



# St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

May-June 2010

## The Ascetic Podvig of Living in the World

*from a lecture of Met. Laurus+*

The situation of an Orthodox person, an Orthodox Christian who lives in the contemporary world, may be described, without any exaggeration, as extremely difficult. The whole of present-day life, in all its tendencies, in one way or another is directed *against* a person who is trying to live according to the teachings of the Orthodox Church. In life around us, in our environment, in our heterodox surroundings, everything is essentially a total denial of Christianity. If, in the beginning of the Christian era, Christ's beloved disciple, St. John the Theologian, could write, "... the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19), then how much more justified we are in speaking thus of our times.

Being a true Orthodox Christian, prepared to preserve unto death one's faith in Christ our Saviour, is much more difficult in our day than it was in the first centuries of Christianity. It's true there were persecutions then and Christians were tormented, but the Christians well remembered the Saviour's words, "... fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matt. 11:28). Being fortified by God's grace, they joyfully went to their martyrdom and gave up their lives for Christ. This was also the case in Russia during the torture and persecutions. Now nobody threatens us, living here in freedom, with persecution and torture, but in spite of this, a persecution in its most diverse forms is being carried on against Christianity and against the Christian way of life. Today we see that everything connected with faith in God, with the teaching of God's Word, with Christ's teachings and the teachings of the Orthodox Church, in one way or another is being driven out of a person's life. This process that is taking place in the contemporary world is a process of apostasy, and it can be detected in every aspect of life.

The Old Testament says, "God, to be sure, framed man for an immortal destiny, the created image of His own endless being; but, since the devil's envy brought death into the world, they make him their model that take him for their master" (Wisdom 2:23-25).

We have been given our holy Christian faith so that we might obtain eternal life in blessedness. But to conform perfectly with the spirit of the Founder of our faith, Christ our Saviour, and with His teaching, to really cleanse ourselves morally, to increase in virtue, to become acquainted with spiritual perfection, all this demands special, grace-filled cooperation from above, in addition to an Orthodox person's own efforts. This grace-filled cooperation is called sanctification and is given to us by the Lord. It is achieved by the Holy Spirit in the holy Church founded by our Lord Jesus Christ for our sanctification and salvation.

You and I are children of the Russian Orthodox Church. The question arises, do we live as Orthodox Christians are supposed to live? No, we are far from living in the way we should.

At our holy baptism we gave vows (if we were baptized as infants, our sponsors gave them on our behalf), we made a contract with Christ and in this way we became His children, His servants, the children of God. At baptism the holy Church sings, "As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia."

Therefore, since we belong to God, we must live in accordance with God's commandments, in accordance with Christ's teachings and the laws of the Church. We are baptized, we are Orthodox Christians but we don't know very much about our Orthodox Faith.

All who are born in the bosom of the holy Church through holy baptism are born into a new life. They grow and are brought up in the Spirit of Truth and receive in the spiritual life grace-filled gifts for life on earth, with the promise of eternal gifts for the future life. Thus, to live in *the Church* is an essential condition for a Christian's moral development.

The Church of Christ was founded by our Lord the Saviour and He showed us the path by which we must go to Him, and He showed us how to follow His teaching. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Consequently, we must go by this path, pointed out to us by our Saviour.

Every path and every action demands a podvig—that is, an ascetic struggle. Therefore, our holy Orthodox Faith is an ascetic faith demanding ascetic labor in the struggle with our sinful passions and lusts.

How must we live and struggle? Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself shows an example: "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15). The saints also provide us with an example.

In His Sermon on the Mount our Lord Jesus Christ gives us the whole essence of Evangelical teaching. This is found in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the Gospel of St. Matthew. In the Beatitudes the Lord teaches us that we must be born again spiritually and thus prepare ourselves for the beatitude of eternal life in the heavenly man signs. The first step towards this is to recognize one's spiritual emptiness, one's sinfulness and worthlessness, to become humble. This is why "blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3). But only those who observe all the commandments will achieve this. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

In order to go by the path that our Lord pointed out in the holy Gospel, we have to take ourselves under control, we must check and test ourselves.

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.

