

UKRAINIANS
their Rite, History
and
Religious Destiny

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FOREWORD

Many of us are apt to think of the Ukrainians as a distant and unimportant people, to be forgotten when the interest subsides. But that interest should grow and develop when we are given some informative facts. For instance:

- (a) The Ukrainians have had a distinctive Nationality from the Sixth century.

(b) Historical data shows that on several occasions they have saved European nations from invasions from the East and the South.

(c) There are now in the United States of America one million Ukrainians, and they have come to be recognized as a tower of National strength.

(d) With a population in the Dominion of Canada of half a million people, they are now the sixth largest racial group in this country.

(e) They have preserved their own language, customs and traditions, side by side with their American and Canadian citizenship which they ardently revere.

(f) Nearly three-quarters of them in Canada are Catholics, with their own Eastern rite, while most of the rest of us have a Western rite.

(g) The Ukrainians are specially fitted, and in an advantageous position, to spread the light of the true Faith among all the Slav peoples who have Eastern rites.

It is high time that the Ukrainians and all they stand for were better known to the American and Canadian people, because they are rapidly rising to a position of pre-eminence in both the United States and Canada.

I. ASCENDANCY OF THE UKRAINIANS

During the past century and more especially within the last few years, the eyes of thinking people the World over have witnessed a resolute ascendancy, and a tenacity of purpose, of that wonderful people known as the Ukrainians. They are recognized as an outstanding nationality by reason of their backgrounds of history, of education, of literature, of architecture, and last but most important of religion.

The historical events of a thousand years recall, and the records of the present World War prove, that Ukrainians have repeatedly saved European civilization. For whole decades during the middle ages, they were bulwarks on the fields of battle against nomadic tribes, and the Tartars and the Mongolians. Then, in the seventeenth century, the Ukrainian Cossacks together with another country gave such a blow to the Ottoman Empire, that the Turks gave up their plans to attack the nations of Europe. At the present time we see that once again the home-lands of the Ukrainians have been devastated, while they themselves are found fighting in the cause of freedom in the armies of the allied powers.

It is an historical fact that Ukrainian education was well advanced in the tenth century. Some of their battle poems have been used for 800 years. As far back as the eleventh century, the Ukrainians had a law codex, which served as a pattern for the governments of other nations. By nature and by instinct the Ukrainians have always been a deeply religious people.

In a word their accomplishments can be considered as the foundation rock, for uplifting the spiritual life of great groups of mankind. They will be a

power for world-wide development in the future, and their religious destiny has become increasingly apparent.

In the United States and Canada, the Ukrainian Catholics are called “Greek Catholics,” because they use the Greek Liturgy and strictly follow their own Eastern rite. It is important to observe that all of the various rites are precious and must be upheld. This statement requires some elucidation, and will be dealt with under another heading.

II. DECLARATIONS OF THE POPES

When we examine early Church history and rites in general, we find that some Catholic writers refer to the Church of the East and the Church of the West, which is their method of making comparisons of the branches of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, as it grew and spread in its early days. The Patriarchate of Rome was known as the Church of the West, and the Patriarchates of Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Constantinople were collectively known as the Church of the East. But the Pope in Rome has always exercised supreme jurisdiction, as successor in the See of Saint Peter, the first Bishop of Rome.

Evidences are clear and definite that both priests and laymen have been urged by the highest Church authorities to become proficient in the knowledge of our Catholic brethren of what are known as the Eastern or Oriental rites. Let us bear what the Popes have to say on this matter:

1. *Pope Leo XIII* in his Apostolic letter “*Orientalium Dignitas*” published on November 30, 1894 declared : “The maintenance in being of the Eastern rites is of more importance ,than might be imagined. The august antiquity which lends dignity to these various rites is an adornment of the whole Church and a witness to :the divine unity of the Catholic faith. Perhaps nothing, in fact, better proves the note of Catholicity in the Church of God than the singular homage paid by these ceremonies which vary in form, which are celebrated in languages venerable by their antiquity, and which are still further hallowed by the use that has been made of them by the Apostles and Fathers of the Church.”

