

National CYMK-UOY New Year's Newsletter!

As we are starting off a new year and new decade, our National CYMK-UOY Executive wanted to share some updates on all the exciting things CYMKivtsi have been up to!

Please read below for a report from our National CYMK President, Max Kowalchuk; a greeting from our National CYMK Chaplain, Fr. Taras Udod; and updates and news from many of our locals across the provinces!



National and Alberta Provincial CYMK Representatives at the UCC Triennial Congress, Ottawa, ON.

National CYMK President's Update

Since our last communication with members and advisors in November 2019, our National CYMK-UOY Executive has continued to be very busy! We meet monthly to work on the resolutions set at our National Convention and talk about how we can continue to grow the organization.

In the fall, we developed presentations for all three Eparchial Conferences and had members of the National Executive present to clergy. Each conference heard the same message from our Ukrainian Orthodox Youth, which is that we are an organization who wants to work closer with our clergy to create a vibrant community and grow future leaders of our church. This was a very successful initiative and has set a good foundation for building a meaningful connection in more parishes. We are very grateful for all the support we have received from our clergy, and in particular, His Eminence Metropolitan Yuriy.

Our National Executive also attended the UCC Triennial Congress in Ottawa, ON in November 2019. This was an opportunity to not only attend various sessions on topics including Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine and engaging volunteers, but to also network with other National Ukrainian community organizations and youth.

CYMK has also been working with the SUS Foundation of Canada to promote the CYMK Administrator position. This individual will be hired to support CYMK nationally by working with parishes to build locals and help plan various activities and programs.

National Executive members have been working hard to familiarise themselves with their positions. I (Max) have been representing CYMK at meetings for the National USRL Executive and the Joint USRL/UOCC Youth Initiative Task Force, as our President. Larysa Kuchta, our Secretary and media director, has been

keeping our executive organized with meeting minutes and to-do lists between meetings, as well updating the website, posting on social media accounts, communicating with our locals, and collecting membership information. Ilya Osachuk, our Treasurer, is learning the ropes of his position; Liza Zienchuk our Vice-President, continues to represent CYMK with National UCC; and Tanya Buciora is providing guidance as our Past President.

Our registered membership as of January 2020 is 92 CYMKivtsi from our 7 locals. We are expecting this number to increase, and look forward to working with our Ukrainian Orthodox parishes in engaging our CYMKivtsi/ Ukrainian Orthodox Youth.

Recently, we included a greeting into the Christmas issue of the Visnyk, which we felt was an important step to promote CYMK-UOY to our Orthodox parish members across Canada.

We also have a few upcoming events and updates we are currently working on.

1. We have been approached to help organize a youth component to this year's Sobor in Winnipeg from July 15-19, 2020. This will be an event focused for youth 14+ and we want to make sure that it will be engaging for the youth, and help meet our resolution to hold an annual CYMK-UOY retreat/ event, open for all our Ukrainian Orthodox youth. Planning is underway, and as soon as we know more details, they will be shared with our locals and families via media sites and email.
2. We have also been working on developing a CYMK Podcast. The topics would be youth-oriented and centered around our CYMK-UOY pillars [Faith, Culture, Leadership, Fellowship]. If you have any topic ideas, please forward these to our National Executive email address, nationalcymk@gmail.com

Respectfully submitted by,
Max Kowalchuk
National CYMK President



Ukrainian Canadian Congress Tribute Gala - National CYMK Representatives

On [Saturday, February 1, 2020](#), a Gala was held at the Liberty Grand in Toronto, to celebrate the retirement of Roman Waschuk, with a tribute to his wife Oksana Smerechuk. Mr. Waschuk is the Former Ambassador from Canada to Ukraine, and has devoted his career to Government issues and works that involve varied avenues of External Affairs, Assistance to Operation UNIFER (Canada's Military training mission in Ukraine), support for police reform in Ukraine, where, due to his work, Ukraine now has the leading number of women in the Ukrainian military, Police Academy and Workforce. Furthermore, Mrs. Smerechuk has worked alongside her spouse, and has also proved to be an inspiration and powerful female leader, as she not only worked with the Government of Canada as a linguistic specialist, but lead many women groups in Ukraine, such as the International Women's Club and Ambassador's Spouses Club in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Mr. Waschuk and Mrs. Smerechuk have always been very encouraging of Ukrainian Canadian youth, and believe in the power and importance of young Ukrainian Canadians, and their value for our Canadian future. The purpose of the Tribute Gala was to raise money for the Roman Waschuk and Oksana Smerechuk Fund, to support Ukrainian youth within Canadian Parliament, who have an interest in political leadership, public service and policy, foreign affairs, and Government.

