



**St. Demetrius Church Community Group**  
**“Faith Break” Leaders**



**Amanda Maternicki nee Shymko RECE**

Thank you to my parents for leading me down a path of faith.

Living the dream. I began my involvement in youth leadership by chance, in my early twenties I was invited to chaperone a St. Demetrius youth retreat one February in the late 1990s and the experience changed me. My heart was filled with such love that weekend that my life was altered forever and I realized my purpose and my path with Christ.

When God calls to you are you listening? Quite often we do not hear the Lord when he speaks to us; messages are often sent in ways that may be unclear, but once you hear and answer “yes” the world becomes an incredible place to live.

My long-time involvement in the St. Demetrius community (from my own Baptism to the initiation of my 3 children) knowledge and skills as Camp director, Retreat Leader, Public Speaker, Early Childhood Educator and Ukrainian Dance Instructor are essential in the production of a successful experience with Faith Break.

I initiated Faith Break Day camps as an alternative to the secular camps found within the GTA, our original day camp was held in 2009 after 3 years the camp took a hiatus and was reinitiated in 2015. Campers arrive for a fun filled week, like other camps; however, their lives are enriched spiritually through a foundation of faith that the camp is based upon. Prayer is a part of daily life and this is naturally instilled at Faith Break; campers are encouraged to continue their relationship with God at home with their families through various means. Campers range in age from 4-12; this welcomes opportunity for older campers to take on a leadership role and work together as teams with younger friends.

*Project Vyra-aptly named by one who had demonstrated so much faith in God and others. – Lesia Kiska*

Project Vyra works in association with the St. Demetrius church community group acting as a collaborator with “Faith Break,” volunteers from the church share their time and specialties to teach children Ukrainian traditions i.e. writing pysanky, cooking varenyky, baking and much more. In both spring and summer camps Clergy visit with the campers to enhance the catechism program.

*I strive to demonstrate the same qualities I’ve observed from Amanda for many years in my own community involvement and my professional life today. - Natalie Witiuk*

I continue to do all I can to bring Christ’s love to the young people of our community.

**Tamara Ryhorski OCT**

My parents are Colleen and Larry Ryhorski and my grandparents are Mary and John Ryhorski; Father John married my grandparents. My great grandparents were Steven and Katherine Paskowich, who were instrumental in founding the Ukrainian Catholic Women’s League at St. Demetrius. Their daughter, my grandmother, Mary, and her husband John, were also deeply devoted to St. Demetrius. I was baptized and confirmed by Father John; attended St. Demetrius school; partook of the sacrament of Holy Communion at St. Demetrius church; was an altar server under Deacon Bill Bochar; celebrated my grade 8 graduation, and continue to be a practicing parishioner.

I have since heard many stories about my father’s childhood within the Ukrainian Catholic community and have been fortunate to follow in his footsteps. As a young girl, my mother took me and my sister, Tanya, to the kitchen on a couple of Tuesday mornings before school to help the women make the pyrohy. My sister and I also danced with Yavir for a number of years; after concerts our parents would bring us in our costumes to the Care Centre where we would go to the floors and dance for the residents. I have been an volunteer and part-time employee with the Ukrainian Canadian Care Centre throughout the years since.

Three years ago, Father John brought Amanda Maternicki and I together and we initiated the St. Demetrius Church Community Group (CCG) and have since, had great success in welcoming the youth of the Ukrainian community into the spirit of the church. While running our Faith Break camp, it warmed my heart that the women in the kitchen, and those of the women’s league, remembered my grandmother and great grandmother. I am proud and humbled to be able to carry on the traditions and legacies that they started and to continue to be a part of such a wonderful, faithful and nurturing community.

For more information on Faith Break Day camp please contact Amanda Maternicki at [projectvyra@gmail.com](mailto:projectvyra@gmail.com)