



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

September/October 2008

About Laying Up Eternal Treasures

from The Sermon on the Mount

by Bishop Alexander (Mileant)+

A predilection for riches strongly interferes with a person's ability to become virtuous. In His teachings and parables, the Lord Jesus Christ often warned people about having an excessive attachment to worldly goods. In His Sermon on the Mount, the Lord directly forbids a Christian to become rich, saying:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon [i.e., riches]” (Mat. 6:19-24).

This admonition, of course, does not apply to the effort that is necessary for feeding oneself and one's family. It is forbidden here to indulge in excessive and oppressive troubles for the sake of becoming rich. The Holy Scriptures speak thus about the necessity of work: “If any would not work, neither should he eat!” (2 Thes. 3:10).

In order to avert people from an excessive attachment to material goods, the Lord reminds us that they are not permanent but mortal: they can be ruined by rust, moths and all sorts of unfortunate events; they can be taken by malicious persons and stolen by thieves; finally, a person has to leave them behind on earth when he dies. For this reason, instead of using all of one's strength to gather fleeting blessings, a person would be better off attending to storing up internal riches, which are truly valuable and which will be his eternal inheritance.

The internal wealth of a person includes his so-called “talents”— the mental and spiritual abilities given to him by the Creator for development and perfecting. First and foremost, the spiritual wealth of a person must include the virtues, for example, faith, courage, abstinence, patience, constancy, hope in God, compassion, magnanimity, love

and others. These spiritual riches should be acquired through a righteous life and good deeds. The most valuable spiritual wealth is the moral purity and holiness which are given to a virtuous person by the Holy Spirit. A person must zealously ask God for this wealth. Upon receiving it, he must painstakingly guard it in his heart. The Lord summons people to the acquisition of this many-faceted internal wealth in His Sermon on the Mount.

To the same degree that spiritual riches illumine a person's soul, oppressive cares about worldly, material goods cloud his mind, weaken his faith and fill his soul with tormenting confusion. Speaking of this metaphorically, the Lord compares the mind of a person with an eye, which must serve as a conduit for spiritual light: “The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single [undamaged], thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.” In other words, like an injured eye which deprives a person of the ability to see light, a soul dulled with excessively worldly cares is not in the condition to accept spiritual light; it cannot understand the spiritual essence of events and its purpose in life. For this reason, to be a lover of wealth is identical to being a blind man. In the parables of the foolish rich man, and of the rich man and Lazarus, the Lord portrays clearly the spiritual darkness and ruin of two rich people, who in other ways, apparently, were not bad people (Lk. 12:13-21; 16:14-31).

Is it possible to have both spiritual and material wealth? The Lord explains that it is as impossible as serving two demanding masters at the same time: “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon!” In ancient times, Mammon was the pagan patron god of wealth. In mentioning this idol, the Lord compares the miser to an idolator, and thus shows how mean this passion is. The Gospel tale of the rich young man shows how a person attached to wealth is not always capable of parting with it, even if he sincerely desires to serve God. His attachment to his wealth suppresses all his good intentions, and he has more trust in his own money than in help from on high. That is why it is said: “How hard it is

continued on page 5

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 15th of the month prior to publication to Margaret Lark at (603) 332-9613, e-mail: woolfolk3@gmail.com, or to Father Michael at 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.

September

- 7 Karen Schidlovsky, Nancy Harris
- 14 Matushka Nancy, Megan Crowley, Natasha Kirichok
- 21 The Sarantakis Ladies
- 28 Masha Harris, Kot Engalichev

October

- 5 Natalie Botchkov, Tania Sciaudone
- 12 Helena Doohovskoy, Marianne Dimatteo, Laryssa Doohovskoy
- 19 Nick Kronauer, Vera Sarantakis
- 26 Anna Johnson, Mereille Lang, Alexandra Gonzalez

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

Thank You

...a big thank you to our friend Peter Gaudet for all his hard work in polishing our 4 large candlestands. They look brilliant and are now ready to help us celebrate our church's feast day.

...to Brockway Smith/Anderson Windows, Larry Boyko, P. Douglas Cals and David Pandolph for their help in replacing a broken window in our parish. We are sincerely grateful to the gentlemen and their company for the assistance in replacing a half-round window in our nave.

Please remember in your prayers Nicholas, Lilly, Nina, Josephine, David, Vassilisa, Lilly Anne, Margaret.

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

Financial Update: As of August 31, 2008, the balance on the church mortgage stands at \$39,335. If you have any questions, please see Subdeacon Constantine Desrosiers.

Member Information Update/Renewal: Parish membership should be renewed, or updated, by Sept. 1. Please fill out an updated renewal membership form, or notify Natalie Pishenin, parish council secretary, of any changes of address, phone numbers and any family member inclusions or exclusions. Thank you.

