

**A SHORT HISTORICAL OUTLINE  
of the  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
OF CANADA (UOCC)**



**ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
90th ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHURCH  
(1918 – 2008)**

by  
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## **THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF CANADA**

*The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC) encompasses 273 congregations organized into 61 parishes or parish districts in three dioceses, 69 active priests, 23 retired priests, 3 deacons, and approximately 30,000 faithful. The headquarters of the UOCC are in Winnipeg, where the presiding Metropolitan of the Church who bears the title "Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Diocese and Metropolitan of Canada". The Eastern Diocese is based in Toronto and the Western Diocese is based in Edmonton. The Central Administration of the Church is located at the Consistory Building in Winnipeg. The Church publishes a monthly newspaper "Visnyk – The Herald" (since 1924) and the annual "Ridna Nyva" almanac. The Church operates a church book, icon and supply house called "Consistory Church Goods Supply", and also has a theological College – St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg, located on the campus of the University of Manitoba.*

*The UOCC is in communion with the world family of Orthodox Churches and is under the omophorion of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The UOCC follows the unbroken 2000 year historical tradition and teachings of Christianity as well as the 1000 year tradition of Orthodoxy in Ukraine (founded in 988).*

*The UOCC, in unity with all Orthodox Christian Churches, believes itself to be part of the "One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church" founded by Jesus Christ and proclaiming the same authentic apostolic faith which was originally preached at Pentecost. The Church has as its foundation "Holy Tradition" which is the continued presence and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, witnessed to and manifested in the Holy Bible, as well as in the writings of the fathers of the church, lives of the saints, the decrees of the ecumenical councils, the liturgical tradition, holy images, and sacred canons. The Bible, which is composed of the divinely inspired books written by the prophets, apostles and saints, is the central and most authoritative source of Holy Tradition. It is not to be interpreted by personal or private opinion but depends on the trustworthy consensus of the entire Church, especially the writings of the Holy Fathers. The Orthodox Church encourages and places great emphasis on the continual study of all these sources of Holy Tradition.*

*On the cover of this booklet is the  
"Icon of Mother of God of Canada"  
by iconographer Vera Lazarowich Senchuk*

*This booklet is dedicated to the*  
**UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX YOUTH**  
*and to the*  
**PIONEER**  
**METROPOLITANS, BISHOPS,**  
**CLERGY and FAITHFUL**  
*of the*  
**UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF CANADA**

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# INTRODUCTION

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (until 1990 known as the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada) has experienced a 90 year history in Canada which included the transfer of the religious tradition from Ukraine to Canada, four waves of immigration, five generations of Ukrainian Canadians and the integration of non-Ukrainians into the Ukrainian Orthodox religious tradition through intermarriage and conversion. This was all accomplished through tremendous love and sacrifice, unbending hope and the strong, dedicated faith of each generation of the church membership. The UOCC has had a most interesting 90 year history celebrating numerous glorious events, as well as experiencing difficult challenges, but the unity of the Church always prevailed through the collective action of the Metropolitans, Bishops, Priests, Church administration (Consistory) and the lay membership.

## UKRAINE

### The Origins of Orthodox Christianity in Ukraine – A Short Overview

The earliest record of Christianity in Ukraine refers to the tradition surrounding *St. Andrew the Apostle the First Called*. According to pious tradition, St. Andrew in his latter years, crossed Asia Minor and the Black Sea to the mouth of the Dnipro River, and traveled up the river to the present site of Kyiv. It is here that he prophesied that a major city with many churches and a strong Christian presence would be built. This narrative and the apostolic foundation on Ukrainian soil have played a major role in the psyche of the Ukrainian Orthodox people.

Ukrainian Orthodoxy with the conversion of its Slavic population has its origin in the second half of the tenth century. *Grand Prince St. Volodymyr the Great* (956-1015)

accepted the Orthodox faith for his Kyivan-Rus' state from the Byzantine Empire, the leading European Empire at that time, in 988. As such the Patriarchate of Constantinople became the mother church of Ukraine. The baptism of Rus'-Ukraine in 988 was foreshadowed by the conversion of St.



*Icon of St. Andrew,  
the First Called*



*Icon of Sts. Volodymyr and Ol'ha.*

Volodymyr's grandmother, **St. Olha** (890-969), the first state ruler to accept Christianity. From 988 to 1240, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was organized as the **Kyivan Metropolia**, headed by a Metropolitan who centralized the spiritual and organizational life of the Church. This Church was an autonomous ecclesiastical body within the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

In the first half of the 11th century the second great leader, **Grand Prince Yaroslav the Wise** greatly promoted Orthodoxy and saw the establishment of the St. Sophia Cathedral and other

churches as well as the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves. These two institutions have played a tremendous role in the 1020 year history of Ukrainian Orthodoxy. Famous saints besides Sts. Olha and Volodymyr of this period include: Sts. Anthony and Theodosius – the founders of monasticism at the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves, Sts. Boris and Hlib – the passion bearers and first martyrs of Ukraine, and St. Ilarion – the first Ukrainian Metropolitan of Kyiv.

After the destruction of Kyiv by the Tartars in 1240, the Kyivan metropolitans moved north while the centre of Ukrainian political and religious life moved to the west – to the Halych-Volhynian state. Here a **Halych Metropolia** was established and flourished, and eventually this western Ukrainian territory was incorporated into Lithuania and later the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the XV c.

The close attachment of Ukrainians to the Orthodox Church as well as their geographic location, occupying the eastern portion of the Polish Lithuanian state, led to a strong self identity that would serve them well. Here the Kyivan Metropolia was restored in 1458/1470 and later re-established in the capital of Kyiv. However, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church started to suffer much political, social and religious interference from the leaders of this state in the XVI c.

In spite of the difficult circumstances the Church found herself in, there arose a strong **renewal movement in the second half of the XVI c.** that included the tremendous support of the church brotherhoods, the establishment of schools of higher learning (Colleges were established in

Lviv and Ostrih), and the establishment of printing presses. A significant role in the defense of Orthodoxy was played by Prince Konstantyn Ostrozkyj. This reinvigoration would benefit Ukrainian Orthodoxy well into the future.

The Kyivan metropolia was divided in 1596 by the tragic Union of Brest, where a portion of the Orthodox bishops, including the Metropolitan of Kyiv, left the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and submitted themselves to the jurisdiction of the Pope of Rome, thereby creating the Ukrainian Uniate (unified with Rome) Church (later known as the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church). The Ukrainian Orthodox bishops who did not accept the Union remained strong in their adherence to Orthodoxy and maintained Eucharistic communion with the Orthodox Churches of the Christian east, notwithstanding the difficulties placed upon them by the secular and religious authorities of the Polish Commonwealth.

In 1621 the Kyivan Orthodox Metropolia was restored for a second time with the support of the Cossacks and the Kyivan Epiphany Brotherhood through the agency of the Jerusalem Patriarch, Theophanes, who consecrated a metropolitan and seven new Orthodox bishops in Kyiv. Within a decade the famous metropolitan **ST. PETRO MOHYLA** (1632-1647) accepted the leadership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and for 15 years worked diligently to renew the church by reinvigorating monasticism (especially at the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves), establishing a strong theological school (The Kyiv Mohyla College which later became an Academy), advancing publishing and printing, preparing new liturgical texts and regularizing the liturgical life of the Church as well as enhancing the status of the bishops and clergy. This is referred to as the **MOHYLA RENAISSANCE** in Ukrainian Orthodox Church history and its impact lasted into the XXc. In 1997, Metropolitan Petro Mohyla was canonized a saint by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

The St. Petro's successors, the metropolitans and the diocesan bishops, continued to provide pastoral care for the autonomous Ukrainian Orthodox Church within the Patriarchate of Constantinople for the next 40 years. However in 1686, the Kyivan Metropolia, headed by Metropolitan Hedeon Chetvertynskiy, was unjustly annexed by the Patriarchate of Moscow during the political leadership of Hetman Ivan



*St. Petro Mohyla.*

Samoilovych. Over the next century the spirit of Ukrainian Orthodox autonomy began to decline until the 1780's, when the Church officially became a set of dioceses within the Russian Orthodox Church. This loss of autonomy was a major blow to Ukrainian Orthodoxy, which in time became influenced by the north and Russified. The entire XIXc. was a dark age for the Orthodox Church in Ukraine, although the spirit of Ukrainian Orthodox autonomy survived in the small villages and towns, whereas the cities became considerably Russified. In this time period all of the metropolitans of Kyiv were ethnic Russians. Nonetheless, many liturgical, linguistic and cultural traditions of the Ukrainian people survived in the Church.

