

## NEWSLETTER

### of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies of the Ukrainian Catholic University № 7 - December 2011



#### The 4th Ecumenical Social Week «Reforms through trust» was held in Lviv

From September 27 to October 2 this year, the 4th Ecumenical Social Week (ESW), a Ukrainian social forum, was held. The theme of the event was "Reforms through trust." It was attended by numerous experts from Ukraine and abroad. Relevant issues of reform were discussed during this year's Ecumenical Social Week and attention was focused on society's participation in transformation.



The forum was attended by experts from Great Britain, France, Italy, Canada, Germany and Ukraine.

The organizers of the Week were: the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, the Ukrainian Catholic University, the Lviv City Council, the Lviv Regional Council and Administration, and Lviv Polytechnic National University. This year's

forum was held with the support of the Solidarity Initiative of German Catholics with the People in Central and Eastern Europe Renovabis, the Bradley Foundation (the USA), and the Missionary Relief Association «Kerk in Actie» (the Netherlands), the organization "Communikantes" (the Netherlands), and others.

During the major events of the ESW – a conference (September 29) and round tables (September 30) – participants discussed issues including reform as a way to European integration, trust in social relations in a period of social reforms, leadership, prospects for dialogue between government and society, church activities and science in socio-economic renewal, and the formation of civil society.

In addition to conferences and round tables, a photo exhibition was organized on social topics. And on October 1 as part of the Ecumenical Social Week various social organizations were displayed. One of important events of the forum was an awards ceremony for the winners of the Second All-Ukrainian contest "Reporters of Hope in Ukraine."

Participants of the Week had an opportunity to attend a concert of choral singing given by performers with special needs at the Church of the Holy Eucharist and a youth concert of Ukrainian music with the participation of Olena Kovtun, winner of the show "Ukraine's got talent." The Saturday prayer Day of Trust, prepared together with the Taizé ecumenical

Christian community (France), also was important in the week. At the end of the Day of Trust youth made an ecumenical picture on the topic of trust in God.

The result of the discussions of the 4th Ecumenical Social Week was a resolution which includes the work of national and foreign experts with recommendations for improving welfare and social policy in Ukraine. "We are convinced that, at least partially, it will be implemented into life. We hope both the government and society will execute the decision," said Iryna Kitura, ESW coordinator.

More detailed information on the site: <http://www.esw.org.ua/>

## Seminar "The experience of NGOs and charity organizations working with children and youth with special needs"



On September 28 a seminar was held "The experience of NGOs and charity organizations working with children and youth with special needs." Representatives of NGOs from Vinnytsia, Kharkiv, Bilhorod-Dnistrovsk and other parts of Ukraine gathered for discussions.

A round table was organized by the NGO [Melody of Life](#) and the [charitable fund Association of Philanthropists of Ukraine](#).

In addition to Ukrainian participants, guests from abroad also joined the discussions. **Wieslaw Brodowski**, president of the society Magnum Bonum in Poland, shared his experience of work with children and youth with special needs, and presented a system for financing such organizations.

The seminar was attended by representatives of the civil authorities: **Vasyl Kosiv**, Deputy Mayor of Lviv, and **Valery Piatak**, Deputy Head of the Lviv Regional Council. In his speech, Valery Piatak said: "It is important to do charitable activities, but it is even more important to have a working system. Friends from Poland demonstrated how this system works in their place."

<http://www.esw.org.ua/NOVINI-EST/Blagodijni-organizaciyi-teper-ne-konkuruyut-a-spivpracyuyut>

## The International Academic Conference «Reforms Through Trust» Began with Ecumenical Prayer



On September 29, the academic conference of the Ecumenical Social Week opened with inter-confessional prayer that gathered representatives of the Christian confessions of Lviv.

