



# St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

March/April 2009

## On the Necessity of Abstinence

*by Bishop Alexander Mileant +*

**F**asting, by definition, means abstaining from food, drink, and pleasures. Sometimes abstinence is manifested by not eating anything at all (for one or several days). Most frequently, however, it is accomplished by giving up meat and dairy products and switching to vegetarian foods. In medical terms, fasting is similar to dieting. It is a diet with an important spiritual goal.

The necessity of abstinence of food arises from the human constitution itself, possessing not only a body but an immortal soul. Because of the sinfulness of our nature, the harmony between our body and soul has been disturbed. As a result, the desires of the flesh often predominate and sometimes completely stifle all the soul's endeavors for righteousness. A person becomes a pitiable slave to his passions and at times worse than an animal. It is possible to restrain one's physical desires and to allow the soul's noble aspirations to bloom and strengthen with the help of prayer and fasting.

It should be noted that the commandment of abstinence was given to our forefathers Adam and Eve when they were still in paradise and, hence, were sinless. We refer here to the commandment forbidding them to eat the fruits from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). Fasting became especially necessary after their fall, and we see in the Bible that righteous people throughout the Old and New Testaments fasted during certain periods of their lives. A few examples follow.

The great prophet Moses, the law-giver of the Old Testament, had been fasting for 40 days before he received the Ten Commandments from God on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 34:38). The righteous king David fasted frequently, as we can conclude from his God-inspired psalms. The great prophet Elijah (1 Kings Ch. 19), who was taken up to heaven alive, also used to fast. The prophet Daniel had fasted before he received the revelation from God about the destiny of his people (Acts 10). The prophet John the Baptist fasted to a great extent and also taught his disciples to do so. The prophetess Anna, living at the temple for about fifty years, served God by fasting and praying throughout the day and night. For that she became worthy of God's grace and received His revelation about the birth of Jesus Christ (Luke 2:37).

Even the sinless God-and-man our Lord Jesus Christ fasted for 40 days to prepare for His mission of the salvation of the world. Following His example, the Apostles and the early Christians used to fast also, as can be found in the epistles of Saint Paul (Acts 13:3; 1 Cor. 7:5 and 9:27; 2 Cor. 6:5 and 11:27). From early Church history we learn that the dedication of particular days of the year to fasting became a widespread practice among Christians in the first few centuries. That is why in our time also the Church gives such great importance to Lent and states that without prayer and fasting, spiritual growth is impossible.

The books of the New Testament teach about the benefits of fasting. In answer to the Pharisees' reproach that Christ's disciples did not fast, the Lord answered that the time to fast had not yet arrived because the Bridegroom (Christ) was with them. But when the Bridegroom will be taken away (that is, when Christ dies), then they will fast (Luke 5:33-35). Therefore, since apostolic times it has become customary to fast on Wednesdays, when Judas betrayed Christ, and on Fridays, when Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross. For the same reason, the Church timed Lent to the days preceding the Passion Week. To the disciples' question as to why they could not drive out a demon, the Lord answered: "This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:21). In fact, demons for the most part work through our carnal nature, arousing in it improper passions, thus pushing us towards all kinds of sins, and in this way controlling our will.

To free ourselves of their influence, it is necessary to weaken the body and strengthen the soul through abstinence and prayer. Of course, one has to fast for the sake of improving oneself and not to be praised by people, as the Lord explained in his Sermon on the Mount. He said: "So that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father Who is in the secret place; and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you openly" (Matthew 6:18).

The heirs of the Apostles, the Holy Fathers and teachers of the Church, impressed on Christians the importance of fasting during Lent. "Do not scorn the Forty day Fast," writes Saint Ignatius of Antioch to the Philippians. "It is the imitation of the life of Christ." The Blessed Jerome, in

*Continued on page 4*

St. Xenia of Petersburg Orthodox Church is a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, under the omophorion of Met. HILARION of Eastern America & New York. The parish newsletter is published bi-monthly under the direction of the Rev. Michael Crowley. In order to ensure timely delivery to our far-flung parish, please submit all notices by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication to Margaret Lark at (603) 332-9613, e-mail: [woolfolk3@gmail.com](mailto:woolfolk3@gmail.com), or to Father Michael at [tcrowley@maine.rr.com](mailto:tcrowley@maine.rr.com). Thank you.