2. The fifteenth centenary of one of the great Eastern doctors, St. John Chrysostom, (A.D. 407-1907) was the occasion for a solemn pontifical Mass in the Byzantine rite, which took place at the Vatican on February 12, 1908, under the presidency of *Pope Pius X*. In his letter promulgating this celebration the Sovereign Pontiff wrote on July 22, 1907: “May the, Easterns seperated from Us see and understand in what great and profound regard We hold all the rites alike.”

3. *Pope Benedict XV* on May 1, 1917, by his “*Motu Proprio Dei Providentis*,” created the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church, and stressed the importance of the event in these words: “The Church of Jesus Christ, since she is neither Latin nor Greek nor Slav but Catholic, makes no distinction between

her children, and these, whether they are Greeks, Latins, Slavs or members of other national groups, all occupy the same rank in the eyes of this Apostolic See.”

4. *Pope Pius XI* in his Encyclical “*Rerum Orientalium*” issued on September 8, 1928, requested Bishops and Religious superiors to give every facility in all colleges and seminaries for the study of Eastern questions, and in particular of Eastern rites. Here are his words: “By turning the minds and hearts of the students towards Eastern doctrines and rites not a little profit is to be expected for the Church... profit not only to the advantage of the Orientals but also for the Western clergy themselves. The latter will, in fact, obtain a more adequate knowledge of Catholic theology and of Latin theological disciplines, while conceiving a more ardent love for the true Bride of Christ, whose enchanting comeliness, and unity in the diversity of the various rites, will shine forth more clearly in their eyes.”

5. The present *Pope Pius XII* is taking a keen and abiding interest in the Ukrainian people. On May 21, 1939, at his direction, a solemn Triduum begun in Rome was concluded in the Vatican Basilica with services according to their own rite. This was in celebration of the 950th anniversary of the baptism of Saint Vladimir the great Ukrainian ruler.

All these celebrations and pronouncements show how near and dear to the hearts of the Pontiffs is the work of our fellow Ukrainian Catholics, who profess their faith and love of God according to their own Liturgy.

And when we make a minute examination of the tendency of the Ukrainians to spread to different parts of the world, while upholding the traditions that have been handed down to them for generations, we are convinced of their mission concerning the future of Catholicism.

III. GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

Let me now give a short survey of the Ukraine and its people. The word Ukraine means “outskirts” or “borderland.”

The country is very important industrially and agriculturally. It contains a very rich black soil, and produces wheat and other grains in abundance. Its mineral resources include coal, iron and manganese. The electrical power project on the Dnieper River is the largest of its kind in Europe.

The Ukrainians are a nationality of some 47,000,000 people, located chiefly in four continents, Europe, Asia, North America and South America:

(a) Their home lands, containing about 42,000,000 people Are located in South-Eastern Europe and embrace parts of four countries : Russia, Poland, Rumania and Hungary.

This territory extends from the Black Sea and the Caucasus mountains on the South to the Pripet marshes on the North, and from the Carpathian mountains on the West to the Caspian Sea on the East. While their lands have suffered on many occasions the ravages of war and partitionment, and their

sons have been subjected to banishment and enslavement, the Ukrainians in Europe have remained in a great cluster around the Rivers Dnieper and Dniester.

Toward the end of the 19th century, they began to emigrate to different parts of the world, bringing their culture and traditions with them.

In Asia, they now have a population of about 3,000,000. One large and prosperous colony is located in and around the Siberian City of Vladivostock on the Pacific Coast. Others have taken up their residence in Turkestan and Central Asia.

In South America there are some 140,000, with one large settlement in the Argentine Republic and another in Brazil.

(b) In the United States

In the United States they have a population of about 1,000,000, chiefly located in the industrial states of the North, including Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and the New England States.

In the sphere of religion, the Ukrainians in the United States have accomplished much in the development of the spiritual and intellectual life of that country. The fifth convention of the Ukrainian Catholic Youth League of North America was held in Pittsburg, Pa., on August 5, 6 and 7, 1938, and by its international representation, fittingly celebrated the 950th anniversary of Ukrainian Catholicism.

