



Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation
Rebuilding the Church in Ukraine

Ukrainian Catholic NEWSLETTER

Young Theologians Celebrate New Center

A new Theological Center for the Ukrainian Catholic Church, including new premises for Holy Spirit Seminary, was inaugurated in Lviv, Ukraine, on August 28. To celebrate the event, 250 graduates of the seminary and the Ukrainian Catholic University held a theological conference called Kairos, classical Greek for “the crucial time.”

Donors of the Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation like you provide continuing support to educate seminarians, nuns, and future lay Catholic leaders at the seminary and university. UCEF donations are also supporting the construction of the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology Building, to be inaugurated at a later date, where the center’s main classrooms will be located.

Most of the participants of the conference were in their 20s or 30s, religious, priests, and laity. Since graduation, many have received advanced degrees or are still working on them in Vatican-based institutions in Rome, and schools like the University of Notre Dame, the Catholic University of America, and even Oxford. Some of the young scholars are now working in church institutions, like the university.

Lasting Activities, in Peace

“The Church needs you,” said Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, to the participants of the Kairos conference. “The theologian doesn’t exist for himself. He ponders over divine revelation and tries to understand and pass this on to his neighbors. . . Today, we begin anew with hope that this time our activities will be more lasting and left in peace.”

The pre-war Lviv Theological Academy was inaugurated in 1928, but shut down by the Soviets in 1944. Many of the priests who studied there became leaders in the underground Church that existed under Communist persecution. And seven of the new Ukrainian Catholic martyrs beatified by Pope John Paul II were students and staff at the academy. The academy was revived in 1994 and inaugurated as the Ukrainian Catholic University in 2002.



Religious and lay graduates of the Ukrainian Catholic University gather for a conference of young theologians.

Between the closing of the pre-war academy and its revival in 1994, Ukrainian theological study went through a crisis, with only a handful of stalwarts entirely dedicated to “the scholarly harvest,” as UCU alumnus Markian Filevych puts it. “Against such a more than humble background,” adds Filevych, “the beginning of the 21st century looks like it has much promise.” Filevych now teaches iconography and sacred architecture at the university.

A Gift for the Church

On the first night of the conference, the young theologians made a gift to Cardinal Husar: their dissertations, published reference works, and journal articles.

Among their accomplishments, the graduates successfully ran the Christmas Together project, bringing eastern and western Ukrainians together to celebrate in Lviv in January 2005. They helped develop communities for the mentally disabled. They have also organized numerous summer programs, including evangelization projects throughout the country, and done many translations of theological literature.

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Reflections from the UCEF President

John F. Kurey, Esq., president of the UCEF, reflects on 2005.

“You did it!”

*“What is whispered in your ear,
proclaim from the roofs.”*

Matthew 10:27



Dear Friends in Christ:

Your generosity, and the generosity of donors like you throughout the United States, is achieving miracles and continues to defy the skeptics. In a year with so many other needs you supported the Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation more than ever and immensely helped the Church!

The result? Your gifts paid for over half of the operating expenses of the Ukrainian Catholic University in 2004 and in 2005! You helped educate hundreds of seminarians, nuns and lay students at the first Catholic university founded on the territory of the former Soviet Union. And the education that these seminarians, nuns and lay students receive at the UCU cannot be provided anywhere else in the world! You made this possible! Thank you!

One example of this incredible support was the reception that greeted Fr. Borys Gudziak, rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University, when he visited New York City, Chicago and Detroit in November of 2005. In each city, hundreds of people turned out to meet Fr. Gudziak and responded to his appeal for help. In the end, over \$450,000 was collected at these events – enough to pay for the cost of running the university for *four full months!*

Another wonderful development in 2005 was achieved through television. “Light in the East: The Ukrainian Catholic University,” an original program created by EWTN Global Catholic Television, aired in November 2005. The host was Cardinal Francis George, Roman Catholic archbishop of Chicago, who travelled to Ukraine last summer. Over 10 million viewers worldwide saw the program, and we have received many phone calls.

The needs of the Church in Ukraine are very great, but the opportunity to do the Lord’s work there is also very great. Your generosity means everything to the cause in Ukraine. Thank you for your ongoing support for re-building the Church in Ukraine.

May God bless you!

Rector Has Successful Spring Tour

North America was very hospitable to Fr. Borys Gudziak, rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University, during his spring 2006 visit. It was “a long and very successful tour,” according to Prof. Jeffrey Wills of the UCEF. Among the places visited were North Port, Florida; Parma, Ohio; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Describing the tour to students of the university, Fr. Gudziak noted: “There are so many people that want to help us that I am inspired by their example!” The UCEF is already laying the ground for a fall 2006 tour. More details will be forthcoming.

