



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

January - February 2017

Homily of His Eminence Metropolitan Laurus (+ 2008), for the Sunday after Theophany

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Dear brethren and sisters, today we are gathered here to glorify in prayer the great feast of Theophany.

This Sunday, in the liturgical language of the Church, is called the Sunday after the Enlightenment.

Some of us probably know that in antiquity, and even today in the liturgical books, the feast of the Theophany of the Lord is referred to as the Day of the Enlightenment.

Why is such a title, such an appellation, applied to the feast of the Baptism, the feast of Theophany?

If we carefully investigate and delve with you into the hymns of these recent days, we would have to direct our attention to the fact that these hymns speak to us of the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ at the Jordan for baptism.

And so, from that moment light shone forth for those sitting in darkness, for those sitting in the gloom and shadow of death.

In the kontakion of the feast we sing, "Thou hast appeared today to the whole world, and Thy light, O Lord, hath been signed upon us who hymn Thee with understanding. Thou hast come, Thou hast appeared, the Light unapproachable."

With the appearance of the Lord in the Jordan, the splendor of salvation shone upon humanity. The Lord preached among the people for three years, preparing them for the coming of the kingdom of God. But the people only marveled at His miracles; they did not accept Him; and in the end they crucified Him.

Yet the Lord arose, and after His resurrection He ascended into the heavens and sent the Holy Spirit down upon His disciples; and He founded the Holy

Church and bestowed upon it all the gifts that conduce to life and piety.

The entrance of the kingdom of heaven was thrown wide, but it is up to us to enter in—and one can do so only through the Holy Church, through the Holy Mysteries.

The first Mystery is Holy Baptism, through which we enter into the Holy Church. Through the Mystery of Baptism we are enlightened, we become members of the kingdom of Christ.

Early in the Christian era, on the Eve of Theophany the baptism of catechumens was performed, and it took place in baptisteries; but for the faithful in church the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures concerning the baptism of the Lord were read. These readings are even now read in church on the even of Theophany, the 18th of January. There are thirteen of them.

When the baptism of the catechumens was completed, they were led into the church and greeted with the hymn, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Thus it is that, because, on the eve of Theophany, the catechumens were enlightened with the light of the Faith of Christ, the feast of Theophany, now as in ages past, is called the Day of Enlightenment.

During these holy days may the Lord enlighten us also with the light of His grace, and may we turn to the Lord more frequently with the words of the prayer with which the priest concludes every Matins service: "O Christ, Thou true Light, Who enlightenest and illumineest every man who cometh into the world, may the light of Thy countenance be signed upon us, that therein we may behold the unapproachable Light; and direct our steps to the doing of Thy commandments, through the supplications of Thine all-pure Mother and of all Thy saints. Amen."

St. Xenia of St. 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 15th of the month prior to publication to Father Michael at frmichael@stxenia.org. Thank you.

Rector:

V. Rev. Michael Crowley
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North Andover, MA 01845
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Confessions on Saturday during Vigil, on Sunday during the Hours, and by appointment.

Parish Council

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Dcn. Alexander Doohovskoy	(978) 369-4486
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Anthony Sarantakis	(978) 263-2016
Roberto Gonzalez	(978) 692-1229
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Trapeza Schedule

* = strict fast

If you cannot be at church on your assigned Sunday, please contact someone directly to switch. If you are not on this list and would like to help, please add your name on the hard copy posted in the church hall and you will be added for the next round. If you have any questions, contact Judy Engalichev -- dujykot@comcast.net.

Trapeza can be whatever you would like to prepare, anything is appreciated. **Note: If you are preparing anything containing nuts or other allergens, please put a small label to that effect in front of your dish. Nut allergies are especially fatal to small children.**

A note about Trapeza etiquette: Standing, even for short periods of time, is often extremely difficult for older people and expectant mothers. It would be an act of Christian charity to allow them to collect their meal first and to be seated. It should go without saying that this courtesy should also be extended to visiting clergy.