Annual Parish Meeting: Our parish's Annual Meeting is planned for a Sunday in October. Agenda and details will be posted on the bulletin board in our hall in advance of the date, which will be announced. We also hope to include this information in the September/October issue of the newsletter.

Altar Feast: This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the glorification of Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg. As has been the case recently, we will celebrate our altar feast on the Sunday closest to the actual date, September 28th. We hope that our new First Hierarch, Metropolitan Hilarion, will be able to join us on that day to take part in our celebrations.

Available in our Bookstore: A VHS of the 1978 canonization of St. Xenia, which took place in New York City and was presided over by Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky), has been transferred to DVD and is for sale in our bookstore. Though of less than perfect quality due to its age, it is, nevertheless, a welcome addition to your spiritual recorded library.

From the Pastor's Desk:

We once again have come to the beginning of a new Ecclesiastical Year, with our Parish Feast day, the visitation of our Hierarchy, and all of which the Lord brings to us. We are as well preparing for our Annual Parish Meeting at which we review the year gone by, look forward to the year to come, elect officers and a parish council and put forth a budget for the vote of the membership.

I am writing to you today to encourage you to attend the Annual Meeting to voice your support of our parish and to address any issues near to your heart. The Annual Meeting is open to all, but only the actual members of the parish are able to vote.

Please be so kind as to let us know if you will not be continuing your membership in the parish. We also have a form at the candle counter that you can use to update any pertinent information regarding your family for our parish records.

I also wish to encourage you to remember your financial pledges/commitment to the parish and, if possible, bring your giving up to date. We have grown a bit in numbers in the past few years but our expenses have grown as well. I realize that it is a difficult time financially for all in this country—we should take this opportunity to express our utter faith in God by giving generously to His Church. It is your giving that allows us to continue performing the Divine Services for all Major Feasts and Sundays, educate our young people in our Sunday School classes, provide a lovely time of fellowship after all of our Services with food and good cheer, and many other essential things. Remember the promise of the Lord to His disciples when He said that all of our sacrifices would be rewarded an hundred-fold.

Please keep the entire parish and me in your holy prayers. We look forward to your continuing love, and hopefully your attendance at the Annual Meeting.

—Fr. Michael

Glorification (1978) of St. Xenia of St. Petersburg (18th century)

September 11/24

**"Whoever has known me, may he remember
my soul for the salvation of his own soul."**

This rather strange inscription appears on the grave of the beloved fool-for-Christ of Russia, St. Xenia, whose glorification thirty years ago we celebrate this September 11/24.



She was born about 1730, and as a young woman married an army colonel named Andrei Feodorovich Petrov, a handsome and dashing man fond of worldly living. When she was twenty-six years old, her husband died suddenly after drinking with his friends, leaving Xenia a childless widow. Soon afterward, she gave away all her possessions and disappeared from St Petersburg for eight years; it is believed that she spent the time in a hermitage, or even a monastery, learning the ways of the spiritual life. When she returned to St Petersburg, she appeared to have lost her reason: she dressed in her husband's army overcoat, and would only answer to his name. She lived without a home, wandering the streets of the city, mocked and abused by many. She accepted alms from charitable people, but immediately gave them away to the poor: her only food came from meals that she sometimes accepted from those she knew. When they began to build a church in the Smolensk Cemetery, Xenia, after the onset of darkness, would secretly carry bricks to the top of the construction, and thereby helped the masons erect the walls of the church. (She was later buried in this same cemetery.) At night she withdrew to a field outside the city where she knelt in prayer until morning.

Slowly, the people of the city noticed signs of a holiness that underlay her seemingly deranged life: she showed a gift of prophecy, and her very presence almost always proved to be a blessing. The Synaxarion says, "The blessing of God seemed to accompany her wherever she went: when she entered a shop, the day's takings would be noticeably greater; when a cabman gave her a lift he would get plenty of custom; when she embraced a sick child it would soon get better. So compassion, before long, gave way to veneration, and people generally came to regard her as the true guardian angel of the city."

Forty-five years after her husband's death, St Xenia reposed in peace at the age of seventy-one, sometime around 1800. Her tomb immediately became a place of pilgrimage: so many people took soil from the gravesite as a blessing that new soil had to be supplied regularly; finally a stone slab was placed over the grave, but this too was gradually chipped away by the faithful. Miracles, healings and appearances of St Xenia occur to this day, to those who visit her tomb or who simply ask her intercessions.

Her prayers are invoked especially for help in finding employment, a home, or a spouse (all of which she renounced in her own life). A pious custom is to offer a Pannykhida / Trisagion Service for the repose of her husband Andrei, for whom she prayed fervently throughout her life.

