



# St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

May/June 2008

## The Election of Metropolitan Hilarion

### The Council of Bishops Signs the Act Electing the New First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad

On Monday, April 29 (May 12), 2008, on the feast day of the Nine Martyrs of Cyzicus, having gathered in the City of New York in the Cathedral of the Sign of the Most Holy Mother of God of the Kursk Root Icon, We, the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, having prayed at Divine Liturgy before the opening of an extraordinary session of the Council of Bishops, and commemorating His Eminence Metropolitan Laurus; and having prayed before the Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God and the relics of SS Elizabeth and Barbara, invoking the grace-filled aid of the Holy Spirit, commenced electing the new Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

There were 11 voting bishops, 3 of them absent, but who submitted their votes in writing.

His Eminence Archbishop Hilarion received over 2/3 of the votes and was elected, in accordance with the Order of electing the First Hierarchy, as the sixth Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

We pray to the Almighty God, worshiped in the Trinity, the Most-Blessed Virgin Mother of God, and all the saints for Divine blessing to be sent down upon the further service of our First Hierarchy. Amen.

+*Archbishop Ahpy*

+*Archbishop Mark*

+*Archbishop Kyrill*

+*Bishop Michael*

+*Bishop Agapit*

+*Bishop Gabriel*

+*Bishop Peter*

### *Axios, Axios, Axios!*

It is with great joy that our parish received the news of the election of Archbishop Hilarion of Sydney, Australia and New Zealand to the rank of First Hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York.

Vladyka Hilarion, while Bishop of Manhattan, was an ardent supporter of our parish. His Eminence, among many other things, was integral in securing the funding for the building of our church building, and came in 1995 for the service of the laying of the cornerstone, bringing relics of the Holy Monk Martyrs of the St. Theodosius Monastery in Palestine, which were sealed in a gold box under the first stone. Within a year His Eminence was appointed Archbishop of Australia, and so sadly was not present for the opening Services of the church.

Many times over the past six years that I have served at St. Xenia's, parishioners (particularly Lilly!) would ask when Vladyka Hilarion would visit us again—so enduring is their love for him.

We were deeply saddened by the untimely repose of our beloved Metropolitan Laurus who was present with us for our parish feast for the past two years. We are thankful to God for the return of Vladyka Hilarion to assuage our grief.

Also, after over ten years of support and prayers for our parish, His Grace Bishop Gabriel has been appointed Bishop of Montreal and Canada. We are very grateful for the love, kindness and arch-pastoral guidance of Vladyka Gabriel towards us and will greatly miss his visits. We pray that God grant His Grace many years in the Episcopal seat in Montreal!

—*Fr. Michael*

St. Xenia of Petersburg Orthodox Church is a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, under the omophorion of Metropolitan HILARION of Eastern America & New York, First Hierarch. 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  
Starosta: Sdn. Constantine Desrosiers (603) 775-0320  
Secretary: Natalie Pishenin (978) 658-5564  
Treasurer: Anthony Sarantakis (978) 263-2016  
Sisterhood: Matushka Nancy Crowley (207) 767-1889  
Cemetery: to be determined by search committee.  
Interim, Rev. Michael Crowley  
  
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

**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.

**May**

4 Nicholas Kronauer, Vera Sarantakis  
11 Alexandra Gonzalez, Amy McLellan  
18 Anna Johnson, Mireille Lang  
25 Nina Yakuboff, Maria Kasarda

**June**

1 Pot Luck

Summer Trapeza (pot luck) begins in June and ends in September.

**Sisterhood News:** The Sisterhood has decided not to put on the "Lilac Nights Ball" this year. Hopefully, it will resume in 2009.

Over \$300 was raised for the St. Nicholas Church building fund through the sale of kulich before Pascha.

The Sisterhood is offering scholarship money to college-bound children of parish members graduating this June. \$500 will be available for college-bound high school graduates. For consideration, the graduate should write an essay about how their faith has guided or will guide them to or through college.

The Sisterhood is open to all women of the parish. Dues are \$5 per year.

**Thank You...** to all who participated in the parish clean-up for the Feast of Pascha.

...to Gene Survillo for providing potted palms to help beautify our temple for Palm Sunday and throughout the paschal season.