January

Jan 1 – **Potluck**
Jan 8 – **Potluck**
Jan 15 – **Yolka – Potluck**
Jan 22 - Engalichev, Lynch, Schidlovsky
Jan 29 - Matushka Nancy, JoJo Crowley

February

Feb 5 - Pam Reed, Carolyn Savage, Diane Mendez
Feb 12 - Meghan Nettleton, Dorothea Crowley, Lena Rodzianko
Feb 19 - **Meat Fare:** Alexei Doohovskoy, AnneMarie Hakim, Sonya Mukhanov
Feb 26 - **Cheese Fare:** Alexandra Gonzalez, Anna Kekis, Marina Pavlov

Sisterhood News - Thank you...

...to all who donated poinsettias and wreaths to decorate the Church for the Nativity.

...to all who donated winter clothing to the Methuen School District. Over 60 coats were donated as well as many hats, gloves and scarves. The administration and staff of the Methuen school district were truly appreciative.

...to all who donated food at Thanksgiving for the local family in need.

Our parish is privileged to be able to help our neighbors in need. Thanks for your donations!

Congratulations...

... to the newly married Dorothea Crowley and Daniel Poletti, as well as Angela Kimball and Alexei Skok. Many Years to all!

Please Remember In Your Prayers...

Athanasia Tamvlakis, Peter Danas, Dimitry Emelianoff, and Masha Harris. Please remember to inform the Sisterhood if someone is in the hospital or shut in at home.

St. John of Damascus Church School News:

Please remember, the Church website has a page dedicated to the church school:

<http://www.stxenia.org/churchschool.html>

There you can find information about dates for our special events, pictures from past events, and curriculum guidelines broken down by age group.

The Parish Yolka will be held January 15 after Trapeza. Elementary 5 group will have a mandatory dress rehearsal on Saturday, January 14 at 4:30. Please be sure the children come for rehearsals and are well-prepared. Regular classes will resume on January 22nd.

Choir News:

If you have a private service - wedding, baptism, funeral, etc. - and would like to have choir singers, please contact Laryssa directly at stxeniachoir@gmail.com.

If you are interested in singing in the choir, please see Laryssa Doohovskoy.

A Reminder:

House Blessings will begin January 21 and are available until Great Lent. Father Michael will place a sign-up sheet in the Church for all those interested.

Charitable Deductions on Income Taxes: Consistent with good financial practice, the Parish has maintained records of all donations made to the Church. These contributions include those made by cash, checks, electronic funds transfer, credit card, or payroll deductions. Donors who want to itemize deductions cannot claim a tax deduction for any contribution regardless of the amount, unless you keep one of the following:

1. A bank record that shows the name of the qualified organization, the date of the contribution, and the amount of the contribution. Bank records may include:

- a. A canceled check.
- b. A bank or credit union statement, or
- c. A credit card statement.

2. A receipt (or letter or other written communication) from the qualified organization showing the name of the organization, the date of the contribution, and the amount of the contribution.

3. The payroll deduction reductions (see Publication 526 (2007)).

To ensure tax compliance for 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.

Our Parish does track contributions made and will, upon request, produce a written statement of contributions. This information will include the name of our Parish, name of the parishioner, date of each individual contribution, and the dollar amount. Our Parish cannot track cash contributions, regardless of amount, that are not properly identified by using the contribution envelope and writing in your name. Everyone who has given single contributions of \$250 or more will still receive a statement without needing to request it, as required by the tax code.

This is our best understanding of the current law; if you have additional questions, please consult with your tax advisor.

Tax Deductions for Church Volunteers: If you itemize your income-tax deductions, you can deduct your out-of-pocket expenses for church-related activities. In order to qualify for charitable tax deductions, you must:

1. Keep accurate records of mileage to and from church, or to and from church-related activities (e.g., post office, when picking up church mail).

