



The Way Newsletter

April 9, 2021

I would like to encourage all the women working in Church structures who labor for the development, understanding, and spreading of the Gospel. The Lord assures us that things will not be easy: "They persecuted Me - they will persecute you." Our path is that of Easter: the grain must die to bear fruit, whoever wants to be first must be last, if you want to save your life, you must lose it.

The Cross leads to the Resurrection. There are no true spiritual phenomena that do not follow the path of the Easter pilgrimage.

Don't give up! A smile, a deep prayer life, and peace of mind will help you. Move forward in peace and joy! Be the evangelists, the first, as were myrrh-bearing women.

Metropolitan Borys

The Sunday of Myrrh-bearing Women



The myrrh-bearing women: gratitude and loyalty

Success — this is one of the pillars of our age. You need to be successful, otherwise, you would be a burden. Countless coaching courses try to help people get on the path of success and to rid themselves of the “loser mentality”. Losers are loners because nobody wants to be seen or associated with a loser. At the same time, everyone wants to be as close as possible to a winner, hoping to get a piece of that success.

Three women in an early morning hour sneak up to the tomb of a loser. First, this man was on the highway of success: praised by the crowds, feared by religious leaders and politicians. He was supposed to be the new king who would set his people free from oppression and injustice. Thousands have set in him great hopes and expectations. But it appears that he didn’t have a winner mentality. He could not keep the crowds. Even more, he was betrayed and left alone by almost all of his disciples. He lost everything in just five days – what a loser!

Strangely, those three women wanted to visit his grave. He has lost and there was no future for him and his teaching. Why even bother? But there was something stronger than fear of being associated with the lost cause. They were grateful and loyal because that teacher from a small town called Nazareth changed their lives. It does not matter that He has lost, because they have already won. The light of God’s faithfulness, forgiveness, and mercy has set them free. They were redeemed – only that counts. Even though those women were sad, they were no longer afraid—unlike those other disciples of Jesus of Nazareth.

Gratitude and loyalty – these words are infrequently used in modern times. Grateful and loyal people are not rushing and running after experiences of being successful. They are looking for the others who are lost, wounded, forgotten. At the same time, those people

are witnessing the greatest miracles in this world and have a foretaste of the world to come.

Three grateful and loyal myrrh-bearing women are the first witnesses of Resurrection. Their faithfulness to the Lord leads them to the greatest experience a human being could attain – the experience of love and redemption.

Fr Ihor Kolisnyk, CSsR

Go tell His disciples: Christ is risen!

“In the depth of the morning, the myrrh-bearing women came to the tomb of the Life-giver and saw an angel sitting upon the rock; he addressed them with these words: Why do you seek among the dead the One Who is alive? Why do you bewail the Incorruptible as though He was suffering corruption. Go tell His disciples: Christ is risen! (from the Resurrection Matins)

Since Our Lord died on a Friday and the Sabbath was quickly approaching, Joseph from Arimathea, a distinguished member of the Sanhedrin (Council of the Jewish Temple) boldly requested an audience with Pilate to obtain the release of the body of Jesus for proper burial. Joseph of Arimathea was a pious man who had looked forward to the resurrection of the body and also to the reign (Kingdom) of God.

Having determined that Jesus was already dead, Pilate released the body of Jesus to Joseph. Joseph took down the body of Jesus from the Cross and wrapped Him in a newly-bought linen shroud and laid Him in a tomb which the noble Joseph himself had provided. Since there was no time for the customary anointing of the deceased (according to Jewish burial customs), Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James, observed where Jesus was laid in the tomb.

The very first opportunity after the sabbath was over, early Sunday morning at daybreak, the myrrh-bearing women, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Salome, bought perfumed oils to anoint the buried Jesus. Myrrh was the ointment with which the women sought to anoint our Lord. Approaching the tomb where our Lord was laid, they wondered who would roll away the rock over the entrance to the tomb. Much to their surprise, they found the rock already rolled back. They found a young man dressed in a white robe sitting near the entrance. The women were thoroughly frightened. The young man dressed in white reassured the women not to be frightened, saying: “He (the Lord Jesus) is not here (at the tomb). He is Risen!” Instead of going to Peter and the other

disciples as the young man requested, the women left the tomb with fear and trembling and said nothing to anyone.

It would be with the descent of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost) that the disciples of the Lord would overcome their fear and go forth boldly preaching the Good News of Salvation to all the nations. The Apostles with the strength of the grace of the Holy Spirit would visit the many peoples of the world and make them disciples of the Risen Lord, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. May all of us, baptized Christians profess our belief in the Risen Lord with joy, boldness and fervor!

Father George Worschak



History of the Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great Jesus, Lover of Humanity Province

The Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great began with one extraordinary family living in the Eastern Roman Empire during the 4th century. Basil the Elder and his wife Emmelia hailed from Asia Minor (modern Turkey) and had nine children. Macrina was first, followed by Basil. The others included Gregory of Nyssa, Peter of Sebaste, Naucratus, as well as four sisters. Gregory of Nazianzus was a schoolmate of Basil and became a close friend. This remarkable family helped form the Christian faith as we know it, especially regarding monasticism and our understanding of the Holy Trinity.

