



# Mission Society of the Mother of God of Boronyavo

Lent 2011

## Letter of Thanks and Appeal from the Sisters of St Basil in Presov

Sister Josifa, the Provincial Superior of the Sisters of St. Basil in Presov, writes that they gratefully received the donations sent for the Medzilaborce monastery. Now they have a greater problem—the roof of the Presov mother-house. It is in very bad repair, due to materials which were for short-term use. “We have many other needs which have to be done, but our roof is the first which is the most urgent. The reconstruction of the roof is estimated at \$27,400. We will be very happy if you could help us with the sum of money for our roof, or whatever sum of money, because we cannot save such money from our income.”



In addition the Sisters need help for heating (\$24,100 due to collapse of water system), thickening the front wall for warmth (\$59,150), and paving the access road (\$19,500). Not only is the access road not paved but the gravel is dangerous for the older Sisters.

*The roof damage will only get worse—and more expensive—the longer repairs are postponed.*



**Provincial Chapter of Sisters of St Basil the Great in Slovakia**

## Bishop Milan Sasik’s Pilgrimage

Bishop Milan Sasik, CM, the Ordinary of our mother-church in the Eparchy of Mukachevo, undertook a personal pilgrimage in February, 2011. A Slovak, Bishop Milan was ordained in communist Czechoslovakia, but took vows as a Vincentian priest illegally, i.e., in the underground as the government had banned all religious Orders in 1950. He presided at services in the church of Saint Vincent de Paul, founder of his community the Vincentians, in Bratislava. He bestowed the Order of Alexander Bachinsky on the first bishop of the Greek Catholic Exarchate of Prague, Bishop Ivan Lyanvinec (1996-2003), who is now wheelchair bound. The award was given in thanksgiving for the bishop’s support in the building a new church in Volovets, northeastern Transcarpathia, his home village. As a priest of the Presov eparchy, Bishop Ivan had been deported to work in the uranium mines of Bohemia by the communists in 1946.



**Bishop Milan Sasik, CM (center)**

Bishop Milan declared 2011 the Year of Blessed Theodore Romzha, our first priest-martyr (+1947) and the

**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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spiritual rock of the underground Church 1949-1990. This commemorates the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth in Veliky Bychkiv, a town with strong Hutsul influence even today, in the eastern raion of Rakhiv. The Hutsuls are the mountaineers of the Carpathians and are known for their singing, woodwork, and embroidered folk costumes. Bishop Romzha gained valuable experience growing up in this ancient town (founded in the fourteenth century) at the confluence of rivers and railroad lines. The local Social Democrat party produced both many activities to benefit the peasants and workers (schools, reading rooms, athletic societies) and also a strong Communist Party (see [www.bychkiv.com.ua](http://www.bychkiv.com.ua) for photos and more history). Young Romzha faced his greatest opponent, communism, from the very beginning!

Schedule of the upcoming events of the Year of the Blessed Theodore Romzha: And you can be part of the celebrations on June 27-28 as part of our pilgrimage ([see separate article](#)):

- April 14, 2011, at 12.00 p.m. – Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the Ascension church in Khust (to commemorate 1922-1930 study years of Blessed Theodore in Khust gymnasium\*).
- June 26, 2011, 9.30 a.m. – Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the Exaltation of the Holy Cross cathedral.
- June 27, 2011 - Conference dedicated to Blessed Theodore Romzha at the Uzhorod Greek Catholic Theological Academy of the Blessed Theodore Romzha.
- June 28, 2011, 10.00 a.m. – Solemn Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the Academy courtyard followed by a Cross procession with relics of the Blessed Theodore to the Holy Cross cathedral.
- July 8-10, 2011— pilgrimage on foot from Khust to Velykyj Bychkiv a birthplace of the Blessed Theodore for triduum of celebrations:
  - Friday, July 8, 2011 – 9.00 a.m. Moleben to Blessed Theodore in Khust
  - Saturday, July 9, 2011 – 9.00 a.m. Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in Tyachiv.
  - Saturday, July 9, 2011 – 7.00 p.m. Great Vespers followed by night vigil with the relics of the Blessed Theodore in the church in Velykyj Bychkiv.
- Sunday, July 10, 2011 – Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in Velykyj Bychkiv

In December 2011, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the priestly ordination of the Blessed Theodore, the Mukachevo Greek Catholic Eparchy will send a pilgrimage to Rome and also the presentation of the Vatican's Christmas Tree for the Saint Peter's Square which will come from the territory of the Mukachevo Eparchy.

In Blessed Theodore's hometown, the Church of the "Transfer of The Relics of Saint Nicholas" was rebuilt in the traditional wooden Hutsul style by the Greek Catholics in 2003-05 under the direction of Father George Popovich. The parish feast is May 9.

