On April 6, 2024, fifty four faithful gathered in Jenkintown, Pa for the UOL Retreat. This was the twenty first retreat that has been sponsored for east coast UOL members. Our UOL retreat has become like a family where some members have attended every retreat for the last 20 years. When everyone arrived there were hugs and fist bumps, and everyone was very excited to get together. We were also encouraged that this year we had new members attend.

We had members who attended from UOC parishes in Allentown, Pennsylvania; Trenton, New Jersey; Johnson City, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Scranton, Pennsylvania; South Bound Brook, New Jersey; South Side Pittsburgh, PA and also from other local Orthodox dioceses (including the Serbian, Greek and Antiochian Dioceses).

Fr. Anthony Perkins served as the Spiritual Father for the retreat. He led morning prayers. Following morning prayers, the entire group gathered for breakfast. This year we allowed for extra time so that everyone could catch up and enjoy each other’s company.

This year the Retreat focused on Confession. Unfortunately His Eminence Metropolitan Antony was unable to attend, however, retreat participants each received a gift from Vladyko, who purchased books regarding Confession. We were so excited to have the UOL Retreat in person and are so grateful to Fr. Anthony Perkins. He was inspiring and prepared us for the services of Holy Week. We are so thankful for all of his support with the Retreat. He is truly a blessing! The retreat was a wonderful way to prepare us for Pascha and we are so thankful to him for his dedication to the UOL Retreat. May he be blessed for many years!
Embracing Christ’s Call

2024 Ohio/WPA ANNUAL LENTEN RETREAT

Submitted by Marianne Carmack

The 2024 UOL’s Ohio/WPA Annual Lenten was held on Saturday, April 20, 2024— from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM at SS. Peter & Paul’s UOC Orthodox Center in Youngstown, Ohio. The Retreat’s Theme “Embracing Christ’s Call: Trust in the Lord with all your heart” is an extension of the region’s retreat series: In Search of God. The retreat was hosted at the Parish to honor the 100th Anniversary of its consecration which will be celebrated on September 13 and 14, 2024. Matushka Laryssa Charest, President of the National Ukrainian Orthodox League warmly welcomed everyone and reinforced the UOL’s commitment to providing vital programs and support to the UOC of USA and its parishes demonstrating its mission, “Dedicated to the Church,” “Devoted to its Youth.”

Fr. Mykola Zomchak, pastor of SS. Peter & Paul in Youngstown, Ohio, Spiritual Advisor of the Senior UOL, and Fr. John Charest, SS. Peter & Paul in Carnegie, PA, Spiritual Advisor of the Junior UOL, and our guest Speaker, Fr. Tom Constantine who recently retired as pastor of St. John the Forerunner CDC in Youngstown, Ohio presided over a day of prayer, worship, learning, and fellowship. We also were blessed to hear the inspiring story of the development of the St. Nicholas Campus Program at All Saints Camp—an example of Embracing Christ’s Call—presented by Tracy Galla who flew in from Florida to attend the retreat. The day began with Morning prayers and continued with inspiring talks, discussion, and great food and concluded with confessions and Vespers—a wonderful day of prayer and learning with our clergy and our brothers and sisters in Christ from many parishes.

The three talks presented in the series “Embracing Christ’s Call” worked together harmoniously to provide a comprehensive guide on how individuals can truly live out their faith, emphasizing different aspects of this journey. They also echoed the inspirational daily Facebook Shorts by His Eminence Archbishop Daniel. The retreat began and ended with selections from these messages.

Fr. Mykola Zomchak provided the foundation and context for the Retreat: he laid out a vivid metaphysical framework for understanding the church and its members, emphasizing individual roles and the importance of collective strength and support. Fr. John Charest built on this metaphor by diving into the all-important practical aspects of living out the faith - through love, service, and community involvement, elaborating how to embody Christ’s teachings in daily actions and relationships. Fr. Tom Constantine in the final talk completing the metaphor reflected on prayer and its power in embracing and overcoming challenges, roadblocks, and personal doubts in our journey of discipleship. He illustrated concepts with personal anecdotes encouraging us to discover and follow unique callings. He emphasized the transformative power of prayer, fasting, and scripture reading, which are crucial for spiritual growth and resilience.

