

Ukrainian Catholic leader predicts changes

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

GATES — The Ukraine will gain its independence from the Soviet Union within six or seven years.

The 1986 nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Ukraine may have been predicted in the Book of Revelations.

And the second coming of Jesus Christ is imminent.

For Josyp Terelya, the exiled leader of the Ukrainian Catholic Church who now lives in Toronto, all of these statements ring true. In an interview with the *Catholic Courier* on Wednesday, July 24, Terelya elaborated on those assertions and others he has written about in his recently published book, *Witness to Apparitions and Persecution in the U.S.S.R.*

Terelya also brought his messages to St. Theodore's Church, 168 Spencerport Road, on Thursday night, July 25. About 250 people turned out to hear the 47-year-old Terelya relate tales of his harsh life in Soviet prison camps and visions he claims to have seen of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

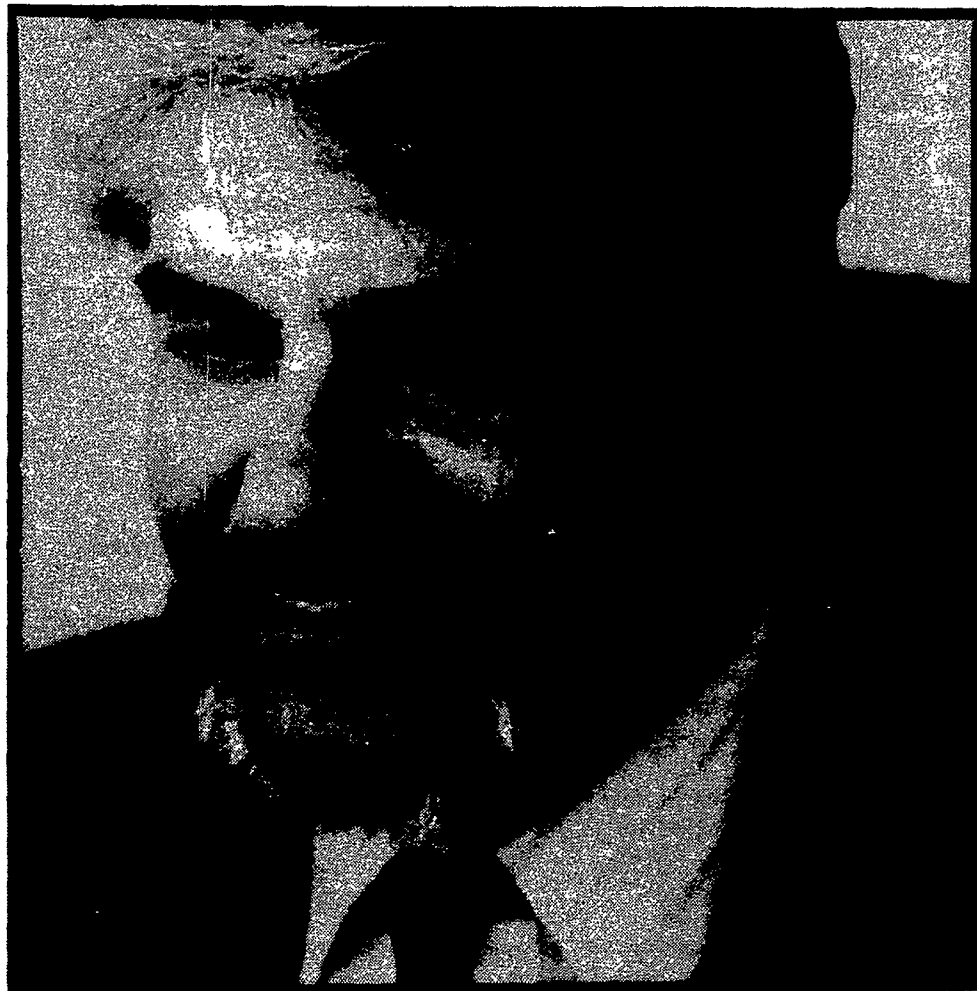
A prisoner in the Soviet gulag for most of the years between 1962 and 1986, Terelya was born the son of high-ranking Ukrainian Communist officials who once entertained Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev in their summer cottage. Ironically, Terelya's mother even worked on behalf of the Communist Party to destroy Christianity in the Ukraine, he said.

"Being here in the West, they often ask me, 'How is it that the son of a high-ranking Communist became a Christian?'" said Terelya, whose words were translated into English by Alice Boyczuk, a Ukrainian-American from Chicago, during his talk at St. Theodore's Church.

Until the age of 12, Terelya was actually raised by his grandmother, a devout Catholic. Nonetheless, he and his fellow Catholic peers learned to hide signs of their belief because Joseph Stalin had outlawed the church in 1946. Followers of the church were often harassed, imprisoned, and even killed for their beliefs when the church became outlawed.

After his grandmother died in 1956, Terelya moved in with his parents. While his father tolerated the boy's Catholic practices, his mother was quite unhappy with the boy's faith, he said. He noted that he persuaded his brothers and sisters to say grace before meals in a deliberate effort to provoke his atheistic mother.

"The children said grace and mimicked



Bebette G. Augustin/Staff photographer

Josyp Terelya, exiled leader of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, is touring the United States to promote increased awareness of religious persecution in the Soviet Union and to evangelize about the Catholic faith.

me," he said. "It was a solidarity we developed."

By the time he was ready to be drafted into the army, Terelya had decided to publicly challenge the authorities on their religious repression. He brought religious materials to the army induction center, mockingly telling the officers that he would evangelize the Soviet Army when he joined.

"Their reaction was priceless," he said of the officials and of his mother. "I still remember it to this day. They were red and burning, and my mother was burning me with her eyes."

