



Anthology of Writings
on St. Joseph Ukrainian
Byzantine Church

Compiled by Leyton Furlong

Introduction

As a part of my interest in Slavic history in Northwest Missouri, it's only natural that I took an interest in the St. Joseph Ukrainian Parish in town. The parish is somewhat of an oddity for rural Midwest Missouri. One would be forgiven for assuming it was an Eastern Orthodox Church, given its ethnographic context and doctrinal undertones. However, the Byzantine Catholic faith is fully in communion with Rome, albeit existing as a *sui iuris* church with a great deal of autonomy. This particular parish is especially interesting given its unique ethnic composition. In addition to Ukrainians, Romanians, Poles, Serbo-Croats, and Carpatho-Rusyns/Ruthenians also made up a significant portion of the congregation.

Now, a few notes on the Ruthenians. To oversimplify, the Ruthenians or Rusyns (not to be confused with Russians) and Ukrainians are two East Slavic peoples who both claim to trace their lineage to the Kievan Rus'. Until the early 20th century, the term Ruthenian was used to describe all East Slavic peoples on the fringes of the Russian and Austrian empires. Over time, these groups diverged as a result of Habsburg and Russian rule, geography, and emerging nationalist movements.

In St. Joseph, the Ukrainian population primarily hailed from Austria-Hungary in what would now be Ivano-Frankivsk and Horodok. The Ruthenian population in town consisted of Galician and Slovakian immigrants who had initially settled in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania before heading to Missouri.

In the case of the former, it is possible the first Ukrainians in town were a sub group (who may be considered a middle ground

between Ukrainians and Ruthenians according to some sociologists) known as the Hutsuls given their unique religious and geographic characteristics.

Most of the current-day congregation actually hail from families who came to America as displaced persons at the end of World War Two. I had spoken to several congregants back in 2024, and they all told me about the experience of their parents living through the Nazi Ostarbeiter forced labor program before their liberation. Initially, I had sought to make a short documentary about the history of the church, and I had interviewed some of the congregants (Irena Hasiak, Bodhan Schawinsky, and James Kowalewich, who I'm thankful for having the opportunity to speak to). However, I missed my deadline for completion, and have learned more about the church since that point. This anthology, therefore, is dedicated to the people of the St. Joseph Ukrainian Parish.

The documents compiled in this anthology were primarily located while I was browsing through the archives of the Catholic Diocese in Kansas City and the research room of the St. Joseph Museums. There are many typos in some of the writings, which I have intentionally left incomplete in order to reflect each article as it was initially written.

It is possible that I will publish an additional anthology should I locate more sources related to the topic. Initially, I was going to include some clips from Newspapers.com, but decided it would be best to only include written accounts and documents related to the church that may not be accessible (with the exception of the 2022 Newspress article).

Hopefully, this anthology will provide useful tools for researchers interested in St. Joseph history or a reference point for future generations.

Leyton Furlong

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History of St. Joseph's Ukrainian Parish

Zenon Shtohryn

This article is taken from St. Joseph's Ukrainian Catholic Church Short History by Zenon Michaelo Shtohryn, 1991, with minor revisions.

The origins of the church date back to 1910 when 20 families were brought from Horodok Jahailonsky, Galicia, for the purpose of founding a house of worship in St. Joseph. Heeding the new Ukrainian Bishop, Soter S. Ortynsky's call to gather the faithful, Rev. Ivan (John) Ostap of St. Louis began organizing the new parish on 1 September, 1911. The name was to be the "Church of St. Mary's Assumption." Fund raising events and sales were greatly aided by the 20 April, 1913 founding of the Zaporozhka Sich Chapter #335 of the Ruthenian National Union (later called the Ukrainian National Association). In addition to providing insurance and workers' benefits, the group was instrumental in founding and supporting the church. In fact, a stated goal of the U.N.A. was the establishment and support of the parish.

Members donated labor and money, and made loans, and gave time for maintenance and record keeping as trustees. Tithes were set in 1914 at one dollar per family and fifty cents per single person. One hundred fifteen names are recorded in the first marriage record book as donors pledging a set amount weekly for the priest's pay and expenses.

Two lots in the third addition to the city of St. Joseph were purchased 23 June, 1914, located at the corner of Virginia and Sherman Streets in South St. Joseph. The cost was \$1700, subject to a deed of trust for \$650, payable at \$9 per month. The name on the deed reads "Independent Ruthenian House Church," showing that the congregation kept control of the institution instead of allowing it to become an immediate possession of and giving control to the Philadelphia Eparchy.

This illustrates the incredible turbulence of the times, with Bishop Ortynsky trying to bring order to the faith in America and the continuous pressures brought to bear by more than half a dozen religious and political parties. In 1915 digging began on the hole that would be the basement. All of it was dug by hand, with every bucket of dirt carried out the same way. All labor was supplied by the parishioners. By 1916 enough structure was in place for services to be held inside. The first baptism was of Ivan Zanko on 10 March, 1917. Rev.. Joseph Dzendzera performed the service.

At 2:00 p.m., Sunday, 16 June, 1918, Rev. Walter Kopyczak of St. Louis, the Eparchy's delegate, Rev. Myron Danylovich, and the elder brethren of the church officially blessed the church. Rev. Paul Michalak of St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr Polish Catholic church assisted Rev. Kopyczak and societies of the church, such as Entre Nous, attended. Romanian, Serbian and Croatian groups also took part. Special lyrics were created for the blessing of the \$7000 church. It could accommodate 200 standing worshippers. A photographer, an immigrant Ukrainian Jew from Kharkiv named Isadore Frumhoff, recorded the congregation for posterity.

The basement was used very early to teach English and government so the immigrants could fit into American society and become citizens. People such as school teachers were hired to lead the classes. The church became an instant mecca for those wanting to learn. Poles, Romanians, Croations, and others enriched themselves. None were turned away.

The naturalization process was also a self-protective measure. Feelings against foreigners were at a peak and by WWI, anyone from the "Central Powers" region that had not declared an intention to naturalize before a certain date was legally labelled "enemy alien."

In October, 1916 a small bell was bought for the belfry and a collection taken for its baptism.

After the war a free Ukraine and the harsh economic conditions in St. Joseph caused many to leave for other cities (such as Pittsburgh) or to return to the Ukraine. On 31 May, 1920 Rev. Antin Melnyk joined Paul Hurecky and Elizabeth Kulchytsky in the first recorded wedding. A shortage of priests caused some, like the Rev./ Antin Czerepaniak, to come to St. Joseph from as far away as Winnipeg, Canada in the 1920s. Also during this time the church was taking on more shape and character.

During the decade of the 1920s an altar society, the Sodality of Our Lady was formed. Land was purchased for \$1750 on the same block as the church for a rectory. The interior of the

church was brightened by being painted. The talented pastor, Rev. Diomisiy Girecky, painted the walls, and carved or had carved angels for the tops of the side altars. This gave a finished, homey touch to God's house. Also during this time, pews, side altars, 2 angels with blue apparel, and the front of the choir loft were obtained from St. Stanislaus parish. On 10 June, 1923 another milestone gladdened the parish. The first religious instruction class of 17 children took their first holy Communion.

On 16 November, 1924, Rev. Antin Czerepaniak was presented with a 35 pound Gospel Book by the parishioners. The pastor recorded their names and the date in the handsomely wrought tome. After several brushes with false priests, it was decided to incorporate the church for 50 years. This act of 3 March, 1926 insured legal title of the church against takeover attempts by outsiders.

Between 1926 and 1931 four Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Magnificent stationed in St. Louis, taught Ukrainian and religious classes in St. Joseph. The precise dates are not known.

Rev. Joseph Dzendzera returned to St. Joseph in 1935 and published a small memorial booklet on the 25th anniversary of the parish, explaining the faith. The names of 20 families, evidently the congregation at the time, are listed.

On 10 January, 1938 the name of the church changed legally to the "Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. Joseph." This apparently was caused by the way the land record was filed by the Recorder of Deeds, in which it refers to "St. Joseph's Ukrainian Catholic Church."

