

# Ukrainian Genocide Remembrance Day 2005 Article

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A Community Remembers

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Chicago, Illinois - On Sunday, September 18th, the Chicagoland Ukrainian-American Community came together to commemorate the 72nd anniversary of the Soviet genocide which claimed the lives of over 10,000,000 Ukrainians during the years of 1932-1933 during the annual Ukrainian Genocide Remembrance Day. This year the Ukrainian Genocide Famine Foundation – USA (UGFF) chose to hold the memorial service at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in Chicago's historic Ukrainian Village.

Hundreds of members of the Community assembled behind a large birch cross draped in black fabric outside the St. Nicholas School Auditorium. A member of the PLAST Ukrainian Scouting Organization's "Cross Bearers" troupe carried the birch cross as he led a solemn procession down Rice Street to the Cathedral.

Marching in the procession were three distinguished political guests – Illinois State Senator Jacqueline Collins, Illinois State Representative John Fritchey and Office of Governor Blagojevich Representative Christine Herbert. Senator Collins and Representative Fritchey were instrumental in passing House Bill 312 which makes the study of the Ukrainian Genocide of 1932-1933 mandatory in all Illinois Public Schools. The Governor signed the Bill into Law on August 5th, 2005.

Representing the hierarchy of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy in the procession were current Bishop Richard Seminak and Bishop Emeritus Reverend Innocent Lotocky. Representing the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyivan Patriarch hierarchy was Archbishop Alexander Bykowitz of Detroit. Archbishop Vsevolod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA elected not to participate in the procession, but was present among the guests during the memorial service in the Cathedral.

In addition to the hierarchs, the procession included clergy from the various Orthodox and Catholic Ukrainian Churches in Chicagoland, the Sisters of St. Basil, the St. Nicholas Choir, members of the Ukrainian American Youth Association (CYM), ODUM and PLAST Ukrainian Scouting Organization along with parishioners of the various churches and representatives of the over 70 community organizations.

Once inside the Cathedral children laid symbolic purple flowers, a symbol of the Ukrainian Genocide, in front of two large grapevine wreaths bedecked with over 70 black ribbons bearing the names of the community organizations. This year, rather asking representatives of each organization to come up to the wreaths and hang their respective ribbons on the wreath the memorial service featured a candle lighting ceremony. UGFF board member Tamara Kuzyk-Storrie, Master of Ceremonies, announced the names of the distinguished political guests and the names of over 70 community organizations and asked each of them to light a candle at the front of the Cathedral in memory of the 10,000,000 victims of the Ukrainian Genocide.

Following the candle lighting ceremony a short memorial panachyda was led by Bishop Richard, Bishop Emeritus Innocent and Archbishop Alexander. Bishop Emeritus Innocent delivered a moving speech about the physical and spiritual tragedy of the Ukrainian Genocide, the cover-up by Moscow and the hopeful future of democratic Ukraine. Reverend Bohdan Nalysnyk of St. Nicholas Cathedral

closed the memorial service with a brief statement followed by the singing of "Boje Velykyj" by the St. Nicholas Cathedral Choir.

Under police escort, the procession walked down Oakley Boulevard across Chicago Avenue to the Ukrainian Cultural Center of Sts. Volodymyr and Olha Ukrainian Catholic Parish where a memorial luncheon was held. The Luncheon began with the singing of the American Anthem by Olha Popova and the Ukrainian Anthem by the female quartet "Vinok" directed by Wolodymr Popowycz.

Nicholas Mischenko, President of UGFF, welcomed the luncheon attendees and thanked Representative Fritchey and Senator Collins for their work in passing House Bill 312. The new Acting Consul General of Chicago, Oleh Shevchenko greeted the attendees on behalf of the Ukrainian government.

Righteous Reverend Ivan Krotec of Sts. Volodymyr and Olha Ukrainian Catholic Church blessed the "holodnyj obid". Nearly 300 people partook in the symbolic meal which consisted of black bread, honey, herring and potatoes.

Following the meal John Jaresko of St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Bloomingdale delivered a English language keynote address titled "See No Evil: The End of Ukrainian Genocide Denial". His speech and visual presentation of images from the Ukrainian Genocide gave attendees a historical overview of the cover-up of the Ukrainian Genocide. He urged attendees to become involved in ensuring that the story of the Ukrainian Genocide does not go untold.

Mr. Jaresko stated: "We must not think that because we attend Ukrainian functions or our children go to Ukrainian summer camp...this satisfies our responsibilities. What kind of concerned Ukrainian or Ukrainian-American can barely find time once a year to discuss and commemorate the extermination of over 10 million innocent lives because they were Ukrainian! This must be a constant campaign to right the injustice that was inflicted on the Ukrainian nation. We must support the publication of educational materials for use in the schools tailored for various age groups and the society at large. In order to accomplish these goals we need the enthusiastic support of the community and your generous financial contributions."

UGFF Vice President Lida Tkaczuk and Education Co-Chair Katya Mischenko-Mycyk presented the "Ukrainian Genocide Education Award" to Representative John Fritchey, Representative Paul Froehlich, Senator Jacqueline Collins and to Governor Rod Blagojevich for their work on passing House Bill 312. Representative Fritchey thanked the Foundation for their work in mobilizing support for the Bill in the Ukrainian Community. Senator Collins stressed the importance of teaching children about world history. She stated that "If we do not teach our children the past we will repeat the same mistakes in the future".

Following the presentation of awards, Ukrainian Genocide survivor Archbishop Alexander Bykowetz of Detroit presented a keynote address in the Ukrainian language. Archbishop Bykowetz was 9 years old when the Ukrainian Genocide engulfed his beloved Poltavshytyna and spoke passionately about the horrors of the genocide which was ordered by Moscow. His moving speech was greeted with a standing ovation by the audience.

The luncheon was concluded with a poem written and read by Halya Romoh followed by a short program of choral music performed by Chicago's Surma Choir.