

CHURCH AND LIFE

UKRAINIAN RELIGIOUS & COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER IN AUSTRALIA

PUBLISHED FROM 1960

УКРАЇНСЬКИЙ ЦЕРКОВНО-ГРОМАДСЬКИЙ ЧАСОПИС В АВСТРАЛІЇ

ЦЕРКВА і ЖИТТЯ

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How would you describe your God?

Is your God a father, magician, friend, judge, public man, saviour, minister of justice? Someone who is irrelevant or does not exist?

We all have an opinion about God but we may not think about it too often. However, our personal opinion of God has very wide implications for us personally. It influences almost every aspect of our lives, our actions, our behaviour, our inner state of soul, and ultimately can have a bearing on our eternity.

God does not change, has not changed, and will not change. The only thing that can change is our own personal opinion of Him.

God is who he says it is! He spoke in ancient times and continues to speak today through the Holy Spirit. It is the church which presents His work through the Sacred Scriptures and her teaching of this word of God.

One of the most fundamental explanations of God is that "God is love". This love is meant to be understood in all its wide implications. We learn just



how much God loves us. He sent us His Son who came into the world and died on the cross. He institutionalised the Holy Eucharist so that we could become one in Body and Blood. He tells us that we will live forever with Him in eternity. God totally loves us.

If we have a different opinion of God, for example, that He is the one who is a minister of justice then we would expect that everything in life must be "fair".

There would be justice for all who are innocent. Illness becomes a problem, accidents, violence etc. becomes God's fault. This could lead to the thought that since he can't keep order then He might not exist.

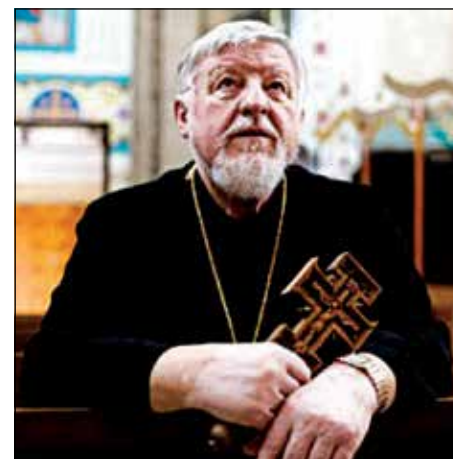
If our God is a magician, then we would expect Him to do magic tricks for us. We would need to win the lottery; we would need protection from our bad driving etc.

If God is a policeman, then we would wonder why there is so much crime in the world and ask God to stop it.

If he is just a judge, then all our enemies would have to have crop failures and lead miserable lives.

We really need to find out who God is for us. It is important. In this search, there is much help available. We could start with the Catechism, the Scriptures, and the Church.

As we live and grow our concept of God will also grow. Prayer for faith is probably the best place to start.



Bishop Peter Stasiuk

First Holy Confession & Solemn Holy Communion

We ask you to pray for these children, who are preparing for their First Holy Confession, and Solemn Holy Communion on Sunday October the 1st 2017

Baker Sarah, Cicala Blake, Foskett Samuel, Kuiper Jamie, Havrila Oliver Paul, Holovka Valentina Lucy, Kekoc Tayissa, Keele-Krasulak Christian, Marnik Tiana, McDiarmid Owen, Makohon Oksana, Smorhaj Anastasia Miriam, Tandy William, Vidal Xavier, Zauch Ava.

MIMIVIC GROUP

Victor and Mimi Rudewych
Support
CHURCH AND LIFE

UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE AUSTRALIA - Melbourne Branch



We would like to announce that this year we are undertaking a collection of canned and dried foods for the poor and homeless of Melbourne. The foods collected will be delivered to the

Father Bob Maguire Foundation

For more information, see page 4



The Mystery of Crowning¹

Dr Andrew Thomas Kania

Byzantine Christianity with its elaborate liturgical life uses an array of majestic symbols in order to elevate the human Spirit and Mind to a place beyond the daily living of life, and all the routines and cares of this world. Liturgy, in the Byzantine East, is not only about communal prayer and the communication of the Gospel message; but in addition, Liturgy intends to *immerse* the Faithful into an experience designed to give a glimpse of the ethereal. The Faithful should be open to, and seek to obtain an experiential knowledge of God by way of participating in the Divine Liturgy.

A distinct self-limitation is also inherent within the experience of the Byzantine Liturgical formula, because of the profuse usage of symbol. Any visitor to a foreign land in which a language unknown to that visitor is spoken, is fully aware that a breakdown in communication detracts from the experience of living in that country. Due to the importance and power of the frequent use of symbolism in Byzantine Christianity, Byzantine Christians must therefore seek a deliberate understanding of the symbols used in the Liturgy in order to climb the Divine Ladder of their Faith.

To illustrate this argument, let us take as one example, the Holy Mystery of Crowning; a Mystery that the majority

of Byzantine Christians will experience liturgically in their lives, either as witnesses, or perhaps also as a betrothed – a Mystery whose liturgical symbols are too often misunderstood or totally ignored, due mainly to the witnesses or betrothed not being fully cognizant of the spiritual drama taking place, a failure to understand the many symbols used to underpin the Liturgy; a liturgical illiteracy of sorts.

Where to begin?