Together, these talks provided a rich mosaic of understanding, motivation, and practical advice on embracing Christ’s call, nurturing personal faith, and strengthening the church community. Each part complemented the others by providing a complete holistic approach to spiritual growth: understanding the context, responding through actions, and sustaining through a commitment to prayer, fasting, and participation in the sacramental life and the liturgical life of the Church. Spiritually uplifting supporting materials were developed for and distributed to participants with further insights on Embracing Christ’s Call and how this commitment affects our daily lives: They included: A self-assessment, 3 Keys to Embracing Christ’s Call, 11 Keys to Spreading the Gospel, 6 Keys to Working Together, The Impact of Prayer, Fasting, and Giving (Alms) on 6 Keys to Working Together, Lady’s Role in Embracing Christ’s Call and Christ is Calling Us: Are you Listening? Are you Following?

(Continued on page 6)
“For we walk by faith, not by sight” - Corinthians 5:7

77th Annual UOL Convention Summary - Philadelphia, PA

Wednesday Evening, July 24, 2024 –
Hospitality Welcome for delegates and guests at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Thursday Morning, July 25, 2024 –
Following Divine Liturgy, Brunch at the Crown Plaza Hotel.

Thursday Evening, July 25, 2024 –
Philly Style Fare
St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral Hall
6740 N. 5th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19126
School bus transportation will be provided to the church

Friday Evening, July 26, 2024 –
UOL Picnic w/ Sports Games & Events
Tryzub Ukrainian American Sport Center
Lower State and County Line Roads or 1 Lower State Road
Horsham, PA 19044
School bus transportation will be provided to Tryzub
Sport Center

Saturday Evening, July 27, 2024 –
Banquet and Ball
Crowne Plaza Hotel
260 Mall Blvd.
King of Prussia, PA 19046
Entertainment by Solowy Band – Live Ukrainian music

Sunday Morning, July 28, 2024 –
Farewell Luncheon
Immediately following Divine Liturgy
St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral Hall
6740 N. 5th Street

Join in and support the UOL Convention Basket Raffle by donating a basket or making a donation to support the event. Please let us know by July 1 of your participation in this event. We are accepting baskets (with a value of $50) or you can make a donation to this project – check should be payable to “77th UOL Convention.”

Your participation in the Raffle and your donations will help to make this 77th Convention a financial success for the entire Ukrainian Orthodox League. We sincerely appreciate your generous support!

Daria Danyo
Scarlet_1958@yahoo.com
20 Locust Grove Rd.
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003
(856) 906-5921

UOL Convention Basket Raffle 2024

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Christ is Risen! Христос Воскрес!
On behalf of the Jr. National Executive Board of the UOL, I hope everyone had a joyous and blessed Great Pascha season. I wish it was spent in prayer and spending time with loved ones.

Our Great Lent Giveaway this year went to scholarships for refugees to attend All Saints Camp. I want to thank everyone who donated and helped us with our cause. I also want to thank Ms. Natalie Kapeluck, who greatly helped us organize our Giveaway, as well as the entire board and our advisors. GLG is an amazing tradition that I am proud to pass along through the Jr. UOL.

The 77th Annual Convention is swiftly approaching. Considering the location this year is my home parish, I have seen first hand all of the hard work that has gone into planning this. It is going to be so amazing and I hope to see all of you there!

As always, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, comments, or concerns at 2676255686 or at miazetick@gmail.com!

In Christ,
Mia Zetick
All Saints Camp
Submitted by Josh Oryhon

For the first time in history, the services of Holy Friday, Holy Saturday and PASCHA were held at All Saints Camp in Emlenton, PA. Faithful from around the northeast traveled to campus for a weekend of uplifting services in St. Thomas Chapel and the joyous Paschal celebration. Sincere thanks to the clergy who led our journey to the Resurrection: V. Rev. Myron Oryhon, V. Rev. John Haluszcak and Rev. Mark Phillips. The choir was led by Mauri Gladys and Kira Senedak. Meals were lovingly prepared by the new ASC Food Service Manager Julie Powell.

