

p. Igor Zar
The Pilgrim of the XX-th century

My dear friends! Every person is created in the image and likeness of God in order to glorify the Creator of the Universe by the way of his own life. One can see that even a bird, when flying or singing, glorifies God, a flower by its beauty, makes us smile and think about God, a stream runs and tells us about God's deeds. The Earth, sky, stars, mountains, forests and rivers, – the whole nature by its existence tells us gently and with love about God's greatness, about the Heavenly Kingdom and also encourages us to devote our lives to the glory of the Triune God – Father and Son and Holy Spirit.

I am happy to have met a man in my life who glorifies his Creator in the marvelous manner and is a present-day disciple. This is George Walter, an American. It seems to me that the saint disciple Paul is in front of me, the moment I look at him. I haven't yet seen a person in my life whose eyes would radiate so much kindness and love.

A friend of mine and my neighbour, Mykola Kostyts'kiy, with whom I served in the army and ate up not one bowl of porridge, told me, during one of my visits to him, about a man who has been walking with a cross around the world for 30 years, glorifying God by the way of his life. Now he is spending the winter in the mountains in Norway at the monastery of trappists.

Mykola suggested that we should make an invitation for him and he should visit Ukraine. I told Mykola that a lot of people walk around the world and there is nothing strange in it, but my friend was strongly convinced that we should do it for Ukraine and it would be a great event. I agreed to do everything in my power to help him. Later on I understood that Holy Spirit had His own plan.

Months of hard work slipped by, and on October 2, 1998 Mykola phoned me to say that George was already in Lviv. When I called on Mykola's place, I saw a vigorous man, of about 182 cm in height, in front of me with glasses and sparkling lights of God's love in his eyes. He was bald-head

with long-long beard, dressed in a loose overall, made from pieces of denim; the wooden Icon of God's Mother of Indefatigable Help was on his breast. He was girded about with a crude rope, to the right side of which a big wooden rosary with a cross was fixed.

In his right hand, he had a two meter bamboo stick, made and gifted to him in India, with the Crucifix of Jesus Christ on it. This Crucifix was presented to him by the Holiness Father Jean Paul II the Pope. In his left hand, George kept the Gospel. He was barefooted; but he had sandals, made from car tread, with one wider tarpaulin stripe in front and the other from behind, clasping the leg.

The stripes were coarse, strong and fixed with screws. They were made in Chukotka. A tent and a rucksack with personal possessions – books, copybooks, envelopes, pens, a pair of scissors, a comb, a screwdriver, nippers and a little of food – all on his back.

Mr. George smiled kindly to me and greeted me in Ukrainian “Slava Isusu Khrystu”.

Sergiy, Mykola's nephew, who knows English well, was with us. Two hours of our conversation flid by like a moment. At the end of it George suggested that we should pray together. And again,

I heard from him in Ukrainian “Our Father” and “Ave Maria”. I was amazed very much because he only was a few days in Ukraine. By this gesture he showed that he had come to our land with peace and love. George also prayed in his own words and we tried not to fall behind. Suddenly, I felt heat in all my body, particularly in my heart. I looked at George with astonishment and understood that the heat was going from him. Nothing like that has ever happened in my life before.

My friend Mykola, lives with his mother in a three-room flat and he offered George to settle in his place because early winter was coming. And then George proved that he was not from this world. He chose a construction wagon in the building yard of the All Saints of the Ukrainian Nation Church for his dwelling in Symon Petliura Street. The dean of the church rev.

Oleh Sukhins'kiy, a good and open-hearted priest, made all the arrangements for the Pilgrim to feel at home.

A popular Ukrainian craftsman, Roman Petrovs'kiy, made for George a big patriarchal wall cross and a nice prop for the Gospel. Then came our Ukrainian women's turn to show their skills. They are known to be very good cooks. Borsch, varenyky, stuffed cabbage (holubtsi), cookies and apples – they all flew like a river to the wagon. Shortly after, I noticed that the Pilgrim had gained much weight. Seeing my astonishment he said that he would take it off in two weeks when he set out on his journey.

George was used to getting up at 4 a.m. to pray. He mostly read psalms, the Bible and said the rosary. He was one of the first to come to the Liturgy, and all the winter he stood barefooted on the concrete floor and truly prayed. He used to receive the Eucharist standing upright, he followed the learning of the saint Catholic Church and obeyed the Pope. Almost every day he visited different parts of L'viv, met with people, went to see sick persons, enjoyed the temples, museums and architecture of the city.

