



Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation
Rebuilding the Church in Ukraine

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Church Suffers Growing Pains

To minister to the 600,000 faithful living in southern and eastern Ukraine, the Ukrainian Catholic Church (UCC) has begun setting up exarchates, similar to mission dioceses. In addition, the UCC's Synod of Bishops in July 2002 decided to ask Pope John Paul II to recognize their Church as a patriarchate. In recent months, however, the Church has been called to defend its right to expand and to serve its faithful.

Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, head of the UCC, explained the goal of the patriarchate in a interview with Antoine Arjakovsky, professor at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv: "Vatican II said: 'Let there be patriarchates established.' It is simply a development of church structure. We don't desire it as a prestige or reward for our suffering or our martyrs. We look upon it as a pastoral and ecumenical instrument. We feel that our patriarchate can be, within our unfortunately-divided Kyivan Church, a very strong instrument for unity."

Talks in Moscow

Some outside groups, however, have reacted strongly to the possibility of a Ukrainian Catholic patriarchate. In late February, Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, traveled to Moscow to discuss this possibility. Prior to the meeting, Cardinal Kasper had asked Patriarch Alexis II, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, for his opinion. Patriarch Alexis responded by recruiting a dozen other Orthodox patriarchs to join him in condemning the proposal and threatening to end Catholic-Orthodox relations if Rome recognizes the patriarchate. After the meeting with Cardinal Kasper, Patriarch Alexis expressed his concern that the Eastern-rite Catholic Church "is expanding in eastern and southern Ukraine, in Russia and Kazakhstan."

One question to ask is: why are there Catholics in places like Russian Siberia? As Jesuit Fr. Robert Taft, one of the Catholic Church's leading experts on Orthodoxy, bluntly puts it, the Soviets "dragged them there in cattle cars" in the 20th century. The children and grandchildren of these forcibly displaced Catholics, now that they have religious freedom, are trying to establish parishes. In this newsletter, we present the story of one of these regions, the Ukrainian Catholic exarchate of Odesa and Crimea in southern Ukraine. Maria



Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church (pictured), approaches challenges with optimism.

Kryzhanivska, a graduate of the Ukrainian Catholic University, is helping the area's bishop as part of a UCEF mission project.

Shedding light

This newsletter will be dedicated to the growth of the UCC, the patriarchate, and Catholic-Orthodox relations in Ukraine. Fr. Michael Loza, president of the UCEF in Canada, reflects on his time in Rome as a seminarian under Cardinal Josyf Slipyj, who championed the idea of the patriarchate. An Orthodox parish in Transcarpathian Ukraine that returned a church to the Catholics is part of this issue's news. Excerpts from the statement of the Ukrainian Catholic Synod of Bishops on Cardinal Kasper's trip to Moscow are included. Finally, the life of Blessed Leonid Feodorov, a convert from Russian Orthodoxy, is recalled.

UCEF hopes to shed a little light on the pastoral position of the Ukrainian Catholic Church regarding some issues that have been getting much publicity in recent months.

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Fr. Michael Loza, president of the UCEF in Canada, recalls Cardinal Josyf Slipyj, who in the 1960s revived the idea of a Ukrainian Catholic patriarchate.



“Uncommon Spiritual Valor”

I vaguely recall something Sister Claudia said in high school.

Somewhere between the lines of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, she reminded us how fortunate we were to have had two great religious leaders in the same century.

Metropolitan Andrey (+1944) and Patriarch Josyf (+1984) were men of uncommon spiritual valor. They guided the Ukrainian Catholic Church through some of her most difficult and painful trials.

It has been recorded that on the day of his death – on the eve of a new wave of religious persecution – Metropolitan Andrey foresaw a rainbow beyond the stormy clouds of Soviet communism. “The Church will rise from the ashes and become a source of great strength for her people,” he said just prior to falling asleep in the Lord. On that day he also charged his successor, Bishop Josyf Slipyj, with the daunting task of leading the Church through decades of impending and vicious persecution.

