



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

September-October 2010

The Nativity of the Theotokos

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary: The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that it seemed altogether impossible to restore them. People often said that God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind.

The Son of God chose to take on human nature for the salvation of mankind, and chose as His Mother the All-Pure Virgin Mary, who alone was worthy to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since St. Anna was barren.

Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Sts. Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin, and therefore the righteous Sts. Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feastsdays at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy, since he was childless.

St Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. St Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and of them would be born a most blessed daughter Mary, through whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God, so the Church sings in its festal hymns: "the East Gate... bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls" (*2nd Stikhera on "Lord, I Have Cried", Tone 6*).

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks the change of the times when the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of the human race from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled. This event has brought to earth the grace of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of Truth, piety, virtue and everlasting life. The Theotokos is revealed to all of us by grace as a merciful Intercessor and Mother, to whom we have recourse with filial devotion.

St. Xenia of Petersburg Orthodox Church is a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, under the omophorion of Met. HILARION of Eastern America & New York. The parish newsletter is published bi-monthly under the direction of the Rev. Michael Crowley. In order to ensure timely delivery to our far-flung parish, please submit all notices by the 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
- Dcn. Constantine Desrosiers (603) 775-0320
- Secretary: Natalie Pishenin (978) 658-5564
- Treasurer: Anthony Sarantakis (978) 263-2016
- Sisterhood: Matushka Nancy Crowley (207) 767-1889
- Peter Danas (978) 459-9541
- John Danas (978) 454-0315
- Laryssa Doohovskoy (978) 841-5960
- Roberto Gonzalez (978) 692-1229
- Michael Johnson (603) 893-4593
- John Kekis (978) 456-9865
- Choir Director: Michael Lang (603) 465-9754

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

Trapeza Schedule

* = strict fast

Trapeza can be whatever you would like to prepare. Some parishioners prefer to make a big lunch, but this isn't necessary, especially during the summer. As long as there is enough food for about 75 people, anything is appreciated. Donuts, fruit and pastries are as acceptable as soup and sandwiches. If you have any questions contact Karen Schidlovsky at (603) 868-6410. Thank you in advance for your contribution.

September

- 5 Helena Doohovskoy, Marianne Dimatteo
- 12 Nick Kronauer, Vera Sarantakis, Priscilla Choi
- 19 Anna Johnson, Mireille Lang, Amy McLellan
- 26 Karen Schidlovsky, Nancy Harris, Tanya Vlasenko

October

- 3 Pam Reed, Carolyn Savage, Diane Mendez
- 10 Josephine Kniaziuk, Mariana Haven
- 17 Matushka Nancy, Ana Mukhanova, Katia Fredette.
- 24 Natalie Botchkov, Natalya Kirichok, Olga Medvedeva
- 31 Masha Harris, Kot Engalichev

Thank You... to all who brought items for the Sisterhood food drive that took place over the summer. We received many, many donations of canned goods, dry goods, toiletries, and baby needs.

...to Laryssa Doohovskoy and her dedicated team, for all the hard work and efforts that went into the planning, preparation and execution of the St. John of Damascus Vacation Church School that took place during the month of July. The kids had a great time!

...from the Nettleton and Crowley families, to all who attended the christening of Lucy Nettleton on August 7. Thank you also to all who prepared meals for David and Meghan during those first few weeks, and for all the cards and good wishes that were sent to the family.

...thank you to Helena Doohovskoy for bringing coffee creamer for Trapeza for so many years!

Please remember in your prayers... Nicholas, Lilly, Nina, Josephine, David, Lilly Anne, Margaret, John (Gil). Please remember to inform the Myrrhbearers Sisterhood if someone is in the hospital or shut in at home.

Financial Update: As of August 31, 2010, the balance on the church mortgage stands at approximately \$19,500. If you have any questions, or would like to know the exact amount left, please see Fr. Deacon Constantine Desrosiers.

Orthodox Books: Holy Trinity Monastery now has an online bookstore! To browse their offerings, go to this link: <http://bookstore.jordanville.org/>

St. John of Damascus Church School News: We had a wonderfully successful Vacation Church School, with an astounding 24 participants ages 4 through 17. In addition, we also had a number of younger siblings who took part in activities and craft projects throughout the week. Our students went Traveling on the Ark of Salvation—learning about the Great Feasts of the Theotokos. Each day consisted of learning about the Feast of the day, craft projects, activities, music, fellowship, and lunch. The kids really enjoyed their time together and learned a tremendous amount! A special thanks to the parents who brought their children each day, and to the adults who did such a wonderful job of making VCS such a success. We are looking forward to next year's VCS. Mark your calendars now for July 12-15, 2011!

Our regular church school sessions begin again in September (although we have continued to meet during the summer months). Beginning in September we will be splitting the Elementary class in to two sections (Grades 1-3 and grades 4-6). As a reminder, the class breakdown is as follows:

These classes meet immediately after the prayer following Holy Communion: Young children (under age 4) -

Meet with Tanya in the loft in the Church Hall for craft projects

Pre-K and Kindergarten - Meet with Alexandra Gonzalez in the basement Preschool room

Grades 1-3 - Meet with Amy Elizabeth McLellan in the Library in the basement

Grades 4-6 - Meet with Laryssa Doohovskoy in the Elementary Classroom in the basement

Grades 7-8 - Meet with John Danas in the Middle School Classroom in the basement

High School and Young Adults meet in the basement during Trapeza for lectures, when scheduled.