It amazed the citizens of L'viv to see a man not of this world; they stood with their mouths wide open, staring at him, came up to kiss the cross and the hand of the Pilgrim, filled his pockets with money, apples, cookies, sweets and everything they had. But proud and rich Pharisees looked at him with neglect, condemning him for the way he dressed, prayed and lived.

But common people clung to the Pilgrim, who received them from morning till late hours at night, except Wednesdays and Saturdays. People came to him for advice, told him about their troubles, brought ill persons to him and they all asked him to pray for them. One after another, they knelt down before George; he put his hands on their heads and prayed truly. His prayers were heard by God as the people got help. Many came several times and brought crowds with them.

After his prayers, the Pilgrim hugged everybody with his huge clutches and clasped them to his bosom with so much love

that bones crunched. I asked him why he, who only walked, had hands like a smith. George only smiled in response. Later on I understood that to carry a rucksack with weight of about 25-30 kg and to walk everyday for 20-30 km wasn't a task for dweebs. Some time passed and I noticed that there were more and more pilgrims coming to our Pilgrim. George often was very tired and it was necessary to take him away from kind people.

With God's help we managed to visit VK-48 in L'viv. At first, prisoners didn't show any desire to welcome us. There were about 800 people there. We invited Taras Dorots'kiy, the blind young man aged 20, to be our interpreter. He teaches history at school for the blind, and he is simultaneously a postgraduate student of the L'viv national university. He is also the real member of the All-Ukrainian kobzars' union. I made some introductory remarks and briefly told them about our Pilgrim and after that, George himself started to speak to the prisoners on God's word.

His eyes, his speech, his clothes affected the hearts of the condemned. I saw people returning to life. The questions began to fall and all the present, with their mouths wide open, listened to what the Pilgrim had experienced and saw in his life. They realized that an uncommon man was in front of them. Many prisoners came to the conclusion that it was better to be imprisoned with the roof above their heads and to have, at least, some piece of bread than to knock about the world in hunger and cold weather like George, and to carry the cross, and to risk their lives.

At the end, George proposed to pray together. The prisoners started coming up to him and kissing the cross and his hand, they touched his strange sandals and asked to pray for them. Our Pilgrim was deeply touched and gave way to tears. In a week we visited VK-30.

On December 16, 1998 I was just forty that day. I didn't intend to celebrate the event, but it was brought to my notice that my birthday party was going to take place in the apartment of Rev. Roman Harandzha and his wife Hanna. They informed me that my close friends and relatives from Kamyanets'-

Podil's'kiy would come as well. I had been their beneficiary for 5 years there. So I was to come and sit down at table. When I said that I wanted to invite George, the number of persons willing to come increased to 50. The celebration started with the thanksgiving service to God's Mother.

Formerly, a secret theological seminary was there in the apartment where 20 of us studied. I was happy that for my birthday the Greatest Pilgrim of the XX century, George Walter, had been walking from America for forty years. We didn't eat or drink much but communicated a lot. Our interpreter, Taras, amazed us greatly, telling about his treatment in America and his journey to Germany and also about the nature in those places.

Everybody listened to him and wondered who was blind there and who was able to see. People from Kamianets' sang very nice songs from Podillia; Nadija Kalavur, the teacher of Ukrainian recited poems of Taras Shevchenko, and a very gifted painter Mrs. Liuba Babenchuk-Vytvyts'ka told us about herself and the life of an outstanding banderivets' Zenoviy Krasivs'kiy. Everyone stood up and shared with others his talent, given to him by God. It was an uncommon and unforgettable spiritual evening. And that is what George told us about himself.

George was born in 1941 in America and at the age of 5, he was sent to a primary school in the town of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, where he had been studying for 8 years. After that he studied there in Catholic theological seminary till 1966. It was the twelfth year of his seminarian studies. The beginning of his theological studies contemporized with the decree of the second Vatican Council. With some innovations a lot of unclear questions arose. Those were the years of new morals, new theology, new social consciousness and a new liturgy. Seeing all those changes the future candidate for priesthood began to feel as if he had mistaken his choice, as if he had been thrown into the sea and couldn't find the way out. Doubts arose in his mind: "If everything is changing and I've lost the right direction, how can I be a good shepherd and lead people to the Kingdom of God? How shall I go further?" This state of his soul reached its

critical level on Christmas of 1966 when every candidate was to state his thoughts, concerning priesthood, to the bishop. Having talked with George, the bishop agreed to postpone his priesthood.