May we learn from the example of Blessed Xenia how important it is for us not to be attached to the things of the world, but to keep our minds and hearts turned towards heaven, our true home, that we too, like St. Xenia, may, after our earthly wandering, "come to dwell in the Father's house."

Saint Xenia was first officially glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia in 1978; then by the Moscow Patriarchate in 1988. You can see some of the original glorification service presided over by Metropolitan Philaret of blessed repose on www.youtube.com. Search videos: [The glorification of St Xenia, 1978](#)

Kontakion, Tone 3

A wandering stranger on a foreign earth / ever sighing for the heavenly homeland / thou wast known as a fool by the senseless and unbelieving / but as most wise and holy by the faithful / and wast crowned by God with glory and honor. / O Xenia, manly in mind and divinely wise. / Wherefore, we cry unto thee: / Rejoice, for after earthly wandering thou hast come to dwell in the Father's house.

Troparion, Tone 8

Christ the Lord has shown forth in thee a new mediatrix and intercessor for our race;/ thou didst will to endure evil in thy life and didst lovingly serve both God and man./ We zealously run to thee in misfortune and sorrow,/ we hope in thee and cry from our hearts:/ Put not our hope to shame, O blessed Xenia.

Another Troparion, Tone 5

Having lived as a stranger in the world, O Xenia,/ thou didst outwit the deviser of evil/ by thy pretended foolishness./ Thou didst receive from God/ grace to foresee and foretell things to come./ Now thou hast been translated from earth/ and art numbered with the choirs of Angels.

Kontakion, Tone 4

Thou didst give thy wealth to the poor, O Xenia,/ and accept poverty out of love for Christ;/ and having lived in a manner rivaling the Angels/ thou wast counted worthy/ of glory on high.

St. Xenia was known as a "Fool for Christ." But what exactly is a Fool for Christ? The following article explains:

What is a Fool-for-Christ?

Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

[\(1 Corinthians 3:18-19 KJV\)](#)

The *yurodivy* ([Russian: юродивый, yurodivyj](#)) is the [Russian](#) version of Foolishness in Christ ([Russian: юродство, yurodstvo](#) or [jurodstvo](#)), a peculiar form of [Eastern Orthodox asceticism](#).

The holy fool is a person who pretends that he is mad in order to save his own soul and the souls of others. He chooses to become homeless, poor, disdained and persecuted as Christ Himself was. The holy fool teaches people by means of images of sin, and he tells them truth disguised behind a fool's appearance and behavior. The Russian word for "holy fool" is *iurodivyi*. The stem *iurod* corresponds to the ancient Greek word meaning, "mad, stupid" and *salos* meaning "simple, stupid." (Two Russian holy fools were named Salos.) The first holy fools appeared in Egypt. In the Middle Ages, however, this "holy fool" type of saint flourished mainly in Russia until the 18th century, when Peter the Great issued several edicts against "the fools." The Russian word *iurod* means "ugly one." Holy fools used to appear in public practically naked, or they would wear dirty, torn clothing. (Their nakedness was considered not only indecent but also reminded people of Satan who was traditionally depicted naked on frescoes.) St. Paul said that God "had chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise" (1 Cor. 27). The fool's naked, dirty, ugly, strange and indecent appearance was a metaphor for humankind's soiled, "naked," sinful soul that has lost its "wedding garments," its innocence. Becoming insane, becoming "a fool," humanity has lost its divine likeness and lost its God. The holy fools look the way human beings really look in a spiritual sense. They become spiritual symbols – strange and almost disgusting in appearance, but tragic and attractive from a spiritual point of view. The holy fools' disgraceful behavior carried the message of judgment. Those who understood the message started to cry; those who did not laughed at the fools and threw stones at them.

"Eternal Treasures" continued from front page

for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! (Mark 10:24)" Here it should be clarified that the people who sin by loving wealth are not only those who are rich, but those who consistently dream of wealth and see their happiness in it.

In concluding this part of His sermon, the Lord explains that everything good that is necessary for life does not come so much from our efforts as from the mercy of God, Who, as a kind Father, perpetually cares for us.

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mat. 6:25-33).

Truly, the gift of life and the amazing composition of our bodies, the earth with its natural wealth of flowers, fruits and various grains, sunlight and warmth, air and water, seasons of the year and all the external conditions necessary for our existence — all this is given to us by our merciful Creator. For this reason, most animals — birds, fish and other creatures — do not work at all, unlike people, but only gather for themselves already prepared food, because Nature provides them with dwellings and shelter also.

