of his responsibilities as Administrator of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Phoenixville, PA and is assigned as Pastor of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church in Reading, PA. He retains his responsibilities as Administrator of St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church in Pottstown, PA.



Rev. Orest Kunderevych

10. Rev. Orest Kunderevych is relieved of his responsibilities as Administrator of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Wilkes Barre, PA and as Administrator of St. Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Church in Edwardsville, PA and is assigned as Pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church in Hillsborough, NJ and as Administrator of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church in New Brunswick, NJ.



Rev. Paul Wolensky

11. Rev. Paul Wolensky is relieved of his responsibilities as Pastor of St. Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Church in Scranton, PA and as Administrator of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Simpson, PA and is assigned as Pastor of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Wilkes Barre, PA and as Administrator of St. Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Church in Edwardsville, PA.



Rev. Myron Myronyuk

12. Rev. Myron Myronyuk is relieved of his responsibilities as Assistant Pastor to the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Philadelphia and as Administrator of the North-East Mission Parish in Philadelphia, and is assigned as Pastor of St. Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Church in Scranton, PA and as Administrator of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Simpson, PA.

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# PAROCHIAL ASSIGNMENTS BY METROPOLITAN STEFAN FOR THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

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Rev. Paul Makar

13. Rev. Paul Makar, currently the Vocation Director of the Ukrainian Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia, is assigned as Pastor of St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church in Cherry Hill, NJ and as Administrator of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Williamstown, NJ.



Very Rev. Ivan Demkiv

14. Very Rev. Ivan Demkiv is relieved of his additional responsibilities as Administrator of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Philadelphia, PA.



Rev. Yaroslav Kurpel

15. Rev. Yaroslav Kurpel, Pastor of Christ the King Ukrainian Catholic Church in Philadelphia, PA is assigned the additional responsibilities as Administrator of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Philadelphia, PA.

## Songs of the Heart

The Office for Religious Education, at the request of the Archdiocese due to recent transfers, has **canceled** the Festival of Children's Songs scheduled for June 3, 2012 at the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. We apologize for any inconvenience. If you have questions, please feel free to contact the office for Religious Education at [ukrcatecheticaloffice@catholic.org](mailto:ukrcatecheticaloffice@catholic.org).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## New Leadership at Saint Basil Academy



Sister Dorothy Ann Busowski, Provincial Superior, along with the Board of Trustees of Saint Basil Academy is proud to announce the Sister Lydia Anna Sawka has been named Principal of Saint Basil Academy beginning the Academic year September, 2012.

Sister Lydia Anna Sawka, presently Secretary to His Grace, Archbishop Stefan Soroka has served in many capacities in both the Church community and her religious community. Before entering the Sisters of the Order of Saint Basil the Great in September, 1984 Sister established and taught a Ukrainian Saturday Nursery School taught in a public school system, and at Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Elementary School in Hamtramck, MI. Upon entering community sister continued her teaching career in Parma, OH, Chicago, IL and Hamtramck, MI. Sister also served as Vocation Directress for the community, as Youth Ministry Director for the Chicago Eparchy, and as Secretary to the General Superior in Rome, Italy. Sister has spent time in Ukraine catechizing in villages and working with the Basilian Sisters. She had the opportunity to work as an assistant secretary for the Ukrainian Catholic Bishops' Synod in 2007 and as an organizer, delegate and presenter at the Ukrainian Catholic Sobor in Brazil in 2011.



**Sister Lydia Anna Sawka**



**Sister Carla Hernandez**

Sister was born in Hamtramck, MI and attended Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church and schools. Sister received a B.S. in Elementary Education and a Master's Degree in English from Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.

Sister was very active in Church and Plast before entering and has remained committed to Church affairs.

Sister Carla Hernandez, currently Principal of Saint Basil Academy, has served as Principal for twenty-six years. Having given years of dedicated service in administration, Sister will return to her first love – teaching.

## Hillside, NJ Parish Celebrates Easter with Hahilky & Easter Egg Hunt

Hillside, NJ – On Sunday, April 15, 2012, after the 10:45am Divine Liturgy, the parishioners of Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church gathered in the church hall to watch the children perform hahilky (ritual Spring songs & dances) – under the direction of Odarka Polanskyj Stockert.

Fr. Vasyl Vladyka, parochial vicar, also performed several unique hahilky that he learned when he was a child in Ukraine. The parishioners were in awe of Fr. Vasyl's special performance. Fr. Vasyl truly brought the "Easter spirit" to this parish event.

Afterwards, Teresa Szpyhulsky and Marta Olesnyckyj organized an Easter Egg Hunt for the children on the parish grounds. A parish Easter meal was served for parishioners and visitors who travelled from throughout Union, Morris, Essex, Middlesex and Monmouth counties.

Please visit the parish website at [www.byzcath.org/ImmaculateConception](http://www.byzcath.org/ImmaculateConception) to view additional photographs of the event.



Fr. Vasyl Vladyka, Anna Pelesz and Odarka Polanskyj Stockert pose with the children as they eagerly await the start of the Easter Egg Hunt at the Hillside parish.

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# Hillside, NJ Parish Celebrates Easter with Hahilky & Easter Egg Hunt

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The children perform Hahilka Viu Vinez (i.e. Making a wreath). At the end, this particular hahilka involves a unique spiral formation.

The Hahilka Zhoochok (i.e. the Beetle Dance) is a song and dance that describes a beetle that comes alive in the Spring and celebrates his festive attire by walking on a fir tree branch. During the dance, the children form two rows and create a bridge. The smallest of the children walk over the branch and then return via the tunnel that the other dancers have created.



