You are cordially invited to...

The 71st Annual U.O.L. Convention
South Bound Brook, New Jersey
July 25-29, 2018

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11
Can you explain how monks/nuns pray with a prayer rope. Is it appropriate for laymen to wear a prayer bracelet even if you are not following guidelines for prayer?

The use of the prayer rope has its origin in the Orthodox monastic tradition. The use of the prayer rope, a certain stance or prayer of the body and controlled breathing all are part of the monastic tradition and the prayers, of course, are counted on the prayer rope. The Jesus prayer is “Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” Monks are initiated into this practice with spiritual direction, which is a recommendation.

The type of prayer ropes we usually see in use among laymen amounts to a little bracelet. With our busy lives most people fill their time with noise and raucous music and one rarely finds a totally quiet atmosphere. Quiet is really necessary for the Jesus prayer in its classical usage and the demands of our life do not easily bend to times of quiet, contemplation and prayer.

What often happens is that the wearing of a prayer bracelet simply amounts to, in reality, a piece of Orthodox jewelry. To be a conversation piece or a piece of jewelry is not the intended use and although it may make a statement which for most people can be but a rare moment indeed. I have found that for some deep prayer sessions we need the quiet and solitude of our room, that one is an Orthodox Christian, it does not presuppose a deep prayer life. For some deep prayer sessions we need the quiet and solitude of our room, that one drives along by oneself, with no blaring radio playing, one can say the Jesus prayer can be introduced into one’s busy life in certain ways. As one drives along by oneself, with no blaring radio playing, one can say the Jesus prayer with some controlled breathing without losing the concentration needed to be a safe driver. Waiting for a dental or physician’s appointment is another moment when you can pray undisturbed. Stealing a few quiet moments can be a blessing to use this unique form of Orthodox prayer. An injection of even minutes of intense prayer can transform and elevate our life in the world. Consult a monk, nun or your pastor on how you can build a prayer life even in your hectic existence.

What does it mean when in the Liturgy the priest says “All catechumens depart, depart catechumens.” Does this mean that visitors or whoever should go out of church?

In the history of the early Christian Church, the catechumens, those preparing for baptism, were kept from viewing the totality of the Liturgy and the final act of reception of Communion. In their catechumenate, or instruction period, they could stay in the Liturgy only during the instructional parts. The beginning of the Liturgy through the prayers of the litanies, the Psalms and finally the Epistle and Gospel was deemed necessary for their education. The Creed was for those who already were baptized and confirmed as believers. At this time, all those who were in the period of preparation were escorted out of church. This action we can call the arcana, or secret of the church. We DO allow visitors in church and even curious non-Christians are not thrown out at this point in the service.

You will find out that the Church retains what has been in the liturgical texts over the centuries. It is like all of Granny’s old pictures and artifacts that are kept in a trunk in the attic. They may have no bearing on today’s life, but they have had historical significance and importance.

(Continued on page 6)
Understanding our Past to Plan for our Future

Submitted by Michael J. Komichak

It has been 100 years since the Holy Spirit planted the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the United States. What can we learn from our history that will allow us and our Church to meet the challenges of the next 100 years? This will be a central topic for us to explore at this summer’s 71st Annual UOL Convention / 57th Annual Junior UOL Convention at the Metropolia Center of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA in South Bound Brook (Somerset), New Jersey from Wednesday July 25 to Sunday July 29.

This summer’s Convention will open as is our custom on Wednesday evening, but this year we plan to conclude our business sessions on Thursday afternoon. In the evening on Thursday, in addition to dancing and socializing, we will have the opportunity to attend the opening of a UOC of USA Centennial exhibit curated by the Ukrainian History and Education Center.

In this Centennial year, we have designed the Convention schedule to devote the entire day on Friday July 27 first to an examination of our UOC of USA history, and then to understand and apply any lessons learned from that historical experience to produce healthier parishes today and in the future. The parishes of today are a product of our shared history. Of course, the essential truths of our Orthodox Faith are the same today as they were a hundred years ago, and indeed as they have been for the past two millennia. Against the backdrop of the several waves of immigration to the US from Ukraine, we hope to better understand the forces that have shaped us. Will today’s new immigrants find a home in our Church while we continue to minister to existing parishioners? How do we attract new converts? Can we develop more welcoming and inclusive parishes, building a stronger UOC of USA and growing as one family in Christ?

