



# St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

November-December 2003

## Role of Family in Salvation

Excerpts from a sermon of Archbishop Sergius (Korolev) of Prague (1881-1952).

The issue of salvation is the main issue in the history of humankind as well as in the life of each individual. Salvation is true happiness. Everything else is based on our salvation. In this sense, happiness is in our own hands. It is achieved by defeating sin. The immediate environment for struggle against sin is the family as well as all those living around us. We look at the environment and situation of our life as if it was something accidental, and we don't view our family as the path given to us by God for our salvation. Life in a family seems to be something that happened by chance, and the most important aspect of family life evades our attention. According to the Apostle, family is a small church. It can especially help an individual in achieving the main goal of life. In family people look for happiness. But what do we mean by happiness? People usually give unclear answers to this question. This means that we don't take from this God-given state that which is the most essential.

Both sinful and spiritually right life take place inside a person and the environment is a means using which the person must look inside. We already mentioned that sin is a separating force. I will explain it with an example from everyday life. Let's say two people offended and insulted one another; did not want to make concessions and went their separate ways. That's an unhappy situation. This tells us that we must fight against sin for the sake of our own happiness, because anger is an unhappy part of our life. A human being is created with a desire for happiness and must and can learn to fight for his happiness against unhappiness, i.e. against sin in the environment which is especially close to him, close to him in the flesh. Powers of sin and holiness are in a person as if it were in a state of equilibrium. Depending on

how we touch a person, the power of good or the power of evil begin to act in him and in the world around him. We always need an environment that would cleanse our inner world and would enable us indeed to come to know ourselves.

Outside environment, being a chance interaction of people does not server this purpose. When faced with strangers, a person hides his unrighteousness, drives it inside and tries to look good. A person is ashamed of what others might think of him, ashamed of the opinion of society and therefore does not show his true self. It is only in the family environment, to which we are accustomed, that the source of evil lurking in us begins to show up. In this respect a family environment is a necessary tool for self-understanding. No wonder that we are often afraid of this family atmosphere. Running away from it, we are interested in many things and entertain ourselves in various ways, just to escape from the environment that helps us to learn more about ourselves.

Why does the family appear to be the environment most conducive to salvation? Because in the family a person directly opens up his feelings, but when outsiders are present he hides his inner world. In society a person controls himself, he hides his irritation, tries to show himself other than he really is. He shows his outward, not his inner character. But in the family he is not trying to hide his condition, he will show it, won't be ashamed to display his sinfulness by word or deed. And his hidden sinful world is open before the family, before his relatives and before the person himself. Thus, in a family environment, a person who pays attention to his own salvation can easier understand his sins and what separates him from others. It is important, however, that this realization of one's inner world should lead one to fight against sin.

St. Xenia of Petersburg Orthodox Church is a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, under the omophorion of Metropolitan LAURUS, First Hierarch, and Bishop GABRIEL of Manhattan. The parish newsletter is published bimonthly 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: [skovranok@ttlc.net](mailto:skovranok@ttlc.net), 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  
 (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
- Starosta: Rdr. Constantine Desrosiers (603) 775-0320
- Secretary: Natalie Pishenin (978) 658-5564
- Treasurer: Tony Sarantakis (978) 263-2016
- Sisterhood: Matushka Nancy Crowley (207) 767-1889
- Cemetery: Lily Dombrowski (978) 851-2972
- Peter Danas (978) 459-9541
- Roberto Gonzales (978) 264-9594
- Michael Johnson (978) 691-0045
- Anna Johnson (978) 691-0045
- John Kekis (978) 264-6604
- John Rush (603) 898-4315

**Non-Council Ministries:**

- Sunday School: Michael Lang (603) 465-9754

**Trapeza Schedule**

St. Xenia's is pleased to be able to offer Trapeza after every Divine Liturgy, and new members of this group are always welcome. 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 40 people, anything is appreciated. Donuts, fruit and pastries are as acceptable as soup and sandwiches. We ask only that, if you cannot be at church on your assigned Sunday, you kindly call and switch with someone. If you have any questions, or would like to be a part of this ministry, contact Karen Schidlovsky at (603) 868-6410. Thank you in advance for your contribution.

