



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

July - August 2015

Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos

By St. John of Kronstadt

“Magnify O my soul, the honourable Translation of the Mother of God from earth to heaven.”

(Refrain for the 9th Ode of the Canon)

Let us be happy, beloved brothers and sisters that we belong to the Holy Orthodox Church, worthily and rightly glorifying the Most Holy Sovereign Theotokos on this eminent day out of all the days of the year with special solemnity. There exists on earth many societies and entire governments that do not consider the need nor the obligation to call upon and glorify the Queen of heaven and earth, the Mother of Our Divine Lord Jesus Christ, and other saints and angels; to submissively serve Her lovingly, as the true Mother of God. Sadly in Russia nowadays we have heretics (among us) who actively dishonor the Mother of God, the saints, their icons, their relics and their festivals. O, if only they also unanimously with us glorified the worthy Queen of heaven and earth!

Today the Holy Church solemnly glorifies the honorable Dormition or translation of the Mother of God from earth to heaven. A wonderful translation - she died without serious illness, peacefully. Her soul is taken up in the divine hands of Her Son and carried up into the heavenly abode, accompanied by the sweet singing of angels. And then, her most pure body is transferred by the apostles to Gethsemane where it is honorably buried, and on the third day it is resurrected and taken up to heaven. You see this on the icon of the Dormition of the Theotokos. On it is represented the life-bearing body of the Theotokos laying on a bier, surrounded by the apostles and hierarchs, and in the center of the icon the Lord holding in His hands the most pure soul of the Theotokos. The translation of the Mother of God is a paradigm of the translation in general of the souls of Christians to the other world.

We say that our dead have “fallen asleep” or “passed away.” What does this mean? This means that for the true Christian there is no death. Death was conquered by Christ on the cross. But there is a translation, i.e. a rearrangement of his condition, i.e. his soul is in another place, in another age, in another world beyond the grave, eternal, without end, that is what is meant by “falling asleep”. It is as if it were a temporary dream after which, by the voice of the

Lord and the fearful yet wonderful trumpet of the Archangel, all the dead shall live and come forth each to his place: either to the resurrection of life or to the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:29). This is what the Christian means by translation. We should be ready for this translation, for the day of the general resurrection and judgment, for this indescribable world event, recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

This preparation for the meeting of the heavenly King before the dread judgment seat, after death, is essentially the person’s preparation throughout the whole of his life. This preparation means a change in all his thoughts, and the moral change of all his being, so that the whole man would be pure and white as snow, washing clean everything that defiles the body and spirit, so that he is adorned with every virtue: repentance, meekness, humility, gentleness, simplicity, chastity, mercifulness, abstention, spiritual contemplation, and burning love for God and neighbor.

Our preparation for meeting the heavenly King, and for the inheritance of eternal life in heaven, should consist of these things. The heavenly King desires souls adorned with immutable virtue, souls prepared so that the Very Lord Himself could abide in them. Do not marvel that the Very Lord wants to live in us. In fact the human soul is more spacious than the heavens and the earth, for it exists in the image of God. And if one removes sins from the soul, the Lord of all will settle in it and will fill it with Himself. “We will come to him and make our dwelling with him” (John 14:23), says the Lord about the souls who love Him.

And so, ye participants in the Christian feasts, and especially the present feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God, ye who are brightly adorned with every virtue and translated to the heavenly kingdom, to Her Son and God, proclaim to each and every one about preparing their souls to be the dwelling place of the Lord, about continual repentance, and about the incorruptible adornment of Christian virtue. Let your death also be unashamed and peaceful, serving as the pledge of a good answer at the dread judgment seat of Christ. Amen.

St. Xenia of St. Petersburg Orthodox Church is a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, under the omophorion of Met. HILARION of Eastern America & New York. The parish newsletter is published bi-monthly under the direction of the Rev. Michael Crowley. In order to ensure timely delivery to our far-flung parish, please submit all notices by the 15th of the month prior to publication to Father Michael at frmichael@stxenia.org. Thank you.