Saturday’s Convention schedule will be somewhat different than usual. On Saturday morning we will join others from across our Archdiocese at a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy marking the Centennial anniversary of the UOC of USA, immediately followed by a Centennial banquet in the afternoon. After the banquet we will relax and enjoy an evening of fellowship and dancing.

It is so important that the future leaders of our Ukrainian Orthodox Church also learn about the history of our Church in the US, as well as the vital role that the Ukrainian Orthodox League has played and continues to play in supporting our UOC of USA. As in years past, our full-time resident Seminarians from St. Sophia will be able to attend the UOC Convention free of charge. We are once again asking for your support to help defray the costs associated with their attendance. For a suggested donation of $250, you or your Chapter can sponsor one of our eight current Seminarians at the Convention.

The 71st Annual UOL Convention Committee is looking forward to seeing you in South Bound Brook this summer. With a better understanding of our past and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can discover how to best prepare our Church and the UOL for the next 100 years!
Greetings! Hope you had a blessed holiday season. Here at St. Vladimir’s we have been busy. On Saint Nicholas day, we had a successful cookie walk. Also, some members of our Jr. UOL traveled into center city to look at the decorations and watch the Philly light show. We also participated in our UOL annual family fun night, where we played a variety of fun games. Along with the family fun night, we also actively participated in our Malanka. And once again, a few members of our Jr. UOL chapter visited the Ronald McDonald house to serve dinner and spend some time with the kids staying there.

As for upcoming events, we will host the “Souper Bowl” in honor of Super Bowl 52. Lastly, we will soon have our Lock-in, where some Jr. UOL members will stay a night at church and play a lot of fun games such as Chapter Challenge. In conclusion, these are just a few of the things that will be happening in our chapter and I can’t wait to see what is to come for our Jr. UOL chapter!

Protodeacon Ihor Mahlay, president of the St. Andrew Society who was visiting for the weekend, thanked the UOL chapter and the participants and took the opportunity to describe the work that the Society has been able to accomplish as a result of their continuing support. The attendees reciprocated with their generous donations totaling $1000. Great job St. Sophia UOL!

Lynn Sawchuk-Sharon Kuzbyt Memorial Scholarship
40 years “In Loving Memory”
Submitted by Fr. John Charest

The LSSK Scholarship was established at the 28th Annual UOL Convention in 1975 to perpetuate the memory of two lovely, dynamic young women whose untimely deaths left an indelible mark in the life of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox League, and in the personal lives of their families and many friends.

Both Lynn and Sharon were leaders in their communities. Lynn was president of St. Vladimir’s Junior UOL in Philadelphia, PA. Sharon was president of the Holy Ascension Junior UOL in Clifton, New Jersey. Both were active participants in our diocesan camping programs and Junior League convention delegates. Both were extremely active with the Church and the League. This scholarship is awarded annually to Junior UOL members or former members who have exhibited the dedication, energy and scholastic qualities by which these young women are remembered.

Recipient of the Lynn Sawchuk-Sharon Kuzbyt Memorial Scholarship are selected based upon the following criteria:

a) A Junior UOL member in good standing; a past Junior UOL member enrolled in or about to enter a program of advanced education but not beyond five (5) years from high school graduation.

b) A record of outstanding performance in the service to the Ukrainian Orthodox League and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

c) Academic performance in high school.

d) Involvement in extracurricular and civic activities.

e) Be of high ethical and moral character.

An emphasis will always be placed on “outstanding performance in the service to the Ukrainian Orthodox League and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church,” and students with only above average grade point average and outstanding contributions to the League and the Church will be considered for the scholarship.

Scholarship applications are due to the LSSK Scholarship Chair by May 31st of each year. To retrieve an application contact Anna Anderson at musan44460@gmail.com or follow the link from the UOL webpage. UOLO-FUSA.ORG , click Resources then Scholarships and Recognition.

