

Cardinal Collins and Bishop Gudziak Bless Sheptytsky Institute's New Premises in Toronto

On July 25, the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies (MASI) held a Garden Party and Blessing of its new home, Windle House, located on campus of the University of St. Michael's College (USMC) in the University of Toronto.

The premises were blessed by His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Collins, Archbishop of Toronto and Chancellor of USMC, and Bishop Borys Gudziak (representing Bishop Stephen Chmilar), Eparch of Paris and founder of the Ukrainian Catholic University, who was also the keynote speaker. Concelebrating with them were Bishop David Motiuk of Edmonton and Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR of Saskatoon.

Founded in 1986 by Father Andriy Chirovsky in Chicago, MASI had been based in Ottawa since 1990. Last year, MASI signed an agreement that as of July 1, 2017 it would become an autonomous academic unit of the Faculty of Theology of USMC, thereby forging an affiliation USMC, the Toronto School of Theology and with one of the world's leading universities, the University of Toronto.

The large turnout at the event reflected the significance of this development for our Eparchy and the Ukrainian Catholic Church in general, for the Roman Catholic and Eastern Christian Churches as well as for the USMC. Numerous priests and deacons from the Greater Toronto Area and beyond, scholars and academics as well as laity – totalling more than 400 people – were present.

In attendance were the president of the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada (UCWLC) Marion Barszczyk and other UCWLC national executive and local members; Zenia Kuspheta, a founder of Dzherelo in Lviv; and others. The Knights of Columbus representing Eastern Catholic Councils and Assemblies escorted Cardinal Collins.

The event began at 5 p.m. At 6:30 a procession of clergy made their way to the steps of Windle House for the moleben. Dobrodiyka Halyna Chirovsky, dressed in a vyshyvanka, and several children met them at the entrance with the traditional bread and salt greeting.

Cardinal Collins, who gave the homily, and Bishop Gudziak celebrated the moleben; Bishops Motiuk and Bayda concelebrated and many other priests and sub-deacons participated.

In his homily, Cardinal Collins noted how important it was that with the arrival of MASI on the USMC campus, "East and West" were now together engaged in theological pursuits for the glory of God. The Eastern Christian Churches "are one of two lungs through which we must breathe," he said, adding that through the Eastern

Churches' glory of worship which brings an awareness of the divine in this world, this reality can reach outwards from MASI across the country and far beyond.

Emphasizing the importance of MASI in educating and forming future clerical and lay leaders, he reminded those gathered that Patriarch Sviatoslav Shevchuk is an alumnus of the Institute.

MASI's choir led the singing during the moleben under conductor and sub-deacon Dr. Brian Butcher, an instructor at the Institute. The Melkite Choir of Jesus the King and the choir of the Coptic Orthodox Churches of the Greater Toronto Area also sang. Taissa Cronin, granddaughter of Brampton's Father Roman and Dobrodika Iryna Galadza, was one of the readers. Dr. Andrew Bennett, the former Canadian Ambassador for Religious Freedom and an alumnus of MASI, read verses from the Psalms.

At the conclusion, MASI's new sign at the front of its premises was unveiled by officiating clergy, the Sheptytsky Institute staff, its former directors and its current one, Father Peter Galadza; the President of USMC, David Mulroney, the Dean of USMC's Faculty of Theology Dr. James Ginther, and members of the MASI Foundation, the charitable funding body that holds the endowments of the Institute.

Afterwards, guests toured Windle House, a stately mansion at the very heart of the St. Mike's campus, next to the student center, where, starting in the 2017 academic year, MASI's classrooms, administrative offices, reading rooms, student lounge and rooms for visiting scholars will be located. Public lectures will also be held there. Liturgical services will be held in a chapel in nearby Elmsley Hall and a fundraising drive is underway to renovate that space.

Tour guides Dobrodiyky Olenka Galadza and Halyna Chirovsky explained that Windle House dates to the late 19th century and was inhabited by a series of notable individuals. Built for barrister Herbert Harley Dewart, who became provincial Liberal Leader, it was named after a later resident, Sir Bertram Windle, a scholar and university president. At one point it was home to French Catholic theologian Jacques Maritain and most recently served as a residence of the Basilian Fathers. At one point, the late Fr. Petro Bilaniuk had an office here.

At 8 p.m. Bishop Gudziak spoke in the Sorbara Hall auditorium, to a capacity crowd about the "The Unique Importance of the Sheptytsky Institute for the Church Universal." Emcee Larisa Galadza-Cronin, of Ottawa, opened the program. She introduced USMC President David Mulroney, who welcomed the community and invited them to keep coming back to the campus. Fathers Peter Galadza and Andriy Chirovsky presented a specially commissioned icon to the President and Cardinal for their vital role in arranging MASI's move to USMC. Dean of Theology Dr. James Ginther also received an icon.

Lesya Savada of Saskatoon, one of MASI's first students and a recent graduate of the

D.Min. Program at St. Paul University in Ottawa, introduced the keynote speaker, Bishop Gudziak, who lectured on the amazing life of Andrey Sheptytsky. He was “one of the greatest churchmen of the last 100 years,” said Gudziak. “He lived through the administration of seven governments while shepherding a relatively small church of 3-4 million members” in Western Ukraine, then a “distant, poor corner of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.” One of his legacies today, said Gudziak, is a Church whose members and communities are spread in many places around the globe – from Siberia to Egypt, from Canada to Argentina.

“My hope,” said Gudziak, is “that the community here and the U of T and USMC and the Ukrainian and Catholic communities of Toronto make the best of this special opportunity”. Visibly moved by the momentous potential of MASI to share Christ’s Gospel and shape and transform lives, he encouraged the community to support MASI and help it meet the greatest challenges of the 21st century. He promised that if they do, their “community will be changed,” “their eparchy will be changed” and “incredible things will happen.”

“Don’t waste this opportunity,” Bishop Gudziak urged those assembled at this event marking a new era for MASI and our Ukrainian Catholic Church. As MASI’s first academic year in Toronto gets underway, the ball is now in our court. How will we, clergy and laity of the Toronto Eparchy answer the call?

How Can You Support MASI?

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Connect: Subscribe to MASI’s newsletter. Send a request to sheptytsky@utoronto.ca
Pray: Join MASI’s prayer fellowship or attend Divine Liturgy at MASI’s chapel
Donate: Visit MASI’s website to donate online or send cheques to:
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