

CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

18. Father John Bala, CSSR

Born on January 15, 1894, in Svobodne Dvory, now in the Czech Republic, Ivan (John) Bala was one of eleven children, two of whom became Redemptorists and one sister a Basilian, Mother Mary, OSBM. John completed a brilliant course in the Konigratz gymnasium (high school) with the Jesuits. In 1913 he entered the major seminary in Lviv. World War I disrupted his studies and he took refuge with family in Kotsyubintsi and worked as a tutor to Father Nicholas Teodorovych's children. Attracted to the Redemptorists by his older brother, Joseph, in November 1917, he entered the Redemptorist novitiate under Father Joseph Schrijvers in Univ and was professed on December 22, 1918. He completed his studies in Beauplateau, Belgium and was ordained by Bishop Hryhory Khomyshyn in Stanislaviv on January 3, 1921. His superiors thought of sending the obviously brilliant Father John Bala for advanced studies, but the needs of the Canadian missions were too great and he arrived in Yorkton, Saskatchewan on June 26, 1922. In



addition to pastoral work, he preached missions and retreats in Canada and the United States, taught in the Redemptorist minor and major seminaries, in Sacred Heart Academy, and in St. Joseph's College in Yorkton. He founded the Sodality of Mary in Yorkton from which came over fifty vocations for the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. As editor of Redeemer's Voice, he wrote articles and substantial booklets on a wide range of issues. In 1935, while in Yorkton, he was shot in the neck and shoulder by a Goodeve parishioner crazed by the hardships of the Depression. Despite severe loss of blood and a dangerous blood transfusion, Father John lived to serve in Ituna, Saskatchewan, Roblin and Winnipeg in Manitoba, St. John the Baptist in Newark, New Jersey, and as a professor in Waterford and Meadowvale, Ontario. He was rector and pastor for several years, and vice-provincial (1945-48) responsible for all of the eastern-rite Redemptorists in North America as well as a delegate to the Redemptorist General Chapter in Rome. In 1954, he enlarged the church in Yorkton. He organized several branches of the Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood and was instrumental in the building of the Metropolitan Sheptytsky Institute in Saskatoon. A man of rigorous intellect and self-discipline, he spent his last days reading the new theological literature created by the Second Vatican Council and the scientific literature relating to the atom bomb. He died after a lengthy illness on December 1, 1970, in Toronto and was buried in Winnipeg. He was 76. Vichna Pamiat'!



Ukrainian Redemptorists 100 years

The year 2006 marks 100 years since the Redemptorists began formally working with eastern European immigrants in North America and eventually around the world in their own rite. This series of 'Bulletin Inserts' is dedicated to the pioneer Redemptorist Fathers and Brothers of the Yorkton Province. For more information about the Redemptorists, contact: the Redemptorist Vocation Office: 250 Jefferson Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R2V 0M6, Canada or visit our website: www.yorktonredemptorists.com