Odarka Polanskyj Stockert lead the children in Hahilky.



The Hahilka Zajchik is a song and dance about a zajchik (rabbit) running in a meadow gathering beautiful flowers. The children catch the rabbit before it runs away.



The children enjoy the Easter Egg Hunt!



## MOTHER'S DAY GREETING

On the occasion of Mother's Day, the Staff of "The Way" wishes all our readers who are mothers good health, long life, and the Lord's choicest blessings. May the Holy Spirit guide you throughout your lifetime. May the Holy Mother of God guard and protect you from all evil.

**MANY HAPPY & BLESSED YEARS!**

## Moleben at Ascension Manor

Moleben in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary is being offered on all Wednesdays in the month of May at Ascension Manor.

Ascension Manor is a Senior Citizen Apartment Complex for people 62 and older. It is under the direction of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia.

**Ascension Manor**  
**911 N. Franklin St.**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19123**  
**215-922-1116**

Equal Housing Opportunity



Photo: Rev. Ivan Demkiv during the Moleben at Ascension Manor on May 2, 2012. (Photos by Bill Malinowski.)





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**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO OPEN AN ACCOUNT:**

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## News from Olyphant, PA

Ss. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church, Olyphant, Pa will be celebrating the "Feast of Pentecost" (7th Sunday after EASTER) on Sunday, May 27, 2012. As tradition of the Church, the Divine Liturgy for "Pentecost Sunday" will be held at Ss. Cyril and Methodius Cemetery Chapel on Gino Merli Drive\* , Peckville, Pa. at 11:30 a.m. to 12:45p.m. and sung in Church Slavonic-Ukrainian by the Choir under the direction of Choir Master, Mr. Patrick Marcinko II. After the Divine Liturgy, "Panakhyda" will be sung and then followed by the Blessings of the Graves. All are invited to attend. Parishioners and out of town families, gather at the grave sites of the dearly departed family members during the Divine Liturgy. (Bring a chair.) Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor, (570-489-2271) web sites: [www.stcyrils.maslar-online.com](http://www.stcyrils.maslar-online.com).



(\*300 Block of Gino Merli Drive/Main Street, Peckville, Pa)



Ss.Cyril's and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church Choir released in a new format of the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, celebrated by Monsignor Stephen Hyrnuck as sung by the St. Cyril's Choir. This historical (Divine Liturgy) DVD is available for \$20.00 each. They also have available a Christmas Music CD for \$15.00 each. They have just released their Easter CD format, (Lenten Hymns and Easter Hymns sung in Church Slavonic) as a FUND RAISER. The price for the (Easter) CD is \$15.00 each. Patrick J. Marcinko II, Choir Director and over 25 choir members can be heard on the DVD & the CD's. Please contact Glenda Marcinko at 570-876-2888 and any choir member to obtain these items. Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor 570-489-2271, Website: [www.stcyrils.maslar-online.com](http://www.stcyrils.maslar-online.com)

Photo April 2012....Choir members of SS. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church held a meeting to discuss their annual Fund Raiser for 2012 which includes the DVD and CD's of the Divine Liturgy, Easter and Christmas singing. From Left to right: Dorothy Zinsky (Secretary), Tom Matkosky, Rosemary Marytnuk, Marie Martin and MaryAnn Turko.(Treasurer)

## In remembrance of Bishop John Stock on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death

### Savior of thousands of Ukrainian Displaced Persons throughout Western Europe after World War II

On Apr. 22, the last seminar of the Spring Semester of the "Saint Sophia" Religious Association of Ukrainian Catholics in the USA and the Shevchenko Scientific Society (Philadelphia Branch) was dedicated in memoriam to the 40th anniversary of the unexpected passing into the Kingdom of the Lord of Bishop John Stock. Since Bishop Stock was the pastor of Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church in Melrose Park, Pennsylvania (1971-72), the seminar took place in the church hall immediately following the Divine Liturgy celebrated by His Grace Most Rev. Stefan Soroka, Metropolitan-Archbishop of Philadelphia for Ukrainian Catholics in the United States. The co-celebrants were: Most Rev. Basil H. Losten, Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Stamford, Connecticut, Msgr. Peter Waslo, Chancellor and Judicial Vicar of the Philadelphia Archeparchy, and Rev. Ihor Royik, pastor of Annunciation parish.



Commemorative on April 22, 2012 in Melrose Park, PA: (l to r) Bishop Emeritus Basil Losten, Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka, Rev. Ihor Royik, Prof. Albert Kipa and Alexander Lushnycky, Ph.D.  
(Photo: <http://www.ukrainianbvm.com>)

In his sermon, Metropolitan Stefan spoke, in both languages, about the holy, priestly life and accomplishments of Bishop John Stock.

Following the Divine Liturgy, the parishioners and a significant number of guests descended into the church hall, where the stage was decorated with flowers and a portrait of Bishop John Stock. The pastor, Rev. Ihor Royik, welcomed everyone and introduced the Master of Ceremonies, Prof. Albert Kipa, a renowned Germanist, known throughout the Ukrainian Diaspora. The program commenced with a prayer by His Grace, followed by an extended biographical sketch of Bishop Stock by the President of the Philadelphia Branch of the Shevchenko Scientific Society, Dr. Yaroslav Zalipsky. The keynote speaker was Bishop Basil H. Losten, who elaborated on the letter written by then-U.S. Army Chaplain Rev. John Stock to Metropolitan Ambrose Senyshyn concerning the plight of Ukrainian refugees in postwar Europe.

