50th Anniversary Repose of Metropolitan John
Submitted by His Eminence Metropolitan Antony

On the third of May 1971, the First Primate of our Church of the U.S.A., His Beatitude, John, Archbishop of Philadelphia and Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of North and South America, fell asleep in the Lord. The Funeral Services and Eulogies on his behalf, witnessed unto the entire world the extreme sorrow with which the clergy and faithful accepted his repose. Thousands of his spiritual flock along with all the clergy and faithful of other churches and faiths paid homage while he lay in state. Faithful of other Orthodox Churches with their hierarchs and clergy conducted memorial prayers. “These services, eulogies and farewells formed an undying wreath, which we placed upon his fresh grave out of a deep respect and love for him.” (Archbishop Mstyslav)

Metropolitan John (Ioan Theodorovych) was born in the town of Krupets, Ukraine, on 6 October 1887. Krupets, is a community in the Volyn Region (equivalent to a USA State), where his father served as a priest and where others of his ancestry also served the church. Here in this community he began his studies and later entered the Seminary Preparatory school in the city of Klevan. Upon graduation here, he enrolled in the Zhytomyr Theological Seminary from which he graduated with high honors. Following graduation, he continued his studies and received his teacher’s certificate, which he utilized by teaching for five years in the schools of the Dubno and Ostroh Districts. It was during this time that he married.

He was ordained a Deacon, in 1914, by the Archbishop Evlohiy of Volyn and was ordained a priest on 10 May 1915, by the Bishop of Volodymyr, Thadeaus. This was during the World War I and tragically, Fr. John’s wife suddenly reposed in August of 1915. Following this tragedy he joined the army and served as a priest and with the Red Cross in the southwestern front.

In 1917, he was appointed Chaplain to the Ukrainian Division of the Imperial Army. After the Bolshevik Revolution in October of this year, Father John later joined the Ukrainian freedom movement and became an active participant until the end of actual armed contention. During the first liberation struggle in Ukraine, he became the Chaplain of the (Sirodzipannisky) division and then he was assigned Directing Chaplain of the right-bank front, which included the Kholmska, Podilka and Kiev armies of the Ukrainian National Republic. Along with many of the soldiers of this army, Father John suffered typhoid fever in 1917. He nearly died after being shot during a battle, but lived to see the tragic end to the war, with a Moscow Bolshevik victory over Ukraine.

(continued on page 3)

UOL Retreat February 2021
Submitted by Natalie Bilynsky

Prior to our retreat on February 27, 2021 we were thrilled that we had eighty individuals registered for the retreat. Over 60 participants attended the retreat featuring Fr. Anthony Perkins. Our retreat was truly Pan Orthodox with participants from the UOC of USA, the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, the Orthodox Church in America and the Greek Orthodox Church. We were honored that His Eminence Metropolitan Antony attended the retreat. Also, His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory of ACROD attended the retreat.

In addition to being a Pan Orthodox Retreat, our retreat was international with participants from the United States, Canada and Lithuania. While we typically have individuals travel to our retreat in Bethlehem, PA this year we had participants from all areas of the United States. The focus of the retreat was a topic we are all currently facing, “Being Orthodox during COVID and Social Unrest.”

(continued on page 7)
Ukrainian Cultural Corner - Egg Art
Submitted by Matushka Laryssa Charest

Most are familiar with the term ‘pysanka’ or ‘pysan’ky (the first word for the singular and the second for the plural). I would venture to say that most readers have some form of a pysanka in their homes, whether it’s an actual egg or a picture of one. Though a pysanka actually refers to one type of egg art style.

**Pysanka** - The word ‘pysanka’ comes from the Ukrainian word ‘py-sa-t’y’ which means, ‘to write’. That is exactly what is done. The pysanka artist uses a stylis called a kistka to write symbols on the egg. The kistka has a funnel shaped tip that releases melted wax onto the egg. First, the artist covers the white color of the design. Then the lightest dye is used. Then, that color design is covered with wax. This continues until the very last color. Finally, the wax is melted off to reveal multi-colored dots. This technique is more modern and not very popular, though still visu-

**Drabanka** - The word ‘drapanka’ comes from the Ukrainian word to scratch or ‘dra-pa-t’y’. With this egg decorating style, an artist dyes the egg in a darker dye. Then, a sharp object like a knife, needle, or even a nail is used to scratch a design onto the dyed egg. Scratch-
ing the dyed egg reveals the original white of the egg. Drapanka usually feature more pictures than symbols.

**Krashanka** - A krashanka refers to an egg that is dyed in one color. The word krashanka comes from the Ukrainian word “kra-sy-t’y” or, “to color”. Krashanky use wax to refer to the hard-boiled eggs we place in our Pascha baskets to be blessed on Pascha. These don’t have any other decorations on them.