At the beginning of the XXc., two major church movements arose in Ukraine which paralleled the rebirth of the Ukrainian state (1917-18). The first was the movement towards *Ukrainian Orthodox autonomy* that saw Ukrainian participants request and finally obtain the approval of the Moscow Council of 1917-18 as well as the Kyivan Sobor of 1917-18 for autonomous status for the Church in Ukraine under the Moscow Patriarchate. The second movement was towards *Ukrainian Orthodox autocephaly*. A major movement to create a Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAPT) culminated in the Kyiv Church Sobor of 1921 with the election of Vasyl Lypkivskiy as Metropolitan. This last movement was very patriotic and had the support of nationally conscious lower clergy and laity but in terms of Orthodox Church polity was not recognized by world Orthodoxy. These two Church traditions lived side by side under the militantly atheistic Bolshevik regime, until the UAPT was finally liquidated by the Soviets in the 1930's. During the interwar period the Church in Ukraine experienced a strong challenge by the communist authorities, who attempted to destroy Christianity throughout the Soviet Union, including Ukraine.

A major area of Western Ukraine found itself politically under Poland after World War I and here the Ukrainian Orthodox Church with other minority Orthodox churches founded the *Orthodox Church in Poland*. In 1924 after the decision of an Episcopal Sobor and in consultation with the Patriarchate of Constantinople, a Patriarchal Tomos was published, granting the Church of Poland autocephaly. Here, especially in Volyn', Polissia and Halychyna, the Ukrainian Orthodox tradition was strongly invigorated between the two world wars.

During WWII, with the German occupation of Ukraine, two ecclesiastical jurisdictions emerged. First the *Autonomous Church of Ukraine* was headed by Metropolitan Oleksiy Hromadskiy, who considered his Church an

autonomous part of the Russian Church, but with the relations between them suspended because the “mother church” was subject to the Soviets. The second church was the ***Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church***, and was headed by Metropolitan Polikarp Sikorski. Its inspiration was the Orthodox Church in Poland. It claimed no association with the UAPTs of 1921 and attracted many of the nationally conscious Ukrainians. A number of bishops and many clergy and laity of these churches retreated to Western Europe and then to Canada, USA, and Australia after WWII.

When the Soviets came back to power in 1944, they incorporated many of the Ukrainian parishes in former Soviet Ukraine and Poland into the Moscow Patriarchate and organized them as an ***Exarchate***. Included in their numbers were the suppressed parishes of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church of Halychyna (after the shameful so-called “Lviv Sobor”, staged by the Soviet authorities in collusion with the Russian Orthodox Church in 1946). After the tenure of two Russian born metropolitans of Kyiv, an ethnic Ukrainian, Filaret Denisenko, was named Metropolitan in 1966. Although an exarchate, the Orthodox Church in Ukraine was severely restricted and controlled by the Soviet state and the pro-Russian leaders of the Moscow Patriarchate.

With the rise of “perebudova” and democratization at the end of the 1980’s, and Ukraine’s independence in 1991, a movement arose in support of the nationally conscious ***Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church*** that later divided into two jurisdictions with the establishment of the ***Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyivan Patriarchate***. Meanwhile the church of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine continued to exist as the ***Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)***. Each of these jurisdictions has its own particular ecclesiastical vision and position. In 1993 at the invitation of the government of Ukraine, the UOCC sent a delegation to Ukraine headed by Metropolitan Wasyly to dialogue with all three jurisdictions with the goal of facilitating unification. Significant dialogue occurred with representatives of each of the three jurisdictions, but to date the desired outcome has not been achieved. The UOCC continues to pray for the unity of all Orthodox in Ukraine, and the creation of a canonically recognized Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

## **CANADA**

### **Background to the Ukrainian Religious Life in Canada from 1891 to 1918**

Ukrainians began to arrive in Canada in 1891 from the Ukrainian

provinces of Bukovyna (south western Ukraine) and Halychyna (western Ukraine), which were both under the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They brought with them their strong Ukrainian religious beliefs – from Bukovyna the ***Ukrainian Orthodox Church*** tradition and from Halychyna (Galicians) – the ***Ukrainian Catholic Church*** tradition. This first wave of settlers were for the most part agriculturalists – farmers, searching for their 160 acres of free land and establishing the early network of



***St. Michael's Church—Gardenton, MB.  
—Oldest Ukrainian Orthodox church in  
Canada.***

towns along the southern Boreal forest belt (today along the Yellowhead highway from Winnipeg to Edmonton). In addition these settlers were possessed with a growing and positive sense of their Ukrainian roots, devotion to their Byzantine faith and liturgy and a progressive attitude towards their material and spiritual future. Many of them were known as “narodovtsi” or populists.

In Canada the two groups, Bukovynians and Halychany (Galicians), quickly began to construct church buildings. Nonetheless, the clergy needed for the religious life were not readily available. The Bukovynians turned to the Russo-Orthodox mission (affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church) for their spiritual needs while the Halychany turned to the nascent Ukrainian Catholic mission in the USA, or to the bishops of the Roman Catholic dioceses in Canada who often wanted to attach them to Polish parishes and clergy. The Greek-Catholics soon received aid from their homeland with the arrival in Canada of male and female monastics from Ukraine as well as Belgium, and French monks newly trained in the Byzantine rite.

The new immigrants had a tremendous attachment to the “Byzantine” or the “Greek” rite. Initially Ukrainians would gather as extended family and friends to pray in their homes without clergy. Soon thereafter they would collegially construct a church building – someone would give a few acres of land and everyone pitched in to build the simple multi-domed church. By 1914 there were some 80 such church buildings in western Canada. But the great problem was still the lack of permanent clergy. Some

parishes were lucky if a missionary priest visited them once or twice a year. This was much different than in their homeland where clergy were plentiful. This produced a longing for a return to the religious lifestyle left behind, but many of the appeals to the homeland fell on deaf ears.

In Canada besides the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic (at that time called the Ruthenian Greek-Catholic Church) and Russian Orthodox jurisdictions, other religious groups began to proselytize the Ukrainians, attempting to integrate them into their own church and /or to assimilate them through Protestantism. There were two major attempts to missionize Ukrainians in Canada in this manner.

First there arose the popularly known *Seraphimite Orthodox Church* (officially the All-Russian Patriarchal Orthodox Church). In 1903 there appeared in Winnipeg a self-proclaimed bishop by the name of Seraphim who, at the invitation of a group of community leaders (K. Genik, I. Bodrug, and I. Negrych), tried to form an independent and democratic Church without the controls of Roman Catholicism or Russian Orthodoxy. "Bishop" Seraphim (Stephan Ustvolsky) filled the immediate need for spiritual care that was lacking. He indiscriminately and quickly ordained as priests a group of cantors (diaky) and lay people who did not possess proper training, celebrated pompously the Byzantine rite services for a fee, and launched his "Tin can Cathedral" in north-end Winnipeg. Due to various indiscretions and problems with alcohol, he soon lost the trust of the masses and because there were issues with his proof of holding episcopal office, he decided to return in January 1904 to Russia to re-establish his formal "appointment". Upon his return in the fall of 1904, he found out that a coup for his leadership had taken place, whereby his synod members had removed him from office and had reconstituted themselves as another church – the Independent Greek Church. After the final departure of Seraphim from Canada, his notorious assistant and self-designated "bishop" Makarii Marchenko (self-titled as "Arch-Patriarch, Arch-Pope, Arch-Tsar, Arch-Hetman and Arch-Prince") continued to serve the quickly declining membership of this church for the next few years, but by 1908 had lost all his parishes and members. This attempt was a failure but did spawn a short lived contender for the allegiance of Ukrainians.

During the debacle of Seraphim's church, many of the same leaders began to court more formally the Presbyterian Church and its Manitoba College in Winnipeg. In turn the Presbyterians initiated their Canadianizing and assimilationist policy towards Ukrainians. Education at Manitoba College seemed like a great way to bring the Ukrainians into Protestantism,

however the Ukrainians also wanted certain characteristics to remain including the rich and meaningful Byzantine rite. Thus the name of the hybrid Ukrainian and Presbyterian Church became known as the *Independent Greek Church* (here “Greek” meant that it included the celebrations of the Byzantine rite). Curiously the name “Ukrainian” was missing in its title. The new Church was to be an amalgam of the Byzantine rite in ritual and worship, the administration was to be democratic, and the ministry was to inculcate the worshippers with strong evangelical values and high morality, especially in the sermons. This Church also espoused values that were anti Roman Catholic and anti Russian Orthodox.

