



Podcast: United in Love and Payer in Adversity with the People of Ukraine  
Mgr Daniel McHugh

*Journey of Faith - Life from Holy Mass - with Monsignor Daniel McHugh*

On Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> February I attended Mass at St Volodymer the Great, the Church of the Ukrainian Catholic Community in Coventry. At the close of Mass I gave this short address: I said I was there to represent Archbishop Bernard Longley who wrote to me “I would be grateful if you could represent me and express my closeness to the community in prayer at this terrible time.”

In his Pastoral Letter for the Eighth Sunday of the Year, 27<sup>th</sup> February, he wrote to the Priests and people of the Diocese “I know that there are so many important and serious matters to claim our attention as we gather for Mass this Sunday... Above all ... we are conscious of the worsening situation in Ukraine and the threat of war. On Wednesday, at his weekly audience, Pope Francis said: *Like me, many people throughout the world are feeling anguish and concern. Once again the peace of all is threatened by partisan interests ... I would like all those who have the political responsibility to make a serious examination of conscience before God, who is the God of peace and not of war ... He wants us to be brothers and not enemies.* The Holy Father has asked us to fast for peace on Ash Wednesday and to pray that the Queen of Peace will preserve the world from the madness of war. I have asked all our priests to offer a Votive Mass for the Preservation of Peace and Justice during this week. I know that you will join me in praying for the people of Ukraine, remembering especially the clergy and parishioners of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church together with my brother bishop, the Ukrainian Eparch Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski.”

I said to the Celebrant, Father Taras and the Parishioners: “personally I have a special love of Ukraine. In 1995 I visited Lviv and Kyiev when a new dawn had come for the Church in Ukraine at the end of the Soviet era, and Maryvale Institute, of which I was Director, was able to offer its distance learning programme in Theology and Catechetics to support the underground Church as it emerged from oppression. Nowadays, we benefit here from the Ukrainian Catholic Community in our midst, contributing to the Mission of the Church in our land. I was particularly aware of this at the Intercultural Mass recently in Coventry where the Ukrainian Community played a prominent part.”

I said “this morning I was listening to a Church of England Christian Service on the Radio 4 in St Martin in the Fields. Bishop Kenneth was present. The opening hymn was “lead kindly light amid the encircling gloom” the Newman hymn familiar to you. In a prayer Bishop Kenneth expressed our Faith in God “The world of hatred is never stronger than your indomitable love.”

A representative of the Ukrainian Embassy spoke too and thanked the U.K. for its support; and he quoted the Psalm 27:

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*“The Lord is my light and  
my salvation  
of whom shall I be afraid”*

As I have watched the News and Social Media I have seen the coverage of mums with their children leaving their homes the bravery of their husbands joining the resistance, the little children praying the Rosary.

My roots are in Ireland: as a child I went to the Shrine of Our Lady of Knock – Mary stood with her people there in poverty and hard times. Our Lady will stand with you now in your strong Faith in God.

You and your loved ones will come through as you have in the past. And may those who have died come into the presence of God. Eternal Rest grant to them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.

I include in this Podcast of the message in Coventry this Prayer of Pope St John Paul’s II to Our Lady of Zarvaniza when he visited Ukraine in 2001.

He prayed the prayer at the Greek-Catholic Church of St. Nicholas in Kyiv, asking for the icon to be brought there for the occasion.

Here is the prayer in which he invoked Our Lady’s help in covering Ukraine in her mantle.

O Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Zarvaniza,  
I thank you for the gift of my visit to the Kyivan Rus’  
from where the light of the Gospel spread through this whole region.

Here before your miraculous icon,  
kept in this church of Saint Nicholas,  
I entrust to you, Mother of God and Mother of the Church,  
my apostolic journey to Ukraine.

Holy Mother of God,  
spread your maternal mantle over all Christians  
and over all people of good will  
who live in this great nation.

Lead them to your Son, Jesus,  
who is for everyone the way, the truth and the life.

I ended my words at St Volodymyr: thank you to Monsignor David Senyk who welcomed my presence here today, and thank you to Father Taras, Celebrant of this Mass, and all of

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you parishioners. In the Archdiocese we stand united in love and prayer in adversity with the people of Ukraine. Amen.

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