While most of the Catholic bishops were eventually murdered, Archbishop Josyf survived 17 years of imprisonment, torture and exile. Through the efforts of Pope John XXIII and President John F. Kennedy, the archbishop was finally released from Soviet prison. Together with Fr. Michael Dymyd and Fr. Borys Gudziak, former and present rector, respectively, of the Lviv Theological Academy-Ukrainian Catholic University, I had the privilege of knowing and living alongside this confessor of faith in his last years of life. As students of St. Sophia College in Rome, we were honored to sit at the feet of this living church father. We were captivated as much by his sermons as by the marks of his tortured body. Both spoke of complete and radical dedication to the Lord.

This year we mark two important memorials: the 60th and 20th anniversaries of the deaths of these two uncompromising church leaders. This is not solely an opportunity to remember the steadfast and faithful heroes of the past, but also a moment to consider anew our direction for the future. For although the world is in constant change, the struggle between the forces of good and evil will always comprise the central theme of human history. Please join us as we pray and work to encourage and foster another generation of radical leaders for the Church of tomorrow.

Orthodox Return Church to Catholics

In early 2004, the Orthodox in Osii, in southwestern Ukrainian Transcarpathia, gave their old church to the local Catholics. With an almost-completed church in the village center, the Orthodox decided to return the old building to the Catholics, who owned it before 1949, when the Soviets declared their Church illegal. On the occasion of the transfer, the local Catholic bishop, Milan Sasik, celebrated a Liturgy for both communities. Bishop Sasik called upon his faithful to help the Orthodox finish the construction of their new church. He added that Orthodox in four regional villages will follow this example and alleviate tension over church buildings between Orthodox and Catholics. According to Vasyl Mandziuk, deputy head of the State Committee on Religious Matters, communities take turns conducting services in 36 towns of the region.

U.S. Pro-Life Leader Visits UCU

Dr. Jack Wilke, M.D., president and founder of the International Right to Life Federation, lectured at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv on March 18. He came to the university at the invitation of its Institute of Marriage and Family Life. “We wanted to come [to Ukraine] because we heard of the very sad situation here,” said Dr. Wilke. “Of every ten pregnancies, you kill seven. That may be the worst record in the entire world... You have much work to do.” He shared the American experience of pro-life efforts with his audience. Dr. Wilke's wife, Barbara, assisted him in his presentation. Ukraine is the 66th country in which the couple has lectured.

Economic Hardship Continues in Ukraine

Two recent studies confirm Ukraine's continuing economic difficulties. According to a report published by the Federation of European Employers, Ukraine was 46th out of 47 countries rated for average hourly payments for labor. Number 1 was Denmark, with an average of 27.89 euros (about \$34.86). Ukraine was next to the bottom with an hourly labor payment rate evaluated at 1 percent of Denmark's. And according to a survey backed by the United Nations International Labor Organization, workers in Ukraine earn less than \$100 per capita. The survey found that average income is less than the estimated amount needed to maintain a subsistence standard of living.



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EDITOR, MATTHEW MATUSZAK

UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION
UCEF@UCEF.ORG WWW.UCEF.ORG

IN USA

2247 W. CHICAGO AVE.
CHICAGO, IL 60622
(773) 235-8462
FAX (773) 235-8464

IN CANADA

1317 STONECUTTER DR.
OAKVILLE, ON L6M 3C5
(905) 465-3388
FAX (905) 465-3384

Bishops Address Cardinal Kasper's Trip to Moscow

On March 1, the Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Catholic Church addressed Cardinal Walter Kasper's February trip to Moscow. Excerpts from the text follow.

The recent visit of Cardinal Walter Kasper to Moscow to consider, among other things, the affairs of our Church has become the subject of discussion throughout the world. Many Ukrainian Catholics have been troubled that the internal development of our Church was discussed not in Kyiv, Lviv or Rome, but in Moscow without our participation. We would like to say a few words...

We chose [to proclaim a patriarchate] long ago and it reflects the clear will of the people of God of our Church. [And regardless of the opposition recently expressed,] what happened may also have positive consequences. The public attention attracted by the mentioned visit may give impetus to a more thorough study of the arguments...

Communion with Rome

We are firmly convinced of our own identity. Our Church, though it received its ecclesiastical formation from Byzantium, was and always sought to be in communion with the successor of St. Peter the Apostle, the bishop of Rome. There were many difficult periods in the history of our Church when its right to existence was denied, when attempts were made to physically destroy it. We have survived, despite all these cruel measures. It must have been God's arm that supported us in the worst moments of our history and that gives us opportunities to successfully develop today.

