

- Change of views of employers on disadvantaged job applicants.
- Development of partnership between educational and social institution and creation of system of complex assistance in reintegration of marginalized persons.
- Increase of self confidence, motivation, and knowledge of our clients.
- Helping in elimination of the feeling of loneliness and inutility, loss of reason to live in senior years.
- Precedence of the need to locate elderly lone people in social care facilities.
- Content of the relatives and improvement of the relations between generations.
- Opportunity to earn new life experiences for students of the Theological faculty.

On a budget of \$238,000, this Caritas center needs an additional \$174,038. Your donations will make a profound difference in this region of Slovakia, and move our Byzantine Catholic Church forward into a new dimension of pastoral ministry. How can you help?

### Christmas in the US 2008

For Christmas gift-giving, it is to be done in the spirit of the Magi: giving of ourselves in honor of the Infant Jesus. Perhaps in this time of economic crunch, you could give out Christmas cards to your relatives and friends with a note "A donation has been made to the Mission Society of the Mother of God of Boronyavo in your name", or even list what you gave the money for. You can give for the Caritas House, the Sisters Novitiate, or the Seminary in Uzhgorod.

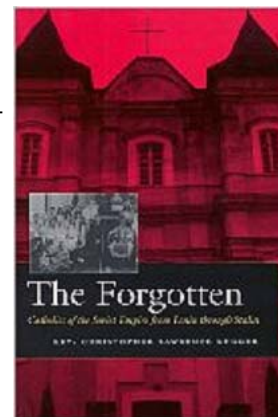
Whatever you send to us, goes to Europe. We spend money in the US on printing and very basic office expenses such as paper and mailing. All the work is done by volunteers, and no one is paid any salary or stipend. We use an office through the kindness of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church, where Father Kurt Burnette, JCL, JCD, is the pastor. Father Christopher Zugger's trips to Eastern Europe have all been paid for out of his own pocket or the generosity of friends. Housing in Eastern Europe for Fr. Zugger on those trips has been provided by friends in Budapest, and by local priests or the seminaries in northern Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine. We try to use your donations wisely – thank you for your trust in us in these challenging times.

The Seminary Choir of Blessed Theodore Romzha Theological Academy conducted a successful, whirlwind tour of the Northeast and Upper Midwest this autumn. Jack Figel, director of the Orientale Lumen Conferences and of Eastern Christian Publishing, brought 12 seminarians and their rector, Father Taras Lovska, to the United States on his own money and devoted three weeks to daily travel to our parishes. People were very generous in their donations to the choir, and the money donated will help pay for seminarians' tuitions, maintenance of the building, and finishing the church.

Mr. Figel, an ordained lector for the Eparchy of Passaic, has CD recordings available for sale from his website of the Divine Liturgy in Church Slavonic, Christmas carols, Lenten and Easter music, and more. You can order this by going to his website, [www.seminaryconcerttour.com](http://www.seminaryconcerttour.com) or by calling the office at 703-691-8862.

In addition, Mr. Figel sells two books of interest to our readers: the autobiography of Father Stefan Bendas, *Five Years Behind Barbed Wire*, his account of life in the Siberian gulag for his loyalty to our Church under Soviet persecution, and the excellent biography of Blessed Theodore Romzha. (Price: \$20.00 USD. 200+ pages. Can be ordered online from *Easter Christian Publications*: [ssl.webvalence.com/ecommerce/kiosk.lasso?merchant=ecpubs&kiosk=books&class=2](http://ssl.webvalence.com/ecommerce/kiosk.lasso?merchant=ecpubs&kiosk=books&class=2) or phone: 703-691-8862)

Father Christopher Zugger's book *The Forgotten: Catholics in the Soviet Empire from Lenin through Stalin* has been highly praised by Father Mitch Pacwa, SJ, on EWTN throughout October and November. You can order your own copy from Syracuse Press or by contacting the bookstore at the church in Albuquerque: [www.olphnm.org](http://www.olphnm.org) and click on the store link for \$40 (shipping and handling included: cheaper than Amazon!).



