



UOL BULLETIN

UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dedicated to the Church – Devoted to its Youth

VOL. 52 NO. 5

MARCH, 2007

Taras Shevchenko School of Ukrainian Studies Performs for UOL Executive Board

The UOL Executive Board Meeting, held in Parma, OH on Saturday, January 27th, was pleasantly interrupted by an impromptu presentation of Ukrainian carols by the students of St. Vladimir's Cathedral Ukrainian School. The fifteen students enthusiastically sang several carols to the enjoyment of board members.



Ukrainian School Students Carol for UOL Executive Board

In addition to the singing of Ukrainian carols, poems were presented in perfect Ukrainian by Maksym and Andriy Mahlay. Dr. Volodymyr Bodnar, Ukrainian School Director, accompanied the students with his bandura. The senior board was delighted with the brief interlude.

Dinner A Highlight at the Greenleaf Residence

Following the completion of the Board's business sessions, members attended Vespers at St. Vladimir's Cathedral and then traveled to the Greenleaf home where Helen and Geof hosted a delicious dinner for twenty-eight guests. In addition to running to the airport, providing lodging for several board members in her home, and making airport pick-ups, Helen, who serves as 1st Vice President of the League, made time to prepare an **international menu** that consisted of: *Boursin cheese and Irish cheddar cheese spread, chicken and broccoli Alfredo, Beef Bourguignon, rice pilaf, Sugar Snap Peas, jello salad, mixed greens with tomatoes, fresh basil and fresh mozzarella (with a dressing that Helen created with balsamic vinegar from Italy and olive oil from Greece), triple chocolate brownies, coconut rum pound cake and rice pudding. And of course there was wine served by "the butler 'Geof'".*

The traditional Friday Evening Social was hosted by the Nakonachny family with many delicious appetizers and snacks. Senior and junior board members were also lodged at the Nakonachny, Greenleaf, and Kominko homes. Lunch on Saturday was prepared and served by St. Vladimir's chapter members. Following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, a delicious luncheon of grilled pork loin and other delicious accouterments was prepared by Executive Chef Michael Nakonachny.

It was a weekend . . . Parma-Style!

"Convention Chatter" . . .

So . . . have you talked it over with your family and finally decided that your summer vacation plans will include a stop in Pittsburgh for the **UOL 60th Anniversary Convention**? If you haven't, you better think about it because you really don't want to miss out on this great celebration the Carnegie Senior and Juniors have planned for you.

First of all, the **Embassy Suites Hotel** is a terrific place to stay. Did you know that each room is actually a **two room suite** with the bath in between the two rooms? The entry room is set up as a sitting room/living room with TV, sofa, desk, etc., while the second room is set up as the bedroom. However, the sofa in the living room is a fold out double bed, so this room can also double as another bedroom. Pretty nice, wouldn't you say? Another highlight of the Embassy Suites is that a **full breakfast is included in the price of your room** – and this doesn't just mean muffins and coffee! The breakfast includes eggs, bacon, sausage, pastries, cereal, you name it!! And this you won't believe – the price of your room **also includes the Manager's Social Hour** at 5:00 pm each day with drinks (including alcohol for those over 21) and munchies. Now that's a good deal!!

Plan to arrive on Wednesday before Noon because Natalie Kapeluck Nixon has a marvelous afternoon of **workshops** planned for you beginning at 1:00 pm on Wednesday. Now anyone who knows Natalie, our very own National Diocesan Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, realizes that anything Natalie does will not only be educational and inspiring, but will also be interesting and fun for both young and old. So, plan to check into the Embassy Suites in time to participate in a few of the workshops.

Wednesday night following the Junior and Senior National Executive Board meetings, the Carnegie Senior and Juniors Chapters roll out the red carpet with the infamous **Carnegie Hospitality Night**. Alexis Sawchuk is already organizing chapter members to provide the delicious snacks and treats that will make your mouth water – yum, yum!

The actual 60th Convention will open Thursday morning with our Hierarchy concelebrating the **Divine Liturgy** in the spectacular permanent chapel which Fr. Steve Repa, our spiritual Advisor and Michael Kapeluck will set up at the hotel. No delegates or guests spilling out into the hallway at our Convention liturgical services this year – the room which our convention Chair Steve Sivulich has secured for us as our permanent chapel is large enough to accommodate all of our Convention delegates and guests!!