At that time California was considered to be a good place to start a new life in. With a small bag, the Pilgrim went to Los Angeles city, where he knew not a living soul. After two weeks of looking for a job, he got in touch with hippies, who only began to spring up. George decided to join them. He acquainted himself with young people, searching for a new life in a rather strange manner: they lived in communities, took hallucinogenic medications, practiced eastern meditations, sex without marriage, listened to rock music, read science-fiction literature. While staying with them, George didn't find any answers to his questions; so he left for San Diego because he felt absolute necessity to seclude himself and renew his tie with the Lord.

George stopped going to the church and to receive the Eucharist. In San Diego he met a lot of people and was employed at different jobs. By that time, he had grown his beard and long hair. He decided to return to Pittsburg to visit his relatives and friends. On coming back home, he felt there like a guest from another planet because nobody could understand what had happened to him.

In spring 1968 George set out to the west, aiming to stay in the mountains in Colorado State. There, he met a group of 30 hippies who were going to spend the summer in the mountains, awaiting for the doomsday. He joined them. He enjoyed the sights and communicated a lot with people who tried to apprehend the sense of life. June was coming to its end, but the world still existed. Hippies left their camp and George climbed higher into the mountains.

Staying for a month in solitude, he begged the Lord to reveal him the truth. And one day, a great bliss came into his heart and he exclaimed: "Oh God, you do exist! You are here! I see it. No man could create these mountains, plant trees, and stretch the sky. You created all this and You created me. I descended from You. I'm not a result of any accidental

evolutional selection. I am obliged for my existence to the unique, loving and creative act which is a part of You, my Heavenly Father!”

George realized that he had touched the very depth of the mystery of life – God’s existence. It was his first experience, and his firm belief, that his faith was alive and strong enough to support him in the future. With this truth the Pilgrim returned to people without fear and disturbance, knowing that he was a son of God. His aim became clear: life was a simple journey back to the heart of Father who had created him.

George understood that it was time for him to come back to his relatives and friends, especially to the bishop, and share his experience with his spiritual father; but first he decided to stay in the trappists monastery for some time. After returning to the Western Pennsylvania, George started to look for God’s will concerning his future. Later on, he was sanctified for the deacon.

So, in October 4, 1968 on the patron saint's day of Francis from Assize, the “ex-hippy” arrived to a small town’s parish. There, the deacon spent most of his time, going from house to house and collecting offertories. After six months, the question of his sanctifying for the priest arose again. But at that time, George had some doubts concerning his priesthood; and therefore, he asked to be dispensed from it and left the parish.

He set himself a task to cognize Jesus Christ who came to this world to show the way to Our Father for the human. George began to study very attentively the Holy scripture and pray for good guidelines. Exactly at that time the idea of pilgrimage to Jerusalem appeared. He thought that he would understand the Bible better if he saw the places, described in the ancient book. But he also knew that his way to the Holy Land shouldn’t be easy – by plane or by ship. So, George decided to set out on his journey on foot. His first pilgrimage started on the 5th of February 1970.

The journey to Egypt turned out to be not an easy one. Different adventures and difficulties occurred. But the Lord never forsook the Pilgrim in his troubles and, in a miraculous

way, sent him food and drink. However, George most of all wanted to meet Jesus. And soon, God satisfied his inner thirst in a most unexpected way. It happened during the second week. He read the Gospel of Luke and continued his journey.

And all of a sudden, all the truth about Jesus revealed to him so clearly as never before. He saw that the Jesus, Luke had written about, was not only a great historical person, who lived 2000 years ago in Palestine, preached and performed good deeds, was crucified, and resurrected and rose to the Heaven. No, this Jesus is alive today; he is here, together with the Pilgrim – in his heart. That was a revealing! Jesus has risen to His Father, but at the same time He stays here on the Earth in a new image with his disciples and followers.

George says that everyone glorifies his creator in his own way: some preach and some work. And George only walks around the world and he is the feet of Jesus. It often happened that people stopped their cars and went out to meet the Pilgrim. And that was enough to open their spiritual eyes. After that, those people started to live in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Gospel.

Walking around the world the Pilgrim always spends his nights in a tent somewhere near the road and often has to overcome difficulties. Gangsters, fanatics, mentally diseased people, heat, cold, storms, gibes of proud and contempt Pharisees frequently take place, but George knows his cause and carries his cross with love, praying with his every step “Jesus, I trust you.” For all his life George has never been to the hospital and has never taken any medicine, he has never been taken ill and always eats everything he is given.

