

# THE WAY ШЛЯХ

Official Publication of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia

VOL. 76 - No. 18

OCTOBER 04, 2015

ENGLISH VERSION

## Pope Francis Visits United States of America



**Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka listens intently to Pope Francis during the Homily at the Papal Mass on the Parkway in Philadelphia, PA on September 27, 2015.**

**(Photo: Tanya Bilyj)**

### Highlights inside this issue:

**Pope Francis in Washington, DC - Pg. 2**

**Pope Francis in New York - Pg. 10**

**Pope Francis in Philadelphia - Pg. 13**

**Holy Father expresses solidarity with Ukrainians during visit to USA - Pg. 24**



# Pope Francis arrives in the United States of America

22/09/2015

(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis has landed on American soil. He touched down at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington DC at 3.50pm local time kicking off the first visit of his life to the United States of America.

Pope Francis' 10th Apostolic Journey abroad has already taken him to Cuba where he visited Havana, Holguin and Santiago. In the United States of America he will be spending time in Washington DC, in New York and in Philadelphia where the World Meeting of Families is taking place.

Greeting him on the tarmac at the Washington Air Force Base, were US President Barack Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama and both of their daughters.

It is the first time in his presidency that Obama has greeted a visiting dignitary at the point of touchdown. Presidents usually have important visitors come to them, at the White House. And in another departure from official protocol, it's also the first time ever that the Vice-President and his family have joined the welcoming party.

However, for the record, President George W. Bush and Laura Bush also travelled to the air force base in Maryland to greet Francis' predecessor, the Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI when he visited the United States in 2008.

This visit marks Pope Francis' second meeting with President Obama whom he first met in the Vatican in March 2014.

During his six-day, three-city visit to the U.S., Pope Francis met with President Obama, addressed Congress, spoke at the United Nations in New York and took part in the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia where he celebrated the closing Mass.

The Official Welcome Ceremony in Washington DC was Wednesday morning at the White House. Some 15,000 people were invited to attend the ceremony which took place on the South Lawn. Afterwards, the Pope and the President held talks in private in the Oval Office.

Pope Francis's Apostolic Visit to the US was packed with important events, including the first ever address from a Pope to Congress.

But it also included many, more personal gestures, like meeting with immigrants, with prisoners and with the homeless. Those meetings which include the moments that Pope Francis clearly cherishes most, as time and time again, he reaches out to those struggling to hold on to the bottom rungs of society.

Adapted from an article on <http://en.radiovaticana.va>



**The US President greets Pope Francis upon his arrival at Andrews Air Force Base - AFP**

# Pope: Freedom is one of America's most precious possessions

23/09/2015

(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis quoted Martin Luther King on Wednesday during his speech at the Welcome Ceremony at The White House in Washington at the start of his six-day apostolic visit to the United States.

Noting that as the son of an immigrant family the Pope said he is happy to be a guest in a country built largely by immigrants, and that he looks forward to listening to and sharing the hopes and dreams of the American people.

Describing American Catholics and all other Americans of goodwill as people who are committed to building a society which is truly tolerant and inclusive, Pope Francis remarked on their concern that a "just and wisely ordered society respect" their right to religious liberty.

"Freedom – he said – remains one of America's most precious possessions" and he called on all citizens to "preserve and defend that freedom from everything that would threaten or compromise it".

Pope Francis also had warm words of appreciation for how President Obama is pushing to reduce air pollution.

"When it comes to the care of our "common home", we are living at a critical moment of history" he said.

Pointing to the fact that environmental issues pertaining to "our common home" have globally been overlooked and that today they must be urgently tackled, he quoted Reverend Martin Luther King's words: "we can say that we have defaulted on a promissory note and now is the time to honor".

And reminding believers that "the Creator does not abandon us" Pope Francis said humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.

The Pope concluded his address calling on all American men and women of good will to "support the efforts of the international community to protect the vulnerable in our world and to stimulate integral and inclusive models of development, so that our brothers and sisters



**Pope Francis and President Barak Obama during the Welcome Ceremony for the Pope at the White House - AP**

everywhere may know the blessings of peace and prosperity which God wills for all his children".

**Please find below the full text of Pope Francis' speech: Welcome Ceremony, The White House, Washington; Wednesday, 23 September 2015**

Good morning!

Mr President,

I am deeply grateful for your welcome in the name of all Americans. As the son of an immigrant family, I am happy to be a guest in this country, which was largely built by such families. I look forward to these days of encounter and dialogue,

in which I hope to listen to, and share, many of the hopes and dreams of the American people.

During my visit I will have the honor of addressing Congress, where I hope, as a brother of this country, to offer words of encouragement to those called to guide the nation's political future in fidelity to its founding principles. I will also travel to Philadelphia for the Eighth World Meeting of Families, to celebrate and support the institutions of marriage and the family at this, a critical moment in the history of our civilization.

Mr. President, together with their fellow citizens, American Catholics are

**(continued on next page)**

# Pope: Freedom is one of America's most precious possessions

(continued from previous page)

committed to building a society which is truly tolerant and inclusive, to safeguarding the rights of individuals and communities, and to rejecting every form of unjust discrimination. With countless other people of good will, they are likewise concerned that efforts to build a just and wisely ordered society respect their deepest concerns and their right to religious liberty. That freedom remains one of America's most precious possessions. And, as my brothers, the United States Bishops, have reminded us, all are called to be vigilant, precisely as good citizens, to preserve and defend that freedom from everything that would threaten or compromise it.

Mr. President, I find it encouraging that you are proposing an initiative

for reducing air pollution. Accepting the urgency, it seems clear to me also that climate change is a problem which can no longer be left to a future generation. When it comes to the care of our "common home", we are living at a critical moment of history. We still have time to make the changes needed to bring about "a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change" (Laudato Si', 13). Such change demands on our part a serious and responsible recognition not only of the kind of world we may be leaving to our children, but also to the millions of people living under a system which has overlooked them. Our common home has been part of this group of the excluded which cries out to heaven and which today powerfully

strikes our homes, our cities and our societies. To use a telling phrase of the Reverend Martin Luther King, we can say that we have defaulted on a promissory note and now is the time to honor it.

We know by faith that "the Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home" (Laudato Si', 13). As Christians inspired by this certainty, we wish to commit ourselves to the conscious and responsible care of our common home.

The efforts which were recently made to mend broken relationships and to open new doors to cooperation within our human family represent

positive steps along the path of reconciliation, justice and freedom. I would like all men and women of good will in this great nation to support the efforts of the international community to protect the vulnerable in our world and to stimulate integral and inclusive models of development, so that our brothers and sisters everywhere may know the blessings of peace and prosperity which God wills for all his children.

Mr President, once again I thank you for your welcome, and I look forward to these days in your country. God bless America!

<http://en.radiovaticana.va>

---

## Pope to U.S. bishops: be shepherds in unity and dialogue

23/09/2015

(Vatican Radio) After an official welcome from U.S. President Barack Obama on Wednesday, Pope Francis met with the nation's bishops, urging them to be shepherds who promote dialogue and foster unity at all levels of the Church

and society.

Speaking to the U.S. Church leaders in the Cathedral of St Matthew the Apostle, close to the White House, the Pope praised the generosity of the American Church and the support it has given to the spread of the Gospel

in many suffering areas of the world. He talked of the "immense efforts" made to welcome and integrate immigrants, as well as the pain and difficulties caused by the sex abuse crisis. The Pope said he had not come to judge or to lecture the bishops, but rather to support and

encourage their work as humble shepherds, shaping a Church that "attracts men and women through the attractive light and warmth of love." He urged them to promote a culture of encounter, avoiding "harsh and divisive language"

(continued on next page)

# Pope to U.S. bishops: be shepherds in unity and dialogue

(continued from previous page)

but rather encouraging authentic dialogue as they confront the “challenging issues of our time”.

**Below please find the prepared text of Pope Francis’ words to the United States Bishops Meeting with the United States Bishops, Cathedral of Saint Matthew, Washington**

Dear Brother Bishops,

I am pleased that we can meet at this point in the apostolic mission which has brought me to your country. I thank Cardinal Wuerl and Archbishop Kurtz for their kind words in your name. I am very appreciative of your welcome and the generous efforts made to help plan and organize my stay.