With the beginning of WWII the first church bell was contributed to a scrap metal drive, probably in October, 1942. This allowed for the mounting of the larger and current bell, which was purchased sometime in the 1930s' and lay in the front yard of the church where children played on it. Other refinements included replacement of the pot bellied stove with a gas floor furnace.

In 1947 Rev. Jaroslaw Gabro, destined to become first bishop of the newly created Chicago Eparchy, became pastor of a changing, maturing flock.

The large postwar immigration also kept Rev. Dmytro Blazejowsky very busy. Meeting new arrivals, finding homes and getting jobs for them was a huge undertaking, and this was in addition to the usual tasks of pastoring the flock. It was a good thing he was young!

During the 1950s the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the children's Sodality of SS Peter and Paul were formed. The men formed the Brotherhood of Bishop Soter S. Ortynsky in 1953.

Rev. John Lazar, the next pastor, facilitated the 2 February, 1955 return to the fold of the Sugar Creek, Missouri congregation which had espoused Orthodoxy. This parish was taken on as a mission from St. Joseph.

The church continued changing through the years. The taller, more prominent onion dome gave way to the more modest round dome of today. The basement was finished, including the addition of a kitchen in place of a stage. Food was now prepared and stored where once Ukrainian plays were performed.

A new owner was another of the changes as it was decided the church property should be given to the Eparchy. The papers were prepared on 19 February, 1957.

Under the Eparchy interior changes were mandated. All statuary was removed and the altar renovated. A talented neighbor, Casper Erk, built the new altar and a plaque on the side of it lists the names of people who contributed money for the project.

From the original first Communion class of 17 in 1923, the numbers rose and fell until a peak of 77 students were instructed by Rev. Basil Benyo in 1945. Tragically he died 15 July, 1978 at the age of 71, and was buried at Mount Olivet Cemetery in St. Joseph. He was a stabilizing force during his 13 year stay and his passing was a great blow to the community.

When St. Stanislaus church was closed, parishioner John Bregin purchased several items and donated them to St. Joseph's so the holy articles could continue serving in the worship of God. Among the items were a red velvet cloth with gold fringe, 2 tall matching marble and brass candlesticks, and 2 short brass candlesticks, a processional cross kept at the front pew, and a wooden cross with corpus, which was placed on the confessional at the rear of the church. The Entre Nous club from St. Stanislaus parish elected to continue, and began meeting at St. Joseph's parish hall.

The cost of running the church was helped by various fund raising events over the years. Picnics, dinners and dances were so common in the 1950s that the church had a permanent beer license. Nearly every year a Ukrainian bake sale was a staple of the St. Joseph Museum Prairie View Festival, which was only recently discontinued (1991).

One of the larger events was held on 25 May, 1968 at the AFL-CIO Hall where an overcapacity crowd watched the children perform outstanding dance routines and sing popular Ukrainian songs.

The Millenium of Christianity in Ukraine was concelebrated at St. James Church on Sunday, 13 November, 1988. People from several surrounding states filled the church to capacity for this unique occasion. All agreed it brought the parish together as nothing else had. A dinner was held in the church basement afterwards. Among the outstanding features of St. Joseph church are the 6 beautiful stained glass windows of icon imagery. The church is unique in Missouri for having so many.

During the past few years the parishes in St. Joseph, Omaha and Lincoln, NE., have become closer. So close that some activities, such as the Millenium celebration were shared. In the hopes of making future events easier to manage, an enlarged and refurbished basement is being discussed.

This history is a bare bones collection of dates and facts, not so much a story of people from the founders to today's roughly 50 active members, that is just how the people have felt it should be. The church was and is many things, but mostly it is a visible symbol of and a monument to faith. It was not recorded, but the common thread linking the generations is that it is enough to be a Ukrainian Catholic worshipping God.

Addendum:

Pastors:

1911: Ivan Ostap

1916: Joseph Dzendzera

Letter from Zenon Shtohryn to Rev. Caldwell

Oct. 25, 1989

Dear Rev. Caldwell

I'm sorry I've taken so long to get these questions to you. I understand you spoke with my mother, Mrs. Stefania Shtohryn, since our phone conversation and she told you a little of what's been holding me up. Hopefully most of the worst is over and I can settle in again on this history!

Here are my list of questions about St. Stanislaus:

1. What was the relationship between the Polish church and the new Ukrainian church (roughly 1915-1920)? I understand there might have been friction because the new church was seen as competition.
2. Is there a first notation about our church or some other way to mark the official founding of the Ukrainian Catholic Church? We understand it was finished in 1917.
3. Were there any shared activities between the two parishes? I understand some Ukrainian children attended St. Stanislaus' School, but was there anything else? A shared service or wartime activities? April 21, 1917 was declared Ukrainian Day by Pres. Wilson to remember the suffering there. Perhaps the two churches combined forces to benefit
- 4.

the Polish-Ukrainian border areas? Possibly the same in World War II?

5. Is there any mention of the activities of the early Ukrainian priests? Rev. Ivan Ostap was the earliest organizer from St. Louis. He appeared in 1911, at least September of that year, and returned for years after. Rev. Joseph Dzendzera appeared 1917-1918. He then returned for 5 years in 1935 and printed a Memorial Book in 1935. It explained who we were and what the Ukrainian Rite consists of and its history.
6. Is anyone able to recognize these two priests? Do any photographs exist with these two priests in them that are captioned or noted? Are there any other of our priests recorded on film?
7. Did any Polish priests serve at any time at our church, or perform marriages, baptisms, funerals?
8. Are these priests Polish or are they mentioned: Rev. Antin Melnyk, Rev. Iwan Tyndyk, Rev. Nikon Romaniuk?
9. Our church acquired a bell in or around October, 1918. Could it have been purchased from St. Stanislaus or other Polish church here? It 27½ inches at the mouth, weighs about 400 pounds and was cast in 1894 by the Buckeye Bell Foundry.

10. We acquired another bell sometime later that sat in front of the church until it was donated in a World War II scrap metal drive. Do you have any word on this one?

Any other scrap of information you might come across would be greatly appreciated. I didn't know just how great a task writing our church history at this late date would be. One of possible sources I needed to speak with has died. Another I wanted to interview has since become so ill he's moved to Kansas City to be with family. His memory is now suspect. And so it continues.

Again, anything you might provide will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your efforts in advance!

Sincerely,

Zenon M. Shtohryn
422 East Kansas Ave.
St. Joseph, Missouri
64504

Letter from Tomasz Zbierski to Reverend Caldwell

Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!

Dear Father Caldwell:

As you know, I am writing a history of St. Joseph Ukrainian Catholic Church. Currently I am waiting for the parish school of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr who served in our parish school. Once I have that information everything will be in place.

Thank you for the letter from Zenon Shtohryn. I have the good fortune to know this family. Zenon is a very dedicated writer and even more dedicated son. Proud of his heritage, as we all are, I am positive that his work on the history of Saint Joseph Ukrainian parish will be excellent.

I would like to respond to the questions that he poses in his letter of October 25th.

1. The Polish Church was started in 1915 and 1920. These dates are significant. The Ukrainian parish was started when there was no Poland. Due to the partitions of our country, Poland had been erased from the map of Europe. Saint Stanislaus Parish was therefore not erected in competition but rather as a sign of hope. And while there might have been some friction between some individuals—as one could expect under any circumstances—it is important to keep in mind that the South End Poles came mostly from Galicia. Galicia was under the Austro-Hungarian section all Poles

and Ukrainians were truly brothers. In this particular favored neither group so there were no struggles among the peasants themselves.