Scholarship awards are announced at the Annual Grand Banquet of the National Ukrainian Orthodox League Convention in July.
Web Portal of the Strategic Plan of UOC of USA in “Basecamp” - Everyone is Invited
Submitted by Tatjana Paunesku,
Goal captain for “9.4 Portal”

Sub-goal of the overall strategic goal “Technology”

The strategic plan of the UOC of USA was initiated as a country wide effort to tune-up the workings of the Church so that it better meets the needs of all UOC parishes and each one of the faithful. This is a daunting task – this group of people is large and varied, and each one of us has different personal tastes and sensibilities. In truth – loving the UOC of USA is possibly the only aspect of our lives that we all share. The same is true for all present and future participants in the strategic plan (and for you too - the reader - if you want to pitch in). As we strive to execute the strategic plan, regardless of its benefits, this tie between us will strengthen and our introspection into why we each love the UOC will become deeper.

Each one of the faithful can contribute to the betterment of the strategic plan precisely because we have different talents and outside-of-church interests. The main “directions” for the plan – the so called strategic goals (administration, clergy, communication, education, family and youth, healthy parishes, outreach and evangelism, stewardship and technology) were chosen based on input from a selection of faithful who were selected to be as diverse as possible with regard to gender, age, country of birth, employment and marital status. Within these overall goals, almost any contribution is imaginable and will be welcome. The desire of the strategic plan goal captains is that all faithful who want to be should be included.

In order to make it possible for everyone to have their say and be heard, it was necessary to organize a virtual meeting place for strategic plan participants. After some deliberation, we have selected a web application called “Basecamp” to be such a space. Aside from providing us with a poetic notion that the UOC is adrift on the prairies of USA, Basecamp is a website that fosters effective work communication and cooperation without actual face-to-face meetings. The CEO and one of the founders of the company, Jason Fried, has tinkered with this website application since 1999 and has given TED talks about collaboration, productivity and the nature of work. In other words, Basecamp is not a social media website, but an application that is focused on productive work-related communication (as a voluntary assembly we receive a 50% discount). The documents and messages exchanged between the Basecamp participants are visible only to other participants and the means for communicating with each other are numerous. Inside each subsection (task) are several quasi-folders. Folder “Docs and Files” corresponds to a regular folder and participants may place any document into it without the concern that the material can be altered or downloaded by the outside world (bears and coyotes are kept outside of the camp). Folders “Schedule,” “To-dos” and “Automatic Check-ins” are meant to improve synchronicity for tasks that require timely deadlines, while folders “Campfire” and “Message Board” provide means to send a message to the team right away or post a message that will be seen when other participants log in, respectively. “Campfire” will send an email with the content of the message to all team members automatically, whereas “Message board” acts exactly as a virtual message board should. Another feature of Basecamp “Pings” (in the header) allows us to reach out to one or few of the other participants, again by an instantaneously sent email. While this seems like a fancy way to send emails at first glance – we can easily comprehend that Basecamp allows us to track all communication very simply and communicate with large groups of people and share large documents regardless of who your email provider is and how well versed you are with group communications.

We are using Basecamp as a Portal for the strategic plan for less than a year now, adding new participants as we go along. Thus, some of the Basecamp participants have used it for a long time and utilized many of its features, while others just received their invitation to join in. Whatever your status is – I invite you to email me with any questions or your desire to be included to t.paunesku@gmail.com (subject line “Basecamp”). We can make our ties stronger and understand each other better if we communicate more about our goals and efforts to make the UOC of USA more successful and welcoming to everybody.

PAN ORTHODOX YOUNG ADULT RETREAT

Are you between the age of 18 and 35 and interested in strengthening your faith, and meeting other Orthodox young adults from the other Orthodox dioceses?

Think about attending the Pan-Orthodox young adult retreat at Camp Nazareth from May 4-6th.

Keynote speaker is His Grace Bishop Gregory.

Registration begins late February.

For further information, please contact Kateryna Kocelko at kdkcutie25@yahoo.com.
In our own Metropolia, at a clergy conference, this seeming anomaly came up and was thoroughly discussed. The result is, that although the text is not altered, in print the phrase about departing is in lighter print, indicating that those words are not chanted aloud. The text which the congregation hears aloud should reflect the positive message, “Let us the faithful” and etc. The omission of the words to depart sets a very positive tone to the Liturgy. Even if we should have catechumens preparing for baptism and reception in the Church there is no demand for them to exit. It is of course understood that they will not be permitted to Communion until they are baptized and/or chrismated.

