



UOL BULLETIN

UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dedicated to our Church -- Devoted to its Youth

VOL. 65 NO. 5

APRIL - MAY 2019

UOL Lenten Retreat March 30, 2019 "Don't Go to Church, Be the Church"

Submitted by Marianne Carmack



On Saturday, March 30, 2019, one of four regional retreats sponsored by the Ukrainian Orthodox League got underway. "Don't just go to Church, Be the Church" was the very timely theme. Participants joyously greeted one another as they arrived, completed their registration and enjoyed a wonderful continental breakfast. This year St. John the Baptist's Senior UOL Chapter (Sharon, PA) joined forces with the Ohio/Western Pennsylvania Retreat Team by preparing, setting up and making sure everyone had plenty of coffee and other breakfast drinks. Morning Prayers were offered by Fr. Ivan Tchopko, our host pastor, as well as a Memorial Litany for the Very Rev. Fr. John Harvey who guided our efforts for many years. His love for the retreat perhaps was second only to his love for serving the youth of our Church at Teenage Conference for over a quarter-of-a-century.

After regrouping, Stephanie Rimedeo greeted everyone and formally introduced Fr. Ivan and John Holowko, president of the UOL of USA. Their welcoming remarks further helped to create a powerful spirit of fellowship and community. Marianne Carmack then reviewed the day's activities and introduced visiting clergy, including Fr. Steve Repa, Fr. Mark Swindle Fr. Stavros Demas, Fr. Deacon Evan O'Neill and seminarian James Cummings; and, then, introduced the main speakers Fr. Paisius McGrath and Fr. John Charest.

Fr. John Charest, wrote a very informative summary of the retreat which included the following comments: "As Marianne introduced the three priests who had a major role in the day, Fr. Ivan Tchopko, Fr. Paisius McGrath, and Fr. John

Charest, everyone got a laugh because she noted that they all hail from a Saints Peter and Paul Parish, but each a different parish."

Fr. Paisius spoke about the importance of joy in our own spiritual life. He drove home the point that 'if we're not full of joy doing what we do, then we won't be fulfilled, and we won't be able to evangelize those who don't know Christ.' Fr. Paisius went on to say that, 'we don't just need to find joy in our spiritual life, we need to express it.' When he addressed the group regarding evangelizing, he reminded the participants that they need to meet people where they are. This means using familiar language, focusing on beliefs that they already acknowledge, and showing them the love of Christ. He reminded the group that while it might feel fulfilling to be joyful about Christ, we must also do the foundational work of bringing Christ to people who are unfamiliar with His Teaching.

Fr. John Charest then spoke about what it takes to be an Orthodox Christian. He talked about how Orthodoxy is a way of life and not just a religious exercise. Fr. John compared, as St. Paul often does, how the life of a Christian is analogous to the life of an elite athlete (it takes effort and practice). Fr. John showed a video depicting people performing amazing stunts, to drive home the point that elite athletes dedicate their lives to practicing and perfecting the skills needed to excel and achieve that which appears impossible. He

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You are cordially invited to the...

72nd ANNUAL UOL CONVENTION at ALL SAINTS CAMP
Emlenton, Pennsylvania

AUGUST 1-4, 2019

1-4 СЕРПНЯ, 2019

"Train up a child in the way he should go:
and when he is old,
he will not depart from it."
Proverbs 22:6



"Привчай юнака до
дороги його, і він,
як постаріється,
не уступиться з неї."
Приповісті 22:6

Ласкаво запрошуємо вас...

72-гу ЩОРІЧНУ КОНВЕНЦІЮ УЛІ на ОСЕЛІ ВСІХ СВЯТИХ
Емлентон, Пенсільванія

UOL BULLETIN - The official publication of the Ukrainian Orthodox League of the United States of America. Circulated to all UOL Members.

Non-members subscription rate \$30.00 Canada \$40.00

<i>John Holowko</i>	<i>Alexis Naumenko</i>	<i>Natalie Bilynsky</i>	<i>Fr. Harry Linsinbinger</i>
UOL President	Jr. UOL President	UOL Bulletin Editor	UOL Bulletin
14 Lenape Way	7 Home Road	703 Pine Ridge Road	Spiritual Advisor
Randolph, NJ 07969	Hatboro, PA 19040	Media, PA 19063	
jholowko@gmail.com	alexisnaumenko20@gmail.com	nsufler@aol.com	

UOL Bulletin - Published six times annually - October, November, January, March, April /May and June.

The absolute deadline for each monthly issue is the 1st of the prior month. Photos will not be returned.

Note to Contributors: All articles submitted to the UOL Bulletin must be in 11 point Times New Roman (font), or typed and double spaced in 12 point type. Articles may be submitted via e-mail attachments. (Submit to: nsufler@aol.com). If submitting photos please be sure to obtain consents for photos to be included in the UOL Bulletin.

The editor reserves the right to condense any material submitted. Material cannot be returned.