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(978) 204-0428 (cell phone with voice mail)

Confessions on Saturday during Vigil, on Sunday during the Hours, and by appointment

**Parish Council**

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Choir Director: Michael Lang (603) 465-975

**Trapeza Schedule**

**\* =Strict Fast (no meats, fish or dairy)**

If you cannot be at church on your assigned Sunday please call and switch with someone. If you have any questions contact Karen Schidlovsky at (603) 868-6410. Trapeza can be whatever you would like to prepare on your day. Some parishioners prefer to make a big lunch but this isn't necessary. As long as there is enough food for about 50 people, anything is appreciated. Donuts, fruit and pastries are as acceptable as soup and sandwiches. Thank you in advance for your contribution.

**March**

- 1 Pam Reed, Carolyn Savage, Diane Mendez  
(*Cheesefare Sunday*)
- \*8 Chaplain Family
- \*15 Anna Mukhanov, Olga Medvedeva
- \*22 Maria Kasarda, Tania Sciaudone, Nina Yakuboff
- \*29 Matushka Nancy, Megan Nettleton, Katia Fredette

**April**

- \*5 Karen Schidlovsky, Nancy Harris, Tanya Vlasenko
- \*12 Masha Harris, Kot Engalichev
- 19 Pascha
- 26 Natalie Botchkov, Natalya Kirichok

**Sisterhood News:** Thank you to Alexandra Gonzalez for her extended service and a job well-done as Sisterhood treasurer. And, welcome to our new treasurer, Diane Mendez! We look forward to her assistance. The Sisterhood is open to all women of the parish.

**Save the date!** The Lilac Nights Dinner Dance will be at the St. John of Damascus Church hall on June 12<sup>th</sup>. More information will be forthcoming

### Thank You...

... to all those who donated poinsettias and wreaths for the Feast of the Nativity. Your donations helped to beautify our parish on this most wondrous of Holidays!

... to Mireille Lang and all her crew and musicians. Our parish was treated to a festive and entertaining musical Yolka play on not just one, but two, Sundays! Bad weather helped to make our Nativity season even more festive than usual. We're looking forward already to next year's production! Special thanks to Mireille for taking this on year after year—it is greatly appreciated by all in the parish.

... to the children of our Sunday School for such a great job on their performances of *Amal and the Night Visitors*.

... to Alexandra Gonzalez for teaching the preschool group during Laryssa's 40 days' absence following the birth of Ephraim.

... to everyone who did such a wonderful job organizing the yolka this year: Mireille Lang, Pamela Reed, Natalie Pishenin, Charles Kronauer, Kristina Kronauer, Alexander and Helena Doohovskoy, and Matushka Nancy. The kids did a fabulous job--**both** times!

**Please remember in your prayers...**Nicholas, Lilly, Nina, Josephine, David, Vassilisa, Lilly Anne, Margaret, John (Gil).

Please remember to inform the Myrrhbearers Sisterhood if someone is in the hospital or shut in at home.

**Financial Update:** As of February 28, 2009, the balance on the church mortgage stands at \$33,335. If you have any questions, please see Subdeacon Constantine Desrosiers.

**Congratulations:** to Ephraim Alexeevich Doohovskoy and his family on his recent baptism. God bless and many years to you all!