A short *in memoriam* followed, written by Msgr. Ronald Popivchak, Ph.D. (who was unable to attend), and read by Prof. Albert Kipa. Msgr. Popivchak is the pastor of SS. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Bridgeport, PA. The next speaker, Nicholas Rudnytzky, Associate Registrar at Manor College in Jenkintown, PA, read an interview between Msgr. Leon Mosko and Alexander Lushnycky, Ph.D., an American ethnic historian. Msgr. Mosko is the "golden-tongued" homilist who wanted to participate in this *in memoriam* event but could not for health reasons. The last speaker was Dr. Alexander Lushnycky, who shared his many years of pleasant memories of Bishop Stock.

A parishioners-sponsored light buffet followed the commemorative conference honoring Bishop John Stock.

**Alexander Lushnycky, Ph.D.**

(Article reprinted from "America" newspaper, May 5, 2012)

# Митрополит-Архиєпископ Стефан Сорока виголошує проповідь в Українській Католицькій Церкві Благовіщення Пречистої Діви Марії, Мелроуз Парк, ПА підчас Літургії в пам'ять єпископа Івана Стаха 22-го квітня, 2012 р.

Христос Воскрес!

Останньої неділі ми чули як Ісус сказав до апостола Томи: «Благословенні, хто не бачив і увірував». Сьогодні ми пригадуємо жінок-мироносиць, які бачили як Ісуса клали до гробу, але не бачили як він Воскрес. Вони прийшли до гробу, щоб помазати тіло Ісуса. Вони повірили в його воскресіння, коли ангел сказав їм, що Ісус воскрес. Вони вірили достатньо, щоб піти й сказати апостолам і Петрові, що Ісуса немає в гробі, що Він Воскрес і зустрінеться з ними пізніше.

Ці жінки-мироносиці показують вам і мені ту віру, якої жадається від кожного з нас. Це віра, яка полягає в любові та надії. Ці жінки любили Ісуса і вірили, що він є Месією, який здійснить їхні надії. Ці жінки практикували чесноти християнського життя – віру, надію та любов. Вони також були достатньо відважні, щоб піти до гробу, який охороняли вояки, бо

боялися того, що Ісус обіцяв – що він воскресне на третій день. Ці жінки виявили відвагу тоді, коли інші сховалися від страху та розгубленості через те, що сталося. Жінки також виявили сміливість, коли разом з Йосифом Ариматейським зняли тіло з Хреста і поклали його до гробу. Це було великою відвагою і для Йосифа Ариматейського - піти до Пилата та просити віддати йому тіло Ісуса.

Щоб бути сьогодні християнином треба також мати відвагу. Дорога доброго християнина не є популярна. Треба бути сміливим, щоб йти за Ісусом у сьогоднішньому щоденному житті. Треба бути відважним, щоб бути втримати християнську родину. Треба бути відважним, щоб жити за християнськими стандартами. Джерелом цієї відваги є наша віра та надія на Воскреслого Ісуса Христа. Ви чули про це у яскравому зображенні життя Петра і Йоана в Діяннях Апостолів. Справді, це



**Bishop John Stock (1918-1972)**

щось надзвичайне, провести час в присутності Ісуса, який уповноважує людей.

Сьогодні ми особливо пригадуємо відважне служіння покійного єпископа Івана Стаха, який помер сорок років тому. Релігійне товариство українців католиків «Свята Софія» організувало сьогоднішнє поминання цього надзвичайного служителя

Церкви в США. Поминальна конференція, на яку запрошуємо всіх бажаючих, відбудеться в парафіяльному залі після Божественної літургії. Конференція буде проходити на англійській мові. Я проголошу частину проповіді в сподіванні на присутність членів родини покійного Єпископа Івана Стаха.

**(Продовження на ст. 17)**

# Митрополит-Архиєпископ Стефан Сорока виголошує проповідь підчас Літургії в пам'ять єпископа Івана Стаха.

(продовження з попередньої сторінки)

Ми вдячні виконавчому комітету «Святої Софії» за їхню уважність до свідчень пам'яті покійного Єпископа Івана Стаха. Також ми дякуємо отцеві Ігореві Роїку і парафіянам за їхнє щедre прийняття цих поминань.

Мені не пощастило бути знайомим з покійним єпископом Іваном Стахом. Але я чув багато гарних свідчень про його служіння як священика та єпископа. Він був рукоположений на священика в 1943-му році покійним єпископом Константином Богачевським. Коли завершилася Друга світова війна, Європа лежала в руїні. Багато українців стали переміщеними особами, оскільки комуністи захопили Україну. Тоді, в серпні 1946-го року, отець Іван Стах був посланий єпископом Богачевським в Європу, щоб помагати тисячам переміщених осіб. Отець Іван Стах з відвагою та винятковістю помагав українцям аж до часу свого повернення в 1952-му році. Після повернення він служив с е к р е т а р е м