Asia Minor was a hotbed of activity for the early Church and produced many saints, including the Sisters' founders Macrina and Basil. They were born during a pivotal stretch of history between the legalization of Christianity and its promulgation as the imperial

religion. Their father, Basil the Elder, was a teacher of rhetoric who died when his two oldest children were still teenagers. Afterwards, Macrina worked alongside Emmelia at home while Basil went abroad to continue his education. Basil returned about a decade later, by then well known for his rhetorical brilliance.

Two extremely important events took place shortly thereafter. First, Macrina confronted Basil, who “had become excessively exalted by the idea of his own gift of oratory,” according to their brother Gregory of Nyssa. She humbled Basil so effectively that she changed the course of his life. Second, Macrina convinced Emmelia to make the household into a monastery. This entailed far more than physical changes: the female slaves and servants would now be their equals. It is difficult to overstate how radical this was for the time. Other women eventually joined them, and the monastic community flourished. Meanwhile, headed in a new direction thanks to his older sister, Basil engaged in a life of asceticism and would later be consecrated bishop of Caesarea.

Basil and his best friend, Gregory of Nazianzus, are Doctors of the Church—a title conferred to just thirty-six of the thousands of canonized saints. Basil received this distinction for his writings and tireless efforts against heresy. He composed theological and apologetic works as well as monastic rules. Basil’s rules along with the monastic community Macrina founded at their family home influenced monasticism all over Christendom. Basilian monasteries proliferated throughout the Byzantine East for more than a thousand years, a process roughly paralleled by the Benedictine movements in the Latin West. Moreover, Benedict of Nursia himself underscores Basil’s importance in his own rule.

So where does Ukraine enter the story? Long before it was a modern nation, the land now occupied by Ukraine was part of a medieval kingdom known as Kyivan Rus’. King Volodymyr the Great, sovereign of Kyivan Rus’, introduced Christianity to his people in 988, and countless Basilian monasteries were founded there in subsequent centuries. Thus, Basilian monastics—both women and men—have lived in Ukraine for a very long time. Two remote historical events factor into why the Sisters of St. Basil came from Ukraine to the United States. In 1054, the bishops of Rome and Constantinople broke communion for largely political reasons. This tragic event is known as the Great Schism. Thereafter, Christians in the Byzantine East were known as Orthodox while those in the Latin West were Catholic. Kyivan Rus’ was located in the former part of Christendom, so it became Orthodox by default.

The situation remained unchanged for more than five hundred years until a group of bishops worked to re- enter communion with the bishop of Rome (the Pope). They succeeded in 1596 with the Union of Brest which brought many in Western Ukraine back into communion with Rome while still preserving their Eastern Christian identity. This explains why the Sisters of St. Basil are Catholic yet not Roman Catholic: their ecclesial

heritage is Byzantine rather than Roman. Consequently, the Sisters' liturgical tradition derives from Constantinople, their devotional images are strictly iconic (i.e., no baroque paintings or statues for that matter), and their eparchial (diocesan) priests may be either celibate or married.

The Union of Brest affected mostly Western Ukraine, especially Halychyna and the Carpathians. Ukrainians who arrived in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries were primarily from these Catholic regions. They gathered first in rural areas such as the coal mining towns of Pennsylvania and later in industrial centers including Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago. During the 1900s their population grew large enough that the first Eastern Catholic bishop of the United States, Soter Ortynsky, petitioned the Sisters of St. Basil in Yavoriv, Ukraine to send members of their Order to care for the immigrants' children and orphans.

In 1911 four Sisters of St. Basil arrived and set up a monastery in Philadelphia, right near the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral. This was the founding of the Jesus, Lover of Humanity Province. The Sisters very quickly began teaching children and orphans. They helped raise the latter both in Philadelphia as well as Chesapeake City, MD as Bishop Ortynsky purchased land there shortly before his death in 1916. Then in the late 1920s, the Sisters acquired property in Fox Chase where they built the Motherhouse and opened Saint Basil Academy in 1931 and Manor College in 1947. In 1948 they purchased real estate on Lindley Avenue in the Logan section of Philadelphia upon which they built Saint Basil Orphanage Home and Saint Basil Elementary School. The Jesus, Lover of Humanity Province grew throughout the twentieth century and its Sisters conducted schools all over the United States.

To conclude, the history of the Sisters of St. Basil originates in the 300s with the saintly family of Basil the Elder and Emmelia. Their two oldest children, Macrina and Basil, undertook the work that continues seventeen centuries later. Through faithful dedication Macrina founded the first of many monasteries, while through her virtue and maturity she guided her younger brother towards holiness. Macrina and Basil's monastic example spread all over the world, first in Asia Minor but then in Europe, the United States, Latin America, and even Australia. The Sisters' schools and other ministries are vital parts of their legacy as are the students, alumnae, and supporters who share in this tradition begun so long ago.