**Please remember in your prayers...**Nicholas, Lilly, Nina, Josephine, David, Vassilisa, Lilly Anne, Margaret, the newly-reposed Olga.

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

**Financial Update:** As of April 30, 2008, the balance on the church mortgage stands at \$43,335. If you have any questions, please see Subdeacon Constantine Desrosiers.

**Church School Update:** Please remember that church school information is available at [www.stxenia.org](http://www.stxenia.org). A list of the Spring High School lectures can be found here, as well as weekly updates of class lessons and announcements for church activities that may be of interest to families with school aged children.

**Summer School of Liturgical Music:** The 17th session of the Summer School of Liturgical Music at Holy Trinity Seminary, Jordanville, New York, will be held from Sunday, July 6 until Saturday, July 19, 2008. This is a three-year program of intense study of Russian Orthodox church music history, Typicon, vocal training and choir conducting, Slavonic, music theory, and Liturgical Performance Practice. Singers and conductors aged 16 to 80 have participated in the program. The fee for two weeks of concentrated training (room, board, and tuition) is \$900.00, and as always, our parish has set aside money for a scholarship. The web address is <http://sslm.hts.edu>, where students can register. If you have any questions, you may email [musicschool@msn.com](mailto:musicschool@msn.com), or call Matushka Natalia Papkova at 847-299-2585. Please keep in mind that completion of all three years of this course earns three college credits!

## The Requiem for the Dead (*Panikhida*)

The origin of the Service of the Dead (*Panikhida*) is as follows: St. Macarius of Alexandria once inquired from the Angels who accompanied him an explanation of the Church's custom to celebrate the third, ninth, and fortieth days after a death by religious services. And the Angel told him: "When, on the third day, the body is brought to the Temple, the Soul of the dead man receiveth from his Guardian Angel relief from the grief which he feelth at parting from his body. This he receiveth because of the oblation and praise which are offered for him in God's Church, whence there ariseth in him a blessed hope. For during the space of two days the Soul is permitted to wander at will over the earth, with the Angels which accompany it. Therefore the Soul, since it loveth its body, sometimes hovereth around the house in which it parted from the body; sometimes around the coffin wherein its body hath been placed: and thus it passeth those days like a bird which seeketh for itself a nesting-place. But the beneficent Soul wandereth through those places where it was wont to perform deeds of righteousness.

"On the third day He who rose again from the dead commandeth that every Soul, in imitation of his own Resurrection, shall be brought to heaven, that it may do reverence to the God of all. Wherefore the Church hath the blessed custom of celebrating oblation and prayers on the third day for the Soul.

"After the Soul hath done reverence to God, He ordereth that it shall be shown the varied and fair abodes of the Saints and the beauty of Paradise. All these things the Soul vieweth during six days, marvelling and glorifying God, the Creator of all. And when the Soul hath beheld all these things, it is changed, and forgetteth all the sorrow which it felt in the body. But if it be guilty of sins, then, at the sight of the delights of the Saints, it beginneth to wail, and to reproach itself, saying: 'Woe is me! How vainly did I pass my time in the world! Engrossed in the satisfaction of my desires, I passed the greater part of my life in heedlessness, and obeyed not God as I ought, that I, also, might be vouchsafed these graces and glories. Woe is me, poor wretch!' After having thus viewed all the joys of the Just for the space of six days, the Angels lead the Soul again to do reverence to God. Therefore the Church doth well, in that she celebrateth service and oblation for the Soul on the ninth day.

"After its second reverence to God, the Master of all commandeth that the Soul be conducted to Hell, and there shown the places of torment, the different divisions of Hell; and the divers torments of the ungodly, which cause the souls of sinners that find themselves therein to groan continually, and to gnash their teeth. Through these various places of torment the Soul is borne during thirty days, trembling lest it also be condemned to imprisonment therein.

“On the fortieth day the Soul is again taken to do reverence to God: and then the judge determineth the fitting place of its incarceration, according to its deeds. Thus the Church doth rightly in making mention, upon the fortieth day, of the baptized dead.”

It is also customary to have the Requiem Office celebrated on the anniversaries of the birthday, name-day, and death-day of the departed.