2. Keep all receipts for expenses over \$25.00.

3. Keep records of all out-of-pocket expenses for trips taken to church events, such as choir or clergy conferences, at which you are an official representative of St. Xenia's parish. These include:

- a. hotel rooms
- b. parking
- c. tolls
- d. meals
- e. conference fees
- f. travel expenses (air fare, train tickets, cab fare)

Be sure to deduct any reimbursement you receive.

Consult with your tax preparer to confirm allowable deductions.

And finally, information on **another way to support our parish community, and save on your taxes: donations of stocks and bonds.** Supporting the church with a stock gift allows you to deduct the original cost, and also to avoid the tax incurred upon its sale. The church immediately sells the stock, and pays no tax on the sale. For example, if you bought fifty shares of Dunkin' Donuts common stock for \$30 per share, you paid \$1,500. If you donate the stock to the church at \$50 per share, the church would receive its full appreciated value of \$2,500 tax free! Please consult with your broker if you are interested in supporting the church in this way.

The Holy Martyress Tatiana (*Commemorated January 25/January 12*) was born into an illustrious Roman family -- her father was thrice elected consul. He was secretly a christian and raised his daughter devoted to God and the Church. Having reached the age of maturity, Tatiana did not enter into marriage but with all her strength devoted herself to the Church. She was made deaconess in one of the Roman churches and served God, in fasting and prayer tending the sick and helping the needy. By her righteousness Tatiana gained in future to be crowned with the crown of martyrdom.

When Rome came to be ruled by the sixteen year old Alexander Severus (222-235), all power was concentrated in the hands of the evil enemy and persecutor of christians Ulpian. Christian blood flowed like streams. Deaconess Tatiana was also arrested. When they brought her into the temple of Apollo so as to force her to offer sacrifice to the idol, the saint began praying -- and suddenly there occurred an earthquake -- the idol was smashed into pieces, and part of the temple collapsed and fell down on the pagan priests and many pagans. The demon inhabiting the idol ran out with an howl from that place, in front of which all saw it flying through the air like a ghost. They then began to beat the holy virgin about the eyes, but she bravely endured everything, praying for her tormentors that the Lord would open for them their spiritual eyes.

And the Lord heard the prayer of His servant. The executioners came to see, that four Angels encircled the saint and fended off from the blows; they heard a Voice from the heavens addressed to the holy martyress. All of them, eight men, believed in Christ and fell on their knees to Saint Tatiana, begging them to forgive them their wrongs against her. For confessing themselves christians they were subjected to tortures and execution, receiving Baptism by blood. Saint Tatiana was again given over to tortures on another day: they uncovered her and beat her, they cut at her body with razors, and from her wounds then there permeated a fragrance in the air. The torturers became exhausted and said, that someone invisible was beating at them with iron staffs, and nine of them fell dead. They then threw the saint in prison, where she prayed all night and with the Angels sang praise to the Lord. A new morning began, and they again took Saint Tatiana to the court. The torturers beheld with astonishment that after such terrible torments she appeared completely healthy and even more radiant and beautiful than before. They began to urge her to offer sacrifice to the goddess Diana. The saint seemed to appear agreeable, and they took her to the heathen temple. Saint Tatiana made the sign of the cross and began to pray -- and suddenly there sounded a crash of deafening thunder, and lightning struck the idol, the sacrificial offerings and the pagan priests. They again fiercely tortured the martyress, and at night they again threw her in prison, and again there appeared Angels and healed her wounds. On the following day they took Saint Tatiana to the circus and let loose at her an hungry lion; the beast did not touch the saint but only lay meekly at her feet. They wanted to pen up the lion back in its cage, and here instead it clawed up one of the torturers. They threw Tatiana into a fire, but the fire did not harm the martyress. The pagans, thinking that she was a sorceress, cut her hair to deprive her of magical powers, and locked her up in the temple of Zeus. But it was impossible to take away the power of God. On the third day pagan priests came with an encircling throng, preparing to offer sacrifice. Opening the temple, they beheld the idol thrown down into the dust and the holy martyress Tatiana joyously invoking the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. All the instruments of torture were worn out, and they carried out a sentence of death: the valiant sufferer was beheaded with a sword. Also executed as a christian together with her was her father, for having shown her the true faith of Christ.