As I look out with affection at you, their pastors, I would like to embrace all the local Churches over which you exercise loving responsibility. I would ask you to share my affection and spiritual closeness with the People of God throughout this vast land.

The heart of the Pope expands to include everyone. To testify to the immensity of God’s love is the heart of the mission entrusted to the Successor of Peter, the Vicar of the One who on the cross embraced the whole of mankind. May no member



**Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka (pictured left) was at St. Matthew’s Cathedral in Washington, DC when Pope Francis met with Bishops of the USA on September 23, 2015. (Photo: EPA; <http://uk.radiovaticana.va>)**

of Christ’s Body and the American people feel excluded from the Pope’s embrace. Wherever the name of Jesus is spoken, may the Pope’s voice also be heard to affirm that: “He is the Savior!” From your great coastal cities to the plains of the Midwest, from the deep South to the far reaches of the West, wherever your people gather in the Eucharistic assembly, may the Pope be not simply a name but a felt presence, sustaining the fervent plea of the Bride: “Come, Lord!”

Whenever a hand reaches out to do good or to show the love of Christ, to dry a tear or bring comfort to

the lonely, to show the way to one who is lost or to console a broken heart, to help the fallen or to teach those thirsting for truth, to forgive or to offer a new start in God... know that the Pope is at your side and supports you. He puts his hand on your own, a hand wrinkled with age, but by God’s grace still able to support and encourage.

My first word to you is one of thanksgiving to God for the power of the Gospel which has brought about remarkable growth of Christ’s Church in these lands and enabled its generous contribution, past and present, to American society and to the world. I

thank you most heartily for your generous solidarity with the Apostolic See and the support you give to the spread of the Gospel in many suffering areas of our world. I appreciate the unfailing commitment of the Church in America to the cause of life and that of the family, which is the primary reason for my present visit. I am well aware of the immense efforts you have made to welcome and integrate those immigrants who continue to look to America, like so many others before them, in the hope of enjoying its blessings of freedom and prosperity. I also appreciate the efforts

(continued on next page)

# Pope to U.S. bishops: be shepherds in unity and dialogue

(continued from previous page)

which you are making to fulfill the Church's mission of education in schools at every level and in the charitable services offered by your numerous institutions. These works are often carried out without appreciation or support, often with heroic sacrifice, out of obedience to a divine mandate which we may not disobey.

I am also conscious of the courage with which you have faced difficult moments in the recent history of the Church in this country without fear of self-criticism and at the cost of mortification and great sacrifice. Nor have you been afraid to divest whatever is unessential in order to regain the authority and trust which is demanded of ministers of Christ and rightly expected by the faithful. I realize how much the pain of recent years has weighed upon you and I have supported your generous commitment to bring healing to victims – in the knowledge that in healing we too are healed – and to work to ensure that such crimes will never be repeated.

I speak to you as the Bishop of Rome, called by God in old age, and from a land which is also American, to watch over the unity of the universal Church and to encourage in charity the journey of all the particular Churches

toward ever greater knowledge, faith and love of Christ. Reading over your names, looking at your faces, knowing the extent of your churchmanship and conscious of the devotion which you have always shown for the Successor of Peter, I must tell you that I do not feel a stranger in your midst. I am a native of a land which is also vast, with great open ranges, a land which, like your own, received the faith from itinerant missionaries. I too know how hard it is to sow the Gospel among people from different worlds, with hearts often hardened by the trials of a lengthy journey. Nor am I unaware of the efforts made over the years to build up the Church amid the prairies, mountains, cities and suburbs of a frequently inhospitable land, where frontiers are always provisional and easy answers do not always work. What does work is the combination of the epic struggle of the pioneers and the homely wisdom and endurance of the settlers. As one of your poets has put it, "strong and tireless wings" combined with the wisdom of one who "knows the mountains".

I do not speak to you with my voice alone, but in continuity with the words of my predecessors. From the birth of this nation, when, following the American Revolution, the first diocese

was erected in Baltimore, the Church of Rome has always been close to you; you have never lacked its constant assistance and encouragement. In recent decades, three Popes have visited you and left behind a remarkable legacy of teaching. Their words remain timely and have helped to inspire the long-term goals which you have set for the Church in this country.

It is not my intention to offer a plan or to devise a strategy. I have not come to judge you or to lecture you. I trust completely in the voice of the One who "teaches all things" (Jn 14:26). Allow me only, in the freedom of love, to speak to you as a brother among brothers. I have no wish to tell you what to do, because we all know what it is that the Lord asks of us. Instead, I would turn once again to the demanding task – ancient yet never new – of seeking out the paths we need to take and the spirit with which we need to work. Without claiming to be exhaustive, I would share with you some reflections which I consider helpful for our mission.

We are bishops of the Church, shepherds appointed by God to feed his flock. Our greatest joy is to be shepherds, and only shepherds, pastors with undivided hearts and selfless devotion. We

need to preserve this joy and never let ourselves be robbed of it. The evil one roars like a lion, anxious to devour it, wearing us down in our resolve to be all that we are called to be, not for ourselves but in gift and service to the "Shepherd of our souls" (1 Pet 2:25).

The heart of our identity is to be sought in constant prayer, in preaching (Acts 6:4) and in shepherding the flock entrusted to our care (Jn 21:15-17; Acts 20:28-31).

Ours must not be just any kind of prayer, but familiar union with Christ, in which we daily encounter his gaze and sense that he is asking us the question: "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" (Mk 3:31-34). One in which we can calmly reply: "Lord, here is your mother, here are your brothers! I hand them over to you; they are the ones whom you entrusted to me". Such trusting union with Christ is what nourishes the life of a pastor.

It is not about preaching complicated doctrines, but joyfully proclaiming Christ who died and rose for our sake. The "style" of our mission should make our hearers feel that the message we preach is meant "for us". May the word of God grant meaning and fullness

(continued on next page)

# Pope to U.S. bishops: be shepherds in unity and dialogue

(continued from previous page)

to every aspect of their lives; may the sacraments nourish them with that food which they cannot procure for themselves; may the closeness of the shepherd make them long once again for the Father's embrace. Be vigilant that the flock may always encounter in the heart of their pastor that "taste of eternity" which they seek in vain in the things of this world. May they always hear from you a word of appreciation for their efforts to confirm in liberty and justice the prosperity in which this land abounds. At the same time, may you never lack the serene courage to proclaim that "we must work not for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures for eternal life" (Jn 6:27).

Shepherds who do not pasture themselves but are able to step back, away from the center, to "decrease", in order to feed God's family with Christ. Who keep constant watch, standing on the heights to look out with God's eyes on the flock which is his alone. Who ascend to the height of the cross of God's Son, the sole standpoint which opens to the shepherd the heart of his flock.

Shepherds who do not lower our gaze, concerned only with our concerns, but raise it constantly toward the horizons which God opens before us and

which surpass all that we ourselves can foresee or plan. Who also watch over ourselves, so as to flee the temptation of narcissism, which blinds the eyes of the shepherd, makes his voice unrecognizable and his actions fruitless. In the countless paths which lie open to your pastoral concern, remember to keep focused on the core which unifies everything: "You did it unto me" (Mt 25:31-45).

Certainly it is helpful for a bishop to have the farsightedness of a leader and the shrewdness of an administrator, but we fall into hopeless decline whenever we confuse the power of strength with the strength of that powerlessness with which God has redeemed us. Bishops need to be lucidly aware of the battle between light and darkness being fought in this world. Woe to us, however, if we make of the cross a banner of worldly struggles and fail to realize that the price of lasting victory is allowing ourselves to be wounded and consumed (Phil 2:1-11).

We all know the anguish felt by the first Eleven, huddled together, assailed and overwhelmed by the fear of sheep scattered because the shepherd had been struck. But we also know that we have been given a spirit of courage and not of timidity. So we cannot let ourselves be paralyzed by fear.