**MESSAGE
FROM THE
SENIOR
UOL
PRESIDENT
John Holowko**



Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!

At the time of this Bulletin publication, our Lenten Retreats have been completed, hosted by Troy NY, Youngstown and Western PA, along with Philadelphia in Bethlehem. All of them, Pan-Orthodox. We would like to thank all the organizers, speakers and participants in making each retreat a success. Each carried a different theme and with them different take-aways.

We sincerely wish all of you and your families a Blessed Pascha and if by chance you focus on the words literally and do not know, *Pascha* is derived from the Jewish word *Pesah* which means "Passover." Though the most important words are in fact, Christ is Risen!

As I mentioned to the people attending the Villa Maria Retreat, my drive westbound towards Youngstown (much more pleasant than last year given the weather conditions of the prior year) was spent listening to an audio book about a song and its origins. *I Can Only Imagine* is a 2018 American Christian drama film based on the story behind the MercyMe song of the same name, the best-selling Christian single of all time. Bart Millard, the lead singer wrote the song about his complicated relationship with his abusive father (the previous week I knew nothing of it until I watched the film on Amazon's Prime Video). Millard, after watching the transformation of his father after discovering he had pancreatic cancer and the power of forgiveness that followed, finally wrote the lyrics to the song by drawing on his thoughts and personal faith about what one would experience standing before God in Heaven. In the book, Bart wondered what if we all knew our date, if you will? Would we be kinder? More compassionate? Focus on the right things? How would we change things? Putting a different intent around the song title I do imagine in many of our lives that the decisions we would make would be different in many cases. I certainly wish that the grind of my daily life did not make daily decisions as difficult as they seem to be at times, even when I do try to make the right decision.

On a different note, we are working hard on making this convention truly spiritually enriching. I ran across one resource that I would like to share with you for the benefit of your children (<https://www.faithtree.org/youth>). Faithtree's mission is to help Orthodox Christian parishes develop thriving communities. One of their projects is the Relationship Project.

The Relationship Project seeks to create a space in the Church where teens experience Christ's unconditional love and feel a deep sense of belonging, ultimately resulting in a generation of teens who continue to turn towards the Church throughout their lives. The curriculum is crafted to meet the needs of high school students. The topics address issues that are pertinent to the lives of teenagers and the discussion questions are crafted particularly for the adolescent stage of life. In order to create the best possible content, they facilitated collaboration between theologians, therapists and youth directors.

The curriculum appears to be designed to enable you to communicate the richness of our faith to your teens. Faithtree has done the lesson planning and vetted it. It appears it can be a resource for youth leaders, teachers, parents and clergy.

I know it's only April, but I also know that many are beginning their planning for the summer. I hope you and your Parishes consider sending your children to All Saints Camp (ASC), even if just for a week. I know all about the sports camps etc. and wanting to get away as well-a challenge for all. The question is challenging, yet simple. Can you achieve both? And, if not, what do you want the long-term priority to be for your children? If you have never brought your children, let this be the year, I believe they will fall in love with ASC.

As many of you know, our 2019 Convention is being conducted for the first time at ASC. There have been and continue to be articles on this—much work is going on in conjunction with the planning, including a significant renovation of the Millennium Building and much thought is being given as to the overall program and theme—we are truly aiming for it to be spiritually

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Ask Fr. Harry

The UOL National Executive Board is pleased to announce that His Eminence Metropolitan Antony appointed Fr. Harry Linsinbinger as the Spiritual Advisor of the UOL Bulletin. Mnohaya Lita!

Does the Orthodox Church change?

"Change" is a word that has several different applications. Its primary definition is "to make or become different." The Orthodox *Faith* does not change, although it has been expressed in different ways down through the centuries. However, the *Church* changing is a horse of a different color.

The statement "the Church changes" and the statement "the Church does not change" are not mutually exclusive. Rather, we need to understand that both of these statements are true. We also need to understand *why* they are both true.

The Church is a living organism, and as with all living organisms, it both changes and stays the same. For example, the pine tree in your back yard is the same tree as it was when it was younger. It has not changed into an oak tree, nor did it become some other tree. It also has not changed into a non-tree (i.e. it has not changed into a rock or a car). It has all the same essential qualities of being a pine tree as it did when it was younger and likewise is the same *particular* tree. Yet it has grown and developed while maintaining the same essentials it had before. It gives more oxygen to the environment than it did when it was a seedling or when it was smaller. It gives more shade to animals and people in the face of a warm summer sun than it did when it was younger. In that sense, it has changed. Any organism that does not change by growth and development either is dead or dying, but Christ's Body is very much alive.

Thus, the Church is the same Church that Christ founded upholding the unchanging God-given Faith, practices the same essentials of liturgy and worship, continuously strives to abide by the commandments. But much like a seedling to a small tree to a great tree so also the Church has grown and developed by adding more members generation after generation, worship develops over time while always maintaining the essential elements. We have the same sacraments but some of the minor elements of each sacrament has undergone local changes without ever changing the essentials.