The Nun Xenia (V), (*Commemorated February 6/January 24*) in the world Eusebia, was the only daughter of an eminent Roman senator. From her youth she yearned for God. In order to evade the marriage set up for her, she secretly left from her parental home together with two servants devoted to her and they set sail upon a ship. Through the Providence of God meeting up with the head of the monastery of the holy Apostle Andrew, which was situated in the city of Milassa, in Caesarea, she besought him to take her with her companions to Milassa. Having changed her name, she called herself Xenia [which in

Greek means "stranger" or foreigner"]. At Milassa she bought land, built a church in the name of Saint Stephen and founded a woman's monastery. Soon after this the bishop of Milassa, Paul, consecrated Xenia a deaconess, as fully worthy of that calling through virtuous life. The saint rendered aid to all: for the destitute she was a benefactress, for the grief-stricken -- a comforter, for sinners -- a guide. She possessed deep humility, accounting herself worst and most sinful of all. In her ascetic deeds she was guided by the counsels of the Palestinian ascetic, the Monk Euthymios. By her lofty life Saint Xenia attracted many a soul to salvation. The death of the holy virgin, during a time of prayer, was marked by the Lord with the appearance over the monastery in the heavens of an apparition in the form of a luminous crown with a radiant cross amidst it, which accompanied the body of the saint when it was carried into the city to the people, and it stayed until the moment of burial. Many of the sick, having touched to the remains of the saint, received healing.

Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Nikolai, ArchBishop, Apostle to Japan, (*Commemorated February 16/February 3*) -- in the world Ivan Dimitrievich Kasatkin, was born on 1 August 1836 in the village of Berezovsk, Bel'sk district, Smolensk diocese, where his father served as deacon. At the age of five he lost his mother. Having completed the Bel'sk religious school, and afterwards the Smolensk religious seminary, in 1857 Ivan Kasatkin entered the Saint-Peterburg spiritual academy. On 24 June 1860, in the academy temple of the Twelve Apostles, bishop Nektarii gave him monastic vows with the chosen name Nikolai. On the day of memory of the first-ranked Apostles Peter and Paul, 29 June, the monk Nikolai was ordained deacon, and on 30 June -- the altar-feastday of the academy temple -- to the dignity of priestmonk. Afterwards through his wish Father Nikolai was assigned to Japan, as head of the consular church in the city of Khakodate.

The preaching of the Gospel in Japan at first seemed completely impossible. In Father Nikolai's own words: "the Japanese of that time looked upon foreigners as beasts, and on Christianity as a villainous church, to which it was possible only for total knaves and charlatans to belong". Eight years passed in this way, in studying the country, the people, their language and manners and customs, amidst which he would have to preach. Up until 1868 the flock of Father Nikolai still numbered about twelve Japanese. At the end of 1869 priestmonk Nikolai made a report to the Synod in Peterburg about the result of his work. This resolution was adopted: "to form for the preaching of the Word of God among the pagan Japanese a special Russian Spiritual Mission". Father Nikolai was elevated to the dignity of archimandrite and assigned as head of this Mission. Having returned to Japan, he trans-

ferred the Khakodate flock to priestmonk Anatolii, and himself shifted the centre of the Mission to Tokyo. In 1871 there began in the country a persecution of Christians; many were subjected to being chased about (among this number was the first Japanese Orthodox person, the afterwards reknown missionary priest Paul Savabe). Only in the year 1873 did the persecution abate somewhat, and it became possible to freely preach Christianity.