**Krapanka** - Eggs, like the one pictured to the left, are called krapanky. This is derived from the Ukrainian word for dot, ‘krop-k’a’. An artist making krapanky uses the kistka to make dots all over the egg and in various colors. Similar to pysankys, making the wax is melted off to reveal multi-colored dots. This technique is more modern and not very popular, though still visu-

**Malyovanka** - In Ukrainian, ‘malyovaty’ means, ‘to paint’. Thus, malyovanka, describe eggs that have been painted. This technique uses acrylic or other such paints instead of dyes and doesn’t use wax. The pic-
tured eggs shows a specific type of Ukrainian painting called Petrykivka, which originated in the Petrykivka region of Ukraine.

**Travlenky** - Travlenky have really gained popularity in recent years. These are etched eggs. The name trav-

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**MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR UOL PRESIDENT**
Karen Ferraro

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen! Христос Воскрес! Воістину Воскрес!

Are we in the presence of a “new normal”? Have the virtual meetings we put in place in 2020 taught us a new way to stay in touch and interact as a national church? I think so! In early March, we held our first “Chapter Life” virtual meeting with representatives from several of our UOL Chapters discuss-
ing some of the things they were able to do in the past year, in spite of the challenges. Those in attendance found it to be a valuable exchange and I was asked to schedule more of these sessions, and I will happily do so!

Our virtual retreats have been successful, as have other educational seminars. I’d like to thank Natalie and Oleh Bilinsky, and Marianne Carmack, Father John Charest, and Father Ivan Tchopko for organizing our Pre-Lenten and Lenten virtual retreats. Of course, many thanks to our wonderful presenters, also. The video of at least one of these retreats is available at this time on the UOL Website: www.uolofusa.org Be sure to check it out!

I’d like to thank the parishioners who were able to either hold Souper Bowl Sunday events in February or take up a collection in place of the event. All dona-
tions may not be recorded yet, but it appears we have exceeded $7,000 at this point to benefit St. Andrew Society!

As you know, our Annual UOL Convention was planned for July 21-25 in the Greater Philadelphia area. The UOL National Executive Board consulted with the Philadelphia Convention Committee and our Hierarchs in early April and came to the decision that a traditional in-person Annual Convention is not going to happen in 2021. Although this is a disappointment, I’m confident that we will come up with alternate plans that will both satisfy our constitu-
tional requirements and enable us to join in fellowship!

All Saints Camp has announced they WILL have encampments this summer! We wish them well and encourage you to look into our camp’s offerings for your family! Such a beautiful place!

My friends, we need to continue to work together to grow the Church in spite of the challenges we’ve encountered in the past fourteen months! I recently read the results of a Gallup poll that said U.S. Church membership fell below 50% for the first time since this statistic was measured in 1937. Be an instrument of Christ! Spread the Good News! Stay active in your parish and chap-
ter, and encourage others who have been away.

“But the angel answered and said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is Risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.’”

Matthew 28:5-7

In Christ,
Karen Ferraro

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**St. Vladimir Junior UOL Philadelphia**
Submitted by Natalie Swan

Greetings from the Jr. UOL in Philadelphia! With the upcoming Pascha sea-
on, the Juniors will be bringing back traditions that could not be celebrated last year including their Egg Hunt, Palm Crosses, Pascha Baskets for shut-ins, and the annual Lock-in. This year’s Lock-in will be held via Zoom, and the night will be filled with activities such as Chapter Challenge. The link is open to all so feel free to join us on April 16, 2021 from 7-9 pm!

The day after the Lock-in, the Juniors will travel to the Seminary at Bound Brook to clean up and plant new flowers around the graves. They will also continue to assemble and distribute food bags to those in the community who need them. Lastly, keep an eye out for new Jr. UOL masks! The Junior Na-
tional Board recently ordered adjustable blue and black masks which will be for sale in the upcoming weeks. We hope to see you all soon during Liturgy! God Bless!
Following the war with the Bolsheviks, Father John was assigned to a parish in Minsk, in the district of Starokostiantiniv. At this time he began his activities with the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church movement. He was a participant in the Diocesan meeting in Zhytomir and the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Congress of Kiev. He was assigned by this Council to organize parishes in Volyn and Podilia. This assignment was extremely dangerous because of Bolshevik control. He was placed in a concentration camp and only by a miracle was he saved from being shot to death. Upon his release from camp just before the opening of the First All-Ukrainian Church Sobor in Kiev, he immediately made arrangements to be a participant of the Sobor.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA had its beginnings in 1915 when various Ukrainian parishes and clergy who were serving in other Orthodox Churches, Eastern and Roman Catholic jurisdictions decided that the Orthodox Ukrainian American population had reached significant enough numbers as a distinctive ethnic group and should have its own jurisdiction. There were many spiritual and political concerns, which inspired this decision and it immediately prospered in terms of the number of parishes and people who joined the movement. Eventually, in 1918, the group sought and received spiritual protection under the omophor of Bishop Germanos (Shehadi) of the Syrian Orthodox Church. Bishop Germanos provided the necessary guidance for the new jurisdiction until the need for it own Bishop became obvious to all. The jurisdiction requested the appointment of one from the Autocephalous Church. Because of his proven exceptional organizational and administrative skills, Bishop John was elevated to the rank of Archbishop and assigned by the All-Ukrainian Church Council to Archpastoral duties in the U.S.A.