At the Tribute Gala, CYMK, as UCC National members, were invited, alongside the Ukrainian Canadian Student Union (SUSK) and Plast, to represent the youth of our Ukrainian Canadian Generation. Former National CYMK Presidents Tanya Buciora and Liza Zienchuk were honoured to represent CYMK during this event. As the youth organizations are aiming to become more close-knit, it was a fabulous way to interact with other young Ukrainian leaders. We are proud of the progression and awareness that our CYMK organization is earning from Ukrainian Canadians, and we look forward to continuing the growth of our organization.

The Program of the Tribute Gala was very informative and meaningful. Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, Andriy Shevchenko (Ambassador of Ukraine to Canada), Paul Grod (President of the Ukrainian World Congress) and Alexandra Chyczij (President of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress) made public presentation of the immense work Mr. Waschuk and Mrs. Smerechuk have completed during their terms, alongside video greetings from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Roman Waschuk was also dedicated the Ukrainian Canadian Congress Shevchenko Medal, for most outstanding work towards the development and enhancement of the Ukrainian Canadian community. An Appreciation for Canadian Police Reform Programs in Ukraine, and Canadian Armed Forces Joint Task Force in Ukraine (Operation UNIFER) were also appreciated.

CYMK would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the Temetry Foundation for

sponsoring the youth guest table. CYMK looks forward to attending many more historical UCC events in the near future.

Tanya Buciora

National CYMK Past President



National CYMK-UOY Chaplain's Greeting

Dear CYMKivtsi,

Slava Bohu! Glory be to God! ... for all His many blessings poured out abundantly upon everyone of us! And indeed we all have many reasons for gratitude – if we but have our hearts and minds open for opportunities to give thanks!

One way that we are called to be grateful is to acknowledge that God created us in His image and likeness. The **image** we always have ... the **likeness** is what is renewed in us at our baptism and renewed whenever we return our focus to thinking, and acting consistent with God's Will.

There is a saying in Ukrainian (пословиця) – “**ВІК ЖИВЕШ ... ВІК УЧИСЯ!**” *one lives an entire “age” - one is (called) to **learn** an entire age ...* For me this means amongst other things – that not only are we never too old to learn, we also are called to keep ourselves learning (and re-learning) our whole life. I have often thought that the more I learn, the more I read and study, the more I realize how much more there is to learn ...

This saying also means that the very simple and basic teachings and lessons that all of us hopefully learn when we are children are the ones that carry and sustain us as we re-learn and apply them to our lives again and again, as our life circumstances change.

It is in this vein that I offer these thoughts on one of our basic actions as Ukrainian Orthodox Christian people – crossing ourselves (or *placing* the cross upon ourselves.) We are invited – again granted the opportunity by a Loving God to *place* the Cross of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ *on* ourselves, and *on and upon* ... our whole life and in any and every circumstance – joy and sadness, gratitude and feeling sorry for ourselves, when travelling or moving about and when we seek to be still.

We are called to witness to our faith by pausing ... crossing ourselves and asking God to bless our food before we eat ... and yes doing so in public or with our friends who may not pray / cross themselves before they eat.

We are certainly called to pray – cross ourselves ... and slowly, deliberately whenever we may be afraid or apprehensive or just plain unsure of what to do or how to proceed in whatever situation or life circumstance we may find ourselves in.

Yes, dear CYMKivtsi ... it is that simple ... and yes living “in” that space can be so

challenging at times. Never forget ... God (is) with us, and we can have Him “touch” us and bless us as we ask God the Father to bless our brain-mind-intellect, God the Son to bless our heart-emotions-soul, and God the Holy Spirit to guide all of our actions in everything we say and do.

May God’s blessings be with you all!

z Bohom,

(otets) Taras Udod,

National CYMK Executive Chaplain

St. John's Senior CYMK Update

Edmonton, AB

St. John’s Sr CYMK held our annual meeting on September 20th and elected a new executive for the 2019-2020 year:

President – Justine Jereniuk

Vice President – Jonah Makowsky

Treasurer – Jacob Lakusta

Secretary – Ksenya Jereniuk

Advisors – Taras and Susan Jereniuk

Our members participated in the AUSRL convention and Bar-V-Nok retreat on October 5th and the Western Eparchy Youth Retreat and Banquet on October 27th. Larysa Kuchta, a St. John’s member who is on the National Executive gave a great presentation on CYMK to encourage new branches at the various parishes throughout the Western Eparchy. On Sunday, November 10th, we gathered to watch the movie “Holod 33” about the Holodomor. It was a moving film and a very

sad depiction of this tragedy. On Saturday, November 23, we joined other Ukrainians from Edmonton to commemorate Holodomor at City Hall. CYMK was represented by Roxoliana Tsisar, holding the flag and there were 10 members from St. John's Jr and Sr CYMK. May we always remember those who perished from the man-made famine.