The Opening Divine Liturgy will be followed by a delicious **Executive Breakfast** being planned by Pat Dorning right at the hotel. Pat's been working hard with the hotel catering manager to insure that this luscious breakfast buffet will be all you need to prepare you for the Convention Business Sessions to follow. Rumor has it that Pat also is planning a few favors for you at this Executive Breakfast to focus your attention on our Convention theme **"Come, follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."**

Well, that's enough for now – more about Thursday and Friday night Convention activities in next month's Bulletin. **Look for more "Convention Chatter" in April!**

**60th Annual U.O.L. Convention -
July 25-29, 2007 Carnegie, PA**

"Dedicated to our Church . . . **60th U.O.L. Convention - July 25-29, 2007**

. . . Devoted to its Youth"



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

V. Rev. Volodymyr Bukata Award Recipients Visit Pani Matka Olga Bukata

by *Melanie Nakonachny*

On Wednesday, December 6th, three Fr. Bukata Award Recipients from Saint Vladimir's Cathedral of Parma, OH, Saints Peter and Paul Church in Youngstown, OH and Holy Ascension Church in Maplewood, NJ visited Pani Matka Olga Bukata at her home in Bloomfield, NJ.

Pani Matka is the wife of the late, V. Reverend Volodymyr Bukata, long time priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States of America and founder of the Ukrainian Orthodox League. While with Pani Matka Bukata, they sang traditional carols and presented her with a Christmas tree and an icon. Among the visitors were past V. Rev. Volodymyr Bukata Award Recipients: Melanie Nakonachny (1995), Christy Bohuslawsky (2004) and Marc Senedak (2005). This award is presented annually at the U. O. L. Convention to a Junior member who has exhibited outstanding service to the League.



Melanie Nakonachny, Marc Senedak and Christy Bohuslawsky

*Please join us for
an Educational Seminar on*

Iconography
Hosted by the U.O.L.

Saturday, April 14, 2007
(weekend of St. Thomas Sunday)
In South Bound Brook, New Jersey

Featuring iconographer:
MICHAEL KAPELUCK

Workshops are FREE
For more information contact:

Natalie Bilynsky
(612) 892-7315 nsufler@aol.com



NAKO'S NEWS
Melanie Nakonachny, U.O.L. President

Glory to Jesus Christ!
Slava Isusu Christu!

*My soul, my soul arise! Why are you sleeping?
The end is drawing near and you will
be confounded*

~Kontakion of the Cannon of Saint Andrew of Crete

It is always difficult to prepare for Great Lent. Christmas is such a joyous time where we celebrate together with family and friends. Yet, a few weeks later the tone changes from outward, joyous celebration to the quiet inward preparation for Crucifixion and the ultimate feast of feasts, Pascha - Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Great Lent is a time to contemplate, a time to reflect on our lives and the realization that the end is drawing near. Are we ready? Great Lent is the time to get our lives back on track, our priorities straight. During Paschal Matins your priest will read the sermon of Saint John Chrysostom. Let us be the ones that come at the first hour, prepared for what is to come.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who participated in the Thanksgiving tithing program. The Christian Caregiving and Missions Commission was pleased to present the Eastern Orthodox Foundation of Indiana, PA with a donation in the amount of \$2,251.00. Over the last several years chapters, parishes and individuals have really worked to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate through these projects. It's still not too late to participate in the "Souper Bowl" Sunday project, which benefits St. Andrew Society's soup kitchens in Ukraine. Donations may be sent to Financial Secretary, Oleh Bilynsky.

Information concerning the 2007 U. O. L. Essay Contest has been mailed to chapters and parishes. Please encourage the youth of your parish to participate. It's a great opportunity for them to reflect on our faith. If you need more information feel free to contact Education Commission Chairwoman, Anne Bohen.

As Great Lent will soon be upon us it is time to begin thinking about attending one of the two U.O.L. Lenten Retreats. The first will be held at All Saints Camp March 16-18. This year's theme, "Grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother", will focus on Great Lent and how to prepare ourselves for Pascha. The second retreat will be held in Bethlehem, PA March 9-11. The theme for this retreat is "Rejoice in the Lord" and will discuss the feast days of the Church. More information concerning both retreats can be found in this issue of the Bulletin. I hope to see many of you at these retreats.

The National Executive Board is thrilled to announce the publication of a new book titled **Hymns of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church**. This book, similar to the one compiled by V. Reverend Stephen Hallick for the U.O.L. many years ago, has the same songs with the updated version including all songs in both Ukrainian and English. Special thanks must be given to 2nd Vice President and Junior U.O.L. Advisor, Dr. Natalie Sufler Bilynsky and her committee for the countless hours of work that were put into creating this book. This book is truly a resource for our diocese and I encourage you to purchase a copy.