**Rector:**

Rev. Michael Crowley  
 16 Channel Road  
 South Portland, ME 04106  
 (978) 204-0428 (cell phone with voice mail)

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

**Parish Council**

President: Rev. Michael Crowley	(207) 767-1889
Dcn. Constantine Desrosiers	(603) 775-0320
Secretary: Natalie Pishenin	(978) 658-5564
Starosta: Anthony Sarantakis	(978) 263-2016
Sisterhood: Mireille Lang	(603) 465-9754
Peter Danas	(978) 459-9541
John Danas	(978) 454-0315
Laryssa Doohovskoy	(978) 841-5960
Roberto Gonzalez	(978) 692-1229
Michael Johnson	(603) 893-4593
John Kekis	(978) 456-9865
Choir Director: Michael Lang	(603) 465-9754

Cemetery: Rev. Michael Crowley, Natalie Pishenin, Peter Kasarda, Daniel McLellan, Maryann DiMatteo

**Trapeza Schedule**

\* = strict fast

If you cannot be at church on your assigned Sunday, please call and switch with someone. If you are not on this list and would like to help, please add your name to the Pot Luck days and I will add you for the next round. If you have any questions, contact Karen Schidlovsky at (603) 868-6410. Trapeza can be whatever you would like to prepare. Some parishioners prefer to make a big lunch, but this isn't necessary. As long as there is enough food for about 75 people, anything is appreciated. Donuts, fruit and pastries are as acceptable as soup and sandwiches. **Please note that this year, the Peter and Paul Fast begins on May 31.** Thank you in advance for your contribution.

**May**

2 Anna Johnson, Mireille Lang, Anna Muhanova  
 9 Pam Reed, Carolyn Savage, Diane Mendez  
 16 Matushka Nancy, Megan Nettleton, Katia Fredette  
 23 Karen Schidlovsky, Nancy Harris, Tanya Vlasenko

**June**

6 Masha Harris, Kot Engalichev  
 13 Josephine Kniaziuk, Mariana Haven  
 20 Natalie Botchkov, Natalya Kirichok  
 27 Pot Luck

**Thank You...** to all who turned out for the parish workday on March 20 to clean and beautify our church for Pascha. Your efforts were very evident as we celebrated the Feast of Feasts.

...to Laryssa Doohovskoy, for all the hard work and efforts that went into the planning, preparation and execution of the Holy Friday retreat that was held for the St. John of Damascus Sunday School students. It was a great day, and the children got a lot out of it.

... From the Gonzalez family: Our baby, Salomé Eve, was baptized on March 13, and we would love to thank everyone in the parish for their prayers and assistance in the last few months. We were thrilled to share the joy with everyone on this day. Our parish truly is our village.

**Please remember in your prayers...** Nicholas, Lilly, Nina, Josephine, David, 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 April 30, 2010, the balance on the church mortgage stands at approximately \$23,241. If you have any questions, please see Fr. Deacon Constantine Desrosiers.

**Congratulations:** To John and Anna Kekis, on the birth of their daughter, Eleni Georgia, on April 14. Many years to all!

**Sisterhood:** An informal meeting was held on the Sunday of the Myrrhbearers, the feastday of the sisterhood. A vote of confidence was given to Mireille Lang to take over as Head Sister. Congratulations!

**St. John of Damascus Church School News:** We had a wonderful turnout for the Holy Friday retreat—thank you to all the parents who brought their children! We began the day with the Royal Hours, after which we learned about our Lord's Passion and Resurrection. There were many activities, including mounting an icon of the Resurrection, a "treasure" hunt—the kids collected eggs holding items, each with a connection to an aspect of Holy Week—and spent time with each other, in quiet play. It was a wonderful way for the kids and their families to focus on preparing for Pascha, the Feast of Feasts!

We are pleased to announce the first annual Vacation Church School at St. Xenia's! VCS will run from July 12–July 16, 2010. Our children, ages 5–12, will be "Traveling on the Ark of Salvation" and learning about the Great Feasts of the Theotokos. Our teens, ages 13–18, will be discussing the "Teenage Ten Commandments," as well as other topics of Faith and the Church, relevant to their daily lives. The camp will kick off on July 12 with the Liturgy celebrating the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul. A short session will follow the Liturgy on Monday. From Tuesday,

July 13 through Friday, July 16 the camp will run from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. The kids will enjoy crafts, music, lessons, activities, daily assemblies, and worship. Lunch will be provided each day. The cost of the camp is \$20 per child, or \$40 per family, and is for kids ages 5–18. Registration forms are posted on the parish website and included with this newsletter. If you are interested in volunteering during the week of VCS, please let Laryssa know so you can be included in our first "Staff" meeting mid-May. This is a great and exciting program, and we are very excited to be putting it together for our kids! For more details, please see the parish website: <http://www.stxenia.org/church-school.html> (no hyphen in the address).