2. The best way to get the actual date of the completion of Saint Josephs Church would be to contact the Chancery office for the Ukrainian diocese that resides here in Chicago. I would also suggest that Zenon look at the NATIONAL CATHOLIC DIRECTORY which has been published since the late 1800's. This book will give parish statistics for his home parish. It will list the name of the pastor, the number in Saturday school, etc. This work can be found in the reference sections of larger libraries. In our area I would suggest the library facility at Benedictine College in Atchison.
3. There seems to be little sharing on the parish level between the two parishes. I have a number of bulletins from St. Stanislaus. Ukrainian names are very infrequent at best. And while some children did attend Saint Stanislaus, the vast majority did attend Hosea School and/or Saint James. When the parish of Saint Joseph was closed, it seems that most of the people attended Saint James. I would like to point out though that there was inter-marriage between the two groups. My own grandmother was Ukrainian and married a Pole here. And as they chose to raise their family in the South End, as a matter of in the very house the Shtohryn family owns, indicates that such marriages were not discouraged or prejudiced against The composition of the neighborhood was mixed. There were no streets entirely Polish nor entirely Ukrainian. And again there were no streets as such it is as much sociological as it is

ethnic. There were no streets entirely Ukrainian by the local people.

I would like to point out that our parish did enjoy service conducted by the Ukrainian priests. Even our parishioners as many as 15 especially our women, did wake service in the Ukrainian as it is very beautiful and moving. And in recent times, the Entre Nous Club—for a while in the basement of Saint Stanislaus Parish—met for a time. This indicates that our people did work and live together in relative friendship.

4. I translated the baptismal register of Saint Joseph. I do not recall seeing the mention of any of the priests that Zenon lists. This is also significant. I think what it means is that during the time of the Sacraments until they could receive people deferred the reception for a fact that the Ukrainian children who attended their own Rite. I know with me we Polish children made ours at Saint Joseph—not Saint James—just as we made their First Communions at our own parish when it was yet open.
5. In the documentation that I have seen, I have never seen a picture of any of the Ukrainian priests.
6. This question is also answered by #4. It should be noted that Saint Joseph parish maintained a Saturday school. At this school the children were given instruction in their own language and customs and also sacramental preparation was also given. Saint Stanislaus of course had its own parish school so we did not have a Saturday school.

7. One point of confusion in our area was the calendar, the liturgical calendar. Because of a variance in the celebration of Easter sometimes there was some problem. But this came even more from the Irish priests at Saint James than from the Poles. It should also be pointed out that the Ukrainians were able to maintain a social hall and tavern, Lake and Michigan. There was even a cyrillic inscription pointing out that this was the Ukrainian Hall. This place seemed to be very special in the life of their community. It was a real gathering place for the and something that we did not have in the Polish community. I do know that Polish men were always welcomed in this hall for a shot or two, so it was a real social center for the area.

8. I do not know the history of the bells in question. My sources indicate the bell did not come for the Polish parish. What would be of real interest to open the cornerstone still in place at Saint Stanislaus Church and St. This would, without a doubt, give a clear picture of the South end at the of the church dedication.

The end of WWII there was a great deal of immigration. Many Poles and Ukrainians who had lived there just as long as my own family. There were Ukrainians. There were no distinctions. They were all Ukrainian clothes to Poles and, however, most groups helped their own simply because they knew the new immigrants participated in, and I have heard them, that some of the new Poles were usually dis-credited and no longer the other group. I mean, stories were of the Old World into the New wanted to bring that same time that normal times. They need to be kept in the New World. At the same time these seen as that.

And while there has been a history of problems between Poles and Ukrainians, it should also be noted that the most celebrated image of the Mother of God, the Matka Boska Czestochowska, came to Poland from Constantinople through the Ukraine. And while the officials of the Ukraine would not allow for the demonstrations of piety during the 1000 year celebration of Christianity in the Ukraine, the Bishops of Poland sponsored liturgical celebrations for this anniversary at Czestochowa.

When Saint Stanislaus was forced to close Msgr. Moriarty had an auction conducted at Saint Stanislaus. Mr. John Bregin, former sacristan at our parish, was able to acquire many of our liturgical items for the use of Saint Josephs Church. Our people were glad to see this. They wanted these items to still be used in the church setting. The large candlesticks at Saint Josephs, which once graced our altars, are still being used in the praise and worship of God. This is a symbol of the south end experience.

For while we were different people, people who came from similar though different backgrounds—we truly were Faith people---and we raised up churches in honor of Him who had done so much for us in bringing all of us to this wonderful new world.

Tomasz Zbierski

Byzantine Catholics at Sugar Creek, Mo.**By Brother Joseph Welschemeyer SM**

The sight of an "onion dome" atop the tower of St. Paul's Byzantine Catholic Church, 11411 Chicago St., Sugar Creek, Missouri, is a curious feature to many who notice the sight in suburban Jackson County. The church is one of five parishes in the State of Missouri, and the only one in metropolitan Kansas City which follow Eastern Christian worship traditions. These five parishes are under the jurisdiction of Byzantine Catholic bishops who head dioceses (eparches) alongside their fellow Roman Catholic bishops.

Traditionally, the domed cupolas were to be found on the Eastern Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox churches of eastern and central Europe. Immigrants of the Slavic countries brought the architectural form to the United States and here to the middle west.

Although the present parish was organized in 1911 at Sugar Creek, the cupola was added only two years ago (1984). In 1910 the Standard Oil Company began building an oil refinery at Sugar Creek, Mo. Among the workers which were brought in to work at the plant were ten (10) families who had emigrated to America from the area south of the Carpathian Mountains in Eastern Europe. This region, 'Sub-Carpathia' (Pod Karpatska) is today divided between Czechoslovakia and the USSR. In 1911, these people were designated by Catholic Church authorities as being "Ruthenians" or "Rusins", (sometimes mistaken as "Russians", their eastern relatives).

These ten families who resettled in western Missouri had previously belonged to St. Joseph Greek-Catholic (Ruthenian) Church in Gary, Indiana. Now in Missouri, the oil company donated land for these people so a church could be built. These first parishioners were unskilled workers and they had few financial resources. In 1911 a basement was dug and the subterranean hall was built for worship. Because the number of families was small, it was difficult to obtain the services of a full-time priest. It was mentioned that at first a priest was available, but he could not be kept because of the inability to support him.

In the native-homeland, the Sub-Carpathian district was part of a province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire ruled from Vienna, Austria. It was the authorities in Vienna which had termed these Byzantine Catholics as being "Greek Catholics". This was a misnomer as these peoples were neither Greek in ethnic background nor in language. They simply had followed the liturgical traditions of the Greek Church even after their union with the Roman Church at the Union of Uzhhorod in 1646. These traditions were continued at their new home in Sugar Creek. The Austrian authorities allowed their Slavic subjects the freedom to emigrate. In the eastern area of the Ukraine the government of the Russian Czars at St. Petersburg did not allow such freedom. Thus, many of these Europeans practiced Eastern Christianity. The majority in the Catholic Union, while a smaller number as Eastern Orthodox.

In the early 1920's additional immigrants arrived in the area. More of these persons were Orthodox in their allegiance. Since no Greek Catholic priest was available (except on

infrequent missionary visits) a Russian Orthodox priest from Kansas City, Kansas, was invited to serve on a once-a-month basis. Among the Eastern Catholics, the local congregation's trustees held title to the church property. Even after the building of the present church in July, 1925, the trustees kept the title to the land. The Orthodox priest from Kansas City, Kansas, only celebrated the Divine Liturgy, the parishioners governed the parish. At that time (1920's) many in the area as began referring to the parish as "the Russian Catholic Church".

Ukrainian Jurisdiction

Such circumstance continued from the late 1920's until 1955. At that time the trustees began negotiating with the Ukrainian Catholic priest at St. Joseph, Mo. to secure his priestly services on a weekly basis. On February 2, 1955, Fr. John Lazor received the parish back into the Catholic Church, and specifically the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of Philadelphia, PA. A mission was conducted and a reorganization of the parish took place according to the norms of Catholic Canon Law. The trustees were required to hand over the title of the land to the Bishop, Most Rev. Constantine Bohachevsky.

So it was that a parish, originally under Ruthenian jurisdiction, came under the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Diocese. The two ethnic groups are related, but their language varies. On February 2, 1965 Fr. Basil C. Benyo replaced Fr. Lazor as pastor. He too served the parish from his residence in St. Joseph, Mo. Having a Ukrainian pastor, more

Ukrainian-Americans in the metropolitan area began attending the church. An instruction class for the youth was organized.