The Independent Greek Church, born in January 1904 under the superintendence of Ivan Bodrug, soon launched a newspaper, ‘Ranok’, in 1905, began classes for future clergy at Manitoba College and established a unique catechism and prayer book translated into Ukrainian. By 1907 this sect included some 24 missionaries from within Ukrainian immigrant ranks in Manitoba and Saskatchewan and had inherited a number of clergymen from the Seraphimite Church. Their peak numbers were approximately 25,000 faithful. In the same year some of the funds for this church began to decline and Presbyterian control became greater. In 1910, a reformed worship service was introduced and it became obvious that the toleration of the Byzantine rite was at its end. The Presbyterians were hoping that the transitional period of the Independent Greek Church would carry the faithful into the mainline of the Presbyterian tradition. By 1911 the Presbyterian Church decided to liquidate the IGC parishes and bring them directly under their own presbyteries and thus began a quick decline in membership. Several other factors also figured prominently – Ukrainians recognized the open assimilationist policy of the Presbyterians, the Ukrainian Catholic Church began to be reinvigorated with the arrival of further clergy and their first bishop in 1912 and the Russian Orthodox Church was strengthened in Canada. By the mid teens the Independent Greek Church had lost most of its glamour for Ukrainians in Canada but the experiment proved useful in that Ukrainians saw the importance that freedom played in challenging the clericalism of both the Ukrainian Catholic and Russian Orthodox churches. The Presbyterians also underestimated the attachment Ukrainians had to their Byzantine liturgical and cultural traditions.

The *Ruthenian (Ukrainian) Greek-Catholic Church* in Canada was strengthened by the visit of Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytsky in 1910, and the appointment of the first vicar bishop in Canada, Nykyta Budka. By

1912, the church had some twenty one clerics – five Basilian monks, 8 secular celibate priests, 4 Belgian Redemptorists and 4 French monastics. These numbers were very small for the numbers of faithful and parishes spread throughout Western Canada. In addition, the favorite type of priest from the homeland, the married secular cleric, still was missing in Canada.

Through special decrees of 1890 and 1894, the Vatican had forbidden married secular clergy to come to North America and decreed that all Greek-Catholic clergy be placed under jurisdiction of the local Roman Catholic hierarchs. This double blow caused major problems for the church and was only slightly softened with the appointment of the first bishop. In another turn of fate, Bishop Nykyta Budka began to implement a very monarchical episcopal structure for his “new Ukrainian Catholic Church”. First he began the process of registering all the parishes in Canada under his episcopal charter (“Ruthenian Greek Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Canada”) and challenged the local lay trusteeship of parishes. Later he issued a constitution for his church (“Statutes of the Ruthenian Catholic Church of Canada”) and in 1914 at a clergy synod in Yorkton adopted a set of regulations known as the “Regulations of the Ruthenian Greek-Catholic Church in Canada”. All of these documents placed the Ukrainian Catholic Church under strict hierarchical authority, which disappointed and later infuriated the lay leadership of the Ukrainian community in Canada. In addition, the Vatican’s decision to make clerical celibacy mandatory for the Greek-Catholics in Canada, contributed to further deterioration in the relationship with the Ukrainian “hromada” (community).

The Ukrainian community in Canada had established non-sectarian institutions known as “bursy” (institutes or student residences) for the furthering of higher education for students in major cities such as Winnipeg (Adam Kotsko Bursa), Saskatoon (Petro Mohyla Institute) and Edmonton (Mykhailo Hrushevskyi Institute). Soon after the founding of the Petro Mohyla Institute in 1916, Bishop Nykyta Budka attempted to have this institution incorporated under his Episcopal charter. To counter this, the Institute was incorporated in 1917 under Canadian statutes. Thus a major debate arose in the community and in the press of the day. Each group defended its position – the community leaders refused to submit to the bishop and the bishop refused to recognize the secular nature of the “bursa”. This impasse became a symbol of the two different and diametrically opposite approaches to the Ukrainian community and religious leadership.

Meanwhile the *Russian Orthodox mission* in Canada which was ministering among Ukrainians was initially a diocese of the Russian

Orthodox Church in the Russian Empire. It enjoyed very significant financial assistance and support from the Russian tsars and church. In North America it had established itself in Alaska in 1794, and then moved to San Francisco in 1872. Later its headquarters were transferred to New York in 1905 where it established itself as a Metropolia with vicar bishops in several American centers and as well as with plans to have a vicar bishop's see in Winnipeg (mainly for the Ukrainians in Canada). This Church considered itself to have exclusive jurisdiction over all Orthodox in North America, including Ukrainians. In some areas in the USA and Canada they brought entire parishes of Greek-Catholics to Orthodoxy due to the insensitivity and lack of understanding Roman Catholic bishops demonstrated toward the particular needs and issues of Greek-Catholics, such as married clergy and different ritual practices. The Russian Orthodox mission was popular at first with the Bukovynian Ukrainian population but lost favour at the end of the 1910's and early 1920's. A major blow to the Russian mission resulted from the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 that ideologically separated the state from the church, following which all financial support from Russia ceased.

Considering this complicated quarter century situation in the religious life of the Ukrainian Canadian community, it was only a matter of time before the lay leadership would stand up to launch a new initiative. The "narodovtsi", the lay leaders of the movement were characterized by their loyalty to the masses, their open espousal of a strong Ukrainian cultural identity and intense opposition to clericalism. They strongly believed in higher education and many became teachers or other professionals in order to mould the masses into an identifiable "ethnos". They were active defenders of Ukrainian culture and heritage, and strong believers of Ukrainian community institutions which promoted bilingual English-Ukrainian schools on the prairies and had established the popular newspaper "Ukrainskyj Holos" (Ukrainian Voice) in 1910 which popularized their ideas. This was the first newspaper in North America to use the name "Ukrainian" in its title.

The "narodovtsi" were very active participants in the religious debates. They generally disliked the four major Ukrainian religious traditions in Canada and were searching for new options. They could not tolerate non-Ukrainian clergy and refused to have the incorporation of churches and other community institutions under episcopal charters. In addition they desired married secular clergy and were skeptical of hierarchical leadership – they preferred shared leadership (with a strong role for the laity) and co-operative community ventures.

Having raised these issues, the 'narodovtsi' began to rally in the mid-1910's for "a return to the faith of the forefathers" and to establish a "Ukrainian National Church". Some even suggested a national and democratic church modeled on the Polish National Catholic Church, which broke with the Vatican and the Papacy in 1878. The leaders of this movement were three prairie laymen – *Wasył Swystun* (1893-1964) - first rector of the Petro Mohyla Institute 1916-1921 and later lawyer, *Mykhailo Stechishin* (1888-1964) – a law student in Saskatoon and later prominent lawyer/judge, and *Wasył Kudryk* (1880-1963) - editor of "Ukrayinskyj Holos" newspaper from 1910-1921 and later priest of the UGOCC.

Many of these leaders were following the events of 1917-1924 in Ukraine where the Ukrainian independent state was formed (although only for a short period) as well as the autonomist and autocephalist movements within the Orthodox Church in Ukraine. Lastly the leadership became interested in various chapters of Ukrainian history and religiosity, especially the the Kyivan Rus' (X-XIIIc.) and Cossack (XVI-XVIIIc.) periods. This orientation eventually would push the envelope in the direction of recreating or restructuring on Canadian soil the historic "Ukrainian Orthodox Church".

### **The Period from 1918 to 1924**

In 1918 a very special event occurred that is often referred to as the rebirth of the Ukrainian Orthodox tradition on Canadian soil. On July 18-19, 1918 a confidential meeting ("dovirochni narady") was called by thirty prominent lay leaders, headed by Wasył Swystun and held in Saskatoon with the attendance of some 154 delegates from the three prairie provinces. These representatives, were all considered to be politically "narodovtsi" – better educated, a considerable number were teachers, small business men or successful farmers, many were members of Mohyla Institute, were very dissatisfied with the direction taken by the Ukrainian Catholic Church and their bishop Nykyta Budka, as well as the Russian Orthodox mission in Canada. Most were formerly from Halychyna and a smaller number were originally from Bukovyna. Together they initiated a major paradigm shift in the religious life of the Ukrainian community of Canada.

They gathered to discuss the "Ukrainian Church Issue" and quickly, after three fiery speeches and a condemnation of Bishop Nykyta Budka, decided "to organize a Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Brotherhood" so as to later organize the "Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada" based on 6 key principles:

1. The Church will be in communion with other Eastern Orthodox Churches and will accept the same dogmas and the same rites,
2. The priests will be married,
3. The property of each congregation shall belong to its members who shall be responsible for it (trustee ownership),
4. The General Council (Sobor) of priests and delegates of congregations and brotherhoods shall elect bishops from among qualified candidates,
5. Appointment and dismissal of priests shall be with the consent of the congregations, and
6. To fulfill the aims and objectives of this conference, it is resolved to organize the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Brotherhood which was charged with:
  - a. Incorporating the newly formed Church in Canada,
  - b. Establishing a Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Seminary,
  - c. Organizing Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox congregations,
  - d. Providing priests for congregations and
  - e. Preparing for and calling for a General Council (Sobor) of members of this Church to complete its organization.