As always, should you have any questions, concerns or comments regarding the church school, please feel free to contact Laryssa Doohovskoy at [LaryssaL@aol.com](mailto:LaryssaL@aol.com) or by phone at 978-841-5960.

**Summer School of Liturgical Music:** Takes place this year between July 4 and July 17 at Holy Trinity Monastery in Upstate New York. As always, our parish has one scholarship available for anyone wishing to attend the Summer School. I know that our choir director, Michael Lang, has been encouraging some of our young people to learn how to conduct the choir, and it is particularly this group that I would most strongly encourage to consider attending, especially since completion of the course is worth three college credits.

Because the Summer School is an "unknown quantity" for so many of us, I received permission from Mary Mansur, the editor of *Orthodox America*, to reprint an article from Issue #165, *The Foundation of Church Singing: School and Prayer*, printed elsewhere in this edition of the newsletter. I was privileged to begin the Summer School course as the author of this article was conducting her final exam, and it is due partly to her selection of her graduation piece that I owe my own decision to return to the School and complete the course: If you have never heard or sung Kastalsky's *Svete Tikhii*, this is the place to learn it!

I should note that I have had to alter the article somewhat, not only because of space constraints, but also because several staffing changes have taken place since it was written. The current staff includes Matushka Yelena Perekrestova, who teaches Church Music History; Irina Mozyleva, who teaches Voice class; Dr. Kurt Sander, who teaches Music Theory and Solfege (sight-reading); and Fr. Roman (Krassovsky), who will teach Typicon for Choir Directors, replacing—insofar as is possible—Fr. Joasaph (McLellan, who was a co-founder of the School. All of us who knew Fr. Joasaph will have him in our hearts, thoughts, and prayers as this session of the Summer School takes place, for the first time, without his vast knowledge and tireless devotion to both Church and School. May his memory be eternal!

## St. Seraphim Scholarship Application 2010

St. Seraphim Youth Camp is a private, not-for-profit, fully insured organization serving the needs of the Russian Orthodox community. The camp was founded in 1994 with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. Our camp utilizes the facilities of the Boy Scouts of America in the beautiful Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. Due only to God's blessing, the camp has prospered for many years and is currently the largest Russian Orthodox camp in the West. The camp is held each year at the feast of St. Seraphim of Sarov, and accepts Russian Orthodox youth between grades 3 and 12. **Registration deadline is July 1.** For more information, visit their website: [www.stseraphimcamp.com](http://www.stseraphimcamp.com).

### Guidelines for Scholarships:

- Scholarships are available, based on financial need, to member children of St. Xenia Orthodox Church who are in good standing and whose children have made an effort to attend church school on a regular basis.
- Scholarship applications are kept confidential.
- All completed scholarship applications should be given directly to Fr. Michael.
- All scholarships to the camp are funded by the St. Xenia Church School and paid directly to St. Seraphim Camp.
- The family of a recipient may be eligible for a stipend of \$200 for travel and lodging in addition to the camp registration fee.
- In the event that several families are in need of aid, partial aid may be awarded to accommodate as many families as possible.
- Recipient families are responsible for the completion of all necessary camp forms and travel arrangements.

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Camper's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Camper's Age \_\_\_\_\_

Has the Camper previously attended St. Seraphim Camp?                      YES                      NO

Would you like to be considered for the travel stipend?                      YES                      NO

Please use the space below to express any needs, interests or other considerations:

## The Foundation of Church Singing: School and Prayer

by Catherine Stade

I am the 28th graduate of the Summer School of Liturgical Music at Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, New York. For each of the past three summers, I have spent a little more than two weeks at the monastery, studying our heritage of Russian Orthodox music and learning, little by little, how to direct a church choir. The intensive schedule of instruction during the courses has been invaluable in beginning to tap the fountain of Orthodox knowledge and tradition concerning our Divine services. I have learned many things from each of the excellent teachers at the Summer School, and give them all a heartfelt "Thank you" for their beautiful dedication to our Orthodox faith. Yet the overall experience of simply being at the monastery and interacting outside of class with teachers, students, and monastics has been the most valuable of all. I have been enriched not only academically through these courses, but also emotionally and spiritually. The whole experience has been a major step in my life-long dream of becoming a church choir director.