By Rev. Christopher Zugger



### Honoring Bishop Petro Oros

This August, the Eparchy of Mukachevo celebrated the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the martyrdom of Bishop Petro Oros. Bishop Oros was secretly consecrated a bishop during the Christmas season of 1944 by Blessed Theodore Romzha. Blessed Theodore suspected that Soviet persecution of the Greek Catholic Church would be fierce, given the anti-religious activities of the USSR under Stalin. He consecrated Bishop Oros and the eparchy's chancellor, Msgr. Alexander Khira, to serve in case of his own arrest. As it happened, Bishop Romzha was brutally murdered in 1947. Bishop Oros withdrew into the eastern region of Transcarpathia, along with several priests, in 1948 and took up residence in a cabin. He managed to conduct missionary work in the valleys and highlands with the aid of the mountaineers. Bishop Khira stayed in Uzhgorod and was arrested there in 1949 when our Church was totally suppressed by the communists, and was eventually sent to the Gulag, working as a coal miner near Kazakhstan. Bishop Oros continued to serve Liturgies and celebrate the Holy Mysteries/ Sacraments in village cemeteries, barns, or isolated homes. A high price was put on his head by the NKVD, because his constant preaching was keeping the villagers loyal to the suppressed Church.

In 1953, local authorities were unsure as to what the religious policies of the new government would be after Stalin's death, but the bounty was not withdrawn. On the feast of the Dormition (Assumption of Our Lady), on August 28 (Old Style Calendar), he celebrated the Liturgy in a cemetery and then went in disguise, in the company of Catherine Stanko, to board a train in the village of Irshava. However, a militiaman recognized him, and arrested him. Since some Greek Catholic priests had been arrested and released, Bishop Oros asked this policeman to let him go. However the enraged man stopped the pair in front of the village soviet building, and shot the bishop in his knees. As he sank to the ground, he whispered to Catherine "The Liturgy intentions" so that she would pass them on to another priest. He was then shot in the head and died on the spot.

Today there is a beautiful black marble cross in the memory of our martyr on this spot. In 1953, however, his body was maltreated by the Soviet police and left naked and exposed in the town morgue, and finally buried underneath the concrete floor of the police garage. The reason? For three nights, the policemen and townspeople alike heard the voice of the bishop singing the Divine Liturgy. In order to silence this accusing voice, the police buried the body in thick concrete,



Bishop Petro Oros

**All support of the Mission Society's work is in addition to members' and donors' existing support of their local parish, their eparchy, and the Metropolia of Pittsburgh. Renewal of our Mother Church in Central Europe cannot mean a diminishment of our financial and spiritual dedication to the church in America.**

**MISSION SOCIETY OF  
THE MOTHER OF  
GOD OF  
BORONYAVO, INC.**

*The Mission Society is an independent organization dedicated to the renewal and strengthening of the Byzantine Catholic Church in America and Central Europe.*

**Mailing address:**  
1838 Palomas NE Albuquerque,  
NM 87110  
**Tel: (505) 265-5350**  
Web: [www.missionboronyavo.org](http://www.missionboronyavo.org)

**LOCAL  
REPRESENTATIVES:**

Denver: Fr. Deacon  
Andrew and Olga Bodnar -  
(303) 932-1490  
Phoenix: Diane Rabiej -  
(480) 460-0902  
Albuquerque: Phyllis Snider (505)  
296-1173

**NATIONAL LEVEL:**  
Chaplain-Moderator: Rev.  
Christopher Zuggger

**National Officers:**  
Director: Diane Rabiej  
Vice-director: Cassandra Epstein  
Legal: Brian Escobedo  
Financial: Phyllis Snider

Newsletter Editor: Rev.  
Christopher Zuggger  
Newsletter Layout: Stephanie Block

where it remained until a repentant officer finally revealed its resting place in 1992. His body rests today in a chapel outside of the church in the village of Bilky. His Cause for Beatification is under consideration today.