Participants in the ecumenical prayer : **Bishop Venedykt** (Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church), Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University **Fr. Borys Gudziak** (UGCC), Responsible for media in the Lviv Archdiocese **Fr. Petro Buhryn** (Roman Catholic Church), Bishop of

the Christian Evangelical Church **Vasyl Boyechko**, Senior priest of the Lviv Cathedral **Fr. Tadeos Gevorgyan** (Armenian Apostolic Church), and **Fr. Roman Fihias** from the Institute of Ecumenical Studies (UGCC).

Bishop Venedykt expressed his hope that such ecumenism would be fruitful and effective in society's life. And **Fr. Peter Buhryn (RCC)** emphasized the importance of the motives which guided the organizers of the ecumenical prayer. "Christians' strength is in unity. Therefore, such ecumenical prayers truly witness that we, Christians, are a living organism directed to God."

<http://www.esw.org.ua/NOVINI-EST/Mizhnarodnu-konferenciyu-rozpochali-z-ekumenichnoyi-molitvi>

### Marius Vismantas on «Reforms through trust»

On September 29 in Lviv a conference was held "Reforms through trust." World Bank expert **Marius Vismantas**, Regional Program Coordinator in Financial and Private Sector Development for Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova, participated in the conference. According to his words, «The government and the *National Bank* should be key players in promoting trust in financial reforms.»



Marius Vismantas

In his speech Marius Vismantas stressed that only the formation of transparency in the financial sector could increase the population's trust. "Banks should be interested in educating their clients – it is the law of common sense in the world, therefore reforms should not be delayed, and the population's trust must be increased by hard daily work."

**Participants in the conference:** **Rev. Daniel McDonald**, Vice-Rector of the Pontifical Gregorian University and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, who emphasized the affinity between the Church's teaching and society's social life and the importance of reform movements which require trust; **Robert Brinkley**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Ukraine (2002-2006), who compared the situation of trust in the states of Ukraine and the UK; **Christine Menges-Le Pape**, Professor of Toulouse University, in her speech noted that religion and law in society take radically opposite roles, but their cooperation is necessary for the realization of reforms. **Fr. Borys Gudziak**, Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University, was among guests of the Academic Conference. He outlined his position on the vital issue of reforms in civil society: "The history of our country has been struck by 'radiation,' which destroys trust from an early age in the lives of each of us. This distrust itself destroys our political and business life. It is also present in human personal relations. Therefore, the search for trust is the most important task today."

Also speaking at the conference were: President of the Association for the Right to Economic Initiative (ADIE) from France **Maria Nowak**; Head of the Lviv Regional Council **Oleh Pankevych**; Director of the corporation HQS Consulting Services (Supporting Organizations in Evolution) from Canada **Lionel J. Quesnel**; Head of the Social Welfare Committee of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and Rector of the state institution Luhansk Institute of Labor and Social Technologies **Tetiana Shapovalova**; and Director of the Kyiv International Center for Prospective Research **Vira Nanivska**.

<http://www.esw.org.ua/NOVINI-EST/Akademichna-konferenciya>



## The European experience of the development of the social market economy was presented by President of the Association for the Right to Economic Initiative ADIE from France Maria Nowak

On September 30, British, French and Ukrainian experts discussed the topic "Reformation is the way to European integration" at a round table as part of the 4th Ecumenical Social Week.

President of the French Association for the Right to Economic Initiative (ADIE) **Maria Nowak** concluded: "The Soviet way of solidarity and domination of private interests excluding the social interest are two sides of the same regime of dictatorship. The Ecumenical Social Week in Lviv is a right way to change society through peaceful means."

Other participants in the round table: **Robert Brinkley**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Ukraine (2002-2006); **Antoine Arjakovsky**, Co-Founder of the IES in Ukraine, Co-Director of the Department Society. Freedom. Peace at the Bernardine College in Paris (France); **Fr. Iwan Dacko**, Doctor of Theology, President of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies at UCU; **Valeriy Pyatak**, Deputy Head of the Regional Council.

A total of 4 round tables were held as part of the Forum.



