

Commemorative Plaque to Patriarch Mstyslav Unveiled in Lviv Culture

Posted by:

Posted on : 2013/10/2 10:41:37

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LVIV, Oct 2, 2013 (UBO) - A commemorative plaque to the first patriarch of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) Mstyslav (born Stepan Skrypnyk) was unveiled on September 27 in Lviv at 17 Piskova Street, Lviv. Many relatives from Ukraine and Canada, including his son Yaroslav Skrypnyk, were present at the unveiling. The dedication of the plaque was headed by Father Ihor Burmylo of the Assumption Church of the UAOC in con-celebration with Father Mykola Kavchaka and Father Mykhailo Savka. Metropolitan of Lviv of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyivan Patriarch Dymytriy was also present. After the dedication, the patriarch's niece, Zoya Bezotosna, spoke to those present at the dedication. Bezotosna is the only Skrypnyk relative who survived the Soviet government's destruction of the Skrypnyk family in Ukraine. “Bishop Mstyslav was a man of high culture who gave the world light. After my father was shot in 1937 for having the name Skrypnyk and for being Symon Petliura's nephew, it seemed that our family connections were lost... but God brought us together,” she said. Also from the patriarch's family, Mstyslav's son Yaroslav Skrypnyk, who despite his age (93 years) made the trip to Ukraine from Edmonton, Canada, to be with his Ukrainian family in Lviv, also spoke. “Dear priests, dear Lvivans. This plaque is not only a monument to the bishop's triumphant stay in Lviv and in this house, but also a piece of our soul. My father left his home at age 18. He never again saw his whole family together. He wandered the world: Zolishchyky, Rivne, Stanislav, Warsaw, followed by France, Canada, USA... and he lived his life in his native Poltava. In the '70s we received a call from New York and were told that there is a letter from our family in Ukraine. Until then, we did not know whether any of our relatives were alive because our family was killed. That same day we went to the specified address. In a squalid house we met with a Jewish family from Lviv who gave my father the letter. In it we discovered that of our entire family only our cousin Zoya survived, who today lives at 17 Piskova Street. Metropolitan Mstyslav, after high-profile meetings, came here to Piskova. Forty-nine years the family did not see each other, and that meeting I remember to this day. After a lifetime of wandering the world, the bishop came to his home, and it remained his native home in Ukraine to the end of life; Lviv was his second hometown after Poltava. I thank the government, the city, and the region which reacted favorably to our request.” The commemorative plaque to Patriarch Mstyslav was not the first in Ukraine: such plaques are on the UAOC Assumption Church in Lviv, the Pokrov Cathedral of the UAOC in Ivano-Frankivsk, and the UAOC Church of St. Andrew the First-Called in Kyiv. Streets in Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk are named in honor of the bishop, Yuriy Fediv reported to RISU.

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*The article above appears through courtesy of the Religious Information Service of Ukraine.
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