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## Preserving Ukrainian Culture and Spirituality

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# Preserving Ukrainian Culture and Spirituality

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Wednesday May 31, 2023

By Ann Zlotnik

The Marian Library has been collecting Ukrainian Marian art and ephemera for decades. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine we have made a conscious effort to acquire and add newly created artworks to our collection. Why is this important? One reason is to support the people of Ukraine and the artists who continue working during this volatile time. The second reason is to be a safe haven for this sacred art and help preserve the cultural — and spiritual — work of creating icons. In Ukraine the creation of icons has been a symbol of resistance and resilience during times of foreign occupation and repression.

Many opportunities have surfaced since the Marian Library began collecting new pieces for the collection. The decision to host a traveling exhibit featuring the sacred art of eight female Ukrainian artists led to the curation of a complementary display showcasing our Ukrainian Marian Collection. Word of the exhibit turned into a conversation with Kettering City Council

member Jyl Hall. In addition to her duties on City Council, Hall is an adjunct professor for Asbury University and United Theological Seminary. She has a doctorate in intercultural studies from Asbury Theological Seminary.

In order to increase public awareness about Ukrainian iconography and the threat of cultural erasure and loss that it currently faces, Hall is coming to the University of Dayton for a special speaking event. Please join us at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, June 7 in the Roesch Library Gathering Place, or [register](#) to participate via Zoom. Those who attend in person will be invited to explore the *East Meets West* exhibit after the presentation. The traveling portion of the exhibit, *Women Icon Makers of West Ukraine*, will close on June 30. By attending this event you will be sure not to miss this inspiring display of contemporary sacred icons.

— *Ann Zlotnik is a graphic designer and the communications and creative coordinator for the University Libraries and the Marian Library.*