Archbishop John arrived in the United States in 1924 and immediately called for a Sobor, which would formalize the establishment of the Archdiocese as the American-Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. This Sobor elected Archbishop John as its first Primate. Bishop Germanos officially relinquished his authority over the Church to Archbishop John. Following the Sobor, under the guidance of Archbishop John, the life of the American-Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA truly began to blossom. He established his cathedral the guidance of Archbishop John, the life of the American Orthodox Church. He was particularly active during this Sobor and became one of three candidates who were elected to become Bishops of the Ukrainian Autocephalous, Orthodox Church. He was consecrated Bishop by the Metropolitan of All-Ukraine, Wasył Lipiński and Archbishop Nestor Sharatsky on the 26 October 1921. At this time he became the Bishop of the Podil’ska Eparchy. This Eparchy consisted of only eighteen Ukrainian parishes. By 1923, just two years later, the Podil’ska Eparchy had over 300 Ukrainian parishes.

CHRIST IS RISEN! XPICTOC BOCKPEC!

I greet you all this wonderful spring season as we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord! I hope everyone had a joyous Pascha! I always look forward to Pascha, not only because of its theological importance, but because the feast of Pascha offers us all a chance to seek truth in our lives and dive deep into how we can live out God’s calling for us.

I would like to remind you all that we are still selling our Jr. UOL masks! Please see the poster for more information. To order, please email myself at juniorpres@uolofusa.org.

As Great Lent comes to a close, many junior chapters wrap up their annual Lenten project. This year for the Great Lent Giveaway, chapters had the opportunity to choose their own project and their own beneficiary. If you would like to share pictures of your chapter’s project, send them to Vice President Natalie Hrytsay, so we can share the awesome projects you have all participated in! Please know that a chapter project is not confined to the Lenten season. Small projects such as donation collections for a local food pantry or homeless shelter are a great way to give back to your own community at any time of the year!

With graduations around the corner, please be sure to check the UOL website for information on the LSSK Scholarship and Father Bukata Award.

I would like to leave you all with a verse I like to look back at during the celebration of Pascha. 1 Peter 1:3 reads “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”. This verse not only encourages us to rejoice during the Easter celebration, but reminds us of the hope that the resurrection brings. The Lenten season prepares our hearts to accept Christ risen into our lives. This verse is a reminder of the great joy and love that comes from the Resurrection, and the way it propels our faith journey throughout the rest of the year, and the rest of our lives.

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the Junior UOL, please do not hesitate to contact me at juniorpres@uolofusa.org. Yours In Christ,

Madeline Zetick

All Saints Camp - Submitted by Josh Oryhon

It is with great joy and excitement that we announce All Saints Camp will open for the 2021 season!

With the Blessing of our Hierarchs, the Executive Committee of All Saints Camp has voted to re-open for residential camping programs this year. While this is truly wonderful news, it means our work to prepare for the summer begins in earnest now --- and we have a lot to do.

Obviously the pandemic is still a reality, so the safety of campers and staff on-site is paramount. This means All Saints Camp will look and feel a little different this summer, but we truly appreciate your patience and flexibility when it comes to following our protocols. We will circulate these expectations in the weeks leading up to your program. Join the #ASC2021 Team! We are hiring for a number of positions:

+ All Ages (14+)
+ All Interests (Program, Facilities, Food Service)
+ Paid+ Volunteer Opportunities Available

Email Joshio [at] allsaintscamp [dot] org for more information.

Improving the Foundation, Cementing the Future: We are ecstatic to announce we have raised $125,000 for the All Saints Camp Capital Campaign. We offer sincere gratitude to the individuals, parishes and organizations for their support!