Almost all of the students stay at the monastery guest-house, except for the seminarians and a few who elect to stay with the nuns at the community of Grand Duchess Elizabeth. Each morning begins early with people lining up for the few shower rooms and collecting school belongings. Those who have strength go to 6 a.m. Liturgy at the monastery. It is a very short drive to the monastery, and some prefer to walk. It is still early, the heat has not yet become aggressive, and wildflowers bloom in profusion against the backdrop of the monastery's golden domes shining in the sun. At the monastery's summer kitchen, students gather for breakfast. Classes start promptly at 8 a.m. The first summer of my studies at Jordanville was probably the most difficult in terms of becoming used to the rigorous daily schedule.

Music History is one of the most intense classes of all. The lectures are packed with information that one would not learn in any university: of the history and development of Russian sacred music from the 14th century to modern times. The first lecture of my first year ended with a recording of *O Tebe Radnestsia (In thee rejoiceth)* by Nikolai Danilin (1878-1945) as we left the classroom. I remember tears welling up in my eyes. For years, even as a child, I had been interested in church choir directing and had dreamed of becoming one. This seemed such a beautiful way for one who is musically inclined to give his talents to God and to serve our Church. And here finally was a school, held at the main monastery of our Church Abroad, where young people are encouraged to devote their energies to adorning the services of the Orthodox Church, are taught the majestic cycle of the Orthodox life, the typicon, the eight-tone cycle, and are given musical training and practical advice. In addition to all this, I felt a great sense

of solidarity with all the other students and teachers, all of whom had gathered for the same reason. Hearing that one piece of music as we left the classroom, surrounded by portraits of our church's hierarchs and holy icons, brought all of this home to me in a sudden strong feeling of gratitude to God and fierce determination to continue serving Him in this way, no matter what obstacles might arise.

Other classes are Musicianship, Music Theory, and Church Slavonic. Musicianship and music theory are good introductory courses, but, as all the teachers point out, they cannot take the place of systematic study of these subjects in regular college or university classes. I, and many other students, have learned this from experience. It is much less stressful at the Summer School if one has already taken some basic music courses elsewhere. Then the music classes become more enjoyable, interesting, and thought-provoking.

Other academic classes include Choral Methods, Liturgical Performance Practice, and Liturgics. Choral Methods is based on the textbook for choral conducting by Pavel Chesnokov (1877-1944), *The Choir and How To Direct It*, and is a wonderful introduction to a great Russian master's view of conducting in the Orthodox church. Liturgical Performance Practice is very helpful to those who have questions concerning the technical side of how services should be done, and how they are actually done at various centers of our church. This course covers reading in church, common abbreviations allowed in parish practice, standard choral repertoire in the Church Abroad, and communication between clergy and choir directors. The course also includes systematic learning of all the tones: troparion, stichirion, irmosi, and special melodies. Liturgics or Typicon class is a favorite with many students and is essential in learning the basic order of services, from a normal Vespers on Saturday evening to weekday services in Great Lent. I saw for the first time how majestic and heavenly is our Orthodox cycle of church services, and that there is great art and beauty in the way that the cycles overlap and intertwine with each other.

The remaining classes in the school day are choir practice and voice class, taught by professional singers. Every day the whole school has a general voice class all together; students are also encouraged to take short private lessons daily. Learning how to breathe correctly is the foundation of Church singing, including the correct posture for singing, the internal mechanism of vocal cords and diaphragm, and exactly how to place one's voice. Nikolai Alexeevich Myshkin teaches choral conducting and leads the daily choir rehearsals. There is time each day for all the prospective graduates to work with the choir. It is a very constructive but also nerve-racking experience to try to conduct a rehearsal under the watchful and critical eye of an experienced conductor, and this class can be very intimidating, especially for new conductors who have never stood in front of a 35-voice choir before. When, during my second

year, I conducted for the first time, I was extremely nervous, and spent much time the following year preparing to do it again. This summer, as part of the graduating class, I had to conduct almost every day in preparation for the conducting exam. Thanks to the tremendous help of Nikolai Alexeevich, it was a wonderful experience for me, both humbling and inspiring. It was the first time I had ever felt such rapport with a choir, all of whom were supportive and helpful and worked hard to achieve a beautiful sound. The graduation exam performance was one of the most memorable moments of my whole experience at the Jordanville music school.