**St. Herman's Youth Conference:** Our parish has been blessed with the honorable task of hosting the December 2009 St. Herman's Youth Conference. Please spread the word and encourage those members of your family who are in their mid and late teens and early 20's to save the dates around December 25 for participation in what will be, for the first time, a locally accessible conference for our Orthodox youth. Please contact Fr. Michael or Matushka Nancy with any assistance you may be able to

offer with planning, supplies, or other needs. Details will be available later in the year via our parish, as well as on the conference's and synodal websites.

In the meantime, the Youth Conference's beautiful patronal Icon of St. Herman of Alaska will reside in our parish throughout 2009.

**Paschal (Easter) Gift Envelope:** Your continued love and support for our parish is greatly appreciated. Enclosed within this newsletter is an envelope which can be used for making a Paschal (Easter) donation to St. Xenia Orthodox Church. If you choose to, feel free to specify which need you would like your donation to apply: church upkeep, cemetery upkeep, Sunday school, alms/charity, or whatever else is close to your heart. All gifts, no matter the size, are in support of the church's mission here on earth, and all gifts are truly and greatly appreciated. Thank you!

### A Reminder Concerning Financial Contributions:

To ensure tax compliance for 2009 contributions to our parish, if you are planning to itemize your deductions using Schedule A, the following donation methods are recommended:

1. If you plan to include deduction of your cash donations, please use the parish envelopes provided to you on the candle counter and write your name on the envelope.
2. For checks, if your name is not on the check (for instance, if it is the name of your business), please put the check in the donation envelope and write your name on the envelope.
3. Direct deposit from your bank account
4. Payroll deduction.

### From the Sunday School:

**Advanced Class:** The advanced class will resume meeting on March 8, 22, and April 5. These classes are open to anyone, but we especially hope that the high school students will make the effort to attend on these dates. The subject of these classes is "Why be good?"

### WHEN DO I CROSS MYSELF?

During the Divine Liturgy when we hear the mention of the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit), which is usually the conclusion of a petition.

### In our daily lives:

- when we wake up and say our morning prayers;
- before and after any meal;
- when we leave our house for the first time of the day;
- when we start our car;
- when we pay a visit to a Christian grave at the cemetery;
- when we say our prayers before going to sleep at night.

### **In church:**

- when we enter into an Orthodox church, or exit from it;
- when we sing the Hymn, or we recite, “Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal”;
- when the Shroud of Christ procession passes;
- when the Holy Communion passes in front of us during the Great Entrance in the Divine Liturgy;
- when we hear or sing the Hymn “Christ is Risen”;
- whenever the name of the Virgin Mary is mentioned during services or sacrament;
- when we venerate an icon, the Gospel, the Holy Cross or a relic of a Saint;
- when we hear one of the variations of the phrase, “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;”
- at the beginning and end of the liturgical services;
- when passing in front of the Holy Altar;
- after receiving Holy Communion (and come down the steps, turn around, face the chalice, and cross yourself).

### **We do not cross ourselves:**

- at the chalice before or after taking Communion (you might hit the chalice with your hand);
- when the priest or bishop blesses saying, “Peace be to all” (blow slightly and receive the blessing);
- when receiving a blessing from a bishop or a priest (kissing the right hand of the bishop or priest is appropriate, but not making the sign of the cross).

As Orthodox Christians we should know these things and talk to and teach them to our children. When we attend the Divine Liturgy we should participate by opening the book of Divine Liturgy, and pray at the same time.

*Prepared by the V. Rev. Alexander Kile from the teachings of the Orthodox Faith*

*On the Necessity of Abstinence, continued from page 1*

the name of all Christians of his time said, “We fast during Lent according to the tradition of the Apostles.” “The longer the abstinence, the easier the acquirement of salvation,” teaches Blessed Augustine. According to the teachings of St. Asterius of Amasis, Lent is “the teacher of moderation, the mother of virtue, the tutor of God's children, the instructor of the confused, the tranquility of thoughts, the support of life, a lasting and undisturbed peace; its strictness and importance weaken passion, extinguish anger and rage, quench and calm any worries which arise from overeating.”