<http://www.esw.org.ua/NOVINI-EST/Ekumenichnij-social-nij-tizhden-u-L-vovi-virnij-sposib-zminiti-suspil-stvo-mirnim-shlyahom>

## Inter-regional discussions of effective partnership as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Social Week

During the 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Social Week a round table was held "Public Councils and Executive Agencies: Effective Partnership."



The round table was organized by the Department for Civil Society Development and Interaction with Citizens' Unions, the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine; the organizers of Ecumenical Social Week; and the Parliamentary Development Project for Ukraine.

Participants of the round table were delegates from the Regional Councils in Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Volyn, Ternopil, Transcarpathia, Rivne and Chernivtsi, who talked about the successful activity of public councils in these territories.

Common problematic items in the activities of all public councils, regardless of region, were highlighted: a lack of facilities and adequate funding for public councils.

Public councils have to work strategically in all directions – this was the main subtext which was heard throughout the round table.

<http://www.esw.org.ua/NOVINI-EST/Strategiya-gromads-kih-rad>

## Activating reforms in civil society was discussed in Lviv

Another round table "Reforms as a driving force of civil society" was held as part of the 4th Social Week. Ukrainian and foreign experts discussed reforms in the areas of leadership, the political situation, and health. Ukrainian and foreign experts discussed reforms in the spheres of leadership, political conditions, and health care.

Lionel J. Quesnel, PhD, director of the corporation HQS Consulting Services from Winnipeg (Canada), participated in the event. He emphasized the concept of leadership. In his view, leaders can offer a movement forward, they are the driving force of society and the unifying factor.



Lionel J. Quesnel

Victor Yelensky, PhD, president of the Ukrainian Association of Religious Freedom, joined the discussion and drew attention to nation-building initiatives in the context of trust. The speaker pointed out that the idea of statehood has not been realized mainly because of a lack of public discussion of the issues. Participants in the roundtable:

Liliya Klos, Coordinator of Social and Medical Components of Social Work at Lviv Polytechnic National University; Ivanna Synytska, a representative of the Sant'Egidio Community; and Iryna Kurlyak, Head of the Department of General and Social Pedagogy of the UCU.

In general, the round table participants worked out some ideas and initiatives for implementing reforms through the intensification of social dialogue.

<http://www.esw.org.ua/NOVINI-EST/Aktivizaciya-reform-u-gromadyans-komu-suspil-stvi>

## Social organizations reported on their activities

On October 1 during the 4th Ecumenical Social Week in Lviv there was a display of social organizations. In the Market Square social organizations from western Ukraine presented their activities.

The fair is a traditional event of the Ecumenical Social Weeks.

This year, 11 organizations from western Ukraine and one from Odesa told about their activities and sold their products made by the hands of the disabled and people in need. In addition, all interested persons were able to make donations to social organizations in special boxes.

Through this event the organizers tried to draw attention to the needs of disabled and ill people in our society.



<http://www.esw.org.ua/NOVINI-EST/U-L-vovi-social-ni-organizaciyi-rozpovili-pro-svoyu-diyal-nist>

## The winners of «Reporters of Hope in Ukraine» were awarded in Lviv

On September 28 an awards ceremony was held for the winners of the Second All-Ukrainian contest "Reporters of Hope in Ukraine." 12 authors were nominated and took prizes in four categories: "Society," "Economy," "Culture," and "Religion."

The authors who won the first places in each category received certificates in the amount of 3,000 hryvnias, statuettes and participant diplomas.

Material about ill children who need blood donations and how to solve this problem – «I have done the small things in my power to save the child» by author **Tetiana Kyrpa** won in the first category. A piece about the extremely urgent problem of ecology, with the interesting title "Eco-eaters," won in the category "Economy." It is about farms that produce only ecologically clean



products, by author **Inna Zavorodnia**.