In reviewing the course material and seeing the extremely intense schedule of classes, more than eight hours a day, one soon realizes that there is much more to learn than one can absorb in three summers. At some point everyone feels overwhelmed by the incredible amount of information to be learned. The School is designed to give a good introduction to the most crucial subjects of Orthodox choir conducting, and then it is up to the individual to continue his education on his own.

Attending the beautiful monastery services, confessing, and partaking of the Holy Mysteries is a great relief and comfort for all the students, as well as a help to one's spiritual life. I would like to give my heartfelt gratitude to Holy Trinity Monastery for its support for the school. It must be hard on the monks for so many lay people to be at the monastery for two whole weeks, studying and singing late at night. Yet the atmosphere of the monastery is crucial for church singers to understand that prayer is the foundation of church music and of the Orthodox services, not beauty of sound, knowledge, or musical training. It is vitally important for budding choir directors to see a life of prayer being carried out before their very eyes during their church education. Also, I would again like to thank Fr. André Papkov for his tireless labor in founding the school, organizing it, and doing the countless administrative tasks involved.

The Summer School of Liturgical Music can be difficult and intense. Yet it is so rewarding in such a host of ways that I am sorry to have finished. I have made several very dear friends through going to this school and have been able to spend a little more than six weeks at Holy Trinity Monastery. Most importantly, I feel infinitely more equipped to stand up in front of a church choir and know what to do. It will be a lifelong process of learning to become a good director, but this school of Orthodox Church music will have been the biggest step along the way.

*At the time of this writing, Catherine Stade was assistant choir director at St. John Chrysostom Russian Orthodox Church, House Springs, Missouri. She has since married.*

## Feasts of This Period:

### Pentecost: May 10 /23, 2010

*(Trinity Day or Descent of the Holy Spirit)  
One of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church*

Fifty\* days after the Resurrection, on the exciting Jewish feast of Pentecost, while the disciples and many other followers of Jesus Christ were gathered together to pray, the Holy Spirit descended upon them in the form of "cloven tongues of fire," with the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and they began to speak in languages that they did not know.

At the Feast of Pentecost, we are recalling that 50\* days after the Passover, which is the day in which those disciples were gathered together, was when the Jewish people celebrated what they called the Feast of Weeks, seven weeks after Passover. They were commemorating the time that they were in the desert, being formed into God's people. Then at Sinai, Moses had that extraordinary experience of God and, in behalf of the people, entered into a covenant. God said, "I will be your God, you will be My people."

So St. Luke places this event 50 days after Easter to show us that God is forming a new people. We are now bound together with God in the new covenant of God's love that is made present for us in the death and resurrection of Jesus. That is what binds us to the new covenant so that we become God's people; God is our God.

When St. Luke talks about the wind that came through that house where they were, he uses the word that is used in the book of Genesis -- wind, or spirit, that hovered over the chaos and drew all of creation into being. So this is the wind of the Spirit that now makes a new creation, we, who are God's people.

The tongues of fire are reminiscent of what happened at Sinai, where some descriptions of that event were that fire broke forth upon the mountain. So again, Luke is saying this all is connected with how God drew the people together, made them God's people and again, now we are God's people.

\*The number fifty stands for eternal and heavenly fulfillment, seven times seven, plus one.

### The Tradition of the Apostles' Fast

*From Wikipedia:* Having rejoiced for fifty days following Pascha, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Apostles began to prepare for their departure from Jerusalem to spread Christ's message. According to Sacred Tradition, as part of their preparation, they began a fast with prayer to ask God to strengthen their resolve and to be with them in their missionary undertakings.