Their preparation for admission to the Sacraments was in English and Ukrainian; for the Divine Liturgy was conducted in Ukrainian or Church Slavonic, not in Latin. (For those not familiar with the traditions of Eastern Catholics, it might seem unusual that Fr. Benyo was a married priest with a family. This practice was permitted by Eastern traditions). Fr. Benyo died on July 15, 1979 and was buried at St. Joseph, Mo.

Byzantine Ruthenian Jurisdiction

At one point some members of the Sugar Creek parish had left the Ukrainian parish. The core of the group formed a second Byzantine-Catholic Mission. In 1979 this group received a pastor in the person of Fr. Francis McGlynn, a Roman Catholic priest of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. He has special permission to celebrate the Liturgy in both the Roman and Byzantine Rites. At first this group met for worship at various sites. When the Ukrainian Diocese closed the church in 1984, arrangements were made by the Byzantine-Ruthenian Catholic Diocese of Parma, Ohio to take over the jurisdiction of the parish. This was done verbally in June, 1984, and officially in May, 1985. This transfer placed the jurisdiction under which the parish was originally founded in 1911.

Under the present pastor, the onion dome was added to the tower in 1984 and a new iconostasis was installed in the sanctuary. Ethnic background is no longer a factor in the parish membership, though some of the original families are still

represented. Average attendance is between 30 and 40 persons each Sunday.

April 15, 1986

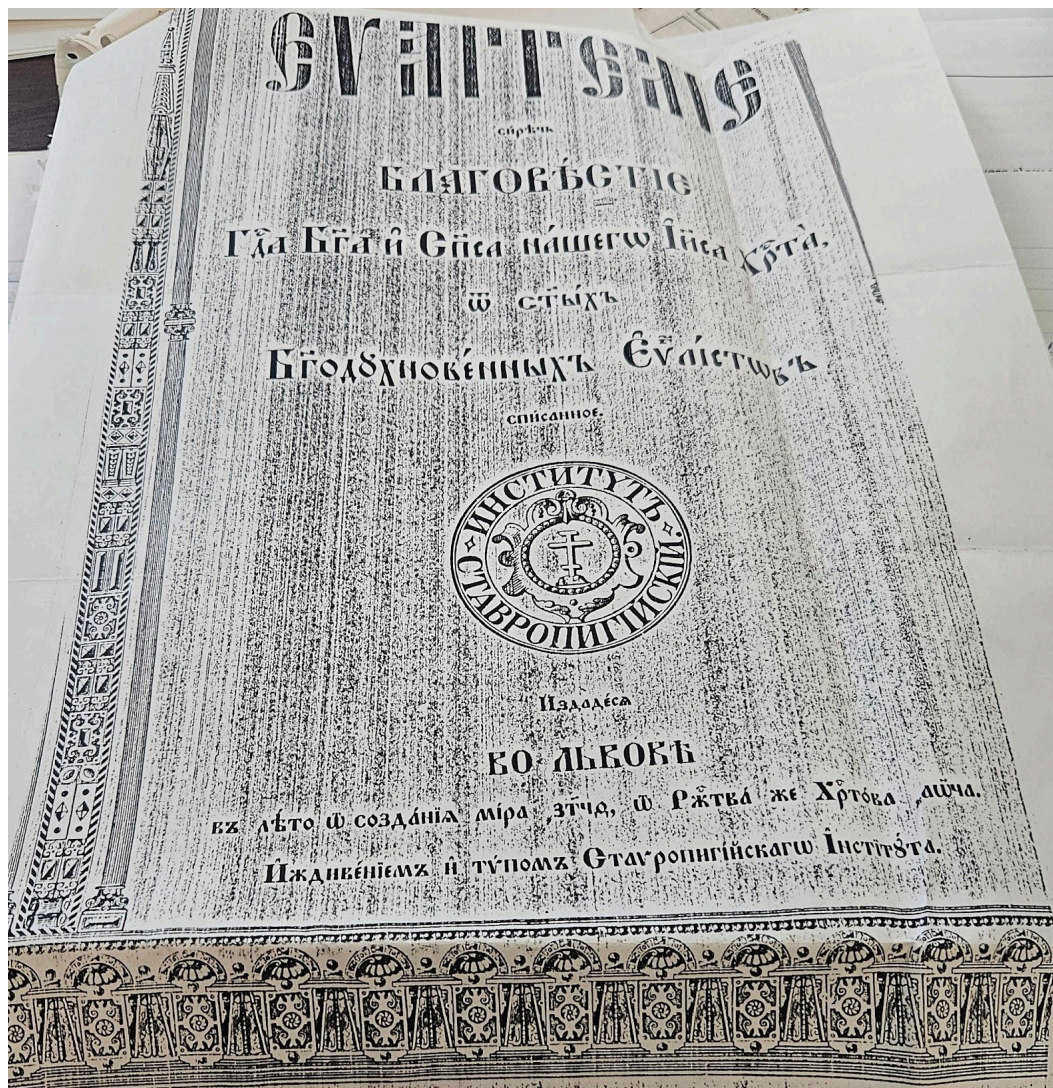
7700 South 43rd Street

Omaha, Nebraska 68147

(402) 734-2000

Compilation of Church Documents

Unknown Author



This is the title page to the Gospel book presented to our community in Sugarcreek on November 16, 1924. It is roughly 13" x 19". I photographed the titles thick on its end & at just 35 pounds it was very select and old Slavonic typewritten page—suitable for Holy Wedding. I believe the original type was put together in 1891 for the printing of this work.

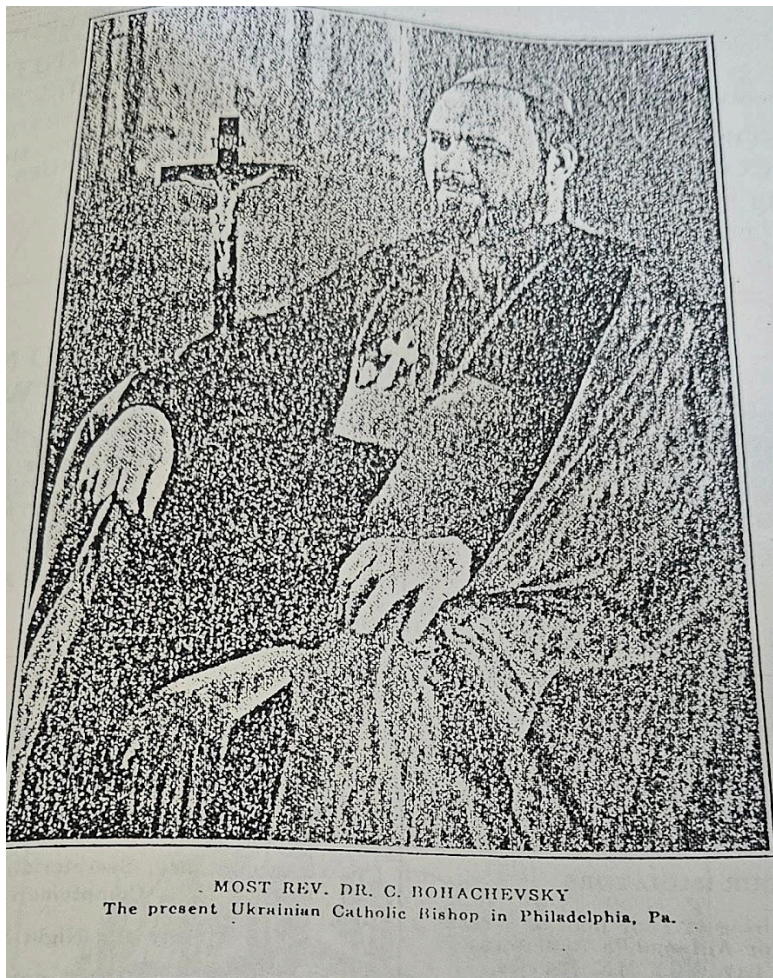
СНІЖКА АЛФАВЕТ (OLD SLAVONIC) AND
Церковна азбука в порівнянні з шкільною.