I know that you face many challenges, that the field in which you sow is unyielding and that there is always the temptation to give in to fear, to lick one's wounds, to think back on bygone times and to devise harsh responses to fierce opposition.

And yet we are promoters of the culture of encounter. We are living sacraments of the embrace between God's riches and our poverty. We are witnesses of the abasement and the condescension of God who anticipates in love our every response.

Dialogue is our method, not as a shrewd strategy but out of fidelity to the One who never wearies of visiting the marketplace, even at the eleventh hour, to propose his offer of love (Mt 20:1-16).

The path ahead, then, is dialogue among yourselves, dialogue in your presbyterates, dialogue with lay persons, dialogue with families, dialogue with society. I cannot ever tire of encouraging you to dialogue fearlessly. The richer the heritage which you are called to share with parrhesia, the more eloquent should be the humility with which you should offer it. Do not be afraid to set out on that "exodus" which is necessary for all authentic dialogue. Otherwise, we fail to

understand the thinking of others, or to realize deep down that the brother or sister we wish to reach and redeem, with the power and the closeness of love, counts more than their positions, distant as they may be from what we hold as true and certain. Harsh and divisive language does not befit the tongue of a pastor, it has no place in his heart; although it may momentarily seem to win the day, only the enduring allure of goodness and love remains truly convincing.

We need to let the Lord's words echo constantly in our hearts: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, who am meek and humble of heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls" (Mt 11:28-30). Jesus' yoke is a yoke of love and thus a pledge of refreshment. At times in our work we can be burdened by a sense of loneliness, and so feel the heaviness of the yoke that we forget that we have received it from the Lord. It seems to be ours alone, and so we drag it like weary oxen working a dry field, troubled by the thought that we are laboring in vain. We can forget the profound refreshment which is indissolubly linked to the One who has made us the promise.

We need to learn from Jesus,

(continued on next page)

# Pope to U.S. bishops: be shepherds in unity and dialogue

(continued from previous page)

or better to learn Jesus, meek and humble; to enter into his meekness and his humility by contemplating his way of acting; to lead our Churches and our people – not infrequently burdened by the stress of everyday life – to the ease of the Lord’s yoke. And to remember that Jesus’ Church is kept whole not by “consuming fire from heaven” (Lk 9:54), but by the secret warmth of the Spirit, who “heals what is wounded, bends what is rigid, straightens what is crooked”.

The great mission which the Lord gives us is one which we carry out in communion, collegially. The world is already so torn and divided, brokenness is now everywhere. Consequently, the Church, “the seamless garment of the Lord” cannot allow herself to be rent, broken or fought over.

Our mission as bishops is first and foremost to solidify unity, a unity whose content is defined by the Word of God and the one Bread of Heaven. With these two realities each of the Churches entrusted to us remains Catholic, because open to, and in communion with, all the particular Churches and with the Church of Rome which “presides in charity”. It is imperative, therefore, to watch over that unity, to safeguard it, to promote it and to bear witness to it as

a sign and instrument which, beyond every barrier, unites nations, races, classes and generations.

May the forthcoming Holy Year of Mercy, by drawing us into the fathomless depths of God’s heart in which no division dwells, be for all of you a privileged moment for strengthening communion, perfecting unity, reconciling differences, forgiving one another and healing every rift, that your light may shine forth like “a city built on a hill” (Mt 5:14).

This service to unity is particularly important for this nation, whose vast material and spiritual, cultural and political, historical and human, scientific and technological resources impose significant moral responsibilities in a world which is seeking, confusedly and laboriously, new balances of peace, prosperity and integration. It is an essential part of your mission to offer to the United States of America the humble yet powerful leaven of communion. May all mankind know that the presence in its midst of the “sacrament of unity” (Lumen Gentium, 1) is a guarantee that its fate is not decay and dispersion.

This kind of witness is a beacon whose light can reassure men and women sailing through the dark clouds of life that a sure haven awaits them, that

they will not crash on the reefs or be overwhelmed by the waves. I encourage you, then, to confront the challenging issues of our time. Ever present within each of them is life as gift and responsibility. The future freedom and dignity of our societies depends on how we face these challenges.

The innocent victim of abortion, children who die of hunger or from bombings, immigrants who drown in the search for a better tomorrow, the elderly or the sick who are considered a burden, the victims of terrorism, wars, violence and drug trafficking, the environment devastated by man’s predatory relationship with nature – at stake in all of this is the gift of God, of which we are noble stewards but not masters. It is wrong, then, to look the other way or to remain silent. No less important is the Gospel of the Family, which in the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia I will emphatically proclaim together with you and the entire Church.

These essential aspects of the Church’s mission belong to the core of what we have received from the Lord. It is our duty to preserve and communicate them, even when the tenor of the times becomes resistant and even hostile to that message (Evangeliium Gaudium, 34-

39). I urge you to offer this witness, with the means and creativity born of love, and with the humility of truth. It needs to be preached and proclaimed to those without, but also to find room in people’s hearts and in the conscience of society.

To this end, it is important that the Church in the United States also be a humble home, a family fire which attracts men and women through the attractive light and warmth of love. As pastors, we know well how much darkness and cold there is in this world; we know the loneliness and the neglect experienced by many people, even amid great resources of communication and material wealth. We see their fear in the face of life, their despair and the many forms of escapism to which it gives rise.

Consequently, only a Church which can gather around the family fire remains able to attract others. And not any fire, but the one which blazed forth on Easter morn. The risen Lord continues to challenge the Church’s pastors through the quiet plea of so many of our brothers and sisters: “Have you something to eat?” We need to recognize the Lord’s voice, as the

(continued on next page)



# Pope to U.S. bishops: be shepherds in unity and dialogue

(continued from previous page)

apostles did on the shore of the lake of Tiberius (Jn 21:4-12). It becomes even more urgent to grow in the certainty that the embers of his presence, kindled in the fire of his passion, precede us and will never die out. Whenever this certainty weakens, we end up being caretakers of ash, and not guardians and dispensers of the true light and the warmth which causes our hearts to burn within us (Lk 24:32).

Before concluding these reflections, allow me to offer two recommendations which are close to my heart. The first refers to your fatherhood as bishops. Be pastors close to people, pastors who are neighbors and servants. Let this closeness be expressed

in a special way towards your priests. Support them, so that they can continue to serve Christ with an undivided heart, for this alone can bring fulfillment to ministers of Christ. I urge you, then, not to let them be content with half-measures. Find ways to encourage their spiritual growth, lest they yield to the temptation to become notaries and bureaucrats, but instead reflect the motherhood of the Church, which gives birth to and raises her sons and daughters. Be vigilant lest they tire of getting up to answer those who knock on their door by night, just when they feel entitled to rest (Lk 11:5-8). Train them to be ready to stop, care for, soothe, lift up and assist those who, "by chance" find themselves stripped of

all they thought they had (Lk 10:29-37).

My second recommendation has to do with immigrants. I ask you to excuse me if in some way I am pleading my own case. The Church in the United States knows like few others the hopes present in the hearts of these "pilgrims". From the beginning you have learned their languages, promoted their cause, made their contributions your own, defended their rights, helped them to prosper, and kept alive the flame of their faith. Even today, no American institution does more for immigrants than your Christian communities. Now you are facing this stream of Latin immigration which affects many of your dioceses. Not only as the

Bishop of Rome, but also as a pastor from the South, I feel the need to thank and encourage you. Perhaps it will not be easy for you to look into their soul; perhaps you will be challenged by their diversity. But know that they also possess resources meant to be shared. So do not be afraid to welcome them. Offer them the warmth of the love of Christ and you will unlock the mystery of their heart. I am certain that, as so often in the past, these people will enrich America and its Church.

May God bless you and Our Lady watch over you!