The first place among topics on culture was given to a piece about Yaryna Tsvyk, a woman who has been bedridden for many years but has not lost her love of life. She embroiders professionally and makes beaded products. Recently she started to make embroidered wedding cloths. This work of Oksana Senyshyn is called "Embroideress." The favorite in the category "Religion" was a piece that takes a different look at information technology. The hero of the scene – Volodymyr Tymoshchuk – daily sent

from 5 to 100 SMS-prayers for people who are in difficult life circumstances. The authors are **Iryna and Stas Matviyenko**.

In total, more than 800 works from all regions of Ukraine and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea participated in the contest. More than 250 competitive materials were submitted by journalists. Other materials were selected by students of the Master's Program of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies who throughout the year did media monitoring and selected more than 600 works. The winners were assessed and awarded by an honorary jury: the chief editor of the newspaper "Vysoky Zamok," Natalia Baliuk; the chief editor of Lux TV and Radio Broadcasting, Paraskovia Dvorianyn; director of the Religious Information Service of Ukraine (RISU), Taras Antoshevskyy; head of UCU's Information and External Relations Department, Fr. Pavlo Khud; and Ukrainian journalist (the Telekrytyka project), writer and blogger Otar Dovzhenko.

"I did not expect to win, because there are a lot of good journalists here. I want to thank the heroes of my publication; because journalism is only a tool, but actually the stories themselves and inspiration itself are drawn from the people about whom you write. My goal was not to compete, but to achieve some result, and I am glad I did," explained the winner in the category "Society," Tetiana Kyrpa.



Taras Antoshevskyy and Iryna Matviyenko

We remind that "Reporters of Hope in Ukraine" is a contest for the best article, reportage or program which is an "information-carrier of solutions," which means it not only presents important issues of modern society, but also gives them specific answers and shows ways to solve problems and encourages people to action. The contest was organized by the Institute of



Ecumenical Studies of the Ukrainian Catholic University with the support of the French association Reporters of Hope (Reporters d'Espoirs).

<http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.ua/reportery>

### The first session of the administrative board of of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies was held

**On October 1 the first session of the administrative board of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies was held.** Participants in the meeting: rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University **Fr. Borys Gudziak, PhD**; Vice-rector for Educational Work of the Ukrainian Catholic



Daniel Schmidt

University **Pavlo Khobzey**; President of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, **Fr. Iwan Dacko, PhD**; Director of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies **Dr. Antoine Arjakovsky**; Vice President of the Bradley Foundation (USA), **Daniel Schmidt**; a representative of the Foundation L'Oeuvre d'Orient, Hubert de Gabori; and senator of the Ukrainian Catholic University (USA) **Prof. Jeffrey Wills**. At the session of the administrative board a report was presented on the activities of the institute and the distribution of the budget of the institute in 2011. Also presented were proposals for improving projects and the budget for 2012.

As a result of the discussion, the administrative board approved the projects to be implemented over the next year, gave recommendations for the improvement of the work of the institute, and appointed Halyna Bohonko executive director of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies in 2012.

### The Ecumenical Social Week as a project of inter-confessional cooperation in Ukraine was presented at an international conference in Minsk, Belarus

On November 13 a three-day international conference "Orthodox-Catholic dialogue: Christian ethical values as a contribution to the social life of Europe," started in Minsk, Belarus.

Participants discussed issues of inter-confessional cooperation in the economic, social and cultural spheres. Current issues of bioethics were discussed: abortion, euthanasia, and cloning.



Iryna Kitura

The Coordinator of the Ecumenical Social Week in Ukraine, Iryna Kitura, presented the Institute of Ecumenical Studies of the Ukrainian Catholic University and the project of the ESW. The Fourth Annual Ecumenical Social Week was held in Ukraine in early October. She showed part of a film about the third ESW. "The Ecumenical Social Week in Ukraine is part of a network of European Social Weeks, but the particularity of the Forum in Ukraine is its emphasis on ecumenism."

The Ecumenical Social Week is a good example of cooperation of representatives of different denominations in the social sphere.