One of the great criticisms of the Holy Mystery of Crowning in the Byzantine Rite, by those in the West who witness the Liturgy, is often made about the very commencement of the Liturgy of the Crowning – the claim being that the Entrance is less ‘romantic’ than the Western tradition where the bride enters the Church accompanied by her father walking arm in arm down the aisle to the tune of Felix Mendelsohn. This criticism is at times also made by members of the Byzantine Rite who seek to incorporate the Tradition of the West into the Byzantine Crowning Liturgy. In contrast to the Western Tradition, the bride in the Byzantine Rite is seen to ‘merely’ walk to the Church door – where arriving at the threshold of the Church, she is met at the door, by her groom and the celebrant. The Byzantine Rite bride enters alone. But is this truly less romantic, less

poignant? There is a symbolic meaning to this entrance. Historically, in the West, the daughter was the property of her father, from birth, until the father ‘gave her away’, to another man, whose property she would then become. Hence in the West, the father leads the daughter to her future husband. In the Byzantine East, although the daily life of a woman may not have been any better than her Western counterpart; in the eyes of the Byzantine Liturgy, she was equal to her groom, and as such she came into the Church, ‘unaided’ and ‘unowned’ as his equal. The bride comes to the Church, in the Eastern tradition as the female lover seeks the object of her affection in *The Song of Songs* – not as a serf, not as a minion, nor accompanied by her parent, but as a woman seeking the life-long embrace and love of the man she has chosen to wed, and who has chosen to wed her. (cf. *The Song of Songs*, 3: 1-4). As the bride walks into the Church – every witness present understands that before them is a woman embarking freely, independently, on one of life’s great journeys – and one of the Church’s greatest Mysteries. She is a woman in love – she desires her groom – she stands firmly – she stands alone – until her hand is joined to his. The bride may indeed be nervous, and may indeed wish to recline on her father’s arm, but as per Byzantine Tradition, the love and determination in her heart should see her enter the Church independently, to take up her new status, as a new, freely chosen, interdependent creation.

The rings in the Byzantine Rite hold the self-same value in the East as they do in the West – but with a number of clarifications. The rings are placed on the ring-finger of the right hand rather than on the left-hand as in the West. The reason for this is that the right-hand is the symbol of Christ, seated at the right hand of the Father – and it is therefore the hand by which every Christian commends their life to God through the Signing of the Cross. Therefore in the Byzantine Rite, each time a spouse crosses themselves in prayer, they in fact recommit their vows to their partner in matrimony; their matrimonial promise is therefore integrated into their daily prayer life. In the West, the practice is that the ring is placed on the ring-finger of the left-hand – the rationale being that pagan tradition believed that through this finger ran a nerve directly to the lover’s heart.

Another important symbolic difference between the Byzantine Rite and the Roman Rite is that in the Byzantine East, it is the celebrant who places the ring on the fingers of the betrothed. The West emphasizes in the placing of the ring on the fingers by the betrothed

pair, one to the other, that the Sacrament is being administered by the bride and groom with the priest as the witness for the Church. In the East, the Mystery of Crowning can only be imparted by God. God has chosen the lovers by Providential act. God is therefore at the core of their love and their life together. Without the priestly celebrant, a Byzantine wedding cannot occur. Moreover in Byzantine Theology, only in the context of God – is marriage given its fullest meaning – for the love between spouses is completely actualized by both bride and groom loving each other *in* God, not only in the physical sense, but in the spiritual sense as well.

So now we leave the door of the Church in procession. Following the celebrant to the tetrapod, the bride and groom are given lighted candles symbolizing their faithfulness to their baptismal calling. The emphasis now is on the betrothed *couple* – and their decision to be married; the emphasis is not on the ‘bride’s big day’; for it is not the ‘bride’s day’ – it is the day of the bride *and* groom; hence they walk together in procession. The theology of the Church is clear here – the ceremony is important, but the ceremony must emphasize the reality of the importance of a partnership of the two. The wedding is the beginning of a marriage; and marriage is a union of two. Oftentimes we hear of the ‘*bridezilla*’, a modern colloquial term that refers to a bride bullishly intent on making the wedding all about her. In the Byzantine Liturgy, the liturgical structure emphasizes the marriage as a partnership, with the wedding the first symbol of this new partnership. The Ukrainian term for ‘wife’, *Дружина* (*Druzhyna*) accentuates this liturgical precept. The term *druzhyna* translates into: ‘*the person who walks beside you*’. Your *druzhyna* does not walk behind as a vassal, nor in front as a dictator – but they are your partner in everything, in the great journey and ‘Mystery’ of life, that God consecrates in marriage.

Let us consider the other symbols embossed within the Liturgy of the Mystery of Crowning. The hands of the couple are tied by the priest in his stole, and the couple are led around the tetrapod three times in what is known as the Dance of Isaiah. The married life thus begins with the first steps taken with Christ, with the priest symbolising Christ. Three times the couple walk around the tetrapod symbolising their journey with the Holy Trinity; a holy binding of the couple, into one spiritual and physical being. Above their heads, their attendants hold crowns, symbolising the regal nature of manhood and womanhood, and the Divine plan

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¹ *The Mystery of Crowning* is the specific phrase used by Byzantine Christians to refer to what is commonly known in Western Catholicism as the Sacrament of Matrimony. The term ‘Sacraments’ are known in the Byzantine East as ‘Mysteries’. The focus in Byzantine Christianity is on a ‘mystery’ that the human person is invited by God to partake in. The use of the term ‘mystery’ emphasizes that the people partaking of the Grace-filled event can in no way fully understand what is occurring, but that they understand that God in His great power and goodness is present, nurturing and guiding those who are gathered.