The projects detailed in the Capital Campaign allow All Saints Camp the opportunity to expand operations by hosting private gatherings, weddings, re-treats, conferences, in addition to the existing roster of summer programming. In the coming years we want our ministry to become more accessible to the faithful of the UOC and other organizations.

We will begin scheduling parish visitations as soon as the safety of ASC staff, volunteers and the host parish can be guaranteed. ASC representatives will visit your community to promote our ministry and the Capital Campaign. Find out more about the Capital Campaign and make an one-time or recurring donation at https://www.allsaintscamp.org/50
The Archbishop remained in contact with the Church in Ukraine, but, by 1927 it was clear that the Communist regime would not stop its persecution of this Church, having by that year arrested all its Hierarchs and most of its clergy and destroyed most of the Church properties. By 1937 all the Bishops had been executed and there were no signs of the Church’s life existent. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church had no opportunity to plead its case for canonical recognition to world Orthodoxy and the decisions and actions of its organizing Sobor have remained controversial to this day. Almost from the moment the 1921 Sobor concluded, the struggle for continued existence was doomed. Archbishop John rejected the claim of the Moscow Patriarchate jurisdiction, which replaced the Autocephalous Church in Ukraine and cut all ties to Ukraine.

The American Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA was deeply affected by these facts, in that Archbishop John had been consecrated as one of the first three bishops of the Autocephalous Church in Ukraine and had not received the canonical recognition of world Orthodoxy. In spite of several attempts to plead his case before the Ecumenical Patriarchate no progress was made on the issue and in fact all his correspondence went unanswered. The clergy and faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, however, were undaunted in their conviction and their commitment to build their own independent church, which continued to grow and develop spiritually and materially. With the Archdiocesan center located in Philadelphia, a seminary was established and the clergy needed to serve the spiritual needs of the faithful were educated and assigned – all of them working miracles in the establishment and building of new parishes all over the country. Archbishop John’s vision of what could be for the Ukrainian Orthodox faithful had become a blessed reality.

Archbishop John completely immersed himself in the life of our Church and in American society. He became completely fluent in the English language comprehending that his faithful, who had immigrated to the USA beginning in 1880 and between World Wars I and II, had greatly assimilated into their new society. These were Ukrainians who never knew an independent Ukraine or a Ukraine as a political entity to itself. They came from the regions of Ukraine that were occupied continually by neighboring nations like the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Poland and others. The Metropolitan gave them an identity upon which to build their church and he was capable of doing so in a language spoken by all. He was very articulate in English and expressed his deepest theological and pastoral concerns with ease in that language. He was keenly aware of the need to engage the youth of the Church.

In 1947, with the leadership of Fr. Volodymyr Bukata and Fr. Stephen Hallick-Holotiak, he formed the Ukrainian Orthodox League, the first of our Church Central Organizations. The organization has functioned for 74 years and has been the instigator of many historical developments in the life of the Church – the creation of our own Seminary of St. Sophia, the purchase of All Saints Camp in Emlenton, PA, creation of scholarship programs – the Metropolitan John Scholarship Fund for seminarians and the Lynn Sawchuk-Sharon Kozyby scholarship for UOL members who attend college or university, the publication of an abundance of educational materials and ultimately the creation of a Junior Ukrainian Orthodox League of the USA in 1962 to prepare our youth for leadership roles in the life of our Church. Without Metropolitan John Theodorovych, none of this would have been realized.

In 1928 a second group of Ukrainian Orthodox faithful in the USA initiated a movement toward Orthodoxy. Because of the questions surrounding the status of Archbishop John, the group hesitated in affiliating itself with his already established jurisdiction even though it was thriving. The first Sobor of this group met in Allentown, PA in the spring of 1929 and established itself as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America. Rev. Dr. Joseph Zuk was elected as administrator to organize the diocese and at its second Sobor of 1931 in New York City he was elected as its first Bishop. Two hierarchs of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the USA consecrated Bishop Zuk in 1932 at St. Volodymyr Cathedral, on 14th Street in New York City. Unfortunately, Bishop Joseph lived less than two years following his consecration.

In 1936 the Ecumenical Patriarch accepted the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America under his omophorion and in 1937 Bishop Bohdan (Spylka) was consecrated as bishop of the diocese. Under his guidance the jurisdiction also began to thrive and the number of parishes and faithful grew, almost rivaling the growth of the American Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA under Archbishop John.

The two Ukrainian jurisdictions co-existed in the USA for the next 17 years. They were both expanded, with Archbishop John also heading the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada and Bishop Bohdan establishing several churches there, as well.

