



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

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*Welcome to our new format! We are trying to both accommodate people's desire for information and pictures, but not overload you with paper (or strain our little budget). So this will be the style now. Let us know what you think.*

**WHERE ARE THEY NOW?** Over the years, we have helped a number of priests and seminarians. The recent changes in the Byzantine-Ruthenian (Greek Catholic) Church in Central Europe seems to be a good time to bring you up to date on some of these men.

**Father Taras Lovska** has been appointed as the new Rector of the Bishop Romzha Seminary in Uzhorod by Bishop Milan Shashik, CM, the Apostolic Administrator of Mukachevo Eparchy. Father Taras was educated in Rome, and served as pastor in Vinohradiv and Drotintsi where he supervised the renewal of the Greek-Catholic communities and construction of two churches. He was also the chaplain at the Vinohradiv Orphanage to which so many have been so generous.

Father Taras brings a deep spirituality and love of our Church to the seminary; enthusiasm for evangelization among the many people who are unchurched; and a strong loyalty to the ideal of the Union of Christians. He will be an excellent rector, and this is a significant step in the renewal of the Eparchy. There are 41 students in the as-yet unfinished Seminary. We wish him well in his work for the rebuilding of our Church.

**Father Daniel Bendas** remains as pastor of Mala Kopanya, but is also now the Professor Church History at the Seminary in Uzhorod. Father Daniel is the son of a priest who was repressed and suffered in the Gulag. He himself was an engineering instructor, and was ordained a deacon and priest in the last days of the USSR after his retirement from teaching. He continues to serve as Hungarian Dean for the Hungarian-language Greek Catholic parishes. Father Bendas is a consummate historian, with massive archives that he has collected from the time of the arrival of the Red Army in 1945 and even before. He is a walking depository of Ruthenian Church history. He was also appointed by Bishop Milan Shashik, CM, the Apostolic Administrator of Mukachevo Eparchy.



**Fr. Robert Jager (left) & Msgr. Jan Babjak, SJ at Divine Liturgy, San Antonio Abbate at Russicum in Rome**

1/5/03



**Ordination of New Bishops by John Paul II**

Bishop Babjak, SJ, of Presov  
Bishop Milan Shashik, CM,  
Apostolic Administrator of  
Mukachevo (center)

1/6/03

**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.*

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**Father Robert Jager** assisted Bishop Jan Babjak, SJ, the new Bishop of Presov, for two months in the preparations for the bishop's ordination in Rome and ceremonies in Presov. Father Jager was constantly at the side of the bishop translating for various foreign guests, and making all kinds of liturgical arrangements. He has now returned to his full-time positions teaching Sacred Scripture in the Catholic theological faculty of the State University, where his students include Greek-Catholic seminarians, and parochial vicar or "Kaplan" in the new parish of the Holy Protection Church on the south side of Kosice, whence he travels every weekend from Presov. He and his wife Pani Rosalia are expecting their first child this autumn. PHOTO SENT OF HIM by E MAIL.

**Father Tomas Muszka** is the new secretary of the Bishop of the Kosice Exarchate. He is "Kaplan" in the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Cathedral in Kosice, working with young people in the parish. Father Tomas had some serious illnesses last year, but has rebounded and is again busy. At the curia, he handles foreign correspondence, and assisted the Slovakian pilgrims at World Youth Day in Toronto. He translated for Bishop Milan Chatur, the Exarch, and assists him regularly at the cathedral.

**Sub-Deacon Oleksiy Korostil** and his wife Valentina had their first child, Damian, in Austria. Oleksiy is now completing his doctorate, and Valentina her courses at LCI in Gaming. With this work done, he hopes to go back to Ukraine to be ordained a priest for the mission territories, either for the Baltic States where there are many Greek Catholics without clergy, or eastern Ukraine. He has been working as Director of Seminarians with Father Juraj Terek in Austria.

**Father Juraj Terek** and his wife Katie had their first child, Antonia, in Austria. Father Juraj is the rector of the International Theological Institute, pastor of the Greek-Catholic population for both the ITI and LCI in Gaming, and an instructor. Pani Katie is also a teacher, for eastern European students in LCI. The LCI offers courses for clergy, seminarians, and laity in catechesis, Christian family life and natural family planning. The Greek Catholic population is from the Galician region of Ukraine; Romania; Slovakia; and Russia. Father Juraj and family will be in the United States this summer, based in Denver, CO. He will be assisting the Mission Society with some preaching, and also helping Father Chris in Albuquerque with a parish mission this summer.

#### **PARISH PROJECTS**

**The Church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary in Michalovce** sends its thanks for donations given last year. This parish had 120 children receive First Holy Communion in May (parts of Slovakia do not offer Infant Communion yet). The parish profited from missions preached by the Redemptorist Fathers in September to prepare for the feast-day observances of September 8<sup>th</sup>. Father Frantisek Puci writes that he offered Liturgies for the intentions of Mission Society members in thanksgiving for donations.

**The Kugor parish of Saint Michale**, under Father Vitalii Shelemba, will resume construction of its parish house once the thaws have settled. Bishop Milan Shashik has asked that parish houses be constructed in the villages so that the priests can live among the people and not have to travel so far. This is important, as most such houses have not been returned by the Ukrainian state, and they have many uses besides being a rectory for the priest and his family: the average parish house also contains a chapel, library, office, classrooms, and sometimes more! The Mala Kopanya parish house begun by Father Bendas is almost complete now.

#### **LITURGY INTENTIONS**

You can arrange to have the Holy Sacrifice of the Divine Liturgy offered for your special intentions or the souls of loved ones by priests in Europe. The stipend of \$5 will benefit our

priests tremendously.