Ukrainian Basilians Celebrate



The origins of the Ukrainian Basilian Order as we know it today are found in 1617. Various independent monasteries were united into a single religious congregation which was called the Order of St. Basil the Great (OSBM). St. Josaphat and Metropolitan Joseph Rutsky were the bishops who lead this reform 400 years ago. This year the Basilian Order is celebrating its 400th anniversary. Bishop Peter Stasiuk, while on a recent Catechetical visit to Brazil, attended the Basilian Order's Brazilian celebration in Iracema in the state of Santa Catarina. This year also marks the 120 year anniversary of the arrival of the Basilians to Brazil. Iracema was one of the first settlements where the priests and brothers worked. Basilians from across Brazil came for the celebrations as did a large crowd of Religious Sisters and lay people.

Bishop Peter in his address to those assembled said, "Today we thank God for the graces which have been bestowed on our church through the Order of St. Basil the Great. We can ask ourselves what would our Ukrainian church look like if the Basilians did not exist? What would the church in Brazil look like if they had not come to Brazil 120 years ago?

Would there even be a Ukrainian church today? St. Josaphat, a Basilian, worked to reunite our church with Rome in 1596. Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, another Basilian, lead our church through the difficult times at the beginning of the last century.

We have to remember the other Basilian Saints and Blessed. Over the last 400 years, hundreds, if not thousands of priests, bishops, brothers served the church faithfully. They opened schools and seminaries. They built printing presses and served in many parishes. They sent a large number of their very best missionaries to Brazil and also to Argentina, Canada, the United States, and other places. What would our church look like today if this did not happen?

Today we must also remember the work of the Basilians in creating, either alone, or with others, Religious Women's Orders which have also served as missionaries in our church. Among these are the Basilian Sisters, the Sisters of Mary Immaculate, the Sisters of St. Ann, the Sisters of St. Joseph and, of course, the lay Institutes of Catechists who are so prominent in South America and now in other places. What would our church look like without these religious vocations?

As we mark these anniversaries, we must, in thanks giving, pray for new religious vocations to the Basilians, to all the women religious, and priests in Brazil and around the world.

When we look at the Basilians, we can be assured that God loves our Ukrainian Catholic Church and that He will never abandon it."



of sexuality and family life. The couple are crowned the king and queen of their new home and family. They represent both in a physical and spiritual sense all humanity - male and female, and the potential for family life, in conjugal love, a family if not Graced from their loins, then a family specifically to assist their community, by their service and witness to others. The crowns show that the couple belong to a royal priesthood as symbolized by their hands enveloped in the priest's stole. When the couple take their vows in the Byzantine East they do so with their bound hands resting on the open Gospels. The vows they both speak are the same, calling on the Holy Trinity as a witness. The couple then drink from the chalice, the Common Cup, each partaking of the cup three times, drinking the contents of the wine to the last drop, a prefigurement not only of the Blood of Christ and sharing in His sacrifice - but also of the bond of marriage shared with fidelity, until the contents of this life are over; consuming equally both life's joys and sorrows. The Common Cup is only shared by the couple, as only they are partakers of the chaste promise, the vow now made, to one another, and to God, and ever sacred.

As the Church is both ancient and new; ancient in the sense that the Liturgy was designed before our era, but new in that we live in the contemporary world; in order to appreciate the full meaning of what the Church celebrates in the Liturgy, we need to come to understand the language She uses through symbolism. For it is only through symbolism that we can ever hope to intellectually grasp some of the Divine Nature of the Hidden God; and it is only through the Liturgy, and the Holy Mysteries thereof, that we can hope to partake of this same God, in a manner so profound, that although we *experience* His grace, we cannot *understand* Him completely. For what remains in essence in this world, is a human being gazing at, and being embraced by a Divine and Life-Giving Mystery, and touching the face of God, through the Mysteries He has left us in His Church.

UCWLA announced collection for the poor, as many turn out to hear Father Bob Maguire speak



Ukrainian Catholic Women's League Australia Melbourne Branch (UCWLA) announced that this year they are undertaking another collection for the poor and homeless of Melbourne.

On August 11, Father Bob Maguire was a special guest at our Café Trembita in North Melbourne. Many members of the parish came to listen to him speak, he was very inspiring. He spoke about his vision and dreams for his Foundation and helping

the poor and less fortunate of Melbourne. If you would like to contribute to his foundation and help the less fortunate, you can do so by donating canned goods and dried foods. UCWLA is collecting foods and will sort and deliver them to the warehouse of the Father Bob Maguire Foundation.

The donations can be dropped off at Café Trembita on Sundays and the collection will continue until mid-September.

For further information please contact Hania Polatajko (9336-3889) or other League committee members

Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Australia is an organisation that embraces Ukrainian Catholic Women in faith and friendship, where they can embrace their God given vocation, share their talents and make a sincere gift of self to others.



PARISH AGM 2017

As a past president of our parish I thought it would be good to report on our AGM meeting on August 5, 2017 and to raise some issues that some of us are not aware of.

The current President Mr. Vasyl Mychajlyk reported on the last years events and Mr. Michael Moravski our treasurer pasted the dim view of our dwindling finances.

Mr. Mychajlyk thanked a number of people for their efforts this year. These people worked voluntarily and spent a lot of time in helping our parish during the year at no cost to us. He thanked Mr. Michael Kohut who spent a long anguishing battle to ensure the scaffolding went up, that it would come down, the correct paint was being used and consulted with Mr. David Wells, (once again also generously donated his time) an engineer, to ensure all the leaks were fixed, that the insurance company had all the possible claims applicable - a massive task.