One of the expressions of this development is our wish to be recognized as a patriarchate. The idea of the Patriarchate of the Kyivan Church can be traced back at least to the 16th and 17th centuries. In the 1960s, at the Second Vatican Council, it was distinctly made public by Patriarch Josyf Slipyj and it has been continuously developing ever since. Today, we are deeply convinced that such an arrangement is necessary to strengthen the unity of Church and people. This position was expressed by all the bishops of our Church at the Synod of 2002 and now we only await its recognition by the Holy Father.

Papal Support

His Holiness Pope John Paul II has, from the beginning of his pontificate, stood up for our Church. Ten years before the celebration of the thousandth anniversary of the Baptism of Kyivan Rus, our bishops informed the Holy Father of their wish to commemorate this event. He very gladly blessed that intention and, in answer to the protest of representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate, confirmed our main right, the right to exist, in his letter of 1979. Later, in 1988, the Pope personally participated in our celebration, which still had to be held on the territory of Rome. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Pope greeted our bishops who had been active in the



Cardinal Walter Kasper (left) visited Holy Spirit Seminary in Lviv (seen here), and also the Ukrainian Catholic University, in October 2002.

underground Church and urged them to develop it. And in 2001, despite various protests, he visited Ukraine. It was on his instruction that Cardinal Walter Kasper presented the case of our Church to the Moscow Patriarchate in 2003...

Unfortunately, the responses from the Moscow Patriarchate and other Orthodox Churches often contained expressions inappropriate for interchurch dialogue. It is enough to mention the statement that the Roman Catholic Church should "gradually reduce the presence" of our Church. These warnings, like ultimatums and verging on blackmail, saying that any possible contacts between Catholics and Orthodox will be broken off for years if the Pope recognizes the Patriarchate, sound like a personal insult to the Holy Father. We hope that in the future those Orthodox circles which are prepared for constructive cooperation and understanding will express their opinions as well...

From a certain point of view, the current discussions about the Patriarchate are a sign from the Holy Spirit that we should firmly confirm this Patriarchate in the life of the whole Church. Notwithstanding all our speculations and efforts, we should rest our hope upon the Lord. We hereby sincerely ask you for your prayers and fasting for this intention.

The full text of this address is available at WWW.UGCC.ORG.UA.

EDITOR'S NOTE: When this address was first released in March, the official website of the Ukrainian Catholic Church was, due to technical problems, not operating. For a week, the public had access to the text, in Ukrainian and in English translation, mainly thanks to the Religious Information Service of Ukraine, WWW.RISU.ORG.UA, a project of the Ukrainian Catholic University.

In the Mission Fields

UCU Grad Helps Catholics in the South Organize

The Soviets forcibly resettled 160,000 people from far western Ukraine to the country's southern areas in the 1950s. Most of them were Catholics. For decades, their Church was illegal, so they had no pastoral care. With religious freedom in 1989, they began organizing. And Pope John Paul II approved the formation of the exarchate of Odesa and Crimea of the Ukrainian Catholic Church on July 28, 2003.

The exarchate (like a mission diocese in the Latin rite) now has 20 parishes served by 12 priests. This is spread out over a territory of 49,000 square miles, with a general population of 8 million. "Some priests have 2 or 3 parishes. They have to travel 450 miles to contact one another. They need spiritual support," explains Maria Kryzhanivska, a graduate of the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU). Sponsored by the UCEF, Kryzhanivska ("Maria K.," for short) is helping Bishop Vasyl Ivasiuk, first exarch of the new exarchate, to organize programs for youth, families, and priests.

Christmas Eve at the Orphanage

For the Christmas holidays, Maria K. helped organize numerous pastoral activities. One of the most poignant was a Christmas celebration for 60 children at Bright Home, a shelter in the port city of Odesa. Two young men from Holy Spirit Seminary and two lay students of UCU, joined by students of Odesa University, prepared the 12 traditional dishes for Christmas Eve supper. In addition to sharing a meal, the volunteers prayed, caroled, and had fun with the children.