Sean McLaughlin, Director
Basilian Spirituality Center

Ukrainian Edition of Metropolitan Constantine Bohachevsky Book Published

The Ukrainian Catholic University recently released a Ukrainian translation of *Ukrainian Bishop, American Church* by historian Marta Bohachevsky-Chomiak. The book was first published by the Catholic University of America Press in 2018. The Ukrainian edition, *Community – Bishop – Church: Constantine Bohachevsky and the Formation of the Ukrainian Catholic Metropolia in the United States*, was produced with the support of Dr. Marta Pelenska from Philadelphia and the research team of the Institute of Church History (UCU).



Marta Bohachevska-Chomiak's book is dedicated to Constantine Bohachevsky (1884-1961), second bishop and first metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the United States. Under his leadership the see was transformed from a temporary exarchate to a full-fledged and permanent ecclesial structure. The author based her research on the materials of the Ukrainian, Polish, U.S., and Vatican archives and analyzed the activities of Metropolitan Bohachevsky within the broader social and cultural context of the first half of the twentieth century.

Professor Bohachevska describes her mission as writing more than a biography, she also intends to show how the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the United States survived and developed.

In the forward to the Ukrainian edition she writes, “I offer this book about the life of Ukrainian emigrants, which is different from life in the ‘old country,’ to the Ukrainian reader out of gratitude for all the opportunities to learn and study modern Ukraine, which its inhabitants gave me. I hope that this book will encourage us all to continue to learn and grow in knowledge and wisdom.”

Metropolitan Borys Visits the Parish in Passaic

On Saint Thomas Sunday, April 11, 2021, Archbishop Bishop Borys Gudziak made a pastoral visit to St. Nicholas Parish in Passaic, New Jersey.



The Metropolitan was welcomed with joyful greetings by children, the faithful, and the pastor, Fr. Andriy Dudkevych. Fr. Dudkevych thanked the Metropolitan for his time, fatherly love, and ministry.

Metropolitan Borys remarked in his sermon, “We have a great blessing to pray and be together. In His last words, Jesus inspires us and the apostles to proclaim the Gospel with our words, life, attitude, silence, smile, outstretched hand, [and to have] humility that Christ is risen...[so that] death and sin no longer have power over us. May the Lord help us not to be afraid and to maintain peace in our hearts, families, communities, cities, countries, and the entire world. May this deep peace and true joy always be with you.”

Archeparchy of Philadelphia Expresses Condolences to His Beatitude Sviatoslav on His Mother’s death

On April 12, 2021, Mrs. Vira Shevchuk, mother of His Beatitude Sviatoslav, Father and Head of the UGCC, and Father Vsevolod, who serves in the St. Josaphat Eparchy, passed away at the age of 74 after a serious illness. On behalf of the community of bishops, clergy, monks, and faithful of the Archeparchy of Philadelphia, Metropolitan Borys expressed his

condolences to His Beatitude Sviatoslav and the entire family and assured them of spiritual support and solidarity in prayer for the repose of her soul.



The letter of condolence reads, “Your Mother not only gave you life, through her boundless motherly tenderness and love for music and art, she opened for you a deep spiritual dimension of life and taught you to draw from deep spiritual sources that still inspire you to seek God and His beauty. The times of the atheist regime could not extinguish her faith and love for God and her Church. Through constant contact with the persecuted Church, its priests and active laity, your family created an environment where the faith of the future Head of the UGCC matured. Your Mother gave birth to you for life and for God.”

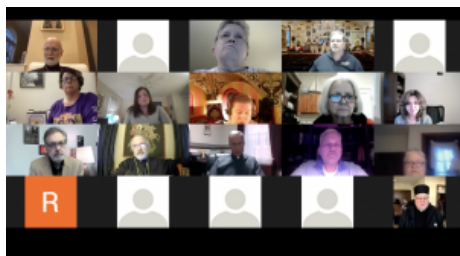
On behalf of the faithful in the United States, the Metropolitan thanked the newly deceased Vira for giving her sons the gift of life. “We thank the late Vira Shevchuk for her sons. Through the ministry and prayer of the sons, the fruits of her life will continue, multiply, and will give life-giving strength to many.”

His Beatitude Sviatoslav’s mother taught piano at a music school before retiring, something he reflected upon: “My mother worked at a music school almost all her life as a piano teacher. If we talk about my first memories, they are related to the piano. There was always music in our house. Even when my mother was doing household chores—for example, cooking in the kitchen—students would play the piano in the next room.”

In the letter to His Beatitude the Metropolitan concluded, “Despite our ministry and high responsibilities, as long as our parents are alive, we remain children, and their departure leaves pain and emptiness in our hearts. May the all-merciful Lord, who today receives your Mother in his Father’s arms, give a cure that will heal the wound of loss for you, your Father, and brother.”