The Annual St. John of Kronstadt Party will take place on October 31. As a part of this event, we are planning a parent class in the afternoon. This will be an opportunity for parents of young children and teens to discuss various topics of interest as they relate to our faith and the raising of our kids. Arrangements are being made to assure that there are extra hands to watch the kids during this class. Throughout the year, we will be holding various retreats to help strengthen our young parishioners' foundation in the faith. Please keep an eye out for announcements for those and encourage your children to participate. We have a great time at these events, and they are a very important addition to our children's Church School experience.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact Laryssa Doohovskoy at LaryssaL@aol.com or via phone at 978-841-5960.

Visit of the Metropolitan: His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion will be visiting our parish for the St. Xenia altar feast, September 25/26. During the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, Fr. Deacon. Constantine will be elevated to the priesthood, and Subdeacon Alexander Doohovskoy will be elevated to the diaconate.

There will be a festal meal after the services outside under the tents organized by the Siserhood.

Upcoming Feasts: On September 8/21, we celebrate the birth of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary. Accordingly, a few facts about her from the website of Bishop Alexander (Mileant):

The Birth of the Most Holy Virgin Mary. As time drew near for the Redeemer of the world to be born, there lived in the town of Nazareth, in Galilee, a man by the name of Joachim with his wife Anna. Joachim was a direct descendant of King David but lived a very modest and simple life. Both he and his wife were God-fearing people and were known for their humility and compassion. They never had children and, being very aged, had little chance at having any. However, not willing to despair, they continued to ask God to send them a child. They even made a vow that if they had an infant, they would dedicate that child to the service of God. At that time, to be childless

meant to be punished by God for sins. Childlessness was especially difficult for Joachim since, according to prophecy, the Messiah-Christ was to be born into his family line. Owing to their patience and faith, the Lord finally sent them a great joy: Anna had a daughter. The newborn child was given the name of Mary, which means in Hebrew "Mistress-Hope."

We also commemorate, on September 8, the finding of our beloved **Kursk Root icon** of the Theotokos. Again, from Bishop Alexander's website:

The Icon of Znamenia, which means "The Sign," also known as the **Icon of Kursk**. It was found on September 8, 1295, by a hunter at the root of a tree on the bank of the Tuskor River in the province of Kursk. When he took the Icon in his hands, a spring of water came from under the tree. The hunter built a chapel near the tree and placed the Icon therein. From that time the Icon began to perform many miracles. In 1383 the Tartars of the Crimea, devastating the province, cut the Icon into two parts and threw them into opposite directions. They took as prisoner the priest Bogolyub, who performed the services in the chapel. Having been redeemed by the envoys of the Grand Duke of Moscow, Bogolyub found the split pieces of the Icon, joined them, and miraculously they grew together. In 1597 the Icon was brought to Moscow by the will of Tsar Feodor Ioannovich. In view of the return of the holy relic, a monastery was founded which was given the name of the Root Hermitage. Since the time of Tsar Feodor Ioannovich, the Icon has been encased in a cypress board, with the portrayal of the Lord Sabaoth above and of Prophets on the sides.

In 1612 the Icon miraculously saved Kursk from being captured by the Poles. The grateful inhabitants built the monastery of Znamenie, into which the Icon was brought every year and stayed from the 12th of September until the Friday of the 9th week of Easter. The rest of the time it remained at the Hermitage.

On March 7, 1898 the Icon remained unharmed during an attempt by revolutionaries to blow it up in the cathedral of the Znamensky monastery. After midnight a bomb placed under the Icon went off with a terrible noise. Everything around was torn apart and scattered. Only the Icon remained intact. During the revolution the Icon was also stolen in April of 1918, but was miraculously found in a well several months later. Finally the Icon was taken from Russia in 1920 by Bishop Theophan of Kursk and placed in Holy Trinity Church in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. This Holy Image rendered great assistance when Belgrade was bombarded during the Second World War. Bombs never fell on the houses visited by the Icon, although they destroyed the surrounding areas. Presently the Icon resides in the Znamenia Cathedral in New York City, though from time to time it is taken to different temples of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad for adoration. Every year numerous healings continue to flow from this Holy Icon.

The Universal Elevation of the Cross: This is a holy day of fasting and repentance. On this day the faithful make dedication to the crucified Lord and pledge their faithfulness to him by making prostrations at the Lords feet on the life creating Cross. For the feast, the Cross is placed on a tray surrounded by flowers or branches of basil, and placed in the center of the Church for veneration.

PICTURES FROM VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL!



Our first Vacation Church School class!



