



The Forerunner

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church
301 Struthers Liberty Rd
Campbell, OH 44405
OCA - Diocese of the Midwest



SEPTEMBER BULLETIN SPONSOR

Audrey Chengelis

Weekly Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, September 10

9:35 AM: Hours
10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Social /
Festival Meeting
2:00 PM: Fellar Wedding

Monday, September 11

6:00 PM: Orthodoxy 101 Class

Wednesday, September 13

6:00 PM: Great Vespers w/ Litya

Thursday, September 14– Strict Fast Day

9:00 AM: Divine Liturgy
10:15 AM: Book Club

Saturday, September 16

4:00 PM: Bible Study
6:00 PM: Vespers / Confessions

Sunday, September 17

9:35 AM: Hours
10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Monthly Panachida / Social
Council Meeting

September Social Schedule

Sunday, September 10– Tracy Zenko
Sunday, September 17– Sisterhood
Sunday, September 24– Social for First Responders

40 Day Remembrance

September 24 His Eminence Metropolitan
Daniel of Tokyo / Thomas Kristian
October 8– Karen Muzyka

**Blessing of
Campbell First
Responders
Staff and Vehicles**



Sunday, September 24, 2023

11:30 AM Blessing 

11:45 AM Complimentary lunch at
the church

All City Officials & First Responders
welcome!






ST. TIKHON'S SEMINARY LOOKING FOR SUSTAINERS

Sustainers provide regular monthly donations to the seminary through automatic deduction on their credit cards. On Sunday, September 17th at the social Fr. Andrew will explain further and answer any questions. Thank you!



PLEASE KEEP OUR SHUT-INS IN YOUR PRAYERS

Send a “Thinking of You” card or remember their Birthday with a card. If anyone needs to be added, please contact Fr. Andrew.

Martyrs Menodora, Metrodora, and Nymphodora, at Nicomedia

Commemorated on September 10

The Holy Virgins Menodora, Nymphodora, and Metrodora (305-311), were sisters from Bithynia (Asia Minor). Distinguished for their special piety, they wanted to preserve their virginity and avoid worldly associations. They chose a solitary place for themselves in the wilderness and spent their lives in deeds of fasting and prayer.

Reports of the holy life of the virgins soon spread, since healings of the sick began to occur through their prayers. The Bithynia region was governed at that time by a man named Frontonus, who ordered that the sisters be arrested and brought before him.

At first he tried to persuade them to renounce Christ, promising great honors and rewards. But the holy sisters steadfastly confessed their faith before him, rejecting all his suggestions. They told him that they did not value the temporal things of this world, and that they were prepared to die for their Heavenly Bridegroom, for death would be their gateway to eternal life.

Flying into a rage, the governor took out his wrath on Saint Menodora, the eldest sister. She was stripped of her clothes and beaten by four men, while a herald urged her to offer sacrifice to the gods. The saint bravely endured the torments and cried out, “Sacrifice? Can’t you see that I am offering myself as a sacrifice to my God?” Then

they renewed their torments with even greater severity. Then the martyr cried out, “ Lord Jesus Christ, joy of my heart, my hope, receive my soul in peace.” With these words she gave up her soul to God, and went to her Heavenly Bridegroom.

Four days later, they brought the two younger sisters Metrodora and Nymphodora to the court. They showed them the battered body of their older sister to frighten them. The virgins wept over her, but remained steadfast.

Then Saint Metrodora was tortured. She died, crying out to her beloved Lord Jesus Christ with her last breath. Then they turned to the third sister, Nymphodora. Before her lay the bruised bodies of her sisters. Frontonus hoped that this sight would intimidate the young virgin.

Pretending that he was charmed by her youth and beauty, he urged her to worship the pagan gods, promising great rewards and honors. Saint Nymphodora scoffed at his words, and shared the fate of her older sisters. She was tortured and beaten to death with iron rods.