**November:**

- 2: Karen Schidlovsky, Nancy Harris
- 9: Pam Reed, Diane and Carolyn Sarantakis
- 16: Anna Johnson, Masha Harris
- 23: Xenia Rush, Matushka Nancy
- 30: Tanya Sciadone, Mireille Lang

**December:**

- 7: Janet Donley, Amy McLellan
- 14: Marianna Haven, Josephine Kniaziuk, Irene LaPage
- 21: Nicholas Kronauer, Vera Sarantakis
- 28: Helena Doohovskoy, Marianne DiMatteo, Anna Kekis



**Sisterhood News:** Our thanks to all members of the parish who came through with donations of time and food when Bishop Gabriel visited our parish in September. Vladyka had a wonderful time, and the food was delicious!

We have accumulated a large amount of clothing to be sent to Russia. Before contributing anything else, please contact Anna Johnson to see what the families actually need.

Once again, the Sisterhood will be holding a fundraiser for the parish by selling wrapping paper and candy. Please keep this in mind as you prepare for the holidays.

Sisterhood dues are \$5 per year, and membership is open to all women of the parish. Our next meetings will take place on November 28 and December 26.

### **Thank You...Спасибо...Ευχαριστο...**

...from Father Michael and Matushka Nancy to all who helped make Bishop Gabriel's recent visit a success. To quote from the note Father sent to all via e-mail: "Since I was not able to get to everyone personally yesterday, this is just a note to thank everyone for their hard work in hosting Bishop Gabriel for our parish feast. The choir was superb, the food was absolutely wonderful, everything to the smallest detail was handled perfectly. If I begin trying to name names I am sure I will miss someone so I will simply say to everyone—Congratulations! Now that was a parish feast day honoring our Holy Blessed Xenia! Vladyka Gabriel was very pleased with our parish in every way. I am sure that he will return often."

**Please remember in your prayers...** Nicholas, Paul, Nina, David, Basil, Vassilisa, Seraphim, Bart, Alice, Dimitri, Lilly, Kyriaki, Genevieve, Anne, and Apostolos.

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

**Condolences** to Vladyka Gabriel, whose mother reposed in September. May her memory be eternal!

### **Congratulations:**

...to Dan and Amy McLellan, and all the Clan McLellan, on the birth of their son Ian Zachariah Serge on September 18<sup>th</sup>. Many years!

**Financial Update:** As of October 2003, the balance on the church mortgage stands at \$89,092.64. If you have any questions, please see Reader Constantine Desrosiers.

**Sunday School News:** Sunday School began on October 4/5 (N.S.). We have made a number of structural changes this year. We have consolidated to three classes: Elementary (grades 1-5), Middle School (grades 6-8), and High School (grades 9-12). Elementary will be taught by Alexander Doohovskoy, Middle School as before by Michael Lang, and Father Michael himself will be teaching the high schoolers. A reminder that the times have changed as well: Elementary school class begins after Communion as before, but middle school now begins as soon as Father finishes the sermon. High schoolers will meet on the first Saturday of each month in the afternoon, and the third Sunday of each month during trapeza.

We are using new texts for the elementary class: "A Visual Catechism of the Orthodox Church" and "A Child's Paradise of Saints." There is also a new text for the middle school class: "The Young Church: A New Approach to Study of the Acts." For the high schoolers, Father has planned "a Law of God type of class that will speak to the particular needs of these young people and help them both deal with the onslaught of the world that they face in high school, and prepare them for college when many of them leave the nest of their families to struggle on their own."

We are excited that the new school year has started, and are looking for a repeat of the great job our students did last year.

**Property Committee:** We have been in contact with the mosaic artists in Russia. The sketch for the mosaic icon of St. Xenia over the front portico is being amended to reflect a more iconographic style, as requested by the parish.

The contractor for the parking lot addition began work in October. First, some more trees were cleared (beyond what is needed for the parking lot), so that we can eventually expand the cemetery. Also, the road around our cemetery will get some desperately needed improvements—it will be ground up and resurfaced. We think everyone will appreciate the benefits of these endeavors. We would also be very grateful for any contributions towards these efforts to improve our church and cemetery.

Fr Yakov is making great strides towards finishing the frescoes for inside the Altar. Natalie Pishenin visited him at his home in Richfield Springs, NY, on October 12<sup>th</sup> and was impressed with the progress he has made. He told her that he will hopefully have the icons complete and installed in our church by the end of November.