The National Executive Boards of the Senior and Junior U. O. L. held their Winter Meetings in Parma, Ohio January 26-28, 2007. The meetings were extremely fruitful. I would like to thank my parish of St. Vladimir's for hosting this event. They worked very hard to ensure that our visitors had an enjoyable and productive visit. Mark your calendars now! The spring board meetings will be held in the hosting convention city of Carnegie, PA June 8-10. If you live in the vicinity of these cities and are able to attend this meeting I strongly encourage you to do so.

I hope you have already made plans to attend the 60th Annual Ukrainian Orthodox League Convention which will be held July 26-29, 2007. The Senior and Junior Chapters of Saints Peter and Paul Church in Carnegie, PA are excited to host us as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the U.O.L.

Praying that Great Lent is a time of peace and meditation

I remain . . .

Yours in Christ,

Melanie A. Nakonachny

JR. UOL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHT Fun For the Junior's @ FUN FORE ALL

"**Fun Fore All**" is a family entertainment center located north of Pittsburgh, about twenty minutes from the 60th UOL Convention hotel – The Embassy Suites Hotel.

This activity is scheduled for Saturday afternoon during the 60th UOL Convention and will make available a wide variety of games and activities:

A huge video arcade! **A Go-Kart track!**
A snack bar! **Two miniature golf courses!**
A bumper boat pool! **Numerous batting cages!**
Kiddie rides!

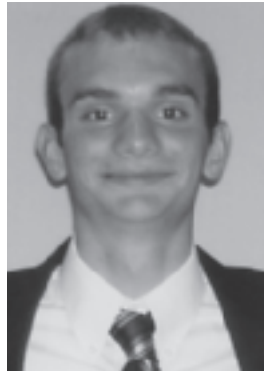
Juniors, preteens and youngsters will be transported by bus to the **Fun Fore All** facility. A lunch will be provided as part of this activity. The Jr. UOL Executive Board endorsed this event at their board meeting held on January 27th.



Anastasia and Natasha test the motorcycles and other games

A MESSAGE FROM MARK...

Mark Meschisen, Jr. U.O.L. President



Glory to Jesus Christ

Well, another Lenten season is upon us! Although this one started a little earlier than usual, the year still seems to be rushing past. The junior and senior Boards had a very successful joint meeting this past January 26-28 weekend. At the meeting many important points of business were discussed for the upcoming spring months. Many projects and activities will be in full steam in the Lenten and spring season and I encourage you all to take part and make them the best they can be!

First on our list of activities is this year's *Great Lent Giveaway Project*. This project will again be worked on in conjunction with the Office of Youth Ministry. Proceeds will go towards the iconography in the newly built chapel at the All Saints Camp. Please help us in this endeavor. The junior and senior Boards will have their annual "*Battle of the Boards*". This Chapter Challenge style event will take place at our next meeting and the boards will get sponsors and raise money for the Great Lent Giveaway.

The Junior *UOL Raffle Tickets* should have gone out by now. This is the most important National Fundraiser to the Junior UOL, so please buy tickets early and often. If your chapter has not received any tickets to sell please contact someone on the board so we can send some to you and get you selling.

This Convention the juniors will hold their *Cultural Contest*. It is a great event for juniors to showcase their cultural prowess. This year seniors are asked and encouraged to participate in the contest as well. The Convention Body will vote on the entries at the convention in Carnegie.

Hopefully your chapters have already started on these things and are at least starting to think about the convention. Don't forget about the *Pysh Travel Grant*! If you think that your chapter is unable to attend the convention for financial reasons, the Pysh Travel Grant can help you. Be sure to apply if you think this can help you or your chapter.

I wish you and yours a blessed and safe Lenten season. Remember, myself or other board member are just a click or a phone call away, so never hesitate to contact us with any questions, concerns, or comments.

I humbly remain...

Yours in Christ

Mark Meschisen

JOHNSON CITY JUNIORS GO CAROLING

by Mikayla Klym

The Jr. UOL at St. John's Parish in Johnson City, NY went caroling this year, and it was lots of fun! Jr. U.O.L members made a 6-foot star to take with them. The front of the star has an icon of Mary and baby Jesus. We had a nice, warm bus to ride in from house to house. It was so much fun going to all of the houses for Christmas parties and singing. We also went to the Broome Developmental Center to sing Christmas carols.

Thank you to everyone who invited us to their houses to sing. A special thank you for renting the bus! I hope all of you join us to sing next year!