<http://en.radiovaticana.va>

---

## Mass for the canonization of St. Junipero Serra

Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia attended the Mass for the canonization of St. Junipero Serra celebrated by Pope Francis at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on the campus of The Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. on September 23, 2015. (Photos: <https://www.youtube.com/user/vatican>)



# Pope at Vespers: a special thank you to the religious women of the United States of America

25/09/2015

(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis' first engagement on arriving in New York from Washington DC on Thursday evening was to preside over Vespers with priests and religious at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Before pronouncing the homily, the Pope expressed his closeness to the Muslim world struck by the tragedy at a Mecca pilgrimage that has killed over 700 people and injured many more.

During the homily he told those present that gratitude and hard work are the two pillars of their spiritual life and warned them against surrounding themselves with worldly comforts.

Remarking on the beauty of St. Patrick's Cathedral and of how it was built up over the years through the sacrifices of many men and women, Pope Francis said it can serve as a symbol of the work of generations of American priests, religious and lay faithful who helped build up the Church in the United States.

Highlighting their fundamental role in building American society, the Pope thanked the many priests and religious who have played a central role in educating and nourishing the children of the nation.

He cited the founder of the first free Catholic School for girls in America, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton and Saint John Neumann, the founder of the first US system of Catholic education, pointing out that many paid the cost of extraordinary sacrifice and did so with heroic charity.

With a direct reference to the pedophilia scandal that rocked the Church in the US, Pope Francis acknowledged the suffering of his brothers and sisters for having had to "bear the shame of those who harmed and scandalized the Church in the most vulnerable of Her members..." and offered prayers and words of closeness in this time of pain and difficulty.

Urging them to find joy and satisfaction in their vocation, the Pope called on priests and



**Pope Francis during Vespers at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York - Photo: Bishop Paul Chomnycky, OSBM**

religious to work hard and live a life of self-sacrifice which he said "becomes a privileged way of responding to his great love".

In a special way, he expressed his esteem and gratitude to the religious women of the United States. "What would the Church be without you? (That is) Women of strength, fighters, with that spirit of courage which puts you in the front lines in the proclamation of the Gospel. To you,

religious women, sisters and mothers of this people – he said - I wish to say "thank you", a big thank you... and to tell you that I love you very much".

**Please find below an English translation of the Pope's homily at Vespers in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York:**

"There is a cause for rejoicing here", although "you may for a time

**(continued on next page)**

# Pope at Vespers: a special thank you to the religious women of the United States of America

(continued from previous page)

have to suffer the distress of many trials" (1 Pet 1:6). These words of the Apostle remind us of something essential. Our vocation is to be lived in joy.

This beautiful Cathedral of Saint Patrick, built up over many years through the sacrifices of many men and women, can serve as a symbol of the work of generations of American priests and religious, and lay faithful who helped build up the Church in the United States. In the field of education alone, how many priests and religious in this country played a central role, assisting parents in handing on to their children the food that nourishes them for life! Many did so at the cost of extraordinary sacrifice and with heroic charity. I think for example of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, who founded the first free Catholic school for girls in America, or Saint John Neumann, the founder of the first system of Catholic education in the United States.

This evening, my brothers and sisters, I have come to join you in prayer that our vocations will continue to build up the

great edifice of God's Kingdom in this country. I know that, as a presbyterate in the midst of God's people, you suffered greatly in the not distant past by having to bear the shame of some of your brothers who harmed and scandalized the Church in the most vulnerable of her members... In the words of the Book of Revelation, I know well that you "have come forth from the great tribulation" (Rev 7:14). I accompany you at this time of pain and difficulty, and I thank God for your faithful service to His people. In the hope of helping you to persevere on the path of fidelity to Jesus Christ, I would like to offer two brief reflections.

The first concerns the spirit of gratitude. The joy of men and women who love God attracts others to Him; priests and religious are called to find and radiate lasting satisfaction in their vocation. Joy springs from a grateful heart. Truly, we have received much, so many graces, so many blessings, and we rejoice in this. It will do us good to think back on our lives with the grace of remembrance.



**Sr. Michele, Sr. Eliane, Sr. Ceceila, and Sr. Kathleen, SSMI pose for a picture in St. Patrick's Cathedral. - Photo: Sr. Kathleen Hutsko (Facebook page)**

Remembrance of when we were first called, remembrance of the road travelled, remembrance of graces received... and, above all, remembrance of our encounter with Jesus Christ so often along the way. (That is) the remembrance of the amazement which our encounter with Jesus Christ awakens in our hearts. (That is) to seek the grace of remembrance so as to grow in the spirit of gratitude. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves: are we good at counting our blessings?

A second area is the spirit of hard work. A grateful heart is spontaneously impelled to serve the Lord and to

find expression in a life of commitment to our work. Once we come to realize how much God has given us, a life of self-sacrifice, of working for Him and for others, becomes a privileged way of responding to His great love.

Yet, if we are honest, we know how easily this spirit of generous self-sacrifice can be dampened. There are a couple of ways that this can happen; both are examples of that "spiritual worldliness" which weakens our commitment to serve and diminishes the wonder of our first encounter with Christ.

(continued on next page)

# Pope at Vespers: a special thank you to the religious women of the United States of America

(continued from previous page)

We can get caught up measuring the value of our apostolic works by the standards of efficiency, good management and outward success which govern the business world. Not that these things are unimportant! We have been entrusted with a great responsibility, and God's people rightly expect accountability from us. But the true worth of our apostolate is measured by the value it has in God's eyes. To see and evaluate things from God's perspective calls for constant conversion in the first days and years of our vocation and, need I say, great humility. The cross shows us a different way of measuring success. Ours is to plant the seeds: God sees to the fruits of our labors. And if at times our efforts and works seem to fail and produce no fruit, we need to remember that we are followers of Jesus... and His life, humanly speaking, ended in failure, the failure of the cross.

Another danger comes when we become jealous of our free time, when we think that surrounding ourselves with worldly comforts will help us serve

better. The problem with this reasoning is that it can blunt the power of God's daily call to conversion, to encounter with Him. Slowly but surely, it diminishes our spirit of sacrifice, renunciation and hard work. It also alienates people who suffer material poverty and are forced to make greater sacrifices than ourselves. Rest is needed, as are moments of leisure and self-enrichment, but we need to learn how to rest in a way that deepens our desire to serve with generosity. Closeness to the poor, the refugee, the immigrant, the sick, the exploited, the elderly living alone, prisoners and all God's other poor, will teach us a different way of resting, one which is more Christian and generous.

Gratitude and hard work: these are two pillars of the spiritual life which I have wanted to share with you this evening. I thank you for prayers and work, and the daily sacrifices you make in the various areas of your apostolate. Many of these are known only to God, but they bear rich fruit for the life of the Church. In a special way

I would like to express my esteem and gratitude to the religious women of the United States. What would the Church be without you? (That is) Women of strength, fighters, with that spirit of courage which puts you in the front lines in the proclamation of the Gospel. To you, religious women, sisters and mothers of this people, I wish to say "thank you", a big thank you... and to tell you that I love you very much.

I know that many of you are in the front lines in meeting the challenges of adapting to an evolving pastoral landscape. Whatever difficulties and

trials you face, I ask you, like Saint Peter, to be at peace and to respond to them as Christ did: he thanked the Father, took up his cross and looked forward!

Dear brothers and sisters, in a few moments we will sing the Magnificat. Let us commend to Our Lady the work we have been entrusted to do; let us join her in thanking God for the great things he has done, and for the great things he will continue to do in us and in those whom we have the privilege to serve.

<http://en.radiovaticana.va>



**Sr. Michele, Sr. Eliane, Sr. Kathleen, and Sr. Ceceila, SSMI pose for a picture with their Papal tickets in New York. - Photo: Sr. Kathleen Hutsko (Facebook Page)**

## Pope Francis' Mass at Madison Square Garden

On Friday, September 25th, 2015, Pope Francis celebrated Mass at Madison Square Garden, a popular indoor arena located in Manhattan. Pictured on the right is Bishop Paul Chomnycky, OSBM. (Photo: Bishop Paul Chomnycky, OSBM (Facebook Page))



## Chancery Staff attends Papal Mass in Philadelphia

Members of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia Chancery Staff pose for a picture before attending the Papal Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul in Philadelphia, PA on September 26, 2015.