**Retired priests** are men whose health was worn out by prison life and the strains of trying to work as a registered Greek-Catholic parish priest under the communist Czechoslovakian government, or working illegally as a priest in the USSR. State pensions in the Ukraine to the retired clergy, who held secular jobs as disguises for their pastoral work, come late and are only partial payments; the economy is a shambles in the Carpathian region making the situation for the elderly priests and their families even worse. Father Taras Lovska will distribute Liturgy intentions in the Mukachevo Eparchy to the older clergy who are in need.

**Younger priests** need these intentions as well, on both sides of the Slovak-Ukrainian border. In Mukachevo eparchy, some of these priests do not receive much of a salary, and the meager collection money has to go to the maintenance of beautiful but old churches. Father Vitalii Shelemba will distribute the intentions to younger clergy in need in the deaneries.

Your donations not only provide all of these priests with living-expenses, but continue the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice in the parishes of our Church and obtain graces for your intentions or the souls of the deceased. Please mark the intention form clearly for the names you wish remembered. We hope to provide you with Liturgy cards in the future.

## REQUESTS

### Slovakia

Fr Maros Rinik, 26 years old, married and the father of two boys with a third baby on the way, is the pastor at Zemplinska Teplica, for renovations to the walls and foundations of the hilltop church which was built in 1795. It was last renovated in 1948, just before the suppression of the Greek Catholic Church by the Communists. The parishioners raised \$25,000 for the first phases of work (1 million Slovak crowns), despite unemployment and a poor economy. Then they rebuilt the sacristy for 150,000 crowns, and put a new roof on the parish house. The church still needs repairs to the interior walls, which are cracked, a new roof, and work on the iconostas. Donors to this project will be remembered both in prayers, and at a memorial plaque. Estimated cost for all of this work, stabilization around the church, could be up to 1 million crowns again, which the people simply cannot raise. They have worked hard, and will work hard again, but need our financial support. Mark CHURCH REPAIR for your donation.

### Trans-Carpathia

Vinohradiv: Father Constantine Sabov is the new parish priest of Vinohradiv, and Dean of the Slavonic parishes in Vinohradiv Raion. He is already going out to the schools to try and get courses on Christian life introduced, per the Ukrainian Constitution. He will also serve as chaplain for the Orphanage, and so we will continue to



### Greek Catholic Bishops of Slovakia

Bps. Milan Chatur, CSsSR of Kosice Exarchate (left), Jan Babjak, SJ of Presov Church of the Holy Spirit in Hummene

3/9/03



### Crucifix

Top of the Iconostas of a Byzantine Church in Bratislava, Slovakia

By the hand of Ratislav Buyna



### Resurrection Icon

From the School of Iconography of the Sisters of St. Basil the Great in Slovakia

From the hand of Sr. Monika in Presov

assist these children through him. Father Sabov is a relative of +Bishop Constantine Sabov, former underground bishop of the Mukachevo eparchy who died during Soviet rule. Thank you to Lou and Diane Rabiej and their helpers at Saint Stephen Pro-Cathedral in Phoenix, AZ, and to Rt. Rev. Stephen G. Washko, Rector, for the work done at the annual pancake breakfast. This raised \$1,000 for the Orphanage! Work continues on the medical wing, and unfortunately there are always new children being delivered to the orphanage.



**Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Zemplinska Teplica**

**Seminary-** Father Taras Lovska reports that Bishop Milan Shashik would like to finish the Seminary residence for the 41 students before winter 2003-2004. There are 41 men studying for the priesthood; major order of deaconate was given to five men at the beginning of Great Lent, and minor orders to five others. Conditions are cramped and difficult, but the men continue their studies. Only the chapel, administrative offices, and some classroom/kitchen/library space was finished previously. Mark SEMINARY.

DONATION FORM: use past model. Please add SEMINARY and CHURCH REPAIR

**FROM THE CHAPLAIN**

At this writing, most of the news around us concerns the war in Iraq. Christians are called to be peacemakers; let us pray most fervently that God's peace will reign not only in Iraq, but throughout the Middle East. War is never a desired outcome – ask the soldiers! But war can bring about dramatic change – look at the former Axis Powers that are now solid democracies. At the beginning of the war, the leaders of the Chaldean, Syrian, Armenian, and Latin Catholic Churches and the Syrian and Assyrian Orthodox Churches held a concelebrated prayer service at Saint Joseph Cathedral in Baghdad, in which they consecrated Iraq to the protection of the Mother of God under her title Our Lady of Peace.

Up to 1 million Iraqis are Christians, most of them members of the Chaldean Catholic Church or the ancient Assyrian Orthodox Church. About 80% of the Christian population still speaks and reads Aramaic, the language of Jesus Himself. The allied forces are operating in territories where the Gospel was established by Jesus' own disciples! As followers of the Cross, who partake in the bitter Passion of Christ, we look forward always to the Resurrection. May God grant that a new Middle East will rise up out of the flames of war and terrorism, one where the Gospel's voice will ring clearly. Let us pray throughout Lent and the Paschal season to the Most Holy Mother of God, that her homeland would know peace and justice.

In the former Communist countries, there are constant complaints at all levels of society of the collapse of morality, the extent of corruption, and the ecological wreckage of the land. Communism did not bring many benefits and has left a sad legacy. In proclaiming the Gospel, the Byzantine Catholic Church can indeed work at raising up a new and holy generation, one that will have a well-formed conscience and know the teachings of Christ Jesus. Your support of the Mission Society helps that happen, be it for repairing broken walls so an old church will still stand proud and welcome believers, or for a youth center so the new generation has a safe place to gather. Whatever you give, is used completely for the work of the missions.



**Damaged fresco of St. Luke the Evangelist, Nativity BVM Church, Zemplinska Teplica**