What is the difference between a mission, a church and a cathedral?

When the church targets a place where there is potential for a Christian community to be developed, a mission is established. A priest does his evangelistic work to facilitate organization of a community and lay leaders arise to cooperate in its foundation. Worship begins on a regular basis as a priest is available. Each circumstance is different and sometimes it takes years for a mission to grow in spiritual maturity to coalesce into a viable community. Goodwill of people and a definite level of commitment is necessary before a mission is ready for acquisition of property or to build a church. Missions undergo growth pangs and some do not ever properly develop, wither on the vine and ultimately close. It is cooperation with the Holy Spirit that is most important as is the commitment of the founding individuals that can lead to success or failure. A church that is in missionary growth is one which exhibits its life and mirrors the Gospel imperative to spread the faith.

In our own diocese there are old parishes, which are now in definite decline numerically and officially have been denominated as missions. Here we find the challenge, to recoup the loss with new commitment to exist and the cooperation of all to ensure continued existence. Some communities wax old and either refuse to open their doors to newcomers or don’t even encourage their offspring to continue as active Orthodox. When a parish is demoted to mission status, it is imperative that efforts be made to promote and expand the community. Sad to say, some places seem to have a death wish and do nothing to stem the flow of their demise. As long as there are people in a town, there is no reason that the power of the Gospel should not spread and potential converts arise to inject new life into a faltering mission.

A church is a regular and established worship center that our diocese has in a community. A parish has a regular life and a pastor assigned to it, with liturgies, sacraments and a full pastoral life well established. If a parish is active spiritually and is open to visitors it is a viable community and can be a beacon of Orthodoxy, an Orthodox presence in the community as a whole. Going beyond mission status, a parish usually has a church building and an altar which has been consecrated by the hierarch attesting to the fact that this is a permanent institution.

A Cathedral is the church from which a bishop presides over his eparchy. A Cathedral signifies the place where the cathedra, or bishop’s throne is situated. We have some churches that have the title of cathedral, but do not presently have a bishop in residence. This is a residue from past hierarchs who have resided there and the title remains as an honorific. After the unification of the UOC of the USA and the U.O.C. of America over a decade ago, we have some parishes denominated as Pro-cathedrals. This again is an honorific, for under the former administration, parishes that were far flung away from the actual diocese center in New York City were given a regional preeminenence.

What is the difference between a mission, a church and a cathedral?

When the church targets a place where there is potential for a Christian community to be developed, a mission is established. A priest does his evangelistic work to facilitate organization of a community and lay leaders arise to cooperate in its foundation. Worship begins on a regular basis as a priest is available. Each circumstance is different and sometimes it takes years for a mission to grow in spiritual maturity to coalesce into a viable community. Goodwill of people and a definite level of commitment is necessary before a mission is ready for acquisition of property or to build a church. Missions undergo growth pangs and some do not ever properly develop, wither on the vine and ultimately close. It is cooperation with the Holy Spirit that is most important as is the commitment of the founding individuals that can lead to success or failure. A church that is in missionary growth is one which exhibits its life and mirrors the Gospel imperative to spread the faith. It was a beautiful autumn day for football—sunny with a light breeze and temperatures in the upper 60s. It was a good game, but the crowd of just over 1100 in attendance saw the home team lose to the visiting Wolverines from Dover, Delaware 26-7. We snacked on hot dogs at half time, and after the game we all went to a restaurant near Dan and Lynne Gulak’s house for dinner. It was the perfect ending to a very enjoyable day!
excited to have everyone join us in the City of Brotherly Love!

Our focus now is on our beginning plans for Convention 2020. We are quite

first blessing of water. Following dinner everyone gathered in church to celebrate the

people at the table we enjoyed a traditional dinner and sang carols and

We set a large table each year so we can eat as one family. With over forty

On the eve of Theophany we hosted our traditional “Holdna Kutya” dinner.

Once the victory was in hand we danced and danced and danced. Approximately

one hundred people enjoyed a delicious dinner prepared by Chris and Tanya Pelteki. We are incredibly lucky to have Al and Debbie Shinn as the

chairpeople for the Malanka. It is always a fantastic event!