Second Preparatory Meeting of Future Pastoral Council of the Archeparchy via Zoom

On Monday, April 12, Archbishop Borys convened the second preparatory meeting of the future Pastoral Council. The participants of this meeting were chosen from among the delegates who attended the last meeting of the Third Session of the Archeparchy Sobor, held on January 23. All the members are deans, lay representatives from the six deaneries, and representatives from the religious orders. The initial meeting of this group was held on Saturday, March 20. The Pastoral Council is an advisory body to the Archbishop of Philadelphia on pastoral matters.



Pastoral planning for the Archeparchy's future was the central theme of the meeting. In opening the session, Archbishop Borys shared the Archeparchy's news and presented on the process of drafting the Ukrainian Catholic Church's global pastoral plan, which extends until 2030. This new plan will be based on the 6 main points of the Pastoral Plan of the Church 2020, entitled "The Vibrant Parish – a Place to Encounter the Living Christ": the Word of God and Catechesis; Liturgy and Prayer; Service to one's neighbor; Leadership-Stewardship; Communion-Unity; and Missionary Spirit. Fr. Andriy Onyferko, who served the executive secretary on the implementation of the previous pastoral plan on the Church wide level, presented on the formulation and implementation of "The Vibrant Parish."

St Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church in McAdoo holds charitable events for the community

St Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church continues its engagement in charity. Last month there were 2 events: the first was aimed at supporting the homeless and the needy, and the second was participating in a citywide fundraising campaign for cancer research.



During the first action during the day, parishioners prepared and distributed soup to those in need. St Mary's offered a Soup Bank, soup giveaway (outdoor distribution to remain sensitive to Covid concerns). The event was promoted on social media, and in posters set at Post Office, laundromat, and other local bulletin boards. Parish volunteers who organized the distribution included Julie Merenda, Romaine

Postupack, Jim Dougherty, and Father George Worschak. Homemade soups were prepared by several other parishioners. Many dozens of soup pints were distributed to those who needed them. The church received some notes of thanks and positive comments on Facebook for the effort. Earlier in the winter, the Parish collected non-perishable grocery items for donation to shelters and food pantries, as well as to parishioners in need. "This creative thinking helps a community stay together», noted Joe Krushinsky.

The purpose of the second action was to raise funds for cancer research. The members of St Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church of McAdoo, with Romaine Joseph of Nesquehoning, who already puts in many hours preparing ethnic foods to benefit her Parish, had a potato pancake sale outside of the Lansford office on W. Ridge Street. In a critical year for the American Cancer Society, many of its fundraising events were canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic.



So, this action was a great help and expression of goodwill at this difficult time. «We got a big assist today from people from St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic in McAdoo. They have their own fundraising picnic in August, and an amazing menu», said Lisa Hoey of the American Cancer Society staff. Potato pancakes were bought for \$1 each. Many hungry supporters crowded the Lansford sidewalks. Bob Ritsick, a volunteer from St. Mary's, and Joe Krushinsky were frying potato pancakes all day. The final tally for the day was right around \$1,300.

<https://www.city-journal.org/vital-economic-and-civic-role-of-churches-mcadoo-pennsylvania>

Church News

The All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations called for peace

The All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations appeals to all those in whose power and competence to cease fire and shelling, and to find sufficient strength and courage to restore the previously declared commitments for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.



ВСЕУКРАЇНСЬКА РАДА ЦЕРКОВ
і РЕЛІГІЙНИХ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙ

In connection with the aggravation of the situation in Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine and the violation of the ceasefire, which again led to irreparable human losses and caused deep grief and human suffering, and the unprecedented strengthening of Russian troops near the state border of Ukraine, the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and religious organizations appeals to all those in whose power and competence to cease fire and shelling, and to find in themselves sufficient strength and courage to restore the previously declared obligations for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Before one of the greatest Christian holidays, Easter, which for many citizens of our country remains an opportunity for inner renewal and a source of spiritual consolation, we ask you to show wisdom and courage, so that at this time solemn Easter songs, not shots, echo over our homeland. May sincere Easter greetings be heard again, the weapons be silenced, and a lasting peace be established.

Recognizing the importance of the previously reached ceasefire agreements, we, the representatives of the Churches and religious organizations of Ukraine, emphasize the need for the signatories to reaffirm their commitment to the declared principles and decisions and to immediately remove all obstacles to a peaceful settlement in eastern Ukraine.

We appeal to the representatives of international institutions and the diplomatic corps in Ukraine to show unwavering firmness and resolute commitment to the resumption of the process of diplomatic settlement of the military conflict and the establishment of just peace throughout our state within its internationally recognized borders.

+ SVIATOSLAV

Chairman of the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations,
Father and Head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church,
Major Archbishop of Kyiv-Halych

April 12, 2021, Kyiv

The mother of His Beatitude Sviatoslav has passed away

With sorrow in our hearts and a prayer on our lips, we announce that on April 12, 2021, after a serious illness, Mrs. Vira Shevchuk, the mother of His Beatitude Sviatoslav, has returned to our Heavenly Father's house. She died in Stryi at the age of 74.