On October 22, 1942, an epoch in Church history took place when the Reverend Ambrose Senyshyn was consecrated bishop in Saint Nicholas Church, Chicago. He was the first Ukrainian bishop to be consecrated in the United States, and became auxiliary to the Most Reverend Constantine Bohacevsky of Philadelphia, the bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of the United States. The consecrator was Bishop Bohacevsky, and he was assisted by the Most Reverend Basil V. Ladyka of Winnipeg, the bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of Canada, and by the Most Reverend Basil Takach of Homestead, Pa., the bishop of the Greek Catholic Diocese of the United States.

IV. THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLICS IN CANADA

In the Dominion of Canada, there are now about 500,000 Ukrainians, spread from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, but chiefly located in the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Of these, approximately 350,000 are Catholics.

The first Ukrainians to come to this country arrived in the year 1891, and they proved to be excellent farmers. A few years later, the Dominion Government decided to bring in many settlers for their Prairie Provinces, and urgently requested these hardy farmers from Eastern Europe to come to Western Canada. They nobly responded, and leaving their homes, mainly in the Western

Ukraine, they poured into this country in thousands, and readily took to their new farm lands.

But it was soon found that these early settlers were unaccustomed to the religious regulations prevailing in Canada. The great majority were Catholics of the Ruthenian rite, and they came at first without their own priests. Then certain non-Catholic religious organizations tried to influence them. These things created difficulties which led to many problems. I would like to mention here, that these people are always known as Ukrainians, but their rite is called Ruthenian.

In the year 1910, Monsignor Sheptycki, the Ukrainian Archbishop of Lwow, visited Canada, and after investigating the religious problems of his people, advised the erection in this country of a Ukrainian bishopric, and his view was adopted in Rome.

In 1912 the Right Reverend Nicetas Budka was appointed the first Ukrainian Bishop in Canada. In 1913, "The Ruthenian Greek Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Canada" was incorporated by the Dominion Parliament. In 1928, Bishop Budka retired owing to ill-health, and was succeeded by Bishop Basil V. Ladyka, a monk of the Order of St. Basil the Great.

At present the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of Canada is administered by two Bishops: His Excellency Bishop Ladyka and his recently appointed Bishop Auxiliary, His Excellency Bishop Neil N. Savaryn.

Bishop Savaryn was consecrated in Saint Michael's Cathedral, at Toronto, on July 1, 1943. It was my privilege to be present on that occasion, to witness the profound ceremony of Consecration and the Pontifical Divine Liturgy, and to listen to the singing of hundreds of Ukrainians young and old who joined in the responses. It was no doubt a similar beautiful ceremony which influenced the Ukrainian King, Saint Vladimir, nearly a thousand years before, to adopt for himself and his people the Greek rite of the Catholic Church.

The new Bishop was born in Western Ukraine in the year 1905 and after his college graduation he entered the Order of St. Basil the Great at the age of 17, and was ordained in 1931. The next year he was sent by his Superiors to engage in Missionary work among the Ukrainian people in Western Canada. His activities were many, including teaching in the Seminary and writing articles for the Ukrainian Catholic papers. In 1938 he was appointed Superior of Mundare Monastery in Alberta, the largest in the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese in this Country.

In Canada to-day the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese has 440 Churches and missions, administered by 112 clergy, both regular and secular. It possesses two Catholic colleges, two hospitals and one orphanage.

In the Province of Ontario alone, there are many Ukrainian Catholic Churches: (a) In the Diocese of London, there is one in Windsor; (b) In the Diocese of Timmins, one in Kirkland Lake; (c) In the Diocese of Sault Ste Marie, one each in Sudbury and Fort William; (d) In the Diocese of Hamilton,

one each in Brantford, Hamilton and Kitchener; and (e) In the Archdiocese of Toronto, three in the City of Toronto, one in Welland, and a Church and Monastery in Grimsby. It will be observed that the Ukrainians are advancing in a religious way, which is indeed commendable.