I remember either the priests or Bishop Peter bringing to attention the water leaking into the church during a windy wet Melbourne day and Mr. Kohut would follow through to find the impossible starting point of the flow. What about the asbestos in the roof another hold up and then the height and weight of the scaffolding which needed special applications and approvals. Every day meant extra dollars for scaffolding and extra headaches for Mr. Kohut and Mr. Wells.

Now the outside is done but we need to start the inside, this will happen shortly but at least the insurance company is covering the inside as this is regarded as water damage and not movement. Thank God that we use Catholic Church Insurances as they have been looking after us as we could have got a flat no considering that not all the outside recommendations were completed.

One of our major income sources are the rents we receive from our houses around our church. Due to lack of finances we have to some degree failed to maintain these houses properly and now we have Mr. Stefan Kohut brother of Michael supervising the maintenance of these houses and planning the future

maintenance, which will hopefully get us to a certain standard as rents near our church are premium rents and we cannot expect premium rents for dilapidated properties.

Mr. Stefan Kohut has also put up with a lot of complaints and abuse from renters for some misunderstandings and miscommunications. Ever had a phone call at 10pm at night from an irate drunken renter? Mr. Stefan has!

Our children, our future, are always looked after by our nuns, and they as nuns go out of their way to ensure their first reconciliation and communion is perfectly organised. Special masses when required are always well attended and it's a shame that this does not happen every week. From children to our youth and here is where we have had major issues; getting our youth organised and involved in our parish. We have high hopes that a newly appointed leader group will be able to reverse this trend and we may see some benefits in the very near future.

Our cooking families The Laholats and the Kocajs do a great job most Sundays by preparing and serving the parishioners with good Ukrainian tucker at reasonable prices. It is a real Sunday gathering after our liturgies to get our families together and sit with our friends enjoying a joyous meal and conversation, sometimes broken by welcoming visitors from various parts of the world or just singing Mnohaya Lita for a birthday or anniversary etc. Some Sundays are poorly attended and we know both families are losing money in the process but we can only hope that the good days cover these bad days.

Mr. Mychajlyk also thanked Mrs. Ivanka Figurek and his own wife who gladly cleaned kitchens, helped during functions and were very involved in our market days etc.

Gigs shop is thriving and varenyky are the biggest seller followed by hrachka (buck wheat). The shop now carries cheese, smallgoods, herrings from Ukraine and many other lines that people are able to browse and buy. My thanks to all that help in the shop as all profits go to the church and no person is paid or derives an income from our little shop. My thanks go to Mr. NICK CKUJ, MR. ROMAN ZACHARIAK WHO BOTH HAVE NOT HAD THE BEST OF HEALTH BUT WERE PREPARED TO WORK AND TRY AND DO THEIR UTMOST. MY SINCERE THANKS TO THEM BOTH.

Also thanks to Olga Hawryszko who helps on odd occasions and helps with raffles.

Our ladies group have had some great evenings and Mrs. Anna Polatajko and her group are certainly congratulated for their efforts and results over the year.

We need to thank the parishioners who gladly come along to clean the gardens and trees etc before Easter and Christmas, particularly the dads and mums from our Ukrainian Saturday school.

We need to thank our Icon group led by Sister Maria Moravski who keep on producing some beautiful, sacred icons.

Two people who sat in the corner of the hall near the lift were the late Mr. Kmejt and Mrs. Lida Dzish, this couple were there week after week collecting donations booking hall hires, church hires, special donations etc. The work was enormous but both have been dedicated members of our parish who voluntarily gave up their time every Sunday to serve our church. Mr Kmejt was involved since the purchase of the land to build our church, his love for the Ukrainian Church and its life are exemplary for all of us to follow.

We need people to replace the likes of Mr. Kmejt, these kinds of people are hard to find.

Our parish must thank Bishop Peter our priests, our nuns and our Deacons. We as a parish are struggling to have what we need with a shortage of religious particularly priests to serve our parish. As you know we have appointed Very Rev. Fr. Brian Kelty as Administrator of our Parish. Fr. Kelty has done an excellent job to run the parish but when you are short of priests it makes it very hard to christen children, marry people, bury people and visit them in hospital or home, you don't get the time. We are sure that Fr. Brian would love more assistance but there is a lack of suitable candidates. Some young priests have not the disciplines of the old style and their unsuitability and lack of dedication has caused our parish some headaches.

Over the last few months we have seen the general trickling in of new young people from Ukraine and we must thank Mr. Felix Figurek for his efforts in organising a monthly gathering of these newly arrived persons. It gives them a sense of belonging, a sense of friendship and hopefully a plant to get them to church most Sundays.

Mr. Mychajlyk also thanked Mr. Victor Pilgun who volunteered time and equipment to the church for us

to be able to direct telecast our main service every Sunday. This service now allows our elderly, our sick and even vacationing parishioners to tune in to a direct telecast every Sunday. We can even telecast funerals for transmission to family members anywhere in the world whether it be Ukraine, Asia, Europe.

The parish is also grateful to Mr. Tony Mollina for his services in the IT field. He once again volunteers his time and effort to help us in trying times and mostly without charge.

Mr. Mychajlyk also thanked the other members of the committee for attending the meetings and contributing to discussions.

Mr. S. Romaniw who had other duties nationally and internationally but still made the effort and always contributed with ideas or contacts, Mr. And Mrs. Herczaniwski for their efforts in helping in the museum and counting of cash, Ms Vera Zanko who has helped at functions and attended meetings, Mr and Mrs. Taras Kret who attend meetings and help whenever asked. Mrs. Tekla Jaworski who works tirelessly at functions, such as our feast day and attends funerals on behalf of our parish to pay final respects. She is also involved in other parish matters and still has time to sing in the choir.