The bells we ordered from Russia have arrived! They will be delivered to our church the first week in November. Fr. Michael is now looking into a portable frame on which to hang the bells that can be brought inside during the week. A bell-ringing workshop with an accomplished bell ringer from Jordanville is planned for the near future.

## Annual Meeting

### SUMMARY OF VOTES / ELECTIONS / ACCEPTANCES

#### 1. ELECTION: EDITING COMMITTEE

The following parish members were elected to the Editing Committee of the minutes of the 10/19/03 Annual Parish Meeting without dissent and by simple majority vote:

Vera Sarantakis

Nicholas Kronauer

Peter Danas

#### 2. ELECTION: PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

The following parish members were elected to serve on the 2003-2004 Parish Council without dissent and by simple majority vote:

Anthony Sarantakis (Treasurer) Re-elected

Natalie Pishenin (Secretary) Re-elected

Michael Johnson Re-elected

John Rush Re-elected

Lily Dombrowski New Member

John Kekis New Member

Roberto Gonzales New Member

Peter Danas New Member

Anna Johnson New Member

*(Non-elected continuing positions: Starosta Rdr. Constantine Desrosiers, Head Sister Matushka Nancy Crowley.)*

#### 3. ACCEPTED: 2003-2004 Auditing Committee Report

#### 4. VOTED, ACCEPTED: 2003-2004 Budget

Without amendment or dissent, annual budget: \$85,297.

#### 5. ELECTION: 2003-2004 AUDITING COMMITTEE

The following parish members were elected to serve on the 2003-2004 Auditing Committee without dissent and by simple majority vote:

Anna Kekis

Daniel McLellan

Nicholas Kronauer

## Various Housekeeping Issues

The Parish Council works diligently to manage the physical plant of our parish and to make best use of our resources. It is, though, a burden that must be shared with every parishioner according to their ability. We have real needs when it comes to helping with clean-up of the church and grounds.

In order to keep up our marble floors it is necessary to take twenty minutes or so after Liturgy on Sunday to run a dry mop around and to scrape up any wax that may have fallen to the floor. We are hoping to engage some of the young people in this by possibility offering the additional incentive (that is, additional to the abundance of God's Grace) of a few dollars to put in their pockets. If we can get two or three people to take charge each week it should not over burden any one person. "Many hands make light work!"

We also have some basic clean up of the grounds that should be done before winter sets in. A big storm a couple of weeks ago left literally hundreds of pine cones and piles of pine needles on our driveway and parking lot. Again, a few people with brooms or leaf blowers can take care of this very easily. Any volunteers?

Once the snow comes it is important that we have our sidewalks shoveled. We have someone who comes to plow the road and parking lot, but we have to do the rest ourselves. It is very important that we remove snow from our deck as well, particularly the areas where the deck meets the building. Long term moisture contact is giving us a problem with carpenter ants. We may have to do something more with the deck to alleviate the problem, but having the snow removed from where it lies against the building would help a lot.

## Church Etiquette

A couple of points to remember:

When attending the Vigil, it is improper to sit during the Six Psalms, the reading of the Gospel or the Lord's Prayer. We are, of course, supposed to stand for the whole Vigil except during readings which sometimes follow "O Gentle Light" and during Kathisma readings. It is understood that some people have weakness or infirmities that prevent them always standing, but this should not apply to the above times unless one is in a wheelchair.

It is also improper to move around the church venerating icons, lighting candles, etc. during the Cherubic Hymn, the Eucharistic Canon (from "It is meet and right" to "It is truly meet"), or the Lord's Prayer at Divine Liturgy. If you enter the church late, during one of these times, simply stand quietly in the back until it is appropriate to move around.

-Fr. Michael

# The Russian Corner

## Kutia

With the approach of Christmastide in all Orthodox churches, homes and families are usually preparing for the Holiday. Churches are spruced up and decorated. Housewives are preparing traditional dishes after the 40-day Lent has ended.

One of our favorites is “kutia.” It is served on Christmas Eve, after the fast breaks at the sight of the first evening star. Traditionally, kutia represents the symbols of fertility, abundance, and the hope of immortality.

This dish is generally prepared for Christmas, Easter and other important events in the family such as funerals.