Parastas will be held today, at 19:00 in the Church of Saints Volodymyr and Olha in Stryi (St. Hryhoriy Kossak, 7a).

Funeral services will begin tomorrow, April 13, at 11:00.

"My mother worked at a music school almost all her life as a piano teacher. If we talk about the first memories, they are related to the piano. There was always music in our house. Even when my mother was doing household chores, for example, cooking in the kitchen, students would play the piano in the next room," recalls His Beatitude Sviatoslav about his mother.

The Head of the UGCC also mentions that his mother often took him to work. "And all those corridors, classes of music schools in Stryi and Sambir, where she worked - that was the space in which I grew up. Later, when I went to school, my mother would take me to music school to do my homework. Imagine a music lesson - there is a desk, a piano, a student sitting at the instrument, my mother next to her, and I am doing lessons nearby. And only when I did everything I could go home," His Beatitude Sviatoslav shared memories of his childhood.

Today, together with the whole community of faithful of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, we express our sincere condolences to His Beatitude Sviatoslav, his father Yuriy and brother Fr. Vsevolod.

May her memory be eternal! Vichnaya pamyat'!

The UGCC Department for Information

Pope at Audience: Church is the house and school of prayer

Continuing his catechesis on Christian prayer at the weekly General Audience in the Vatican, Pope Francis explains that prayer belongs to the very essence of the Church, without which she cannot carry out her evangelising mission and service to others.

By Robin Gomes

In his Catechesis at Wednesday's General Audience, the Pope explained how the Church is a great school of prayer. As children, he said, we learn our first prayers on the laps of grandparents and parents, who also give their advice inspired by the Gospel. Later, the experience of faith and prayer is deepened through encounters with other witnesses and teachers of prayer, such as in the life of a parish and every Christian community which is marked by liturgical and community prayer.

Prayer and difficulties of life

"The garment of faith," the Pope said, "is not starched, but develops with us." It is not rigid, it grows, even through moments of crisis and resurrection. And "you cannot grow without moments of crisis, because crisis makes you grow."

He continued, "And the breath of faith is prayer: we grow in faith inasmuch as we learn to pray." After certain moments in life, we become aware that without faith we could not have made it through and that our strength was prayer. We realize that not only personal prayer, but also that of our brothers, sisters and the community, whom we requested, also accompanied and supported us."



Community and prayer

The Pope explained, "This is also why communities and groups dedicated to prayer flourish in the Church. Monasteries, convents, hermitages often become centres of spiritual light, small oases in which intense prayer is shared and fraternal communion is constructed day by day." The Pope said, "They are cells that are vital not only for the ecclesial fabric, but that of society itself." In this regard, he recalled the role of monasticism in the birth and growth of European civilization as well as other cultures. "Praying and working in community keeps the world going. It is a motor."

"Everything in the Church," the Pope continued, "originates in prayer and everything grows thanks to prayer." He pointed out that certain groups while carrying out reforms and changes in the Church, put great effort in terms of organization and the media but prayer is sometimes missing. "Prayer," the Pope said, "is what opens the door to the Holy Spirit, which is what inspires us to go forward." He continued, "Changes in the Church without prayer are not Church changes, they are group changes. And when the Enemy wants to fight the Church, he does so, first of all, by trying to dry up its sources, by preventing it from praying, and [inducing it to] make these other proposals." When prayer ceases, he said, "the Church

realizes it has become like an empty shell, lost its bearings and no longer has its source of warmth and love.”

Prayer - oil for the lamp of faith

The Pope pointed out that holy women and men also have problems in their lives, and often face opposition. “But their strength is prayer” through which they nourish the flame of their faith, like oil used for lamps. Thus, they move ahead walking in faith and hope, “not with the weapons of money and power, or of the media and the like, but with the weapon of prayer.”

Evangelization and service

"In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus poses a dramatic question that always makes us reflect," the Pope said: "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?" Or, the Pope asked, "will He only find organizations, like a group of 'faith entrepreneurs,' all well organized, doing charity and many things?" That, he said, is why Jesus insists on the “need to pray with perseverance without getting tired.” Hence, “the lamp of faith will always be lit on earth as long as there is the oil of prayer.”

The Pope said it is prayer that carries forward our prayer and our poor, weak, sinful life with certainty. Therefore, Christians should ask themselves whether they pray and how they pray. “Do I pray like a parrot or from the heart? Do I pray feeling part of the Church and praying for its needs, or do I pray a little according to my needs, letting my ideas become prayer,” the Pope asked. “This is pagan prayer, not Christian prayer,” he said.

The essential task of the Church, then, is to pray and to teach how to pray, transmitting “the lamp of faith and the oil of prayer from generation to generation.” Without the light of this lamp, he said evangelization would not be possible and we would not be able to draw near and serve our brothers and sisters. “For this reason,” the Pope said, “the Church, as the house and school of communion, is the house and school of prayer.”