We must thank our Cathedral choir, its leader Mr. Holovko. We are very lucky to have such a beautiful professional team who would be welcome in any part of the world to sing at any Ukrainian liturgy.

Unfortunately, we are a poor parish due to our status and with the passing of many of our members, donations involvement etc has become a major problem. In many cases, we see people only once a year, that is at Paska, we only wish that more of our parishioners would attend the church and involve themselves and make it a happier meeting place for everyone. It is a shame to attend a concert and find our parishioners attending these concerts and not attending our church services where we could discuss old times over a plate of varenyky or holubtsi.

The election of our committee was quick without problems we have ended up with the same committee but short of a few who could not commit. The meeting ended with a prayer and once again the new year started for the elected dedicated committee.

Written by Eugene (Gigs) Hawryszko

Annual Report of the Parish Administrator

According to the statutes the Parish Priest is appointed by the Bishop to provide pastoral care for the parish. This task is threefold: preaching the word of God; the celebration of the Divine Liturgy; and the function of leading the parish community. In the last instance canon law says, "Being a servant for all the sheep, he is to foster the growth of Christian life both in individual members of the Christian faithful and in their associations, especially those directed to apostolate and in the entire parish community." This is a tall order which requires the efforts of more than

one person. Therefore the pastor (parish priest) is directed "to take measures so that the Christian faithful offer assistance in the works of the apostolate."

May I make the challenge clearer by referring to recent demographics. Over the last 12-month period in the cathedral parish we have conducted 46 funerals, 24 baptisms and 4 weddings. Annually we celebrate solemn communions, but on any given Sunday about 250 people attend Divine Liturgy at 3 different liturgies. Any reading of these statistics leads to the conclusion that we are not in a situation of

growth. The truth is quite the contrary. We are losing many of the elderly who were our founding fathers and mothers. Our rate of baptisms is insufficient to sustain present numbers when you consider that very few of the families who present their children for baptism continue to attend church regularly. In order to address this situation, we need to change our approach radically. Pope Francis tells us very directly: "In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples." He reinforces his message in the following words: "Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in

Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are "disciples" and "missionaries", but rather that we are always 'missionary disciples'".

What do these thoughts mean for us? It is our task as parishioners and members of the parish council to become "missionary disciples." We must deepen our faith. We must be first and foremost followers of Jesus Christ. To do this we must be generous in our outreach to others. Above all else we must be prayerful people. My prayer is: May God bless you one and all and inspire you to commit yourselves to missionary discipleship.

Written by Fr Brian Kelty

Ukrainian World Congress President Eugene Czolij Visits Australia



The Ukrainian World Congress (UWC) is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2017.

A wide international program is well underway which includes Conferences, UWC President and Executive Member visits to countries around the world, an exciting program in Kyiv and L'viv in the last two week of August 2017.

As part of these celebrations the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO) invited UWC President Eugene Czolij to Australia. He arrived with wife Anna at the start of August after visiting the New Zealand community and spent 10 days in Australia visiting communities and holding talks with Government officials and addressing audiences in our Universities.

The UWC originally named World Congress of Free Ukrainians up to 1991 is the international organisation representing Ukrainian in the diaspora – The UWC estimates about 20,000,000 Ukrainians live outside of Ukraine and the UWC has members in 53 countries.

The first President of WCFU Rev Father Kushnir articulated its role as follows: *We document to the world an unshakable will of the Ukrainian people to restore its independence and We unite and reign in the strength of Ukrainians and harness to provide organic cooperation. We pave the way to the strengthening and the development of all areas of the life of the Ukrainian community in the free world.*

In more recent times the UWC has expressed the following; *The Ukrainian World Congress has always been the voice of the global Ukrainian community in support of Ukraine and in defence of the rights of Ukrainians wherever they may live.*

"Whilst we may have different views, opinions and ways of operating in our

communities – being united under a banner of solidarity, being able to distinguish primary from secondary issues, setting common goals and priorities are very important if we as communities are to continue to grow and be effective conduits in supporting Ukraine. The UWC and its members provide this important platform" AFUO Chair and Secretary General Stefan Romaniw said during the Melbourne Banquet on August 12.

The AFUO planned a hectic pace for the visit of the UWC President and facilitated a range of community and high level Government meetings.

The Message

- UWC President Eugene Czolij delivered a very consistent message at all meetings;
- That in communities when there are issues let us all remember that there are young men and women dying in battle with Russian aggressors in Eastern Ukraine -that has to be the focus.
- Russian aggression continues and this is a war of values and principles and the West and its allies have a call to make in supporting Ukraine today, before Putin's march further into Ukraine will lead to a much worse situation for the international community
- Russian propaganda and disinformation continues. Russia spends over \$1.4billion in this space of disinformation according to Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs of the US Department of State Benjamin Ziff
- There are many ways we can counter this – starting with ourselves
- As of the second quarter of 2017, Facebook had 2 billion monthly active users- We should our Facebook pages to promote Ukraine's situation and to combat the Russian disinformation
- Ukraine is reforming – There are good

news stories , however Russia continues to try and influence the world that Ukraine is not worth supporting

- Ukraine is getting on with life – however tough it is-developing the economy and fighting a war
- Ukraine has not purchases Russian gas since 2015. The usage of Gas in Ukatrine is down by 35%
- Ukraine is obtaining its gas from Slovakia, Poland and other places. It is no longer reliant on Russia.