Honorary guests of the event were: Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk Filaret, Patriarchal Exarch of all Belarus; Cardinal Kurt Koch, Head of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; and Apostolic Nuncio in Belarus Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti. Among the speakers were guests from Estonia, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine.

Although the conference was titled Catholic-Orthodox dialogue, representatives of the Jewish and Muslim communities also participated in the event. For today ecumenism goes beyond the notion of inter-confessional and often includes inter-religious dialogue.

"Christian relations must be built on the principles of mutual understanding. We must learn to see Christians of other denominations not as adversaries but as brothers," exhorted Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk Filaret. "The unity of Christians is not only the unity of faith but the unity of good deeds, as well."

The Head of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Kurt Koch, presented the history of the decline of Christian values in Europe, and therefore called for a new evangelization of Europe: "True evangelization has to transmit to people the idea given us by the Lord. At a time when secular trends are spreading our task is to maintain thinking about Christ in the world."

Conference participants called for a new evangelization. They stressed the need to erase the memory of the past and decided to start inter-confessional cooperation in the social sphere.



<http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.ua/golovna>

## The international conference "Academic theology in a post-secular age"

**On November 10-11, 2011, the international conference "Academic theology in a post-secular age" took place in Lviv.**

The event was organized by the Institute of Ecumenical Studies of the Ukrainian Catholic University in cooperation with St. Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute (Moscow) with the support of the Missionary Relief Organization Kerk in Actie (Netherlands).



The first day of the conference began with ecumenical prayer. Words of welcome were addressed to all the participants by **Alexei Bodrov**, rector of St. Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute (Russia); **Taras Dobko**, Senior Vice-Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University; **Fr. Roman Fihás**, researcher at the Institute of Ecumenical Studies; and **Hans Spinder**, a representative of the Dutch organization Kerk in Actie.

Participants discussed issues of theology as an academic discipline, the importance of ecumenical Christian education in academic institutions, the main trends and prospects of its development in high schools of Ukraine, inter-curricular cooperation in the sphere of theology, and the parallels between religion and philosophy.

"Dialogue between Western and Eastern theology can create systematic theology and yet maintain loyalty to the Gospel, to use or restrict reason and faith at the proper moment. This could be one of the projects for academic theology in the 21st century," proposed the speaker from the Netherlands, **Frank Bestebreurtje**.



And the speaker from the Volos Academy for Theological Studies (Greece), **Pantelis Kalaitzidis**, stressed that the Church should speak to people in a more understandable language; and theology must be academic and a kind of "conscience of the Church."

Conference participants were guests from Ukraine and abroad: a representative of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Krakow University of John Paul II, **Jakub Homulka**; the coordinator of the Ukrainian Distance Master's Program of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, **Taras Kurylets**; representatives of the Pedagogical University of Drahomanov (Kyiv), **Vitaly and Iryna Khromet**; an expert in the social theology of the Protestant Churches, **Mykhaylo Cherenkov**, PhD; and staff of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, **Pavlo Smytsniuk** and **Nadiya Ilyushenko**.



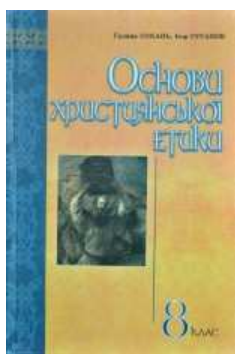
Guests of the conference were representatives of ecumenical centers of Eastern Europe in Poland, Belarus, Russia, Romania and Georgia.

A round table was the final stage of the conference "Academic theology in a post-secular age." Participants discussed key issues and problems in achieving consensus and understanding. Speakers expressed their conviction that theology must be understandable and in accordance with the academic standards offered by modern scholarship. Theology should not be closed in on itself, but open to dialogue with other disciplines.