*Jr. members making a Caroling Star:
William Ferrante, Grace Hatala, Molly Hatala,
and Cassidy Sullivan*



*Juniors and Seniors visit the
Broome Developmental Center*

St. Vladimir's Juniors Spread Christmas Cheer!

by Melanie Hlahol, Historian

The months of December and January have been quite active and full of activities for the Jr. UOL in Parma, Ohio. On December 23rd, we went to St. Herman Monastery and House of Hospitality, as we do annually. There we prepared food to be served for lunch, sang carols, and helped bring the Christmas spirit to all who came for a meal. Many of the juniors also attended our church's 2nd annual Family Night. There was food, friends, and tons of fun, with the juniors favorite game, B-I-N-G-O! That was a night enjoyed by all!

One of the most exciting events of the past two months was December Days at the Zoo. Many of the juniors, and even a junior from Carnegie, went to the zoo on a cold, yet cheery day in December. We roamed the zoo and the Rainforest, seeing many animals such as polar bears, monkeys, snakes, various birds, wolves, fish, and even reindeer! Everyone that came had a pleasurable time!



Jr. UOL Members Visit the Cleveland Zoo

One thing the Juniors of St. Vladimir's are exceptionally good at is singing Christmas carols! Several Juniors went caroling to the shut-ins at many nursing homes and hospitals in the area. We sang joyous Christmas carols, brought them gifts, and stayed to have a chat to brighten their day. At church, many Juniors participated in the annual Christmas sing-a-long. The students of St. Josaphat School also joined us in singing.

The Juniors also painted a room in the new Zoe for Life house. St. Vladimir's Jr. U.O.L. chose to sponsor the prayer room. We spent many hard-working hours taping and painting the room. At the end of all the work, we had completed a beautiful room, with icons on the walls, and a comforting and peaceful mood to the room. The Zoe for Life house was blessed on January 21st, after the Moleben-Prayer for Change, hosted at our church. The day after, one of our Juniors, Oksana Mahlay, attended the March for Life, along with three members of our Senior U.O.L..

The Juniors of St. Vladimir's have had quite a blast these past months!

Sts. Peter & Paul Youth Ministry Visits St. Herman's House of Hospitality

by Diane Senedak

The Sts. Peter & Paul Youth Ministry, Youngstown, OH visited St. Herman's House of Hospitality located in the historic inner city of Cleveland, Ohio. Fr. John Henry, the director of the monastery says that the mission of St. Herman's is to assist the people who are in need and to preach God's word through actions. In existence for 20 years, St. Herman's helps not only to feed and clothe those in need but also provides emotional support. The home houses up to 35 men each night with an average stay of up to a two weeks.



Upon arrival, we were welcomed with open arms by Father Henry and the workers of the home. We then received a tour of the facility viewing the kitchen, dining hall, sleeping quarters and chapel. We were amazed as to how three meals a day were made in their tiny kitchen; not only served to the residents but also to many others in the community as well. In the basement, the sleeping quarters were somewhat cramped but were quite neat.

Next, it was time for the Vespers service. We were moved by so many residents reading from the Gospel. It was evident that being involved in the service was very important to the residents. We, then, provided the evening meal of chili, corn, salad, bread and dessert. After helping to serve the meal, we were asked to join them for the meal. Fr. John Henry was so happy to have us visit, he asked us to join in and sing hymns with the residents. His tireless effort, through his good deeds, exemplify his service to God, by serving people in need. Our young adults visited the quiet and humble Fr. Ephraim who was recovering from surgery. We know that the light of God shines upon him! He is truly an inspirational person and we wish him God's blessing for a speedy recovery.

We all left St. Herman's Monastery feeling truly blessed to have been able to play a small part in helping those in need. We were all very thankful to Fr. Henry and the residents for making us feel welcome.

[Offer help and assistance by calling St. Herman's Monastery, 216-961-3806, or write to: P.O. Box 6448, 4410 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44101]

U.O.L. SUNDAY

St. Vladimir's Chapters, Parma, Ohio

by Melanie Nakonachny

On December 3, 2006 forty-one Senior and Junior Chapter Members and friends from St. Vladimir's Cathedral in Parma, OH gathered at Dimitri's Restaurant to celebrate U.O.L. Sunday. This Sunday, held annually during the first Sunday of Saint Phillip's Fast allows Ukrainian Orthodox League members to gather and celebrate all that the League has accomplished since its founding 60 years ago.

The morning began at 8:30 AM with Divine Liturgy. During the liturgy special petitions were added to remember the founders of the Ukrainian Orthodox League and all departed League members. Following the Liturgy, members traveled to Dimitri's. When the participants arrived they received Christmas ornaments as favors. Everyone enjoyed their meals – prime rib, meatloaf, chicken and burgers were just a few things that participants dined on. The event was a tremendous success and allowed chapter members, who are constantly at work in the parish, to take the morning to relax and socialize.