This ambitious program was to be led by a group of nine elected well known laymen – three from each province – and was to be referred to as the “presidium”, chaired by Wasyl Swystun. Their task was to guide and plan the affairs of the brotherhood and prepare for the first Sobor. The first Sobor came about six months later on Dec. 28, 1918 and was also held in Saskatoon. At this time the members approved the formal establishment of the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada and agreed to draft a church statute and charter.

The major tasks for the young church were enormous – a bishop had to be found, clergy from sympathetic followers of the Russian Orthodox mission or the Greek-Catholic Church had to be absorbed, and a seminary was to be established to prepare their own new cadres of clergy. In addition the task of accepting parishes from other churches or establishing new ones and establishing a financial base were daunting challenges. Meanwhile polemical attacks against the “new church” which was termed “an illegitimate creation” were becoming prevalent, especially in sermons and the press of the day. However, the Brotherhood defended itself primarily through the pages of “Ukrayinskyi Holos” and fired back against the episcopal and clerical authoritarianism of the Greek-Catholics. Many of the populist “narodovtsi” influenced the general popular masses to accept the new reality and defended the progressive and democratic actions of the “1918 event”.

One of the early tasks for the new church was to seek out a bishop as the spiritual head of the Church and within the system of apostolic succession of Orthodoxy. All canonical Orthodox churches are unified in their hierarchical structure which is dependent on the office of bishops and thus legitimizes these churches. At first the Ukrainian leaders decided to convince Ukrainian minority circles of the Russian Orthodox mission to join and attempts were made to convince their bishops to accept the spiritual leadership of the young Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada. Initially several of these agreed to assist such as Archbishop Alexander Nemolovsky and later Metropolitan Platon (he had just returned to America after the Bolshevik Revolution), but they quickly reneged because their church policy was opposed to the Ukrainian “nationalist” church and culture. If anything, they wanted to incorporate this new ecclesial body into the Russian Orthodox Church. This brought further strong opposition from the Ukrainian Greek-Catholics.

Within the second year of its establishment, news was received in Canada that Metropolitan Germanos Shehadi of the Patriarchate of Antioch (one of the earliest churches of Christendom) was willing to dialogue with the leadership of the new church. The talks were successful and at the Second Sobor of the Church, held in three cities – Winnipeg (Nov. 27, 1919), Edmonton (Dec. 4, 1919), and Saskatoon (Dec. 11, 1919), he was approved as the first hierarch of the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada until such time as a Ukrainian Orthodox bishop could be found. The Church now had a bishop and five clergy that had left the Greek-Catholic and Russian Orthodox Churches. They would soon be joined by the first graduates of the Saskatoon seminary (established in November 1919 and headed by Father Lazar German) – Frs. Semen Sawchuk, Dmytro Stratyckuk and Petro Sametz (all three were ordained by Metropolitan Germanos in 1920).



*Metropolitan Germanos Shehadi.*

The early leadership of the Church and the Brotherhood was headed by Wasyl Swystun and its Consistory. In 1920, newly ordained Father Semen Sawchuk became the secretary of Consistory of the fledgling Church. Wasyl

Swystun and Fr. Sawchuk would labour tirelessly for the next two decades on behalf of the Church.

The third Sobor of the Church, in November 1920, again held on successive weekends in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Edmonton, and now with a bishop and some seven clergymen, began to lay the groundwork for an effective church structure and identified several priorities – to increase the number of clergymen, to establish an official church organ or publication, and to make contact with the leaders of the rising church movements in Ukraine and Poland. On this last issue, Fr. Semen Sawchuk in 1921 quickly began corresponding with Prof. Ivan Ohienko, a leading Slavic Orthodox specialist living in Poland to recruit a bishop for the Canadian Church and up to 10 additional priests. Within a year Fr. Sawchuk became the administrator of the Church and was dispatched to Europe to fulfill the needs of the young Church in Canada, especially to find a canonical bishop. This proved to be a difficult task since the Orthodox Church in Poland (most members of which were Ukrainian) was just in its early years (it received its official autocephaly only in 1924) while the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Soviet Ukraine headed by Metropolitan Wasyl Lypkivsky (established at the 1921 Kyiv Sobor) was strongly nationalistic but due to the process of consecration of its first two bishops was not recognized as a canonical Church by World Orthodoxy. Thus no bishop candidate was found and only three priests accepted the challenge to come to Canada.



*Archbishop Ioan Teodorovych.*

Meanwhile the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA had decided to contact the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Ukraine and to request a bishop for America. Metropolitan Lypkiwskyi soon appointed Archbishop Ioan Teodorovych for this task and in late 1923 he arrived in New York. Likewise the Ukrainian Canadian Brotherhood led by Swystun and the Consistory, seeing the unsuccessful nature of Fr. Semen Sawchuk's trip to Eastern Europe, decided to support the candidacy of a bishop from the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church even though he was not canonically recognized. Thus at the fourth Sobor, held in Yorkton on July 15-16, 1924,

the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada elected Archbishop Ioan Teodorovych as its hierarch and asked him to share his leadership with the UGOCC although he resided in the USA (he in fact for over the next two decades spent the late spring and summer months in Canada, providing his pastoral leadership and visiting many of the parishes). This was not the canonical resolution of the issue that was initially pursued but was in fact the only possible solution to the difficult problem of obtaining a “nationally conscious hierarch”. The issue of Archbishop Ioan’s canonical status would not disappear and remained a challenge for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in North America for two decades.

Other notable undertakings during the first years of the UGOCC included the initiation of celebrating the Liturgy in vernacular Ukrainian (the first such liturgy was celebrated on June 18, 1922 in Saskatoon by Fr. Semen Sawchuk). Up to this time the Ukrainian redaction of Church Slavonic had been used. This move brought worship into a living linguistic Ukrainian tradition in Canada. Secondly, the UOCC decided to move its headquarters to Winnipeg in 1922 when Fr. Semen Sawchuk moved to this city for his pastoral and administrative duties. This move brought the UGOCC into the “capital of the Ukrainian community” and the center of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Thirdly, the UGOCC established its own organ and newspaper “Visnyk” (The Herald) in 1924. Its first editor was Fr. Wasyl Kudryk, former editor of “Ukrayinskyj Holos” (Ukrainian Voice) – the organ of the “narodovtsi” and also a newly ordained priest of the UGOCC (August 1923), and formerly an early lay leader of the movement.

This entire period was the great experiment in Ukrainian church life in Canada, but one based on the solid foundation of Ukrainian Orthodoxy. Most of the leaders of this period were in their mid 20’s and early 30’s and took upon themselves the monumental task of organizing and establishing the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada.

### **The Period between 1924 and 1945**

This exciting period is characterized by the continued growth of the UGOCC, with new parishes and new clergy. Many of the clergy of this period had large parish districts, sometimes they included up to 10 congregations that were visited in rotational order. Archbishop Ioan Teodorovych was well received by the Church and played an important role in the pastoral life of parishes and their faithful. His warm character and outstanding oratorical skills endeared him to the faithful. His hierarchical

visitations of parishes were major events in the calendar of Ukrainian Orthodox faithful and they often traveled long distances to be at his liturgical celebrations.

The Consistory of the UGOCC (composed of equal numbers of lay and clergy members) continued to provide substantial leadership for the UGOCC, especially during the absences of Archbishop Ioan Teodorovych. Fr. Semen Sawchuk was the Consistory administrator for the inter-war period and managed the affairs of the church in a very collegial and compassionate manner. Formerly as a student of the Petro Mohyla Institute and becoming a teacher before ordination as a priest, he was nurtured in the spirit of the “narodovtsi”. His well thought out organizational approach, superior oratorical skills, and high degree of diplomacy served him well in his Church leadership duties.



*Rt. Rev. Dr. Semen Sawchuk.*

One of the important endeavors in the latter 1920's was to have the Church officially registered by an act of government of Canada. Thus, in 1929, the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada was incorporated by the Parliament of Canada, and this was accepted by the 6th Sobor in Yorkton in 1930. The Church also had to continuously defend herself from further attacks from the Ukrainian Catholic Church and its press organ – “Kanadiyskiy Ukrayinets”. One such battle led to a decision in the Court of King's Bench in favour of the UGOCC in 1925. Nonetheless these polemical debates continued well into the 1940's.

