



Mission To Ukraine

By Fr. Timothy Graff

The Fraternity of Priests made its first journey to Eastern Europe as part of a 5-day mission from May 19th to 24th, this year. This was the first joint effort in evangelization between the Fraternity of Priests and Renewal Ministries of Ann Arbor, Michigan, who have been working Eastern Europe for many years.

The event was a retreat for priests and religious in the town of Krasilov in the Diocese of Pereyaslav-Khmelnysky in the Central Ukraine.

With the exception of some Greek Catholic priests who are native and have ministered in the Ukraine for many years, most of the priests and

religious were young Poles who came to reopen the monasteries lost in the early part of the last century and to reevangelize a people who suffered so greatly during the communist era.

About 80 priests and religious, most in their early 20's to mid 30's heard of the great hope and freedom that God holds out to them in Christ.

In a country that for many years had been deprived of any sharing of the gospel, the task of evangelization set before these brothers and sisters is great. Yet there is a great sense of expectation of what God is about to do in their midst.

In addition to talks presented by Director of Missions for Renewal Ministries, Peter Herbeck and other members of the team there were prayer meetings every night and a great amount of time spent in personal ministry with the priests and religious.

The prayer meetings had the strongest praise and worship I have ever experienced in more than 25 years in charismatic renewal. The sense of freedom within worship and the use of the word gifts were also very strong. The priests and religious were able to sing and dance with a freedom that only God could give them.

On one occasion while we prayed for those who had suffered during the Communist persecutions, the prophetic word came: "You are the new springtime of my Church.



*Religious in Slovakia
(See story on page 3).*

You are the new springtime of my Church. The blood of the martyrs who have died in this land during the last 80 years is cascading through your veins tonight.

"The seeds that were sown through the blood of the martyrs--the blood of your mothers and fathers, of your sisters and brothers--is taking root tonight because of your faithfulness. See that new buds are appearing on the trees of the Ukraine. See that a new harvest is coming about because you are faithful. Go out in my name and establish my Kingdom. Go out and proclaim the Kingdom of God for my Spirit has empowered you. You are the new springtime of my Church."

When I spoke about Fraternity, brothers in Karislov in the Diocese of Pereyaslav-Khmelnysky, in Berdychiv in the Diocese of Zhytomyr and in Odessa and Sevastopol in the Crimea showed definite interest. As we continue our

Continued on page 3. . .

From the Editor...

In this month's newsletter, the focus is on the Church in Eastern and Central Europe and on the Fraternity's role there. And it is fascinating to watch.

We feature reports by two brothers, Fr. Timothy Graff, board member and Fr. Ian Taylor, member of the Port of Spain Fraternity. They both ventured into this mission territory through Renewal Ministries, with each not knowing of the other's involvement. Fr. Timothy went specifically to talk to priests about Fraternity; Fr. Ian went at the service of Renewal Ministries, as a team member.

Fr. Timothy writes of a hope and freedom made visible, Fr. Ian of the dogged determination of a people. Both men have clearly been deeply inspired and touched.

Dear Friends of the Priesthood

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Dear Friends of the Priesthood,

By the time you read this, I will be out of a job.

I am still a priest, gladly serving the Lord in the Diocese of Cleveland. However, according to the Fraternity of Priests bylaws, I have finished two consecutive terms and am not eligible for re-election.

During my years of service on the board, there has been both change and growth in the Fraternity. Most of the changes in the Fraternity deal with the priests who have moved in and out of Visitation House, as well as on and off the board of directors. Fr. Richard O'Gorman served the Fraternity with sage like wisdom. Fr. Forrest Rouelle exuded zeal for the priesthood and the Fraternity with every heartbeat. Frs. Joules Goulet, Dan Cook and Harold Imamshah made Visitation House a place of refreshment, prayer and hospitality. Msgr. Allard and Frs. Joe Muldoon, Al Quade, Robert Rousseau and Brian Jeffries made the work of the board fruitful, joyful and at times downright funny. Finally, the members of the current board, Frs. Bob Giardina, Timothy Graff, Cuthbert Alexander and Ray Ratzenberger have made my year as chairman enjoyable and fruitful.

However, though faces change, the mission of the Fraternity of Priests continues. New Fraternities have been established in Africa, with groundwork being laid in Eastern Europe as well. Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed..." (Matthew 13:34). In the eyes of the world, Fraternity of Priests is small. However, by God's grace, its growth is inexorable. The Fraternity will continue to be a grace for the priests who have committed themselves to its way of life. Through these priests, the church will be built up in numbers and holiness.