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It is to be remembered that the terms "Ruthenian" and "Ukrainian" are synonymous, interchangeable, though the former is applied more to the Ritual of the Catholic Ukrainians while the latter is used politically to denote the entire people and nationality nowadays. The Ukrainians are the original "Russians," not at all to be identified with the present day Russians or Moscovites, who invaded the Ukraine, adopted the ancient Greek term "Rossii," applicable to the Russini or Rutheni and simply usurped this word from the Ukrainians, to say it mildly, by order of the Moscovite Czar, Peter the Great. Since then, the Ukrainians have preferred to be known nationally

as the Ukrainians, an appellation as old as the name Rutheni (Rusini).

Until the end of the 16th Century, the modern "Russians" were known in history as the Moscovites only. Our best information, taken from the Catholic Encyclopedia, 1910 Edition VI, indicates that the first Austrian-Hungarian Ukrainians immigrated to America in 1861. During the years of 1869 to 1879 an average of 8,000 Ukrainians emigrated annually. According to the 1910 census there were a total of 350,000 Greek Catholics claiming Slavic birth.

In 1879, Ukrainians from Austria-Hungary and the Carpathian Mountain region settled in the state of Pennsylvania, and organized the first Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Shenandoah, Pa.

In 1884 the Galician Metropolitan Arch-Bishop, Cardinal Sylvester Sembratovich nominated the late Rev. Ivan Volansky to come to America to assume charge of the newly formed parish.

Divine Liturgy Attendance List, July 1951

1. MRS. CYBUCH
2. OLGA (?) ROCK
3. KATIE (?) ROCK
4. ROSIE (?)
5. MICHAEL ANDREICHUK (?)
6. IVAN JAKIMJAK
7. IRENE JAKIMJAK
8. JOSEPH CYBUCH
9. MR. PLEKAN
10. HUSBAND OF 69
11. DORIS MAZURKEVICH
12. MR. MAHOOK
13. SEMEN KOVALEVICH
14. FLYER "NICK SPREN"
15. MR. SANKO (?) ANNIE'S DAD
16. FEDOR STEN
17. MIKE HENKOSKI
18. MR. PETRO SUPERLA
19. MR. ZWADUK K. CALLAWAY'S DAD
20. MR. SCRITSKI (?)
21. MYKOSLAW SHTOHRYN
22. MRS. ROCK'S NEPHEW
23. DIMITRO BASZTA
24. BOHDAN MAZURKEVICH
25. STEPHAN YURKOVICH
26. RONNIE HENKOSKI
27. STEFANIA SCHAWINSKY
28. MRS. HALKA KOWALEWICH
29. ROMANIAN MIKE HERZEG

30. ROMANIAN NICK VID
31. MRS ROCK'S NEPHEW
32. IWAN (?) DANYLUK
33. SCHITSKY (?)
34. MR BOBELA
35. HRYTCH DMYTRIW
36. STEPHAN SCHAWINSKY
37. MRS. MARY MTZEN
38. MAHOOK DAUGHTER
39. MRS. MAHOOK
40. MRS. ANNE HENKOSKI
41. OLGA ROCK
42. MR. SEMEN HASTAK
43. ANDREICHUK GIRL
44. ANDREICHUK GIRL
45. LUCIA FOROVICH
46. BULVAN DAUGHTER
47. MRS. BULVAN
48. BULVAN DAUGHTER
49. BULVAN GRANDCHILD (?)
50. MITZAK
51. MR. FOROVICH
52. MR. DMITRO BULVAN
53. BULVAN DAUGHTER
54. BULVAN DAUGHTER
55. REV. SWYASCHUK
56. MRS. SANKO SUTTA
57. GENYU KOWALEWICH
58. JULIE YULKA SAGALA
59. ROMANIAN STEVE LUKIS
60. KATY CALLAWAY

61. GEORGE YURKU MTZEN
62. IWAN SOLEHA
63. WASYL YURKOVICH (MRS. HAMERA'S UNCLE)
64. TEODOR (?) SALONYCHIN
65. ROMANIAN JOHN MASAD
66. MRS. BLAKYTA (JUGGIE ALEX STEN'S STEPMOTHER)
67. MRS. CYBUCH
68. MRS. STEFANIA SHTOHRYN
69. WIFE OF 10
70. MRS. ANNA HANYA MALHEWSKI
71. MRS. SAGALA
72. MRS. RUZA ROSE ROCK
73. MR. IWAN MALHEWSKI
74. MRS. SALONYCHIN
75. MRS. KOLIBA
76. MRS. FOROVICH
77. MRS. HALKA MAZURKEVICH
78. REV. BLAZEDOWSKI
79. MRS. PALENGER ROMANIAN MOM OF OLGA DALKAN
80. ROMANIAN SOPHIE LUKIS
81. ROMANIAN MRS. HERZEG
82. ROMANIAN MRS. PETROVIC
83. MRS. ZWADUK'S MOTHER
84. ROMANIAN MRS. ANNA VID
85. MRS. CYNKO (SYNDER) MARI FIX'S MOTHER
86. MRS. DOROTHY DACHESHTN
87. MRS. KUBELANSKI
88. CYBUCH SON
89. PETRO SHTOHRYN
90. 69 and 10'S SON
91. ROMAN MALHEWSKI

- 92. MARIA MALHEWSKI
- 93. ROCK GRANDCHILD OR BOHDAN SCHAWINSKI
- 94. PETE BOBELA
- 95. STEVE BOBELA
- 96. FOROVICH
- 97. OXANA OKSANA DMYTERKO
- 98. LYBA SEMCHYSHYN
- 99. STEPHANO FOROVICH
- 100. MAHOOK
- 101. FRANCES SWARTZ
- 102. PETRO ROCK

(Handwritten note: 1974=10 students)

Letter from Joseph Welschmeyer

May 16, 1990

Dear Fr. Michael:

I received your note of May 8, 1990; forwarded here from Omaha, NE. Thank you for keeping me in mind. Briefly, in 1987 I did not renew my temporary vows after five years in the community. I do not regret for a moment the experience I gained from the community. I plan to be ordained to the diocesan priesthood at some future point.

Just now I am still living out a love-affair with teaching. This year has been a gem, in fact 9 out of 10 years of teaching have been excellent years. [the exception being last year-----bad body chemistry]

I intended to drop a note to the Sister in the archives/tribunal and ask her to include a bit about the two Byzantine parishes. Please do so if it was good of you to keep me in mind and to write. Please use any of the information. If she needs any information about jurisdiction, etc. she is welcome to write.

The stained glass windows in St. Joseph are unique in Missouri. Though the Greek Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas in St. Louis does have "one" stained glass window of Byzantine nature; [its patron saint]. I have a black & white photo if interested.

Yes, I am still actively researching the eight Byzantine rite parishes in the State of Missouri. I hope to put some files on

the manuscript this Summer. I will have it "privately" bound-----as I could never recover the costs of printing. But I think these persons deserve some mention on paper of their heritage in the State. I'm trying to arrange to present the materials I have in the form of slide shows to historical societies in a couple of locations....to flesh/flush out some additional information.