The UGOCC, besides its challenges from the outside, also faced a major internal challenge in the 1930's and early 1940's. This was the conflict between two key early leaders of the church – Wasyl Swystun and Rev. Fr. Semen Sawchuk – due to major ideological and ecclesiological differences and personality clashes. Swystun was one of the founding fathers of the UGOCC and had a strongly driven, challenging personality and a very legalistic mind (he was an accomplished lawyer and brotherhood/consistory lay member). Fr. Sawchuk, was one of the earliest ordained priests and the administrator of the UGOCC and also had a strong and dynamic clerical leadership style. Together they saw the UGOCC as both a spiritual/religious and a national/social/cultural institution. However they differed in their

priorities for the UGOCC. Sawchuk desired to see a Church with a strongly functioning religiosity and faith system rooted in Ukrainian culture and the “narod” and a positive role for the clergy in it, with a balanced governance model based on bishops and a Consistory of both clergy and lay members (as found in the 1929 Charter of the UGOCC). On the other hand, Swystun challenged this position and desired to see a strong secular lay leadership within the perceived “democratic structure” of the Church, with a minor but very specific role for the clergy. This ideological battle soon came to a head at St. Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor in Winnipeg where both were parish leaders – Sawchuk was the pastor and Swystun was the parish council president. The differences were played out in polemical debates, personal writings, as well as accusations. Quickly this local debate engulfed the entire UGOCC and turned into a struggle for the leadership of the Church.

Within a short period another issue was added to the debate – the canonical or uncanonical “consecration” of Archbishop Ioan Teodorovych in 1921. In the early 1930’s, Archbishop Ioan himself began to raise the issue in the USA of “completing (‘zavershyty’) his consecration” or “reconsecration” due to the fact that the Orthodox world, including the Patriarchate of Constantinople, did not recognize the 1921 method of consecration. His former Church was by now liquidated in Ukraine, then under Soviet rule, and he was its only surviving hierarch anywhere in the world. Swystun was aghast at this intended move by Archbishop Ioan which he considered the abandonment of the canons of the Kyivan 1921 Sobor and a blow to the independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. He was totally against any thought of Archbishop Ioan being reconsecrated. Sawchuk and the Consistory’s position was also against reconsecration but they viewed the canons of the 1921 UAPT and its tradition as having no validity for the UGOCC (in fact they stated that this tradition was never accepted and acknowledged by the UGOCC) and that Archbishop Ioan was only a guest and independent hierarch of the Canadian Church.

The Swystun - Sawchuk issue reached a climax at the VII Sobor of the UGOCC in 1935 in Saskatoon. At this time Sawchuk reached a tentative agreement with Archbishop Ioan Teodorovych not to pursue reconsecration, to de-emphasize the Kyivan Sobor of 1921 and its canons and to maintain a strong emphasis on the unique character and nature of the 17 year old UGOCC. Swystun quickly attacked these positions, especially the validity of the 1921 Sobor and its canons. In the end the Sobor sided with Sawchuk and many of the early leaders of the Church. Swystun had lost the debate

and was now removed from the Church. Subsequently Swystun, some followers and the St. Mary the Protectress Cathedral formally withdrew from the UGOCC. This was the price paid for resolving the Church leadership crises.

The laity of the church, many whom were “narodovtsi”, decided to formalize their lay organizational life in 1927 and organized themselves as the ***Ukrainian Self-Reliance League of Canada*** (“Soiuz Ukrayinskykh Samostiynykiv v Kanadi” – in short the USRL or “SUS”). Eventually they brought under their coordinating body a national women’s association (“Soyuz Ukrayinok Kanady” – Ukrainian Womens Association of Canada – UWAC in English); a men’s association (“Tovarystvo Ukrayintsiv Samostiynykiv” –TYC or Ukrainian Self-Reliance Association in English); a youth association (“Soyuz Ukrayinskoyi Molodi Kanady” – CYMK in Ukrainian); the national homes (“narodni domy”) – “Soyuz Ukrayinskykh Narodnykh Domiv”; and the three Ukrainian institutes (Petro Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon, St. John’s Institute in Edmonton and later St. Vladimir’s Institute in Toronto). “Ukrayinskiy Holos” (Ukrainian Voice) was the unofficial press vehicle of SUS. Their ideology of “self reliance” centered on the ideas of self-respect, self-sufficiency and independence and was articulated by Myroslaw Stechishin and Wasyl Swystun. In their church endeavors, they supported the UGOCC. In the 1920’s and 1930’s, most of the Consistory members were also members of “SUS”. In many parishes the women’s organization and youth organizations were in fact almost exclusively the “Soyuz Ukrayinok Kanady” and “Soyuz Ukrayinskoyi Molodi Kanady”. For some SUS and the UGOCC were synonymous. They worked diligently for both their Ukrainian Orthodox Church and their Ukrainian culture and heritage.

Several other important highlights in the life of the UGOCC of this period include:

1. the celebration of the 950 years of Ukrainian Orthodoxy in 1938 (988-1938),
2. the continuous publication of the “Pravoslavnyj Visnyk”, later “Visnyk” (since 1924) and the publication of the annual almanac - “Ridna Nyva”. Both provided the Church with important religious information on Ukrainian Orthodoxy and the religious scene, national administration and local parish life and events in the life of the church’s membership.
3. The publication of the bilingual (Slavonic/Ukrainian) prayer book “Dobryi Pastyr” (“The Good Shephard”) in 1926 and again in 1933, unified the liturgical texts and practices for the Church and provided the “diaky”-

cantors and parishioners with much needed spiritual resources.

4. The disastrous economic and agricultural problems of the Great Depression (“Dirty Thirties”) also influenced and challenged the life of the UGOCC and its parishes. Often hard hit were the parish priests, who suffered the financial crunch of this period. Most church construction came to a halt and new projects were not undertaken during this period.

5. In 1933, Archbishop Ioan issued a pastoral epistle in regards to the news coming to Canada about the 1932-33 Holodomor in Ukraine. His carefully chosen words and his concern for the fate of the citizens of central and eastern Ukraine was very well received by the two generations of Ukrainians now living in Canada.

Generally speaking the period of 1924 to 1945 was the key period for both Fr. Semen Sawchuk and Archbishop Ioan Teodorovych. They were able to work around the key challenges for the Church and maintain the integrity of the guest bishop-consistory-clergy –laity collegiality. When Metropolitan Ioan Teodorovych of the USA participated in the 50th anniversary celebrations of the UGOCC in Saskatoon in 1968 as an honoured guest (after a 23 year absence from the UGOCC), he received a tremendous reception when landing at the airport and throughout the next three days. The faithful and clergy had not forgotten him, but recognized the tremendous importance that he played for two decades in the early period of the history of the Church.

The same can be said of Fr. Semen Sawchuk and his pivotal role in understanding the church members and leading the Consistory and the administration through some nine Sobors and Consistory Boards. His passionate speeches in the 1960’s and 1970’s on the topic of Ukrainian Orthodox Church history were most inspiring, especially since he was a participant in and contributor to the history of the Church. St. Andrew’s College in 1950 granted him an Honorary Doctor of Divinity (the first bestowed by the College) and the UGOCC elevated him to the highest degree honour of Archpresbyter (“Arkhy presviter”) also the first to carry this title. He was affectionately referred to as “Otets Arkhy presviter Doktor Semen W. Sawchuk”!

### **The Period between 1945 and 1988**

This period was greatly influenced by a number of important factors which contributed to the continued growth of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada. These included:



*Holy Trinity Metropolitan  
Cathedral—Winnipeg.*

1. After World War II, many of the Ukrainian Canadians who served in the Canadian Armed Forces returned home and many settled in urban centers. This contributed to the *urbanization* of the Ukrainian Canadian community and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Many new church buildings, including cathedrals in Winnipeg, Toronto, Edmonton and Saskatoon were rebuilt or established in major urban centers across Canada. In addition a number of priests of the UGOCC volunteered as chaplains in the Canadian Armed Forces and some were sent overseas. Of these one of the most active was Fr. Semen Sawchuk, who played an important role in England with the forces and later was a strong advocate for the resettlement in Canada of

many Ukrainian refugees that were in Western Europe.

2. Another important feature was that a significant number of displaced Ukrainian people in Western European refugee camps were successful in immigrating to Canada. Among them were significant numbers of Ukrainian Orthodox, many of whom once in Canada joined the UGOCC parishes or assisted in founding new ones, especially in Eastern Canada and the urban centers of western Canada. These “third wave” Ukrainian immigrants added significantly to the two previous waves and their offspring.