It is customary, at the Requiem Office (*Panikhidi*), to place upon a small table in the church a dish of *kutiya'* or *koliva*: that is, boiled wheat, mixed with honey, to which raisins are sometimes added. The *koliva* serves to remind us of the resurrection of the dead. As grain, in order that it may form ears and give fruit, must be buried in the earth, and moulder there; so, also, the body of the dead must be committed to the earth, in order that it may rise to life eternal. The honey typifies the sweetness of bliss of the future life. In the grain is set upright a lighted taper, which symbolizes the light wherewith the Christian is illumined in baptism; and also the light of the world to come, which knows no setting.

*From the Service Book, Isabel Hapgood, Engelwood, NJ, pp. 612-613.*

## We Should Never “Break the Cross”

When we make the sign of the cross over ourselves, we need to be mindful not to “break the Cross.” To do so is considered, at the least, incorrect and disrespectful, at worst, sacrilegious.

To “break the Cross” means, in short, to bend our bodies (into a bow) while making the sign of the cross. Sometimes we do so out of lack of knowledge or seeming reverence. Nevertheless, we are to keep our bodies straight (truly vertical), accurately representing the Holy Cross upon which Christ was crucified, bowing only after the sign of the cross is fully completed.

## Hosanna

Hosanna is a Hebrew word which means “God save” or “help.” “Hosanna in the highest” means either “Hosanna to the Most High” or, “May our good wishes be heard in the highest abodes [in Heaven].”

## Twelve Hours in the Life of Our Church

It's Sunday morning. You're wondering if you will make it to church services on time for the beginning of Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m. Yet, have you ever wondered what happens before you arrive?

On Saturday evening at approximately 6:00-6:15 p.m. our Subdeacon and Starosta Constantine, our Canonarch Robert and, of course, Father Michael come to church to begin preparations for Vespers, the All-Night Vigil, and Matins. These services will begin at 6:30 p.m. and will end approximately 9:00 pm. Before services begin, church business takes place; the distribution of mail, the signing of checks to pay our church bills, as well as the preparation of the evening's readings and singing. Of course, preliminary work has been done during the week by our Canonarch and priest to make sure the choir and readers will have the appropriate books, readings and music.

After services end, the church will be prepared for tomorrow's Divine Liturgy. Lampadas will be refreshed, glass topped; icons will be cleaned, candlestands may be cleaned, and other church supplies will be refreshed, as well. Our church becomes empty only at 10:00-10:30 p.m. when Father, Constantine and Robert will finally lock up our House of Worship and make their long rides home, on occasion driving an hour or more.

In the morning, when most of us are still sleeping, Constantine has returned to our parish. He arrives early, generally between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m. to begin reading long lists of names to commemorate and to continue the church's preparation for the Divine Liturgy. Robert will arrive before 8:00 a.m., when he and Constantine will read the Service for the Non-Orthodox. This is a series of prayers which are allowed to be read before the arrival of the priest for those non-Orthodox friends and family members whose names we write on the bottom of the Commemoration slips. (Non-Orthodox whose names are written on a slip during Liturgy are commemorated the following week). Of course, because they are not Orthodox, their names are not commemorated during Liturgy, but since they are our loved ones, Bishop Peter, in a visit to our church some years ago, blessed our desire to pray for our non-Orthodox brethren. This service must not take place in the Altar and must be completed before the arrival of the priest. Thanks to Constantine's and Robert's early morning efforts, our prayers for them are heard.

At approximately 8:15 or 8:20 a.m., Father Michael arrives at church. Robert and Constantine can now get vested. Father will begin Proskomedia at 8:30, during which time he will commemorate a very long list of historical names of clergy, kings, archimandrites, as well as our own parishioners and others whose names our church keeps in its own Commemoration book. Here we are unique: Other churches generally don't have this book. Now, Constantine and Robert will begin reading each of the names in all the Commemoration Books and slips completed by our

parishioners. Matushka will oversee the church to make sure candlestands are clean and prosphora are ready for our parishioners when they arrive. Hours will be read at 9:30 a.m. and Father will take confessions until the beginning of Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

The morning may be just beginning for many of us, but our priest, subdeacon and canonarch have been dedicated and devoted in their prayerfulness on our behalf and on behalf of all mankind for no less than the last 12 hours.

## Singing in the Orthodox Church

Orthodox hymnody is a part of Russian musical culture. It is a specific world, the aim of which is the appeal to God and the service of Him; contrary to secular music, which satisfies the aesthetic needs of people.