*\*Reminder to readers: "gymnasium" in Europe is the upper-level of school, after primary grades.*

## Featured Mission Society Work

*There are so many needs!  
The following projects are the ones we wish to emphasis this month.  
Please indicate which ones your donation supports:*

- Sisters of St Basil in Slovakia
- Seminarian Support: Eparchy of Mukachevo
- Seminarian Support: Slovakia
- New Church Construction: Mukachevo eparchy
- New Church Construction: Slovakia
- Korolevo Orphanage

### Divine Liturgy Intentions

Please send \$5 for each Divine Liturgy. If you want Liturgy cards mailed to you, please include a note and tell us how many. These cards are full-color icons of Our Lady of Boronyavo, with an interior page where you can write your intentions, and a history page, with a matching envelope. We are happy to send you as many cards as you would like: keep them on hand for special occasions!



**Christmas Play by orphans in Korolevo Orphanage. Father Ivan Isayovych , Director (upper right). Your gifts help Father and the Sisters care for the children.**

## Raising Funds

Recently we received \$300 from Saint Andrew's Greek Catholic church in El Segundo, California. This Russian Catholic parish has a broad mix of parishioners. Once a month, a pot-luck luncheon is served and each household donates \$5 to the charity being sponsored. Thus, they sent \$300.

There are many ways to raise funds for our Church in Eastern Europe. Distribution of this newsletter is encouraged, and making copies is completely legal. Ask around for ideas, from yard sales to a monthly event like Saint Andrew's. Ask your pastor if you can hold an event at your parish, or if you can pass out copies of this Newsletter. You can write to us and ask for more copies.

## Great Reading

"Our Mother's Tears" a photo book by Erika Papp Faber, is a tour of all of the weeping icons in churches of Royal Hungary, territory which today covers Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania. The Ruthenian-Greek Catholic Church's icons from Baja/Vodice, Klokochovo, Mariapocs and Palfalva are included, along with the Romanian Greek Catholic weeping icon of Cluj-Napoca, and Roman Catholic images. The chapter of each icon includes color photos, history, and prayers. A Hungarian version, which has more pictures, is also available. Order by sending a check to the author, at \*\*\*\*\*.

**1911 - 2011**  
**+BLESSED THEODORE ROMZHA**  
**100th ANNIVERSARY TOUR**



**June 23 - July 2, 2011**  
**\$2550.00 per person, double occupancy**  
**(plus taxes, single supplement extra)**

Special celebrations are being planned in Uzhorod on June 27-28, 2011 to honor +Blessed Theodore Romzha, martyred Bishop of Mukachevo on the 100th Anniversary of his birth. Come, be part of the Holy Services and Processions with Bishop Milan Sasik, Bishop of Mukachevo and visiting Hierarchs with the Clergy, Seminarians and the Faithful! Travel (JFK/NY departure) with our group through historic Transcarpathia as we visit sites in and around Uzhorod, Mukachevo, Chust, and more! This is the heartland of our mother Church and of our Greek Catholic faith. Visit Ivanovce, the sight of +Blessed Theodore's martyrdom and see the village of Velikij Bychiv, Romzha's childhood home in the colorful Transcarpathian district of Maramorosh. Overnight in Kosice (Slovakia) with time for shopping before your flight back to New York.

*For further information, please contact Mrs. Diane Rabiej at the Chancery Offices of the Eparchy of Passaic, 445 Lackawanna Avenue, Woodland Park, NJ 07424. Phone: (973) 890-7777. E-mail: [secretary@dioceseofpassaic.org](mailto:secretary@dioceseofpassaic.org). Travel Arrangements prepared by Mrs. Mary Vislocky, Rahway Travel, Rahway, NJ. Phone: (732) 381-8800.*

## Pilgrimage 2011:

**Book your trip NOW – space is limited!**

**Contact: \*\*\*\*.**

- ⇒ Thursday June 23 departure from JFK
- ⇒ Friday, June 24 arrival into Uzhorod, welcome dinner at Hotel Uzhorod.
- ⇒ Saturday June 25 - Travel to Mukachevo (Walking tour of city). Lunch on own. Then to Palanok (Mukachevo Castle). Stop at Ivanovce (I'd like to have Moleben or some short prayer service at the site) on return to Uzhorod.
- ⇒ Sunday June 26 - Divine Liturgy at Holy Cross Cathedral, Uzhorod. Visit Crypt after Liturgy. Tour of Castle and Museum of Folk Architecture. Art Exhibit PM.
- ⇒ Monday June 27 - Tuesday, June 28 - Romzha Celebration procession, Tuesday Liturgy at Cathedral. And Lunch at Seminary. Tuesday evening departure for Khust. Tuesday evening overnight Khust.
- ⇒ Wednesday, June 29 - Chust, Velykyj Byckiv, Nyznij Bystryj to visit Romzha Village and childhood home, and Church. Wooden Church tour and return to Khust for overnight and dinner.
- ⇒ Thursday June 30 - After breakfast, drive to Kosice. Walking tour of city w dominating main square, historical buildings and town hall and time to shop.
- ⇒ Friday July 1 - Free Day to visit with friends or relatives or just enjoy Kosice on your own. Bus available in AM to visit Presov for those interested. Early dinner with enough time to pack for "early" departure to US.