**Pictured:** Oleh Kovalskyy, Halyna Malynovych, John Drozd, Teresa Siwak, Ihor Kovaliv and his wife Ivanna, and Olha Kuzewycz and her husband Nick. (Photo: Tanya Bilyj)



# Pope Francis leads reverent, emotional liturgy in Philadelphia

BY MATTHEW GAMBINO

Pope Francis' visit to Philadelphia beginning Saturday morning, Sept. 26, and continuing through Sunday represented more than smiles and cheers from the crowd for arguably the world's most popular man today.

Reaction from the 1,600 Catholic priests, deacons, men and women religious and lay people from across the Philadelphia Archdiocese attending the papal Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul suggested the presence of the pope was a cathartic remedy for a local church ready to emerge confidently from the most turbulent decade in its more than 200-year history.

The pope's stop in Philadelphia closed the Eighth World Meeting of Families and began the final leg of his three-city apostolic visit to the United States this week, after two days each in Washington and New York.

From Tuesday to Friday, Sept. 22-25, some 20,000 souls had descended on the city from across the U.S. and from 100 countries, making it the largest triennial World Meeting ever held. Many of those pilgrims stayed in the city after the last session Sept. 25 to join the papal events for the weekend in a carnival atmosphere.

But Saturday morning's Mass celebrated by Pope Francis had earlier been billed as one "for the people of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia," and the invited faithful participated in an elegant, sublime and emotional liturgy.

The adjoining Chapel of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament was also filled, bringing the number of worshipers up to 1,600, organizers of the Mass estimated.

The 10:30 a.m. Mass began with Pope Francis wearing simple white vestments and following a long procession including the auxiliary bishops of Philadelphia, current and retired bishops of Pennsylvania dioceses, and directly behind a beaming Archbishop Charles Chaput.

(continued on next page)



**Some of the Ukrainian priests who attended the Papal Mass. (Photo: <https://twitter.com/WMF2015>)**



**The moment when Pope Francis enters the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul in Philadelphia. (Photo: Teresa Siwak)**



**Pope Francis processes by Mother Evhenia, Sr. Timothea, and Sr. Maria, MSMG at the Cathedral Basilica. (Photo: Br. Dominic Matthew, O. de M.)**

## Pope Francis leads reverent, emotional liturgy in Philadelphia

(continued from previous page)

The 100-voice combined Cathedral and Archdiocesan Choirs, led by David Kimock and backed by a small orchestra, led the congregation in the Marian hymn “Hail Holy Queen,” in honor of the day’s votive Mass for our Lady, Mother of the Church. Sung by the choir and congregation with such devotion, more than a few people were moved to dry tears from their eyes.

In his homily delivered in Spanish and translated every few sentences into English, Pope Francis affirmed the faithful of the archdiocese and laid down a challenge to them.

The pope used the example of Philadelphia’s first female saint, St. Katharine Drexel, to inspire everyone in the cathedral to take up a mission of service to the church.

“Each one of us has to respond, as best we can, to the Lord’s call to build up his Body, the Church,” the pope said. No less than four times he used the Spanish phrase, “y tu” — “and you” — to echo Pope Leo XIII’s question to St. Katherine: “What about you?”

That pope’s words to a young Katharine changed her life and “made her think of the immense work that had to be done, and to realize that she was being called to do her part,” Pope Francis said.

He recognized the many young people today who like Katharine, he said, “have the same high ideals, generosity of spirit, and love for Christ and the Church! Do we challenge them? Do we make space for them and help them to do their part? To find ways of sharing their enthusiasm and gifts with our communities,

(continued on next page)



**Pope Francis offers the Homily at the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul in Philadelphia. (Photo: Teresa Siwak)**

## Pope Francis leads reverent, emotional liturgy in Philadelphia

(continued from previous page)



**Pope Francis during the Papal Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of SS Peter and Paul on September 26, 2015. (Photo: Teresa Siwak)**

above all in works of mercy and concern for others? Do we share our own joy and enthusiasm in serving the Lord?"

Pope Francis called everyone to "a sense of personal responsibility for the Church's mission." He urged them not to rely on "maintaining our structures and institutions, which have served us well," but by "being open to the possibilities which the Spirit opens up to us and communicating the joy of the Gospel, daily and in every season of our life," he said.

He also called for a renewed emphasis on the participation of lay people in the church.

"Our challenge today," the pope said, "is to build on those solid foundations and to foster a sense of collaboration and shared responsibility in planning for the future of our parishes and institutions."

Pope Francis gave thanks for the contributions of religious women and men, and the leadership of priests

(continued on next page)



## Pope Francis leads reverent, emotional liturgy in Philadelphia

(continued from previous page)

in the archdiocese. He prayed that the Blessed Virgin Mary, “with a mother’s love,” would intercede for the growth of the Catholic Church in America.

“I pray for each of you, and I ask you, please, to pray for me,” he concluded.

Pope Francis celebrated the Liturgy of the Eucharist with the hundreds of concelebrating priests and bishops, joined on the high altar by Archbishop Chaput, retired archbishop of Philadelphia Cardinal Justin Rigali, and Auxiliary Bishops Timothy Senior and John McIntyre.



**Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka and Bishop John Bura at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul on September 26, 2015.**

(Photo: Teresa Siwak)

After communion, Archbishop Chaput welcomed Pope Francis to Philadelphia. The two men walked into the center of the cathedral sanctuary and embraced, to the thundering applause of the congregation. It was sustained as the pope gave the archbishop the gift of a gold chalice, and continued as they embraced again.

As the Mass ended the pope walked through the cathedral and into the chapel, where another roar of acclaim arose as he entered the chapel doors. He blessed sick children lying in wheeled beds in front of the first pews, then exited the chapel to conclude the liturgy.

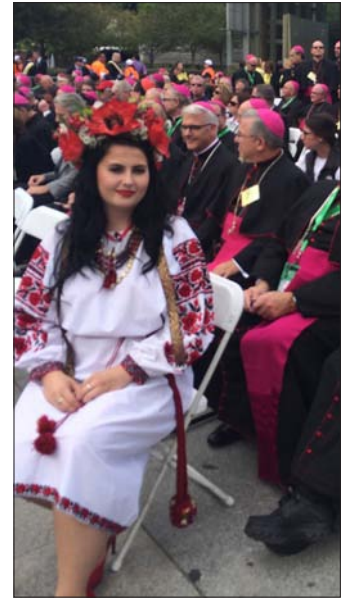
<http://catholicphilly.com>



**Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great in the Cathedral Basilica for the Papal Mass. (Photo: Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great Jenkintown Facebook page)**

## A Ukrainian sings the National Anthem at Independence Hall

**Yuliya Stupen dressed in a Ukrainian outfit sang the American National Anthem on Saturday, September 26, 2015 for the Opening of the Pope Francis Meeting for Religious Freedom at Independence Hall; a historic location and a historic event. (Photos: Ulana Mazurkevich)**



## Pope Francis stresses vital role of religious freedom

(Vatican Radio)

Speaking in Philadelphia's Independence National Historical Park, Pope Francis told representatives of the country's immigrant community that religious freedom is "an essential part of the American spirit". He stressed the importance of remembering the events of history, in order not to repeat errors of the past.

Standing in front of Independence Hall, where the nation's constitution and Declaration of Independence were signed by the founding fathers, the Pope spoke of "the great struggles which led to the abolition of slavery, the extension

of voting rights, the growth of the labor movement, and the gradual effort to eliminate every kind of racism and prejudice directed at successive waves of new Americans".

Pope Francis recalled that the Quakers who founded Philadelphia were inspired by a profound evangelical sense of the dignity of each individual and the ideal of a community united by brotherly love. In today's society too, the Pope stressed that religious freedom is a fundamental right "which shapes the way we interact socially and personally with our neighbors whose religious views differ from

our own".

**Below please find the full English translation of the Pope's words at the Meeting for Religious Liberty**

Address of Pope Francis at the Meeting for Religious Liberty, Independence Mall, Philadelphia

Dear Friends,

One of the highlights of my visit is to stand here, before Independence Hall, the birthplace of the United States of America. It was here that the freedoms which define this country were first proclaimed. The Declaration of Independence stated that all men and women

are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and that governments exist to protect and defend those rights. Those ringing words continue to inspire us today, even as they have inspired peoples throughout the world to fight for the freedom to live in accordance with their dignity.