Blessed John Kolov said: “When a king plans to capture an enemy's city, he first of all stops its supply of provisions. Then its citizens, pressed by hunger, submit to him. Something similar happens with carnal desires: if a person will spend his life in fasting and hunger, then improper desires will fade away.” According to the teaching of John Chrysostom, “Just as non-restraint from food is, at times, the cause of countless evils for humanity, so fasting and contempt for carnal pleasures were always the cause of

great blessings ... As light-sailing vessels speedily cross the seas and those overburdened with cargo sink, so fasting, clearing up our mind, helps us to cross the turmoils of our present life and to strive for heaven and spiritual things.”

Fasting, according to the teaching of Basil the Great, brings forth prophets, strengthens the warriors of Christ, and makes the law-givers wiser. Fasting is the good guardian of the soul, the weapon of the valiant. It repels temptations, is the cohabitant of sobriety and the foundation of chastity. Fasting carries prayer to heaven, becoming its wings.

The Holy Fathers, explaining the importance of abstaining from food, insisted that one should abstain simultaneously from vices because the moral improvement of a Christian is the main goal of fasting.

“The benefit of fasting,” teaches Saint Basil the Great, “is not limited by the abstinence of food alone, because true fasting is the eradication of evil deeds. Everyone should become liberated from lies. Forgive your neighbor when he insults you; forgive him his debts. You don't eat meat, but hurt your brother... We will fast in a way that is pleasing to God. A true fast is the elimination of evil, restraint of what one says, suppression of anger, the alienation of lust, malignant gossip, lies, and perjury. Abstinence from all these is true fasting.” In summary, just as we fell into sin and lost heavenly bliss because of the lack of restraint of our forefathers, so through voluntary fasting we can restore in ourselves the grace of God.

*The remainder of this newsletter will be devoted to various articles concerning Lenten practices specific to the Orthodox Church.*

## **Holy Unction**

*By Archpriest Peter Perekerstov*

Anointing with oil, or Holy Unction, is one of the many mysteries administered by the Orthodox Church. The Mystery is far more common in the Orthodox Church than it had traditionally been in the Roman Catholic Church (until recent years). Today, neither Church reserves it for the dying or terminally ill, but for all in need of spiritual or bodily healing. In Greece, during the Ottoman occupation, it became the custom to administer this Mystery annually on Great Wednesday to all believers; in recent decades, this custom has spread to many other locations. It is often distributed on major feast days, or any time the clergy feel it necessary for the spiritual welfare of its congregation.

According to Orthodox teaching the Church established the Mystery of Holy Unction on the basis of the Epistle of St. James: *Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the*

*name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.* — (James 5:14–15)

Traditionally, according to the practice of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, once a year a general service of Holy Unction is performed by a bishop, usually during Holy Week. Each having confessed his sins, the faithful gather to participate in the Mystery of Holy Unction, the Mystery of healing; they stand, listen to the prayers, pray and then receive the anointing of the oil seven times.

We are not all physically ill, but all of us are spiritually infirm. In part, the Mystery of Holy Unction absolves us from those sins which we have forgotten or are unaware of (of course, we are not absolved from sins which we have purposefully concealed).

### **The Custom of Kutya (Koliva):**

*Sweetened boiled wheat used for commemoration services for the dead*

The origin of this tradition stems from an historical account: "On the first Saturday of the Great Fast we remember the miracle of St. Theodore of Tyre in 362 AD with kutya. The Emperor, Julian the Apostate, had the food in the market sprinkled with the blood of animals sacrificed to pagan gods in order to defile the first week of the Great Fast. Patriarch Aphdioxios of Constantinople appeared to the saint in a dream, warning him of the emperor's scheme. St. Theodore told the people to cook the wheat they had at home rather than grinding all of it into flour. Thus, they did not buy anything in the market and avoided the tainted food."