Let me take time to mention only one of their organizations, the Ukrainian Canadian Cultural Group of Yorkton, Saskatchewan. This is under the Presidency of the Reverend Brother Methodius, F.S.C., a professor at St. Joseph's College, Yorkton. Their motto is "To make Canadians of Ukrainian origin conscious of their own proud history, and to give their best efforts as citizens to this wonderful land... Canada."

The Ukrainians in Canada are growing in numbers and influence, until now they are found in every walk of life. Their efforts and attainments in all parts of the country speak for themselves.

All these developments should encourage Catholics to know more about our Ukrainian brethren, especially in a religious way. But in order to do this, we must have some knowledge of the origin of rites and their early history. This understanding is highly important, and helps to clear away certain misconceptions.

V. THE ORIGIN OF RITES

I will, therefore, pause to make a few references concerning the origin of rites and their early history.

Several of the Apostles like St. Peter, St. Andrew and St. Paul chose certain famous cities as strategic points from which to spread the doctrines of Christianity. And it is acknowledged that from them, the Church in its early days spread rapidly. The most important were: The metropolises of Rome in Italy, Antioch in Syria, and Alexandria in Egypt. The bishops of these three Sees were called Patriarchs. Later Jerusalem and Constantinople were given Patriarchates.

From these cities, the bishops sent out missionaries to other districts, and they, of course, took with them the knowledge of how the ceremonies were performed in the mother Church. In the course of time, it was the custom for the mother Church to bring its Liturgy to the local Churches in their districts.

From the beginning, the Apostles and the bishops administered the seven Sacraments instituted by Our Divine Saviour, and retained all essentials in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It was only the prayers said and ceremonies used, in the administration of the Sacraments and the celebration of the Mass, which differed in the Episcopal sees. Hence arose the different rites.

In the early days of the Church the language of the Liturgy was the spoken word of the people, but in time most of these became dead languages. Other languages were from time to time adopted locally. Among many of those classed as Western Catholics, there is an erroneous opinion that Latin is the only Liturgical language in use in the Catholic Church. Actually there are twelve

languages in which, on every day of the year, Mass or Divine Liturgy is said by Catholic priests. Some, like Latin, are dead languages, others like Arabic are living languages, while others are older forms of languages still spoken and which are partially understood by the people. The Liturgical language of the Ruthenian Rite, used by the Ukrainians, is church-Slavonic. The Greek or Byzantine Rite of which the Ruthenian is a variant is itself derived from that of Antioch.

The Ukrainian Catholics strictly insist upon the use of the Greek Liturgy. It was St. Cyril and St. Methodius, who, when they converted the Slavic people, gave them a Liturgy in their national language, and this was approved by Pope John VIII.

It should be recalled that the Christian community of Rome was originally Greek speaking, and until the middle of the third century, Greek was the language of the Roman Liturgy. By that time, however, Latin had become the spoken language, and the Liturgy was, in consequence, translated into Latin.

Let it be emphatically stated, that all Catholics believe exactly alike, no matter what rite they belong to. The main elements of our Church services and principally the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Administration of the Sacraments, are similar in all Catholic rites. It is in their extension and in the use in connection with them of prayers and ceremonies that Catholic rites differ; but these modifications are only other ways of professing the same truths.

On November 12, 1923, Pope Pius XI, in his Encyclical "Ecclesiam Dei," published on the occasion of the third centenary of St. Josaphat the Ukrainian metropolitan and glorious martyr for Catholic unity, clearly emphasized the equality of status of the various Liturgies in the Church. He uttered these words: "Then we shall see all peoples, brought together in this manner, in possession of the same rights, whatever may be their race, language or liturgy. The Roman Church has always scrupulously respected and maintained the various rites, and has at all times insisted on their preservation."

VI. HISTORICAL GLIMPSES OF THE UKRAINE

I will now give some historical glimpses of the Ukraine, commencing with the dawn of Christianity.