The scriptural foundation for the Fast is found in the Synoptic Gospels: When the Pharisees criticized the Apostles for not fasting, Jesus said to them, "Can the children of the bridal chamber mourn, as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast" (Matthew 9:15). In the immediate sense, Christ was referring to His being taken to be crucified; but in the wider sense it is understood in terms of His Ascension into heaven, and His commission to preach the Gospel, which can only be accomplished with prayer and fasting.

The tradition of the Fast has existed at least since Pope Leo I (461 AD), as is evidenced by his homilies, though it has subsequently been forgotten in the West. The Fast is thought to have been instituted out of thanksgiving to God for the witness of the Apostles of Christ. With this Fast, believers express their thanks for the Apostles' endurance of persecution during their mission. (*Editor's Note: It has also been inferred in other sources that since we do not keep a Fast in preparation for Pentecost, this Fast gives us the opportunity to call upon the Holy Spirit to send us His grace as we go about our own daily witness to our belief in Christ.*)

### **Third Finding of the Head of St. John the Baptist Commemorated May 25 / June 7**

*St. John the Forerunner, the cousin of Christ and last of the prophets*

The glorious Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist was an ascetic and great prophet. John is a cousin of Christ through his mother Elizabeth, who was the daughter of Zoia. Zoia is the sister of Christ's grandmother, St. Anna. Because he baptized Christ, he is the patron saint of godparents. He is sometimes called the Angel of the Desert; because of this title, he is sometimes depicted with wings. His father, Zacharias, was a priest of the course of Abia, and his mother, Elizabeth, was of the daughters of Aaron. John held the priesthood of Aaron, giving him the authority to perform baptisms of God.

#### **First, Second and Third Findings of the Head of St. John the Baptist**

The biblical account portrays the beheading of Saint John the Baptist by Herod Antipas. Herod had imprisoned John because he reprovved Herod for divorcing his wife (Phasaelis), and unlawfully taking his brother Herod Philip I's wife, Herodias. On Herod's birthday, Herodias' daughter (traditionally named Salome) danced before the king and his guests. Her dancing pleased Herod so much that in his drunkenness he promised to give her anything she desired, up to half of his kingdom. When the daughter asked her mother what she should request, she was told to ask for the head of John the Baptist on a platter. Although Herod was appalled by the request, he reluctantly agreed and had John executed in the prison.

**First and Second Finding of the Head of St. John the Baptist** (February 24 / March 9). According to church tradition after the execution of John the Baptist, his disciples buried his body at Sebaste, but Herodius took his severed head and buried it in a dung heap. Later, Saint Joanna, who was married to Herod's steward, secretly took his head and buried it on the Mount of Olives, where it remained hidden for centuries.

The **First Finding** occurred in the fourth century. The property on the Mount of Olives where the head was buried eventually passed into the possession of a government official who became a monk with the name of Innocent. He built a church and a monastic cell there. When he started to dig the foundation, the vessel with the head of John the Baptist was uncovered. But fearful that the relic might be abused by unbelievers, he hid it again in the same place it had been found. Upon his death the church fell into ruin and was destroyed.

The **Second Finding** occurred in the year 452. During the days of Constantine the Great, two monks on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem reportedly saw visions of John the Baptist, who revealed to them the location of his head. They uncovered the relic, placed it in a sack and proceeded home. Along the way they encountered an unnamed potter and gave him the bag to carry, not telling him what it was. The Forerunner appeared to him and ordered him to flee from the careless and lazy monks, with what he held in his hands. He did so and took the head home with him. Before his death he placed it in a container and gave it to his sister. After some time, a hieromonk by the name of Eustathius, an Arian, came into possession of it, using it to attract followers to his teaching. He buried the head in a cave, near Emesa. Eventually, a monastery was built at that place. In the year 452 St John the Baptist appeared to Archimandrite Marcellus of this monastery, and indicated where his head was hidden in a water jar buried in the earth. The relic was brought into the city of Emesa, and was later transferred to Constantinople.

**Third Finding of the Head of St. John the Baptist** (May 25 / June 7). The head was transferred to Comana of Cappadocia during a period of Muslim raids (about 820) and it was hidden in the ground during a period of iconoclastic persecution. When the veneration of icons was restored in 850, Patriarch Ignatius of Constantinople (847-857) saw in a vision the place where the head of St John had been hidden. The patriarch communicated this to the emperor Michael III, who sent a delegation to Comana, where the head was found. Afterwards the head was again transferred to Constantinople, and here on May 25 it was placed in a church at the court.