The Pilgrim walks steadily for two hours and takes a rest for 15 minutes, otherwise he wouldn’t go too far. The countries which have signed an agreement with America let George pass through without any problems, but to visit other countries he has to obtain a formal invitation. George carries a photo in his passport where The Pope Jean-Paul II is blessing him. It helps him a lot on the frontiers and in many stalemates.

George Walter presented me a map of his journeys during 30 years:

1. 1970, Barcelona - Jerusalem – 7000 km.
2. 1980, Pittsburg - Canada – 2000 km.
3. 1988, Pittsburg - Mexico – 4000 km.
4. 1989, Mexico - California – 4000 km.
5. 1992, California - Alaska – 5000 km.
6. 1993, Magadan - Irkutsk – 4500 km.
7. 1994, Irkutsk - Alma-Ata – 3500 km.
8. 1995, Alma-Ata - China - Pakistan - South India – 6000 km.
9. 1996, Rome - Warsaw – 3000 km.
10. 1997, Warsaw - Oslo – 3500 km.
11. 1998, Oslo – L'viv – 3000 km.
12. 1999, L'viv - Jerusalem – 3500 km.
13. 2000, Holy Jubilee Year around the Holy Land – 1000 km.

Altogether 50 thousand kilometers!

The world apprehends our Pilgrim in different ways: a soldier, a miner, a doctor, a professor of theology, a scout, a priest, a student, a beginner of a new religion, a geologist, a gold digger, a musician, a painter, a deserter. For those who are exasperated by George's look, he is a wanderer, for those who look and wonder, he is a fanatic, for those who understand his efforts and sacrifice, he is saint. Even his relatives had failed to understand him for 20 years, but later on they gave way.

Some people proposed George to settle down and get married. But he realized that it wasn't what God had called him for. "Such suggestions did lead to hesitations, but when you start walking in the presence of the Holy Spirit, He heals you and gives you a new strength and power."

Saint Francis from Assize is close to George's heart for his love to the poor and his desire to preach the Gospel to common people and also Saint Teresa from Lisie who just lived in accordance with her faith day by day, without performing great feats.

Among his favorite readings one can find "Filocalia" written by spiritual fathers of the Eastern Church since IV till

XV centuries and “Return of the prodigal son” by Henry Nouen. In winter time George sticks to hard schedule of praying and meditations, combining them with physical trainings. Every day he reads 5 chapters from New Testament and 2 from Old Testament. Every 3 hours, seven times a day, starting from 4 a.m. he sings psalms. “Psalms are our words towards God. They show us the right way to communicate with Him”. He likes the Gospel of Luke best of all because reading it everybody comes to the Lord in his own way.

The life of the Pilgrim isn't always easy and requires an outright denial of the basic comforts: family, friends and wealth. The Pilgrim keeps in touch with his family by letters. When his mother was alive he wrote her every week. Now he corresponds with his brother and some 400 people more. Among them is an old pilgrim aged 72, a Minorite, who has been travelling for 20 years. In Mexico George met an old woman, aged 53, who has also been walking for 20 years with a cross around the world.

On repeated occasions the Pilgrim risked his life. During his journeys In China, red junta prohibited him to preach Christianity. “It's ridicules”, he says. All my look is a homily of Jesus Christ. The life of Christians in Pakistan is very hard. They live in ghetto there, divided from Muslims and have to do the dirtiest work to earn their living. Just terrible is the life of the people in India. On my road to the Holy Land I was hurt by children and by adults.

I calmly accept all sufferings and don't change my road in spite of all the obstacles thrown in my way. But I never tempt the Lord. In Romania, Gyps took me for a saint and started to kiss my rosary and the cross and then to catch hold of my beard trying to pull out several hairs from it. Then I decided to change my clothes so as not to attract attention. But I also met kind people. An Arabian boy, passing by on his bicycle, gave me his baseball cap to protect my head from the sun.

In Palestine people laughed at me and tried to snatch the cross out of my hands. In Turkey I also had to get over animosity and physical violence, but I was never afraid. It is said in the Bible: the perfect love sweeps fear away, and only

God's love is perfect. When we make sure of it, we'll have no fear. If God is our Heavenly Father nothing would happen to us without His will. Every minute I could be run over by a car, and therefore, I said to the Lord: To You I give my life, take it if You want to.

