



SS. PETER & PAUL UKRAINIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH

21 Evergreen Street
Lyndora, PA 16045-1314



УКРАЇНСЬКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА
ЦЕРКВА СВ. ПЕТРА І ПАВЛА

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WELCOME All! Welcome to the God-Loving and God-Protected Parish of Saints Peter and Paul! A Parish of the UOC of the USA and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Our warmest greetings are extended to all visitors and guests, and to all of our beloved parishioners who are participating in today's Divine Liturgy. We are blessed to have you with us today! If you are with us for the first time, PLEASE introduce yourself to Father Yurii – he is looking forward to meeting you! Also, please feel free to email or call Father Yurii with any questions and let him know what is going on in your life, especially if you need spiritual guidance. We hope that you will find peace and comfort in Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church. You are very welcome to come every Sunday and on feast days, make yourself at home, and to become a part of our parish family. Through your prayers and dedication of time, talents, and donations, this can become a reality in all faith and love.

NOVEMBER 6, 2022

Sunday, November 6

21st (7th Luke)

Confessor Paul

Epistle Reading: Gal 2:16-20
Gospel Reading: Luke 8:41-56

Divine Liturgy – 10:00

Oath of Office

Sunday, November 13

22nd (8th Luke)

St John Chrysostom

Epistle Reading: Heb 7:26-8:2
Gospel Reading: John 10:9-18

Divine Liturgy – 10:00

Sunday, November 20

23rd (9th Luke)

**Ven Gregory Decapolites
Saint Proclus**

Epistle Reading: Eph 2:4-10
Gospel Reading: Luke 12:16-21

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 am

CONTACT

Father Yurii Bobko, Pastor

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<http://peterandpauloclyndora.itgo.com>

Protopresbyter William Diakiv,

Attached

Parish Board President:

Maria Corbin

Choir Director: Lydia Rudolf

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX PARISH

“AS HEALTH COME FROM BITTER MEDICINE, SO TOO DOES THE SALVATION OF SOULS COME FROM BITTER EXPERIENCE”

— ST. PAISIOS OF MT. ATHOS

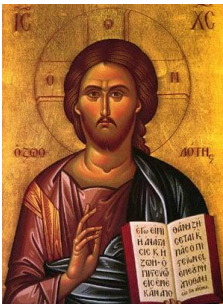
GOSPEL AND EPISTLE READING

St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20



Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

The Gospel According to Luke 8:41-56



At that time, there came to Jesus a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue; and falling at Jesus' feet he besought him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. As he went, the people pressed round him. And a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years and had spent all her living upon physicians and could not be healed by anyone, came up behind him, and touched the fringe of his garment; and immediately her flow of blood ceased. And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter and those who were with him said, "Master, the multitudes surround you and press upon you!" But Jesus said, "Some one touched me; for I perceive that power has gone forth from me." And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." While he was still speaking, a man from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." But Jesus on

hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well." And when he came to the house, he permitted no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. And all were weeping and bewailing her; but he said, "Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." And her spirit returned, and she got up at once; and he directed that something should be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed; but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

All the citizens and residence of Ukraine, Stanley Ostwinch, Julia Walek, Lilia, Jean Markiw, Patrick, Debbie, Wesly, Cindy, Christine, Denny Zymboly, Ruth Dally, Philip, Eric, Greg, Carl, Kayden, Rose, Dorothy Cygan, Helen, Fr. William, pani Sonia, Fr. Vasyl, Mary-Ann, Payton, Anthony, Tina, Mykola, Stella, Maksymko, Fr. Yurii, Maria, Fr. Jakiw, Fr. George, Volodymyr, Alexandr, Vincent.

PARISH NEWS AND UPDATES

Novemebr 9th – We are going to have meeting to discuss 100th Celebration **at 6 pm**
November 15th – We are going to have Ladies Guild Meeting **at 6 pm.**
November 21st – We are going to have Executive Board Meeting **at 6 pm**

Dear brothers and sisters, please remember if anyone is interested in sponsoring one of the open dates for coffee hour or would like to add a date during the month, please contact Karen Sheptak at smskks4568@gmail.com or 724-290-380.

Next week we as a parish community offer a word of congratulations and thanks to all the veterans of our nation's Armed Forces- especially those of our local parish communities as we as nation pause on this Veterans Day to give thanks for the sacrifice of our Veterans and those currently serving in defending our nation and the freedoms we all enjoy.