**ST. XENIA ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
 P.O. Box 147 - Methuen, MA 01844  
 (phone) Fr. Michael Crowley cell (978) 204-0428 -- Church (978)  
 688-1211



MAY 2010						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Apr 25 (Apr 12)</b> <b>4th Sunday of Pascha: The Paralytic Tone 3</b> 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>Apr 26 (Apr 13)</b> <b>HM Artemon</b>	<b>Apr 27 (Apr 14)</b> <b>St Martin the Confessor</b>	<b>Apr 28 (Apr 15)</b> <b>Mid-Pentecost</b>  Fast: fish, wine & oil	<b>Apr 29 (Apr 16)</b> <b>VMM Agape, Irene, and Chionia</b>	<b>Apr 30 (Apr 17)</b> <b>HM Simeon &amp; comp</b>  Fast: wine & oil	<b>1 (Apr 18)</b> <b>Ven John of Decapolis</b>  6:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>2 (Apr 19)</b> <b>5th Sunday of Pascha: The Samaritan Woman. Tone 4</b> 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>3 (Apr 20)</b> <b>Ven Theodore Trichinas</b>	<b>4 (Apr 21)</b> <b>HM Januarius, bp of Benevento &amp; comp</b>	<b>5 (Apr 22)</b> <b>Ven Theodore the Sykeote</b>  Fast: wine & oil	<b>6 (Apr 23)</b> <b>GM and Wonderworker George</b>	<b>7 (Apr 24)</b> <b>M Sabbas Stratelates of Rome</b>  Fast: wine & oil	<b>8 (Apr 25)</b> <b>Ap and Evangelist Mark</b>  4:00 Class 6:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>9 (Apr 26)</b> <b>6th Sunday of Pascha: The Blind Man. Tone 5</b> 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>10 (Apr 27)</b> <b>HM Symeon the Kinsman of the Lord</b>	<b>11 (Apr 28)</b> <b>App Jason and Sosipater of the 70 &amp; comp</b>	<b>12 (Apr 29)</b> <b>9 Martyrs at Cyzicus</b>  6:30 Vigil of Ascension Fast: fish, wine & oil	<b>13 (Apr 30)</b> <b>ASCENSION OF THE LORD</b> 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy	<b>14 (May 1)</b> <b>Pr Jeremiah</b>  Fast: wine & oil	<b>15 (May 2)</b> <b>St Athanasius the Great</b>  6:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>16 (May 3)</b> <b>7th Sunday of Pascha: Fathers of the 1st Council. Tone 6</b> 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>17 (May 4)</b> <b>VM Pelagia of Tarsus</b>	<b>18 (May 5)</b> <b>GM Irene of Thessalonica</b>	<b>19 (May 6)</b> <b>R Job the Long-suffering</b>  Fast: wine & oil	<b>20 (May 7)</b> <b>Apparition of the Sign of the Precious Cross over Jerusalem</b>	<b>21 (May 8)</b> <b>St. John the Theologian</b>  Fast: fish, wine, & oil	<b>22 (May 9)</b> <b>Commemoration of the Departed</b>  4:00 Class 6:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>23 (May 10)</b> <b>PENTECOST</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>24 (May 11)</b> <b>Day Of the Holy Spirit. Tone 7</b> <b>Ss. Cyril and Methodius</b>  Fast free	<b>25 (May 12)</b> <b>St. Epiphanius, bp of Cyprus</b>  Fast free	<b>26 (May 13)</b> <b>VM Glyceria at Heraclea and her jailer Martyr Laodicius</b>  Fast free	<b>27 (May 14)</b> <b>M Isidore of Chios</b>  Fast free	<b>28 (May 15)</b> <b>Ven Pachomius the Great</b>  Fast free	<b>29 (May 16)</b> <b>Ven Theodore the Sanctified</b>  6:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast free
<b>30 (May 17)</b> <b>1st Sunday after Pentecost. All Saints. Tone 8</b> 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>31 (May 18)</b> <b>Beginning of Apostle's Fast</b>  Fast	<b>Jun 1 (May 19)</b> <b>HM Patrick, bp of Prusa</b>  Fast: fish, wine & oil	<b>Jun 2 (May 20)</b> <b>M Thalelaeus at Aegae &amp; comp</b>  Fast: wine & oil	<b>Jun 3 (May 21)</b> <b>Ss. Constantine &amp; Helen</b>  Fast: fish, wine, & oil	<b>Jun 4 (May 22)</b> <b>Ven Barlaam of Khutyn</b>  Fast	<b>Jun 5 (May 23)</b> <b>Ven Michael the Confessor, bp of Synnada</b>  4:00 Class 6:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine & oil





