

From parish, through nation, towards transnational Catholic network

From parish, through nation, towards transnational Catholic network: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in contemporary Transcarpathian Ukraine - lecture by Agnieszka Halemba

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This lecture, based on ethnographic field research conducted at and around Dzhublyk between 2006 and 2011, concerns the politics of religion as expressed through apparitional experiences. The argument is built around the response of the Virgin Mary to a question that was posed to her by the visionaries on September 1, 2002, about the purpose of her visit: "I want to help restore the authority of the priests among the people, to unite those divided people and to unite the Church". Can the Virgin Mary's appearances and her words to the visionaries at Dzhublyk help us understand the local religious situation better? Why has she decided to focus on the authority of priests and the unity of people and the church? Are those issues particularly problematic in contemporary Transcarpathia? Is the Virgin Mary speaking on someone's behalf, or is she indicating some present challenges that explicitly or implicitly preoccupy the local people? Transcarpathia and the Mukachevo Greek Catholic Eparchy have a particular position within contemporary Ukrainian nation-state and its religious landscape. The Virgin Mary and other holy figures that appear at Dzhublyk introduce a strong voice into the present debates concerning the Ukrainian nation and statehood. They can be seen as a case of divine intervention being sought in a situation where discussions and conflicts among human partners are locked in a stalemate.

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This lecture was given at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on 7 November 2017.

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