<http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.ua/golovna>

## Eight Grade Pupils Will Have a New Textbook in Christian Ethics

**The Institute of Ecumenical Studies continues to support the initiative of writing and publishing textbooks in the essentials of Christian ethics.**



This year, the textbook "Essentials of Christian Ethics" for 8th grade pupils was published by the Svit Publishing House. The publication was accomplished with the support of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies at the Ukrainian Catholic University and the Missionary Relief Organization Kerk in Actie (the Netherlands).

The book was prepared by H. Sokhan in co-authorship with Ihor Husakov. It was already the author's third textbook. Topics of the edition are devoted to God's commandments, which are the moral guide in human life. The textbook considers guidelines concerning the relationship with God and neighbor, and the commandment of love. It acquaints pupils with the essentials of Christian values, gives them certain guidance, and fosters a sense of

responsibility.

The handbook was elaborated according to the teaching program of "Essentials of Christian Ethics for the 1st to 11th Grades," approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

<http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.ua/novini-institutu/2011/11/04/2219>

## A researcher at the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, Fr. Roman Fihas, participated in a Dutch conference devoted to the Ukrainian Church

**On November 26 in Hernen (Nijmegen), the Netherlands hosted a conference "The Church in Ukraine. The practice of faith, art, ecumenism and social responsibility."**

The main speakers at the event were: **Heleen Zordrager** – "The Churches in Ukraine: Inter-church relations"; **Fr. Roman Fihas** – "Social responsibility of the Churches in Ukraine. The Ecumenical Social Week "; **Yuliya Hopenbrauers-Nahirnyak** – "The practice of faith and



people's beliefs in Ukraine"; and **Mariana Kavinska** – "Old and new Ukrainian icons."

At the conference religious life in Ukraine was presented from different perspectives: the teachings and life of the Churches, social challenges in our country, the people's beliefs; and iconography.

In his report Fr. Roman Fihas presented statistics on social problems that exist in Ukraine (alcoholism,

drug addiction, AIDS, abortion). These statistics impressed the audience of the conference. The speaker stressed the important role of the Churches in overcoming crisis phenomena in society: in which spheres the Churches and social organizations have begun to influence the challenges and what steps have been made to deal with social disasters in society.

Also, Fr. Roman Fihas presented the Ecumenical Social Week, which for four years has been held in Lviv. Organized by the Institute of Ecumenical Studies at the Catholic University, the Ecumenical Social Week is an example of a common reflection on social challenges. This is a forum for dialogue, discussions and common actions. The researcher of the Institute described the main activities and resolutions of the ESW and its ecumenical specifics.

"Much has already been done, but more needs to be done. We should together take responsibility for building a more just society that can be built on the foundation of true Christian values," said Fr. Roman.

In total the event attracted more than 50 participants. Among them were scholars, theologians, sociologists, and people interested in Ukraine who have executed social projects in our country.

<http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.ua/novini-institutu/2011/12/02/2287>

## The staff and students of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies participated in the 86th Social Week of France

**In late November the 86th Social Week was held in France (Paris), attended by representatives of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies of the Ukrainian Catholic University.** The theme of this year's Social Week was "Democracy. A new concept." It is no accident that the emphasis was put on democracy, as it is known that modern Europe is facing many challenges today: social, national, economic, political and religious. Therefore, the question of democracy is a kind of saving point which should help Europe get out of crisis situations and avoid future ones.

During the three days of the conference the following key sub-topics were discussed: assessing democracy, the experience of democracy, and real democracy. At the 86th Social Week in France the students of the Master's Program of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies of UCU presented a display with information about Ukrainian Christian democratic initiatives successfully realized in recent years and implemented in Ukraine. Also, a meeting with youth was organized by coordinators of the Social Week in France. At that meeting, young people had a good opportunity to learn and share their own understanding of democracy from the perspective of different countries.

Participants in the conference: **Veronique Daviniet**, member of Parliament and representative of the charitable organization ATD Fourth World; **Luis Blondois**; and **Jean-Luc Marion**, philosopher and member of the French Academy (L'Académie Française).