In 1942, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Ukraine was re-born once again as part of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Poland headed by Metropolitan Dionisii (Valedynskyy) during a brief relaxation of religious persecution by the German occupation of Ukraine. One of the bishops consecrated for the resurrected church in 1942 in Kyiv was Bishop Mstyslav (Skrypnyk), who eventually came to Canada to lead the Ukrainian Orthodox Church there, taking over from Archbishop John. Bishop Mstyslav left Canada within a few years and came to the United States to join the jurisdiction of Bishop Bohdan, with the approval of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He had a great desire to unite the two existing jurisdictions in the USA. Bishop Mstyslav, who was a validly consecrated bishop, persuaded Archbishop John to submit to a new consecration in order to resolve all canonical questions about his Episcopal status and as prerequisite of unification of the two churches. In 1949 Archbishop John agreed and was consecrated by Bishop Mstyslav and Metropolitan Christopher, Exarch to the USA of the Alexandrian Patriarchate.

In 1950, both jurisdictions held separate Sobors in New York City at St. Volodymyr Cathedral on 14th Street – one in the Church itself and one in the Church auditorium. Then on 13 October a combined Sobor of unification took place in the Church where all the parishes of the American-Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA under Archbishop John and the majority of the parishes of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America united by signing an Act of Unification. Unfortunately, some clergy and parishes under Bishop Bohdan were not convinced and persuade him to reject the union. Bishop Mstyslav did, however, join with the majority of Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America parishes and Archbishop John was recognized as presiding prelate with his Cathedral in St. Vladimir Parish, Philadelphia, PA; Mstyslav as President of the Consistory and Archbishop of New York; and Archbishop Hennady leading the Chicago Eparchy of the now greatly expanded and renamed Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. The Act of Unification was proclaimed during Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God – Pokrova – 14 October – in St. Volodymyr Cathedral by newly elevated Metropolitan John, Archbishop Mstyslav and Archbishop Hennady with the following words:
We’re Back! were the common words and theme for the day of our 53rd Annual Ukrainian Easter Egg Sale on March 28, 2021. Let’s not get into the fact that it should have been our 54th sale mind you, no thanks to a PANDEMIC that shut us down last year and almost ruined not only our UOL Chapter, but broke the hearts of members and the community. Slowly in November we began to plan and ask if we thought a sale would be possible. We did our Ukrainian Festival in September, so we felt fearless, but our beloved Pysanky Sale was a “whole other ballgame” as they say.

The advertising was started but we still were not sure about the “how to do the sale” as things were constantly changing. Luckily, we had all our pysanky we made from when we were in “CORNTEEN” (aka Quarantine if you do not speak Pittsburghese…) that helped because when February and March came it was feet to the floor we are going forward! As with our Ukrainian Festival our number of workers were small, but they had increased with some generous helpers and support!

A flurry of activity all happened in March once we knew the sale was a go. The perogies were made as well as stuffed cabbage and paskas. Baskets for our famous basket raffle were prepared as well as the baked goods. Do not leave out the ladies who got together and made their nut rolls to sell.

The people of the community come to the Ukrainian Easter Egg Sale every year, not just for the Pysanky and gifts, but for their Easter foods and items as well.

Setting up the sale was different this year with a smaller number of helpers. Over 1,200 Pysanky and 300 specialty eggs had to be set up and priced.

The day was finally here, and our small band of UOL workers and friends were ready and waiting on the 28th of March. Would they come? The weather outlook was not good and there would not be an outdoor eating area now. We waited and after church they were there.

The line of friends waiting for our Ukrainian Easter Egg Sale was back! They waited in the pouring rain too! The sale would not be like it was in the past. Everyone was patient and helped each other work through new processes and systems.

They were glad to be able to come back. Main questions received were: “We are so glad you had it this year!”, “We were so disappointed last year!”, “This is a blessing I needed.”, “What time is Fr. John’s talk again?”. While the day was not a “packed house”, it was a steady flow of people throughout the day. The items were not all sold, but we are still selling. Out of the box thinking happened and the sale was a success!

We have all different levels of warriors who helped pull this sale off, and our General Chair of the Ukrainian Easter Egg Sale, Michael Kapeluck, to make things run smoothly.

The theme of the sale was “We’re Back!” Yes, we are in more ways than one. It was not easy and there is still much to do and a long way to go. The Church, the Chapter, the Community are slowly getting back to a new normal. It is nice to know that after 53 years our parish UOL event has had an everlasting impact on the community.

Submitted by Chris Mills
(Metropolitan John - continued from page 4)

“From today our Churches, the American Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States of America and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America are united and form One, Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States of America, which from this day forward will live and act as a Metropolia under one spiritual leadership and be governed by one constitution, which we at the same time collegially ratify and accept.”