This year, we collected coats for the Coats for Kids campaign in December. Donations of gently worn winter clothing were greatly appreciated. We collected 8 large bags of clothing this year.

Justine Jereniuk
Local President



Anna Papish CYMK Update

Saskatoon, SK

It has been a very busy start of the year for our Anna Papish Branch in Saskatoon, SK. The CYMKivtsi have held several meetings and have enjoyed many fellowship activities, such as lazer tag. For fundraising, we had a table at our Christmas Bake Sale. There, we sold baked goods donated by the CYMKivtski and their families. Our biggest sale was wheat, so a little part of CYMK was on many tables

at Svat Vechir.

Our focus this year with CYMK is to give back to our parish that has supported us so much. We helped out at the All-You-Can-Eat Varenyky supper by clearing tables and preparing new settings. The volunteers were excited to see us helping out. We have also been more active in our Divine Liturgies by serving the first Sunday of every month. Some CYMKivtski have read epistle readings while others have helped out by greeting the parishioners at church and helping during the service.

We wrapped up the first half of our year by joining together during the Christmas celebrations and carolling at homes. This was a wonderful experience for our branch to reach out to our parishioners and share the gift of music. The children were truly appreciative of the treats and food they received from everyone.

Plans for the next half of the year are already underway and it will be a busy one. We are planning to help out at more Varenyky suppers, and go bowling and skiing as well. We are very thankful for all the love and support everyone has given our CYMKivtsi and wish everyone a blessed New Year full of health and happiness.

Eric Allen

Local President



Ivan Danylchuk Senior CYMK Update

Winnipeg, MB

Winnipeg Sr. CYMK includes youth members from Holy Trinity Cathedral and St. Mary the Protectress Sobor parishes.

This past summer, 3 members of our local travelled to Mississauga for the National Convention. Members of Winnipeg Sr. CYMK Maxim Kowalchuk and Ilya Osachuk

have taken on positions as National President and Treasurer.

This fall has been a rebuilding period where our local went from only five members last year to 11 members this year.

So far, members held a parish lunch at Holy Trinity Cathedral, and more recently a group went carolling to parish members as well as 25 residents of the Ukrainian Millennium Villa.

Upcoming plans include holding elections, organizing a fun event, and hosting embroidery and pysanka workshops.

Winnipeg Sr. CYMK will also be helping to plan this summer's Sobor CYMK youth retreat, so stay tuned for more information!

Michelle Kowalchuk

Local Advisor



Long-Branch CYMK Update

Toronto, ON

Over the Ukrainian Christmas season, our Toronto CYMKivtsi stepped out of their traditional caroling comfort zone, and decided to adopt a much more spiritual portrayal, to entertain Ukrainian parishioners in their homes and dwellings, by

performing a jubilant 'Vertep.' The Vertep was entirely orchestrated by the CYMKivtsi themselves, with a discrete agenda, so as not to alert others during the making of this production, to create a more exclusive experience from our previous years with our Caroling trips.

There were over 20 youth casted for the Vertep, from the St. Demetrius Ukrainian Orthodox Parish, and each member had their own character role, script, and costume. The cross-section of CYMKivtsi, aged 10-25, were each as dedicated as the other to working together, memorizing their scripts, and becoming truly enveloped in the Nativity of the Birth of Jesus. We can give kudos to every member, as reviews from the parishioners and guests were beyond excellent and celebratory.

The all Ukrainian 30-minute long Vertep, including Ukrainian Christmas carols, was designed to showcase how 'Good' obliterates 'Evil' in the world. Some of the good key roles were: Kozak, Angels, the three Kings and Sheppard's. Whereas the bad key roles were: Herod the King with his Guards, Devil, Misery, and the Grim Reaper, to name a few.

The Toronto CYMKivtsi look forward going house to house annually, not only to have a memorable and enjoyable experience with each other, but also, to raise funds to support their Parish, St. Demetrius, in Toronto. This is usually a very successful plight. More than 20 houses were visited, and also a Banquet Hall and a final performance at the Holy Jordan Supper at our Parish, St. Demetrius.

Toronto CYMK looks forward to engaging other new members of CYMK to carry on the good work – adding new roles and increasing their Vertep. We would like to take this opportunity to give a shoutout to readers to remember our Vertep production during their next Ukrainian Christmas festivities, and we wish everyone a prosperous 2020!

Tanya Buciora
Local Member



We hope you enjoyed hearing some of the exciting events our CYMKivtsi have been taking part in, across Canada!

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact our National CYMK Executive through our email, media pages, address, or website, listed below.

Please see the note below if you wish to change how you receive emails, or if you wish to subscribe/ unsubscribe.

Thank you, and Happy New Year!

З новим роком!



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We send emails to current and past members of CYMK and community supporters!

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