(a) *St. Andrew the Apostle*

Shortly after Pentecost Sunday which is called the birthday of the Catholic Church, the Apostles dispersed to preach the Gospel to all nations. St. Andrew, one of the twelve, travelled Northward and founded the Church in Byzantium, already a prosperous city at the junction of the Black Sea and the Bosphorus. After establishing the Church in that important centre, he continued his Missionary labours along the Northern shore of the Black Sea.

To the Scythians who roamed the plains and forests of what is now known as Southern Russia, St. Andrew preached Christianity. Records show that he even reached the plain of the Dnieper River, as far as the present location of the City of Kiev. While he was among the Scythians, St. Andrew received the crown of martyrdom.

The fourth Pope, St. Clement I, began his reign in the year 90 A.D. After being driven from Rome by the Emperor Trajan, St. Clement in his missionary wanderings reached the Crimea where he preached the Christian doctrines. He, too, received the crown of martyrdom about the year 100 A.D. by means of drowning in the Black Sea.

The Scythians were superseded by the Sarmatians, who were in turn succeeded by the Alans and the Goths. The ancestors of the Ukrainians occupied the lands on the Dnieper and Dniester Rivers, shortly after they were abandoned by the Goths.

The cradle of the Slavic race in Europe was the upper and middle Dnieper River. To the South-East and East went the Eastern Slavic tribe which ultimately became the Ukrainians.

Slavs, under the name of Veneds are mentioned by the Greek historian Ptolemy in the First Century A.D. They are also referred to by the Roman writers Tacitus and Pliny.

(b) Commencement of Ukrainian Nationalism

Beginning with the Sixth century the Ukrainians began to build up their territory by intensive agricultural production, and by extensive trade with the Byzantine Empire. The chief town, Kiev, later became the capital of the Ukrainian State, as it controlled the great basin of the Dnieper River and also the highway leading to the Black Sea and Byzantium. These developments served to create their own distinctive Nationalism.

It should be remembered that from the Sixth to the Tenth centuries, Byzantium was considered the most civilized country in Europe or Western Asia. It was, therefore, quite natural that the Ukrainians were for centuries influenced by this Byzantine civilization.

About the year 859 A.D. the Norsemen (under the name Varangs) came to rule the lands of the Ukrainians. Soon there was one large state with the Scandinavian dynasty of Rurik, reigning at Kiev. It was also about this time, that other Scandinavians founded a similar dynasty in England. At the beginning, the Ukrainian rulers were usually called Princes, and later on Hetmen.

In 914 A.D. Prince Igor became the Ukrainian ruler, and his wife Olga was one of the first of royalty to be converted to Christianity – about the year 945 A.D. She has been canonized as St. Olga. Her grandson, Prince Vladimir, became one of the outstanding men in Ukrainian history.

(c) *St. Vladimir the Great*

It is recorded that Prince Vladimir, while still a pagan, sent envoys to the neighbouring countries for information concerning their religions. They reported adversely regarding the Jews of Khazar, and the Bulgarians who then followed Mohammed, and the German Christians with their Latin rite. But they were pleased with the solemn Greek rite of the Catholic Church of St. Sophia in Constantinople. (The City of Byzantium had its name changed to Constantinople by the Roman Emperor Constantine about 325 A.D., but it is now called Istanbul.)

As a result of this investigation, Vladimir was baptized in the year 988 A.D. Shortly after this momentous event in Ukrainian history, he married the Catholic Princess Anna, a sister of the Christian Emperor Basil II of Constantinople.

Vladimir then returned to Kiev, and arranged for the conversion of his subjects the Ukrainian people, who were willingly baptized as Catholics. He built churches and monasteries in different cities. In the year 989 he erected the large Church of St. Mary ever Virgin (usually called the Cathedral of the Tithes), and in 996 the Church of the Transfiguration, both in the City of Kiev. He then gave up his warlike career and devoted himself principally to the government of his people. He established schools, introduced ecclesiastical courts, and became known for his mildness and for his zeal in spreading the Christian faith. Vladimir has been canonized as Saint Vladimir, and his feast day is July 15th. His two sons, Boris and Gleb, are known as Saints Roman and David from their baptismal names.