Kutya—boiled wheat mixed with nuts and sugar—is offered by the bereaved after it is blessed by the priest to everyone present at the *parastas* or *pannikhida*. This is another feature of the ritual filled with symbolic representations. Wheat and nuts are seeds which, when fallen on good earth, apparently disintegrate (die) but eventually germinate (resurrect) into new life. Accordingly, kutya acts as a reminder and a "proof" of the resurrection into a new life to follow the death.

### **What are Hours? What are Royal Hours?**

The **Hours** are four relatively brief prayer services of the Daily Cycle that mark the various principal hours of the day.

- **First Hour** corresponds to daybreak (6:00 a.m.).

- **Third Hour** corresponds to mid-morning (9:00 a.m.)
- **Sixth Hour** corresponds to mid-day (12:00 noon)
- **Ninth Hour** corresponds to mid-afternoon (3:00 p.m.)

Each of the services of the Hours shares the same general structure.

- The service opens with the priest's exclamation *Blessed is our God ...* and the Trisagion Prayers. (Note: this opening sequence is omitted if the service immediately follows another service.)
- Three chapters from the Psalter appointed for the particular Hour are read (First Hour: Psalms 5, 89, 100; Third Hour: Psalms 16, 24, 50; Sixth Hour: Psalms 53, 54, 90; Ninth Hour: Psalms 83, 84, 85)
- The Troparion of the day is chanted.
- The Theotokion and Psalm verses of the Hour are chanted.
- The Trisagion Prayers are prayed.
- The Kontakion appointed for the Hour is chanted.
- The Prayer of the Hours *Thou Who at all times and at every hour ...* is prayed.
- The final prayer appointed for the Hour is prayed.
- The priest gives the final blessing and offers the Little Dismissal. (Note: this is omitted if another service will immediately follow.)

**"Royal Hours"** differ from the ordinary in the following points: 1) of the three Psalms prescribed for each Hour, only one is read; the other two are selected specially with reference to the events commemorated; 2) at each Hour after the Troparia, the *Premiae* (the Epistle and the Gospel) are read; and 3) the offices of all the three Hours are combined into one. These Hours are called **"Royal"** because they are read only on the eve of the most important days of Christ's earthly life: on the vigils of the Nativity and the Epiphany and on Holy Friday; and also because in ancient times the Emperors used, on these days, to go in solemn procession to the principal church of the city.