3. Among the immigrants were several canonical Ukrainian Orthodox bishops who had left Ukraine and Poland with their flocks. Many of these bishops wanted to relocate to the west, including Canada and the USA. The UGOCC leadership decided to sponsor some of these bishops because there was now an opportunity to have permanent instead of itinerant bishops for the UGOCC. Fr. Semen Sawchuk was asked to research this issue and traveled to Western Europe for this purpose in 1947. He initially thought of seeking out Metropolitan Ilarion Ohienko (whom he had consulted in the early 1920's while still a professor) in Switzerland, but Metropolitan Ilarion was not prepared to join the UGOCC. Subsequently the UGOCC received word that Archbishop Ioan Teodorovych had resigned from his archpastoral duties in Canada and thus the UGOCC was left without a bishop. Fr. Semen Sawchuk approached Metropolitan Polikarp Sikorski in Europe and came

to a general understanding to have Archbishop Mstyslav (Skrypnyk) come to Canada. At the Extraordinary Sobor of November 1947, Skrypnyk's candidacy was voted on and he was accepted as the hierarch of the UGOCC. To complicate matters, two months earlier, Metropolitan Ilarion (Ohienko) had arrived in Canada at the invitation of the dissident St. Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Winnipeg. There were now two Ukrainian Orthodox bishops in Canada, both in Winnipeg, each promoting a different orientation for Ukrainian Orthodoxy. This provoked feuding and polemical debate between the two camps, the much larger of which was still the UGOCC.

With Archbishop Mstyslav in place, a new internal leadership crisis arose in the UGOCC. The established clergy-laity leadership of the UGOCC, led by Fr. S. Sawchuk, locked horns with the new bishop and his hierarchical vision of the Church. The major issue between the two was that of leadership responsibility and the views on the division of labour between the Consistory and the hierarch. Sawchuk desired to continue the already three decade tradition of collective leadership with the offices of the bishop, Consistory and chair of the Presidium while Archbishop Mstyslav wanted major episcopal control with a strong hierarchical leadership and to de-emphasize the work of the Consistory (some even called this "monarchical episcopal control"). To a certain extent this was a "new world - Canada" vs an "old world - Ukraine/Poland" view of Orthodox ecclesiastical leadership. Soon another issue arose between them, that of inter-Ukrainian Orthodox and Orthodox relations, especially with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA. Sawchuk and the Consistory saw a limited need for it and wished primarily to consolidate and strengthen the UGOCC. Meanwhile Archbishop Mstyslav wished to develop and lead a strong diasporal Ukrainian Orthodox Church and initiated several projects for its success (he even began to play a role in the UOC of the USA without the approval of the Consistory, which infuriated the Canadian leadership). He especially saw the need for this leadership due to the destruction of Ukrainian Orthodoxy in Ukraine after WW II and in order to counter Soviet propaganda.

This crisis reached a peak by 1950 and Archbishop Mstyslav, recognizing his precarious position, decided to resign from his position as the hierarch of the UGOCC but left the final decision for the X Sobor in June of 1950 in Saskatoon. Here the issue was intensely debated and argued by followers and leaders of both sides (the early leaders of the UGOCC on the side of Sawchuk and the new third wave immigrant members on the side of

Archishop Mystyslav). At the end Fr. S. Sawchuk and his followers narrowly won the debate and accepted the resignation of Archbishop Mystyslav. Likewise the Sobor decided to continue its independent policy in church matters and to protect itself in the future, introduced the governance model of a *Metropolia* which was to consist of a metropolitan and two other hierarchs in three geographic dioceses.

Again the UGOCC was left without a bishop and still another search for bishops began in Western Europe. This time the Consistory decided to request Archbishop Mykhail (Khoroshiy) to become the Metropolitan and Bishop Platon (Artemiuk) to be the bishop (both were in Germany at this time). For the third bishop, they proposed the senior clergyman and stalwart leader, Rev. Wasyl Kudryk – the editor of “Visnyk” and formerly the early editor of “Ukrayinskyj Holos”. However at this same time, there also was in Winnipeg the learned Metropolitan Ilarion (Ohienko) who was in another much smaller jurisdiction that was quite hostile to the UGOCC. Notwithstanding this, some considered him as a potential candidate.

And so in July 1950, initial contacts were made between the Consistory and Metropolitan Ilarion. These were successfully concluded in 1951 and at the Extra-Ordinary Sobor of August 1951, *Metropolitan Ilarion* accepted the terms presented and was elected “*Metropolitan of Winnipeg and all Canada*”. *Archbishop Mykhail*, the original first choice for metropolitan, humbly accepted the position of Archbishop of Toronto and the Eastern Eparchy. The third candidate for bishop, Bishop Platon Artemiuk, unfortunately reposed in the Lord, and Fr. Wasyl Kudryk refused to accept monastic vows, thereby disqualifying himself from episcopal election. Thus the UGOCC had its first two bishops after a half decade of upheaval.

The Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada was officially formed with the election of a third bishop for the Church in 1959. The Rt. Rev. Hryhoriy Metiuk accepted the decision of the Consistory and was elected at an Extra-Ordinary Sobor in Edmonton. He was installed as *Bishop Andrew* of Edmonton and Bishop of the Western Diocese. In 1963 at another Extra-Ordinary Sobor in Winnipeg, The Rt. Rev. Boris Yakowkevych was elected as a fourth bishop with the title Bishop of Saskatoon and vicar of the Central Diocese taking the name of *Bishop Boris*. In 1975 he was elevated to head the Western Diocese in Edmonton (1975-1984).

Meanwhile the UGOCC chose another bishop for the Eastern diocese in the person of the Rt. Rev. Mykola Debryn, who was elected bishop at the XV Sobor in 1975. With the repose of Metropolitan Mikhail in 1977 *Bishop*

**Nikolai** became Bishop of Toronto and of the diocese of Eastern Canada (1977-1981). The Rt. Rev. Wasyl Fedak was chosen as a bishop in 1978 at an extraordinary Sobor and given the title Bishop of Saskatoon and Vicar of the Central diocese. In 1981 he was chosen Bishop of Toronto and the Eastern Diocese (1981-1985).

Two more bishops were elected by the Church in the 1980's. The Rt. Rev. John Stinka was elected Bishop of Saskatoon and Vicar of the Central Diocese at an Extra-Ordinary Sobor in 1983 in Winnipeg. In 1984, he was given the title of Bishop of Edmonton and the Western Diocese (1984-2005). Bishop John, later archbishop and since 2005 Metropolitan of the UOCC was the first Canadian born and educated bishop in the Church. Meanwhile the Rt. Rev. Yuriy Kalistchuk was elected bishop in 1989 at an extraordinary Sobor in Winnipeg and became the bishop of Saskatoon and vicar of the Central Diocese. In 1991 he became the Acting Bishop of Toronto and at the XIX Sobor of the UOCC in 1995 was confirmed as the Bishop of Toronto and the Eastern Diocese.

4. The UOCC also at this time was maturing as a major ecclesial presence in Canada and ***needed a theological College for the training of new clergy*** for the Church. After several decades of itinerant training in Saskatoon, Regina and Winnipeg, ***St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg*** was incorporated by a charter of the province of Manitoba in 1946 and was established in north-end Winnipeg. In its early life besides being a theological school, it also ran a residential high school and provided a summer Ukrainian religious, cultural and leadership program over a six week period for teenagers. The theological College was able to procure learned professors from the refugee camps who initiated a strong theological-academic tradition in Canada. These included Professor Petro Doroshenko, Metropolitan Ilarion (Prof. Ivan Ohienko), Prof. Dmytro Martynovsky, Prof. Leonid Biletsky and others.



***St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg.***

By 1962, St. Andrew's College and the UGOCC leadership decided to re-establish the College at the University of Manitoba. In 1964, the new St. Andrew's College opened its doors as a theological faculty (with four degree programs), college residence and a centre for summer high school courses in religion, culture and leadership. Within the

theological faculty, courses were also offered in Ukrainian studies. Beginning in 1972, St. Andrew's College became an accredited teaching center of the university and offered liberal arts courses for credit. Within a decade some 17 courses in Ukrainian Studies were approved and accredited by the University. As such in 1981, St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba agreed to create a Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies with a concentration in Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Studies.

The Faculty of Theology of St. Andrew's College with its four diploma and degree programs has produced over 205 graduates with 135 ordinations (mostly but not exclusively for the UOCC) in the past 62 years (1946-2008), including seven bishops. Among the Rectors, Deans of Theology and professors of St. Andrew's College over its 60 year period have been the Rt. Rev. Dr. S.W. Sawchuk, Metropolitan Ilarion, Metropolitan Andrew, Dr. Yuriy Mulyk-Lucyk, Rt. Rev. Dr. Serhiy Gerus, Dr. Pavlo Macenko, Rt. Rev. Dr. Oleg Krawchenko, Rt. Rev. Michael Yurkiwsky, Rt. Rev. Dr. Stephan Jarmus, Rt. Rev. Timofiy Minenko, Dr. Roman Yereniuk and Very Rev. Roman Bozyk. The College has published some 23 books and 26 scripts for courses and has issued fourteen volumes of the journal "*Vira I Kultura*" (Faith and Culture). In 1981, St. Andrew's College and the UOCC republished a facsimile copy of the "*Ostrih Bible*" on its 400th anniversary. This was the first complete Bible published in the Slavic world, prepared and printed in Ostrih, a city in the Ukrainian province of Volyn' which was a major center of learning.