(d) *Culture in the 10th and 11th centuries*

The good influence of the great Ukrainian rulers of that era began to be felt in distant places. Then, too, the enlightenment brought about by Christianity helped all, for it was found that the new Christian moral teaching was very successful in overcoming the pagan coarseness.

During the 10th and 11th centuries, the Ukrainians also widened their sphere of trade and increased their wealth, as they came into contact with several different nations. In that period the Ukrainian state had so branched out, that it extended across Eastern Europe from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.

In the 11th century the city of Kiev, because of its high level of culture, was recognized as one of the greatest in Europe. One traveller who visited that metropolis, in the year 1018, left a description in which he relates that it contained 400 churches, 8 market places and “countless numbers of people.” Another visitor to the same city, in the year 1072, refers to it as a rival of Constantinople, and “Jewel of Greece.”

The architectural grandeur of the Ukraine of that age has come down to us. The beautiful church of Saint Sophia, built by the Ukrainian prince Yaroslav the

Wise, was finished in 1037. It was the same prince, who placed the Ukraine under the protection of the Mother of God.

We also have the remnants of other buildings with their wonderful sculptures, frescoes and mosaics.

Several outstanding Literary relics of that time have been preserved. Besides the translation of the Bible, and writings of the Fathers of the Church, we have works of fiction and a series of compilations on Geography and Astronomy.

(e) Invasion and the Cossacks

All this culture and prosperity, together with the lack of protecting natural barriers, made the country subject to plotting, and then to terrible invasions from several tribes and nations. During the 11th and 12th centuries, the Ukraine bore the brunt of many ferocious battles, when the Asiatic hordes from the East tried to break through in order to pillage and overrun the nations of Europe.

In the 13th century there occurred the most devastating of all invasions, when the Tartars under Mongol leadership swarmed over the land. In 1223 the Ukrainian army was defeated. Kiev was captured in 1240, under the direction of the Great Khan. (His full name was Chingiz Khan Temuchin, and he was elected in 1206 and died in 1242).

Then began a system of ruin and devastation, and a period known in the history of the Ukraine as the "Yoke of the Tartars." Every Ukrainian Prince had to be confirmed to his right to his throne by the Khan, and had to pay homage to him and bring rich gifts.

On one occasion, in 1245, the Ukrainian Prince Daniel sought help from Pope Innocent IV against the invaders. After the Mongol-Tartar invasion, the home lands of the Ukrainians passed first under Lithuanian rule in 1370, and later, in 1569, under the King of Poland.

During the second half of the 16th century, another national development took place in the Ukraine. Owing to the dangers arising from the proximity of the Tartars in the Crimea and the hazards of frontier life, a special organization known as the Cossacks grew and developed. The Cossacks had their own elective officers, a system of Justice and Administrative rule, and their elected leader was called "The Hetman." He soon came to be recognized as the leader of the Ukrainian State.

Probably the most outstanding, Hetman was Bohdan Khmelnitsky, who received his early training in the Jesuit colleges at Lwow and Yaroslav in Western Ukraine. He was a great ruler, besides being a man of military and organizing genius. He died on August 6, 1657, at the age of 62, after having fought for his country for 37 years.

The Cossacks finally revolted against the foreign ruler, and in the middle of the 17th century threw off that control. In the meantime the cultural life in Kiev

again flourished. This renewed activity associated the people with the traditions of the Ukrainian State of old. The rise of the Cossacks brought the Ukraine once more into prominence throughout Europe.

The Cossacks, however, found it difficult to maintain freedom from foreign hostility, Turkish expansion, Tartar treachery and the ambitions of the Czars. In 1654 the Cossacks entered into treaty relations with the Czar, which guaranteed the autonomy of the Ukraine. But notwithstanding this treaty, the Czar made an agreement with another nation in 1667 by which the Ukraine was divided between them.