In this year archimandrite Nikolai set about the construction in Tokyo of a church and school for fifty men, and later also a religious school, which in 1878 was transformed into a seminary.

In 1874 there arrived at Tokyo His Grace Paul, Bishop of Kamchatka, to ordain to the priestly dignity candidates from the local population recommended by archimandrite Nikolai. During this time at the Mission in Tokyo there operated four schools -- catechetical, seminary, women's, church readers. And in Khakodate there were two schools: boys and girls. In the second half of 1877 the Mission began regularly to publish the journal "Church Messenger". By the year 1878 there already numbered in Japan 4115 Christians, and there existed a number of Christian communities. Divine-services and teaching in the native language, the publication of books of religious-moral content -- these were the means which permitted the Mission to attain in a short while such reknown results.

Archimandrite Nikolai was ordained bishop on 30 March 1880 in the Trinity Cathedral of Alexander Nevsky Lavra. Returning to Japan, he began with still greater fervour to continue his apostolic work: he completed construction on the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Tokyo, he set about the translation of the Divine-service books, and he composed into the Japanese language a special Orthodox theological dictionary.

Great hardship befell the lot of the saint and his flock at the time of the Russo-Japanese War. For his ascetic labour during these difficult years he was deemed worthy of elevation to the dignity of archbishop.

In the year 1911 half a century had passed from the time, when the young priestmonk Nikolai had first tread on Japanese soil. But by this time in 266 communities of the Japanese Orthodox Church there were 33017 Christians, 1 archbishop, 1 bishop, 35 priests, 6 deacons, 14 teachers of singing, and 116 preacher-catechists.

In his 76th year on 3 February 1912, the Enlightener of Japan ArchBishop Nikolai expired peacefully to the Lord. The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church passed resolution on 10 April 1970 concerning the glorification of the Sainted-Bishop into the ranks of the "RavnoApostoli" "Equal-to-the-Apostles", since in Japan the saint was long honoured as a great righteous one and prayerful intercessor before the Lord.



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JANUARY 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 (Dec 19) Sunday before the Nativity, Holy Fathers, Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine & oil	2 (Dec 20) HM Ignatius the God-bearer, bp of Antioch Fast: wine & oil	3 (Dec 21) VM Juliana of Nicomedia and comp. Fast: wine & oil	4 (Dec 22) GM Anastasia of Rome, her teacher M. Chrysogonus, and comp. Fast	5 (Dec 23) Holy Ten Martyrs of Crete Fast: wine & oil	6 (Dec 24) Nun-martyr Eugenia of Rome, and comp. 6:30 Vigil of the Nativity Fast	7 (Dec 25) NATIVITY OF THE LORD 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Festive Meal following 2:00 Great Vespers
8 (Dec 26) Sunday after the Nativity, holy ancestors, Tone 4 9:00 Matins and Divine Liturgy Fast free	9 (Dec 27) Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen Fast free	10 (Dec 28) The 20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia Fast free	11 (Dec 29) The 14,000 Holy Innocents Fast free	12 (Dec 30) VM Anysia at Thessalonica Fast free	13 (Dec 31) Ven. Melania the Younger, of Rome Fast free	14 (Jan 1) Circumcision of the Lord 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast free
15 (Jan 2) Sunday before the Baptism of Our Lord, Tone 5 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Noon Parish Yolka Fast free	16 (Jan 3) Prophet Malachias Fast free	17 (Jan 4) Synaxis of the 70 Apostles Fast free	18 (Jan 5) Eve of the Theophany 6:30 Vigil of Theophany w/Blessing of Waters Fast: wine & oil	19 (Jan 6) THEOPHANY OF THE LORD 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy	20 (Jan 7) Synaxis of the Baptist Fast: wine & oil	21 (Jan 8) Saturday after the Baptism of Our Lord 5:30 All-Night Vigil
22 (Jan 9) Sunday after the Baptism of Our Lord, Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	23 (Jan 10) St. Gregory of Nyssa	24 (Jan 11) Ven. Theodosius the Great	25 (Jan 12) Martyr Tatiana of Rome Fast: wine & oil	26 (Jan 13) St. Hilary, bp of Poitiers	27 (Jan 14) The Holy Fathers slain at Sinai and Raithu Fast: fish, wine & oil	28 (Jan 15) St. Paul of Thebes, and St. John Calabytes of Constantinople 5:30 All-Night Vigil
29 (Jan 16) 32nd Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 7 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	30 (Jan 17) St. Anthony the Great	31 (Jan 18) St. Athanasius the Great and St. Cyril, archbishops of Alexandria	Feb 1 (Jan 19) Ven. Macarius the Great of Egypt Fast: wine & oil	Feb 2 (Jan 20) Ven. Euthymius the Great	Feb 3 (Jan 21) Ven. Maximus the Confessor Fast	Feb 4 (Jan 22) Apostle Timothy of the 70 5:30 All-Night Vigil