The bodies of the holy martyrs were to be burned in a fire, but a heavy rain extinguished the blazing fire, and lightning struck down Frontonus and his servant. Christians took up the bodies of the holy sisters and reverently buried them at the so-called Warm Springs at Pythias (Bithynia).

Part of the relics of the holy martyrs are preserved on Mt. Athos in the Protection cathedral of the Saint Panteleimon Russian monastery, and the hand of Saint Metrodora is on the Holy Mountain in the monastery of the Pantocrator.

PRAYER LIST– Updated 8-30-23

PARISHIONERS: Achilles Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / George Horodnic / Irene Horodnic / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / Paula Kennedy / George Kolesar / Barbara Kolesar / Mary Jane Puskas / Kenny Ruff / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Marion Zwinski / Mary and her unborn child

FAMILY & FRIENDS: Archbishop Benjamin / Bishop Matthias / Fr. James Gleason (Fr.) / sub-deacon Wylie Meath (Fr.) / Bruce (Hryb) / Bret (Zelinsky) / Dominic (Centofanti) / Ellen (Clark) / Katie (Garrity) / Basil Glovinsky (Fr.) / Ellen (Kessler) / Eleanor Marie (Kidder) / Paul (Kolesar) / Kathy (Kolesar) / Malakai (Kolesar) / Andrew LaChard (Jesko) / Mea (Mahan) / Mary (Mahan) / Pauline Meath (Fr.) / Matushka Raissa (Nicoloff) / Eugene (Pallai) / Ksenia and her unborn child (Petrochko) / Matushka Helen (Psinka) / Chris Quotap (Fr.) / Kristianna & infant Mary Louise (Robinson) / William Romanchak (Fr.) / Julia (Shirilla) / Katherine (Steffaro) / Johanna (Tusinac) / Richard (Tusinac) / Brian (Shirilla) / Joseph (Vansuch) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Paula (Voytilla) / Mary Ann Bozichovich (Kennedy) / Patty Bozichovich (Vansuch) / Sarah and her newborn Zoe / Drew (Willison) / Emilia Yannitto / Zoland Zile, (Fr.)

MILITARY FAMILY & FRIENDS: Cory Deaton (Fr.) / Alena Grabavoy (Fr.) / Liam Garrity (Zelinsky)

MISCELLANEOUS: Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Diocese of Aleppo) & Archbishop John (Archdiocese of Aleppo) still being held captive / The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers around the world / Those suffering persecution in Syria, Iraq, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and around the world.

Matthew 22:1-14 (Gospel)

And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.’” But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

THANK YOU

Thank you Anne Cvercko, for donating the flowers for the Exaltation of the Cross, in memory of her parents Morris & Antonik Pecuszor



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<https://www.stjohnthebaptist-campbell.org/>

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**ARCHPASTORAL GREETINGS OF THE
MOST REVEREND DANIEL, ARCHBISHOP
OF CHICAGO AND THE MIDWEST, ON
THE OCCASION OF THE BEGINNING OF
THE INDICTION & THE ECCLESIASTICAL
NEW YEAR**

Beloved Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest:

Thy Nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, hath proclaimed joy to the whole world,
for from thee hath shone forth the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God,
Who annulling the curse hath bestowed blessing,
and destroying death hath granted us eternal life.

—Troparion of the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

For Orthodox Christians, September 1st marks the start of the New Church Year, also known as the Beginning of the Indiction. As we enter this New Year of Grace, the first Great Feast that we celebrate is the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, September 8.

In reflecting on the birth of Mary of Nazareth and her singular role in the history of salvation, we notice that the Gospel of John speaks of only two moments when the public life of Jesus directly intersects with His Mother. Of course, Mary's very life was intimately connected to that of her Son from the very moment of His conception, and Matthew and Luke make special note of this in their Infancy Narratives. However, John only mentions these two moments: the beginning of the Lord's public ministry at the wedding feast in Cana (John 2:1-12) and the moment when Mary stands beneath the Cross (John 19:25-27). Perhaps the Holy Evangelist wants to show us the Mother of Jesus in these two completely opposite situations in human life: the bright joy of a wedding feast and the profound sorrow at the death of a child.