In 1795, as a result of the first partitioning of Poland, Russia was given control of the larger part of the Ukrainian lands. The Ukrainian people were then reduced to a low ebb in their national and social life.

After the Napoleonic Wars (1798 to 1815), the largest section of the Ukraine was left to Russia, but Austria retained the Provinces of Galicia and Bukovina which were largely inhabited by Ukrainians.

(f) *Conditions in recent years*

During the first World War (1914 to 1918) much of the fighting on the Eastern front was fought on Ukrainian lands, and this brought untold misery to the Ukrainians, who were divided between Russia and Austria-Hungary, then enemies. In 1917, after the revolution in Russia, the Ukrainians formed a National Central Council, and Russia recognized the Ukraine as a self-governing unit within the Russian state. On January 22, 1918, the Ukrainian National Central Council proclaimed the Ukraine as an Independent National Republic. A few months after, or in October, 1918, the Austro-Hungarian Empire broke up, and the Ukrainians in East Galicia proclaimed the independence of the West Ukrainian National Republic. The two Ukrainian Governments then decided to unite on January 22, 1919, and the union of these States was proclaimed in Kiev.

This *Act of Union*, represented the national objective of the Ukrainian people. But the Government which proclaimed it did not have the physical force to protect it.

The hostility of some of the neighbouring nations prevented the Ukraine from realizing her nationalist ambitions, and once more the home lands of the Ukrainians were divided, this time among Russia, Poland, Rumania and Hungary. At the beginning of the present World War, in 1939, the home-lands of the Ukrainians were still under the control of the same four nations.

Such is the brief history of a country which has been both light and protection to other nations, similar to the Milky Way in the heavens. Such is the description of a people whose consideration for others has always been like the warmth of a Gulf Stream in the cold ocean of indifference.

But in all their trials the Ukrainians never lost their religious spirit, and their hope for a brighter prospect.

Yes, the Ukrainians have had a noble past, but their mission of the future is to help guide the souls of others. That mission or destiny is a laudable work and should be encouraged by all those within the fold of Catholicism.

VII. THE RELIGIOUS DESTINY OF THE UKRAINIANS

(a) *Data and Reasons showing Mission*

Let me now give some remarkable data and references, indicative of the religious destiny of the Ukrainians.

There are approximately 300,000,000 non-Catholic Christians who have Eastern rites.

They comprise the largest non-Catholic group of Christians in the world.

These Christians, who have their own bishops and priests and whose ancestors were Catholics, are still separated from the see of Peter.

At the same time, there are about 10,000,000 Catholics belonging to the Eastern rites, and of that number 7,000,000 or 70% are Ukrainian Catholics.

Many reasons can be advanced, showing that the Ukrainians are supremely fitted and qualified for the mission of bringing back to the Catholic church the rest of the Ukrainians, and then through them the other Slav peoples who have Eastern rites.

Here are some of those reasons:

1. The Ukrainians understand their own nationals, as no others can, by reason of customs, culture and language.

2. Their historical background raises them to the highest position for guiding non-Catholic Christians of Eastern rites, along the Religious path of truth as laid down by Jesus Christ our Divine Founder.

3. The Ukrainians have now established themselves as foremost citizens in the leading countries of the world, and their training and experience of local conditions both in the home-lands and in their new countries, place them in a preferred class to advance the teaching of Catholicism.

4. Their belief and knowledge that the Popes will always uphold the Eastern or Oriental rites, are best explained and imparted by those holding the same rites.

5. The barriers and misunderstandings of the past can be surmounted by those who are known to have always been friendly disposed.

6. It is an outstanding fact that those who have Eastern rites are firm in their retention, Catholics as well as dissidents.

Speaking of these separated Christians, Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical “*Rerum Orientalium*” used these words: “There flourishes among them a sincere allegiance to Christ our Lord, and a special love and devotion to His Virgin Mother, and the practice of the Sacraments themselves.”

