Constantinople by Ecumenical Patriarch Benjamin I, who at the same time erected the Orthodox Carpatho-Russian Diocese of Johnstown. By that time, however, thanks to the firm but patient policy of Bishop Takach, the Ruthenian Catholic Church had weathered the storm.

In 1946 the ailing Bishop Takach (d. 1948) received a coadjutor with the right of succession in the person of Bishop Daniel Ivancho. During his short administration (1948-1954), Bishop Daniel erected the seminary and, aided by the influx of highly qualified refugee priests from Central Europe, he placed the seminary on firm foundations. Under his successor, Bishop Nicholas Elko (1954-1967), a diocesan newspaper, the Byzantine Catholic World, was launched, the English language was introduced into the Divine Liturgy. Also the Ruthenian Exarchate followed its people, opening in 1956 its first parish on the West Coast.

In 1963 the missionary exarchate was replaced by two eparchies: Pittsburgh and Passaic. Bishop Stephen Kocisko became the first bishop of Passaic. He succeeded Bishop Elko in Pittsburgh when the latter was recalled to Rome in 1967. In 1969 the Parma Eparchy was erected for the Western states, with Bishop Emil Mihalik (1969-1984) as the first bishop. That same year, the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Munhall (since 1977, Pittsburgh of the Byzantines) was established, and Archbishop Stephen Kocisko (1969-1991) became its first metropolitan. In 1982 Bishop Thomas Dolinay was appointed to head the new Eparchy of Van Nuys, California. In 1990 he became archbishop-coadjutor with right of succession to Archbishop Kocisko, whom he succeeded in 1991, governing the archdiocese until his sudden death in 1993. Bishop Michael Dudick ruled the Passaic Eparchy from 1968 to 1996. He expanded Ruthenian parishes in the southern states, particularly Florida. He also erected a beautiful eparchial center with a rich museum and library in West Patterson, New Jersey. In 1995 Archbishop Judson Procyk, D.D., who had built the new cathedral complex in Munhall, became the third metropolitan archbishop of Pittsburgh. The following year, Archbishop Procyk led the Ruthenian hierarchs of North America and Europe in a celebration of the 350th anniversary of the union of the Ruthenian Church with the Holy See, held at St. Peter’s Basilica in the presence of the Holy Father. The event was marked by the issuance by Pope John Paul II of a Apostolic Letter on the Union of Uzhorož. The seventeenth anniversary of the Ruthenian Catholic Church of Pittsburgh, which will be attended by hierarchs and faithful from two continents, is a time to renew ties and, appreciating past difficulties and accomplishments, look forward with confidence to future challenges.

Father Mina is archivist of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Pittsburgh.

“Byzantine Catholic Expression” at Heinz History Center

In commemoration of its 75th anniversary, the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Archdiocese of Pittsburgh announces “The Byzantine Catholic Expression,” an exhibit that opens Oct. 2 and continues through Jan. 16, 2000 at the Heinz Regional History Center.

The exhibit brings together a selected collection of liturgical, architectural, and iconographic items to help develop an understanding of the Byzantine Catholic mode of spiritual expression.

The liturgical dimension is supported by the Holy Table, and altar that belonged to the first eparch of Pittsburgh, Bishop Basil Takach. The Holy Table is completely furnished. Nearby a Holy Shroud, which depicts the iconographic image of Christ’s body and which is used during Good Friday vespers, is displayed. This section also features the complete religious vestments of a Byzantine bishop, priest, and deacon, as well as the garments worn by a monk, a nun, and an altar server. An archbishop’s chair is also included.

The various designs of Byzantine architecture are shown through both church models and photographs. The models include four significant Byzantine churches in present-day Slovakia and Ukraine, as well as a model of the St. Nicholas Chapel built in 1992 in Beaver. The six photographs include a representation of several styles of American Byzantine churches. The most poignant of these photographs is that of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Lopez, which was totally destroyed by fire on Sept. 3, 1999.

The exhibit includes an array of twelve historical photos that weave the story of significant American Byzantine Catholic events during the past 75 years.

The role of icons in Byzantine Catholic spirituality is emphasized in several ways. Twelve icons represent an array of saints and feast days as well as various iconographic styles. An adjacent pane describes the work of iconographer Sister Stephanie Bavol, a member of the Uniontown province of the Byzantine Sisters of St. Basil the Great. A nearby panel features a six-part icon progression, detailing the crucial steps in the writing of an icon. A special section of the exhibit is reserved for a historic reference to icon screens. Reconstructed and on display is a major section of the icon screen from the old Ascension of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church in Clairton. The exhibit also includes photographic highlights of three icon screens located in the Pittsburgh area: those of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, St. John Chrysostom Church in Greenfield, and the cathedral in Munhall.

“The Byzantine Catholic Expression” was developed by a committee chaired by Michael Barbush Jr. of Pittsburgh and was coordinated by Dave Ragan of Youngstown.