

Pope celebrates baptism of Kievan Rus together with the Ukrainians

by Irene Beaudry and Luba George

In defiance of Muscovite attempts to present the “Russian” Millennium as “theirs,” Pope John Paul II celebrated in Rome with 10,000 Ukrainian emigrés the 1000th anniversary of the Christianization of Kievan Rus, which occurred some 150 years before Moscow was founded, and almost two centuries before the principalities, including Moscow, which then existed in what is now Russia, converted to Christianity.

On July 10, Pope John Paul II bestowed his apostolic blessing on 8-10,000 Ukrainian pilgrims gathered at St. Peter’s for the Millennium of Christianity in Kievan Rus—the Ukraine. The service was the highlight of a five-day commemoration which brought Ukrainian Catholics to Rome from all over the world including Poland, Yugoslavia, Western Europe, and North and South America. The Pope told the gathered crowd, “With all my heart I embrace all of you and together with you, the entire Ukrainian nation; and I embrace all of you with the kiss of peace as your brother and the first Pope of Slavic descent in the history of our Church. Together with you, in spirit, I travel to the Kievan hill overlooking the Dnieper River, where St. Volodymyr stands. I fall on my knees before the icon of the Mother of God, Oranta, in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, and in her care I place the entire fate of the Ukrainian Catholic community. O, Mother of God, cover us with all of your protection and safeguard us from all evil.”

The Pope also spoke of how Prince Volodymyr, who is rightly regarded as the initiator and champion of the conversion of Rus to the Christian faith, accepted the religious rites and ceremonies of the East, but being aware of his position not only did he stand, till the end, for the “unity of the whole Catholic Church,” but also took great care to develop and maintain cordial relations between the Apostolic See and his own state. The Pope also referred to the Metropolitan of Kiev, Isidore, who acted “in accordance with the oldest tradition of the Ukrainian Church,” when he signed the decree by which the Greek Church entered into union with the Latin Church at the Council of Florence in 1439.

On July 9, the Pope, Cardinal Myroslav I Lubashivsky (who resides in Rome) and 23 Ukrainian bishops from the West concelebrated the holy liturgy in the Byzantine Rite at

the Cathedral of St. Sophia, seat of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the free world. Located on the outskirts of Rome, it was established by the late Ukrainian Catholic Patriarch Josyf Slipyi in 1967-69. After the devotional service, the Pope delivered a homily in Ukrainian and Italian. His remarks were specifically addressed to the youth, including hundreds of Ukrainians from Poland and from throughout the free world. He also told the faithful: “The Millennium of Christianity is not only the pinnacle of one event, but it also begins the next act. We wish to begin the next 1,000 years of your Church and your people with a new spirit of hope.”

‘Filioque’ weapon against the Third Rome

The Ukrainian Catholic Church, it will be recalled, was persecuted in the Russian Empire under the czars, and it has fared no better under Soviet rule. A major symbol of national identity in the Western Ukraine and a church that has deliberately preferred union with Rome to absorption by the Russian Orthodox Church, it has been abhorred by the Soviet Union’s Communist government and the Moscow Patriarchate alike. When the U.S.S.R. regained control of the Western Ukraine at the end of World War II, the Soviet authorities wasted no time in enlisting the help of the Moscow Patriarchate to “liquidate” the Ukrainian Catholic Church. This was done by abolishing the the Brest-Litovsk Church Union of 1596 (which united the Western Ukraine with the Holy See) by the so-called “Lvov Council” in 1946 under Stalin. Ukrainian Catholics were forced, through terror, threats, and violence of every type, to submit themselves to the Patriarchate of Moscow and renounce their 300-year union with the Holy See in Rome. Earlier, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church had also been outlawed, because it refused Russification and to bow before the Imperial Russian Orthodox Church.

Since then, the Ukrainian Catholic Church has managed to survive in the underground as a “catacomb” church, complete with its own clandestine network of bishops, clergy, and religious schools. In recent years, the Ukrainian Uniates have been galvanized by the activities of their outspoken leader in Rome, Cardinal Iosif Slipyi, who died in 1984, and the election of the first Slavic Pope, who, despite tremendous



Ukrainians participated in a mass human-rights protest against Mikhail Gorbachov during the December 1987 summit in Washington, D.C. Inset: His Holiness John Paul II.

Stuart Lewis; Inset: U.N./Sam Lwin

pressure from the appeasers in the West and the Soviet authorities in the East, has, unlike his predecessors, spoken out loudly and eloquently in defense of the rights of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Despite harassment, over 5,000 Ukrainian Catholics petitioned this year for the legalization of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and announced the publication of a new Ukrainian Catholic *samizdat* (unofficial) journal *Hrystiansky Holos* (*Christian Voice*). Shortly before the Millennium celebrations and President Reagan's visit to the U.S.S.R., the underground Uniate Church's appeal for legalization was rejected. Five underground Ukrainian bishops (who signed the petition) were called in for questioning in Kiev and Ivano-Frankovsk by the KGB-linked Council for Religious Affairs. Under *glasnost*, persecution of believers in the Ukraine has increased.

When the Russians held their big Millennium spectacle in Moscow (see *EIR*, Vol. 15, No. 25, June 17, 1988), about 200 Ukrainians, defying State authorities, gathered around the statue of Grand Prince Volodymyr in Kiev. At the meeting were read poetry of Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine's "poet of freedom," and short speeches with excerpts from Pope John Paul II's 1985 Appeal to the Bishops of the Fourth Synod of the Ukrainian Catholic Church on the Millennium,

and quoting the Pope on the repression of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. An official from the Council of Religious Affairs protested when the demonstrators tried to light candles at the statue, claiming that it constituted an "illegal service." The militia and KGB filmed the demonstration but dared not intervene—Reagan was still in Moscow.