St. Vladimir's UOL Chapter Members Celebrate U.O.L. Sunday



ALL SAINTS CAMP CHAPEL FUND DRIVE

**"It's not how much we give
but how much love we put
into giving."**

(Mother Teresa)

The UOL Fund to Furnish the Chapel at All Saints Camp has been blessed with the love of many of our faithful, as evidenced by the icon sponsorships, general fund donations and iconostas construction donation that have been received since the project was initiated. So many wonderful individuals, families and parish organizations have embraced the project of constructing and furnishing the Chapel at All Saints Camp.

At its October meeting, the UOL National Executive Board committed to raising funds for the first phase of the iconography and for the construction of the iconostas.

A most loving, generous, anonymous donation was recently received for the construction of the iconostas.

Of the 70 icons available, 37 have been sponsored, either with outright donations or pledges, which will be fulfilled by March 2008. It now remains for the committee to find sponsors - either individuals, parish organizations or businesses - for the 33 remaining icons. The following are available for sponsorship:

\$675.00	Apostles	
	Bartholomew (012)	James Alphaeus (014)
	James Zebedee (016)	Jude (Thaddeus) (018)
	Simon (020)	
\$1,350.00	Archangels	
	Salathiel "Prayer to God" (028)	Jegudiel "Praise of God" (030)
	Barachiel "Blessing of God" (031)	Uriel "The Fire of God" (032)
\$1,100.00	1 Seraphim panel (034)	
\$2,750.00	Theotokos (036)	
	4 panels of the Ranks of Angels (037 - 040)	
\$2,200.00	Evangelists	
	St. Matthew (041)	St. Mark (042) St. Luke (043)
\$2,750.00	Panels depicting Creation	
	Separation of the Waters (046)	Creation of dry land/plants (047)
	Creations of sun, moon... (048)	Creations of birds/fish (049)
	Creations of animals/man (050)	Day of rest (051)
	Creations of Eve (052)	The Fall (053)
\$550.00	Side walls of nave	
	3 icons still available	
\$1,650.00	Shrines in the corners of the nave	
	Front left corner (to be determined) (055)	
	Shrine to Christ (056)	Shrine to the Theotokos (057)

It is not necessary to sponsor an icon in order to support this project. General fund donations are always most graciously accepted. There is much work to do, beyond the iconography itself, and general fund donations help to cover these additional expenses.

The dream of building a chapel at All Saints Camp is rapidly becoming a reality. It's an enormous project but it was undertaken with an indescribable enthusiasm and energy. AT LAST - All Saints Camp will have a chapel in which to worship.

We invite everyone to join us in this awesome project. If you have any questions, you may contact any one of the three committee members:

Irene Carman (315) 785-9089 iccrph@twcny.rr.com

Diane Senedak (330) 792-6699 dkssenny@aol.com

Pani Matka Mary Anne Nakonachny (440) 885-1509 nackos3201@aol.com

Donations and pledges may be sent directly to:

Pani Matka Nakonachny, 3201 Marioncliff Dr., Parma, Ohio 44134

JR. CHAPTER NEWS FROM CARNEGIE

by Danielle Walewski, Chapter Reporter

The Juniors of Sts. Peter and Paul UOL Chapter have been busy doing activities and planning new ones. We started by decorating our church with a Christmas tree, wreaths, and other decorations. On February 3rd, we cooked soup for *Souper Bowl Sunday* and then went bowling. The next day, February 4th, we held our Souper Bowl Sunday, just like we do every year.

We will also be having a food drive. The money we raise will be going to our local food bank in Carnegie. The juniors will once again be donating our time to make pysanky for the forty-first Annual Pysanky Sale. Our junior chapter receives money from the senior chapter for helping with the pysanky.

We are looking forward to the lock-ins and retreats coming up. We can't wait to see what we will be doing next.

And, you should plan to attend our CONVENTION!

NEWS FROM PALOS PARK, IL

by Fr. Taras Naumenko

In December, Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, Palos Park, celebrated a day of the wondrous St. Nicholas. As a tradition, Jr. UOL members put on a play reflecting the life of this great saint. The play is enjoyed by faithful of all ages, but especially by little children who always receive a special gift.



Performers and children meet with St. Nicholas

And just days away from the Nativity of our Lord, children of the parish, with the help of adults, decorate the church for the big celebration. The garlands, the lights, the flowers and the trees are beautifully decorated with colorful embroidery.