Economic growth

- The economy recovered modestly by 2.3 percent in 2016, with a bumper agriculture harvest leading to stronger growth of 4.8 percent in the fourth quarter. Decisive reforms in the face of unprecedented shocks in 2014 and 2015 helped to stabilize confidence
- The prediction is 3.5% growth in 2018 and 4% in 2019
- Keep in mind there is war Ukraine is fighting, taking over from Yanukovich, who left almost nothing in the bank
- Legal reform, fighting of corruption. The introduction of E Declarations has been master stroke with over 100 000 Government officials and bureaucrats including the President, PM, Ministers and others completing the declarations
- 75 senior officials are being prosecuted for corruption – This will take time as evidence is being gathered – A far better system than trial by telephone – with some high ranking official, calling a judge and scripting the verdict.

The Ukrainian diaspora has played major role in assisting with reforms

- The UWC has been active in supporting soldiers and volunteers through the *Patriot Defense* program. Over 30,000 soldiers and volunteers trained in

basic first aid and are receiving over 25, 000 First Aid Kits. A program coordinated by Uliana Suprun, then UWC Humanitarian Director, now acting Minister for Health. Minister Suprun has taken on the pharmaceutical mafia and now all pharmaceuticals are purchased through tender through 4-5 major reputable international sources

- Currently, such organizations as UNDP, UNICEF, Crown Agents are involved in the process
- In meeting with Australian Government officials the UWC President acknowledged Australia's support for Ukraine, applauded Australia for holding fast on sanctions and called on the Government to continue to support Ukraine
- At each opportunity, the request for Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to consider reciprocating President Poroshenko's visit to Australia by visiting Ukraine was raised
- Having Australian support, a visit by the PM would certainly lift the spirits of Ukraine
- Australia is held in high regard now, a visit would solidify and strengthen the friendship.

These were the thrust of messages conveyed at each opportunity – community town hall meetings, University presentations and meeting with Government officials – A strong consistent message developed by UWC for its leadership to deliver

The itinerary August 1

Having arrived early that day, the first meeting in the afternoon was held in Victoria. UWC President Mr Czolij and UWC Secretary General and AFUO Chairman Stefan Romaniw met with

the Speaker of the Victorian Parliament the Hon Colin Brooks and President of the Legislative Council the Hon Bruce Atkinson.

That evening a welcoming dinner was hosted by the AFUO with members of the AFUO Committee and AFUO member organisations based in Melbourne.

August 2-3 – Perth

Ukrainian Association of WA President Mykola Mowczan greeted the UWC President and his wife at a public community function.

He also met with Rev Fr Ihor Holovko Parish priest of the Ukrainian Catholic Church of St John the Baptist and met visited the Ukrainian Orthodox Parish of St Nicholas

August 4 – Adelaide

Here the UWC president was met by Association of Ukrainians in South Australia President Frank Fursenko. This was followed by a visit to the Museum established and administered by the Ukrainian Women's Association of South Australia «Союз Українок Південної Австралії », Head of the Women's Association Irena Boujenko provided a tour of the museum.

Mr Czolij then visited the Ukrainian Community Centre owned by the Association of Ukrainians in South Australia Inc, His visit included the Ukrainian language school, and dance classes run by Yevshan Ukrainian Arts for children aged 3 to 15.

Mr Czolij addressed the Ukrainian community of Adelaide at a meeting organized by the Association of Ukrainians in South Australia headed by “Frank” Jaroslaw Fursenko. The short documentary film “50 years of the Ukrainian World Congress” was screening before Eugene Czolij's address to the community. After

the address, they were entertained by local Ukrainian musicians and the Volya Ukrainian Dance Ensemble.

August 5-6 – Sydney

Ukrainian Council of NSW Marko Shumsky met the UWC President.

Mr Czolij visited the Ukrainian Central School of Knyahynia Olhy and met with Association of Ukrainians in Sydney, President Andrij Bilinsky.

This was followed by a visit to the Parish school of St Andrews and met with Odarka Brecko Principal, teachers and students.

Meetings

Rev Fr Symon Ckuj Parish Priest and Vicar general of the Eparchy Wo Wytowych Chair of the Karpaty Foundation and President of the Parish Council of the Orthodox Parish

Church on Sunday, Liturgy at St Andrews followed by a meeting with CYM Members during their monthly gathering

The Ukrainian Council of NSW hosted a lunch – benket

August 7 – Canberra

Meeting with the Ambassador of Ukraine H.E. Mykola Kulinich.

Together with the Ambassador and UWC Secretary General and AFUO Chairman Stefan Romaniw met with The Speaker of the Parliament the Hon Smith, Senator the Hon Zed Seselja, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs Representing PM

Visit to Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St Nicholas Centre and Museum and meeting with Rev Michael Solomon the Head of the UAOC Consistorial.

The AFUO organised an evening event to meet with the Rev Fr Wally Kalinetski from Ukraine Greek Catholic Church, Fr Michael Solomko, community leaders Peter Lutak and Embassy staff.

August 8 – Brisbane

Met by the Queensland Ukrainian Association President Stephan Chomyn, the UWC President was shown some of the sites of Brisbane and was most impressed in hearing the impact of Mr Roman Pavlyshyn a community stalwart of the Queensland Ukrainian community and his work in development of Brisbane in his professional capacity as a State bureaucrat.

An evening community meeting hosted by UAQ in the newly acquitted community centre, brought members together to hear the UWC President's presentation.