Is it true that the Orthodox Church requires abstinence from marital relationships during all of the fast periods and on all fast days? I have been Orthodox all my life and just heard this from a friend of mine who was told by a monk that this is the case. If so, this is very upsetting. Do the rules of the Church require this?

No, this is not the case. The canons of the Church say the following: "Persons who are self-sufficient and married ought to be judges of themselves. For we are told in writing by St. Paul that it is fitting that they should abstain from each other by agreement for a time, in order that they may indulge in prayer, and again come together." The Rusyn Church in the Synod of Volodymyr in 1274 issued guidelines for married clergy for all of the Rusyn lands. They included as days of abstinence from sexual relations only the first and last week of Great Lent, the two weeks of Dormition Fast, and only Wednesdays and Fridays during the Nativity Fast and Apostles Fast. The only other canonical restriction is that of St. Timothy, who states in Canon 5 that a couple ought not have intercourse "during the night" before taking Communion because they are, if awake that late, to be engaged in prayer in preparation for Communion. He reinforces this in Canon 13, but

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**72nd Annual UOL Convention
All Saints Camp, Emlenton, PA
August 1 - 4, 2019**

The UOL Convention is approximately 4 months away! It seems like a good time to start planning for this fantastic event. There are several things that chapters and individual members can do to plan for the event.

Chapters

- ◆ Start thinking about delegates for the Convention.
- ◆ Get your basket ready for the basket raffle.
- ◆ Sponsor a fundraising event to support the Convention.
- ◆ Encourage all of your youth and juniors to come to the Convention.
- ◆ Encourage the parents of your juniors to attend, to come to Camp and see All Saints Camp and learn firsthand what their kids have been describing.
- ◆ Sponsor events to support Convention packet fees for all delegates from your chapter.
- ◆ Consider paying for registration for all delegates.
- ◆ Sponsor a Yearbook Ad for the Yearbook.

Individual members

- ◆ Make your reservation for the hotel (Foxburg Inn Hotel www.foxburginn.com 714-659-3116)
- ◆ Remind all of your friends and fellow chapter members to attend the Convention.
- ◆ Consider donating a basket for the basket raffle.
- ◆ Encourage Juniors to attend the Convention.
- ◆ Think about the fun you will have on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday at All Saints Camp!
- ◆ Registration forms will be available soon! Be sure to register for the UOL Convention at All Saints Camp!

**Basket Raffle at UOL Convention
Submitted by Patricia Walton, Corresponding Secretary UOL**

The 72nd UOL convention is fast approaching. This year it will be at All Saints Camp in Emlenton, PA on August 1-4, 2019. We will have our traditional basket raffle and humbly ask each chapter to please contribute a basket for the raffle.

The baskets can be any theme at all. Wine, movie night, game night, products from your hometown, beer lovers, cheese and crackers, chocolate lovers, scratch off lottery tickets or school supplies, etc. Please let me know your plans to participate so I can prepare how much space we will need.



This year's convention is hosted by the National UOL board so we don't have a Parish host. *If each chapter could host a fundraiser that is specifically for the camp convention that would help the convention immensely.* Whether it is \$100 or \$500 your donation makes a big difference.

We appreciate your participation. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me. Thank you so much for your help. See you by the bonfire at our Camp convention!!



**MESSAGE
FROM THE JUNIOR
UOL PRESIDENT**

Alexis Naumenko



Christ is Risen! Христос Воскрес!

On behalf of the Executive Board of the National Jr. UOL, I would like to greet everyone with the feast of feasts, Holy and Great Pascha! When we look at Paschal mystery, we come to a deeper meaning of dying and rising.

Jesus Christ's passion, death and Resurrection, are the ultimate event of dying and rising, of death and new life. We learn from Jesus that new life can come from death, that we can find meaning in tough times, that there really is light in the darkness. And so it is my hope that this Pascha was a period of rebirth for you, a period of a new beginning.

This year, the UOL held four Lenten Retreats in different geographical regions that were widely attended by the faithful of the Church. I personally, along with several Juniors from Philadelphia, attended the retreat in Bethlehem, PA. The topic of this retreat was "The Ladder of Divine Ascent and our spiritual journey one step at a time" and it refocused me on the importance of Christ-centered life. If you attended this year's Lenten retreat, I thank you and hope that you found it spiritually uplifting.

Although Great Lent is behind us, the Junior UOL is continuing to collect for the Great Lent Giveaway ("GLG"). This year's recipient of the GLG collection will be Heifer International (Heifer.org), a charity organization working to end hunger and poverty around the world by providing livestock and training to struggling communities. This project is being coordinated by the Financial Secretary, Maddie Zetick (zetickm@gmail.com) in cooperation with the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry (uocyouth.org). We hope that everyone is able to contribute to this worthy cause.