Let us hone in, however, on the special place of Mary in John's account of the Lord's Passion and Death. The first thing that John mentions is Mary "standing near the cross of Jesus" (John 19:25), close to her Son as He suffered the pains of the Cross and shed His blood for the salvation of mankind. Mary stood there, at the foot of the cross, filled with sorrow—yet with unwavering conviction, courage, and fidelity. This is the main way that Mary appears in the Gospel of John: she stands near those who suffer and want, those rejected and marginalized by the world, those on the very fringes of our social and

economic order. It is in this role as Mother that Mary stands close by us all, steadfast and faithful near the cross of human sorrow and suffering, yet ever under the shadow of the Cross of Her Son.

In this way, Mary also teaches us how to "stand near" these situations. It demands more than simply acknowledging the realities of human suffering; rather, those in painful situations should feel us standing faithfully and fearlessly at their side. All those suffer any pain or loss can experience the Mother who remains near them, for in their sufferings she sees the open wounds of her Son Jesus. She learned this at the foot of the cross. We too are called to respond to the sufferings of others. Following the example of Mary, let us go out to meet our suffering brothers and sisters, to console them and accompany them. Let us not be afraid to experience the power of tenderness, to be involved, even in the most uncomfortable of situations, and to let our lives become complicated for the sake of others. Inspired by Her, the Most Pure One, let us remain steadfast and faithful, our hearts at peace in God in even the most difficult circumstances of life. Let us be ever ready to lift up the fallen, raise up the lowly, showing them the love and that "peace beyond understanding" that only comes from God (cf. Philippians 4:7).

Grateful that the beginning of September brings with it this special Feast, let us also acknowledge that every day of every year, no matter the month or the season, offers us the grace-filled occasion to give thanks to God for His many blessings, just as each day presents the opportunity to be present with those who are suffering in any way. Every day of every year invites us to draw closer to Christ, to grow in holiness, to bear witness to our faith, and to continue stand with those who are suffering and in any kind of need. As we enter into the New Church Year, we look forward to another Year of Grace, living the Gospel, serving our brothers and sisters, and experiencing the Church's liturgical cycle which invites us to enter, ever more deeply, into the great mystery of our salvation.

In this new Ecclesiastical Year, let us entrust ourselves, our families and loved ones, our parishes, and all the world to the loving maternal care and protection of the Holy Theotokos.