August 9 – Canberra

Back to Canberra and together with Ambassador of Ukraine M.E. Mykola Kulinich and UWC Secretary General and AFUO Chairman Stefan Romaniw held meeting with Murray Hansen Chief of Staff to the Minister for Foreign affairs, Julie Bishop, Kevin McGee Assistant Secretary for Northern, Southern & Eastern Europe, Chris Crewther MP - Chair Australia -Ukraine Parliamentary group and Senator Catryna Bilyk Deputy Chair.

This was followed by a presentation at the ANU – Centre of European Studies – which included a lively discussion. Thanks to Dr Sonia Mycak for her facilitation and organisation

August 10 – Melbourne

The UWC President and UWC Secretary General and AFUO Chairman Stefan Romaniw met with The Hon Robin Scott Victorian Minister for Finance and Multicultural Affairs.

In the evening the UWC President gave a Presentation at Monash University – ZeroV Centre organised by Prof Marko Pavlyshyn and facilitated by Alessandro.

August 11 – Hobart

Association of Ukrainian in Tasmanian

President Marina Ladaniwskyj organised an exciting program with lunchtime meetings followed by a dinner meeting to allow as many people access to hearing the UWC President.

August 12 – Melbourne

Visit to Ukrainian Parish School of Metropolitan Andrij Sheptytsky in North Melbourne – meeting students, school leadership –Marijka Cikoja and Maria Van der Werf. Meeting with Bishop Peter Stasiuk, who is also a UWC Board member

Evening Benket organised by the AFUO and the Association of Ukrainian in Victoria saw close to 200 people attend the Dinner Banquet – The event was enriched with performances by CYM Verchovyna Dance Ensemble, Rodyna Singing ensemble, Markyan Melnychenko and his mother Oksana gave a riveting rendition and then a finale by Lehenda Dance Group.

Sunday August 13 –Melbourne

Liturgy as Sts Peter and Paul's Cathedral, visit to Holodomor Monument at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church –Protection of Virgin Mary.

Before stepping on the plane to Singapore there was quick trip to the MCG to see part of an Australian Rules Football game, a beer and a pie with sauce to complete the visit.

Upon leaving Australia both the UWC President and his wife expressed their deepest gratitude to all who made their stay so warm, welcoming and friendly and for organising a range of meetings with high level officials.

“Australia will stay in our minds and hearts for ever – We are blessed in having had this opportunity. We acknowledge the hard work of many to make this a vibrant community,” Mr Czolij said.

Australia – Ukraine Parliamentary Group Reactivated

August 11, 2017

The Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO) welcomes the reactivation of the Australia –Ukraine Parliamentary Group (AUPG) and looks forward to working with the group and its leaders Chris Crewther MP as Chair and Senator Catryna Bilyk as Deputy Chair.

The AFUO has been encouraging Members of the Federal Parliament to formalise the Group in the life of the 45th Parliament. The AFUO considers the AUPG as a major vehicle in promoting a strong and positive working relationship between the Australia and Ukraine.

30 Members of Parliament have joined the group with others indicating they intend to join. Chair Chris Crewther MP and his office have been very active in having the group formed.

“This is a great opportunity to strengthen ties between Australia and Ukraine”, Mr

Crewther said.

“Plans for cooperation and establishing a strategic plan have been discussed in meetings with the Chair and Deputy Chair.”

The AFUO is now working with the leadership group and the office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to officially launch the current AUPG at Parliament House in the near future.

“The Group starts its work at a very opportune time. The news of its formation is certainly a shot in the arm for Australia - Ukraine relations and the strengthening of bilateral relations,” AFUO Chairman Stefan Romaniw OAM said today

“Its formation is seen as another bow to Australia's support for Ukraine in its reform process and in protecting the integrity of its borders”.

The appointing of Australia's

Ambassador - designate to Ukraine Ms Melissa O'Rourke, who will take up her post in September, and the formation of the AUPG gives impetus for an increased level of activity,” Mr Romaniw said.

In a meeting earlier this week with Speaker of the House the Hon. Tony Smith MP, who is a member of the Group, the Speaker highlighted the importance of Parliamentary Groups and offered his support in working with the AUPG.

The AFUO in cooperation with the Embassy of Ukraine hope to hold a briefing session for members of the Group to provide an update on the situation in Ukraine and outline proposals for ongoing work.

AFUO's Chairman will be travelling to Ukraine next week and will meet with the leadership of the Ukraine – Australia Parliamentary Group (UAPG)

to discuss how the two groups can work in partnership.

The AFUO has initiated discussions with leaders of similar Parliamentary Groups in other Commonwealth countries to form loose alliances between groups. This will assist in the sharing of information and possibly lead to a more strategic approach in supporting Ukraine.

Last, what can you do as members of the Ukrainian community?! Please contact your local Member of the Federal Parliament /Senator, inform them of the AUPG and encourage them to join!

The Australia Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO) is the peak body for Ukrainians in Australia representing 22 Peak Ukrainian Organisations, and is a member of the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC).

Christian leaders united against assisted suicide bill

Published: August 1, 2017

The open letter rejects assisted suicide legislation (Unsplash)

Christian leaders in Victoria have penned an open letter to Premier Daniel Andrews, opposing the government's assisted suicide bill, Melbourne Catholic reports.

The letter, published in yesterday's Herald Sun, has seven signatories: Melbourne Archbishop Denis Hart; Greek Orthodox Bishop Ezekiel; Anglican Archbishop Philip Freier; Lutheran Bishop Lester Priebbenow; Syro-Malabar Eparchy Bishop Bosco Puthur; Ukrainian Eparchy of Sts Peter and Paul Bishop Peter Stasiuk; and Coptic Orthodox Bishop Suriel.