# Reflections on the Mission Society's Pilgrimage to Transcarpathia including Slovakia, of the Summer of 2010:

By Diane Rabiej

We are the body of saints and members of the household of Our Lord—One Household!!! One Family!!!

Our Summer of 2010 visit to Transcarpathia was blessed. We are part of a great faith that God has called us to.

Our little group from America met at JFK airport in New York. For the most part, we did not know one another. We came from all across the USA. We traveled to Transcarpathia not knowing many of the people we would meet there. But, the days progressed and the first Divine Liturgy at Holy Cross Cathedral in Uzhorod on Sunday, August 1, 2010 began, a great change was taking place. God united us as “family!” We, the little group of Americans including Bishop Gerald Dino of Eparchy of Phoenix, not only came to know each other, but we, without a common language at times, came to know our Transcarpathian brothers and sisters in Christ.

We celebrated the Divine Liturgy with the faithful in Uzhorod at Holy Cross Cathedral that Sunday, August 1. We were overwhelmed at times with the great fervor of faith that we witnessed during Liturgy in the Cathedral. There was a great “push” to reach communion as the precious Body and precious Blood of Christ was distributed among the faithful present. At the end of Divine Liturgy, as throngs of people exited Holy Cross through one door, another great wave of people poured through another set of doors in eager anticipation of the next Divine Liturgy. The Cathedral was filled to capacity and then some. There were images of many faces and places and the voices we heard, all singing in union and in praise to Our Lord. These were the sounds images that were etched in our minds and hearts. These are the images we brought home with us to America. These are the images of our living faith that we remember.

Our group became fast friends with our local guide and interpreter, Natalia Yuriyschuk, Wooden Church Historian and artist, Mykhaylo Syrokhman and with Arthur Bubnevich, valuable friend, hard worker in service to the Lord and blessed heart who, from the Chancery, did much of the translating and arranging of details for the group. The priests from local churches and the hospitality extended to the twelve of us was extraordinary! All in the Name of the Lord!

We travelled southeast of Uzhorod to the tiny village of Boronyavo where a large pilgrimage is held each year on August 2, the Feast Day of Saint Elias. Our small group was among the over two thousand faithful present in Boronyavo arriving with devotion to honor and pray to the Mother of God, and God, Our Father. The small Basilian Monastery outside the village of Boronyavo is the site each year where the pilgrimage was held. After the Divine Liturgy under the hot August sun concluded, the group was invited by Bishop Milan Sasik, Eparch of Mukachevo, to join with the celebrating Hierarchs and clergy and religious in a great banquet offered at the Refectory, the monks' dining room at the monastery. Spiritually nourished, and pleasantly full from a generous meal of many courses, we departed from the monastery at Boronyavo with our gifts and that of the Icon of Our Lady of Boronyavo, the *Boronyovskaya*, each tucked under our arms.

Further east, one evening we sat under the stars on the mountaintop in Myzhhirya (although shrouded in fog), we knew that the stars were just above us! We, along with our Bishops, ate, relaxed, sang, danced, laughed and shared in the hospitable moment of the evening. Again, we met more of the local faithful including the mayor of the town of Myzhhirya! Father Fedyir, the pastor of the village parish, and his family were hard at work cooking and making sure we were well satisfied with everything, always beaming with smiles-- universal in its splendid translation.

Many were the moments of quiet thoughts, divinely inspired. Seeing our old Cathedral of Mukachevo in Mukachevo city and visiting the Monastery outside the city brought back memories of our ancestors' footsteps worshipping on these very grounds that we were presently visiting. We visited the new church in Sojmy; Bishop Milan Sasik showed us another newly rebuilt church outside of Boronyavo. We saw numerous wooden churches built in the 18th century, some Gothic in style, with towers seeming to spiral to heaven! Not only did we spend some time at the Seminary in Uzhorod, the +Blessed Theodore Romzha Academy of which Very Reverend Taras Lovska is Rector, but we travelled on to Chust, to visit and meet those at the minor seminary there.

This is our faith-- our faith that has continued to survive despite its numerous persecutions through the centuries. Our faith in action bridges the continents that are divided by vast oceans. Ours is a faith, a living, vibrant faith that we are each called to pass along from generation to generation.

So, I continue to reflect on this momentous pilgrimage of 2010. And, I begin to plan another for 2011--this time to celebrate +Blessed Theodore Romzha's 100th Anniversary of his birth. In June, 2011, we will travel to Velykyj Byckiv, Romzha's childhood home, to Nyznij Bystryj to see Romzha's Church. And, to Ivanovce, to visit the site of his martyrdom.

Our friendships are strengthened and will continue, on both sides of the ocean. I have no doubt. The distance measured in miles begins to shrink. All, brothers and sisters united in Christ, are we!