With love in the Lord,

+DANIEL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

REPOSED LIST FOR SEPTEMBER

- Tony Ginarakis (1938) ©
Michael Pikos (1962) ©
Stephen Feltovich , Sr. (1968)
1-His Eminence Bishop Nikon (2019)
1-George Diakogannes (1930) ©
2-Manuel Melas (1936) ©
2-Vasili Mastrovasilis (1950) ©
4-Nicholas Vaytilla (1982) ©
4-Helen Sarisky (1945) ©
5-Archpriest Anastasy Richter (2021)
5-Nicholas Babinec (1920) ©
5-John Hauscin (1924) ©
5-Andrew Pretko (1953) ©
5-Katherine Mistovich (1963) ©
6-His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman (2022)
6-Andrew Shirilla (1956) ©
7-Barbara Jackubek Barnyak (2013) ©
8-Steve Kolas (1980) ©, Steve Graban (1994) ©
9-John Kalas (1923) ©
10- Eudoxia Alisofis (1933) ©
11- George Magdos (1940) ©
11-Infant Kaulianas (1957) ©
11-John Kavouklis (1959) ©
13- Ann Vavlas (1947) ©,
13-Bertha Mastraselis (1960) ©
13-Irene Xenakis (1965) ©
14-John Roman (1943)
14-Mary Leschinsky (1959) ©
15-Steve Bartek (1962)
15-Terri Lariccia (2021)
15-Mike Kotousis (1935) ©
16-Billy Deaton (2022)
17-Victoria Mraz (2004) ©
17-Katherine Despalorich (1961) ©
18-Stephen Sature (2004)
18-Bob Whitham Sr (2020)
18-Dimitri Velichkoff (1927) ©
18-Michael Leschinsky (1959) ©
19-George Bolina, Sr (1981) ©
19-Mary Shirilla (1987) ©
19-Mary Stewart (2016) ©
19-John Yurchak (1926) ©
19-Andrew Graban (1942) ©
19-Andrew Shirilla (1956) ©
20-Mary Patellis (1925) ©
21-Olga Bilas Klddon (2014) ©
21-Nettie Kucheruk (2007) ©
21-Steve Furin (1965) ©
22-Sophie Taboh (1979) ©
22-John Davis (2009) ©
22-Anthony Tranarakes (1949) ©
24-Michael Vansuch (1982) ©
24-Martha Shevetz (1983) ©
24-Anna Semon (1987) ©
25-George Taloban Malahralko (1977) ©
25-Steven Sirilla (1987) ©
25-Helen Graban (2009) ©
27-Michael Holobanich (1969) ©
27-Helen Libertyn (1976) ©
27-John Cvercko (2000) ©
27-Nicholas Strineka (1931) ©
27-Anthonias Michailas (1961) ©
28-Helen Drotar (1971) ©
28-John Matic (1922) ©
29-Julia Rich Holibonich (2016) ©
29-Barbara Sveda (1961) ©
30-Bishop John Martin (1984)
30-Tommy Leonchik (2020)
30-Laurissa Rusnak Sirilla (2022) ©
30-Vasilis Klimas (1949) ©

2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4 (Epistle)

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

September Celebrations

BIRTHDAYS

1-Dennis Konik
 3-Lynn Basala
 4-Deborah Zelinsky
 6-Dc. David Gemmel
 7-Michael Simko
 8-Joshua Rusnak
 9-Kim Konik
 11-Brian Lucas, Joann Sirilla
 13- Ed Graban
 14-Debbie Perman, Chris Baxter, Sub-deacon Donald Tamulonis
 17-Barbara Kolesar
 18-Ron Tusinac, V.R Archpriest David Lis
 23-Gregory Simko

22-Pani Bethany Mihaly
 25-Michael Litzie, Stella Graban
 26-Jim Basala
 27-Tracy Zenko

ANNIVERSARIES

3-Frank & Crystal Batura
 5-Ron & Nancy Tusinac
 7-Steven & Karen Simko
 9-Mary Margaret & Andrew James (Tusinac)
 9-Michael & Martha Centofanti
 13-Sam & Angie Dardovski
 13- Fr. Peter Zarynow (Priestly Anny)
 17- Dc James & Matushka Hryb
 28-1990- Retired Bishop Lazar of Ottawa

NAMES DAY

30- AB Michael of NY & NJ

Metropolitan Tikhon visits St. Tikhon's Seminary for Student Orientation and Alumni Association Gathering

On Thursday, August 31, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon traveled to Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary in South Canaan, PA, to participate in the student orientation for the new academic year and the 8th Annual Alumni Retreat and Gathering, sponsored by the Saint Tikhon's Alumni Association.

On Thursday morning, His Beatitude was welcomed to the seminary by Archpriest John Parker, Dean, Archpriest Patrick Burns, Alumni Association President, and seminary staff, students, alumni, and their families. His Beatitude addressed seminarians in the Convocation Center, welcoming them to the seminary on behalf of the Holy Synod of Bishops and the seminary Board of Trustees. In his address, he encouraged seminarians to maintain their discipline and enthusiasm and to always trust in Christ. At the conclusion of his address, His Beatitude answered questions from seminarians and alumni before blessing first-year seminarians to wear cassocks. Following lunch, Father Andrew Stephen Damick, Chief Content Officer of Ancient Faith Ministries and Saint Tikhon's Seminary alumnus, led the first of two seminars entitled "Preaching the Gospel in a Land of Confusion." After vespers and matins in the monastery church, a cookout was hosted by the Alumni Association.