We can only imagine the immense joy felt by the participants of this joint Sobor at hearing these words and what they envisioned to come in the life of their Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church. It was a joy that resounded throughout the world and over the next two decades, many more parishes joined the united Church and still more were founded by recently arrived immigrants from the Displaced Persons camps in Germany. Even though he had decided to remain outside the newly united Church, Bishop Bohdan did attend the Unification Liturgy to witness the event.

Work began in earnest on the next day with the Metropolitan Council, headed by Metropolitan John and the Consistory, headed by Archbishop Mstyslav, working diligently to bring more and more of the Ukrainian Orthodox faithful in the USA into the Church. The Metropolitan Council met frequently in those first months to make the decisions necessary for building a solid base for organized life in the Church. Under Metropolitan John’s administrative and spiritual guidance, the number of parishes joining and being established throughout the nation grew rapidly. In 1950 the process was initiated to purchase the beautiful Hendrick Fischer property in South Bound Brook, Somerset, NJ. Of course, this became the impressive Metropia Center that we know today with St. Andrew Memorial Church – the first monument to the millions who perished in the genocidal Holodomor in the world, St. Andrew Cemetery, the Ukrainian Orthodox and Seminary Library (which is named after Metropolitan John), St. Sophia Seminary, the Consistory Administration building, the Ukrainian Cultural Center and the Ukrainian History and Education Center. These all continue to flourish to this day.

It was a great tragedy that struck the life of our Church in that May of 1971 with the repose of His Beatitude Metropolitan John Theodorovich, our prime hierarch from 1924 through 1971 – 47 years of love and closeness to the children of the Church. When he visited our parishes the children flocked to him because of his obvious love for them and he told them all to call him “Grandpa,” which many to this day fondly remember. The Metropolitan continuously strived to maintain the unity of the Church when faced with discord between the various waves of immigration that made up the laity and clergy of the Church. He strove to be a pastoral bishop to his flock, a capable administrator and a true academic, theologian, philosopher and teacher. He was a prolific writer and served as a true pastoral example to his clergy throughout the Church. The Metropolitan did not permit the unending questions about his decisions necessary for building a solid base for organized life in the Church. Under Metropolitan John’s administrative and spiritual guidance, the number of parishes joining and being established throughout the nation grew rapidly. In 1950 the process was initiated to purchase the beautiful Hendrick Fischer property in South Bound Brook, Somerset, NJ. Of course, this became the impressive Metropia Center that we know today with St. Andrew Memorial Church – the first monument to the millions who perished in the genocidal Holodomor in the world, St. Andrew Cemetery, the Ukrainian Orthodox and Seminary Library (which is named after Metropolitan John), St. Sophia Seminary, the Consistory Administration building, the Ukrainian Cultural Center and the Ukrainian History and Education Center. These all continue to flourish to this day.

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As I, the fourth Metropolitan of our Holy Church, prepare this article, my mind, heart and soul are filled with much gratitude to His Beatitude, Metropolitan John. I was born six months before the official organization of the Ukrainian Orthodox League in 1947! My first experience of my beloved Metropolitan was at the age of eight sitting in a pew at St. John the Baptist Parish in Sharon, PA in 1955. I was moved to the core of my being looking up to the Metropolitan was at the age of eight sitting in a pew at St. John the Baptist Parish just behind the Memorial Church at the Metropolia Center.

The Metropolitan did not permit the unending questions about his decisions necessary for building a solid base for organized life in the Church. Under Metropolitan John’s administrative and spiritual guidance, the number of parishes joining and being established throughout the nation grew rapidly. In 1950 the process was initiated to purchase the beautiful Hendrick Fischer property in South Bound Brook, Somerset, NJ. Of course, this became the impressive Metropia Center that we know today with St. Andrew Memorial Church – the first monument to the millions who perished in the genocidal Holodomor in the world, St. Andrew Cemetery, the Ukrainian Orthodox and Seminary Library (which is named after Metropolitan John), St. Sophia Seminary, the Consistory Administration building, the Ukrainian Cultural Center and the Ukrainian History and Education Center. These all continue to flourish to this day.

Then came the parish feast day at Holy Trinity Parish in neighboring New Castle, PA. The Metropolitan served that day and I was just as mesmerized as always. I was invited – as a seminarian – to join the priests in the parish residence for lunch and an afternoon of good company. I do not know what gave me away, but the Metropolitan called me aside and asked why I seemed sad. Seeing my reaction, he led me into a bedroom and sat down in a chair and I was taken by the bed. With a sense of compassion and love he pulled out of me all that was heavy on my heart and soul and with each issue described how I am being tested by God and/or tempted by Satan. Finally, he profoundly brought all this together in a description of the lives of the desert fathers ending our conversation by saying: “You will now be returning to Seminary in September, correct?” And my immediate response with tears was “Yes?” What I did not realize at the time was that two hours had gone by. This tower of a man, with ten priests waiting to spend time with him, never once gave the impression that anything else in his life mattered during those 120 minutes. He was mine and I have never appreciated another human being in my life more than I did him at that moment.