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FEBRUARY 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jan 29 (Jan 16) 32nd Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 7 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	Jan 30 (Jan 17) St. Anthony the Great	Jan 31 (Jan 18) St. Athanasius the Great and St. Cyril, archbishops of Alexandria	1 (Jan 19) Ven. Macarius the Great of Egypt Fast: wine & oil	2 (Jan 20) Ven. Euthymius the Great	3 (Jan 21) Ven. Maximus the Confessor Fast	4 (Jan 22) Apostle Timothy of the 70 5:30 All-Night Vigil
5 (Jan 23) Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee. Tone 8 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy 2:00 Great Vespers & Litya	6 (Jan 24) St. Xenia of Petersburg 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Fast free	7 (Jan 25) St. Gregory the Theologian Fast free	8 (Jan 26) St. Xenophon, his wife St. Mary and their two son Fast free	9 (Jan 27) Translation of the relics of St. John Chrysostom Fast free	10 (Jan 28) Ven. Ephraim the Syrian Fast free	11 (Jan 29) Translation of the relics of HM Ignatius the God-bearer 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast free
12 (Jan 30) Sunday of the Prodigal Son. Tone 1 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	13 (Jan 31) Holy Unmercenaries Cyrus and John	14 (Feb 1) Martyr Tryphon of Syria 6:30 Vigil of the Meeting of the Lord	15 (Feb 2) MEETING OF THE LORD 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	16 (Feb 3) Righteous Symeon the God-receiver and Anna the Prophetess	17 (Feb 4) Ven. Isidore of Pelusium Fast	18 (Feb 5) Martyr Agatha of Palermo in Sicily 5:30 All-Night Vigil
19 (Feb 6) Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare). Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	20 (Feb 7) Ven. Parthenius, bp of Lampsacus Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	21 (Feb 8) GM Theodore Stratelates Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	22 (Feb 9) Martyr Nicephorus of Antioch Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	23 (Feb 10) HM Charalampus, bp of Magnesia Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	24 (Feb 11) HM Blaise, bp of Sebaste Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	25 (Feb 12) St. Alexis, metropolitan of Moscow 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil
26 (Feb 13) The Sunday of Forgiveness. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Forgiveness Vespers follows Liturgy Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	27 (Feb 14) Clean Monday 6:30 Compline w/Great Canon of St Adrew of Crete Fast	28 (Feb 15) Apostle Onesimus of the 70 6:30 Compline w/Great Canon of St Adrew of Crete Fast	Mar 1 (Feb 16) 6:30 Compline w/Great Canon of St Adrew of Crete Fast	Mar 2 (Feb 17) 6:30 Compline w/Great Canon of St Adrew of Crete Fast	Mar 3 (Feb 18) 6:30 Compline w/Akathist to Theotokos Fast	Mar 4 (Feb 19) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: wine & oil