On the eve of Theophany we hosted our traditional “Holdna Kutya” dinner. We set a large table each year so we can eat as one family. With over forty people at the table we enjoyed a traditional dinner and sang carols and schedrivky. Following dinner everyone gathered in church to celebrate the first blessing of water.

Our focus now is on our beginning plans for Convention 2020. We are quite excited to have everyone join us in the City of Brotherly Love!

2018 UOL Essay Contest Topics

The 71st UOL convention in South Bound Brook, NJ is being run in conjunction with the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the inception of the Ukrainian Orthodox church in the United States of America. The Theme for this year’s convention is “For I know the plans I have for you;” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” –Jeremiah 29:11

Essay entries can be typed or hand printed. All entries will be judged by neatness, originality and content.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten:

In John 10:9 “Christ says, I am the door, if anyone enters by Me, he will be saved”. Draw a picture of Christ welcoming people to Church. No entries larger than 12 by 18, please.

Grades 1 and 2:

Draw a picture and write 2 to 3 sentences about the following topic: St Andrew’s Society is a charitable organization of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. One charity to which it gives money is soup kitchens in Ukraine. Soup kitchens provide meals to the homeless and the very poor. Draw a picture of what you think a soup kitchen looks like and then write why you think it is important for us, as Orthodox Christians, to help those less fortunate than us? No entries larger than 12 by 18, please.

Grades 3 and 4:

Write a paragraph (7 to 10 sentences) about the following topic: Look at all the beautiful icons in your church. Pick one that is your favorite, describe it and tell why it is your favorite.

Grades 5 and 6:

Write 50 to 150 words on the following topic: Why is it important that we celebrate the fact that the Ukrainian Orthodox church is 100 years old?

Grades 7 and 8:

Write 100 to 200 words on the following topic: An important person from the history of the UOC of the USA and explain why they were important in the establishment of the church. Or a role model in your parish (not your parish priest) and tell why they are important in the life of your parish church and why you feel they should be considered role model.

Grades 9 and 10:

Write 200 to 300 words on the following topic: Earlier in Jeremiah 29 the Lord tells the exiles from Jerusalem that were sent to Babylon that they should “Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters.” (Jeremiah 29: 5-6). Relate this quote to Ukrainian Orthodox Christians coming to America and establishing churches in a new land.

Grades 11 and 12:

Write 300 to 500 words on the following topic: The first Amendment states “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof…” How did this freedom to exercise one’s religious beliefs benefit the Ukrainian immigrants when establishing parishes in America and how does it provide “a hope and a future” for future generations of Orthodox Christians?

Adults (18 and over):

Please write 500 or more words on the following topic: In the Jeremiah passage, it says “For I know the plans I have for you.” How does the fact that He has given us free will cause conflict in our daily lives?

All entries must be post marked by Tuesday, May 1, 2018.

All email entries must be time stamped no later than Tuesday, May 1, 2018 at 7:00 PM.

Please mail entries to: UOL Essay Contest
C/O Teresa Linck
413 Juniper Lane
Cheshire, CT 06410
Or email to tlinck.essays@gmail.com

Great Lent Giveaway
Submitted by Madeline Zeitick

It is already February and Great Lent is beginning, which means the annual Great Lent Giveaway (GLG) is starting too. As Christians, we are called to live a simpler life and give back during Great Lent. This year the Jr. UOL along with the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry has a monetary goal of $2000 for the St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Society. The money raised will go towards funding scholarships for young adults, whose parents lost their lives as soldiers. These scholarships will allow these teens a chance to attend school and get an education. If you are in need of more information there is a short outreach video for teens and kids, explaining what GLG is, St. Andrew Society and some facts on who St. Andrew was. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at 267-406-8231 or zeitickm@gmail.com.
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.

Donor  Occasion/Tribute

NO TRIBUTES THIS MONTH

Have you been wanting to honor or thank someone special?

The tribute fund is the ideal way to honor someone or commemorate a special event!

It is very easy to submit a Tribute.
Don't put it off -- send your tribute today!!

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.

Annual Fund Drive
Please support the Ukrainian Orthodox League’s Annual Drive for UOL Projects, Lynn Sawchuk-Sharon Kuzbyt Scholarship, and Metropolitan John Scholarship Fund

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!!
Thank you for your continued support!!