## ST. XENIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

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### MARCH 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1 (Feb 16)</b>  <b>Forgiveness Sunday</b> <b>Tone 4</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy 12:00 Forgiveness Vespers  <b>Fast: dairy, fish, wine, &amp; oil</b>	<b>2 (Feb 17)</b> <b>GM Theodore the Tyro</b>  7:00 Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete <b>Fast</b>	<b>3 (Feb 18)</b> <b>St. Leo the Great, pope of Rome</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>4 (Feb 19)</b> <b>App. Archippus &amp; Philemon of the 70</b>  7:00 Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete <b>Fast</b>	<b>5 (Feb 20)</b> <b>Ven. Leo of Catania</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>6 (Feb 21)</b> <b>Ven. Timothy of Symbola</b>  7:00 Akathist to the Theotokos <b>Fast</b>	<b>7 (Feb 22)</b> <b>GM Theodore the Tyro</b>  4:00 Small Vespers 6:30 All-Night Vigil  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>
<b>8 (Feb 23)</b>  <b>Triumph of Orthodoxy</b> <b>Tone 5</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>9 (Feb 24)</b> <b>1st &amp; 2nd Findings of the Head of St. John the Baptist</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>10 (Feb 25)</b> <b>St. Tarasius, archbishop of Constantinople</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>11 (Feb 26)</b> <b>St. Porphyrius of Gaza</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>12 (Feb 27)</b> <b>Ven. Procopius the Confessor of Decapolis</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>13 (Feb 28)</b> <b>Ven. Basil the Confessor</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>14 (Mar 1)</b> <b>M. Eudocia</b>  4:00 Class 6:30 All-Night Vigil  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>
<b>15 (Mar 2)</b> <b>St. Gregory of Palamas</b> <b>Tone 6</b> 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>16 (Mar 3)</b> <b>M. Eutropius of Amasea &amp; comp.</b>  Diocesan Assembly/Clergy Retreat in Jackson, NJ <b>Fast</b>	<b>17 (Mar 4)</b> <b>Ven. Gerasimus of the Jordan</b>  Diocesan Assembly/Clergy Retreat in Jackson, NJ <b>Fast</b>	<b>18 (Mar 5)</b> <b>M. Conon of Isauria</b>  Diocesan Assembly/Clergy Retreat in Jackson, NJ <b>Fast</b>	<b>19 (Mar 6)</b> <b>42 MM of Ammoria</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>20 (Mar 7)</b> <b>Ven. Paul the Simple of Egypt</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>21 (Mar 8)</b> <b>Ven. Theophylactus of Nicomedia</b>  6:30 All-Night Vigil  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>
<b>22 (Mar 9)</b> <b>Adoration of the Cross</b> <b>Tone 7</b> 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  5:00 Unction at Holy Epiphany w/Bp. Jerome serving <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>23 (Mar 10)</b> <b>MM Quadratus &amp; comp</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>24 (Mar 11)</b> <b>St. Sophronius of Jerusalem</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>25 (Mar 12)</b> <b>St. Gregory the Dialogist, pope of Rome</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>26 (Mar 13)</b> <b>M Abibus of Egypt VM Christina of Persia</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>27 (Mar 14)</b> <b>Ven. Benedict of Nursia</b>  7:00 Akathist to the Theotokos <b>Fast</b>	<b>28 (Mar 15)</b> <b>M. Nicander of Egypt</b>  4:00 Class 6:30 All-Night Vigil  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>
<b>29 (Mar 16)</b> <b>St. John Climacus</b> <b>Tone 8</b> 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>30 (Mar 17)</b> <b>Ven. Alexis the Man of God</b> <b>Ven. Patrick of Ireland</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>31 (Mar 18)</b> <b>St. Cyril of Jerusalem</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>Apr 1 (Mar 19)</b> <b>MM Chrysanthus &amp; Daria &amp; comp</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>Apr 2 (Mar 20)</b> <b>Seven Virgin-martyrs of Amisus</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>Apr 3 (Mar 21)</b> <b>Ven. James the Confessor</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>Apr 4 (Mar 22)</b> <b>HM Basil of Ancyra</b>  4:00 Small Vespers 6:30 All-Night Vigil  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>