Church singing, as a variety of sacred music, has its own rhythm and order and differs greatly from any other kind of music. We must take into consideration that in ancient times the influence was much stronger, because of the absence of that acoustic sphere of “sound pollution” that today causes acoustic shock and diminishes the sensibility of modern men, distracts their attention, and therefore undermines their perceptive abilities.

In ancient times sounds, and sounds of music in particular, made people tremble with holy awe. We can assume that sound in general is connected with different spiritual worlds.

To leap from their own internal world to that of the spiritual level, special music is often used because it is impossible for ordinary people in their usual state of mind to communicate directly with the higher spiritual world. Thus music becomes a kind of the bridge between earthly and spiritual worlds. Sound, in the language of people appealing to God, and harmony, can be the language of the Spirit in communication with people. That is the reason why every world religion makes use of music. This type of music supposes a collective perception of it. Actually, it is not only listened to, people plunge into it, taking part in a sacred service.

So music helps people to communicate with spiritual worlds. But the nature of the spiritual world is not homogeneous. Fathers of the Eastern Church believe that the

spiritual world can be heavenly and demonic. The lowest spiritual world is inhabited by demons—fallen angels with Satan at the head; the highest spiritual world is the world of the Holy Spirit. But the aim of Orthodox church music is to elevate the human soul to the heights of the world of the Holy Spirit. There is no instrumental music in the Orthodox Church, though as Fr. Alexander Men wrote: “The use of musical instruments in church does not contradict Orthodox Christianity.” The Bible says: “Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs” (Ps. 150: 4). In the times when Russian Orthodox Christendom was at its initial stage, the fathers of the Church connected the use of musical instruments with the service of demonic force, because instruments were widely used in pagan ceremonies. In attempts to draw a line between Christianity and heathenism, the Russian Orthodox Church did not allow the use of any musical instruments at a divine service.

Psalm 150 says: “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.” The Russian Orthodox Church considers that the praise of God has to be connected with breathing, it has to be vivid and inspired. A person that praises God plays the role of a musical instrument with a soul, contrary to ordinary instruments, that cannot possess a soul. We often meet the comparison of a saint with a musical instrument, for example, an organ in Orthodox literature. The Church calls such a saint “the organ of the Holy Spirit.” No musical instrument can surpass the human voice in the influence it produces upon men. That is the reason for the huge impression produced by this “angelic singing” upon our ancestors—the ambassadors of Great Prince Vladimir. They heard it during the divine service in the church of St. Sophia in Constantinople a thousand years ago. They told Prince Vladimir afterwards that they did not know where they had been: either upon the Earth or in Heaven. Soon “angelic singing” could be heard all over Russia in numerous churches that began to appear after the Baptism of Russia.

Thousands of years passed. The singing that we can hear in churches nowadays is quite different from that “angelic singing” that came to Russia from Byzantium in the tenth century. But it still preserves that special reserve and solemnity, which elevates the human soul.