Terelya's defiance cost him his freedom, when, two weeks later, he was imprisoned. Thus began a hellish life of torture, interrogation and isolation in the Soviet gulag. To illustrate how harshly the Soviets treated him, he estimated that he spent about seven of his 27 years in prison in solitary confinement.

Yet, even in solitary, as in any other prison situation, Terelya displayed a flair for turning a disadvantage to an advantage. For example, Terelya noted that he grew to like solitary confinement because it allowed him to pray undisturbed for hours at a time.

Terelya also claimed that the Blessed Virgin Mary once saved his life in prison. Locked in a freezing cell by his captors and left to die, Terelya fell numb and asleep from the cold, only to wake up and behold a woman who told him she was Mary and that she would be with him always.

"My body was warm, and I saw before me Our Lady," Terelya recalled.

Eventually, the prison guards burst into his cell because they saw a glowing light, Terelya said. In the subsequent weeks, Soviet authorities continually questioned Terelya, hoping to find some rational explanation for his survival in the freezing cell.

The Mother of God is still playing a role in Terelya's life, he noted. Along with thousands of others, Terelya claimed to have seen the Blessed Virgin Mary at Hrushiv, a Ukrainian village, in 1987. Mary told Terelya that the long-persecuted Uk-

rainians would help convert the rest of the Soviet Union to Christianity, and that the Ukrainian republic would be a free nation in 10 years.

Interestingly, in his book, Terelya points out that the Virgin first appeared at Hrushiv exactly one year after the Chernobyl disaster. Even more intriguing, the word "chernobyl" means "wormwood" in Ukrainian. In the Book of Revelations, "Wormwood" is the name of a star that falls from the sky like a torch and that bitterly poisons the bodies of water in its path.


"Was the 'great star' in Revelation a symbol for nuclear missiles, which would spread 'wormwood' across our planet?" Terelya asks in *Witness*.

According to Terelya, nationalistic revolution will certainly spread throughout the Ukraine sometime in the next few years. In his interview on Wednesday, July 24, Terelya said he hopes for a peaceful revolt, but he warned that such a revolution could also be very bloody if the Soviets resist.

He added that, despite reports of religious freedom being granted to people in the Soviet Union, repression continues. He noted, for example, that Dr. Stepan Khmara, a Ukrainian Catholic activist, was arrested with nine other such activists last month in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine.

Despite his ominous tone at times, Terelya will argue he is an optimist and that the second coming of Jesus Christ is just around the corner. The terrible dangers such as war and persecution currently plaguing the planet are signs of the desperate end of "Satan's" or the "Anti-Christ's" rule over mankind, Terelya said.

DIOCESAN APPOINTMENTS



Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the following diocesan appointments.

Father Ralph J. Fraats, parochial vicar at St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Irondequoit, to concurrent appointment as temporary administrator of St. George Roman Catholic Lithuanian Church in Rochester, effective July 24, 1991.

Father Justin Vaskys, OFM, from pastor of St. George Roman Catholic Lithuanian Church in Rochester, effective July 19, 1991, to retirement at St. Anthony's Friary in Kennebunkport, Maine on July 24, 1991.

Fire rages at Catholic cemetery

ROCHESTER — Debris left over from March's ice storm became kindling for a fire that started about 7:30 p.m. in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery on Sunday evening, July 29.

According to cemetery officials, 30 to 35 Rochester and Greece firefighters extinguished the fire by about 4 a.m. on Monday, July 30.

Robert Vogt, director and assistant treasurer of the cemetery, said the pile of debris stood about 60 feet high and covered about 25 square feet of land in the northern end of the cemetery. Cemetery supervisor Jack Drexel added that the pile had been created in a work area that has no graves.

The area generally is used for storage of top soil, he said.

Vogt explained that the ice-storm debris had been left at the site because the cemetery had been unable to rent machinery that could handle it. The debris was either too large or small to be processed through a wood chipper, he said.

Drexel said witnesses claimed to have seen a number of boys in the area before the fire started, but he stressed that no cause for the fire had been established.

No buildings were damaged by the fire, Drexel said.

— Rob Cullivan

Vietnamese priest to serve diocese part-time

ROCHESTER — The Vietnamese communities of the dioceses of Rochester, Syracuse and Albany are slated to share the services of Father John Tiep Khac Vu.



Father Vu, who comes to the western/central New York area from Immaculate Heart of Mary Shrine in Mis-

souri, will spend approximately 10 days each month in each diocese. His exact schedule has not yet been set.

Previously, the Vietnamese community within the Diocese of Rochester was served by visiting priests from New York City who celebrated Mass here only two or three times a year.

A welcoming Mass for Father Vu will be celebrated at 2 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 3, at St. Anthony of Padua Church, 60 Lorimer St.

Waterfront Art Festival

RAIN OR SHINE
10 AM to 6 PM

august

KERSHAW 3 and 4
canandaigua, n.y.

200 Art and Craft Exhibits

DEMONSTRATIONS

- Painting
- Wood
- Sculpture
- Wildlife Art
- Pottery
- Weaving
- Leather
- Stained Glass
- Blacksmithing
- Portraiture
- Quilting
- Folk Art
- Clay Flutes
- Basketry
- Metalsmithing
- ...more

ENTERTAINMENT

SATURDAY

Allen Family Cloggers
11am. and Noon

Agape Puppeteers
1pm., 3pm. and 5pm.

Tom Grill's Blues Band
10am

Back Porch Pickers String Band
2pm. and 4pm.

SUNDAY

Allen Family Cloggers
11am. and Noon

Agape Puppeteers
1pm., 3pm. and 5pm.

Tom Grill's Blues Band
10am.

Los Caribes Salsa Band
2pm. and 4pm.

\$1.00 Admission includes All Events
5yrs. & under FREE