In just three short months, the 72nd annual UOL Convention will convene at All Saints Camp ("ASC") in Emlenton, PA. Why not spend a few days in fellowship and prayer in the beautiful mountains next to the Allegheny river? Many wonderful workshops and events are planned for you and we hope that you will be able to join us August 1-4 at ASC.

As always, for guidance and support, please feel free to contact me at alexis-naumenko20@gmail.com or is telephone 215-290-7878

In Christ,
Alexis Naumenko

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U.S.A.

Great Lent 2019

Giveaway

Benefiting

SPONSORED BY THE CONSISTORY OFFICE OF
YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY AND THE
JUNIOR UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX LEAGUE

For more information on how your parish youth may
participate in this program of Christian caregiving and service
visit UOCYouth.org or contact uocyouth@aol.com

Scan me

Souper Bowl Sunday in New Britain

Submitted by Teresa Linck

The Junior and Senior UOL chapters of St. Mary's in New Britain hosted their first Souper Bowl luncheon. Soups were made by the Senior chapter and were served by both Senior and Junior members. Attendees were urged to sample all the soups (which included Borscht, Split Pea, Roman Egg Soup and Cheesy Mashed Potato) and then were treated to yummy desserts. A full belly was had by all!



Wilmington Senior UOL

Submitted by Jean Roeth

Our Wilmington parish and chapter have been busy recently. In December, we held a cookie sale that is always a lot of fun. Several parishioners participated by baking some delicious homemade cookies that the UOL members assembled on a Saturday morning. We had several sizes available the following morning after Liturgy. It's always nice to see our people gazing at the boxes and lining up to purchase them to take home to enjoy with family and friends. Some even bought them with the purpose of gifting them!



We had our annual Malanka at the Mill Creek Fire Hall in January and the event was well attended. We ate a nice dinner made the Ladies Auxiliary of the fire hall, supplemented by some varenyky made by our Sisterhood pyrohy program. After dinner, we danced the night away to the Starlighters, a local band.

And recently, we solemnly celebrated the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Father Stephen Hutnick led the procession as the faithful carried icons in the procession and the choir sang the Tropar.

We are looking forward to our parish Annual Spring Bazaar on April 13th. This event is our busiest church event and many UOL members pitch in to help.



Ukrainian Orthodox League's Annual Drive for UOL Projects, Lynn Sawchuk-Sharon Kuzbyt Scholarship, and Metropolitan John Scholarship Funds

Donations to UOL Projects will be used for

- *Publication of the **UOL BULLETIN**
- *Supporting the Youth Commission's activities
- *Outreach through the Christian Care-Giving and Missions Commission
- *Continuation of the Education Commission projects and services
- *Public Relations and other administrative necessities

Donations to the Lynn Sawchuk-Sharon Kuzbyt Scholarship fund will

- *Provide Scholarships to current or former Junior UOL members who are leaders in their parishes and communities and committed to their faith
- *Nurture the future leaders of our Church
- *Foster the UOL's motto: "Devoted to its Youth"

Donations to the MJSF Scholarship Fund will

- *Provide tuition assistance to seminarians at our St. Sophia's Seminary
- *Encourage candidates to the Holy Priesthood
- *Provide tuition assistance to our clergy and seminarians for higher education

Please take a moment and use the enclosed envelope to make your donation today!!

(Retreat - continued from page 1)

reminded us that if we are to attain a sense of peace through Christianity, then we must live like a Christian—always and in everything that we do. Fr. John concluded by discussing specific ways that an Orthodox Christian can practice Christian behavior so that it becomes a ‘way of life,’ as well as how we can and should apply our ‘way of life’ in reaching out to others not only in our day-to-day activities and personal relationships, but also by participating in the Orthodox Church’s ministries and outreach programs.

After the presentations, speakers and visiting clergy were asked to comment on the question “What’s in it for me?” Their responses, although similar, each introduced something new to think about and that also encouraged us to embrace a deeper commitment to living our Orthodox Faith. Then, small groups discussed what they learned from each presentation and how it applies to their lives. Each group selected a spokesperson to share a summary of their findings, giving us an opportunity to collectively discuss daily challenges and roadblocks and barriers to making our Orthodox Faith and Values a way of life—and what to do about it. We then broke for our famous Villa Maria Lunch—enjoyed every year by all of us.

As we reconvened, we were joyfully surprised by the news that His Eminence, Archbishop Daniel, had just arrived in the Seminary Van with eight seminarians. They were on their way from St. Vladimir’s in Parma, Ohio to Silver Springs, Maryland. During his time with us, he reinforced the ideas presented earlier in the day, emphasizing that Christian values and virtues must be worked on as we strive to practice our faith. His Eminence gave a review and update about the Church in Ukraine. He spoke of the Myrrh-streaming Icon he had been blessed to be with the night before; and, then shared a touching story about an iconographer who uses panels from Ukrainian Army ammunition boxes used to defend Ukraine’s borders to create icons that provide funds to care for disabled and wounded Ukrainian soldiers. The fullness of this blessed day was reflected in the harmony and prayerful mini-concert of liturgical music presented by our Seminarians—a very special



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Prom Themed
Pre-Convention Dance
St. Vladimir
Philadelphia, Pa
June 1, 2019
6:00—10:00 pm
An event for all ages!