5. The strong leadership of the UOCC in this period was under three prominent primates that included Metropolitans Ilarion (Ohienko) 1951-72), Mykhail (Khoroshiy) 1972-75 and Andrew (Metiuk) 1975-85.

***Metropolitan Ilarion Ohienko (1882-1972)*** was a well known and highly respected scholar and nation builder in Ukraine and Poland and brought this tradition to Canada in 1947. He was consecrated the bishop of Kholm in wartime Poland in 1940. In Canada for over 25 years, he published many volumes on Church history, theology, major figures of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, liturgics and continued his dedication to the field of Ukrainian linguistics. Among his major achievements, besides the creation of the Metropolia with its three dioceses, was the translation of the Bible into Ukrainian which he had begun in the 1930's and completed in the 1960's in Winnipeg, the editing of liturgical books, especially the two volume "Trebnik" (Book of Needs), editing of church journals and the numerous major pastoral visitations to nearly all of the major parishes and centers of his Church. For two decades he was the Dean and professor of the Theology



*Metropolitan Ilarion.*



*Metropolitan Mykhail.*

Faculty of St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg. During his metropolitanate the UOCC celebrated its 50th anniversary in Saskatoon in 1968, but due to his health problems and advanced age he could not attend. He fell asleep in the Lord in 1972.

*Metropolitan Mykhail Khoroshiy (1888-1977)* was a bishop in Ukraine, ordained in 1942, hierarch in the refugee camps of Bavaria after WWII and later archbishop of the Eastern Diocese of the UOCC (1951-1972), with his cathedral in Toronto. He was a close collaborator of Metropolitan Ilarion, whom he succeeded as acting primate in 1970 and metropolitan from 1972 to 1975. He was most dedicated to the Eastern Canadian diocese and witnessed much of the growth of the diocese in the 1950's and the 1960's. He is credited with the founding of 19 new churches in his diocese. His short metropolitanate was dedicated to continuing the work of Metropolitan Ilarion. In addition Metropolitan Mykhail wrote several theological and psychological volumes as well as articles, translated a number of liturgical books and composed liturgical music. He was known as a confessor of Orthodoxy, a zealous archpastor, a bishop of great humility and man of fervent prayer. He passed away in 1977.

*Metropolitan Andrew Metiuk (1898-1985)*, had come to Canada with Metropolitan Ilarion as a prominent priest and was a longtime bishop of the western Canadian diocese of the UOCC (1959-1975). He was the first bishop consecrated in Canada and diligently concerned himself with the growth of his diocese for a decade and a half. As a hierarch, he had a tremendous love for the youth of the church and on several occasions had the UOCC declare a year as the **Youth Year**, where all emphasis was placed on the upbringing of youth and



*Metropolitan Andrew.*

giving them greater responsibility in the Church. At the Faculty of Theology at St. Andrew's College, he taught sessional courses in the field of Patrology and Patristics. Metropolitan Andrew was a very pastoral bishop and metropolitan who visited and cared for each parish, each priest and every parish executive. He reposed in the Lord in 1985.

6. The Administrators and Chairs of the Presidium of the Consistory included the Rt. Rev. Dr. Semen Sawchuk (1922-1951 and 1955-63), Rt. Rev. Yeronym Hrytsyna (1951-55), Very Rev. Thomas Kowalishin (1963-1966), Rt. Rev. Frank Kernisky (1966-1970), Rt. Rev. Dmytro Luchak (1970-1980) and Rt. Rev. Dr. Hryhoriy Udod (1980-85). Each of the Chairs imparted their unique leadership qualities into this important office of the Church. Fr. Sawchuk, in addition to his many other contributions, saw the need for and initiated Consistory Church Goods Supply, Fr. Dmytro Luchak prepared the way for the new office building of the Consistory and the Consistory Church Goods which was officially blessed and opened in 1974 and Fr. Hryhoriy Udod was most passionate in preparing the Church for the celebration of the Millenium of Ukrainian Orthodoxy.

7. In 1980 at the XVI Sobor in Winnipeg, the Consistory proposed changing the name of the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of Canada (UGOCC) to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC). This proposal was accepted by the faithful of the Church, and was ratified by the Parliament of Canada, along with other changes to the Charter of the UOCC, in 1990.



*Consistory Building*

In general, the post WWII period was an era of great

growth, development and creativity in the life of the UOCC. The work accomplished in these 40 years prepared an excellent foundation for the future of the Church. In addition this period witnessed the repose of many of the early leaders of the church. Their labour, accomplishments and love for the Church are still felt today.

### The Period from 1988 – 2008



*Metropolitan Wasyly.*

***Yurij Kalistchuk*** (consecrated in 1989). With the passing of Metropolitan Wasyly Fedak in 2005, the dignity of Metropolitan was bestowed upon Archbishop John Stinka at the XXI Sobor of the UOCC.

The Chairs of the Presidium of the Consistory during this period included the Rt. Rev. Dr. Stephan Jarmus (1985-1990), Rt. Rev. William Makarenko (1990-1995 and 2000-2005), Rt. Rev. Dr. Oleg Krawchenko (1995-2000), Very Rev. Fr. Bohdan Hladio (2005-2008) and Very Rev. Fr. Gregory Mielnik (2008 - ). Their activities and leadership were very important for the success of the life of the Church. Among the

This period covers two decades and is associated most frequently with the person of ***Metropolitan Wasyly Fedak*** (1985-2005). After being consecrated in 1978 as a vicar bishop for the central diocese of the UOCC, he was subsequently elected Metropolitan in 1985 at the XVII Sobor of the UOCC. Being the first Canadian raised and educated bishop (he had come to Canada as a small child), he devoted much of his labour to the important issues and challenges of the Church, and spent much time visiting the various parishes across Canada. Assisting him in the Western diocese was the Bishop and later ***Archbishop John Stinka*** (consecrated in 1983) while in Eastern diocese the archpastor was Bishop and later ***Archbishop***



*Metropolitan John.*

major events and projects accomplished during these years we note the following:

## **1. Celebration of the Millennium of Ukrainian Orthodox Christianity (988-1988)**

The UOCC was the leading institution in Canada to celebrate the millennium of St. Volodymyr's acceptance of Orthodoxy from the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada began preparations for this important event early in the 1980's with a special committee. Celebrations, video and publication projects for the international, national, eparchial and local parish celebrations were initiated. In 1987 an Extra-Ordinary Sobor and Millennium celebrations were held very successfully in Saskatoon. The international and national celebrations took place in Toronto and Hamilton in 1988 and included an academic-theological symposium hosted by St. Andrews College, millennium educational programs, a major concert and a Hierarchical Liturgy. The liturgy was held in Copps Coliseum and was celebrated by 10 bishops, 70 clergymen, 4 deacons, a mass choir of three hundred singers and was attended by 7000 faithful. The Millennium Concert was performed by the best Ukrainian Orthodox Canadian choirs as well as soloists. The Millennium was an event that re-invigorated the UOCC and provided the faithful with a great opportunity to delve more deeply into their history and its major figures, personalities and events. Of major importance was the video prepared by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Ihor Kutash and his committee entitled "River of Joy - A Celebration of Ukrainian Christianity". This video received much attention in the UOCC, across Canada and internationally on television and cable.

## **2. Eucharistic Union of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople**

At the confidential meeting of 1918 in Saskatoon the founders of the UOCC had made a decision to be "in communion with the other Eastern Orthodox Churches". This position was strongly adhered to in the early years of the Church, as witnessed by the search and the choice of a canonical bishop. After WWII the search began again and was successful with the reception of canonically recognized bishops from Ukraine and Poland who had emigrated to the west. In the early years of Metropolitan Ilarion's tenure, the issue of eucharistic union with the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the "Mother Church" of Ukraine, began to be discussed. The Ukrainian

Orthodox Church received its canonical status in 988 from the Church of Constantinople, and the first 700 years of its history were intimately united with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Metropolitan Andrew continued to pursue the goal of Eucharistic union. In 1985-1990, at meetings of the Consistory and Council of Bishops, the issue was raised again and a special Inter-Church Relations Commission was created to investigate the issue. This Commission worked diligently and was able to confer and dialogue with the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and his staff. After three years of dialogue, at a special Extraordinary Sobor (Oct. 21-22, 1989), the report of the Commission was heard and a decision was made to proceed with the "Articles of Agreement with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople" and to initiate the establishment of Eucharistic union. On April, 1, 1990, the delegation of the UOCC officially accepted the "Articles of Agreement" in Istanbul at the Phanar – the office of the Patriarch of Constantinople, and Patriarch Demetrius II (1972-1991) concelebrated the Liturgy with the members of the UOCC delegation. These articles of agreement were presented for and again received approval at the 1990 XVIII Sobor of the UOCC. The Sobor, also in resolution form, made it clear that "in case of any internal-administrative conflict, priority is retained by the UOCC Charter and Constitution as a distinct Church body in a separate, sovereign state".