Youngsters helping with the decorating

L.S.S.K. SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS Due: May 31, 2007

Applications are Available from the UOL page at the
www.UOCOFUSA.org website or by contacting:

Daria Pishko Komichak

64 Coleman Avenue, Chatham, NJ 07928

dapia@aol.com

Qualifications for the scholarship include:

- being a current or past member of the Junior UOL;
- enrolled in or about to enroll in a program of advanced education;
- a record of outstanding performance in the service to the Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox League;
- academic performance in high school;
- involvement in extracurricular activities and be of high ethical and moral character.

O.C.M.C. Journal: Kolkata (Calcutta) and Ahkina, West Bengal, India

August 23-September 17, 2006

By Fr. Paul Martin*

Three mission priests, Fr. Stephen Callos of the Greek Archdioces, Fr. Nathan Kroll of the O.C.A. and I*, depart Chicago O'Hare for Heathrow, 08/23/06, at 9:15 P.M. The flight is just under 10 hours, followed by a 3 hour holdover in London. We leave Heathrow at about 3 P.M. London time for Calcutta (now officially Kolkata), another 10 hour flight with little or no sleep. Arriving in Kolkata, we stay at Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church Friday and Saturday, then depart for the village of Ahkina on Sunday following Divine Liturgy. Though Ahkina is only 60 miles from Kolkata, it takes nearly 4 hours to arrive due to primitive roads.

The adventure begins with a blast of scalding, wet air on our faces as we walk out of the airport terminal. We barely have time to catch our breath when a gang of boys is upon us. With a clamor, several boys rush forward with paper cups of coffee. The one who reaches me first thrusts a cup at me. Without thinking I take it, and he demands payment. *Welcome to Kolkata!*

We make haste to our van. The ride to Kalighat, that section of the city where the Orthodox church stands, is hair-raising, with many close calls and little traffic control—a multitude of cars, motorcycles, autorickshaws and buses darting about us like rats in a maze. We arrive at the Orthodox Church without having slept for 24 hours, relieved to have reached our destination but also intrigued. Kolkata is on the other side of the world, truly a far-away land, and we are keen to do a little exploring.

After unloading our baggage we take a walk. There is no end to the filth in the streets. Most memorable, though, is the smell of death. It is in the air everywhere, but it stinks to high heaven near Kalighat Temple, the largest Hindu shrine in the world, where carcasses of goats sacrificed to the goddess Kali are thrown in the street and rot. There we encounter a leper woman of 70 or so—it is hard to estimate age here. She emerges from the surrounding filth and beckons with outstretched arms. Our eyes meet—hers are liquid, imploring. Nearby the priests of Kali also beckon. I am told they offer a tour of the temple—for a price.

In the ghettos of Kolkata there are always boys flying kites. It is a way for the imagination to rise into the heights. While kites soar, I see people looking up with serene faces—faces radiant with hope and faith in the goodness of life. This will be one of my most enduring impressions of India.

On Saturday morning Fr. Andrew Mondale, pastor of Holy Transfiguration Church, opens the gates to children and other homeless who come for biscuits and milk. Though poor beyond our comprehension, they show such gratitude—and the children are irrepressible, sweet and joyful. Being with these people is a blessing. They bless us with their smiles and signs of gratitude. As we minister to them, they minister to us. It is a foretaste of the Kingdom of Heaven—a foretaste, I say, for the heat is hellish and the pollution asphyxiating. Traffic is dense in this city, and the government does not believe in emission control. Our air-conditioned rooms provide a respite, but at night sleep is difficult because of jet lag, packs of barking dogs and the cacophony of traffic. Kolkata never sleeps, and while in Kolkata, it seems, neither do I. My bed is a thin mattress stretched over a plywood plank.

Our mission is to teach the fundamentals of Orthodox Christian Faith

Ahkina: Monday, 8/28-Friday, 9/15, 2006: Our mission is to teach the fundamentals of our Orthodox Christian faith to the native people, the clergy and the newly baptized, mostly farmers and simple villagers. In West Bengal there are about 3,000 Orthodox Christians, 10 priests and 1 deacon, but all do not attend our seminars. Very few speak English, so translators are necessary. The weeks are a whirl of activity and the conditions are difficult, with temperatures ranging well above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, no air-conditioning, and only ceiling fans in our rooms. My fan provides some relief, though we have as many as 10 power outages in a day. Staying dry and crisp in the monsoon heat is impossible. Minutes after showering we are soaked in sweat. Daily Orthros and Vespers, said in Bengali, are difficult—we stand bare footed on tile floors for hours amid swarming gnats. Occasionally lizards creep along the iconostasis, stalking insects. This is not pleasant. I begin to look like a hobbit—Fathers Nathan and Stephen, too, but of the three pairs of feet mine are positively elephantine.