In different parts of the world, kutia preparation varies. Russians make it from cooked wheat grain with honey and walnuts or almonds, as well as poppy seeds. Serbs make it with cooked and ground wheat, with ground walnuts and honey, adding powdered sugar. Arabs cook wheat in sugar syrup, adding spices, cloves, and cinnamon.

### Recipe for Kutia

1 ½ cups uncooked wheat (obtainable in health food stores); 4 cups water; ¾ cup slivered almonds or walnuts; ½ cup honey and one cup sugar; 2/3 cup chopped raisins; ½ cup chopped dried apricots; pinch of salt; cinnamon to taste; poppy seeds (optional).

Soak the wheat overnight in the 4 cups of water; drain. Cook in fresh water until the wheat is soft. Drain water and add chopped rains, apricots and salt. Combine honey and sugar. Pour syrup over the wheat. Leave kutia in the refrigerator until ready to serve. Scalded poppy seeds can be added to taste.

Some families make kutia from rice, and use raisins and candied peels instead.



## A Delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia Will Be In Moscow Nov. 17-25.

From Nov. 17th through 25th, a delegation from the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, consisting of Archbishop Mark of Berlin and Germany, Archbishop Hilarion of Australia, Bishop Kirill of San Francisco and the Western United States, Proto-priest Nikolai Artemov and Proto-priest Peter Holodny, will be received as guests by the Moscow Patriarchate. They were invited by the blessing of Patriarch Alexy II, Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Although there had also been individual bishops and clergy of ROCOR in Russia previously, this visit for the first time bears an official character. During their stay in Moscow, the delegation will be able to examine the life of the Russian Orthodox Church. The program for the visit also includes meetings with the hierarchy of the Moscow Patriarchate, during which will be discussed the question of overcoming the already obsolete division between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia.

*The above text is from the official website of the Moscow Patriarchate. Since this entry appeared only in the Russian language, the above English translation was made by Fr. John R. Shan.*

# St Xenia of Petersburg Orthodox Church

## November 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<i>1</i> <b>4:30 PM Young People's Class</b> <b>6:30 PM Sunday Vigil</b> (19 Oct) Pr. Joel; St John of Kronstadt
<i>2</i> 9:30 AM Hours <b>10:00 AM Pentecost 20 Divine Liturgy Tone 3</b>	<i>3</i> (21 Oct) St Hilarion the Great	<i>4</i> (22 Oct) St Abercuis; 7 Youths of Ephesus; Kazan Icon	<i>5</i> <b>7:30 PM Bible Study - Epistle to the Romans</b> (23 Oct) Ap James brother of the Lord Fast Day - Wine & Oil allowed	<i>6</i> (24 Oct) MM Aretas & Comp	<i>7</i> (25 Oct) MM Marcian & Martyrius Fast Day	<i>8</i> <b>6:30 PM Sunday Vigil</b> (26 Oct) GM Demetrius
<i>9</i> 9:30 AM Hours <b>10:00 AM Pentecost 21 Divine Liturgy Tone 4</b> 1:00 PM Parish Council Meeting	<i>10</i> (28 Oct) MM Terence & family; St Stephen	<i>11</i> (29 Oct) M Anastasia the Roman	<i>12</i> (30 Oct) HM Zenobius Fast Day	<i>13</i> (31 Oct) App Stachys & comp	<i>14</i> (1 Nov) SS Cosmas & Damian Fast Day - Wine & Oil allowed	<i>15</i> <b>5:30 PM Demetrius' Saturday Commemoration of the Departed</b> <b>6:30 PM Sunday Vigil</b>
<i>16</i> 9:30 AM Hours <b>10:00 AM Pentecost 22 Divine Liturgy Tone 5</b> <b>12:00 PM Young People's Class during Trapeza</b>	<i>17</i> (4 Nov) St Joannicius the Great	<i>18</i> <b>7:30 PM Enquirers Class</b> (5 Nov) M Galacteon	<i>19</i> (6 Nov) St Paul the Confessor Fast Day	<i>20</i> (7 Nov) 33 MM of Melitene	<i>21</i> (8 Nov) Synaxis of Archangel Michael & All Angels Fast Day - Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<i>22</i> <b>6:30 PM Sunday Vigil</b> (9 Nov) MM Onesiphorus & Porphyrius
<i>23</i> 9:30 AM Hours <b>10:00 AM Pentecost 23 Divine Liturgy Tone 6</b>	<i>24</i> (11 Nov) MM MInas & comp	<i>25</i> (12 Nov) St John the Merciful	<i>26</i> (13 Nov) St John Chrysostom Fast Day - Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<i>27</i> (14 Nov) Ap Philip	<i>28</i> (15 Nov) MM Gurias, Samonas & Abibus Fast Day	<i>29</i> <b>6:30 PM Sunday Vigil</b> (16 Nov) Ap Matthew Fast Day - Fish, Wine & Oil allowed
<i>30</i> 9:30 AM Hours <b>10:00 AM Pentecost 24 Divine Liturgy Tone 7</b> 1:00 PM Sisterhood Meeting Fast Day - Fish, Wine & Oil allowed						