The whole family is invited!
Includes dinner, dancing
and non-alcoholic beverages.

For more information
contact nsufler@aol.com



(Ask Fr. Harry - continued from page 2)

clearly also adds the words of Scripture that they are to then quickly "come together again that Satan not tempt you on account of your failure to mingle." Thus, after midnight before Communion, the same time period that you cease eating altogether in preparation for Communion, you would also not be having intercourse. Thus, coinciding with our fast before communion, from the middle of the night before, until we partake of communion, no intercourse should ensue since we are in a vigil of prayer and otherwise getting our necessary sleep and rest.

I will conclude with some thoughts by Fr. Alexander Lebedeff who studied this issue quite thoroughly: "The married state is blessed and the marriage bed is undefiled. The Holy Church in protecting the sanctity of marriage and the well-being of the spouses, as well as encouraging procreation and the raising of 'fair children' has no interest in creating artificial impediments to preclude spouses from 'rejoicing in one another.'"

I am bothered by some things that I have been reading. For example, that the story of the Theotokos, taken from the Protoevangelion of James, was borrowed from the Old Testament story of Hannah. Also, that some of the Saints' lives are legend versus historical fact. Also, the scientific reality of some of the stories of the Bible.

There are several issues here. One is the problem of the historicity of the “Lives” of the Saints generally. The various written accounts known as the “Lives of the Saints” are not dogma. Some lives of the Saints are much more careful to display history while others impose legend. St. Photius, one of the three pillars of Orthodoxy, fervently believed that lives of the Saints should be purged of all pseudo-history and also approved of historical skepticism in many accounts of the lives of Saints. Other Saints of the Church found it less important to employ historical skepticism.

Is this story of the Theotokos "borrowed" from another or is it simply in continuity with it? In other words, why is it harder to believe that an event "foreshadowed" another as opposed to believing that it is a work of fiction "reworking" an older story? If we would do that in relationships, we would be imposing "imago" shallow similarities and making assumptions that they relate to another person or occurrence. This would destroy the relationship and, furthermore, often prove to be untrue in substance. In other words, person A in our past did this and this and this and the actions are similar to person B who is here now. We know from personality theory that, indeed, they are "likely" for different reasons (there is only a 1 in 16 chance that they are for the same reasons). Yet many are willing to take that gamble and destroy the relationship.

As for scientific reality in the Bible, we must believe that Scripture demonstrates truth, but that all value is found in the mysteriological message of Scripture. Scripture is multivalent (many-tiered), and its deepest truths are non-reliant on the historicity of what is said. For example, the parable of the Prodigal Son does not contain “less truth” than the Birth of Christ just because the former is allegorical and the latter historical. Despite all of this, it is an innate message of the Bible and of Christianity that miracles are real. You cannot be Christian and at the same time say that the resurrection of Christ is a metaphor. If you say "this is implausible," that is the point--either God has governance over nature and conquered death or he didn't. That is why several times we read that "with God all things are possible." The point is, that with man (and nature) what is impossible, with God is possible. Existence altogether is implausible--highly statistically improbable. There should be no such thing, but there is. Either you believe that God can and does these things, or you do not. It is that simple. If you believe it, then the "unlikely stories" are not so unlikely. If you do not, then there is never a possibility of you believing in them. Nonetheless, regardless of what we think, reality is reality. Either Moses and the Israelites crossed the sea as if on dry land or they did not. Either Christ rose from the dead or he did not. Either the universe exists (highly improbable, bordering on impossible), or it does not. Yet it does. If you believe it does then you believe in at least one thing that is "supernatural" i.e. beyond nature--the coming into existence of the universe and an inexplicable maintenance of natural order. If you believe in this, why not in the rest?

The purpose of the Bible is to give us truth mysteriologically, sometimes in allegory, sometimes in type, sometimes in historical narrative (such as the book of Acts), sometimes in other ways and certainly on various levels. In the prayers of Thanksgiving for communion we ask God to deliver us from the captivity of our own reasonings. This is because our own reasonings often imprison us and get us “stuck.” “‘My ways are high above your ways,’ says the Lord.” Do we not think that the Creator of all has the full picture? Do we think we have it? No, we see in a glass darkly. As Metropolitan Kallistos once said, “it is not the task of Christianity to provide easy answers to every question, but to make us progressively aware of a mystery. God is not so much the object of our knowledge as the cause of our wonder.”

2019 UOL Essay Contest Topics

Pre-K and Kindergarten: Draw a picture of something you like to do with your family.