Please, remember that we will be entering the Nativity Fast on **November 15th**! We are encouraged to spend this time in prayer, fasting, participating in the Sacrament of Holy Confession, and doing charitable works as we prepare ourselves for the coming celebration of the Nativity of our Lord and Jesus Christ. Let us all endeavor to use the time to enrich ourselves spiritually as we look ahead to this festal season. We encourage everyone to come for Holy Confession by Sunday, **December 19** and to also engage ourselves in the other ways we have been given by our Holy

Church to help us make this time one of spiritual and physical preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

We would like to invite and encourage everyone to come out to help with our Semi-Annual Bake Sale starting **November 28, 29** (two days baking), **30th** (selling day)! Please, come and help as we work together once again for the good of our Parish in this special way.

We would to express our gratitude to all who helped with our annual Ladies Guild Fall Food Sale.

We offer a word of thanks to everyone who came out to help with the Parish Pirohi Sale this past week on Thursday and Friday. Our next Pirohi Sale will be on **Friday, November 18th** and everyone are again invited to join us as we all work together for the good of our parish in this way!

Dear brothers and sisters, we are still gathering the contribution for help in Ukraine. If you would like to send your contribution, you could send the check to our parish of Ss. Peter and Paul and made it Payable to the Ss. Peter and Paul UOCOFUSA. Please, write on the check “Help Ukraine”. Thank you all so much for your support and help!

We encourage everyone to continue to give generously to our Capital Improvement Fund as we continue to work on different projects of maintaining and updating our Parish buildings.

Holy Confession is available before Liturgy and Great Vespers! For Baptisms, Weddings, Memorial Litiya, or any other services, please arrange with Father Yurii! Pastoral Visitations of the Sick and Infirm: Please inform Father Yurii if you or your family members are going into the hospital for any reason or if they would like to receive Spiritual guidance!

For more information regarding our Church life, please visit the official website of our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church- <https://uocofusa.org>

PARISH CELEBRATION

From the bottom of Ss. Peter and Paul parish family heart we wish **Ethan Rock (November 12th)**, Happy Birthday! May God's awesome blessings be upon you this day and for the Future years ahead for many happy and blessed years!

Happy Anniversary to **Patty and David Prokopchak (November 29)**! May God's awesome blessings be upon you this day and for the Future years ahead for many happy and blessed years!

The XXIII Sobor of the UOC of the USA Concluded at the Spiritual Center of the Church



The second day of Sobor began with the delegates joining their hierarchs at Divine Liturgy. The Sobor delegates first heard the activity reports of the Church Central Organizations and Institutions which were, which were a continuation of the previous day's reports. Next on the Agenda were the Consistory Offices of Ministry reports – Office of Stewardship, Office of Christian Charity, Office of Religious Education, Office of Liturgical Publications, Office of Public Relations, Office of Archives, and Office of External Affairs. The Directors of the Offices of Ministry and

Consistory Staff who prepared their individual reports were able to make additional comments to the reports and answer questions from the Sobor delegates. The Sobor Body listened received these reports with much enthusiasm realizing the great accomplishments that have been made. Many resources were made available through the reports for parishes to utilize in their own local ministries to enrich parish life. All the reports will be part of the Sobor Minutes and hopefully published in upcoming issues of the *Ukrainian Orthodox Word*.

These reports were followed by the Financial Report presented by V. Rev. Stephen Hutnick and Natalia Honcharenko-Andrec. Crunching the numbers, the delegates became acutely aware of the enormous costs for our Church's ministry programs. Every corner has been cut by the Consistory and money saving practices have been implemented. Still, funding all the programs requires income. The Consistory and Offices of Ministry do their best to fulfill all their responsibilities, but this is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain.

During the 22nd Sobor in 2019, the Guardians of the Metropolia, the newest Central Organization of our Church, was established. Very Rev. Andrii Pokotylo, President along with Mr. Howard West introduced the Guardians Program to the Sobor Body, informing about what the membership requirements are, and what great benefit the organization will be to the Church. Members are required to contribute or raise specific funds, which are deposited in Guardian Accounts. At least 20% of funds on hand must be donated to the Consistory for support of the Offices of Ministry and other necessary programs.