A person with little faith must learn to trust more in God than in his own strength. The Lord does not call us to idleness; He desires to liberate us from the agonizing worries and excessive efforts made for passing things, in order to give us an opportunity to prepare for eternity. The Lord promises that if we will first and foremost work toward the salvation of our soul, He will provide us with every other necessity: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

This part of the Sermon on the Mount thus far calls a person to avoid greed, to be content with necessities and, most of all, to take care for spiritual riches and eternal life.



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SEPTEMBER 2008						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug 31 (Aug 18) Pentecost 11 Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	1 (Aug 19) M Andrew the General	2 (Aug 20) Pr. Samuel	3 (Aug 21) Ap. Thaddeus Fast	4 (Aug 22) M Agathonicus	5 (Aug 23) M Lupus Fast	6 (Aug 24) HM Eutyches 6:30 All-Night Vigil
7 (Aug 25) Pentecost 12 Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	8 (Aug 26) MM Adrian & Natalia	9 (Aug 27) St. Poemen	10 (Aug 28) St. Moses the Black Fast	11 (Aug 29) Beheading of the Baptist Fast: Wine & oil	12 (Aug 30) St. Alexander Nevsky Fast	13 (Aug 31) Deposition of the Cinture of the Theotokos 6:30 All-Night Vigil
14 (Sep 1) The Church New Year Pentecost 13 Tone 4 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	15 (Sep 2) St. Mamas of Caesaria	16 (Sep 3) HM Anthimus & comp M Edward of England	17 (Sep 4) HM Babtias Pr. Moses Fast	18 (Sep 5) SS Zachariah & Elizabeth	19 (Sep 6) Miracle of Archangel Michael Fast	20 (Sep 7) M Sozon 6:30 All-Night Vigil
21 (Sep 8) NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS Tone 5 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	22 (Sep 9) SS Joachim & Anna	23 (Sep 10) MM Menodora & comp 6:30 Vigil of St. Xenia	24 (Sep 11) Glorification of St. Xenia 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	25 (Sep 12) HM Autonomus	26 (Sep 13) Dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher 6:30 All-Night Vigil Fast	27 (Sep 14) ELEVATION OF THE CROSS 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy 6:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: wine & oil
28 (Sep 15) Pentecost 15 Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	29 (Sep 16) GM Euphemia	30 (Sep 17) MM Sophia & daughters	Oct 1 (Sep 18) St. Eumenius of Gortyna Fast	Oct 2 (Sep 19) MM Trophimus & comp	Oct 3 (Sep 20) GM Eustathius & family Fast	Oct 4 (Sep 21) Ap. Codratus St. Demetrius of Rostov 4:00 Small Vespers 6:30 All-Night Vigil



ST. XENIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

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OCTOBER 2008						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sep 28 (Sep 15) Pentecost 15 Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	Sep 29 (Sep 16) GM Euphemia	Sep 30 (Sep 17) MM Sophia & daughters	1 (Sep 18) St. Eumenius of Gortyna Fast	2 (Sep 19) MM Trophimus & comp	3 (Sep 20) GM Eustathius & family Fast	4 (Sep 21) Ap. Codratus St. Demetrius of Rostov 4:00 Small Vespers 6:30 All-Night Vigil
5 (Sep 22) Pentecost 16 Tone 7 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	6 (Sep 23) Conception of St. John the Baptist	7 (Sep 24) M Thecla	8 (Sep 25) St. Euphrosyne St. Sergius of Radonezh Fast	9 (Sep 26) Ap. John the Theologian	10 (Sep 27) MM Callistratus & comp Fast	11 (Sep 28) St. Chariton 6:30 All-Night Vigil
12 (Sep 29) Pentecost 17 Tone 8 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	13 (Sep 30) HM Gregory of Armenia	14 (Oct 1) Protection of the Theotokos	15 (Oct 2) MM Cyprian & Justina Fast	16 (Oct 3) HM Dionysius the Areopagite	17 (Oct 4) HM Hierotheus of Athens Fast	18 (Oct 5) Hierarchs of Moscow 4:00 Class--TBA 6:30 All-Night Vigil
19 (Oct 6) Pentecost 18 Tone 1 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	20 (Oct 7) MM Sergius & Bacchus	21 (Oct 8) St. Pelagia the Penitent	22 (Oct 9) Ap. James, son of Alphaeus Fast	23 (Oct 10) Optina Elders	24 (Oct 11) Ap. Philip Fast	25 (Oct 12) St. Martin of Tours 6:30 All-Night Vigil
26 (Oct 13) Pentecost 19 Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	27 (Oct 14) MM Nazarius & comp	28 (Oct 15) St. Euthymius the New	29 (Oct 16) M Longinus Fast	30 (Oct 17) Pr. Hosea	31 (Oct 18) Ap. Luke Fast	Nov 1 (Oct 19) 6:30 All-Night Vigil

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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.