Recently, an unofficial Moscow-based journal, *Referendum*, reported that in effect, the Ukrainians have been conducting a cultural warfare campaign against the Soviet Empire and its continuing campaign to try to Russify and destroy the pro-Western and Catholic tradition in the Ukraine.

In its sixth issue, *Referendum* published an article titled, "Will the Ukrainian Church Be Legalized?" where a Russian Orthodox Church priest, Georgi Edelshtein, reports that the Ukrainian Catholics "have emerged from the underground. . . . There are Catholics who go to the Orthodox Churches but include ' . . . and the son' [*Filioque* in the Latin] in the *Credo* and use the greeting: 'Praise be to God—*laudatur Iesus Christus*.'" (The *Filioque*, an Augustinian concept, which uses the notion that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both God the Father *and from the Son* to stress that individual man had the potential to perfect himself and become God-like, was introduced into the *Credo* in the West to fight off Gnostic pseudo-Christian elements such as the "col-

lective soul" idea.) The situation, writes Edelshtein, has arisen because the state will not recognize the existence of the Ukrainian Catholic Church—since the Soviet government-sponsored Council of Lvov (1946) "liquidated" the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The article, the first of its kind by a member of the Russian Orthodox clergy, questions the validity of this council.

Next stop . . . Munich

Beginning with the Ukrainian "Millennium" celebrations in Rome, other spectacular anti-"Russian" Millennium celebrations have been planned throughout the summer. The Pope's messages to the millions of Ukrainian emigrés will be heard in West Germany, the United States, Canada, South America, Australia, and elsewhere.

On the weekend of July 23-24, the official Ukrainian celebrations of the 1,000-year anniversary of the Christianization of Kiev were held in Munich. Some 70,000 Ukrainians live in West Germany, refugees from Stalin's terror and their offspring. The Munich festivities were also attended by representatives of the Patriots for Germany (PFD), the political party in West Germany co-founded by Helga Zepp-LaRouche. The PFD issued a leaflet for the occasion: "For the Right to Self-Determination for All Peoples of Europe."

The leaflet had already produced a devastating effect earlier in July during the so-called "Ukrainian Weeks" in Bavaria, a Soviet government-sponsored event, arranged with the Bavarian government of Franz Josef Strauss and his party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), which sought to prove that life in the Ukraine under Moscow's rule is milk and honey.

The Ukrainian Millennium celebration in Munich highlighted the political war in West Germany between those committed to stopping at all costs a "New Yalta" sellout of Western Europe, and the cowardly forces represented in Bonn and Munich, who are bending over backward to accommodate to the Russian Empire, in the aftermath of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty sellout. The former category includes, of course, the exile Ukrainians, who know only too well what Yalta and Russian rule means.

A three-hour mass was held, presided over by Cardinal Lubashivsky, the chairman of the German Bishops Conference, Bishop Lehmann, and Cardinal Wetter of Munich. Attending as guests were several members of the West German government, who, in contrast to the Ukrainian freedom-fighters and the PFD, exuded the "Spirit of Munich," vintage 1938.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl, though Catholic, in his message to the gathering, didn't dare address the Soviet liquidation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, merely conveying how "impressed" he was over the "religious fervor" of the Ukrainian exiles. If Kohl was pathetic, Bonn Cabinet Minister Hans Klein, a member of Strauss's CSU, was outrageous in his address on that occasion. A "greeting" from a Soviet Central Committee member could not have been much

different. Klein warned the Ukrainians against "stressing too much" their "differences with the Russian Orthodox Church," because, according to Klein, there is now "more religious freedom" in the Soviet Union.

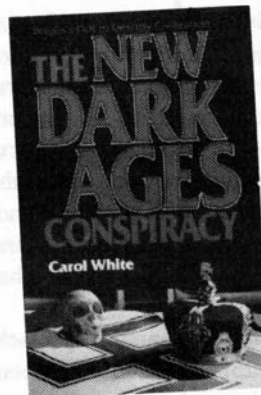
The CSU's betrayal of Western culture is now being rewarded with Russian pieces of silver. On July 23, two CSU members of the Bonn government, Agriculture Minister Ignaz Kiechle and Erich Riedl, a state secretary in the Economics Ministry, arrived in Moscow. Riedl arrived at the head of a delegation from the Bavarian aerospace firm MBB (Messerschmidt), which does final assembly of the Airbus. Contracts are expected before the end of this year.

The diametrically opposite way in which the two Ukrainian Millennium celebrations were treated by the host parties, in Rome (the Pope) and in Munich (the cowardly New Yalta forces), encapsulates the situation in the West. However, the pathetic attempts by Bonn government representatives to play down the Ukrainian Millennium mean nothing in the light of history. What will go down in history with honor is the courageous stand by the Pope, a moral giant who represents hope. In that light, 42 years after Stalin had ordered the liquidation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, the very fact that its parishioners, in the West and underground inside the Soviet Union, have never lost hope, as witnessed by the Rome and Munich celebrations, ought to inspire all of us.

'If a black death could spread throughout the world once in every generation, survivors could procreate freely without making the world too full. The state of affairs might be unpleasant, but what of it?'

—Bertrand Russell

This evil is from the father of the peace movement—find out what the rest of them think.



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