After the Lunch Break, the each Sobor delegate chose to join one of four Breakout Sessions: "*Our Church Life in Western Society – Is our Faith Strong Enough?*" led by Rev. Gregory Jensen (Sts. Cyril & Methodius Mission, Madison, WI); "*Our Spiritual Formation – From Baptism to Repose*" led by Very Rev. Anthony Perkins (Holy Resurrection Mission, Waynesville, NC); "*Our Charitable Ministry – How We Have Gifted and Served – Future Needs and Prospects*" led by His Eminence Archbishop Daniel (President of the Consistory); and "*Stewards of God's Gifts – How Do We Produce the Fruits and Harvests Expected by our Lord "Tending and Keeping" (Genesis 2:15) His Creation Utilizing the Talents He has Blessed us with?*" led by Very Rev. Robert Holet (retired St. Nicholas Parish, Charlottesville, VA).

These sessions met in various locations throughout the Metropolia Center – the Consistory Conference Room, Library, Rotunda and the Seminary. The 175 clergy and lay delegates, as well as guests were fairly evenly divided through all four Session. Following a presentation by the session leader, the participants shared personal parish experiences, offered advice, and brainstormed how the Church, and the local parishes, can improve, grow, and expand in the various areas. Throughout three hours of discussion and enrichment, His Eminence Metropolitan Antony visited each of the four groups, listening and sometimes offering words of wisdom, but more so, simply enjoying his flock working together for the good of the Church her faithful. While the participants could have continued for hours, the sessions concluded just in time for everyone to participate in Vespers which at Three Holy Hierarchs Chapel in St. Sophia Seminary.

As the sun began to set the little chapel, warmly illuminated by flickering candlelight, began to fill. As Vespers began, served by V. Rev. Taras Naumenko with Metropolitan Antony, with the responses chanted by our seminarians, the sky darkened and the halos of the saints visible through the icons of the chapel glowed warmly, and comfortingly. Joining the seminarians, the voices of the faithful rose, as one they worshipped and glorified the Lord. People were moved by the overpowering sense of Grace which seemed to fill the room and mystically envelope them.

“O Joyful Light of the Holy Glory of the Immortal Father, the Heavenly, Holy, Blessed Jesus Christ. Now that we have reached the setting of the sun and behold the evening light, we sing to God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is fitting at all times to praise you with cheerful voices, O Son of God, the Giver of life. Behold, the world sings your glory.”

Preparing to celebrate the Protection of the Mother of God (Pokrova) at Divine Liturgy in the morning, during the Litya His Eminence blessed bread, wheat, wine, and oil. This prayer alludes to the miracle of the Feeding of the five thousand, but the bread and wine also suggest to the Eucharist; the wheat symbolizes Christ, Who is the grain of wheat that fell to the ground and grew into the Tree of Life.

The oil refers to the oil of gladness and the anointing we received at our baptism, as well as the oil of healing. All together these four foods symbolize God’s generous gifts which nourish and sustain us. Concluding the service, Metropolitan Antony blessed all those gathered before him, and expressed his joy at having so many of his flock gathered around him, praying together



The Sobor Grand Banquet followed Vespers. The Sobor General Session and Dining Rooms of the Cultural Center had been transformed into a magnificent banquet hall. As the delegates and guests took their seats, the members of the Council of the Metropolia entered, leading the way for Metropolitan Antony and Archbishop Daniel, along with Mr. Oleksii Holubov, the Consul General of the Ukrainian Consulate in New York City. The evening’s program began as Archbishop Daniel stepped up to the microphone to introduce the first concert performer of the evening, well known singer from Lviv, Ukraine – ANYCHKA, who beautifully performed several songs to the delight of her audience. The room grew hushed as

everyone was transposed by the beautiful melodies and moving lyrics enhanced by her stage presence.

As Anychka concluded her program, His Eminence called for the lights in the hall to be dimmed. Everyone was basked in a soft blue glow in the darkened room, with only the icon of the Mother of God located upon the stage illuminated brightly. Attention was drawn to the large screen and the hall grew silent as the horrors of the invasion of Ukraine were depicted on the big screen. Those present saw the terror inflicted upon their ancestral homeland and experienced the grief right along with the people who were suffering from bombings, murder, torture, and utter destruction of an independent and sovereign nation. But every dark cloud has a silver lining, and the bright light came from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, who in conjunction with the Orthodox Church in Ukraine worked, and continues to work diligently, offering relief to those who are suffering from the invasion. The video showed the numerous deliveries of items necessary to sustain life such as fresh fruits, canned foods, pasta, rice, as well as needed medical supplies, clothing, toys for the children, and much needed supplies such as warm socks, vests, and helmet lamps for the military. Most importantly, however, shown were some of the 70 or more ambulances, trucks and other vehicles for military use. The video, which featured a short clip of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy concluded with a video of several of the ambulances being blessed by Metropolitan Epifaniy in Kyiv and delivered to the various war-torn regions of Ukraine thanks to the generous donations of the faithful of the UOC of the USA and the thousands of American citizens and organizations that have contributed millions of dollars to our Church's Fund to Aide Ukraine.