I met Zenon Shtoryn in person on Holy Thursday. I was in St. Joseph for the Divine Liturgy, and took slides of some of the effects of their background. [inclement, rainy weather was of little help!] He struck me as a solid person, knew religious & social history of his people. I even got a couple of color slides [copies] from the local News-Press on the Ukrainian Easter from 1989. If he ever gets his information on manuscript it will be worthwhile. His frustrations are UNDERSTANDABLE to me after stirring around in this group for the past 10 years. Use enclosed address label. If I can ever be of help contact me. Fr. Brendan Doyle is a fellow-faculty person here; he is judicial vicar at the local matrimonial tribunal. He is a friend of mine.

best regards,
Joe Welschmeyer

Divine Liturgy attendance list**Zenon Shtohryn, unknown date**

1. Vasyl Bobek (Bobik)
2. Michaello Babiechyk
3. Maxim Bodnar
4. Nikolai Chikaleshen
5. Anna Chikalo
6. Fedor Chikalo
7. Josef Gavenka
8. Paulo Gavenka
9. Vasil Hermon (Hershon)
10. Semen Hrinkiv
11. Hrihori Haslok
12. Petro Ivanchik
13. Fedor Ivanchik
14. Ivan Ivanchik
15. Ivan Ivasik
16. Michaello Karoputni
17. Nestor Kalahurka
18. Dmytro Kem (Kelp or Kelm)
19. Elisabeta Kulchetske
20. Ksenia Kalmenyak
21. Petro Kureitski
22. Hrese Kumperka
23. Ivan Kupheshke
24. Dmytro Koraminko
25. Fedor Kalahurka
26. Luka Kuraminka (Koraminka)

27. Petro Kasepyavi (Kasemyavi)
28. Andrei Kotchan
29. Fedor Kovai (Kovae)
30. Michaello Kulchitski
31. Ivan Kuleperka
32. Petro Kasepyavi
33. Petro Kuznyar
34. Petro Kushperka
35. Maria Koznovska (Kozovska)
36. Nikolai Kuleshchki
37. Paulo Hlyalik
38. Vasil Milyan
39. Iorhi Mizen
40. Ivan Melyavich
41. Fedor Taksheshen
42. Onusrt Totyihyu
43. John Mazur
44. Oleksa Shwetz
45. Oleksa Shepa
46. Ivan Shalanski
47. Senko Shwetz (Shwetz)
48. Ivan Shevhuk
49. Vasil Shilek
50. Proch Shwetz (Shwetz)

51. Nikolai Saehuk
52. Hrinko Tvalirney
53. Oleksa Pankiv (Hlarney)
54. Michaello Poiko
55. Dmytro Pankiv
56. Nikolai Pichak

57. Hrinko Plekan
58. Semen Pretulyak
59. Semen Pankiv
60. Fedor Pankiv
61. Dmytro Pichak
62. Ivan Palookh
63. Fedor Palookh
64. Petro Pichak
65. Vasil Khomik
66. Fedir (Fedor) Khomika
67. Petro Rak
68. Vavrek Ratushiney
69. Dmytro Pamily
70. Michelo (Michaello) Ribi
71. Vasil Solonechney
72. Ivan Solonechney
73. Vasil Senko
74. Fedor Sten
75. Yakiv Skritskiy
76. Fedor Solonechney
77. Ivan Sten
78. Fedor Solehia (Soleha)
79. Vasil Senaiko
80. Ivan Starukh
81. Oleksa Senko (Sanko)
82. Michaello Solonechney
83. Vasil Solonechney
84. Michaello Sarakun
85. Michaello Seluchey
86. Iosef Solonechney Sten
87. Petro Sirpe

88. Daksemo Seno (Senyu)
89. Miron Solonechney
90. Ivan Soleha
91. Petro Tlikiy (Tlikey)
92. Fedor Turetskey
93. Stefan Toropa
94. Paulo Turetskey
95. Semen Tatarchuk (Tatarchuk)
96. Petro Tkach
97. Hrihori Yurchishein
98. Stefan Yurkevich
99. Vasil Yurkevich
100. Antin Venitskey

THE UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. JOSEPH

A SHORT HISTORY

By Zenon (Jim) Shtohryn

At the turn of the century the Byzantine Rite was still struggling for independence from Latin authority after decades of hardships in the U.S. Thousands of Ukrainian immigrants were seeking a better life here every year. By 1900 a small number were in St. Joseph.

These few had to seek spiritual lives in Latin Rite churches or go without. Even the appointment of Rev. Soter Stephen Ortynsky as our first bishop didn't raise hopes of a church here. This great organizer of our faith issued a call to gather the believers but it wasn't until 1910 St. Joseph had a chance.

In that year 20 families from around Horodok-Jahallonsky Galicia were brought to the city raising the Ukrainian population to near 150 persons. 2. It wasn't long before Bishop Ortynsky's call was heeded, for the next year Father Ivan (John) Ostasz of St. Louis parish arrived to begin raising a community into a new parish.

His handwritten notation in the first parish record book attests to his purpose. "I notify to everybody that it is the collection book for new Greek Catholic church of St. Mary's Assumption in St. Joseph, Mo. St. Joseph, Mo. Sep 2-1911."

Rev. John Ostasz, Fr. Cath. priest from St. Louis Mo send from the Rt. Rev. Soter S. Ortynsky, gr. cath. Bishop to organize the belonging Church congregation." 3

His quiet proclamation began the new parish, then the westernmost Ukrainian Greek Catholic outpost in the country. After that September day progress stalled since few had money.

Little as \$780 profit was taken, picnics held, some with as little as \$780 profit.

By 1912 enough was raised to purchase the land at 526 Virginia St. in the South End of St. Joseph. The purchase record reads "Independent Ruthenian "House Church" living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The start was also the end as funds were probably depleted. People slowly obtained jobs at area slaughter and meat packing plants but few could contribute more than the agreed 5¢ upon monthly sums of \$1 per family and 50 cents for singles.

A branch of the Ukrainian National Association, No. 355, was founded April 20, 1913 with 16 members 6 and played a large role in the development of the church by contributing labor, donations and by keeping records as trustees. Meetings were held in the church hall and when the U.N.A. Society Hall at 5801 Lake Avenue was purchased in 1926 many church related events took place there. The U.N.A. Hall was sold in 1982.

With careful husbanding of funds building began in 1915. The basement was dug fully by hand, soil removed bucket-by-bucket 7 continuing until the complete structure was finished in 1917.

The name Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church of St. Joseph.

The new Joseph Dsendezera was our first pastor and on June 16, 1918 he and the elder brethren of the parish blessed the church.

8

Our bell is bronze, 80% copper, 20% tin with a 274# diameter. It was cast in 1894 by the Buckeye Bell Foundry, The E.W. Vanduzen Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio and weighs approximately 400 pounds. 9 How we acquired it is still unknown at this time but by October of 1918 it was in our hands. Shortly after this the bell was blessed and baptised. 10

Immediately after World War I the congregation shrank considerably as European events drew many home. The Russian revolution promised self-rule in an independent Ukraine, something world leaders such as Kaiser Wilhelm pledged to support.

For those that stayed poverty still reigned. Frost-damaged vegetables were still being donated to the church in 1920. Because there were so few priests to serve America remnants for Father Dsendezera came from ... far away Winnipeg, Canada. Rev. Anton Melnyk (1919-20) and Rev. A. Czerepanjak (1920-21) both served a long way from home. 13

In 1924 the church was officially dedicated.

It was decided in 1926 that the church would benefit by incorporation. On March 3, 1926 that filing was made and was to last 50 years.14

The rectory house at 518 Virginia Street was purchased in 1934,15 and happily the mortgage was payed off by 1940.16 Father Dmytrybo stayed to pastor here in 1953, this time staying for 5 years. The first year he published a memorial book explaining who Ukrainians were and what exactly the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Rite was. No doubt he did this to celebrate a continuing parish and growing congregation but also, by precisely defining our beliefs, he probably hoped to dispel false assumptions and smooth relations with other Rites, religions and laymen.

After World War II priests again aided new arrivals by helping match immigrant hopefuls with parishioners willing to vouch for and make guarantees about shelter and employment, both necessary for entry. The Act of Congress in 1948 allowed 40,000 refugees

into the U.S., among them being the second wave of immigrants into St. Joseph's.

Father Jaroslaw Gabro (1940-48) helped in this work and later became a Bishop. Gabro, Eparch of the newly formed Chicago based diocese of St. Nicholas from 1961 until 1980.

Father Dmytrybo (1948-51) continued helping new arrivals settle and also organizing, and or sanitize he did. He helped found both the parishes of Omaha, Nebraska and Denver, Colorado in the same month, November, 1951. That was quite a parish circuit!

On February 21, 1952, under the title of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Ss. Peter and Paul, the Sodality of Grade School Children was formed and affiliated to the Primary Sodality of the Roman College.

1923 brought a new look for the church. The unique onion dome and twin Greek crosses were replaced with a more modest cross-topped dome familiar to everyone today. The double stairway entrance gave way to the modern single entrance brick stairs.