The Eucharistic Union and canonical recognition achieved by the UOCC in 1990 was based on sound theological and ecclesiological principles. It brought the UOCC into the world of Orthodoxy as a full-fledged member church and into communion with all Autocephalous and Autonomous churches. This act completed the process of the normalization of the status of the UOCC within World Orthodoxy, and gave the UOCC its rightly deserved place as a respected and honoured member in the family of Orthodox Churches.



*Patriarch Bartholomew I.*

In May of 1998, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, *Bartholomew I*, visited Canada for the first time and made major stops in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal. In Winnipeg, he was most warmly received by the faithful of the UOCC where he received an honorary Doctorate in

Divinity from St. Andrew's College, was hosted at a major Banquet and celebrated a Hierarchical Liturgy with Metropolitan Wasyly and many other bishops and clergy. This visit was truly a fitting tribute to the "Green Patriarch" (so-called because of his care and concern for environmental issues) and also honoured the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada on its 80th anniversary.

### **3. Support for the Orthodox Church in Ukraine**

The UOCC was always very supportive of the movement for freedom and democracy in Ukraine. Throughout the reign of the godless Soviet regime, the UOCC did all within its power to support both religious and human rights, especially those of dissidents in Soviet Ukraine. The movement of "perebudova" in the second half of the 1980's was welcomed by the Church, its press, and its' faithful. For a period of six years the UOCC was home to the dissident Ukrainian Orthodox priest Fr. Wasyl Romaniuk, who later returned to Ukraine and was elected Patriarch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyivan Patriarchate. The UOCC also watched and was encouraged by the development of the movement which began in 1988 for the renewal of the indigenous Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Ukraine. The formal declaration of Ukrainian Independence in 1991, needless to say, was greeted ecstatically by all members of the UOCC. The consistory, clergy, and faithful of the Church supported the independence movement for Ukraine and its Orthodox Church in all possible ways: first and foremost through prayer, through material assistance, by the donation and circulation of books, magazines and newspapers, and through visits to Ukraine.

Though gladdened by the newly-achieved independence of Ukraine and the religious freedom it brought, the fracturing of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine into three separate jurisdictions was and continues to be disheartening to the clergy and faithful of the UOCC. At the invitation of the president of Ukraine, Metropolitan Wasyly and a delegation from the UOCC visited Ukraine in 1993 to dialogue with all three Orthodox jurisdictions with the aim of contributing in some small way to the unity to the Church there. Although the delegation was not immediately successful in its ultimate aim, heartfelt, positive dialogue is never wasted. The UOCC has maintained a clear and strong position on supporting the establishment of an Autocephalous Local Church in Ukraine which would be recognized by and in Eucharistic Communion with World Orthodoxy. Through their prayers, visits to Ukraine, and dialogue with Orthodox leaders both in Ukraine and the diaspora the leadership as well as the general membership of the UOCC continues to work towards this goal.

#### **4. Anniversaries and Celebrations**

a. In 1991, the Ukrainian Canadian community celebrated the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the first two Ukrainians to Canada. This celebration was organized by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and the UOCC participated actively, drawing special attention to the religious contribution of Ukrainians in Canada.

b. The UOCC celebrated its 75th Anniversary in 1993 with special programs across Canada where the religious history of the Church was emphasized and pioneer leaders were accorded special attention. St. Andrew's College hosted a two day Conference on the theme of "The Ukrainian Religious Tradition in Canada". With the collaboration of the Rt. Rev. Dr. Ihor Kutash and his committee a video was produced entitled "Harvest of Faith" to honour this major celebration.

c. In the fall of 1996 the UOCC honoured the memory of the Metropolitan of Kyiv and Halych St. Petro Mohyla on the 350th anniversary of his repose (1646-1996) with symposia across Canada organized by St. Andrew's College (sessions were held in Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Toronto and Montreal).

d. In 2001, the UOCC celebrated the 50th anniversary of its Metropolia (created in 1951) and again St. Andrew's College hosted a two day Conference on this theme.

e. The memory of Metropolitan Ilarion was commemorated with liturgical celebrations and a Conference at St. Andrew's College in November of 2007 on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of his birth and 35th anniversary of his repose).

#### **5. Other Major Achievements**

The UOCC had a number of active standing committees during this period and each made major progress in their area of responsibility. Among the major successes were the following:

a. The Standing Committee on Religious Education worked very closely with the Ukrainian Women's Association in Canada and produced four volumes for the first four levels of religious education programming.

b. The Inter-Church Relations Committee prepared a considerable number of position papers and advised the Metropolitan and Consistory on issues pertaining to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Church in Ukraine and other Orthodox churches.

c. The Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by Dr. Natalia Aponiuk,

produced a major blueprint for the Church which was accepted at the 2000 Sobor. It was entitled "***Vision 2000: A Blueprint for the Future of the UOCC***". Special sections of the documents refer to the areas of spirituality, education, stewardship and communication

d. The Finance Committee made annual budgets and advised the Consistory of its financial status. It also put into place necessary policy and procedure manuals. In 2000 the UOCC created the ***Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada Foundation*** to manage and solicit major funds for future development.

e. In the 1990's St. Andrew's College initiated two major Chairs, the ***Metropolitan Ilarion Chair in Orthodox Theology*** and the ***Dr. Pavlo Macenko Chair of Ukrainian Church Music***. Both chairs were established to fund full time professors in the given disciplines.

f. To promote Ukrainian Church music, the UOCC hosted the ***Vydubychi Choir*** from Kyiv in 1997, which toured Canada with its repertoire of church music. The liturgical and concert tour was very well received throughout Canada.

g. The UOCC commissioned iconographer Vera Senchuk to write the icon of the "***Mother of God of Canada***" and copies were made for various important dignitaries visiting Canada, including the President of Ukraine, Victor Yushenko. Also a series of large icons of the "Mother of God of Canada", "St. Andrew the First Called" and the "Metropolitans of Kyiv" were reproduced and used as a major fundraising tool for the UOCC. In 2001, the UOCC with the support of UWAC, commissioned a series of art prints by Larysa Sembaliuk Cheladyn entitled "***Flowers of the Bible***" that toured as a major Exhibition and limited edition prints were sold across Canada. This was a major success with Orthodox as well as non-Orthodox attending the exhibits due to the universality of the Biblical theme.

h. The Liturgical Committee has been at work for the past decade and produced the bilingual "Molytovnyk" prayer book in 2000, the comprehensive "***Dobryi Pastyr***" prayer book in 2007, and the funeral book published in 2008. Other liturgical books, especially the booklets for the Holy Mysteries, are currently in the final phase of preparation.

i. For the past decade and a half, the By-laws Committee has been preparing an updated version of the UOCC By-laws, which will be presented at the Extraordinary Sobor in 2008.

j. The UOCC has been an active member of the ***Canadian Council of Churches*** since the early 1990's and a key representative from the UOCC has been Archbishop Yuriy who has served on the Governing Council of this body.

k. Aid for numerous social and environmental problems in Ukraine, Canada and around the world has been coordinated by the UOCC and donations have been conveyed to the various needy areas.

l. In the area of publishing, the UOCC continues to communicate through its newspaper – “*Visnyk*” (over 80 years of continuous publication), its “*Ridna Nyva*” almanac, and an excellent web site ([www.uocc.ca](http://www.uocc.ca))

Many new and innovative initiatives have been begun over the past 20 years due to new challenges and the fast pace of technological change. The challenges of changing societal dynamics and technological progress will continue to confront the UOCC into the future.

## **Conclusion**

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada celebrates its 90th anniversary in 2008 and stands as the 2nd largest Orthodox Church in Canada, with parishes in almost every province (273 church buildings—61 parishes or parish districts). It is a highly respected religious body, well known for its Byzantine-Ukrainian church architecture and iconography, polyphonic choral music, important religious, government, community and cultural leaders and outreach work in Canada as well as in Ukraine.

90 years after its founding, the UOCC continues to fulfill the great commission given by Christ to His apostles “to go forth, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you!”

Unto Him be the glory.



*Icon of Jesus Christ.*

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