As the evening's entertainment continued, the seminarians of the St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary stepped up to the microphone and began their program with a moving rendition of "Plyve Kacha Po Tysyni". The song is a lament. It is about a young soldier, a young recruit going off to fight in foreign wars and his dialogue with his mother as he asks what will happen if he dies in a foreign land with nobody to bury him. It is a poignant and solemn reminder of the ongoing battle Ukraine faces against Russia, from the days of the Maidan to the current unprovoked attack. As the young men sang, the people rose to their feet and lowered their heads, many wiping away tears, as the children gazed in wonder not sure why everyone suddenly became sad.

As the seminarians concluded the song, everyone remained in silence for a matter of seconds, before returning to the present, realizing that as they celebrated, people in Ukraine were fighting for their very survival. The seminarians sang additional numbers concluding with a rousing version of "Let my People Go!" which had the audience swaying and clapping along.

A greeting from His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew to Metropolitan Antony on the occasion of his 50th anniversary of priestly ordination was read at this point:

Archbishop Daniel asked that all the clergy approach the front of the hall to assist him in greeting Metropolitan Antony on the 50th anniversary of his priestly ordination, 37 of which he has served as a bishop of our Holy Church. With the clergy gathered round their Prime Hierarchy, Archbishop Daniel presented him with a gift from them all – a bishop's staff (Zhezlo) with gold

and gems, an exact replica of the staff of Metropolitan of Kyiv, Petro Mohyla, one of the most important leaders of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine in the late 17th century, who is credited with saving Orthodoxy in Ukraine for all time. As he received this incredible gift, Metropolitan Antony was deeply moved and lifted it high to bless all in attendance at the banquet. With his arm raised the bishop's staff high, the image was reminiscent of the staff with a serpent upon it, which Moses raised high for his people to gaze upon saving them from the onslaught of venomous snakes threatening them and for all Christians the elevation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of Christ upon which we gaze as for the source of our own salvation.

As the clergy broke out in a loud rendition of Mnohaya Lita (Many Years), the clergy wives came forth, wheeling a cart upon which sat an exquisite cake created in the image of a thick tome, a book titled on the binding – “My Spiritual Life” – representing the chapters of His Eminences past 50 years of service. The Metropolitan spoke next of his deep gratitude to everyone present for their kindness in remembering his 50th anniversary. He shared many interesting stories about important events and influences upon his life by priests and lay people who have greatly strengthened his priesthood. He spoke of his complete reliance upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout his years of service relying upon the Grace inspired to him at his Baptism and during each of the Holy Sacraments and finally at the moment of his priestly ordination. This guidance kept him balanced and open to the strength of his life, the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Christ abiding within him and he abiding in Christ – always striving to be one with Him and making all decisions in that state.



Metropolitan Antony spoke with much love of Metropolitan John Theodorovych, his life's personal hero and supporter. He introduced the Metropolitan John Theodorovych Award which was developed as a form of gratitude to those who have worked in the field of education. One by one His Eminence called out the recipients – which included the professors and educators at the Seminary and those who support the seminarians in their education, along with other parish educators and staff at the Consistory. He presented the Metropolitan John Theodorovych Medals to twenty-four individuals in gratitude for their service. This celebration of a priestly life was an emotional experience for all in attendance. His Eminence simply asked for the continued prayers of all present that God in the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – will continue to bless, guide and strengthen him and, most of all, forgive him for his weaknesses, faults, foolishness and sinfulness for as long as he is able to serve.

Early Friday morning, the St. Andrew Memorial Church filled to capacity and beyond with Sobor participants and regular parishioners for Divine Liturgy on the Feast of Pokrova – the Protection of the Mother of God. Archbishop Daniel preached on the importance of this Feast in Ukraine for her citizens who have always felt the protection of the Mother of God at the worst times of Ukrainian national history. Her arms are extended, holding her veil high above all Kyivans in the main icon of St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv, reminding the nation that she always abides with them and intercedes with her Beloved Son and our God for our safety, remission of sins and salvation. At the conclusion of the service, the Pochaiv.

