

St. Stephen Protomartyr Ukrainian Church

VIEWS FROM THE PEWS | JUNE 16, 2019



Make an Impact by Sharing Your Story

Help us make Views from the Pews even better by sharing your story! We want to hear from you.

Send your stories to:

PublicRelations@Protomartyr.ca



FAMILY HOME “LIVING PEARL”

This morning after liturgy, in the Knights Room, you have an opportunity to hear more about the Family Home ‘Living Pearl’ Orphanage. I would like to share a success story written by orphanage volunteer David Lock that speaks volumes of how Br. Ruslan Markiv and David Lock lead, nurture and care for these children.

Mykola came to the Family Home “Living Pearl” in 2010 when he was only 9 years old. He has an older and younger sister. Both his parents died when he was very young due to alcohol. His grandmother was unable to look after all 3 of them and choose to send him to an orphanage. He had been in state orphanages for quite a few years until he came to live with us in Bortnyky at the age of 9. He was very physically big for his age. Quiet and well behaved but very strong minded. When he came to us, reading was a big struggle for him. I sat with him a few times a week to help him improve his reading. It was clear his lack of education wasn't due to him not being able to learn but due to lack of school. Within 2 years he was back up with his peers and soon was second in his class for most subjects.

Mykola was particularly very good at maths. He was also very sporty, liked playing football, swimming and wanted to learn boxing. I tried to search locally for a boxing club but found only a karate club. I went to the teacher there and spoke to him about our boys. He said they could learn for free. So Mykola and his best friend started going to lessons. Mykola took to it like a duck to water. He had the discipline and coordination. He quickly moved up in class and belt. To get to training lessons meant for him riding a bicycle the 16 kms 3 times a week. After a year of training he was able to help the teacher train the younger boys. Within a year and a half he won 3rd place in Western Ukraine then went on to win 3rd place of all Ukraine. Now he studies in Lviv at a computer

programming college. He continues to keep up his good grades and karate while still helping his aged grandmother cook and pay the bills for their flat. Now he has become an official judge contest. In February this year he won the 1st place in Ukraine in his age group (juniors 16-17 years old) and will travel to Prague in June to fight against teams from all over Europe in the hope to become European no.1

I have been to many of his competitions and we have helped him along his way whether with financial or moral support. It has made me very proud to see what he has accomplished and proud that we "The Family Home of the Living Pearl» have helped Mykola to grow into a productive young man.

- David Lock, the deputy director of the Family Home "Living Pearl"

St Stephens International Trust Fund distributed funds to the 'Bortnyky Project' or 'Blueberry Project' to assist the orphanage in becoming self-sufficient.

Please join us in the Knights Room after liturgy to hear Brother Ruslan Markiv of Bortnyky Ukraine and Swade Holowatuk of Airdrie Alberta explain about the Family Home 'Living Pearl' Orphanage and the Blueberry Project. You also have an opportunity to speak with Roman (20), Sviatoslav (8), and Zakhar (8) who can share first hand stories of their experience at the Living Pearl.

Refreshments supplied by the UCWLC and anyone wishing to support the Blueberry project will find envelopes in the Knights Room.

How do you measure the impact of giving a person the possibility to have a life of opportunity!