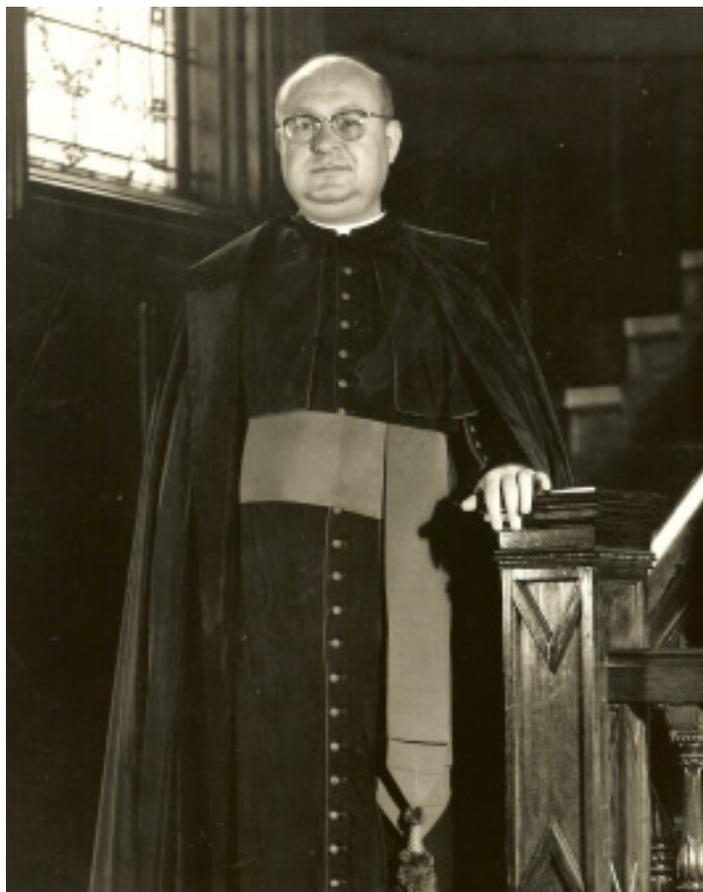
Архиєпископа Амброзія Сенишина, потім К а н ц л е р о м Стемфордської єпархії, аж до рукоположення на єпископа-помічника Митрополита Сенишина у Філадельфії в 1971-му році. У червні 1972-го року єпископ Іван Стах загинув у фатальній автомобільній аварії.

Служіння нашого дорогого єпископа Івана Стаха відкрило його любов до Бога та до Його Церкви. Він приймав усі свої пастирські призначення у спосіб, який відображає життя радісного жертвування через його любов до Воскреслого Христа. Його служіння включало пастирські призначення в багато наших парафій, капеланом сестер служебниць Непорочної Діви Марії, помічником в Канцелярії. Постійне підвищення в чинах та почесні відзнаки, яких він був удостоєний, свідчать про його високе визнання. Його служіння було високо оцінене багатьма. Багато осіб скористали з його служіння. Єпископ Іван Стах відчував глибоке співчуття до переміщених українців в Європі. Його

праця з National Catholic Welfare Conference була важлива й цінна. У ній отець Іван Стах виказував відвагу у захисті інтересів українців і багатьом допоміг перебраться до Америки. Його голос та активна позиція помогли багатьом переміщеним українцям знайти домівку в Західній Європі, чи в Північній Америці, щоб не бути поверненим до окупованої комуністами України. Завдання було не з легких, доводилося долати багато перепон. Отець Іван Стах присвятив шість років

свого життя служінню українцям таким благородним способом. Отець Іван Стах йшов слідами Господа Ісус у пошуку загублених і радості віднайдення їх. Він залишив досконало безпечно та зручно оточення для пошуку загублених. Я вірю, що душа нашого дорогого Єпископа Івана Стаха постійно перебуває при столі святкування з тими, хто присвятився служінню загубленим.

**(Продовження на ст. 18)**



# Homily offered by Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka during the Liturgy in remembrance of Bishop John Stock on April 22, 2012 at Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church in Melrose Park, PA.

*(continued from previous page)*

We are grateful to the St. Sophia Religious Association in their taking the initiative in today's commemoration of the late Bishop John Stock who died forty years ago. This Liturgy and the commemorative program arose from their desire to give living testimony to the contributions of the late bishop John Stock. We are grateful to Bishop Basil Losten for his prayerful participation today in this Liturgy and in the program to follow. We thank Msgr. Peter Waslo, our Chancellor, for his participation, and especially to the pastor, Fr. Ihor Royik for his warm hospitality and organization of today's commemoration at this Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a parish where the late Bishop John Stock once served as a dedicated pastor. We thank all of the parishioners and all of the guests who give honor and testimony to the ministry of the late Bishop John Stock and who pray for his soul. And a very special welcome to family members of the late Bishop

John Stock who have joined us today.

In Ukrainian I spoke of the tremendous courage shown by the myrrh-bearing women we heard of today's Gospel, and of the similar courage shown by the then Father John Stock in ministering to the displaced persons in Western Europe following the Second World War. His courage and persistence resulted in many persons successfully emigrating to the USA and to other western countries. His efforts ensured that they were not forced to return to face persecution in the communist occupied Ukraine. His dedicated six years of service in the interests of displaced persons necessitated his making aggressive arguments and efforts for the persons he was helping. Father John Stock showed gentle but consistent and effective courage in serving God and His people.

I personally was never privileged to have met the late Bishop John Stock. I have heard much about his dedication in his



His Excellency  
The Most Reverend John Stock, D.D.  
Auxiliary to the Metropolitan Archbishop  
of Philadelphia for Ukrainian Catholics

Born, July 5, 1918  
Ordained Priest, December 4, 1943  
Consecrated Bishop, May 25, 1971  
Died, June 29, 1972

ministry. Everyone who speaks of him repeatedly emphasizes how exceptionally nice Bishop John Stock was as a person – gentle, caring, a good listener, eager to help, and a joy to speak with and to share his company. I wondered just what gave him such a Christ-like manner and such strength and perseverance even in times of hardships.