On Friday, September 1, the Ecclesiastical New Year, His Beatitude attended the Divine Liturgy celebrated at the monastery church. Later in the morning, His Beatitude participated in the Alumni Association's annual business meeting before departing for Virginia.

FINAL FINANCIALS FOR AUGUST

Expenses \$10,417.87
 Income..... \$9,996.82
 TOTAL -\$421.05

Weekly Tithe..... \$4,432
 Weekly Candles \$409
 Assessment..... \$70
 Incense \$25
 Tetrapod Candles \$50
 Advent Social..... \$60
 Iconastasis Candles \$50
 Protection Icon..... \$30
 Elevation of Cross Flowers \$100
 Nancy Boldish..... \$20

OTHER INCOME

Ohio Bureau of Workmen's Comp \$154.82
 Diocesan Donation \$5
 Pymt on Rectory Bed \$100

SEPTEMBER Liturgical Attendance

Day	Vespers	Divine Liturgy	Communi-cants
Tues. Aug 29		9	
Sunday, Sep 3		81	48



"...that we here highly resolve
that these dead shall not have died
in vain; that this nation shall have
a new birth of freedom; and that this
government of the people, by the
people, for the people, shall not
perish from the earth.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address,
November 19, 1863.

IN MEMORIAM



Real Heroes Don't Wear Capes.

It's Christmas in Australia
and we're ready for the heat.
It's backyard cricket and swimming pools
and it really can't be beat!

But this year feels a bit different.
I'm only 11 yet I know,
Our country is on fire
and this drought? It just won't go.

There's smoke and ash and burning leaves
that cover our Aussie sky.
Our wildlife, bush and property,
incinerating before our eyes.

Our farmers are losing their cattle,
Our country businesses going broke.
Yet our Aussie spirit of helping another,
has not gone up in smoke.

We're not in a movie, a book or TV,
not a bat phone or signal in sight.
But a bonded group of heroes we have,
On the fire front they fight.

No super speed, no flash costume,
no cape attached on their back.
Just kilograms of equipment, a truck,
and a will that knows no slack.

It's yellow suits and helmets,
It's dragging a heavy hose.
It's facing a wall of fire,
guessing which way the wind might blow.

SIGN-UP / VOLUNTEERS FOR SOCIALS

It has been customary that the “O” Club , Sisterhood, & council sponsor the coffee socials.

We are asking for individuals or families to please sponsor a social on a rotating basis. With enough volunteers, the rotation of sponsors could be once a quarter. Even though the above groups take a particular Sunday, getting a break would be nice.

Bagels, donuts and coffee is perfectly fine.
A simple meal is perfectly fine.

Please see Fr. Andrew so he can put you on a schedule.

As of right now on any given month:

First Sunday	“O” Club
Second Sunday	Council
Third Sunday	Sisterhood
Fourth Sunday	Open
Fifth Sunday	Open (when applicable)

SEPTEMBER BULLETIN CANDLE SPONSOR

Wine: (*\$50 for the month*) In memory of Steve, Eileen Elash and Tim Nolder and all members of the Elash & Graban Families— Given by Cindy Ferrick

Incense: (*\$25 for the month*) For the Health of all the members of the Elash and Graban Families— Given by Cindy Ferrick

Bulletin: (*\$50 for the month*) Sponsored by Audrey C.

Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light: (*\$50 for the month*) From the Wilfong & Basile Family

Altar Candles: (*\$50 for the month*) In honor of Nancy & Ron Tusinac & Mary & Andrew on the occasion of their Anniversary’s- Given by Nancy. Tusinac

Tetrapod Candles: (*\$50 for the month*) In honor of Mary Margaret & Andrew James on the occasion of their Anniversary / In memory of parents Morris & Antonia Pecuszok— Given by Ann Cvercko

Candles @ St John the Baptist Icon in back of church: (*\$30 for month or \$20 for just 1 week*) In Memory of His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman & His Eminence Archbishop Nikon—Given By Fr. Andrew

Candles @ Protection Icon in back of Church: (*\$30 for month*) In honor of Tracy, Ron Jr., & Ethan on the occasion of their birthdays— Given by Tracy Zenko

Candles @ St. Panteleimon Icon in front of church: (*\$30 for month or \$20 for just a week*) In memory of my grandfather Steve Bartek & all my family & friends reposed in September—Given by FR Andrew Bartek

Candles @ St. Herman in front of Church: (*\$30 for month or \$20 for just a week*) TAKEN

Flowers: (*\$75*) In honor of Nancy & Ron

Metropolitan Tikhon visits All Saints of America in Alexandria, VA

On Saturday, August 26, and Sunday, August 27, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon made an arch-pastoral visit to All Saints of America Church in Alexandria, VA.

At the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, His Beatitude elevated Priest Alessandro Margheritino, who is serving both as the parish priest and the Secretary of the Orthodox Church in America, to the dignity of archpriest.

At the conclusion of the liturgy, His Beatitude greeted the faithful and announced that All Saints of America would be raised from mission to parish status effective September 1.

His Beatitude also presented relics of American saints, the heavenly patrons of the community, as well as a new antimimension, the first assigned to the community since its founding in 2008 by the late Archpriest Michael Koblosh.

Axios to the Archpriest Alessandro and many years to the All Saints of America community!

Schedule Announced for Episcopal Consecration of Archimandrite Nikodhim

The schedule information for the episcopal consecration of Bishop-elect V. Rev. Archimandrite Nikodhim has been made available.

The consecration will take place on Saturday, September 16, 2023 at Saint George Albanian Orthodox Cathedral. Matins will begin at 9:00 AM followed by His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon presiding at the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, at which time Archimandrite Nikodhim will be consecrated to the episcopacy of the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America.

A luncheon is to follow in the Athanas Auditorium.

OCA young adults participate in Suprasl 2023

Seven young adults representing the Orthodox Church in America were among the more than seventy participants from around the world who participated in Suprasl 2023, the second annual World Gathering of Orthodox Youth [WGOY] that took place August 10-18 at the Suprasl Academy in the Monastery of the Annunciation.

The event attracted over 140 applicants from Poland, Italy, Mexico, France, Albania, Finland, Australia, the United States, Canada, Greece, Germany, and many other countries. This year's participants represented 10 of the world's autocephalous Orthodox Churches. The gathering was organized by the recently established Suprasl: A World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth which seeks to provide a venue and opportunities for Orthodox youth to celebrate their common faith in Jesus Christ, share their culture and lives, and support and encourage each other through prayer and fellowship.

The week-long event explored the theme "Bear Witness of the Light," (Jn. 1:7) through workshops and lectures offered by speakers from the U.K., Serbia, the U.S., Romania, Belarus, and Poland. "This year's gathering was unique in that the participants not only participated in lectures and workshops of a spiritual and theological nature but two days of the event were dedicated to a mini-youth leadership training course," said Mr. Dawid Szejbut, the event's assistant director.

Archpriest John Behr, Regius Professor of Humanity at the University of Aberdeen, headed the list of speakers by offering a series of lectures on the theme of the week. Father John encouraged the participants to adopt the mind of the Holy Scriptures in their lives and challenged them to become better acquainted with Holy Scripture through dedicated reading and study so that they might more effectively "bear witness of light" (Jn. 1:7). The other keynote lecture of the week was offered by Dr. Alexandra Stevanovich, Research Associate Center for the Scientific Research Faculty of Philosophy and Arts University of Kragujevac, Serbia, on Orthodoxy & Artificial Intelligence. Through her lecture and a secondary workshop Stevanovich explored the subtle connections between AI and Orthodoxy, the challenges and opportunities that AI poses to spiritual life, and what it means to be human in the AI world.