Following Liturgy and breakfast, the presentations of the four break-out sessions left the delegates feeling re-energized and eager to return to their parishes to make real what they had heard – refocusing their parishes to do the work of Christ on Earth – caring for their neighbors, loving one another, and leading others, young and old, to salvation in Christ.

The first Breakout Session presentation was from the *Our Charitable Ministry – How We Have Gifted and Served – Future Needs and Prospects* group, which was introduced by Protodeacon Ihor Mahlay, President of the St. Andrew Society, and presented by Elizabeth Symonenko. The group had explored the statement of His Eminence Archbishop Daniel who had stated “How do we do what we are?” We are identified as Christians by our fruits. To that end the session has agreed to meet and develop a program encouraging individual parishes to enact works of charity both in Ukraine, and in their local communities. These charitable endeavors should involve the entire parish by the creation of Service Teams composed of the priest, parish board, and laity (including the youth); and be repeated on a regular basis allowing the parishioners to plan for each undertaking, and those in need to anticipate the forthcoming assistance. The group shared emails and plan to meet regularly to share ideas, stories of success, and to assist and encourage each other as they serve Christ, by serving others.

The second presentation, “*Our Spiritual Formation from Cradle to Grave*” was introduced by Very Rev. Anthony Perkins who led the session. Expressing his joy at the fruitfulness of the gathering he introduced V. Rev. John Haluszczak who gave a succinct exposition of their discussion. There are three main points to successful spiritual formation within individuals. First, start early by providing children with a good example in their homes, as well as by ensuring they understand that they are loved and welcomed in their parishes. Second point is to nurture time. We must make time in our busy lives for God. We need to formulate and adhere to a daily Prayer Rule, partake regularly of the Holy Sacraments, and set aside quiet time to be with God. Thirdly, we must remember that life is a journey and that we must focus each day on becoming more and more like Christ.

The third presentation discussed was *Stewards of God’s Gifts – How Do We Produce the Fruits and Harvests Expected by our Lord “Tending and Keeping” (Gen. 2:15) His Creation Utilizing the Talents He has Blessed us with.*, which had been led by Very Rev. Robert Holet, and introduced by Mr. Jeff Greenleaf from Parma, Ohio. It was explained that stewardship is what we give back to God. While we have heard we must tithe 10%, we should begin with a lower percentage and slowly work our way up. Metropolitan Antony expressed that stewardship is often misconstrued, as it goes far beyond money. We must concentrate on how we give of ourselves to God in service to Church and mankind. We must give to God the best of what we hope to be, and the Lord will assist us to become the best versions of ourselves.

The final presentation, *Our Church Life in Western Society – Is Our Faith Strong Enough?* having been led by Very Rev. Gregory Jensen, was presented by Very Rev. Gregory Czumak who pointed out that while we may disagree with much of what society preaches, we must learn to live in and with society. We must discern to where to draw the line so that we live in peace with our neighbors yet not compromise our Faith. To help us we should always remember

that Christ loves each and every person, regardless of how they act, look, or identify themselves. Furthermore, we must not spew theology at people who are showing interest in the Church, because we will lose them. Instead, we must return to the basics, and remind them that Jesus loves them. It is that love that will interest them and entice them to learn more.

These brief summaries do not adequately reflect the depth of discussion and personal sharing that occurred during each of the breakout sessions, which continued for three hours! The participants were moved deeply with the extended opportunity to reflect together on the spiritual issues which provoked much thought and discussion that truly embraced the participants and enriched their spiritual lives.



The major and vital discussion of the Sobor, ensued next on the agenda and revolved around financial status of the Church and Metropolia Center. Metropolitan Antony presented the facts about our Metropolia Center properties and the funds that will almost imminently be needed to make capital repairs and mechanical installations to ALL TEN of the buildings on our property. Serious discussion took place with many delegates and administrative officers of the Church about how the Church can best sustain herself, her ministries, and continue to fulfill her holy mission – the salvation of souls and the extension of God’s Kingdom. The entire Sobor finally concluded that monumental decisions will be necessary in the very near future and charged the Council of the Metropolia to investigate all possible solutions to long developing problem and to make the decision concerning the actions necessary to safeguard the future of the Church. This was a difficult decision for the Sobor, but under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the clergy and faithful delegates voted overwhelmingly to pass it. Metropolitan Antony expressed his deeply felt emotion at hearing the comments of so many of the delegates during the discussion who comprehended the nature of the Church as the Body of Christ and that the members of that Body and the salvation of their souls and those who are searching for God, must be the basis for all decisions made. The Metropolitan explained that this discussion was a long time coming and that it was crucial that this decision be made at this Sobor. He reminded all those who will serve on the Council of the Metropolia, that theirs will be a critical effort and that they must be prepared to give the best of themselves in time, talent, treasures and truth so that this effort will succeed.