The parish established a mission, St. Joseph's, in 1925 at 11411 Chicago St., Sugar Creek, Missouri, a suburb of Kansas City. This congregation had turned to the Orthodox branch around 1923 and decided to reenter the fold. The town depended totally on the oil refinery there and when the oil crash of the early 1980's forced its closing, the mission couldn't survive. The property was sold in 1983.

In 1959 it was decided to give all church property to the bishop and all was transferred that same year. Luckily a good neighbor, Casper Erk, had the skills necessary to make the new wooden altar. A plaque on the side of this creation honors parishioners who donated funds for the project.

Eastern icon-art is reflected in our six unique stained glass windows. While there are no statues in our church, John the Baptist, Christ the Teacher, St. Nicholas, St. Joseph, St. Michael and the Mother of God look upon the parishioners at each service.

There are no other windows like them in the state of Missouri. At the height of the population boom Father Basil Banyo (1965-78) had 77 students in catechism instructional class. 18 were in Confirmation until his untimely death July 15, 1978. Bishop Innocent Lotocky has twice visited our church, the most recent in July, 1986 on the occasion of the first Holy Communion of 18 catechism class members.

At this time there are 80 families listed in the parish with 50 families noted as active participants.

Ukrainian foods have become almost a fixture at St. Joseph's Ladies, and some men, cook up delicious holobchi, pirohi and various cheese pastries. Pastors and festivals, St. Joseph Museum galas and other get-togethers have all seen our church take part.

Since 1984 our parish has been served weekly by the pastor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, Omaha, NE and the mission church St. George Ukrainian Catholic Church, Lincoln, NE.

FOOTNOTES

1. Rev. Dzendzera Memorial Book, 1935
2. Ukrainian National Association Jubilee Book, 1936, p. 570
3. Front Leaf of First Parish Record Book
4. Parish Record Book, p. 20
5. Parish Record Book
6. Ukrainian National Association Jubilee Book, 1936, p. 570
7. Short Church History by Fr. Bohdan Piorowski, 1983
8. Parish Record Book
9. I. T. Veredin Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, Bell Ringers of American Record Book, 1918
10. Parish Record Book, Association Jubilee Book, 1936, p. 570
11. Ukrainian National Association Jubilee Book, 1936, p. 570
12. Parish Record Book, 1920, p. 8
13. Short Church History by Fr. Bohdan Piorowski, 1983
14. Articles of Incorporation, Vol. 10, pp. 466-7-8-9
15. Buchanan County Court St. Joseph Mo., 8 a.m. 3/6/26
16. St. Joseph News-Press article, May 24, 1986 by Joe Welschmeyer
17. Short Church History by Fr. Bohdan Piorowski, 1983
18. St. Joseph News-Press article, May 24, 1986 by Joe Welschmeyer
19. History compilation by Joe Welschmeyer, 1985

MILLENNIUM OF CHRISTIANITY

Religious And National Legacy Of Ukraine

1988 is a significant year for Ukrainian Christians throughout the world. It is the 1000th anniversary of the introduction of Christianity to the land called Ukraine. It was in 988 that the Ukrainian people accepted Christianity from Byzantium during the reign of Prince Volodymyr (Vladimir) the Great, the ruler of Kievan Rus', the first Ukrainian state. The commemoration of the millennium of Volodymyr's adoption of the Christian faith provides a unique opportunity for Ukrainian Christians everywhere to reflect on the meaning of their spiritual inheritance. This is the time for them to renew their commitments to the past and to reaffirm their obligation to protect their faith from atheism.

The plight of the faithful in Ukraine due to religious persecution imparts to all Ukrainians in the diaspora a sense of urgency and a sacred responsibility to show the world that Ukrainians, as a nation, have suffered and died for their religious beliefs.

It is ironic, therefore, that the Soviet government is also making preparations to celebrate a "Russian Millennium" in Moscow. The concept of a communist society celebrating this religious event is indeed outrageous. Furthermore, the selection of Moscow as the center of festivities constitutes, in the least, a gross historical inaccuracy. The irony is compounded when one considers the heavy losses incurred by the Ukrainian faithful in the last 50 years. It is a matter of record that in the 1930's, once the communist regime had become entrenched in

the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, through imprisonments and executions, lost three metropolitans, over thirty archbishops and bishops, many thousands of priests and a vast number of Ukrainian Orthodox leaders. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church was then incorporated into the Russian Orthodox Church.

The Ukrainian Catholic Church met a similar fate soon after its official abolition by the Soviet government in 1946. The religious genocide of all those who dared to speak against the destruction of their Church proceeded very rapidly with mass arrests, assassinations and exile to Siberia. However, the resistance continues. Forty years later, as attested by Soviet sources, the "underground Catholic Church" is alive, notwithstanding repressions by Soviet authorities.

At present, all religious activities in both eastern and western Ukraine are supervised and controlled by the newly created Council on Religious Affairs (1974). In essence, violating its own constitutional principles safeguarding "freedom of conscience" and "separation of church and state", the Soviet government has used its regulations regarding "religious cults" to severely restrict believers' rights to expression to a faith. Thus, it is against the law to give religious instruction to a minor, and church attendance by people of any age group is vigorously discouraged.

Paradoxically, the Russian Orthodox Church condones this situation and, in the spirit of "full collaboration", its spokesmen have on many occasions expressed their complete support and allegiance to the Soviet government. Consequently,

since Ukrainian faithful who live on their native land cannot freely thank God for the opportunity to celebrate their Millennium of Christianity, it is up to those who have settled in the free world to demonstrate their gratitude for their 1000-year-old Christian legacy. The duty of every free Ukrainian is to indicate to the world that Ukraine, by accepting the faith, became one of Christianity's most noble protectors.

Having served as a buffer zone against attacks by pagans in the past, Ukraine is now, in modern times, the first to challenge the atheistic philosophy of communism. Thus, we can truly say that the ancient, as well as contemporary, history of the Ukrainian people abounds with heroic deeds and sacrifices.

Ukraine's "Mother Church" - St. Sophia Cathedral, constructed in the 11th century, and converted to a museum by the Soviet government. Numerous other churches, built at the same period, were demolished in the 1930's.

****KIEVAN RUS'****

The First Ukrainian State

It is a known fact that Kiev has always been the capital of Ukraine. There is also ample and irrefutable evidence that the term Kievan Rus', as recorded in the ancient chronicles, applies only to the territory of Ukraine. For example, the Novgorod Chronicle makes a distinction between Rus' and the lands north of the Kievan State. It was later, in the 12th century, that these lands became the realm of the Principality of Muscovy - the forerunner of present-day Russia. Although the names Rus' and Russia (or Rossiya) may look and sound the same, the fact

remains that the words Rusychi, Rusyny, Ruthenians and Ukrainians refer to one and the same group of people and that Rus', Ruthenia and Ukraine designate the same geographical location, namely the land inhabited by Ukrainians. The phenomenon is not so strange when one considers the fact that many nations have gone through similar name changes. For example,

Italy is the only country that contends to be an immediate and direct heir to the Roman Empire, whereas Romania, in spite of its phonic similarity to the word "Rome", is but a former colony, and may not claim this unique distinction. The core of present-day Russia is not the Kievan State but the Duchy of Muscovy. This distinction between Rus' and Romanorum Historiam Ukrainae illustratenta Pontificium which Rus' is unmistakably identified as Ukraine. In addition, correspondence of Peter the Great, dated as late as 1715, contains complaints that foreigners were referring to Russia as Muscovites. It seems, therefore, that the names Russia and Russians are relatively new, hence their direct relationship to ancient Rus' is questionable.

Ukraine - the second largest country in Europe.

****VOLODYMYR THE GREAT****

(978 - 1015)

The beginnings of Christianity in Rus'-Ukraine can be traced to the missionary activity of St. Andrew. According to ancient writings, this apostle preached circa 50 A.D. in the area

located north of the Black Sea. In his "Primary Chronicle", Nestor the Chronicler, claims that St. Andrew visited the location of the future capital of Ukraine where he raised a cross and predicted that someday the site would receive many of God's blessings. This prediction did indeed come true in the year 988.