Grades 1 and 2: One of the Nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit is Compassion. Write 2 to 3 sentences explaining what compassion is and draw a picture of someone showing compassion to something or someone.

Grades 3 and 4: In Proverbs 1: 8-9 the Bible says, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching..." Write 50 to 100 words explaining what this passage means to you.

Grades 5 and 6: One of the seven acts of Spiritual Mercy is to forgive all who injure us. Write 100 to 150 words on how you were taught to do this and how you continue to follow that teaching.

Grades 7 and 8: In Proverbs 20:11 the Bible says, "Even a child makes himself known by his acts, by whether his conduct is pure and upright." Write 150 to 200 words on how this relates to this year's convention theme from Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it" and accepting responsibility for one's actions.

Grades 9 and 10: In John 1:4 the Bible says, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth." Write 200 to 250 words on how this relates to this year's convention theme: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." – Proverbs 22:6.

Grades 11 and 12: Please write 250 to 500 words on the following topic. As you look forward into the upcoming years and getting ready for college, how do you plan on using what you have learned from your parents and from church teachings in your new environment? How do you plan on staying involved in the church?

Adults 18 and over: Write 500 or more words on the following topic. This year's convention theme comes from Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." We have been taught about the Seven Capital Sins and their Opposite Virtues, which are: 1. Pride/Humility 2. Greed/Kindness 3. Lust/Chastity (body and soul) 4. Envy/Charity 5. Gluttony/Liberality 6. Anger/Patience 7. Sloth/Diligence in service and praise of God. In today's world where pride, love of money and a self-centered universe are the norm, how do we use these virtues as a guideline for training up our children?

CONTEST GUIDELINES AND RULES

1. **Entries must be postmarked by April 30, 2019.**
2. **NO NAMES ON THE FRONT OF ANY ENTRY.**
3. All entries must include the following information: **(PLEASE USE THE COVER PAGE SUPPLIED)**
 - a. Participant's first and last name
 - b. Age and grade in school
 - c. The name and address of participant's parish, including city and state
 - d. Drawings no larger than 12" x 18" and **NO** name on the front of drawing. Please attach a **COVER PAGE** or use the **BACK** of the drawing for the information listed above. **All drawings MUST be mailed.**
 - e. Written entries must be on 8 ½" x 11" papers. Include a cover page with the identifying information listed above. Entries for 9th grade and above must be typed or printed.

Please do not take pictures of any entries. If you must send a hand printed essay, please mail it or scan it and then email it.

**All entries must be submitted in English.
ALL ENTRIES WILL BE JUDGED FOR CONTENT, CREATIVITY
AND NEATNESS.
NO ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER April 30, 2019**

Please send entries to

**Teresa Linck: 413 Juniper Lane, Cheshire, CT 06410
Teresa Linck at: tlinck.essays@gmail.com**

UOL Bulletin Pictures



Pauline Witkowsky and Susan Perankovich reading the UOL Bulletin in Hilton Head.

Join in the fun! Take your UOL Bulletin with you and take a picture reading your Bulletin.

Submit pictures by sending to nsufler@aol.com

(President - continued from page 2)

fulfilling for your family. As a result of the venue being ASC, the costs have been significantly reduced with a further opportunity to reduce your family costs by staying at ASC. Registration materials have now been distributed.

We truly hope you plan on attending. If you have not come to ASC before, this provides the opportunity to your family. Please take advantage of it.

Yours in Christ,

John Holowko

(Retreat - continued from page 5)

To once again quote Fr. Charest, "The retreat concluded with Vespers served by Fr. Ivan Tchopko, the veneration of the Holy Cross, and fellowship in the meeting room. Having the concepts of the presentations, the melodies of the seminarians, and the prayers of our Archbishop in their minds and hearts, the participants made their ways home to share their experiences with their home parishes. Many participants left with the words, "see you next year" to one another, and we too, hope to, "see YOU next year."

We are most grateful for our brothers and sisters in Christ who attended the retreat and by their participation made it a very special day indeed; our retreat leaders, Fr. Paisius McGrath, Fr. John Charest, and Fr. Ivan Tchopko and all clergy present; John Holowko, the Executive Board and Daria Pishko Komichak for their support; St. John the Baptist Senior UOL who never hesitated when asked for their help; Retreat Team members Fr. Ivan Tchopko, Pauline Witkowsky, Stephanie Rimedeo, Dinah Fedyna and Marianne Carmack; Ann Woloschak for facilitating the participation of our junior UOL members and their guest; Pat Dorning for helping with registration and getting the coffee going at 7:00 AM; Susan Perankovich for help with set-up; for those who traveled from Illinois, Maryland, New York and New Jersey to attend the retreat; Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center for their hospitality and support; and most especially, our beloved Bishop and seminarians.