New Director for UCEF Canada

Welcome to Lada Darewych, UCEF Canada’s new administrative director. She comes to the UCEF from the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada and has also worked on events for the Canadian Olympic Committee and the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre in Toronto. Outside of her administrative and fundraising experience, Ms. Darewych is an accomplished actress and musical theatre performer.

University Rector is Guest at U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

Fr. Borys Gudziak, rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University, visited parts of the U.S. and Canada in November. In addition to attending fundraising dinners with predominantly Ukrainian audiences in New York, Chicago, and Detroit, Fr. Gudziak was a guest at the meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops held in Washington, D.C.

Newsletter Editor Honored

Matthew Matuszak, editor of this newsletter, was recently honored by the Catholic Press Association. His story on a married Ukrainian Catholic priest and his family, “Serving Church and Family,” published in the January-February 2004 issue of *ONE*, the magazine of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, received an Honorable Mention in the category “Personalities.” The UCEF, the Ukrainian Catholic University and Holy Spirit Seminary, and CNEWA have had an ongoing partnership for a number of years.



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Chicago Cardinal, Pilgrims Venerate Martyr's Shrine

The shrines of the martyrs continue to draw the faithful. During his May 2005 visit to Ukraine, sponsored and organized by the UCEF, Cardinal Francis George, Roman Catholic archbishop of Chicago, prayed at the shrine of Blessed Fr. Emilian Kowcz (or Kovch), one of the new martyrs of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Cardinal George addressed 1,500 young pilgrims who had stopped in the western Ukrainian town of Peremyshliany (Lviv region) as part of an annual May pilgrimage on foot to the Studite Order's Monastery of the Dormition (Assumption).

Suffering for faithfulness to Christ and Church

"Peremyshliany suffered much for its faithfulness to Christ and the Catholic Church," recalled local Bishop Yulian Gbur, speaking to the gathered pilgrims. "The crown and witness of this faithfulness is the figure of the Blessed Martyr Emilian Kowcz. He was the pastor here for many years. His heroism lay in the fact that he was not afraid to stand up for his neighbors, even if they did not belong to his flock. Fr. Emilian hid the children of strangers, in particular children from Jewish families. He died at the Majdanek Concentration Camp in Poland, remaining a pastor to the prisoners until his death."

Born in 1884, Blessed Emilian was appointed pastor in Peremyshliany in 1922. His house was a shelter for orphans and a refuge for the poor. "Angels fly over this house," said Blessed Emilian's parishioners. During the Nazi occupation of the 1940s, he fought the prevailing anti-Semitic mood. He baptized Jews who asked him to, and he was called before the Gestapo when he asked permission to enter the ghetto to minister to Jews there who had converted to Christianity. In September 1943, he was brought to Majdanek, from which he never returned.

Even while imprisoned, he served the Liturgy, heard confessions, administered Communion, and consoled his fellow prisoners. Coaxing, threats, beatings and torture, all the Gestapo's methods of persuasion, did not shake his conviction. In his last letter sent from the death camp, he wrote: "I thank God for His kindness to me. Except for heaven, this is the only place I would want to be." Decades later, his family was able to determine that he had died in the concentration camp on March 25, 1944. His body was then burned up in the ovens. Pope John Paul II beatified Fr. Emilian Kowcz and 25 other new Ukrainian martyrs during his visit to Lviv in 2001.

An example of service to God and neighbor

Speaking to the pilgrims in Peremyshliany, Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, called Blessed Emilian "the beautiful ornament of this city. His life is an example of service to God and neighbor."



Chicago Cardinal Francis George (center) prays over a pilgrim in the Church of Blessed Emilian Kowcz in Ukraine.

During a moleben (prayer service) to Blessed Emilian, Cardinal George reminded the pilgrims: "In the modern world, people are often under the influence of fear. The example of the life of Blessed Emilian, however, teaches us not to be afraid to do brave deeds, for God is with us."

After the moleben, Cardinal Husar blessed the pilgrims with the relics of Blessed Emilian that are kept on the altar of the church, recently re-named the Parish of St. Volodymyr and Blessed Emilian Kowcz.

A Lasting Gift

Have you considered including the UCEF in your will? A will is an expression of your commitment to the people and groups that you cherish here on earth. As a supporter of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, a bequest in your will ensures that the training of priests and rebuilding of the Church in Ukraine will continue after you are gone.

Suggested wording for a bequest:

"I give and bequeath to the Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, ____% of the residue of my estate [or the sum of \$____] for its charitable, educational and religious purposes."

You can also make a special gift by sponsoring a seminarian or other Catholic student at the Ukrainian Catholic University this year. Please contact the UCEF for further information.