Pope: St Teresa of Ávila shows importance of women in Church and society

Pope Francis marks the 50th anniversary of the proclamation of Saint Teresa of Ávila as a Doctor of the Church, and stresses her importance even today, especially in highlighting the role of women in the Church and in society.

By Vatican News staff writer

Opening his message to Archbishop Gil Tamayo of Ávila, Spain, Pope Francis noted that St Teresa was the first woman to become a Doctor of the Church.

He said the title was a recognition of the "precious teaching that God has transmitted to us through her writings and the testimony of her life."

Fifty years ago, on 27 September 1970, Pope St Paul VI conferred the title of Doctor of the Church on St. Teresa of Ávila.

The Catholic University of Ávila, which is dedicated to the Spanish mystic, is celebrating this historic anniversary with an international congress entitled "Exceptional woman," as Pope Paul VI described her himself. It runs until 15 April.

Courageous witness, able to break down walls

Saint Teresa was born in 1515 and died in 1582. Pope Francis wrote in his message that even now, nearly half a millenium since her death, wrote that "the flame that Jesus lit in Teresa continues to shine in this world, always in need of courageous witnesses, capable of breaking down any wall, whether physical, existential or cultural."

He also cited her intelligence and tenacity, which she joined to "a sensitivity to beauty and a spiritual motherhood toward all those who approached her work."

The Pope added that she was an example of the "extraordinary role that women have played throughout history in the Church and in society."



A message for those seeking purification

Saint Teresa of Ávila still speaks to us today, thanks to her writings.

Pope Francis noted that her message and example are for everyone, "for those who feel the call to religious life," but also "for all those who wish to progress on the path of purification from all worldliness, which leads to union with God, to the lofty abodes of the interior castle."

"Having her as a friend companion and guide in our earthly pilgrimage confers security and tranquility," he said.

The Pope concluded his message by recalling Teresa's great devotion to St. Joseph and by encouraging all the faithful to continue to look deeper into her message and teachings.

Cardinal Ouellet highlights importance of theological reflection on priesthood

The Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops emphasizes the need for a deeper ecclesiology in the Church's reflection on the dimensions of the priesthood, ahead of a Symposium on the theology of priesthood slated for next year.

By Vatican News staff writer

The Holy See hosted a press conference on Monday to present a Symposium on the theology of priesthood scheduled to hold from 17 – 19 February 2022.

The Theological Symposium tagged "Toward a Fundamental Theology of the Priesthood" will explore the relationship between vocations, the ordained priesthood and the priesthood of the baptized.

Presenting the Symposium in the Vatican were Cardinal Marc Ouellet, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, as well as two other speakers, who provided the *raison d'être* and background for the upcoming event.

Ecclesiology and the priesthood

"The major theme is the relationship between the priesthood of the baptized and the priesthood of the ordained," explained Cardinal Marc Ouellet in an interview with Vatican News' Christopher Wells.

"The Second Vatican Council has enhanced the value of the priesthood of the baptized," notes the Cardinal. "But along the way in the Church, we have not reflected enough on this question from deeper ecclesiology."

For this reason, the proposal is "a Trinitarian ecclesiology" that can show better how these two dimensions of the priesthood of Christ are integrated concretely in the Church – between ministers, lay faithful, married and consecrated people.



Need for deeper reflection

Amid the difficult times caused by ongoing Covid-19 health emergency, and the accompanying "tensions" it brings, Cardinal Ouellet stressed that we need a deeper theological reflection to understand the Church as communion.

“If we want to overcome tensions that are more at a superficial level, we need to deepen our understanding of the mystery of the Church, and the presence of the Holy Trinity of the Church,” he said. We also need to examine “how it works with the concrete services and ministries, and the fact of the community of the baptized.”

Each day of the three-day event will be dedicated to different themes: “Tradition and New Horizons” for the first day, “Trinity, Mission, and Sacramentality” for the second, and “Celibacy, Charism, and Spirituality” for the last day.

Plast celebrated the 109th anniversary of the first Oath. Every year on April 12, Plast, the largest and oldest Ukrainian youth organization, celebrates the anniversary of the first Plast Oath, which is considered the date Ukrainian scouting was formally established.

Metropolitan Borys is a senior scout (plastun) (Kurin "Order of the Crusaders") and chairman of Plast's supervisory board.



Reading Suggestion

Borough of Churches

In northeastern Pennsylvania's coal region, one town illustrates the vital economic and civic role of houses of worship.

Charles F. McElwee

On a recent afternoon, I stood on a narrow street dividing the parish cemeteries of McAdoo, a small borough outside Hazleton in northeastern Pennsylvania's coal region. Chain-link fences neatly separate the plots, with Roman or Byzantine crosses marking the different ethnic and denominational allegiances. To the west—past the graves of my paternal great-grandparents in St. Patrick's Cemetery—is a panoramic view of the beautiful spires and domes for which McAdoo became known as the “borough of churches.” Many of these congregations have since closed—a sad trend that preceded the Covid-19 pandemic.