Following this critical discussion, the results of the elections for the various Church Administrative Offices: the Council of the Metropolia, the Audit Commission and the Ecclesiastical Court were announced.

Following this announcement, Dr. Paul Micevych presented two Resolutions for consideration, which were inspired by the moving video presentation presented during the Grand Banquet about the abundant assistance our Church has been providing all over Ukraine since the first days of the genocidal invasion of the nation. The Resolutions were unanimously approved by the delegates of the Sobor:

1. The 23rd Regular Sobor of the UOC of the USA expresses its unanimous support of Metropolitan Epifaniy, the bishops, clergy and faithful of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine in tending to the spiritual and physical needs of the embattled peoples of Ukraine during the Russian

genocidal invasion. We pray for the safety, health and spiritual well-being of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people during their time of struggle. We pledge to continue our support to the people of Ukraine who suffer under this horrific invasion.

2. The 23rd Regular Sobor of the UOC of the USA expresses its heartfelt gratitude for the greeting of our Sobor, and support to the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy and prays for his safety and continued heroic leadership during this time of struggle against the genocidal Russian invasion of our ancestral homeland. We also pray for the entire Ukrainian leadership, armed forces and civilians. May the Lord God protect them and keep them.



The darkened church, and somber mood, was broken as His Eminence Metropolitan Antony's voice loudly declared, "Blessed is our God, always now and ever, and unto the ages of ages!" With these words began one of the most moving services many of those gathered had experienced. Everyone held a copy of the Akaphist booklet and sang the responses along with the Seminarians, praising the Virgin, entreating her assistance, and declaring her victory. The praises echoed back and forth through the church with the hierarchs and clergy praying the main verses of the service while the faithful replied with "Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!" and chanted all the various and multiple praises to the Most Holy Mother of God, humbly entreating her assistance. Well over 400 names had been submitted and passed out amongst the clergy to be read during this service. Prayers arose for those who suffer cancer, but also for those who suffer any illness of body, spirit, or mind. While the clergy prayed for those people whose names were written on paper, the faithful prayed in their hearts for all those whom they knew would benefit from the help and intercession of the Virgin.

At the conclusion of the service, the hierarchs once again thanked Howard and Lynda, for the initiative of this Akaphist prayer effort, stating that it would make a great difference in many lives. As the faithful shuffled forward to venerate the icon of the "Queen of All", the hierarchs handed out the smaller blessed icons to the parish delegates to take home with them, along with booklets, to be used to offer this same Akaphist in their parishes.

At the conclusion of the moving service, the members who had been elected to Church administration were called forward and holding candles, were inducted into their offices declaring that they would fulfill all the responsibilities of their office with honor, integrity and diligence, adhering to the Constitution of the UOC of USA. They confirmed their abiding intent to utilize the talents gifted to them by God working tirelessly for the good and the growth of the Body of Christ.

Early on Saturday morning, the clergy and faithful of the Church once again filled the St. Andrew Memorial Church for the final Hierarchical Divine Liturgy of the 23rd Regular Sobor. The service began with the setting aside of Subdeacons of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA: Seminarians of St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary: Mykola Stefanyk, Roman Marchyshak, Andriy Akulenko and Yurii Izhyk.

Following the Divine Liturgy, the worshippers joyously made their way to the Ukrainian Cultural Center for the Sobor Farewell Brunch before departing to their homes throughout the nation. While the delegates and guests departed, the newly elected members of the Council of the Metropolia met in the St. John Theodorovych Library for their inaugural meeting. Metropolitan Antony stressed the importance of the Council, and that all decisions must be undertaken with deep thought and humble prayers for the good of the Church.

Archbishop Daniel, as President of the Consistory, fulfilled his responsibility of nominating those members of the Council he wished to serve on the Consistory: V. Rev. Victor Wronskyj, as Vice-President; Elizabeth Symonenko, Secretary; V. Rev. Stephen Hutnick, Treasurer; and V. Rev. Taras Naumenko, V. Rev. Andrii Pokotylo and Howard West, Members. The Council members unanimously voted to elect these individuals to the Consistory.

May the Lord continue to bless the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, her hierarchs, clergy, and faithful throughout the coming years, guiding them in making all decisions to strengthen and grow the Church, to His Glory.