This memorable event served as the perfect kick-off to the summer of #ASC2024. Stay up to date with all the fun on campus using this online calendar:
https://www.allsaintscamp.org/calendar

Information and registration for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Camping Programs is available at
https://uocyouth.org/

To sign up for the All Saints Camp mailing list, direct message @allsaintscamp on social media or email josho [at] allsaintscamp [dot] org
UOL Member-at-Large Zoom Coffee Klatch
Submitted by Shirley Duffy*

On March 16, 2024 at 10:00 AM the UOL Members-at-Large had a Pre-Lenten Zoom Coffee Klatch hosted by member-at-large liaison, Shirley Duffy (Pittsburgh, PA). You might ask how coffee and a sweet treat could be served up on Zoom? The host mailed a Folgers coffee single and a $5 gift card to Panera to each participant before the event. This is not too much different than hosting coffee hour at church.

Members-at-large who attended were Pani-Matka Linda Oryhon (Apalachin, NY), Pani-Matka Beth/Anne Harendza (Binghamton, NY), Andrew Fournier (Smith Station, Alabama), Pam Scannell (Vestal, NY), Missy and Stephen Sheptak (Butler, PA), Jane Breck (Pittsburgh, PA) and Oxsana Byczkalo (Coraopolis, PA). As you can see from the list of attendees, it was an opportunity to connect and get to know UOL members from different parts of the country. After introductions were made, the floor was opened to anyone who might have a question for the group. Thankfully, participants had questions which livened the discussion.

We talked about All Saints Camp and the need for more campers with special needs for the St. Nicholas Special Needs Program and about the need for volunteers to participate at the camp and in its programs. We also talked about how various parishes handle the church bulletins, whether they are long or short, available in printed or electronic copy or posted on social media. Participants cited examples of church bulletins that they particularly liked.

We talked briefly about the online community campus and what programming could be offered on it to be made available to the UOL and UOC of USA members across the nation.

If you did not get a chance to participate in the Zoom Coffee Klatch, there will be more such opportunities in the future. The next thing planned is a MAL Zoom Afternoon Tea for those members who may not be available on a Saturday morning but may be available on a Saturday afternoon. Such events will also be available on the online community campus. Join us next time!

*Many thanks to Jane Breck who rescued me when I lost my notes about this event. She shared notes that she had taken with me. God provides!

The UOL will be sponsoring workshops that focus on the issues and challenges facing our UOC of USA parishes at the 2024 UOL Convention in Philadelphia, PA. As the lay organization of the UOC of USA the UOL is in the unique position to help parishes learn from each other and the focus of the Convention will be these very pressing topics within our churches.

Topics that will be addressed:

- Best Practices in Religious Education
- Building bonds between diverse members (discussion of parish diversity based on time of immigration, including converts to Orthodoxy, Ukrainians, non-Ukrainians etc)
- How to encourage Young Adult participation in the parish
- Sessions for choir members (including sharing of music)
- Introducing your spouse to the UOC
- Lessons learned in supporting Ukraine during the war (consolidating our efforts)

Come to the Convention and see old friends, make new ones. The events at the UOL Convention will focus on building new bonds and rekindling old friendships.

The beauty of the UOL Convention is the Fellowship and that remains!!

For more information about how to register for the workshops – contact Natalie nsufler@aol.com

July 24–28, 2024
Following are short summaries of each talk:

Part 1 - Taking Stock: Seeing the forest and the trees. Why bring it up? – Speaker Father Mykola Zomchak: In an inspiring talk opening the retreat, Fr. Mykola drew an enlightening parallel between a forest with its diverse trees and the church with its varied members. He compared it to Noah’s Ark, a refuge akin to the biblical vessel that provided salvation. This analogy sets the scene for the exploration of the church as a sanctuary for spiritual safety and growth, much like a forest shelters its trees.