Preschoolers



Crafts



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



SEPTEMBER 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug 29 (Aug 16) 14th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 5 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	Aug 30 (Aug 17) M Myron of Cyzicus	Aug 31 (Aug 18) MM Florus and Laurus of Illyria	1 (Aug 19) M Andrew Stratelates Fast	2 (Aug 20) Prophet Samuel	3 (Aug 21) Ap Thaddeus of the 70 Fast	4 (Aug 22) M Agathonicus and comp 6:30 All-Night Vigil
5 (Aug 23) 15th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	6 (Aug 24) HM Eutychius	7 (Aug 25) Ap Titus of the 70	8 (Aug 26) MM Adrian and Natalia Fast: wine & oil	9 (Aug 27) Ven Poemen the Great	10 (Aug 28) Ven Moses the Black of Scete Fast: wine & oil	11 (Aug 29) Beheading of the Baptist 6:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: Strict fast
12 (Aug 30) 16th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 7 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	13 (Aug 31) Placing of the Cincture of the Most Holy Theotokos	14 (Sep 1) The Church New Year Ven Symeon Stylites	15 (Sep 2) M Mamas of Caesarea Fast: wine & oil	16 (Sep 3) HM Anthimus	17 (Sep 4) HM Babylas Fast: wine & oil	18 (Sep 5) P Zacharias and R Elizabeth 6:30 All-Night Vigil
19 (Sep 6) 17th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 8 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	20 (Sep 7) M Sozon of Cilicia 6:30 Vigil	21 (Sep 8) NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	22 (Sep 9) Holy and Righteous Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna Fast	23 (Sep 10) MM Menodora, Metrodora, and Nymphodora	24 (Sep 11) Glorification of St. Xenia Fast: fish, wine & oil	25 (Sep 12) HM Autonomus 6:30 All-Night Vigil
26 (Sep 13) 18th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 1 8:30 Hours 9:00 Hierarchical Divine Liturgy Parish Feast Day 6:30 All-Night Vigil	27 (Sep 14) ELEVATION OF THE CROSS 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: wine & oil	28 (Sep 15) GM Nicetas the Goth	29 (Sep 16) GM Euphemia Fast	30 (Sep 17) MM Sophia and her 3 daughters: Faith, Hope, and Love	Oct 1 (Sep 18) Ven Eumenes Fast	Oct 2 (Sep 19) MM Trophimus, Sabbatius, and Dorymedon 4:00 Small Vespers 6:30 All-Night Vigil



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OCTOBER 2010						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sep 26 (Sep 13) 18th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 1 8:30 Hours 9:00 Hierarchical Divine Liturgy Parish Feast Day 6:30 All-Night Vigil	Sep 27 (Sep 14) ELEVATION OF THE CROSS 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: wine & oil	Sep 28 (Sep 15) GM Nicetas the Goth	Sep 29 (Sep 16) GM Euphemia Fast	Sep 30 (Sep 17) MM Sophia and her 3 daughters: Faith, Hope, and Love	1 (Sep 18) Ven Eumenes Fast	2 (Sep 19) MM Trophimus, Sabbatius, and Dorymedon 4:00 Small Vespers 6:30 All-Night Vigil
3 (Sep 20) 19th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	4 (Sep 21) Ap Quadratus of the 70	5 (Sep 22) Prophet Jonah	6 (Sep 23) Conception of the Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John Fast	7 (Sep 24) PM and Equal-to-the-Apostles Thecla	8 (Sep 25) Ven Euphrosyne Fast: wine & oil	9 (Sep 26) Rest of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John 6:30 All-Night Vigil
10 (Sep 27) 20th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	11 (Sep 28) Ven Chariton the Confessor	12 (Sep 29) Ven Cyriacus the Hermit	13 (Sep 30) HM Gregory, bishop of Greater Armenia Fast: wine & oil	14 (Oct 1) Protection of the Theotokos	15 (Oct 2) HM Cyprian, VM Justina and M Theoctist of Nicomedia Fast	16 (Oct 3) HM Dionysius the Areopagite 6:30 All-Night Vigil
17 (Oct 4) 21st Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 4 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	18 (Oct 5) Sainted Metropolitans of Moscow	19 (Oct 6) Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas	20 (Oct 7) MM Sergius and Bacchus Fast: wine & oil	21 (Oct 8) Ven Pelagia the Penitent	22 (Oct 9) Holy Apostle James, son of Alphaeus Fast: wine & oil	23 (Oct 10) MM Eulampius and Eulampia 6:30 All-Night Vigil
24 (Oct 11) 22nd Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 5 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	25 (Oct 12) MM Probus, Tarachus, and Andronicus	26 (Oct 13) Iveron Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos	27 (Oct 14) MM Nazarius, Gervase, Protase, and Celsus Fast	28 (Oct 15) Ven Euthymius the New	29 (Oct 16) Ven Longinus the Centurion Fast	30 (Oct 17) Demetrius Saturday. Remembrance of the dead 4:30 General Pannyhida 6:30 All-Night Vigil
31 (Oct 18) 23rd Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	Nov 1 (Oct 19)	Nov 2 (Oct 20)	Nov 3 (Oct 21) Fast	Nov 4 (Oct 22)	Nov 5 (Oct 23) Fast	Nov 6 (Oct 24) 6:30 All-Night Vigil

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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.