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### APRIL 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Mar 29 (Mar 16)</b> <b>St. John Climacus</b> Tone 8  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Fast: wine & oil	<b>Mar 30 (Mar 17)</b> <b>Ven. Alexis the Man of God</b> Ven. Patrick of Ireland  Fast	<b>Mar 31 (Mar 18)</b> <b>St. Cyril of Jerusalem</b>  Fast	<b>1 (Mar 19)</b> <b>MM Chrysanthus &amp; Daria &amp; comp</b>  Fast	<b>2 (Mar 20)</b> <b>Seven Virgin- martyrs of Amisus</b>  Fast	<b>3 (Mar 21)</b> <b>Ven. James the Confessor</b>  Fast	<b>4 (Mar 22)</b> <b>HM Basil of Ancyra</b>  4:00 Small Vespers 6:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: wine & oil
<b>5 (Mar 23)</b> <b>St. Mary of Egypt</b> Tone 1  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Fast: wine & oil	<b>6 (Mar 24)</b> <b>Ven. Zacharias the Recluse of Egypt</b>  6:30 Annunciation Vigil  Fast	<b>7 (Mar 25)</b> <b>ANNUNCIATION</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Fast: fish, wine, & oil	<b>8 (Mar 26)</b> <b>Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel</b>  Fast	<b>9 (Mar 27)</b> <b>St. Matrona of Thessalonica</b>  Fast	<b>10 (Mar 28)</b> <b>Ven. Hilarion the New</b>  Fast	<b>11 (Mar 29)</b> <b>Lazarus Saturday</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  4:00 Class 6:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: wine & oil
<b>12 (Mar 30)</b> <b>PALM SUNDAY</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Fast: fish, wine, & oil	<b>13 (Mar 31)</b> <b>Great &amp; Holy Monday</b>  7:00 Bridegroom Matins  Fast	<b>14 (Apr 1)</b> <b>Great &amp; Holy Tuesday</b>  7:00 Bridegroom Matins  Fast	<b>15 (Apr 2)</b> <b>Great &amp; Holy Wednesday</b>  7:00 Matins of Holy Thursday  Fast	<b>16 (Apr 3)</b> <b>Great &amp; Holy Thursday</b>  9:30 Hours and Vespertal Divine Liturgy 6:30 Matins with the 12 Gospels  Fast	<b>17 (Apr 4)</b> <b>Great &amp; Holy Friday</b>  10:00 Royal Hours  4:00 Vespers with the Taking Down from the Cross 6:30 Matins with the Lamenations Fast	<b>18 (Apr 5)</b> <b>Great &amp; Holy Saturday</b>  9:00 Hours & Vespertal Divine Liturgy 10:00 Reading of Acts of the Apostles 11:30 Midnight Office Fast: wine
<b>19 (Apr 6)</b> <b>PASCHA</b>  12:00 Midnight Matins and Divine Liturgy 11:00 Agape Vespers  Fast free	<b>20 (Apr 7)</b> <b>Bright Monday</b> Ven. George the Confessor  Fast free	<b>21 (Apr 8)</b> <b>Bright Tuesday</b> Iveron Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos  Fast free	<b>22 (Apr 9)</b> <b>Bright Wednesday</b> Synaxis of the Ven. Fathers of Mt. Sinai  Fast free	<b>23 (Apr 10)</b> <b>Bright Thursday</b> MM Terence, Pompeius, Africanus, Maximus, Zeno, Alexander, Theodore and 33 others  Fast free	<b>24 (Apr 11)</b> <b>Bright Friday</b> Pochaev Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos  Fast free	<b>25 (Apr 12)</b> <b>Bright Saturday</b> Ven. Basil the Confessor of Parium  6:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast free
<b>26 (Apr 13)</b> <b>Antipascha, St. Thomas Sunday</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy 12:30 Blessing of Graves in Cemetery	<b>27 (Apr 14)</b> <b>St. Martin the Confessor, pope of Rome</b>	<b>28 (Apr 15)</b>  Radonitsa App. Aristarchus, Pudens, and Trophimus of the Seventy	<b>29 (Apr 16)</b> <b>Virgin-martyrs Agape, Irene, and Chionia in Illyria</b>  Fast	<b>30 (Apr 17)</b> <b>HM Simeon, bishop in Persia</b>	<b>May 1 (Apr 18)</b>	<b>May 2 (Apr 19)</b>  6:30 All-Night Vigil

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St. Xenia Orthodox Church  
170 North Lowell Street  
P.O. Box 147  
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**DIRECTIONS TO ST. XENIA CHURCH:**

**From I-93 North or South take Exit 46, Routes 110 and 113 Dracut and Lawrence. If you were travelling North on I-93,** take the exit and go around the rotary and under the highway. Follow the signs and bear right off the rotary for Route 110/113 Dracut. **If you were travelling South on I-93,** bear right at the bottom of the exit ramp towards Route 110/113 Dracut.

Where Routes 110 and 113 split, bear right onto Route 113 towards Dracut. You will pass several cemeteries on your left, including the Polish National Catholic Cemetery. The very next gate on the left is the entrance to St. Xenia's. Please note that the church is on the left just before the Hickory Hill Golf course, so if you pass the golf course, you will have missed the church. Parking is available on church grounds.