But history also shows that these or any truths must constantly be reaffirmed, re-appropriated and defended. The history of this nation is also the tale of a constant effort, lasting to our own day, to embody those lofty principles

**(continued on next page)**

# Pope Francis stresses vital role of religious freedom

(continued from previous page)

in social and political life. We remember the great struggles which led to the abolition of slavery, the extension of voting rights, the growth of the labor movement, and the gradual effort to eliminate every kind of racism and prejudice directed at successive waves of new Americans. This shows that, when a country is determined to remain true to its founding principles, based on respect for human dignity, it is strengthened and renewed.

All of us benefit from remembering our past. A people which remembers does not repeat past errors; instead, it looks with confidence to the challenges of the present and the future. Remembrance saves a people's soul from whatever or whoever would attempt to dominate it or use it for their interests. When individuals and communities are guaranteed the effective exercise of their rights, they are not only free to realize their potential, they also contribute to the welfare and enrichment of society.

In this place which is

symbolic of the American way, I would like to reflect with you on the right to religious freedom. It is a fundamental right which shapes the way we interact socially and personally with our neighbors whose religious views differ from our own.

Religious freedom certainly means the right to worship God, individually and in community, as our consciences dictate. But religious liberty, by its nature, transcends places of worship and the private sphere of individuals and families. Our various religious traditions serve society primarily by the message they proclaim. They call individuals and communities to worship God, the source of all life, liberty and happiness. They remind us of the transcendent dimension of human existence and our irreducible freedom in the face of every claim to absolute power. We need but look at history, especially the history of the last century, to see the atrocities perpetrated by systems which claimed to build one or another "earthly paradise" by dominating peoples, subjecting them to

apparently indisputable principles and denying them any kind of rights. Our rich religious traditions seek to offer meaning and direction, "they have an enduring power to open new horizons, to stimulate thought, to expand the mind and heart" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 256). They call to conversion, reconciliation, concern for the future of society, self-sacrifice in the service of the common good, and compassion for those in need. At the heart of their spiritual mission is the proclamation of the truth and dignity of the human person and human rights.

Our religious traditions remind us that, as human beings, we are called to acknowledge an Other, who reveals our relational identity in the face of every effort to impose "a uniformity to which the egotism of the powerful, the conformism of the weak, or the ideology of the utopian would seek to impose on us" (M. de Certeau).

In a world where various forms of modern tyranny seek to suppress religious freedom, or try to reduce it to a subculture without

right to a voice in the public square, or to use religion as a pretext for hatred and brutality, it is imperative that the followers of the various religions join their voices in calling for peace, tolerance and respect for the dignity and rights of others.

We live in a world subject to the "globalization of the technocratic paradigm" (*Laudato Si'*, 106), which consciously aims at a one-dimensional uniformity and seeks to eliminate all differences and traditions in a superficial quest for unity. The religions thus have the right and the duty to make clear that it is possible to build a society where "a healthy pluralism which respects differences and values them as such" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 255) is a "precious ally in the commitment to defending human dignity... and a path to peace in our troubled world" (*ibid.*, 257).

The Quakers who founded Philadelphia were inspired by a profound evangelical sense of the dignity of

(continued on next page)

# Pope Francis stresses vital role of religious freedom

(continued from previous page)

each individual and the ideal of a community united by brotherly love. This conviction led them to found a colony which would be a haven of religious freedom and tolerance. That sense of fraternal concern for the dignity of all, especially the weak and the vulnerable, became an essential part of the American spirit. During his visit to the United States in 1987, Saint John Paul II paid moving homage to this, reminding all Americans that: "The ultimate test of your greatness is the way you treat every human being, but especially the weakest and most defenseless ones" (Farewell Address, 19 September 1987, 3).

I take this opportunity to thank all those, of whatever religion, who have sought to serve the God of peace by building cities of brotherly love, by caring for our neighbors in need, by defending the dignity of God's gift of life in all its stages, by defending the cause of the poor and the immigrant. All too often, those most in need of our help are unable to be heard. You are their voice, and many of you have faithfully made their cry heard. In this

witness, which frequently encounters powerful resistance, you remind American democracy of the ideals for which it was founded, and that society is weakened whenever and wherever injustice prevails.

Among us today are members of America's large Hispanic population, as well as representatives of recent immigrants to the United States. I greet all of you with particular affection! Many of you have emigrated to this country at great personal cost, but in the hope of building a new life. Do not be discouraged by whatever challenges and hardships you face. I ask you not to forget

that, like those who came here before you, you bring many gifts to your new nation. You should never be ashamed of your traditions. Do not forget the lessons you learned from your elders, which are something you can bring to enrich the life of this American land. I repeat, do not be ashamed of what is part of you, your life blood. You are also called to be responsible citizens, and to contribute fruitfully to the life of the communities in which you live. I think in particular of the vibrant faith which so many of you possess, the deep sense of family life and all those other values which you have inherited. By contributing your gifts, you will not

only find your place here, you will help to renew society from within.

Dear friends, I thank you for your warm welcome and for joining me here today. May this country and each of you be renewed in gratitude for the many blessings and freedoms that you enjoy. And may you defend these rights, especially your religious freedom, for it has been given to you by God himself. May he bless you all. I ask you, please, not to forget to pray for me.

[http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/09/26/pope\\_francis\\_stresses\\_vital\\_role\\_of\\_religious\\_freedom/1175041](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/09/26/pope_francis_stresses_vital_role_of_religious_freedom/1175041)



**Pope Francis at Independence Hall.**

**Photo: <https://www.youtube.com/user/vatican/videos>**

## Ukrainian family moved Pope's heart with testimony of their faith

The family, which moved from Ivano-Frankivsk to the US, met with the Pope. It happened during the Festival of Families during the Eighth World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia with the participation of Pope Francis on September 26, 2015.

Lesya Vasylyv from Ivano-Frankivsk, who now lives in the US, shared her testimony of faith in the family life, who has a sick child. She came together with her sons, Borys, suffering cerebral palsy, and Bohdan, who studies to become a priest.

The woman said that the disease did not affect the will for life of her 17-year-old son Borys. He plans to create a special computer program for sick children. In two years he will graduate from school and is now looking for a college to study the programming and make his dream come true.

"Some people believe that Boris is a burden, but I do not think so. I draw my inspiration from looking at how well he is learning in school and doing everything else," Lesya Vasylyv said.

Pope Francis listened with great emotion the testimony of Ms. Lesya, looked at her sons - Bohdan clothed in a seminarian robe and Borys wearing embroidery and sitting in a wheelchair. Then the Holy Father rose from his chair and went to the podium to personally congratulate this family. With great tenderness he embraced and kissed happy Borys, greeted his mother and brother with affection. During the speech, Ms. Lesya and sons stood next to the Pope.

Adapted from the article on [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all\\_news/community/religion\\_and\\_society/61231](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all_news/community/religion_and_society/61231)



**Pope Francis hugs a Ukrainian boy Borys during the Festival of Families in Philadelphia after the testimony of his mother Lesya, 26 September 2015 - AP**



**Picture of a Jumbotron screen at the Festival of Families where Lesya Vasylyv tells Pope Francis, "My oldest boy Bohdan plans to be a priest. I'm very proud of him."**

**Bohdan Vasylyv is studying at St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Seminary in Washington, DC. He is also a student of the School of Philosophy at Catholic University of America. Bohdan is also a graduate of Manor College in Jenkintown, PA. (Photo: Teresa Siwak)**

## A Meeting With Pope Francis

On Saturday, September 27th, 2015, Pope Francis was in attendance at the World Meeting of Families 2015 in Philadelphia. The Holy Father, as part of the festivities of the World Meeting of Families, received six families and their testimonials to the blessings of family life. One of families received were parishioners of St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Cherry Hill, NJ. Ms. Lesya Vasylyv, mother of Seminarian Bohdan Vasylyv and Boris Vasylyv, presented her testimony to the blessings of raising a family with a disabled child to the Holy Father. Her son, Borys, has been afflicted with cerebral palsy since his infancy. Her other son, Bohdan, helped his mother and grandmother in aiding his brother Borys. Bohdan is now in his first year of pre-theology



**The Vasylyv Family with Pope Francis at the Festival of Families.**  
**Photo: <https://www.youtube.com/user/vatican>**

studies at St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Seminary in Washington, DC, and wants to be a priest for the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia. All three were blessed by the Holy Father on stage, in front of the whole world on live television. Borys received a hug and personal blessing from Pope Francis as well. Lesya's testimonial to the Holy Father, as well as the blessings she and her family received, are shared by all of us Ukrainian Catholics, who know full well the challenges and joys of raising a family. We wish Lesya, Bohdan, and Borys well, and we thank them for being good ambassadors to Pope Francis and the whole world at the World Meeting of Families.