**MEDZILABORCE MONASTERY**

The Sisters of Saint Basil in Slovakia have been working to renovate a building as their monastery in the town of Medzilaborce. This also serves as a novitiate, where candidates come to learn about religious life and study to become professed Sisters. This letter [unedited] comes from Sister Josifa, OSBM:

*There is a lot of work for the Sisters, but little what to live from. We send two Sisters there to teach in local schools. Because Medzilaborce is like a county-seat, we opened there also Novitiate with two novices.*

*Thanks to generous sponsors we were able to buy a half of a house and later the second half also. We were able to change windows and make some repairs. The last thing was to change a roof on a house. This took a lot of money even from province funds. Sisters have nothing left; they do not have enough for daily living. One of them (Sister Damiana) has a full time job, the second (Sister Romana) only partly, because she is a Director for the Novice (Sister Katarina), who lives with them. The fourth, Sister Antonia, is without work. She just finished her novitiate and goes to visit old people and is also helping Sister Damiana and Romana with the youth meetings. Sisters do their work, because they love to do it. For me it is difficult to see how hard they work on such small incomes. They experience many times God's providence in their life. I would be very grateful if you could help in any way to our Monastery in Medzilaborce. Pictures show how the house look and we know it do not look nice from the outside. The prices of material go up and it is hard to deal with it.*

*I know in your country is also financial crisis and I do not know how it influenced a daily life of people. We will be grateful for each gift that can help.*

*Sincerely in Christ,  
Sister Josifa Simova, Provincial*

The work has been done by local contractors and the Sisters themselves. They are not able to raise the final amount of \$2,500 owed to the contractors. Can you help?

**A REQUEST FROM SVIDNIK AND CARITAS OF PRESOV**

We received this letter from GK Caritas (Charity), the Greek-Catholic charitable organization in Slovakia. This comes from our parish in the city of Svidnik:

*We kindly turn to you with our humble request for financial help for social project "RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT FOR THE MULTI-PURPOSE SOCIAL HOME". We decided to write you, because in Slovakia it is really hard to obtain financial sources for support of reconstruction and modernization activities, especially, when such a project is realized by the Church organization.*

*We believe, that also with your help we might be able to finish the reconstruction of this object, and thus be witnesses of living Christ in the Greek Catholic Church in the*

*world, through the service to the people in need. With thanks and greeting on behalf of all colleagues and Svidník parish.*

Svidnik is a town of nearly 13,000 people, of whom 41% are Greek Catholics, 25.8% Orthodox and 24.1% Roman Catholics. The proposal is the renovation of a building to make it more energy-efficient, with the addition of an upper level for residence for seminarians who would work in Caritas projects, to create a new multi-purpose facility. This would be a social work center for the unemployed, abandoned elderly, and handicapped persons. The center will employ a psychologist, therapists, and employment specialists, and provide hot meals. It is a bold outreach on the part of the Greek Catholic Metropolia of Presov to all those in need, regardless of religion or lack of faith. In addition, the Caritas center is now providing help to the young people of the Svidnik parish, as their letter tells us:

*Cooperation in pastoral activities for children and youth from parishes in evening hours and during the weekend /Biblical Olympics, educational movies, folk songs at the campfire in the garden...*

It also involves seminarians in a new dimension of pastoral life for future priestly work. In their words, it will bring about the:

- Lowering of the unemployment rate in target group of those receiving social benefits (today it is average about 10 %).
- Creation of the database of job opportunities in individual Social Centers, which will be connected together and coordinated.
- Improvement of cooperation with local Offices of Unemployment, Social Affairs and Family.

## Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

**In the spirit of this holy season, I am sending my gift to help our  
Byzantine Catholic Church in Eastern Europe.  
Please distribute it as follows:**

- Sisters of Saint Basil in Slovakia
- Svidnik Caritas in Slovakia
- Divine Liturgy Intentions for priests
- Help for Orphanages in Transcarpathia

*Please visit our website and see the updates and changes we are making.  
If you have suggestions, you can e-mail us: [office@missionboronyavo.org](mailto:office@missionboronyavo.org).*