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MAY 2008						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Apr 27 (Apr 14)</b> <b>PASCHA</b>  12 Midnight Paschal Matins and Divine Liturgy 12 Noon Agape Vespers  Fast free	<b>Apr 28 (Apr 15)</b> Ap. Aristarchus  Fast free	<b>Apr 29 (Apr 16)</b> NMM Raphael & comp  Fast free	<b>Apr 30 (Apr 17)</b> HM Symeon & comp  Fast free	<b>1 (Apr 18)</b> St John the Decapolite  Fast free	<b>2 (Apr 19)</b> St John of the Ancient Caves  Fast free	<b>3 (Apr 20)</b> St Theodore Trichinas; St Nikolai of Ochrid  6:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast free
<b>4 (Apr 21)</b> Thomas Sunday Tone 1  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>5 (Apr 22)</b> St Theodore  Fast free	<b>6 (Apr 23)</b> GM George; St Alexandra  Fast free	<b>7 (Apr 24)</b> M Sabbas  Fast: wine & oil	<b>8 (Apr 25)</b> Ap Mark  Fast free	<b>9 (Apr 26)</b> HM Basil of Amasea  Fast: wine & oil	<b>10 (Apr 27)</b> HM Symeon  6:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>11 (Apr 28)</b> Myrrhbearers Tone 2  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Sisterhood Feastday!	<b>12 (Apr 29)</b> 9 MM of Cyzicus  Fast free	<b>13 (Apr 30)</b> Ap James  Fast free	<b>14 (May 1)</b> Pr Jeremiah  Fast: wine & oil	<b>15 (May 2)</b> St Athanasius  Fast free	<b>16 (May 3)</b> MM Timothy & Maura  Fast: wine & oil	<b>17 (May 4)</b> VM Pelegia of Tarsus  6:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>18 (May 5)</b> Paralytic Tone 3  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy 12:30 Sisterhood Mtng	<b>19 (May 6)</b> Pr Job  Fast free	<b>20 (May 7)</b> Appearance of the Cross in A.D. 351  Fast free	<b>21 (May 8)</b> St. John the Theologian  Mid-Pentecost  Fast: fish, wine, & oil	<b>22 (May 9)</b> St Nicholas  Fast free	<b>23 (May 10)</b> Ap Simon the Zealot  Fast: wine & oil	<b>24 (May 11)</b> Ss. Cyril and Methodius  6:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>25 (May 12)</b> Samaritan Woman Tone 4  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>26 (May 13)</b> VM Glyceria  Fast free	<b>27 (May 14)</b> M Isidore of Chios  Fast free	<b>28 (May 15)</b> St Pachomius  Fast: wine & oil	<b>29 (May 16)</b> St Theodore the Sanctified  Fast free	<b>30 (May 17)</b> Ap Andronicus  Fast: wine & oil	<b>31 (May 18)</b> M Theodotus of Ancyrus  6:30 All-Night Vigil



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JUNE 2008						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 (May 19) <b>Blind Man Tone 5</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	2 (May 20) <b>M Thalalaeus</b>	3 (May 21) <b>Ss. Constantine &amp; Helen</b>	4 (May 22) <b>Apodosis of Pascha</b>  6:30 Vigil of Ascension  Fast, Fish wine & oil	5 (May 23) <b>ASCENSION OF THE LORD</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	6 (May 24) <b>St Symeon of the Wondrous Mountain</b>  Fast: Wine & oil	7 (May 25) <b>3rd Finding of the Head of the Forerunner</b>  6:30 All-Night Vigil
8 (May 26) <b>Fathers of the First Council Tone 6</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	9 (May 27) <b>HM Therapon; St John the Russian</b>	10 (May 28) <b>St Nicetas of Chalcedon</b>	11 (May 29) <b>V Theodosia</b>  Fast: Wine & oil	12 (May 30) <b>St Isaacius</b>	13 (May 31) <b>M Hermias</b>  Fast: Wine & oil	14 (Jun 1) <b>M Justin &amp; comp</b>  6:30 All-Night Vigil
15 (Jun 2) <b>PENTECOST Tone 7</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	16 (Jun 3) <b>Day of the Holy Spirit</b>  Fast free	17 (Jun 4) <b>St Metrophanes of Constantinople</b>  Fast free	18 (Jun 5) <b>HM Dorotheus</b>  Fast free	19 (Jun 6) <b>St Bessarion</b>  Fast free	20 (Jun 7) <b>HM Theodotus of Ancyra</b>  Fast free	21 (Jun 8) <b>GM Theodore the General</b>  6:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast free
22 (Jun 9) <b>All Saints Tone 8</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	23 (Jun 10) <b>HM Timothy of Prussa</b>  Fast	24 (Jun 11) <b>App Bartholomew &amp; Barnabas</b>  Fast: Fish, wine & oil	25 (Jun 12) <b>St Onuphrius</b>  Fast	26 (Jun 13) <b>M Aquilina</b>  Fast: Wine & oil	27 (Jun 14) <b>Pr Elisha</b>  Fast	28 (Jun 15) <b>Pr Amos</b>  6:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: Fish, wine & oil
29 (Jun 16) <b>All Saints of Russia Tone 1</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Fast: Fish, wine & oil	30 (Jun 17) <b>MM Manuel &amp; comp</b>  Fast	Jul 1 (Jun 18)  Fast	Jul 2 (Jun 19)  Fast	Jul 3 (Jun 20)  Fast	Jul 4 (Jun 21)  Fast	Jul 5 (Jun 22)  6:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: wine & oil

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St. Xenia Orthodox Church  
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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.