Last spring, not long after the CDC identified the first U.S. Covid case on Ash Wednesday, the pandemic prompted concerns that many houses of worship wouldn't survive the lockdowns. It's still too early to predict long-term effects, but so far church closures have not been widespread. Federal intervention undoubtedly helped. For instance, the Roman Catholic Church, according to a recent AP investigation, was “perhaps the biggest beneficiary” of last year's Paycheck Protection Program. It's still pre-Covid forces—aging congregations, rising secularism, the fallout of clerical abuse scandals, disillusionment with institutional religion—that imperil the future of churches in urban neighborhoods, sprawling suburbs, and small towns like McAdoo.

Incorporated in 1896, McAdoo once counted ten churches within an area of about 200 acres. These ethnic parishes sprouted after a local coal company permitted Irish, Italian, and Slavic families to build housing. Overall, McAdoo was a lively, but poorer, town: its population peaked at 5,200 in the early 1930s. But through the twentieth century, long after mine closures and economic decline halved its population, the storied churches of McAdoo remained a center of communal vitality.

For generations, the harsh conditions of mining life inspired a regional sense of reciprocity most evident in ethnic beneficial organizations, or in what became thriving parishes like McAdoo's Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church. “Standing by each other during times of need allowed the anthracite mine workers to cope with crises inherent in their occupation,” wrote Harold Aurand, a regional historian. This generous spirit applied to local businesses, too, such as Frank Kline's clothing store, a handsome brick structure in McAdoo's downtown. “Mr. and Mrs. Kline provided everything you could possibly wear, with a lot of love and understanding when some parents didn't have enough cash to pay for everything,” one native recalled to the local paper.

Last June, after 119 years, Holy Trinity closed—its charming brick structure, which housed priceless icons, sold for \$75,000. A dwindling congregation, rather than the pandemic, sealed Holy Trinity's fate. As the Hazleton *Standard-Speaker* reported, only eight worshippers remained. “All of us were elderly,” one long-time member told the paper. The emotional costs are profound. “We lost something,” he added. “Part of our life is gone. It was a big loss. We still

feel it. My wife said today, ‘We have no church.’” Meantime, the community lost one of its focal points; non-parishioners had joined the dwindling congregation to preserve its annual traditions. The church’s summer bazaar, for example, became a yearly homecoming, and regular pierogi sales supported its operation.

McAdoo’s relationship with Holy Trinity reflects the crucial economic and civic role that churches play in U.S. communities, whether in rural towns or city districts. According to Bob Jaeger, president of Partners for Sacred Places, small-town or rural churches “have an economic impact of several hundred thousand dollars each year, on average.” As the Wilkes University-affiliated Institute for Public Policy and Economic Development found, in the third quarter of 2020, northeastern Pennsylvania’s churches made about \$55.2 million in regional purchases. The Institute’s executive director, Teri Ooms, told me that these churches create “an economic impact that ripples through the economy, generating revenue and supporting jobs in other sectors.”

Among those churches is St. Mary’s, one of America’s oldest Ukrainian Catholic parishes and the first congregation formed in McAdoo. At St. Mary’s, long-time congregants preserve McAdoo’s tradition of church-driven volunteerism. Many of these parishioners have moved elsewhere or no longer have older relatives in McAdoo. Yet, as Joe Krushinsky, a native who lived for years in metro Washington, told me, “the church is something that brings these people back.”

“I always think that St. Mary’s has tentacles,” added Connie Postupack, a parish historian. “You feel rooted.”



St. Mary’s Ukrainian Catholic Church ([Shuvaev](#) / [Creative Commons](#))

St. Mary’s contributes to McAdoo’s economy and civic fabric. The borough’s non-parishioners, for example, join church volunteers in preparing food sales. Earlier this month, the church organized a free soup distribution—two pints per person—for the borough. Father George Worschak, St. Mary’s pastor, is a regular at the local coffee shop, which features Lenten specials like haluski (cabbage and noodles) and pierogis. “I think it’s good that Father is visible,” said Krushinsky, who helps manage the church’s social media. “People notice that he’s here and that he’s a participant in the community.”

Like all churches, St. Mary’s had to navigate the uncertainties of Covid-19. In Krushinsky’s view, though, this “creative thinking . . . helps a community stay together.” He has helped livestream Divine Liturgy on Facebook, where people tune in from as far away as Florida.

Later this year, St. Mary's will organize a 16-mile walk to Shenandoah, where, in the 1890s, immigrant ancestors made the Sunday pilgrimage to St. Michael's, America's first Greek Catholic Rite church. In 2016, when St. Mary's organized a similar event, the walk attracted people beyond the parish. "This wasn't just St. Mary's doing this—we wanted to start to unite people," said Postupack.

As new generations sustain St. Mary's, McAdoo itself continues to change. The former St. Kunegunda's, the Polish parish, is now Iglesia De Jesucristo, reflecting the Hazleton area's shifting demographics. Meantime, massive warehousing projects—thanks to the region's proximity to Interstates 80 and 81—are slated for parts of the mine-scarred land where McAdoo's miners worked, along with woods where families picked huckleberries and mushrooms to supplement the household income.