Mind you, I am not complaining. We missionaries at least have our own little cells with shower and comfortable cots, while the native priests are packed 4 to a room. Some have only floor mats for sleeping. And the people attending the seminars are accommodated in 2 large tents in the courtyard. I believe they are all sleeping on tarps. We Americans are living in comparative luxury. The Ahkina staff takes good care of us, washing our clothes, cleaning our rooms and preparing our meals with love and care.

During classes the people sit on hard floors for 6 long hours daily, while we are given comfortable chairs. But they are content and eager to learn, never sleepy. The only nodding heads I see are alert, affirmative. How good these people are, what wonderful students! They are childlike in many ways, and they have the faith of children!

Monday, 9/4/06: I start off with a class on creation. I use the analogy of the sun's heat when speaking of God's creative energies. One man asks if God is the sun, and I set him straight. The people can be very literal, but they understand well when I tell them that God is Love.

Tuesday, 9/5/06: After classes, Fr. Nathan and I take a walk in the countryside around Ahkina. We see a ramshackle shrine to the god Shiva consisting of a heap of bricks. The trident, symbol of this god, stands in the center. Someone had placed a potato before it as an offering. We do not move in close for fear of cobras, knowing that they love to inhabit such areas.

Wednesday, 9/6/05: During a class on the Eucharist a man asks, "What is a proper sacrifice to God?" He alludes to Hindu practices. I mention the potato offered to Shiva and ask, "Should we all bring a potato to Divine Liturgy and place it on the altar? Is this what God wants?" They all shake their heads. "What then does God want?" Their response, almost in unison, delights me immensely—"He wants our hearts!" I then speak to them about Psalm 51 and the significance of bulls being offered—how bulls are stubborn creatures, just as we are, and how we must offer our stubborn hearts to God for healing. They all understand, and I am pleased.

Earlier in the week I answer a question concerning the eating of foods sacrificed to the gods. It is a real concern here. Of course, St. Paul addresses this in 1 Cor. 8, but before India I never expected to find this passage of any practical use, at least not in this quite literal sense. We spend much time talking about this passage. The Orthodox here are surrounded by family and friends who try to make them return to Hindu ways. In most social situations food offered to the gods is served, and everyone is expected to partake.

(To be continued in the April 2007 UOL BULLETIN.)

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RELIGION: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

by Fr. John W. Harvey, St. Michael's Church, Woonsocket, RI

The meaning of “Boh Predvichny” at Christmas

Q: I have noticed that in the Kolyadi at Christmas, Boh Predvichny is usually rendered as *God Eternal*. It sounds great in translation, but having some knowledge of the Ukrainian language, I suspect that *predvichny* has more meaning than the mere word *vichny*. Is there more to this?

A: There **IS** more to this, basically a nuance that further clarifies a truth with razor sharpness. In the multiplicity of heresies that have come down through the ages, one approach is adoptionism. Hey, this nice **MAN** Jesus is so good that God adopts the man Jesus later as **SON**. Others like Nestorius would have Mary as Christotokos. She physically bore Jesus as man, but she was not the Mother of God in his estimation. What we say in truth is that Jesus, as God, was always with the Father and there was not a time when He was not. After the Annunciation through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus as man is conceived and His human nature has a beginning. One might say then that since He was always with the Father as a spirit and was the one who took part in our own creation, *He is eternal*. Because He existed before time He not only is eternal, but even more correctly pre-eternal. When we sing this precious Carol at Christmas we are not only proclaiming that this child is truly both God and Man and born as such in time, but as part of the Godhead has always been in existence.

On icons one will find the monogram, MR TH, which is short for Miter Theou, or Mother of God. This appellation is of course true, but in light of the Nestorian controversy, the holy fathers used the term *Theotokos*, Birth-Giver of God, as the more accurate technical title for Mary. Mother of God could be misconstrued by the ignorant that she was mother of the Godhead, like in some pagan myth. Theotokos delineates her purpose in the scheme of salvation. She bore Jesus, the True God, for as such the Son existed before time and as true man for He took flesh from her in time and was physically born from her. To return to the original question, *God Eternal*, the pre-eternal One, puts the miracle of the Incarnation into an even clearer focus.

Funeral services for priests and layman, a difference?