Other workshops and presentations were on effective leadership, Orthodoxy and life, ecology,

Byzantine Chant, creating Orthodox media and cheesemaking were given by Piotr Michalczuk and Izabela Senderacka, members of Suprasl's leadership training team, Poland; Teodora Paul, Romania; Michael Azar, USA; Eugeny Lobanov, director of Suprasl's ecology initiatives, Belarus; and Elie Shackelford Bernasol, Ancient Faith Ministries, USA.

A highlight of the schedule was the performance of the original play based on the life of Saint Maria of Paris titled, "No Once Can be a Number", performed by a local amateur theater group. The life of Saint Maria and the focus of the play on refugee life in France in the 1930s was particularly poignant considering the present worldwide refugee crisis. The performance left the participants with a desire to act in their local and regional communities. "Saint Maria is a saint that I myself feel very close to", said Elizabeth Sedor, St Mark Church, Bethesda, Maryland. "This conference is aiming to create Orthodox leaders, to build bridges between countries, and to create action...and this is what Saint Maria wanted, her example of doing something, anything, whatever somebody asks you to do, whatever somebody needs you to do, that's the sort of leadership the world needs, and that is what Suprasl 2023 has instilled in us."

Each day of the gathering began and finished with prayers and a spiritual reflection in the monastery's cathedral church led by the gathering's chaplain, Priest Theodore Svane from Norway with prayers and hymns read and sung in multiple languages.

Participants of the WGOY also participated in the annual pilgrimage to the Holy Mountain of Grabarka for the Feast of the Transfiguration joining thousands of pilgrims on the final day of the five-day walking pilgrimage bearing a cross painted by gathering participant Nina Misijuk. Following the vigil service for the feast, Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and All Poland met with the participants to congratulate them on their participation in the gathering. During the address, he encouraged them to remain faithful and work hard for the growth and continuation of Christ's mission in their communities. The youth presented His Beatitude with a framed t-shirt made specially for the gathering and signed by all the participants .

"I had the privilege to travel to Poland to attend Suprasl 2023," said Savannah Foster, Nativity of the Lord Mission, Shreveport, Louisiana. "Not only did I leave more about Holy Scriptures through Fr John's lectures, but also learned more about myself. I made lifelong friendships from all over the world, and I learned what it means to carry your cross with 10,000 other Orthodox Christians as we walked on the pilgrimage. It truly was a life changing event and I encourage everyone to participate **Con't next Pg**

Young adults con't from previous page

in next year's event."

"It was a blessing to be able to again host the second annual World Gathering of Orthodox Youth here at the Monastery of the Annunciation and the Suprasl Academy", said Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak. "Through this, and other events we will be organizing, Suprasl aims to make the monastery and the academy here a venue where Orthodox youth from all around the world can encounter each other, share their lives, create projects together and encourage each other to continue walking on the path of Jesus Christ."

Plans are in the works for future projects which will include a leadership training course in November, a workshop for Orthodox actors and performing artists in January 2024, and next summer's Suprasl 2024.

To connect or get involved with future events, you can join the Suprasl WhatsApp group. For specific queries, contact Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak at jmatusiak@suprasl2022.org.

Suprasl is an independent organization that works with the blessing and support of His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and All Poland. Suprasl 2023 was made possible in part by generous donations from the Orthodox Vision Foundation, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Albanian Archdiocese of the Orthodox Church in America, Orthodox Journeys, and many generous individual donors. The World Gathering of Orthodox Youth has its roots in the Suprasl Summer Institute (1994-2000), a project founded by the OCA's Youth Department in cooperation with the Fellowship of Orthodox Youth in Poland and the Orthodox Youth Movement in Finland.



US PENTAGON