For decades, local churches have helped communities like McAdoo face the challenges arrayed against them. Today, though, it's the churches themselves that require community support—from congregants with deep parish roots, from non-congregants who appreciate the churches' spiritual and civic purpose, and from creative fundraising initiatives like livestreaming religious services. "We have seen that congregations adapt best when they engage their communities, and don't attempt to go it alone," Jaeger told me. In other words, the tradition of reciprocity continues in the borough of churches.

Charles F. McElwee is managing editor of the Commonwealth Foundation. He is the 2020–21 John Farley Memorial Fellow, part of The Fund for American Studies' Robert Novak Journalism Program. He edits RealClear's Public Affairs page on Pennsylvania. Follow him on Twitter at @CFMcElwee.

Top Photo: Charles McElwee

Announcements

MARRIAGE PREPARATION WORKSHOP

“Entering the Holy Mystery of Marriage”

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Ukrainian Catholic Church is pleased to present a marriage preparation workshop, *Entering the Holy Mystery of Marriage*, to take place in person on Saturday April 24, 2021 with a follow up session via Zoom Saturday May 15, 2021. (All safety measures required during the pandemic will be maintained including appropriate social distancing and the wearing of protective masks)

The program focuses on various aspects of marriage, both spiritual and practical, and provides each person an opportunity for greater understanding of one's partner and a means to strengthen one's relationship.

In addition to various presentations and exercises, each couple will be provided an opportunity to take the Catholic version of a premarital questionnaire called FACET (Foundations Applied Conversation and Education Tool). The FACET inventory provides participants with a computer-generated profile of unique couple issues, challenges, strengths and realities to be discussed prior to marriage. The FACET results for each couple involved will be presented to them by a Pastoral Counselor trained in the use of this tool in a subsequent 40 minute private session via Zoom on Saturday May 15, 2021.

Each attending couple must commit to participating in all the sessions in person on April 24, 2021 as well as the 40 minute private meeting on May 15, 2021 via Zoom.

The workshop will be held at: **Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Ukrainian Catholic Church

1206 Valley Road

Melrose Park, PA 19027

The total cost per couple will be \$170 which includes materials, lunch and refreshments.

All couples who wish to be married in Annunciation B.V.M. Ukrainian Catholic Church are obliged to attend this workshop.

If you are currently engaged and plan to marry within a year, and wish to participate in this workshop, please call the rectory by April 16, 2021 at **215-635-1627**.

Entering the Holy Mystery of Marriage

Saturday April 24, 2021

10:00 Registration

10:15 Opening Prayer and Welcome

10:20 Marriage as a Holy Mystery and Sacrament in the Church

11:00 Administration of the FACET Inventory

12:15 Lunch

1:00 Knowing your Finances

1:30 Knowing your In-Laws

2:00 Sacred Sexuality of Marriage

2:45 Break - refreshments

3:00 Our Relationship with God

3:30 Communication Skills for Marriage

4:30 Conclusion -

Scheduling of 40 minute Zoom meetings for review of inventory results

4:45 Closing Prayer and Blessing

5:00 Divine Liturgy (optional)

Saturday May 15, 2021

Each couple will meet for 40 minutes via Zoom with John J. Michalczyk, M.A., M.Div., Pastoral Counselor, to discuss results of the FACET inventory.

Please fill out this form and email it back by April 20, 2021!!!

Please send your payment with registration form to the address below..

Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Ukrainian Catholic Church

1206 Valley Road

Melrose Park, PA 19027

His name_____

Her name_____

His Address_____

Her Address_____

His Phone_____

Her Phone_____

His e-mail_____

Her e-mail_____

Parish you belong to_____

Date and place of marriage_____

“Community Flea Market/Craft Fair and Slavic Food Festival” – Saturday, June 12th

Summer is right around the corner and now is a good time to plan getting that “extra stuff” out of or for your living area. To help you, everyone is invited to **Holy Myrrh-Bearers Church**, 900 Fairview Road, in Swarthmore (Ridley Township) to a community-wide Flea Market/Craft Fair and Slavic Food festival on **Saturday June 12th** from **9:00 am. thru 3:00 pm.**

If you or your family have non-food items to sell or if you are a non-food vendor, spaces are now being offered for only \$20.00.

Call (610) 544-1215 email us at HMBChurch@verizon.net to reserve your space **by June 1st.**

Event is rain or shine.

2021 PILGRIMAGE TO THE MOTHER OF GOD



SISTERS OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT

*Heart to Heart:
The Love and Unity of the Holy Family*



SAVE THE DATE
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2021

SCHEDULE

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| • 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM | Confessions |
| • 11:00 AM | Divine Liturgy |
| • 1:00 PM | Lunch |
| • 2:00 PM | Spiritual Programs |
| • 4:00 PM | Moleben |

Sisters of St. Basil the Great
710 Fox Chase Road
Jenkintown, PA 19046

(215) 379-3998
basilcenter@stbasils.com
www.stbasils.com