I deliberately do not share the details of our conversation because it is not necessary. Suffice it to say that it was a conversation that has sustained me for the next 54 years – the first five of them in seminary and the University of Manitoba, followed by the coming later this year of the 49th anniversary of my priestly service. I know that many others have had similar experiences with this man who gave his life to God from childhood back in Volyn. May his memory be eternal in God’s Heavenly Kingdom and may his soul rest in eternal happiness as he awaits, along with all of us, for our Lord’s return and the Great and Final Judgment.

As I, the fourth Metropolitan of our Holy Church, prepare this article, my mind, heart and soul are filled with much gratitude to His Beatitude, Metropolitan John. I was born six months before the official organization of the Ukrainian Orthodox League in 1947! My first experience of my beloved Metropolitan was at the age of eight sitting in a pew at St. John the Baptist Parish in Sharon, PA in 1955. I was moved to the core of my being looking up to the amvon when this rather small man appeared to me to be God, Himself. He had a manner of speaking, regardless of the language he used, that was comforting – even to an eight-year-old. I was drawn to him and wanted to be close to him and to touch him because he was, indeed, the definition of “holy” for me. He spoke of St. John the Baptist living in the wilderness preparing the way for the coming of our Lord. Never before nor since has a sermon been so successful in touching me at the depth of my soul – and I include my own sermons here. I truly believe that this was the beginning of the comprehension of my “call” to the holy priesthood.

I was in the presence of Metropolitan John numerous times during the next eleven years, in particular each year at UOL conventions, where he remembered me by name each time, but that first encounter would have been enough to sustain my path to seminary. Finally, in 1966, I was enrolled at St. Andrew College/Seminary in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. This first year was one of the most difficult of my life. It was a whole new world, which was conducted only in Ukrainian and I thought I would never make it through in spite of the fact that some very good classmates spent hours translating class notes for me. Coupled with extremely difficult changes in my family life back at home and the attitude of the seminary administration to the theology students, I had pretty much decided that I would not return for a second year.

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The UOL Senior National Executive Board took several factors into consideration in making the final decision in April to host the 2021 convention in a virtual format.

The financial burden on the Philadelphia Convention Committee – if the Philadelphia Chapter kept the existing hotel contract, there could have been a significant financial burden if attendance was considerably less than planned.

The planning burden on the Philadelphia Convention Committee – drastic change of plans and venues on short notice.

Estimated in-person attendance – Polling of UOL Sr. Chapter Presidents resulted in a count of < 20 other than board members, with multiple chapters voting for "all virtual."

The importance of going back to seeing our UOL friends from across the county face to face – At the July 24th session, we will discuss the possibility of a face-to-face social UOL event in the Fall of 2021.

Our Juniors – The Jr. UOL Spiritual Advisor and Junior Advisor from the board will be meeting with the Junior UOL National Executive Board to discuss specific plans for the Juniors, several of whom are graduating and therefore finishing their time with the Jr. UOL this year.

In spite of a strong desire among several board members to return to a normal, in-person convention format, the board as a whole recognized there was not enough support among our chapters to do so in 2021.

The board is moving forward with a convention that, although virtual, will result in more direction for the new National Executive Board, especially in the work of our Commissions and Committees. This will be accomplished through a series of breakout sessions on specific topics or Committees/Commissions. We want to hear what all of you have to say so we can form high-quality plans to move the UOL in the right direction as we continue to be “Dedicated to our Church; Devoted to Its Youth!”

The UOL National Executive Board formally thanks Convention Chair Andrea Swan and the Philadelphia Convention Committee for their planning over the past 3+ years. We’re truly sorry we won’t be gathering in Philadelphia this July.

Stay tuned for more information on the Annual Convention! Make plans to join us in 2022 in Carnegie!

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St Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral
Philadelphia PA

PLEASE DONATE WINTER JACKETS for CHILDREN in UKRAINE

What: New winter jackets for boys and girls ages 2 to 18
When: We will accept you donations through May of 2021

Where: you can mail jackets or donations to:
St Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral
6740 North 5th Street
Philadelphia PA 19126

Our Goal: To ship 500 + jackets in July of 2021 - to help children through the winter

If you are unable to donate jackets: Please donate funds so jackets can be purchased on your behalf, or to help defray the cost of shipping
If you have any questions: please contact Jurij Trypopenko
itrypup@msn.com (215.435.2799)

Thank You so much for your participation!
Together we will do this!

Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.
Proverbs 11:25

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UOL Social Media News
Submitted by Chris Mills

Everyone can now raise your hand that you at least know about the UOL website! Did you know the UOL has a couple Social Media Accounts too?? Yes, we do!

The UOL has a Facebook & Instagram Account. While we are not “heavy hitters” in the social media world, we do however use it responsibly to pass along announcements, events and to share happenings in the UOC of USA.

For example, when we are announcing a lecture, seminar, or retreat, once the information is updated on the website, we will then let you know about it on our Facebook and Instagram Pages with a post and a link to the information. We hope you will then like and share the information with your friends! It is that simple to get the word out about the UOL and our events!

Like / Follow us on our Facebook Page! Look for our site below (Figure 1)! You can find a link to our website from here as well as basic contact information.

Figure 1: UOL Facebook Page Profile

To locate our Instagram account all you need to do is scan the QR Code, simple. Just follow us once you find us after you scan the code. Links to any items will be in the BIO of our Profile.

The UOL Social Media Accounts are maintained by the PR Commission and a few other board members. If you have something from your UOL Chapter or Parish you would like us to share on our pages, please email the PR Commission at uolpr@uolofusa.org or message us on our social media accounts and we will be glad to share your news!

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(UOL Retreat - continued from page 1)

The retreat utilized the Zoom platform and individuals were provided log-in information. Thankfully, we had no difficulties with technology. The retreat started promptly with morning prayers. Natalie Bilinsky provided a brief introduction and overview of the psychological and emotional challenges associated with the onset of COVID and social unrest, including increases in depression, anxiety and conflict. She provided a list of strategies provided by psychologists related to self-care during these difficult times.

It was very clear that many people were interested in the topic, and Father Anthony was phenomenal. He spoke eloquently and directly to the current challenges we are facing and identified strategies to grow spiritually.

Our retreat was held prior to the start of Great Lent and Fr. Anthony encouraged us to use Great Lent to heal and recover from all of the challenges faced in the last year. He called us “to bring peace to our souls and love to our eyes” and for “our parishes to become places that model the new humanity in which all of our differences are a blessing and excuses for love and growth (rather than exploited temptations for division).”

Father Anthony gave us concrete suggestions to heal as we come together as healers and peacemakers. The retreat was truly inspirational. If you were unable to attend or if you would like to review it again the retreat is available on the UOL webpage.

We sincerely thank Fr. Anthony for his wonderful and inspiring presentation. We hope that next year we will be able to attend in person.
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.

To submit your Tribute:
Submit a card that includes your Name and Address, the Name of the Person to Receive the Tribute, the occasion of the Tribute (for example In Memory or To Honor), and the Name and Address of the person to whom an acknowledgement card should be sent.
For a contribution of $20 or more, the name and occasion is printed in the UOL Bulletin.

UOL Tributes should be submitted to:
Natalie Bilynsky 703 Pine Ridge Road Media, PA 19063
Send your tribute today!

The Philadelphia UOL Convention Committee is fundraising by selling Mary’s Tears Prayer Bracelets

The bracelet, a variation of the Orthodox Prayer Rope, is made with seeds commonly called “Mary’s tears.” The beads are said to come from a plant that sprouted at the Cross during the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The plant sprang from the tears of the Mother of God. A story is told that a monk struggling making a prayer rope and the Theotokos appeared to him as he was crying in desperation that he could not master the prayer rope. She placed these seeds into his hand so that he could create a prayer bracelet. The seeds of this plant naturally have an area that can be tied together.

The bracelet is beautifully packaged in an organza purse with a brief description of this story and how to use a prayer bracelet. All bracelets are made for adults (approximately 8 inches – with a slight variation based on the size of the seeds).

Please specify if you request a larger or a smaller bracelet. To order send your name, address, and phone/email. Bracelets are $10. Please add $2.00 for shipping. Please make check payable to “St. Vladimir’s Senior UOL.”

Send order and payment to Natalie Bilynsky 703 Pine Ridge Road Media, PA 19063 Questions? nsufler@aol.com

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
+His Eminence Metropolitan John Theodorovich
On the 50th anniversary of his falling asleep in the Lord,
We encourage chapters and individuals to donate to Metropolitan John Scholarship Fund to honor his memory

Stay tuned to the UOL Website: uolofusa.org
Or see our Facebook Page
(Ukrainian Orthodox League of the USA)
Schedule and registration information will be posted

Join in the fun!
Take a picture reading your UOL Bulletin and submit nsufler@aol.com.
Submit pictures by sending to nsufler@aol.com