UOL of USA Strategic Plan - Healthy Parishes Survey Developed Submitted by Linda Hnatow

When we honestly look around at our church, do we see what we think would be ideal? Do we realize we have to change in order to grow or maybe even survive? Parishes are facing difficulty with money, culture, membership, commitment. There is a lot of competition for our church time. Priests and bishops cannot do it alone. It has to start with each of us. So what would it take? There is no magic. According to Fr. Thomas Hopko, "All that is required is that its members, beginning with its leaders, be firmly resolved to have it so."

Of course it is not all about the numbers. But increasing membership is often an indicator of parish health. What does a healthy parish look like? What do you think indicates a healthy parish? We can look to the early church, where there were some common characteristics: Fellowship (everyone was involved, no matter their "station in life") and all contributed; Joy, their faith made them joyous and they shared it with each other and others; transformed character, they lived holy lives, Christ-like, not just in church; power, they prayed and healed in the name of Jesus; motivated with gratitude, responsibility, and concern for others.

When looking at growing parishes, there are some common threads, including worship, welcoming, working well together, including all generations, stewardship. Parishes that are shrinking also have common characteristics, including surviving, fundraising, goal of keeping the church open and running, focus on culture/social club. One priest has said, "Acquiring a vision of life as a vibrant parish rather than a recycle of previous experiences, overcoming old attitudes about why they exist."

So how do we take our parishes to the next level and become "healthy?" Start with asking good questions. What is the purpose of this parish? How long do we want our parish to live? Is our value of the parish reflected in our behaviors? Who owns the parish? Do we want our parish to grow? Are we satisfied with how things are? Do we need to change? Can we see our parish being different and better? Is the Gospel (knowing it and bringing others to it) a priority? Are we open and welcoming? What will happen if we do nothing? The first thing to do in the change process is to identify gaps. This will probably lead to discomfort, but also opportunity. Sharing information about the parish reality is critical to effect change. This would include data on demographics, donations, attendance, and growth.

Establishing a parish identity is important. How many people in the surrounding neighborhood know about the parish? Is it due to the culture-food, craft fairs, bazaars- or the Gospel centered ministries? Do we know what our mission statement is? Do we know we are the Body of Christ and not a cultural center?

We have developed a self-assessment for parishes to guide them to become healthier. We identified seven areas necessary for a healthy parish. They are: Spiritual leadership; Parish as a family; Education; Youth; Communication; Outreach; and Stewardship. Each area has questions that parishes can use to identify areas they want to improve. We have also identified resources that would help the parish in each of the areas. This list of resources is a start and by no means the complete list of resources that are available for Orthodox parishes. We hope if your parish finds a good resource, you would be willing to share by contacting anyone involved with the Strategic Plan.

Spiritual Leadership

Spiritual leadership is the category where a parish finds its purpose for existence. Orthodox parishes should have their main focus on serving God. It should not be a cultural club or business or museum. Each parishioner should be a spiritual leader in their own way. Vocations should be encouraged, whether they are priestly, monastics, or lay people. Each organization in the parish should be focused on the spiritual needs of parishioners and the community the parish resides within. The priest and the parishioners should be aware of the spiritual needs of each other and be supportive. Spirituality should be facilitated and grown through education, both formal and informal. Healthy parishes set up their parish leadership according to the size and goals of the parish. Leadership prioritizes ministries by funding and equipping them with volunteers and necessary structure. Parish leaders both pastor (s) and lay leaders, are stewards of their parish, focused on building a healthy and vibrant community. Parish leaders accept their jobs with a sense of duty and excellence. They are not business managers, owners, trustees, or critics. They use their talents for the betterment of the parish in an appropriate and effective manner. Decisions are made according to the role of the leader and there is mutual respect. Responsibility is shared and delegated, not controlled by the pastor or parish board member(s). The pastor is the coach, catalyst, mentor, teacher, and role model. He is not a manager, gatekeeper, or "one of the guys." New people are encouraged to become involved in parish leadership, effecting change and vibrancy. Effective change management processes and skills are employed by parish leaders to anchor change in the parish culture. There is a clear and present focus on and relationship between parish leaders and ministries/service.

Parish as a family

This category should be used to explore the fellowship of the parish and also the worship experience. Is spirituality shared within the parish and among all members through participation in services (not just Sundays!) and during

social events? Worship services should be better attended than social events and everyone attending should be participating. Work done for the church should have an element of worship and understanding of the sacrifice offered to God, through the church work. Our sense of family within the parish may include some disagreements, but those should be resolved with love and consensus. Gallup has developed many polls around religious involvement. What Gallup found is that engagement drives spiritual commitment, which has an impact on specific spiritual health outcomes. When purposefully addressed, engagement translates into positive outcomes both inside and outside the local faith community.

Education

Orthodoxy includes a directive for lifelong education about the faith in order to grow spiritually. Lifelong education will help the parishioner understand their faith and increase the vibrancy of the parish on a whole. Often only children are given religious education, but to grow in faith it is necessary to continue learning about God and His church. There should be a focus on understanding and applying Orthodox spirituality, which becomes transformational for individual and parish alike. Sharing culture with each other can build parish relationships, as well as increase enjoyment in sharing and learning.