(Submitted by Rev. Paul Makar)

### **Lesya's statement to Pope Francis was very touching. We include it here for everyone:**

I'm so happy to introduce my family today! My name is Lesya and I have two sons - Bohdan and Borys. We originally come from the city of Ivano-Frankivsk in Ukraine, but we now live here in the United States. We do not have much, but we are indeed blessed by God's graces and the protection of the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary. We really enjoy being together as a close-knit Ukrainian family, and I am so happy to have my two boys in my life. I receive so many blessings and joys from God through my sons, especially Borys, who is afflicted with cerebral palsy, that I am not sure where to begin. But, I can say this: Borys is indeed a

(continued on next page)

# A Meeting With Pope Francis

(continued from previous page)

blessing. He has an ability to help others see that, rather than being “sick,” he is happy with the challenges that he faces. His joy, even in adversity, fills us with happiness. Let me give you an example. When he was receiving Botox injections to alleviate a spectrum of extremely painful muscle contractions throughout his body, he acted as a translator between myself and the medical team, leaving them in amazement at his energy and happiness to help his mother and the team. Borys tries so hard to work and be independent that he is an inspiration for all of us.

One source of my inspiration and help in raising and understanding Borys comes from my mother, Yevhenia. My father died when I was four years old; through my mother, I have learned how to be strong by placing my faith in God. She would always take me to church with her, to learn to trust in our Lord and Savior, and it was her faith that inspired me in my own life and to be an active participant in the faith of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

In Ukraine, life was not easy, especially having a handicapped son, despite having what was considered to be a well-paying job. But in spite of this, I continued to place my faith in God and pray for the grace to persevere and to be strong. We looked forward to our Sunday worship in Church, and God continued to bless us, despite the economic difficulties, and later with the transition to a new government when Ukraine became independent.

When I was coming to America, with great hopes, my husband left the family. It was a struggle every day for us, emotionally and financially. So often feelings of hopelessness weighed on me, but I always remembered that God has a plan for us. Every Sunday I was praying in church, and every day I prayed, I read the Bible (especially the Psalms), and took vows to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to St. Philomena for her support in helping me to raise and care for Bohdan and Borys. Then, my mother came to America and that was a big help for us. I can't even describe how supportive she is, I can only be thankful to God for her.

God has really blessed us in many ways. My oldest boy Bohdan graduated from college and is now planning to be a priest. I'm very proud of him. My dear son Borys is now 17 years old and I love him so very much. I am inspired and so happy to see him not limited by his disability; in fact, Borys strongly desires to create computer programs for children with disabilities similar to his, so that they may have fun, but also be challenged, and not let their disabilities limit them. In two years, Borys will finish high school, and he is working very hard, applying to college to learn computer coding so that he can live an independent life. It brings me much happiness and hope to help Borys and Bohdan realize their dreams and see the blessings that God has given them.

While some people may see Borys as a burden, I certainly do not. Seeing him work hard in school and in everything he does inspires me, and watching him pray to God and be filled with the faith that my mother passed on to me fills me with indescribable joy and hope. I have already seen many people ask Borys to pray for them, and this continues to uplift me. I can only say that I have nothing but positive hope for Borys's future, knowing that the Holy Spirit will guide him, just as He has guided us as a family.

Holy Father, thank you very much, for being with us today. Please bless and pray for us and that all expectant parents who discover their child will be, in the world's view, disabled, may see the joy and love ahead of them.

## HOLY FATHER EXPRESSES SOLIDARITY WITH UKRAINIANS DURING VISIT TO USA

During the meditation following receiving the Holy Eucharist at the Mass of Canonization of Saint Junipero Serra at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC on Wednesday, September 23rd, 2015, an assista of the Holy Father presented a letter from the Holy Father to Archbishop Stefan Soroka. In the letter signed personally by Pope Francis, the Holy Father extends his warmest greetings to the Archbishop and to our local Ukrainian Catholic community. He expresses gratitude for the invitations to visit our Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. While expressing his inability to visit our Cathedral, our Holy Father expresses his closeness and solidarity with us, particularly in praying for those suffering and affected by the war in Ukraine. Pope Francis encourages the generosity of organizations and institutions in assisting the Ukrainian people with acts of solidarity. He continues to pray that all political leaders may continue to make further progress in resolving the conflict.

The Holy Father concludes his fraternal letter imparting his Apostolic Blessing on all of us, and asks for our continued prayers for him.

Archbishop Stefan Soroka personally expressed gratitude to the Holy Father for the greetings during Pope Francis' visit to St. Charles Borromeo Seminary on the morning of Sunday, September 27th, 2015.

The original letter signed by Pope Francis is provided with this announcement.



**Archbishop Stefan Soroka speaks with Pope Francis at the Seminary. (Photo: <https://www.youtube.com/user/vatican>)**



*To the Most Reverend Stefan Soroka  
Archbishop of Philadelphia of the Ukrainians*

On the occasion of my visit to Philadelphia for the World Meeting of Families, I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to Your Excellency and to the local Ukrainian Greek-Catholic community.

While grateful for the invitations I received to visit the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, I regret that I am unable to do so but I wish to assure you of my closeness during this difficult period for Ukraine. I unite myself to your prayer, asking our merciful Lord to alleviate the suffering of those who mourn the loss of their dear ones or have been directly affected by the war, and to bring justice and peace to that beloved land. May divine grace encourage the generosity of organizations and institutions in assisting the Ukrainian people with acts of solidarity. And I renew my prayer that all political leaders may continue to make further progress in resolving the conflict.

Through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, I willingly impart my Apostolic Blessing to you and to all those entrusted to your care. And I ask you kindly to continue praying for me.

From the Vatican, 26 September 2015

*Francis*





## Pope Francis closes World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia with a call to openness to miracles of love for the sake of families of the world

(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis celebrated Mass on Sunday afternoon, on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, at the conclusion of the VIII World Meeting of Families and of his visit to Cuba, the United States, and the United Nations.

Thousands of people packed the 33 acres of the parkway – perhaps upward of a million – to participate in the liturgy of the XXVI Sunday in Ordinary Time. The readings for the Mass were taken from the Book of Numbers (11:25-29), James 5:1-6, and the Gospel according to St. Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48.

In his homily, Pope Francis focused on the call to prophetic witness, which is made universal through Baptism, and the work of which begins in the family. “[The presence of so many thousands of families from all around the world] is itself something prophetic, a kind of miracle in today’s world,” said Pope Francis. He went on to express the hope that everyone could be a prophet and

(continued on next page)

OCTOBER 04, 2015



**Several Ukrainians pose by the Altar before the Papal Mass on the Parkway on Sunday, September 27, 2015.  
(Photo: “The Way”)**



**Pope Francis rides by on the Popemobile before the Mass.  
(Photo: Teresa Siwak)**

# Pope Francis closes World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia

(continued from previous page)

that that all of us could be open to miracles of love for the sake of all the families of the world, "and thus overcome the scandal of a narrow, petty love, closed in on itself, impatient of others."