You will recall the disciples on the road to Emmaus pleaded with the stranger who they came to recognize as the Risen Christ to "STAY WITH US"! They found that Jesus would remain with them when "he was known to them in the breaking of the bread" (Lk 24:35). In the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, Jesus comes to

*(continued on next page)*

# Homily offered by Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka during the Liturgy in remembrance of Bishop John Stock

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stay with us, with you and with me. When we receive the Eucharist, we enter a profound communion with Jesus. We are then inspired to be “one heart and one soul”, the family of God. You and I are inspired and called to be of one mind and one heart in our love for God, in our love for one another, and in our love, care, and concern for others. You and I become Jesus’ ministers of unity, love and peace in the world.

Our beloved Bishop John Stock walked closely with the Risen Jesus Christ bringing Christ’s unity, love and peace in the world where he served. He came to continually recognize the Risen Lord in the Holy Eucharist. He received the interior strength needed to fulfill his call to be an active missionary in the world. Bishop John Stock’s kind and gentle personality, his care and concern for the welfare of God’s people, his dedicated and selfless service in the Church all reflected his emulating the Risen Christ in his life.

On the night when Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist, Jesus was rejected by his apostles – first by his betrayer Judas,

and then with the denial three times by the apostle Peter, and then abandoned by his closest friends. Yet, despite the deep hurt of rejection, Jesus moves forth to give the ultimate sacrifice of his life for our sins. Jesus’ closeness with his heavenly Father enabled his fulfilling his mission on earth according to God’s plan for salvation. Our beloved Bishop John Stock also faced the rejection of some of his own people at the time of his ordination to the episcopate – by a small group of people who were lost in their fervent striving for their cause. Some of these people may have been from among the very persons whom the then Father John Stock assisted in coming to this land. Yet, Bishop John continued without holding malice or grievance against others in his ministry. This reflects how beautifully and how completely and how closely Bishop John Stock walked so closely with the Risen Christ. Bishop John Stock continued to joyfully serve the Risen Christ in his footsteps fulfilling the duties given to him following his ordination to the episcopacy in 1971. What was uppermost was his close journey with His

Lord, the Risen Christ. Nothing could detract from his being centered upon Jesus Christ.

I also believe that the late Bishop John Stock lived a life filled with Eucharistic gratitude. His life reflected a heart filled with gratitude for the many gifts, skills and talents bestowed upon him by almighty God. And he used them without any reservation for the benefit of the people he was called to serve. Can you imagine the inner fears and doubts he may have felt when asked by Archbishop Senyshyn to travel to Europe and to reach out to the displaced Ukrainians? Yet, he obediently complied and performed miraculous works with the aid of God.

Jesus taught that “if anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all” (Mk 9:35). The Gospel of St. John does not contain the account of the institution of the Eucharist. Instead it relates the washing of feet (Jn 13:1-20). By bending down to wash the feet of his disciples, Jesus explains so vividly the meaning of the Eucharist. Being Eucharist people, sharing in the Body and Blood of our Lord and

Savior, Jesus Christ, means sharing in charity with the misfortunate, with those facing all sorts of needs.

The life of our beloved late Bishop John Stock richly reflects a “Eucharistic” attitude of gratitude and of humbling oneself in the service of others. This is the man who Bishop John Stock was as a priest and then Bishop until his untimely death on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1972. Many people admired him. Many loved him. Many were inspired by his gentle and warm personality. Many were gifted with a life-giving example of a life well-lived. Many were taught and guided by his Christ-like manner of fulfilling of his priestly and Episcopal ministry. Many to this day have great gratitude to him.

Perhaps the best way each of us can express gratitude and to give testimony to the contributions of such a significant person is to emulate what we admire in his character and personality in our own life. Reflect how you yourself bear witness to God in your daily life. Are we grateful people? Do you

*(continued on next page)*

# Homily offered by Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka during the Liturgy in remembrance of Bishop John Stock

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and I live out our daily life with a genuine spirit of gratitude to God? Does the journey of your life, my life reflect a close walk with the Risen Jesus Christ? Do we celebrate genuine humility in our relations with others? Does our life reflect the service of others in their needs, especially at a time of special needs? You and I can be elevated in our journey of life with the example given to us by the late Bishop John Stock.

Let us continue to pray with hearts filled with gratitude for the inspiring life and giftedness of the late

Bishop John Stock amidst us. Let us pray for his soul that he may be forgiven of any sins committed in weakness or frailty. And let us pray that our beloved Bishop John Stock has heard that beautiful commendation by Jesus given to the repentant man on the cross, "Today, you will be in paradise with me". And let each of us, in our profound gratitude, renew ourselves in our life emulating the characteristics we have come to admire in the life well lived by Bishop John Stock.

Христос Воскрес!



Photo: Bishop John Stock's Miter (bishop's crown) on display at the "Treasury of Faith Museum" in Philadelphia, PA.



Photo: Part of a display on Bishop John Stock at the "Treasury of Faith Museum."



Photo: Bishop John Stock's Chalice on display at the "Treasury of Faith Museum."

**For more information on the Treasury of Faith Museum please call 215-627-3389 or e-mail [tofmuseum@catholic.org](mailto:tofmuseum@catholic.org) .**

## A Weekend With the Sisters of Saint Basil the Great

I recently attended, shall I call it, an exploratory weekend with the Sisters of the St. Basil in Jenkintown, PA. Having been interested in but not yet *called* to a community of prayer I was excited to see how real-live Sisters lived. I still carried in my head the images of fully habited, soft-spoken women kneeling in prayer 18 hours a day. I think perhaps that people who don't have contact with organized religions on a regular basis adopt the misconception that religious communities are characterized by an old-fashioned lifestyle. So I was mildly surprised when my contact Sr. Ann emailed me her cell phone number in case I got lost driving to the campus. Even knowing that adaptation is a reason why so many Convents and Monasteries still exist, I was surprised at the level of balance the Sisters achieved between prayer and being social, active participants in the community.