Youth

Looking around our church we live the statistics, that 1 in 4 Americans aged 18-24 do not affiliate with any church and "millennials" are less religiously affiliated than any generation before them. We should treat our youth as important members of our parish community. We should have the ability to engage youth from birth through college and beyond. Having them involved and contributing to our parishes can impact their view of "church."

Communication

Healthy parishes have a clear, consistent communication system that includes dialogue, listening, and consensus in speaking the truth with humility and no judgement. They include all voices and do not marginalize any member. Communication includes spoken, written, visual, and electronic methods. Important messages are conveyed by different methods to make sure all parishioners are notified. Dialogue includes examining all points of view with respect. Consensus is built through finding the best solution for the parish and not the individual or small group. Consensus requires seriously examining all points of view. Important decisions require communication that is clear and answers all questions honestly. All topics should be open for discussion. Criticism is given with love and seriousness, not dismissed. Conflict is recognized and responded to with speed, compassion, and respect. Dealing with difficult parishioners is handled with respect and love. The pastor and parishioners trust each other.

Outreach

Outreach, both internal and external, provides an opportunity for individual parishioners and the parish as a whole to use their talents and gifts in God's service. Members understand that they have a reason for being in the parish and work as a living member of the Body of Christ for the benefit of others through service. Parish ministries involve all members of the parish and are evaluated for effectiveness on a regular basis. The parish, both informally and formally, should reach out to parishioners who may be physically separated from the parish family. The parish does not close itself off to others, but lets their light shine throughout their greater community through outreach and evangelization. This includes understanding that living as a Christian community will bring people to God. Outreach should be both a personal responsibility of each parishioner and a community effort.

Stewardship

A healthy parish understands that the parish "is not yours, but God's." Stewardship is what you do with all the gifts that God gave you. A healthy parish has all parishioners involved in some aspect of the parish ministries. Stewardship involves ALL parishioners, no matter their age. Giving patterns begin at a young age, so children should be taught to be generous with their talents and money. Stewardship includes weekly giving according to parishioner's means (tithing) and working for the church. Understanding that "where your treasure is there your heart will be also" (Mathew 6:21). Giving should be a religious calling. Parishioners need to be reminded to give in a consistent manner. People tend to give to a mission and vision, not a bill. An attitude of abundance and gratitude leads to generosity. Parish leadership should be in agreement with parish stewardship strategies and practice. Stewardship should be part of the parish's vision, mission, and values.

General resources for healthy parish development:

<http://stewardshipcalling.com/effective-church-model/>

[http://domoca.org/files/Parish%20Health/Inventory%20Docs/](http://domoca.org/files/Parish%20Health/Inventory%20Docs/FocusareaV1final.pdf)

[FocusareaV1final.pdf](http://www.schwebster.org/about-orthodoxy/building-up-a-healthy-church)

<http://www.schwebster.org/about-orthodoxy/building-up-a-healthy-church>

Non-Orthodox healthy parish resources:

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/10-signs-vibrant-parish>

<http://congregationalvitalitysurvey.com/about.html#>

<http://www.gallup.com/products/174866/faith-member-engagement.aspx>

To obtain a copy of the survey contact Linda Hnatow.

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UOL Tribute

A donation to the Tribute Fund is an acknowledgment of a Milestone, Memorial, or Accomplishment, or is a Special Recognition of an individual or group.

Your much-appreciated contribution is used to support and further the Mission of the Ukrainian Orthodox League. All donations are published in the UOL Bulletin.

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With the renovation of the Millennium Building scheduled to conclude in May and summer fast approaching, volunteers are needed for the **May 17-19 Work Weekend** at All Saints Camp in Emlenton, PA. Please consider volunteering and spreading the word in your parishes!

Friends of all ages and skill-sets are invited to participate in light labor and beautification projects around campus - *no experience is necessary*. Volunteers will stay on campus and meals will be provided.

Friday, May 17
TBD - Arrivals + Work Session
7:00p - Dinner
Evening - Social

Saturday, May 18
8:30a - Breakfast
9:30a-12:30p - Work Session
1:00p - Lunch
2:00-5:00p - Work Session
6:00p - Dinner
Evening - Work? + Social

Sunday, May 19
TBD - Prayers
8:30a - Breakfast
9:30a-12:30p - Work Session
1:00p - Grab 'n' Go Lunch

Simply **email** or call **Josh Oryhon** at **(724) 867-5811** with any questions or to RSVP - hope to see you at ASC in May or this summer!

The 72nd Annual Ukrainian Orthodox League Convention

Hosted by:
The National Ukrainian Orthodox League Board
All Saints Camp, Emlenton PA
August 1-4, 2019

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." - Proverbs 22:6

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**What is happening in your Chapter or Parish Community?
Tell us about your projects and ideas!
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