Rector:

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

Parish Council

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David Nettleton	(203) 895-7636
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Anthony Sarantakis	(978) 263-2016
Peter Danas	(978) 459-9541
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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 60 people, anything is appreciated. Donuts, fruit and pastries are as acceptable as soup and sandwiches. **Note: If you are preparing anything containing nuts or other allergens, please put a small label to that effect in front of your dish. Nut allergies are a problem with some small children.**

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

Trapeza during the summer months is always pot-luck. Fruit salads, pasta salads, or whatever are especially welcome. Please remember the *Apostles' Fast* that continues until Jun 28/July 11 and the *Dormition Fast* that takes place from August 1/14-August 15/28, and plan accordingly. Many thanks to all who provide for us during this time of the year.

Dress Code for Church: Please keep in mind that a certain standard of dress is expected in church. **Women and girls** should wear skirts or dresses (no pants!) at least knee length, blouses with a modest neckline and at least short sleeves – nothing sleeveless – and a scarf or hat on their heads. **Men and boys** should wear clothing best described as businesslike or “business casual,” collared shirts and long trousers, no t-shirts (especially with writing on them) or shorts. No one should wear tank tops (sometimes an issue in the summer). Remember, we should always show respect in church, both for God and for our fellow parishioners. Thank you.

Congratulations to our High School Graduates: Cara Danas who will be attending UMass Lowell in the fall and Dimitry Stelmah who will be attending Bentley University.

Please Remember In Your Prayers... Peter Danas, Tony Sarantakis and George Washburn, who are all recovering from surgery, Dimitry Emelianoff, and Lilly Dombrowski. Please also note that Lilly always appreciates visitors and cards.

Building Expansion: The Parish Council is seeking a 'refresh' of the needs, constraints and ultimate goals of our desired building expansion. We ask that anyone who has information or comments to add to this discussion submit them in writing to the Secretary of the Parish Council, Andrei Doohovskoy. Andrei's email address is andrei.doohovskoy@gmail.com

St. John of Damascus Church School News:

We have completed another year of Sunday School lessons and we would all like to send out a big thank you to Dave Nettleton, Anna Kekis, Carolyn Savage, Pam Reed, Alexei Doohovskoy, Dan Hakim, Diane Mendez, Amy Elizabeth McLellen, Danny McLellen and Robert Stauffer for your time and attention week after week.

We will have a meeting of all the teachers and parents in September before our Sunday School resumes so please keep an eye out for this announcement.

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

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

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

Vacation Church School: Will be held July 9th and 10th from 10 to 1pm and Saturday the 11th from 2 to 4:30 with a dinner break before vigil for Saints Peter and Paul.

St. Seraphim Camp: Registration for the Aug 2-9, 2015 camp is now open. Since 1994, with the blessings of the ever-memorable Metropolitan Lavr, St. Seraphim Camp, through God's grace, has served thousands of youth from throughout the eastern US and beyond and is currently the largest Russian Orthodox camp in the West. For more information, please see: <http://www.stseraphimcamp.com/index.html>

Choir News: The choir is always looking for capable singers. If you are interested in singing in the choir, please see Laryssa Doohovskoy. Choir members are strongly encouraged to attend as many of the scheduled rehearsals as possible! We meet after Trapeza on Sundays.

Please see Laryssa Doohovskoy for more information.

Links that may be of interest:

Eastern American Diocese Social Networks --

<https://www.facebook.com/eadiocese>

twitter.com/eadiocese

<https://www.youtube.com/user/eadiocese>

<http://orthodoxtours.com/>

The first site in the English language Internet completely dedicated to the theme of Travel for Pilgrims to the holy places of Eastern Christianity and the ancient Christian Church, and to sites of sacred Christian art.

June 27/July 10 The Monk Sampson the Hospitable-to-Strangers (+ C. 530) was the son of rich and illustrious Roman parents. In his youth he received an excellent education, he studied the medical arts, and for free he doctoring the sick. After the death of his parents Saint Sampson generously distributed alms and set free his slaves, preparing himself to go into the wilderness.

With this intent un mind he soon journeyed from Rome to the East. But the Lord directed him onto a different path, that of service to neighbour, and so Saint Sampson came to Constantinople. Settling into a small house, the saint began to take in the wandering homeless, the poor and the sick, and he attended to them zealously. The Lord blessed the efforts of Saint Sampson and endowed him with the power of wonderworking. He healed the sick not only through being a skilled physician, but also as a bearer of the grace of God. The news about Saint Sampson spread widely. The patriarch, having summoned him, ordained him as presbyter.