I arrived on Friday in time to participate in Vespers (evening prayer) and the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts in the Chapel filled floor to ceiling with beautiful icons. The



May 13, 2012

prayers were chanted in Ukrainian and filled the room with weaving melodies of 35 Sisters lifting their voices in unison to the Lord of All. As I fumbled through two (or was it three) prayer books in order to follow along, all I could think of was how beautiful it sounded. At dinner that night I met two of the three other curious, lovely, and smart participants. After the third joined us we watched a brief, captivating video made by the Sisters detailing the rise of the Order of St. Basil in the US.

We came to learn that the patron of the order, St. Basil instilled two main precepts in his followers: prayer and community. The Sisters admirably fill both requirements as they pray for and support the community outside the Monastery in a variety of roles, including teachers, administrators, and as pastoral caretakers. I hadn't ever thought about what the Religious could bring to a secular community, I had always seen being a Sister as more of an internal, ongoing dialogue with God. In learning about how these women are living out Christ's personal call to minister to their neighbors I really saw for the first

time what the phrases "pray without ceasing" and "live life so that other may see Christ in you" looked like.

My new friends and I joined the Sisters in Vespers, Matins and Liturgy (in English so that we could fully participate) each day as well as prayers before meals. We had a tour of the buildings and around the grounds and we were able to sit with our guides Sr. Ann and Sr. Joann throughout the weekend who encouraged us to ask our questions as they and others shared their stories of living and working in the religious community.

A highlight for me was being able to have a fascinating sit-down with two Sisters who had come from Ukraine as part of, well, sort of an exchange program you could say. In the days after Communism released its grasp on the Ukraine, the religious orders who had been worshiping underground were able to come into the light. To help them organize and promote uniformity among their practices, Sisters in the US started to travel overseas to help their Sisters in Christ. We were riveted listening first-hand to Sr. Elisaveta tell her story of being *called* and



choosing to join the Sisters underground in a time when deviation from the State-sponsored religion meant isolation in a Siberian prison camp and usually death. She didn't think herself brave as I do; she was just following the One who called to her soul.

By the end of the weekend I was both exhausted and exhilarated. I had seen Christ in my new friends and my heart was lightened when Sr. Lydia shared that she didn't enter the Order until the age of 31, making my own 32 years seem like much less of a hurdle. I think Sr. Dia may have said it best though, when she shared that her *calling* was still a mystery to her and to listen for that knocking on your heart that may signal a life much different than you imagine for yourself. I think I may have felt some knocking on my heart this weekend and in the days since I've been "back to real life" I find myself in quiet moments remembering a joke, a hug, or the open-ended offer to come back and visit, something I already plan on doing.

**Samantha McCarra**

# CONGRATULATIONS ON THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



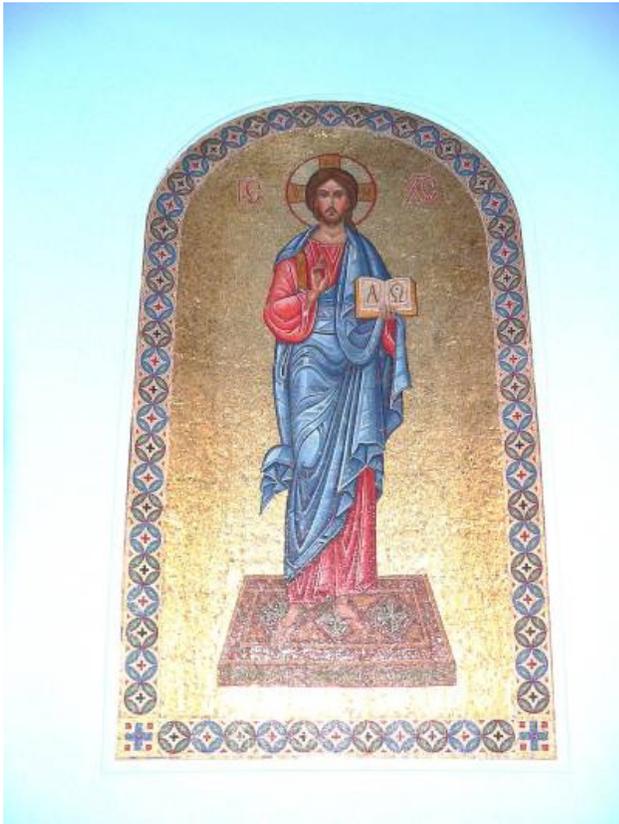
The heartfelt congratulations of the hierarchy, clergy, religious and faithful of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia are offered to the Ukrainian Federation of America on the occasion of their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This special 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated with a gala reception held at the Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center in Jenkintown, PA on Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. The Alexander B. Chernyk Medal was bestowed upon a former Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States of America, His Excellency, Oleh Shamshur. Due to illness, the award was received by the ambassador's daughter, Tetiana, who delivered a moving speech accepting the award.