Q: I chanced to be present at the funeral of a priest and noted great differences from that of funeral for a layman. It seemed to me that the priests just seemed to take over the service and the immediate family and parish family were merely observers in the background. Am I perceiving this right?

A: As a priest is selected or called out from a community and even his own family to serve the Lord's vineyard in a special way, it is true that even in death it is the fraternity of priests who lovingly care for and bury one of their own. Washing the body with pure oil, doing the full priestly vesting and placing in the coffin are all done by the priestly brotherhood. The funeral director may help, but is fellow clergy who perform the abovementioned duties. In the coffin, one sees the Gospel book, from which the deceased addressed and taught the masses. His face is covered with the cloth that covers the holy gifts at the altar. In the priestly service during life, the deceased was the face of his particular community interceding at the heavenly throne and now his face is covered visible only to his maker, the Master whom he served. One can see already there is a certain distance created between the deceased and his own physical family and even the church family.

The services themselves are sung NOT by the parish choir but by the priests, and if possible to be present, the bishop, who is the chief of that fraternity of priests. The Epistles, Gospels and prayers are all done by that selfsame sacerdotal brotherhood. Although expressing the same truths that we find in the burial of a layman, namely that in the end we are all in the need of the mercy of God, there is a slightly different overview. For notwithstanding our rank, we all are sinners. The following prayer reflects our plea before the throne of God:

*“He who lived in godliness, and who was adorned as thy priest,
O Christ, the sacrificer and minister of thy mysteries divine, by
Thy divine command hath passed over from life's clamor unto
Thee. Save him, whom as priest, thou didst accept, O Savior;
and because of thy great mercy, grant him rest with the just.”*

The family is usually given a few private moments to view their beloved, as the chalice veil is held aside briefly, but the deceased, as priest, has passed beyond status of family member or as a friend in a secular manner. His priestly purpose in life as a preacher of salvation, distributor of the sacraments, intercessor for a community and servant at the throne of the Lord God goes beyond familial ties or bonds of casual friendship.

You were right in perceiving differences, but one can easily understand for all the importance as loving spouse, father or friend, it is the deceased's loving priestly service to the community, given him by God through the bishop, that is of the ultimate importance. By priests burying priests with plaintive chant and loving brotherly service, the reality of the deceased's purpose for living is prayerfully and fittingly underscored.

LIBBY'S CULTURE CORNER...

by Elizabeth Mitchell, Staff Writer

TARAS SHEVCHENKO “Bard of Ukraine” (1814-1861)

“In every land an in every literature there is one authority who is the outstanding incarnation of the national genius, one man who sums up all the past of the nation and stands out like a guide to the future . . . such a man for Ukraine was Taras Shevchenko, one of the masters of world poetry.”
(TARAS SHEVCHENKO BARD OF UKRAINE, preface by, Dr. Clarence Manning.)



Taras Shevchenko
(<http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~tarn/courses/429-pix/ts19.jpg>)

Taras Shevchenko is known as Ukraine's greatest literary genius and national hero. Born the son of a poor serf, he went through many hardships in his young life. When his friends raised funds and bought him out of serfdom, Shevchenko attended the imperial Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg. He soon directed his poetry against the social injustices in his country and against the political and cultural opposition of Ukraine by the Russian government.

In 1847, Shevchenko was arrested for writing revolutionary poetry. He was then forced into the Russian army and exiled to deserted outposts of the Russian Empire for ten years. At the time of the Civil War in America for the freedom of slavery, Shevchenko fought with his poetry for the freedom of his people from serfdom and servitude. He transformed

the aspirations of the long enslaved Ukrainian nation.

In “The Testament”, Shevchenko expressed a request that his remains would forever remain on a steep bank of the Dneiper River near the town of Kaniv. In 1988, on a visit to Ukraine, our tour group paused at Shevchenko's gravesite and with deep solemnity offered prayers and songs of his poetry. A verse from “The Testament” came to mind:

**“Bury me, be done with me, Rise and break your chain,
Water your new liberty with blood for rain.
Then, in the mighty family of all men that are free,
Maybe sometimes, very softly you will speak of me?”**

What a great moment for me (E. Mitchell)—never to be forgotten—standing at the grave of Ukraine's greatest poet, **Taras Shevchenko**.

References: “Taras Shevchenko Bard of Ukraine”, by D. Doreshenko, United Ukrainian Organizations of U.S., New York, NY. Other miscellaneous publications.
(Note: Thanks to Fr. Steve Repa for his assistance with this article. E.M.)

The Ukrainian Orthodox League Lenten Retreat March 18-20, 2007

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