A couple of years ago I came across an image that describes the work of Fraternity of Priests. The image is that of a trellis. A trellis is a fence-like structure that helps plants grow to their full potential. Without a trellis, a rose will grow, but in a wild and unkempt manner. However, with a trellis, a rosebush will climb toward the sky.

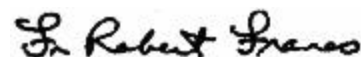
Fraternity of Priests provides priests with a trellis to help them grow in personal holiness, brotherly love and ministerial power. By committing ourselves to an hour of personal prayer each day, the regular reading of scripture and the keeping of a journal, as well as fasting and tithing, we become more open to the Lord, the fountain of all holiness. By meeting regularly with other priests in the Fraternity, giving and receiving teachings, and opening our hearts to our brothers, we grow in brotherly love and know the joy of walking in the light.

Finally, by seeking to live in the power of the Holy Spirit and further His renewing work in the priesthood and the church, members of the Fraternity proclaim that God yet visits His people. The salvation of Jesus Christ becomes accessible, tangible and relevant.

I am deeply grateful to God for Fraternity of Priests. By committing myself to the practices of our "trellis", I have grown closer to the Lord, my brother priests and my vocation to proclaim the gospel. I pray that Fraternity of Priests continue to be an instrument of the Lord to strengthen and renew the priesthood.

Finally, your prayers and financial support are deeply appreciated. May the Lord bless you and your loved ones.

Sincerely in Christ,



Fr. Robert Franco

... continued from page 1

work with the brothers and sisters in the Ukraine I expect more doors to open for the Fraternity to serve in Eastern Europe.

If two words would sum up my journey to the Ukraine they would be "hope" and "freedom". A hope that is born out of a Church persecuted but never defeated. A freedom given to all those who seek the Lord in the midst of their suffering and who live that freedom in the midst of Christ's victory.



Fr. Ian Taylor ministers.

On Fire in Slovakia

By Fr. Ian Taylor

Slovakia in Central Europe, formerly bound to the Czech Republic to form Czechoslovakia, had been under Nazi control in World War II. After this time it was subjected to Russian domination and communist oppression for 42 years, before its final liberation in the early 90's with the global collapse of communism.

Having studied communism at university and conscious of the Blessed Mother's linking of the conversion of communist Russia with an era of world peace, I was elated to receive an invitation to preach the Gospel in Slovakia, a former Soviet stronghold.

Tom Edwards of Florida, had been the feature speaker at the Charismatic Conference in Trinidad in January 1999, where we met. Later he issued this invitation to join him and a team from Ralph Martin's Renewal Ministries on a week's mission to Slovakia. I soon learned that it was to be a pay-your-own-way mission. Traveling from Trinidad would mean a bill of \$2000 US. "Well, if this is from God," I said, "he'll pay the bill."

The team of 20 to Slovakia comprised couples and single persons worship in English and Slovak.

Tom Edwards and others had visited Slovakia twice before within the last year and the results were apparent. Several had been baptized in the Spirit and displayed no inhibition in public praise. The men (and there were noticeably several), lifted holy hands (1 Timothy 2) and people danced and clapped and joyfully worshipped the Lord.

It was hard to believe that in less than 10 years after communism so much had sprung to life again. Praise God! Interestingly, most of the clergy and religious we met were less than 10 years ordained or professed.

Some days we took to the streets, universities, hospitals and prisons, sharing the love of Jesus with all. Many were baptized in the Spirit and others healed.

The Mission reached its high point with the "Fire" rally when 8,000 spirit-filled Slovaks freely and joyfully lifted up the name of Jesus in Slovak and even in English. As the Blessed Sacrament was carried through the crowd, people reached out to touch Jesus. The presence of the Lord was awesome in that place. The people of Slovakia are on fire.

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A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

Jesus, Eternal High Priest, live in (name of priest), act in him, speak in and through him. Think your thoughts in his mind, love through his heart. Give him your own disposition and feelings. Teach, lead and guide him always. Correct, enlighten and expand his thoughts and behavior. Possess his soul, take over his entire personality and life. Replace him with yourself. Incline him to constant adoration and thanksgiving; pray in and through him. Let him live in you and keep him in this intimate union always.

Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (.....). Amen.

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Dear Father Robert Franco,
This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.