In one Siberian village, only an atheist, who lived in a small house with his wife and six children, offered his hospitality to me. Another time one man left me in his house and went to work. In Galilee an old Jew invited me to his house and his wife made food for me and washed my clothes. Good people are in every country. This man from Siberia didn't share my faith, he even didn't believe in God but had a good heart. He was an Atheist but did God's act.

The Lord wants to see His son in you. It doesn't matter what words you tell, they could be mere. The question is what is there in your heart."

Overstepping Byelorussian and Ukrainian border, and making the first step on our land, George felt that Ukraine is under a special protection of the Virgin. The Pilgrim was just amazed by this feeling, though he had crossed the boundaries of 38 countries by that time.

He finds Ukrainians very pious. At every step they kissed his cross, thirsting for his blessing.

It rarely happened in the west. "Ukraine is the land of the Mother of God. I hold to a belief that Ukrainians have a profound love and devotion to the Virgin." I often noticed how their eyes filled with tears and tenderness when they heard me say the words 'Mother of God.' Since XI century, Ukrainians have been praying to the icon called the Protection of the Virgin.

In the church in L'viv, where I spent 4 months, the greatest icon was "The Holy Mother of Indefatigable Help". I am also aware of the fact that the world-known icon of the Mother of God in Chenstokhov was taken by force from the town of Belz in Galichina in the XIV century.

I'd like to share my impressions with you of my winter stay in L'viv and in the studion monastery in Kolodijivka. It was something quite new for me in comparison with what I had

experienced last winter in Norway. In Scandinavia on the top of a mountain I had silence and solitude. And in L'viv I had a real "cell in the center of the market". Every day people came to me. Each of them brought a small gift for me: a few apples or a pot of home-made jam.

I have never experienced anything like that in any other country I have visited before!

After a short time I forwarded 12 great boxes of different food to the monastery. Catholics mostly came to see me but there were also Orthodox. I was visited by those who were on the right way and

those who were just freed from prison. They all were children who needed God.

Two wonderful months I spent in the studion monastery not far from Ternopil'. The hospitality and energy of monks were creative. I could only dream of five hours' common prayer with wonderful eastern singing.

Easter in Ukraine is something unforgettable!

There were days when so many people stopped me that I only had time to put my hands on their heads and ask God to listen to their prayers. I don't take donations as a rule, and I didn't make any exception for Ukrainians. But in Galichina I always found bills and coins of different denomination in my pockets. Only in Ukraine I understood why Jesus had never gone to towns but preferred to stop in deserted places.

The great Pilgrim said that Ukraine is the womb of the Earth, and though it doesn't always look nice because of constant sufferings, it is the most important part of the body. He also compared Ukraine and western countries with apples. The apples in Ukraine are neither very nice nor very big, they are often wormy but very tasty. The apples in the West are big and sparkling and look inviting but without taste. I often told George that I love my crucified Ukraine, that my utmost happiness is that I was born a Ukrainian and I'm grateful to God for that. And though the fate of my nation is hard, we are happy because God is with us, and we suffer for our kindness and openness, for our fairy land.

One day I came to his cabin. George opened the door. His eyes sparkling, his arms ready to embrace me and I heard him call out to me in Ukrainian: “Father-Bandera!” I was shocked and in one minute I found myself in the seventh heaven.

The Pilgrim said that he had been given the most rousing welcome in Siberia and in Ukraine.

In Siberia, distances between settlements are very long and when cars passed by, drivers always stopped to give him some food. And when George said that he remembered tasty “salo” in Siberia, we started to laugh because only real Ukrainians are good at making it. Thus we mentioned some facts from Ukrainian history and how Ukrainians got settled in Siberia.

Twice we visited my good friends together with George, infirm Iryna and Taras. Taras Hrytsak had broken his spine soon after his army service. For 20 years he has been lying on his stomach only. Iryna is 37 years old. She has been paralyzed since she was born, but she easily and successfully teaches English. They got acquainted accidentally by phone, got married, and for many years have been helping each other to carry their cross

They are both practicing Christians, and they demonstrate their fortitude and faith in God to people with hands and legs, who feel ashamed of their helplessness and complaints about life, when they find themselves near them. The great Pilgrim was very satisfied and happy to have met such wonderful and courageous people. He still regularly corresponds with them. Here is what George writes in his letters:

Chernivtsi, April 28, 1999

Let mercy and peace of The Risen Lord Jesus be with You!