The imperfections within the church were highlighted by referencing the Apostles themselves, who, despite their divine mission, were not without flaws. This historical reference implies that shortcomings are a part of the church’s fabric. He likened the diverse array of individuals, organizations, and projects within the church to the various species of trees in a forest, contributing to its resilience and strength. Just like a solitary tree might easily fall in a storm, individuals without the church’s support might falter; yet within the supportive environment of the church, like trees in a dense forest, they are protected and strengthen one another.

A fallen tree in the forest, still a part of the ecosystem, symbolizes members who might stumble. Nevertheless, they remain a vital aspect of the church community, capable of redemption and growth. The church, described as a ‘hospital for sinners,’ is portrayed not as a showcase of sinlessness but as a haven for spiritual healing and improvement. Fr. Mykola encouraged individuals to be fruitful, drawing from the warning in Luke 3:9 that fruitless trees will be cut down, to motivate personal spiritual cultivation.

Concluding with an uplifting reference to Psalm 1:3, Fr. Mykola called upon everyone to envision themselves as vibrant trees planted by nourishing waters—steady, fruitful, and flourishing. Through personal dedication and a focus on faith, everyone in the church can contribute to the grand mosaic of community life, embodying the virtues of love, compassion, mercy, and charity. In closing Fr. Mykola appealed to everyone to seek personal growth and to support each other, ensuring that, despite occasional imperfections, the church remains a sacred space of enduring sanctity and blessings.

Part 2 - Christ’s Call (Surrendering, Submitting, Serving) – Speaker Fr. John Charest: Fr. John talked about the importance of responding to Christ’s call to love, serve, and follow Him with faithfulness, enabling us to become true disciples and adhere to His commandments. He stated that by engaging with our faith, studying scripture, and participating in church life, we deepen our connection with Christ and better understand His teachings.

By living out the Gospel’s message through love and care for others, serving our community, and exemplifying Christ’s love in our words and actions, we demonstrate our discipleship and obedience to His commandments.

He continued by citing how the 21st Chapter of the Gospel of St. John articulates serving and following Christ’s Call by loving and caring for others as Christ loves us and by going out of our comfort zones to serve others embodying true discipleship and fulfills Christ’s commandments to love one another. Prioritizing church involvement and fostering a strong foundation of faith from a young age further emphasizes our dedication to following Christ and becoming His disciples. And even though we are sinners, Jesus continually showers His mercy on us, giving us innumerable second chances to show our love for Him and never gives up on us. Ultimately, by embracing Christ’s call to love, serve, and follow Him in our daily lives, we become His disciples and fulfill His commandments to love God and our neighbors as ourselves. This active discipleship and faithfulness to His teachings shapes our character, relationships, and actions, reflecting the transformative power of Christ’s love in our lives and the world around us.

Part 3 – Blocking and Tackling: The How-to of Embracing Christ’s Call, What’s in it for Me? – Speaker Fr. Tom Constantine: Fr. Constantine emphasized the concept of a “calling” as an invitation to pursue a higher purpose or vocation. Responding to a calling can lead to profound personal change, as exemplified by figures like Ebenezer Scrooge, Jesus’ apostles, and Moses the Black. A calling can guide individuals down various life paths at any stage, such as a retired forester becoming a priest at 57 or a priest shifting from the priesthood to a career in business while continuing to serve the church.

Answering a calling is a deeply personal journey that can lead to service in religious and secular roles, with faith being a constant force amidst life’s uncertainties. He underscored that everyone has a unique calling from God, not limited to religious vocations. Despite different talents and paths, all individuals are called to serve according to their abilities.

He spoke about the progressive nature of spiritual growth, the importance of dedicated service to God, and the transformative power of divine encounters through prayer and scripture. Developing a deep relationship with God through daily practices like reading the Bible and heartfelt prayer is essential for nurturing and following one’s calling. He underscored the significance of recognizing, embracing, and responding to God’s call in one’s life.

Fr. Constantine emphasized the constant duty of all Christians to remain in prayer, as instructed by St. Paul and St. Gregory the Theologian. Fr. Constantine cited “The Way of the Pilgrim,” an Orthodox classic—a narration of a pilgrim’s journey to learn ceaseless prayer through the Jesus Prayer, a powerful and versatile spiritual practice invoking Jesus’ name for mercy, helping individuals maintain calm and focus on any situation. Thus, highlighting the importance and accessibility of continuous prayer in believers’ lives.