In the letter, the bishops state they "commend much of the work of the recent Victorian End-of-Life Choices Inquiry, which identified the need to improve the quality and accessibility of palliative care for all Victorians", however they "strongly reject the proposal to legalise assisted suicide and euthanasia in Victoria".

The letter calls for "better care – not killing" and says "government-endorsed suicide" would a conflicting message to society.

"Human dignity is honoured in living life, not in taking it. Even though an act of euthanasia or assisted suicide may be

motivated by a sense of compassion, true compassion motivates us to remain with those who are dying, understanding and supporting them through their time of need, rather than simply acceding to a request to be killed," the leaders state.

"It is right to seek to eliminate pain, but never right to eliminate people. Euthanasia and assisted suicide represent the abandonment of those who are in greatest need of our care and support."

The leaders say mistakes and abuse will be impossible to avoid with the proposed legislation.

"No 'safeguards' will ever guarantee that deaths under the proposed laws will be completely voluntary. There will always be a risk of error, fraud or coercion," the letter reads.

"Victoria abolished the death penalty because we recognised that in spite of our best efforts, our justice system could never guarantee that an innocent person would not be killed by mistake or by false evidence. The same is true of health care. Mistakes happen and the vulnerable are exploited. We ask you to consider especially the risks to those whose ability to speak up for themselves is limited by fear, disability, illness or old age."

<http://cathnews.com/home/jobs-list>

What Ukraine is fighting for

By Lubomyr Luciuk
08/01/2017

The Ukrainians know the their foes have no scruples when it comes to murdering women and children to further Moscow's ongoing campaign to destabilize Ukraine.

I'm not as good a runner as I used to be. This revelation came somewhere between the ninth and first floors of a murky, bomb-ravaged building located at the edge of no-man's land in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine.

I began scrambling downstairs after our sentinel, positioned nearby, yelled "run!" I did not ask why, or linger to consider how only minutes before we had inched up these very same stairs, stepping carefully in each other's footsteps to avoid setting off any booby-traps secreted to maim, mutilate, or murder anyone scouting this abandoned edifice. Children's toys, full bottles of alcohol and other seemingly innocuous household items can be the disguised agents of destruction, something I learned a few days earlier at the Ukrainian Armed Forces Demining Centre in Kamyanets-Podilsky. No matter. I ran for my life.

It was only after I got outside and turned a corner into the comparative safety of shadows behind the building that I was told a Russian tank had emerged from the distant rubble, maneuvering to take a shot. We didn't offer the enemy a chance for target practice.

What surprised me was that I experienced no fear. Instead I was quite resigned. Indeed the strongest emotion I had was a kind of desperate hope that I wouldn't do anything to endanger my companions, members of an elite Ukrainian military intelligence unit. So I was pleased when I got out of that ruin without failing my friends, even though I was quite winded, my big toes bruised badly despite the protection of combat boots. Like I said I'm not a runner anymore.

We moved to a nearby firing position, heavily sandbagged, from where my companions opened up at the enemy's front line. Crouching, I snapped a few photographs, including one of "Okun," the squad machine gunner. His pseudonym means "Perch." This troop regularly penetrates the enemy's front lines to gather intelligence and sow fear among the Russian invaders and their local collaborators. The latter are dismissively called "vatniks" after the padded jackets worn by the Russian military, and considered little more than a dull-witted breed of drunks and criminals, certainly no match for the professional Ukrainian soldiers who routinely best them on the battlefield.

Even so Ukrainian special forces soldiers

usually do not give their names or like to be photographed, to lessen the chance of the Russians targeting their loved ones, many of whom live close by in the Donetsk Oblast or a few hours away in Kharkiv. Ukrainian Spetsnaz groups have infiltrated the occupied territories right up to the Russian Federation's border. Their enemies do the same in the opposite direction. The Ukrainians know their foes have no scruples when it comes to murdering women and children to further Moscow's ongoing campaign to destabilize Ukraine.

As I questioned these troopers I learned many have been fighting since the Russians invaded in February 2014. For them this is not a civil war or "anti-terrorist operation," even if Kyiv's politicians pretend otherwise. Instead they see themselves as soldiers in a war of independence, struggling to secure Ukraine's proper place in Europe rather than allowing their homeland to be swallowed by a resuscitated Russian empire, as prescribed by Vladimir Putin, the KGB criminal in the Kremlin.

Since Ukraine's soldiers understand what they are fighting for their morale remains excellent. A Ukrainian Spetsnaz officer in Luhansk Oblast told me: "In early 2014 I just wanted to stay alive. By 2015-2016 I was fighting to recover occupied Ukrainian lands. Today I think of myself as a wolf. I know the boundaries of my territory. I do not want anyone else's. I know how to kill. And I believe every Ukrainian woman, whether a child, a mother, a wife, or a grandmother, is a woman I must protect.

"And so I will pursue the enemy until every one of them is killed or goes back where he came from. Not one of them will be allowed to occupy even a meter of Ukrainian land, except for those whose bodies will rot in our chornozem soil, fertilizing it as the corpses of all of the past invaders of Ukraine have done. There can be no quarter. We did not invade their country. They attacked ours. Now we will make them pay for it."

That credo comes with a price. A Russian sniper killed Okun the next day. He was 20, a volunteer who joined up in December 2015, an only son. When the news came I realized I had captured his last photograph. I made sure his mother got it. Her son, Maxim – for that was his name – died bravely in battle. Although I could not attend his funeral I believe this good young man rests in peace having sacrificed himself in a just war, defending Ukraine. There is a glory in that.

<http://www.jpost.com/printarticle.aspx?id=501359>

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