Guests of the Social Week from the Institute of Ecumenical Studies were: Executive Director of the IES **Halyna Bohonko**; Coordinator of the Ecumenical Social Week project **Iryna Kitura**; and students of the Master's Program of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, **Yuliana Laurish** and **Sviatoslav Motren**.

Participation in the Social Week of France was extremely important and useful for the Ukrainian delegation, for the Institute of Ecumenical Studies of UCU has held an Ecumenical Social Week in Lviv already for four consecutive years. It is a kind of exchange of experience and mutual enrichment of institutions of various countries to achieve the best results at home and in the world in general.

<http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.ua/novini-institutu/2011/12/05/2294>

## Students of the MPES walked the childhood paths of great heroes of the Ukrainian people

**On November 5 students and graduates the MPES visited places where prominent figures of Ukrainian history were born and spent their childhoods. Young people were in Kulchytsi and Nahuyevychi.**



These places on the map of Lviv were not chosen by accident. Kulchytsi is the village which became the cradle for three glorious Cossack hetmans: Pavlo Boot, hetman of the unregistered Cossacks in 1636-1637; Mark Zhmaylo, Cossack hetman in 1625; and the most glorious among them, Petro Konashevych Sahaidachny Kosh, ataman of the Zaporozhian Host.

Also, Kulchytsi is famous for another quite well-known person, Y. Kulchytsky, who, according to some scholars, was one of the founders of the coffee tradition in Europe in the 17th century.

Nahuyevychi was the home of Ivan Franko. In this picturesque village of the Drohobych district the great author spent the youngest years of his life.



And skillful guides helped students of the MPES learn about the greatness, achievements, traditions and way of life. These guides may have tired of the young people's constant questions, but still they allowed them to try on a number of museum items, to touch the antiquities.

Such trips are an important matter for student life, and for the integral development of a normal personality. They start with common prayer, led this time by Fr. Roman Fihlas, and allow the group, regardless of year of study, to get to know one another better in an informal communication.

<http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.ua/novini-institutu/2011/11/09/2229>

### Students of the Institute volunteered at the pilgrimage center in France

**Now a tradition, this year students of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies took the opportunity to visit France and volunteer at the La Salette pilgrimage center.**

In August 9 students worked at various Sanctuaire Notre Dame de La Salette services, situated in the Alps at an altitude of about 2,000 meters. It was here that in the 19th century the Mother of God appeared to two young shepherds with a special message.

Later at this place a large religious complex was built, visited every day by hundreds of pilgrims from around the world. Furthermore, La Salette employs hundreds of volunteers from 20 countries, including those from Ukraine.

This experience was a unique opportunity for students to get to know members of other nationalities, because La Salette united all: Ukrainians, Polish, Russians, Slovaks, Czechs, Italians, Spanish, French, and also citizens of Madagascar, Angola, Lebanon.

Common work in the various services (kitchen, shop, restaurant, snack bar, room cleaning, etc.), various cultural evenings, and excursions to interesting and very beautiful places, and international weekly Mass united the volunteers' international community even more. It was important that every volunteer could also improve his knowledge of French at free language courses.

The light and positive atmosphere of La Salette took away even the slightest desire to leave and return home. Also, some representatives of the Ukrainian team took part in the conference "Christians in the Middle East: How to achieve peace," which took place there from July 24 to 28, 2011.

One of the speakers and organizers was Arjakovsky Antoine, honorary director of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, president of the Association of European Meetings in La Salette. Among participants of the event were representatives of the clergy, experts in theology, representatives of all branches of Christianity, as well as students from different countries and denominations. During the conference, they discussed problems of Christians in the Middle East, and also outlined prospects for dialogue.



<http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.ua/novini-institutu/2011/10/07/2149>

*Everyone who wishes to become a partner and/ or sponsor of the IES, and/or support our students by becoming their “godparents” (the annual cost for the education of one student is 500 euros), please contact the Institute of Ecumenical Studies*

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