For Easter, Maria K. led seminarians and lay volunteers to the western part of the exarchate. Six seminarians went to Crimean Yalta. Maria and 3 UCU lay students traveled to Kherson, north of Crimea. There they visited an institution for children with mental problems that she'd like the exarchate "to take under its spiritual wing." Markers, crayons, and colored paper were among the essential items for that part of the trip.



The faithful in Yuzhne must gather for Liturgy in a small basement apartment.



Bishop Vasyl Ivasiuk (left), exarch of Odesa and Crimea, is grateful for the help of Maria Kryzhanivska (right), a graduate of the Ukrainian Catholic University and part of the UCEF's mission program.

They also helped the local mission parish welcome in the joyous holy day. "Even in such poor circumstances," Maria reflected, "we can celebrate the fact that Christ is risen!"

Though Ukraine has rich human resources like Maria K., material limits are a constant challenge. In Kherson, the Catholic community celebrates Liturgy in part of an old train car. In Yuzhne, in the Odesa region, the Catholics meet in a small basement room in a state-owned 5-story apartment building. The authorities allow them to use the small space, about 250 square feet, without charging rent. Even the bishop in Odesa has no residence, just a modest rented apartment.

Warm Family Relations

The life of southern Ukraine's Catholic community is, nevertheless, characterized by informality and warm family relations within the parishes. As a rule, community members are well acquainted with each other and their families often get together.

The clergy and faithful of the new exarchate have high hopes that Bishop Ivasiuk's appointment will help them to establish better contacts with the authorities and other churches. "Sometimes a simple conversation can change someone's attitude towards the Ukrainian Catholic Church," explains Fr. Vasyl Kolodchyn, pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Yuzhne.

Under the tentative title of the St. Andrew Mission Society, UCEF is supporting the activities of young people like Maria K.: graduates of the Ukrainian Catholic University and Holy Spirit Seminary, priests, religious and laity, who have a passion for mission work. More to come in future newsletters!

North America Warmly Greets Seminary Rector

Fr. Bohdan Prakh, rector of Holy Spirit Seminary in Lviv, was enthusiastically received during his spring visit to the U.S. and Canada to raise funds for the construction of a new seminary in Ukraine. UCEF hoped to raise \$32,000, and \$35,000 has already been donated. "Contributions continue to pour in for Fr. Prakh," says UCEF President John Kurey, who was the priest's U.S. guide.

In the U.S., Fr. Prakh's trip centered around New York and Chicago, 30 meetings in 10 days, in addition to Liturgies, vespers, and receptions. Not surprisingly, the Ukrainian community took a great interest. Fr. Prakh visited the Ukrainian Catholic bishops of Stamford, Connecticut and Chicago, the Ukrainian National Association, the editorial offices of the *Ukrainian Weekly* newspaper, Ukrainian-American banking institutions, and numerous Ukrainian Catholic parishes, where he preached at Liturgies.

Fr. Prakh was welcomed by non-Ukrainians as well. In New York, he visited the Catholic Near East Welfare Association and Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, editor of *First Things* magazine and a member of UCEF's advisory council. In the greater Chicago area, he visited the University of Notre Dame, in South Bend, Indiana, where he met with top architects to talk about the building plans for the new seminary complex in Lviv. "Fr. Prakh is inspirational, but very practical," as John Kurey explains. "That's why he's such an effective leader."

A simple slideshow was the usual way for Fr. Prakh to convey his goals effectively to his audiences. "Before his



Fr. Bohdan Prakh, rector of Holy Spirit Seminary in Lviv, Ukraine (left), met in New York with Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, editor of First Things magazine (right).

presentations, people didn't understand the scope of the new seminary complex," explains Kurey. It is, in fact, the largest construction project now going on in western Ukraine.

In the Toronto area, Fr. Prakh met with the Advisory Board of the UCEF in Canada, visited a local parish, and even made his television debut!

This trip laid the groundwork for Fr. Prakh's return visit to North America, planned for the second half of 2004. UCEF, which is providing total organizational and material support for Fr. Prakh's visits, encourages its donors to be most generous to this very worthy cause for the future of the Catholic Church.