Fr. Tom stressed the significance of leading a truly Christian life despite ridicule and persecution. He underscored the need to remain steadfast in beliefs, cultivate a strong spiritual relationship with Christ through prayer, and find joy in serving Him despite worldly challenges. Inspired by the Saints—who showcase the transformative power of faith and love for God and who stood firm in faith and derived strength and joy from living for Christ—we too can embrace Christ’s call and thrive in our spiritual journey.

Fr. Constantine closed by again emphasizing prayer’s essential role in nurturing inner joy, strength, humility, and love in one’s spiritual journey. The transformative power of prayer, especially the Jesus Prayer, fosters a deep connection with God and achieving oneness with Christ.

For this spiritually uplifting retreat, we want to thank our speakers Fr. Mykola Zomchak, Fr. John Charest, and Fr. Tom Constantine for their inspiring and outstanding presentations, and the support and participation of Fr. Steve Repa, Fr. Yuri Bobko, Fr. Deacon Cliff O’Neil, and Sub-deacon James Cummings for their support and participation.

We would also like to acknowledge all those who made this retreat possible, including the Parish of SS. Peter & Paul, Youngstown, celebrating its 100th Anniversary, for providing the venue and their wonderful hospitality; its Senior UOL Chapter, Anna Anderson, President, for donating and preparing a wonderful breakfast, Chuck Woloschak, President of the SS. Peter & Paul’s (Youngstown) Church Council; Committee members, Annie Woloschak, Susan Perankovich, Shirley K. Duffy, Esq., Pauline Witkowski, and Zenia Googde; and Stephanie Woloschak Medemio for organizing activities for the children.

And, most especially, each participant from SS. Peter and Paul, Carnegie; SS. Peter and Paul, Youngstown; St. John the Baptist, Sharon; St. Vladimir’s, Pittsburgh; St. Mary’s, McKees Rocks, our guests from our pan-Orthodox Community and those who attended the retreat for the first time. A special thank you to Matushka Maria Zomchak who took pictures of the retreat—otherwise we might not have had any. The support and encouragement of our president, Matushka Laryssa Charest is deeply appreciated, and we are so blessed with her support. Christ is Risen! May God grant you many years.
Enjoy our collection of Bulletin pictures. Above – Tammy Chebiniak reads the UOL Bulletin with the UOL Retreat participants in awe.

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.

No Tributes this Month

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 Bilinsky
703 Pine Ridge Road Media, PA 19063

Send your tribute today!

Thank you to the following Annual Fund Drive donors:

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Assumption of Virgin Mary Sr. UOL (Northampton, PA)
Alice Sivulich

**UOL**
Catherine Schaffer - (in honor of St. Demetrius (Carteret, NJ) Sr. UOL members)
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Pam & Bill Scannell
Rev. John Nakonachny
Tracy Galla - (in memory of Bernard Galla (Dad))
Stephen and Karen Sheptak - (in memory of Raymond & Anna Kalinik)
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Martha & Michael Misko
Irene Pashesnik
Janice Meschisen (in memory of Emil Skopecyk)
Teresa Linick - (in memory of Anatoliy Sulfer)
Dr. and Mrs. Peter Konchak - (in honor of Karen Ferraro)
Anonymous
Karen Sheptak - (in memory of Anna & Raymond Kalinik)
St. Vladimir Sr. UOL (Phila., PA)
Oleh & Natalie Bilinsky
St. Demetrius Sr. UOL (Carteret, NJ)
Assumption of Virgin Mary Sr. UOL (Northampton, PA)
Andrew Fournier

Convention Registration 2024

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<thead>
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**Name Emergency Contact**: 
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**Registration Fee**:
- Senior: $55.00
- Junior: $35.00
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- Junior Late Registration: $95.00
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**Early Bird Special**: $35.00 until June 30th, 2024

**Late Fee**: $25.00

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