"How beautiful it would be if everywhere, even beyond our borders, we could appreciate and encourage this prophecy and this miracle," he said. "We renew our faith in the word of the Lord which invites faithful families to this openness. It invites all those who want to share the prophecy of the covenant of man and woman, which generates life and reveals God."

The Holy Father explained that the choice to enter into family life is in this age often a courageous and always a prophetic choice. "Anyone who wants to bring into this world a family which teaches children to be excited by every gesture aimed at overcoming evil – a family which shows that the Spirit is alive and at work – will encounter our gratitude and our appreciation," he said.

Pope Francis closed his homily with a prayer. "May God grant to all of

us, as the Lord's disciples, the grace to be worthy of this purity of heart which is not scandalized by the Gospel," he concluded.

Following the Mass, Pope Francis went to offer a brief word of thanks and appreciation to the hundreds of volunteers whose work helped make the week-long World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia a success, after which he was to take plane and depart for Rome, where his arrival was expected at 10 AM local time on Monday, Sept. 28th.

Please find below the full text of Pope Francis' homily:

Today the word of God surprises us with powerful and thought-provoking images. Images which challenge us, but also stir our enthusiasm.

In the first reading, Joshua tells Moses that two members of the people are prophesying, speaking God's word, without a mandate. In the Gospel, John tells Jesus that the disciples had stopped someone from casting out evil spirits in the name of Jesus. Here

(continued on next page)



**Parishioners from Perth Amboy, NJ who attended the Papal Mass made the TV news. (Photo: Rev. Ivan Turyk)**



**Bishop David Motiuk, Canada, Bishop John Bura, Auxillary Bishop Philadelphia, and Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka during the Procession to the Papal Mass. (Photo: Debbie Marco from Reading, PA parish)**

# Pope Francis closes World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia

(continued from previous page)



**Pope Francis during Consecration at the Papal Mass on the Parkway. (Photo: Tanya Bilyj)**

is the surprise: Moses and Jesus both rebuke those closest to them for being so narrow! Would that all could be prophets of God's word! Would that everyone could work miracles in the Lord's name!

Jesus encountered hostility from people who did not accept what he said and did. For them, his openness to the honest and sincere faith of many men and women who were not part of God's chosen people

seemed intolerable. The disciples, for their part, acted in good faith. But the temptation to be scandalized by the freedom of God, who sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous alike (Mt 5:45), bypassing bureaucracy, officialdom and inner circles, threatens the authenticity of faith. Hence it must be vigorously rejected.

Once we realize this, we can understand why Jesus' words about causing "scandal" are so

harsh. For Jesus, the truly "intolerable" scandal consists in everything that breaks down and destroys our trust in the working of the Spirit!

Our Father will not be outdone in generosity and he continues to scatter seeds. He scatters the seeds of his presence in our world, for "love consists in this, not that we have loved God but that he loved us" first (1 Jn 4:10). That love gives us a profound certainty: we are sought by God;

he waits for us. It is this confidence which makes disciples encourage, support and nurture the good things happening all around them. God wants all his children to take part in the feast of the Gospel. Jesus says, "Do not hold back anything that is good, instead help it to grow!" To raise doubts about the working of the Spirit, to give the impression that it cannot take place

(continued on next page)

# Pope Francis closes World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia

(continued from previous page)

in those who are not “part of our group”, who are not “like us”, is a dangerous temptation. Not only does it block conversion to the faith; it is a perversion of faith!

Faith opens a “window” to the presence and working of the Spirit. It shows us that, like happiness, holiness is always tied to little gestures. “Whoever gives you a cup of water in my name will not go unrewarded”, says Jesus (cf. Mk 9:41). These little gestures are those we learn at home, in the family; they get lost amid all the other things we do, yet they do make each day different. They are the quiet things done by mothers and grandmothers, by fathers and grandfathers, by children. They are little signs of tenderness, affection and compassion. Like the warm supper we look forward to at night, the early lunch awaiting someone who gets up early to go to work. Homely gestures. Like a blessing before we go to bed, or a hug after we return from a hard day’s work. Love is shown by little things, by attention to small daily signs which make us feel at home. Faith grows when it is lived and shaped by



**Pope Francis incenses at the Papal Mass on the Parkway.  
(Photo: Tanya Bilyj)**

love. That is why our families, our homes, are true domestic churches. They are the right place for faith to become life, and life to become faith.

Jesus tells us not to hold back these little miracles. Instead, he wants us to encourage them, to spread them. He asks us to go through life, our everyday life, encouraging all these little signs of love as signs of his own living and active presence in our world.

So we might ask ourselves:

How are we trying to live this way in our homes, in our societies? What kind of world do we want to leave to our children (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 160)? We cannot answer these questions alone, by ourselves. It is the Spirit who challenges us to respond as part of the great human family. Our common house can no longer tolerate sterile divisions. The urgent challenge of protecting our home includes the effort to bring the entire human family together in the pursuit of a sustainable and integral

development, for we know that things can change (cf. *ibid.*, 13). May our children find in us models and incentives to communion! May our children find in us men and women capable of joining others in bringing to full flower all the good seeds which the Father has sown!

Pointedly, yet affectionately, Jesus tells us: “If you, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children,

(continued on next page)

# Pope Francis closes World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia

(continued from previous page)

how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Lk 11:13). How much wisdom there is in these few words! It is true that, as far as goodness and purity of heart are concerned, we human beings don't have much to show! But Jesus knows that, where children are concerned, we are capable of boundless generosity. So he reassures us: if only we have faith, the Father will give us his Spirit.

We Christians, the Lord's disciples, ask the families of the world to help us! How many of us are here at this celebration! This is itself something prophetic, a kind of miracle in today's world. Would that we could all be prophets! Would that all of us could be open to miracles of love for the sake of all the families of the world, and thus overcome the scandal of a narrow, petty love, closed in on itself, impatient of others!

And how beautiful it would be if everywhere, even beyond our borders, we could appreciate and encourage this prophecy and this miracle! We renew our faith in the

word of the Lord which invites faithful families to this openness. It invites all those who want to share the prophecy of the covenant of man and woman, which generates life and reveals God!

Anyone who wants to bring into this world a family which teaches children to be excited by every gesture aimed at overcoming evil – a family which shows that the Spirit is alive and at work – will encounter our gratitude and our appreciation. Whatever the family, people, region, or religion to which they belong!

May God grant to all of us, as the Lord's disciples, the grace to be worthy of this purity of heart which is not scandalized by the Gospel!

[http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/09/27/pope\\_francois\\_closes\\_world\\_meeting\\_of\\_families\\_2015/1175235](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/09/27/pope_francois_closes_world_meeting_of_families_2015/1175235)



**Parishioners from Trenton, NJ at the Papal Mass on the Parkway. (Photo sent in by Rev. Taras Lonchyna)**



**Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka passes by Pope Francis during the recessional at the conclusion of the Papal Mass. (Photo: Tanya Bilyj)**

**Photos and Videos from the Pope Visit will be posted on our social media sites the week of October 5, 2015.**



**Metropolitan Stefan receives Communion at the Papal Mass on the Parkway. (Photo: Teresa Siwak)**

**Editorial and Business Office:**

827 N. Franklin St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19123

**Telephone:** (215) 627-0143

**E-mail:** [theway@ukrcap.org](mailto:theway@ukrcap.org)



**Online:** <http://www.ukrarcheparchy.us>

**Blog:** <http://www.thewayukrainian.blogspot.com>

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Archeparchy-of-Philadelphia/197564070297001>

**YouTube Channel:** <http://www.youtube.com/user/thewayukrainian>

**THE WAY Staff**

Very Rev. Archpriest John Fields, Director of Communication;  
Ms. Teresa Siwak, Editor;  
Rev. D. George Worschak, Assistant Editor



**Rev. Worschak & Teresa Siwak**

Articles and photos proposed for publication should be in the Editor's office at least two weeks before requested date of publication. For advance notice of the upcoming events, kindly send one month in advance. All articles must be submitted in both English and Ukrainian languages, THE WAY will not translate proposed articles. All materials submitted to THE WAY become the property of THE WAY.