*Tetiana, accepted the Medal on behalf of her father, Ambassador Shamshur.*

Please see their internet site ([www.ukrainianfederationofamerica.org](http://www.ukrainianfederationofamerica.org)) for great information on their many programs. They are described on their website: "The UFA brings hope to Ukrainians and others around the world through helpful care and crisis response. We do this by responding to areas of challenge for Ukraine and people of Ukrainian background, including Social Services, Humanitarian Aid, Health Care, Education, and Advocacy & Information."





Apsidal icon of Christ the Pantokrator  
Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church, Hillside, NJ

### **Missionary Priesthood**

One of the joys of priesthood lies in the surprises that it brings. I am reminded one time of being with a potential seminary candidate at a coffee shop, discussing various things about the Ukrainian Catholic Church. As we were sipping our coffee, deep in conversation, a couple came up to us, and asked us if we were priests. I replied that I was and that the fellow with me was discerning a call to the priesthood. We invited the couple to sit with us and we talked about our Church, our faith, and what we believe with them for a good half hour. We ultimately parted ways, but not without them asking us where the nearest Ukrainian Catholic Church was so they could come and see what our Church was like. We gave them some information on our Churches in the local area and, after giving them a blessing, we parted ways.

I pray that this couple in question did indeed visit one of our churches and I hope that they were blessed to partake of our unique way of worship and prayer. You see, being a priest means being a missionary – to spread the word of God's saving word to others in the world. Most importantly, we must be ready to INVITE people to come and explore our Ukrainian Catholic faith and heritage and take part in the spiritual treasure and beauty of our Church. In a way, we are all called to be missionaries and to evangelize those who may not know who we are or what we do. There is a great spiritual hunger, not only among our faithful, but among all the people of the world. A priest takes Jesus's dictum to Peter ("Feed my sheep . . .", Jn 21:17) very seriously – he sees not only his parishioners, but all people as sheep requiring spiritual food and care. Please pray for our priests, so that they may continue to spiritually nourish not only our own faithful, but all people of the world.

Rev. Paul J. Makar

*Perhaps you feel that God may be calling you to service in His Church?*

If you would like to discuss God's call to a vocation in your life, do not hesitate to contact:

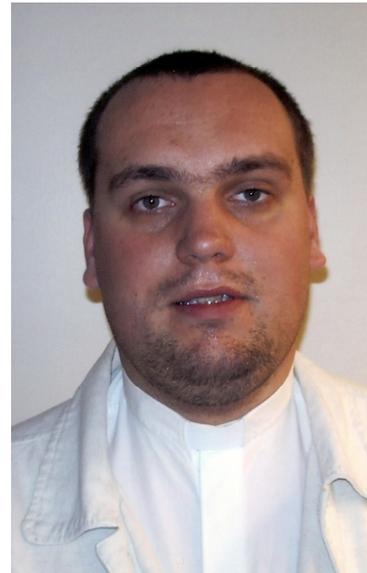
Rev. Paul J. Makar  
Director of Vocations  
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827 North Franklin Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19123-2097

Phone: 1-215-627-0143  
Fax: 1-215-627-0377

E-mail: [ukrvocations@catholic.org](mailto:ukrvocations@catholic.org)



*Come and Get to Know Your Clergy And Religious Men and Women!*



Rev. Ihor Bloschynskyy

Pastor, St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Church  
Philadelphia, PA

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CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO THE GALA BANQUET HONOURING



THE VISITATION  
OF HIS BEATITUDE  
**SVIATOSLAV SHEVCHUK**  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE CENTENARY OF  
BLESSED BISHOP **NYKYTA BUDKA**  
AND  
**SYNOD**  
OF  
**UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC BISHOPS**



**Sunday September 16, 2012**  
**Canad Inns Destination Centre Polo Park**

1405 St. Matthews Avenue,  
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0K5

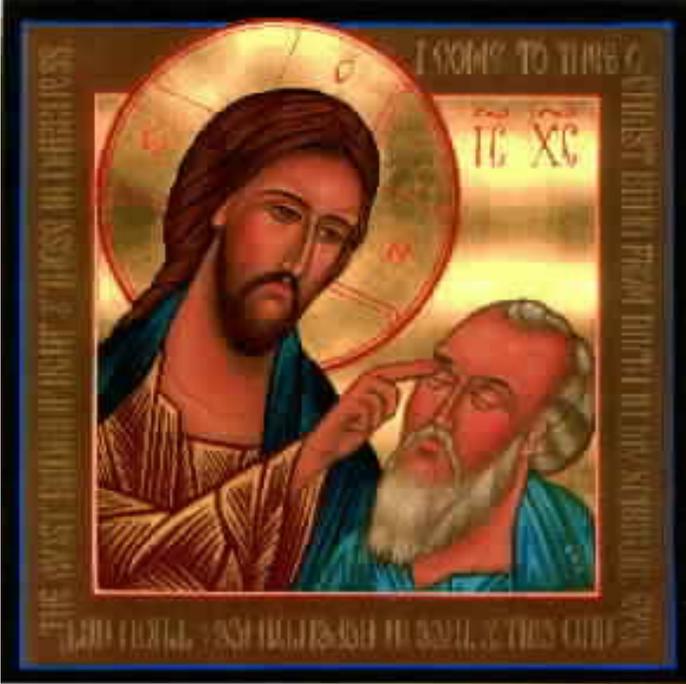


Reception: 6 pm - Dinner: 7 pm

Tickets: \$100 (inclusive of \$40.00 tax receipt)

Contact Len at 204-668-4358 or [lmariash@mts.net](mailto:lmariash@mts.net)  
Or through the parish office

## Sunday of the Man Born Blind



As Jesus went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." "How then were your eyes opened?" they asked. He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went

and washed, and then I could see." "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said. They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner perform such signs?" So they were divided. Then they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet." They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?" "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God by telling the truth," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?" Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out. Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. (Jn. 9, 1-38)

# Sunday of the Man Born Blind

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They all looked at him but they never saw him. He was the blind guy. Born that way. Day after day he sat and begged. They looked. They walked by. They wondered. But they never saw. He had never seen their faces until today. He had never seen his own face, his parents' faces, a sunrise, the stars, his home, a smile until today. Before today it was as if he didn't even exist. He was a life waiting to be born, a light waiting to be spoken. Today he became a new creation, he was enlightened, he became a living testimony to the Son of Man but they still don't see him. For some reason they are unable to see him.

