



Galician (Ukrainian) immigrants on arrival in Quebec, circa 1911.

SHEPHERDS FOR THE FLOCK

100 years of a Distinct Hierarchy for Ukrainian Catholics in Canada
 BY ARCHBISHOP LAWRENCE HUCULAK, O.S.B.M.

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December 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the first bishop for the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Canada, Bishop (later Blessed) Nykyta Budka. To help mark this historic event, Ukrainian Catholic bishops from around the world will gather in Winnipeg in September of 2012 to hold their annual Synod.

The Ukrainian people began to settle in Canada from 1891. Although they brought little with them as they began a new life in this new land, one possession that they did bring was their ancestral Christian faith. The majority of immigrants from what are today considered Ukrainian lands were members of the Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic Church. And even though they quickly began to construct churches on Canadian soil, they initially lacked their own priests, religious sisters and bishops.

The traditional date for the reception of Christianity in the Ukrainian ancestral lands of Kyivan-Rus is the year 988. Christianity came to their forebears primarily from the Church of Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire. Thus the Christian message was received in Kyivan-Rus in the Greek language and according to the liturgical rites and discipline of the Byzantine Church. Although initially the Church of Constantinople and the Church of Rome were in Eucharistic communion, this union was later ruptured, and the effects of this lost union were also felt in the lands of Kyivan-Rus.

However, in the year 1596 bishops of the Church of

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'The first hierarch was Bishop Nykyta Budka.'

On a visit at summer children's camp: Metropolitan Lawrence Huculak, o.s.b.m. Archbishop of Winnipeg, on right, with Father Greg Zubacz, on left.

Kyivan-Rus reunited with the Church of Rome. Since that time what is now known as the Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic Church has remained in Eschastic communion with the Church of Rome, maintaining at the same time its own liturgical rites, church calendar, canonical discipline and church hierarchy—its own bishops!

Thus, when the Ukrainian settlers came to Canada they could not identify with the well-established Roman Catholic Church including the Roman Catholic bishops. By 1902, the first permanent Ukrainian clergy and religious sisters arrived in Canada to serve the settlers. But in spite of the dedication of the pioneer clergy and religious sisters, the need for a bishop of the Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic Church was direly felt.

After numerous pleas from the early settlers, and much discussion between Church officials in Rome, Ukraine and Canada, the

Holy See appointed a bishop in 1912 to take charge of all Ukrainian Catholic faithful across the dominion of Canada. The first hierarch was the young Bishop Nykyta Budka. He was confronted with a huge geographical territory, with language and cultural barriers for himself and his faithful, a new political system, and numerous never-ending challenges. Included among these challenges was the questioning of the Roman Catholic bishops and faithful of the co-existence of another "Catholic" bishop in the same territory.

After Bishop Budka's return to Europe in 1927 the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Canada continued to grow and develop. From the initial single exarchate [a mission-style jurisdiction] for all of Canada, in 1956 the country was divided into three eparchies with their own bishops, and an archeparchy with an archbishop. In 1974, a fourth eparchy was added. Bishop Budka's original cathedral

city was Winnipeg; today, this is the seat for the metropolitan archbishop. His four suffragan bishops have cathedral sees in Edmonton, Toronto, Saskatoon and New Westminster. Together, they make up the Metropolitan Province of Winnipeg. They continue to use their own Byzantine Ukrainian liturgical rites, church calendar, and are governed according to the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, promulgated by Pope John Paul II in 1990.

With the passage of time and the expansion into various eparchies the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Canada has been served—and is served—by numerous bishops. The initial five bishops following Bishop Budka were also born in Ukraine, followed by 18 other bishops who have been born in Canada. They

have been called to episcopal ministry not only for the Ukrainian Church in Canada but also in England, the United States, France and Australia.

From the early doubts and skepticism concerning the co-existence of Churches that were distinct yet part of the same universal Catholic Church, the lived experience of the Ukrainian Catholic and Roman Catholic Churches in Canada has enriched the life of the People of God. Indeed, the shepherds have watched over not only the flocks assigned to them, but have united in their oversight for the entire People of God in Canada.

Archbishop Lawrence Huculak, of the Order of St. Basil the Great (O.S.B.M.), is Ukrainian Eparchial Archbishop of Winnipeg, Manitoba.



Summer catechism class at Sacred Heart Ukrainian Catholic Church in Rosburn, Manitoba: Religion teachers Sister Yvonne Kabay, s.s.m.l., back row left, Sister Ruth Aney, s.s.m.l., right, and pastor Father Mykhaylo Khomitsky, middle, with children receiving religious instruction.