New Ways to Help the Church in Ukraine:

In order to help the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Ukraine more effectively, the UCEF is proposing new ways in which our donors can provide financial support.

Support Made Simpler!

Electronic Funds Transfer is a convenient way to make monthly contributions. Now you can have your contributions automatically withdrawn from your checking or savings account without altering your banking relationship.

Appreciated Stocks or other Assets

The gift of an asset, often common stock or mutual fund shares, is a valuable way to make a contribution to a charitable organization and receive tax benefits based on the value of the asset(s).

Gifts of appreciated assets often involve stock, or

other marketable assets, such as land, antiques, and homes, and can also be utilized as potential gifts with valuable tax benefits. However, these other assets are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Planned Giving

This is a creative way to contribute to the UCEF's work. Planned giving can involve contributing through your will, insurance policy, or retirement assets. Also, it can be a way to make a donation and to provide yourself with an income; a charitable remainder trust is one example of this.

For more information on any or all of these options, or if you have any questions or concerns, in the US please contact Michael Mollet at (773) 235-8462 or e-mail mollet@ucef.org.

Russian Convert Gave His Life for Church Unity

A convert to the Catholic faith, Blessed Father Leonid Feodorov was persecuted by tsarist and Bolshevik authorities. The first head of the Eastern-rite Russian Catholic Church, he gave his life for Christian unity.

Leonid Feodorov was born to Russian Orthodox parents on November 4, 1879, in St. Petersburg. With a love of Scripture and an interest in the works of the Fathers and the Church Councils, he entered the St. Petersburg Spiritual Academy in 1901. After becoming acquainted with the pastor of a local Catholic parish, he decided to convert. Leonid saw the unification of the churches as a way to rescue his beloved Russia, which was under the dreadful threat of godlessness.

Seminarian on Papal Scholarship

The next year he traveled to Lviv to meet Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Sheptytsky left a strong impression and became Leonid's spiritual father. Their spiritual connection was never broken. Pope Leo XIII sent Leonid to Anagni, Italy to study, and in 1911 he was ordained to the priesthood in Bosnia by a Bulgarian bishop.

With the outbreak of World War I, he returned to Petersburg in 1914, where he was arrested as an Eastern-rite Catholic priest and exiled to Tobolsk, Siberia. His health deteriorated there. The tsarist government collapsed and he was allowed to return to Petersburg in 1917. Metropolitan Andrey, who was also released then from imprisonment in Russia, convened an assembly of the Eastern-rite Russian Catholic Church. Fr. Leonid was elected exarch (like the head of a mission diocese).

The Communist Revolution later that year brought terrible trials. Fr. Leonid continued his pastoral ministry, and he also worked hard not to starve to death and to help the sick. In 1923, the Soviet regime accused him of "stirring religious prejudice among the masses." In a letter to Metropolitan Andrey written days before his arrest, Fr. Leonid wrote that he was ready to give his life for Christ and Christian unity.

Though sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, he was released in 1926, but forbidden to live in any large city. Despite the danger, he renewed his apostolic ministry and was arrested less than four months after his release.

Sentenced to the Gulag

He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment on the Solovetsky Islands, an infamous Gulag in northern Russia. He continued to be an apostle of unity on Solovetsky, where he met outstanding representatives of the Orthodox Church also imprisoned there. His fellow prisoners marveled at his optimism, simplicity, and ability to endure sufferings.

Released from Solovetsky in August 1929, he was exiled



Blessed Leonid Feodorov (pictured here) and 26 Ukrainian martyrs were beatified by Pope John Paul II in Lviv, Ukraine, on June 27, 2001.

to various regions. Asthma, rheumatism, gastritis and sciatica entered their critical stages. According to an eyewitness, the priest prayed frequently and suffered patiently. Physical exhaustion and various diseases led to his death in Kirov on March 7, 1935, at the age of 55.

"We expect that the exarch is on the road to glorification through beatification," wrote Metropolitan Andrey on May 4, 1935. "Of course, it is much too early to talk about this, but all of us were strongly impressed by his holiness, strengthened by the crown of martyrdom and death. On the other hand, as a Russian Catholic, as exarch, as someone who died at the hands of the Bolsheviks, it seems to us that he will be right in the center of attention of the entire Church."

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.