Let me remind you, that the well known picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is a favourite Oriental icon. It is a wonderful thing to know, that devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, has been kept on a high standard by the Ukrainians, dissident as well as Catholics. The favorite devotion to the Mother of God is the Rosary.

(b) Power of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Rosary has been a powerful advocate before the Divine Justice ever since its miraculous institution in the 13th century. This present Religious movement will swiftly gather strength if we put forth a genuine appeal to the Blessed Virgin, through regular and consistent family use of the Rosary.

On October 1, 1944, there was celebrated in the City of Toronto the greatest Religious ceremony in honour of the Queen of the Most Holy Rosary ever held in English-speaking Canada. It was called "Rosary Sunday Holy Hour." On that occasion thirty thousand people assembled, and publicly recited the Rosary for the safe and speedy homecoming of our loved ones in the Armed Forces. This celebration was under the auspices of The Archdiocesan Union of Holy Name Societies of the Archdiocese of Toronto.

The several Ukrainian Catholic Churches in that Archdiocese were represented by a large number of parishioners, headed by the Right Reverend Monsignor Kamenecky, the senior Ukrainian prelate for Toronto. They, too, were present to reverence the Queen of the Rosary, in keeping with their long tradition of honouring the Mother of God.

It is well known that a great number of Ukrainian Catholics are represented in the armies of the United States, Canada and the other Allies, and that many have already paid the supreme sacrifice in the cause of freedom and love of country.

The power of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been shown to the world on many occasions. The Ukrainian people, during their long history, have at various times experienced her assistance and guidance. And during the seventeenth century alone, these miraculous manifestations occurred twice.

In the year 1672, when the Turks attacked the City of Terebovlia in the Western Ukraine, the defenders were reduced to dire straits. The people then gathered in the church, and prayed earnestly to Our Lady. The resultant disaster suffered by the invaders was generally attributed to the miraculous protection of the Blessed Virgin.

Again, just eleven years later, the Turks besieged the City of Vienna. The Ukrainian Cossacks hurried to the rescue, and with the hymn on their lips 'Holy Virgin, Mother of the Ukraine,' they with the Polish army struck terrific blows and thus freed the besieged people.

This is a summary in part of the Feast of Pokrova of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is reverently kept in the Ukrainian Catholic Churches the world over.

The great Ukrainian poet Taras Shewchenko has given us authentic documents, showing that the Ukrainian Cossacks regularly appealed to the Mother of God by prayers and hymns, before they advanced on the field of battle. He has proven that this was an accustomed military procedure with these great warriors, who had such confidence in the power of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

(c) *All Christians under Sovereign Pontiff*

Time does not permit me to refer to the Eastern schisms, which have torn so many in the Ukraine from the Catholic Church. Different reasons have been advanced by writers and historians to explain the various Oriental schisms. But it can be emphatically stated, that they were chiefly caused by the interference of national leaders in Church affairs.

It is well known, that pre-occupations of a political order dominated the Great Greek Schism which took place in the year 1054. That sad event should now give place to mutual understanding and good will among all Christians.

In the coming new World Order, the political interferences of the past should not be repeated. The Religious future holds out a glad welcome, but it must be unfettered. Eastern and Western Catholics should learn to know each other more intimately, because they are one in Faith, and should work with unanimity for the spread of that Faith.

The Ukrainians, with their history and culture, their language and similarity of rites, their knowledge of conditions at home and abroad, and their sublime power and influence, possess all these factors as convincing proofs, of their religious destiny to be the leaders in bringing back to Catholicism all those of the Eastern rites.

May Saint Vladimir, who brought Christianity to the Ukrainians nearly a thousand years ago, and St. Josaphat, the Ukrainian martyr and Apostle of Union Who was slain in 1623, join with us in our earnest prayers, that the religious destiny of the Ukrainians shall bear fruit in abundance.

The unity of all Christians in the same Faith, and under the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff, will give to the Church a greater power of expansion, and be a sure pledge for the maintenance of World Order.

And then, when these things are accomplished, the Heavenly choirs will be able to sing once more: "*Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth Peace to men of Good-Will.*"