# St Xenia of Petersburg Orthodox Church

## December 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> (18 Nov) M Platon	<b>2</b> (19 Nov) Pr Obadiah Wine & Oil allowed	<b>3</b> <b>6:30 PM Vespers for the Entry of the Theotokos</b> <b>7:30 PM Bible Study - Epistle to the Romans</b> (20 Nov) St Gregory Decapolite	<b>4</b> (21 Nov) <b>Entry of the Theotokos (Divine Liturgy at Holy Epiphany)</b> Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>5</b> (22 Nov) Ap Philemon	<b>6</b> <b>6:30 PM Sunday Vigil</b> (23 Nov) St Amphilocius Fish, Wine & Oil allowed
Nativity Fast						
<b>7</b> 9:30 AM Hours <b>10:00 AM Pentecost 25 Divine Liturgy Tone 8</b> 1:00 PM Parish Council Meeting Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>8</b> (25 Nov) HM Clem- ent; HM Peter Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>9</b> (26 Nov) St Alypius Wine & Oil allowed	<b>10</b> (27 Nov) GM James the Persia- n; Kursk Icon Wine & Oil allowed	<b>11</b> (28 Nov) M Steph- en the New Wine & Oil allowed	<b>12</b> (29 Nov) MM Paramon & comp	<b>13</b> <b>6:30 PM Sunday Vigil</b> (30 Nov) Ap Andrew Fish, Wine & Oil allowed
Fr. Michael at All-Diaspora Conference in Nyack						
Nativity Fast						
<b>14</b> 9:30 AM Hours <b>10:00 AM Pentecost 26 Divine Liturgy Tone 1</b> Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>15</b> (2 Dec) Pr Habbakuk	<b>16</b> <b>7:30 PM Enquire- r's Class</b> (3 Dec) Pr Zephaniah Wine & Oil allowed	<b>17</b> (4 Dec) GM Barba- ra; St John Damascene Wine & Oil allowed	<b>18</b> (5 Dec) St Sabbas the Sanctified Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>19</b> (6 Dec) St Nicholas Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>20</b> <b>6:30 PM Sunday Vigil</b> (7 Dec) St Ambrose Fish, Wine & Oil allowed
Nativity Fast						
<b>21</b> 9:30 AM Hours <b>10:00 AM Pentecost 27 Divine Liturgy Tone 2</b> 1:00 PM Sister- hood Meeting Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>22</b> (9 Dec) Concep- tion of the Theotokos Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>23</b> (10 Dec) MM Mennas & comp Wine & Oil allowed	<b>24</b> (11 Dec) St Daniel the Stylite	<b>25</b> (12 Dec) St Spyri- don; St Herman of Alaska Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>26</b> (13 Dec) M Eustra- tius & comp Wine & Oil allowed	<b>27</b> <b>6:30 PM Sunday Vigil</b> (14 Dec) MM Thyr- sus & comp Fish, Wine & Oil allowed
Nativity Fast						
<b>28</b> 9:30 AM Hours <b>10:00 AM Sunday of the Forefa- thers Divine Liturgy Tone 3</b> Fish, Wine & Oil allowed	<b>29</b> (16 Dec) Pr Haggai	<b>30</b> (17 Dec) Pr Daniel; 3 Holy Youths Wine & Oil allowed	<b>31</b> (18 Dec) MM Seb- astian & comp			
Nativity Fast						

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

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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.