**ST. XENIA ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
P.O. Box 147 - Methuen, MA 01844  
(phone) Fr. Michael Crowley cell (978) 204-0428 -- Church (978)  
688-1211



JUNE 2010						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>May 30 (May 17)</b> <b>1st Sunday after Pentecost. All Saints. Tone 8</b> <b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>May 31 (May 18)</b> <b>Beginning of Apostle's Fast</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>1 (May 19)</b> <b>HM Patrick, bp of Prusa</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>2 (May 20)</b> <b>M Thalelaeus at Aegae &amp; comp</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>3 (May 21)</b> <b>Ss. Constantine &amp; Helen</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine, &amp; oil</b>	<b>4 (May 22)</b> <b>Ven Barlaam of Khutyn</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>5 (May 23)</b> <b>Ven Michael the Confessor, bp of Synnada</b>  <b>4:00 Class</b> <b>6:30 All-Night Vigil</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>
<b>6 (May 24)</b> <b>2nd Sunday after Pentecost. All Russian Saints. Tone 1</b> <b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>7 (May 25)</b> <b>3rd Finding of the Precious Head of St. John the Baptist</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>8 (May 26)</b> <b>App Carpus &amp; Alphaeus</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>9 (May 27)</b> <b>HM Therapon, bp of Sardis</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>10 (May 28)</b> <b>Ven Nicetas, bp of Chalcedon</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>11 (May 29)</b> <b>VM Theodosia of Tyre</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>12 (May 30)</b> <b>Ven Isaac, founder of the Dalmatian Monastery</b>  <b>6:30 All-Night Vigil</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>
<b>13 (May 31)</b> <b>3rd Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 2</b> <b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>14 (Jun 1)</b> <b>M Justin the Philosopher &amp; comp</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>15 (Jun 2)</b> <b>St. Nicephorus the Confessor</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>16 (Jun 3)</b> <b>M Lucillian and four youths at Byzantium</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>17 (Jun 4)</b> <b>St. Metrophanes, first patriarch of Constantinople</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>18 (Jun 5)</b> <b>HM Dorotheos, bp of Tyre</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>19 (Jun 6)</b> <b>Ven Bessarion of Egypt</b>  <b>4:00 Class</b> <b>6:30 All-Night Vigil</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>
<b>20 (Jun 7)</b> <b>4th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3</b> <b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>21 (Jun 8)</b> <b>Ven Ephraim, patriarch of Antioch</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>22 (Jun 9)</b> <b>St. Cyril of Alexandria</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>23 (Jun 10)</b> <b>HM Timothy, bp of Prusa</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>24 (Jun 11)</b> <b>App Bartholomew and Barnabas</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>25 (Jun 12)</b> <b>Ven Onuphrius the Great</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>26 (Jun 13)</b> <b>M Aquilina of Byblos</b>  <b>6:30 All-Night Vigil</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>
<b>27 (Jun 14)</b> <b>5th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 4</b> <b>9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>28 (Jun 15)</b> <b>St. Jonah, met of Moscow</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>29 (Jun 16)</b> <b>St. Tychon, bp of Amathus</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>30 (Jun 17)</b> <b>MM Manuel, Sabel, and Ismael of Persia</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>Jul 1 (Jun 18)</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>Jul 2 (Jun 19)</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>Jul 3 (Jun 20)</b>  <b>6:30 All-Night Vigil</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>

Please remove my name from your mailing list.

I no longer wish to receive this newsletter.

Please add the following people to your mailing list:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

St. Xenia Orthodox Church  
170 North Lowell Street  
P.O. Box 147  
Methuen, MA 01844

**Forwarding Service Requested**

**Postmaster: Dated Material**

#### **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.