The disciples look at him and see a theological question, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Their vision is distorted by the popular belief that suffering is caused by sin and you get what you deserve.

The neighbors looked but couldn't see past the image of the way things had always been, a blind man sitting and begging. It's all he had ever known. It's all they had ever known. Blinded by disbelief they keep

asking him, "How were your eyes opened?"

Two times the religious leaders call him in. Two times they interrogate him. Two times he gives glory to God. They cannot see the prophet, the man from God, that this formerly blind man now sees. They cannot see the new life, the new man, the new creation that bears testimony to the man from God. Two times they turn a blind eye to this man and his God. No one, as the saying goes, is more blind than he or she who chooses not to see. They have chosen power, rules, and boundaries over the truth and their eyes have grown dim.

Even this man's own parents distance themselves from him. They can talk about their blind son but not about their seeing son. To see him, the enlightened son, meant they would have to tell the story. "We do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." They deny what is right before their eyes. Fear does that. Fear keeps us from seeing a larger reality, from living with a larger vision. So we live with tunnel vision only seeing that one thing that we most fear.

They all looked but none saw him. If they saw him they would have to confront their own blindness. This man blind from birth is not just a single individual, he is every man, every woman. The only difference between him and all the others in today's gospel is that he knows he is blind. Until we know we are blind we can never see with new eyes. "Surely we are not blind, are we?"

Blindness is not about the quality of our vision or the condition of our eyes. It is not about the darkness around us but, rather, the darkness within us. How we see others, what we see in the world, the way we see life is less about the objects of our seeing and more about ourselves. We do not see God, people, things, or circumstances as they are but as we are. Until our eyes are opened by Christ our seeing is really just a projection of ourselves onto the world. What we see and how we see manifest our inner world. They describe and point to the fears, attachments, and beliefs within us.

If we wish to see God, life, and others as they really are then we must attend to what is going on within us. True seeing begins in the heart

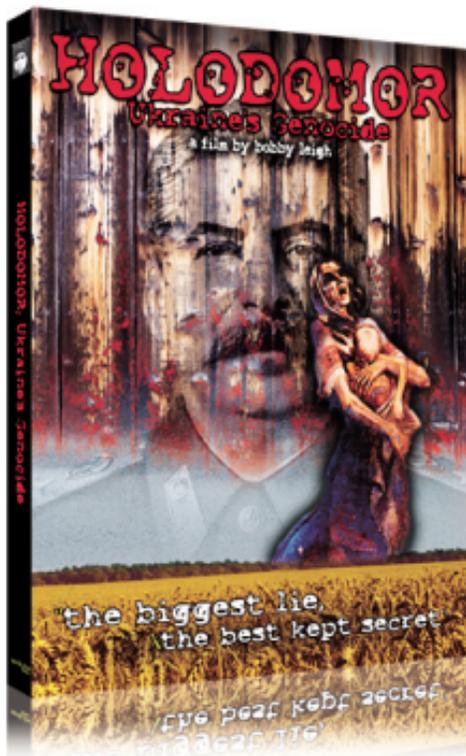
not the eyes. We must begin to acknowledge the fears, attachments, and beliefs that live within us and how they have impaired our vision.

Think about a time when you were scared, really scared. Maybe it was about your marriage, your job, the illness of loved one. That fear had a way of blinding you. Fear rivets our attention on that thing we fear to the exclusion of everything else around us. That one thing is all we can think about, all that we can see. Fear narrows our world view and our vision becomes myopic, nearsighted to the point of exclusion.

Attachments are those things or people we think we must have to be happy. We can't imagine life without them. We have convinced ourselves that our very existence in some way depends on them. The Bible calls them idols. Modern society calls them addictions. Regardless, we will inevitably look for and see only that which fosters and affirms our attachments and will turn a blind eye toward anything that threatens them. Our vision becomes selective.

We have probably all met someone who is

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so fanatical in his or her beliefs that he or she cannot see another point of view. He cannot look at any other possibility. She refuses to see other ways but her own. Not only have we met these people too often we are these people. We all have certain beliefs to which we cling. They offer the illusion of stability and security. So we no longer live in the real world, God's world, but a world that we have created in our head.

The inner darkness of our fears, attachments, and beliefs is what keeps us from seeing. They cover

our eyes like the mud on the eyes of the man born blind. In placing mud on the blind man's eyes Jesus is holding before him the reality of his blindness. He wears thick black lenses of fear, attachments, and beliefs. We all do. Those who know this are sent to wash in the pool, to be re-created, and to see with new eyes. Once they were darkness but now in the Lord they are light. The rest will continue looking but never see, their faces caked with mud.

Don't just look around. Look within. What do you see? How do you

see? Where is the mud of darkness in your life? Name that reality. Acknowledge it and then

go wash. The mud of darkness always gives way to the light of Christ.

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