St. Volodymyr's monument in Kiev.

Prior to 988, the process of conversion to Christianity had been slow and sporadic. Only in the ninth century was there a real upsurge in the Christianization of Rus'-Ukraine which gained even more momentum 100 years later. It is known, for instance, that the majority of Prince Ihor's delegation to Byzantium in 944, was Christian since it pledged "by the church of Elias" to fulfill its signed agreements. We also know that Princess Olha (945 - 960) was the first ruler of Rus' to become a Christian.

Finally, Christianity attained the status of a state religion during the reign of Volodymyr the Great, the grandson of Princess Olha. As a statesman of great foresight, Volodymyr, adopted Christianity throughout his entire realm, and thereby established close spiritual and political ties with many important European states. As the prestige of Rus' Ukraine began to grow, the acceptance of Christian culture stimulated a unique form of church architecture, education and the adoption of just laws. The famous legal document, "Rus'ka Pravda," protecting the basic human rights of every citizen, appeared in 1054, pre-dating the renowned Magna Charta by 58 years.

The tremendous cultural transformation of Kievan Rus' was made possible by the initial action and example set by Volodymyr the Great. As a pagan, he was a ruthless warrior who lived only by the sword; however, after his conversion to Christianity, Volodymyr dedicated himself to noble and peaceful deeds. He then consolidated his power by building towns, constructing schools and erecting numerous churches. And in order to consummate the Christianization of Ukraine, he ordered all pagan idols to be destroyed, and donated one tenth of his wealth in Kiev for which he upon his death in 1015, Volodymyr was laid to rest in this Desiatynna Church.

In recognition of his wisdom and courage, many Ukrainian churches have chosen St. Volodymyr as their patron saint. For Ukrainian people he symbolizes the fact that the Christian faith and Ukrainian nation are inseparable.

****THE TRIDENT****

****A Link Between The Present And The Past****

For many centuries the trident has been used by the Ukrainian people as a national emblem, a symbol of their unity and pride. Very often those who dared to display it, were persecuted. This is true not only in the present-day Soviet Union, but also was the case before the Communist revolution. The trident symbolizes Ukrainian nationalist aspirations, and as such it is perceived as something dangerous and inconsistent with the Russian desire to control the Slavic world. Accordingly, there have been frequent attempts to eradicate it and to substitute it with an emblem that would make Ukrainians forget their noble past.

The trident constitutes a link between the glorious past of Kievan Rus' and contemporary desires to attain freedom for Ukraine. It appears as an official symbol as early as the 10th century. We see it on many coins minted during the reign of Volodymyr the Great. Although originally the trident might have been only a personal heraldic sign of Prince Volodymyr the Great, subsequently it became a national emblem for the inhabitants of the land once known as Kievan Rus'. This was officially reaffirmed on January 22, 1918, the day Ukrainian independence was re-established.

Coins of Volodymyr the Great depicting the trident - the national symbol of the Ukrainian people.

For additional information please write to:

****NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO COMMEMORATE MILLENNIUM****

****OF CHRISTIANITY IN UKRAINE****

Main office: 63 Fourth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10003 (212) 254-5130

Washington office: 810 18th St., N.W., Suite 807,

Washington, D.C. 20006 (202) 783-0988

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UUARC, Inc. Millennium of Christianity Fund

AND MAIL TO:

1319 W. Lindley Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19141

****UKRAINE****

****A Fact Sheet****

****PRESENT OFFICIAL STATUS****

After a military occupation in 1921, Ukraine, formerly known as Kievan Rus' or Ruthenia, was turned into a colony under the name of Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and as such is a member of the United Nations.

****SIZE AND LOCATION****

232,000 square miles, the second largest country in Europe. It is located in southeastern Europe and borders on the Black Sea, Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Byelorussia and Russia.

****CAPITAL CITY****

Kiev, founded circa 600 A.D. by Prince Kiy. Population was about 2.25 million in 1981.

****LANGUAGE****

Ukrainian, one of the 15 major non-Russian languages within the Soviet Union. Ukraine has always had a rich folklore and literature.

****POPULATION****

About 50 million in 1981. (Note: census figures show a decline between 1926 - 1939, thus confirming the massive destruction of lives during the man-made famine in 1932 - 1933).

****RELIGION****

Orthodox - 76%, Catholic - 14%, other (Protestant, Muslim, Jewish) - 10%. (Note: This is only an estimate, since the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was suppressed in 1930s and the Ukrainian Catholic Church declared illegal in 1946).

****HISTORY********The Slavic Epoch (4th - 7th centuries A.D.)****

Before this epoch, Ukraine was inhabited by various tribes, some of them of unknown origin. In the 4th century the Slavs, known as Antes, emerged as a dominant force in the territory.

****The Princely Era (7th - 13th centuries A.D.)****

Prince Oleh, after becoming the ruler of Kiev, succeeded in unifying the tribes of the Antian Group into one state, Rus'. The non-Ukrainian land of present-day Russia was not considered at that time to be part of the Kievan realm. That land was in fact dominated and in direct competition with Rus'. One of these principalities, Suzdal, eventually became strong enough to challenge the Rus' domination. As a result, a war -- the first war between the Russians and Ukrainians -- broke out in 1169.

****The Galician - Volhynian State (1199 - 1347)****

Because of the Tatar invasion from the east, Volhynia became the most important principality of Old Rus'. Later it merged with Galicia. In 1347, Galicia-Volhynia was annexed by the Polish state and the native population was reduced to serfdom.

****The Kozak State (1600 - 1750)****

As a result of many uprisings against foreign domination, this state emerged but never encompassed the whole Ukrainian territory. It was in constant struggle with Poland, Muscovy and Crimea. In the 18th century it was partitioned by the Polish and Russian governments.

****The Ukrainian National Republic (1917 - 1921)****

With the dissolution of the Russian empire in 1917, the Ukrainian masses created a powerful movement that led to autonomy and later to the emergence of independent Ukraine. On January 22, 1918, the Rada (National Council) proclaimed the establishment of the Ukrainian National Republic. Three years later, the Red Russian Army terminated the existence of this Ukrainian state.

****The Present****

Prior to World War II, the foreign invader took extensive and brutal measures to eliminate all forms of nationalism. By the summer of 1942, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army was born. At first, it disrupted the German war effort. Later, it continued its struggle against the returning Red armies for about ten years. In the 1960s the dissident movement emerged in Ukraine. Despite severe repressions (40% of all Soviet political prisoners are Ukrainian), the cultural and political struggle of the Ukrainian people continues.

Local Ukrainian church receives support from community

Jackie Elson

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(ST. JOSEPH, Mo.) The crisis between Russia and Ukraine has sparked lots of conversation and support around the world for the Ukrainian people.

Here in St. Joe there's a small community of people that belong to the St. Joseph's Ukrainian Byzantine Catholic Church.

"On the average it probably 20s it's a small parish, very old parish. We just had our 100 year anniversary in 2017," Deacon Randy Brown said.

Deacon Randy Brown says their small congregation has had visitors and supporters in solidarity with their church and the people in Ukraine.

"We had some visitors who came to show solidarity pray with us. Our church, has asked the parishes to say special intercessory prayers for Ukraine," Deacon Brown said.

Deacon Brown says what's currently going on keeps him and many others in the church awake at night and worried about how and when this could ever end.

"A lot of us aren't getting very much sleep. I've got a lot of very close friends in Ukraine. And it's heartbreaking and really unimaginable," Deacon Brown said.

He says most of the parish originated in western Ukraine and that his son is working to help the Ukrainian people.

"My oldest son currently is at the Polish border, with a band helping to move some refugees on into western Europe," Deacon Brown said.

Deacon Brown says what's happening in Ukraine right now is a cause for awareness and support from everyone in the world.

"Ukraine is currently undergoing a genocidal invasion. And we have the Ukrainian community hope and pray, obviously, for the safety and protection and integrity of Ukraine. We really need the rest of the world to step up and help us," Deacon Brown said.

The church holds its liturgy on Saturdays at 2 p.m.