The last day of my stay in Ukraine is passing by. Tomorrow morning I’m going to Rumania.

Those days after my departure from Lviv were the most unusual days. Cold weather and long queues of people asking to say a blessing over them, caused my delay for two days. A few days after I left, the weather spoiled. Cold. Rain, snow and

heavy wind. One night I spent in an abandoned house to shelter from the wind. I made my way through Ivano-Frankivs'k and Kolomyja. It is an astonishing religious region. I was deeply touched by the people who met me on my way and knew who I was. Many stopped me, asking to pray for them. In one of the villages all its citizens lined along the road, and when I passed them, they knelt down, asking me to pray for them. The village stretched out for less than a kilometer, but I was covering the distance for five hours... In other places, drivers of the cars which were passing by, stopped and asked me for blessing. A lot of people put money into my backpack. I counted 600 hryvnia and gave them to the church. I was given a very warm welcome in Ivano-Frankivs'k (p. Mykola Simkaylo from Cathedral), in Kolomyja (p. Ruslan Vavryk and my acquaintance Tetiana), also in Chernivtci. People always invited me to their homes to give me some food and offered me a rest..

Pilgrim George.

Isfia, Israel, 25th of September, 1999

Shalom! Greetings from the Holy Land, sanctified with Sacred Blood. So Our Lord brought me safely here on August, 15 on the Blessed Virgin Holiday. After two-months' travel about Turkey, I had to fly to Istanbul, and later to Athens to get to Haifa by boat. I planned to reach Cyprus but I failed. After the two-weeks' travel through Gallilea and one week through Sarmatia, I came to the gates of Jerusalem on September, 9 and went to the Church of Jesus' Coffin. There I placed all the names I had been given in Ukraine and I read them aloud near the altar. Jerusalem turned out to be a rather unfriendly place for this travel. I was attacked from everywhere: Moslem children threw stones and rotten fruits at me, Moslem Males scorned me, their policemen unreasonably searched my bags, Fundamental Christians condemned me for my dress, my icon and cross; all tourists wanted to have pictures taken with me.

None of them wanted to receive me, so in three days I left Jerusalem and went to Bethlehem where I was given a warmer

welcome. I put all your names in the place where Jesus was born. I went back to Isifia near Haifa on the north. There I was offered a place for my winter desert in the National park of the Mount Karmel. The thing is I'll have to help in the building of the house.

I sleep the a piece of the cleaned land in my tent. I think it will be my residence here in the Jubilee Year. I'll start my journeys from here: the first ten-days' journey with a group from Nazareth to Bethlehem for the opening of the Jubilee Year on November, 28.

Pilgrim George.

The Mount Karmel, Israel, January 4, 2000

I remember my last Christmas in Lviv very well. And this year I was in Bethlehem.

For eight days I travelled there from Nazareth. Right now through the window, I caught sight of a wonderful rainbow in the sky, which stretched from one mountain to another.

Beneath the rainbow, the surroundings of Haifa, Akra, Libya and Nazareth can be seen in the distance.

What a wonderful sight!... Lord, blessing his people!

I think it is better to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ in hearts, houses and parishes of those who have a deep Faith, than at the real birth place of Jesus, where it is ritual and mostly done for political and economical purposes. There seems to be more police, reporters, cameras and sellers there, than faithful pilgrims on that day. I thank God that the Lord is accessible to every open heart. Be sure of my continuous prayer for all the brothers and sisters. For the Easter Lent I hope to get to the Mount Sinai and back.

Pilgrim George.

Now I recall the mass for my health and good trip after Easter on Thursday, April 15, 1999.

It took place in the All Saints of the Ukrainian Nation Church. There were a lot of people there. They all followed the

Pilgrim across the town to the wonder-working grave of the UGCC confessor, Mykolaj Charnets'kiy. We had a burial service there; we prayed and twelve of us accompanied George to the belt route, beyond Vynnyky. Now it was time to say "good bye."

We friendly hugged one another for the last time; I gave my blessing to George and he walked out on the road. Rapidly, with measured tread against the movement, like a bullet, he went along the side road without looking back. We stood in silence watching him walk until his silhouette disappeared in the distance. Something broke in my heart, tears welled into my eyes.

Can it be possible that we shall never meet again, never see those kind, sparkling with lights of love eyes of the Great Pilgrim of the XX-th century, George Walter? If God permits, we'll meet in Heaven. And in the mean time - life and unending struggle again.