One time it was revealed to the grievously sick emperor Justinian (527-565), that he could receive healing only through Saint Sampson. In praying, the saint extended his hand in the direction of the sick emperor, who then received relief, and soon recovered altogether. In gratitude the emperor wanted to reward his healer with silver and gold, but the saint refused and instead asked Justinian to build a domicile for wanderers and the sick. The emperor readily fulfilled his request.

All the rest of his life Saint Sampson devoted to serving his neighbour. He survived into old age and after a short illness he with joy expired to the Lord (+ c. 530). The saint was buried at the church of the holy Martyr Mokias. Many an healing was effected at the grave of Saint Sampson. His home for wanderers and the hospice remained open, and the saint did not cease to care for the suffering. He twice appeared to a neglectful worker of the hospice and upbraided him for his laziness. At the request of an admirer of Saint Sampson the vagrants-home was transformed into a church, and alongside it was built a new edifice for taking in the homeless. During the time of a powerful conflagration at Constantinople the flames did not touch the vagrants-home of Saint Sampson: through his prayers a strong rain poured down, which quenched the fire.

The Seven Youths of Ephesus: Maximilian, Iamblichus, Martinian, John, Dionysius, Eksacustodianus (Constantine) and Antoninus, Aug 4/Aug 17

lived in the III Century. Saint Maximilian was the son of the Ephesus city administrator, and the other six youths -- were sons of other illustrious Ephesus citizens. The youths were friends from childhood, and all were together in military service. When the emperor Decius (249-251) arrived in Ephesus, he commanded all the citizenry to appear for offering sacrifice to the pagan gods; torture and death by execution awaited the recalcitrant. By denunciation from those currying the emperor's favour, the seven youths of Ephesus were summoned to reply to the charges. Standing before the emperor, the seven youths confessed their faith in Christ. Their illustrious military decorations -- the military sashes -- were quickly taken from them. Decius however set them at liberty, hoping, that they would change their minds while he was away on military campaign. The youths fled from the city and hid in a cave on Mount Okhlonos, where they passed the time at prayer, preparing for the deed of martyrdom. The very youngest of them -- Saint Iamblichus, having clothed himself in beggar's attire, went into the city and bought bread. In one of these journeys into the city he heard, that the emperor had returned and sought them, so as to bring them to trial. Saint Maximilian exhorted his companions to come out of the cave and bravely appear at trial. Having learned where the lads were hidden, the emperor gave orders to seal the entrance of the cave with stones, so that the lads would perish in it from hunger and thirst. Two of the dignitaries, coming before the walled-up entrance to the cave, were secret christians. Wanting to preserve the memory of the saints, they set in among the stones a sealed container, in which were located two tin sheaves. On them were inscribed the names of the seven youths and the details of their suffering and death.

But the Lord brought upon the youths a miraculous sleep, continuing almost two centuries. During this while the persecutions against Christians had ceased, although during the reign of the holy nobleborn emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450) there had appeared heretics who rejected the belief in the Resurrection of the Dead at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of them said: "How can there be a resurrection of the dead, when there would be neither soul, nor body, since they are disintegrated?" Others affirmed: "Only the souls alone would have a restoration, since it would be impossible for bodies to arise and live after a thousand years, when even the dust from them would not remain". The Lord therefore revealed the mystery of the awaited

Resurrection of the Dead and of the Future Life also through His seven youths.

The master of that region of land, on which Mount Okhlonos was situated, discovered the stone construction, and his workers opened up the entrance to the cave. The Lord had kept alive the youths, and they as it were awoke from their habitual sleep, not suspecting, that almost 200 years had elapsed. Their bodies and clothing were completely undecayed. Preparing to accept torture, the youths entrusted to Saint Iamblichus yet once again to buy bread for them in the city to keep up their strength. Going towards the city, the youth was astonished, seeing the holy cross on the gates. And hearing the freely uttered Name of Jesus Christ, he began to doubt that he was approaching his own city. Praying for the bread, the youth gave the merchant money with the image of the emperor Decius on it, and he was detained, as one possibly concealing an horde of old money. They took Saint Iamblichus to the city administrator, who at this time happened to be the bishop of Ephesus. Hearing the bewildering answers of the youth, the bishop perceived, that God was revealing through him some sort of mystery, and set out himself with other people to the cave. At the entrance to the cave the bishop took out the sealed container and opened it. He read upon the tin sheaves the names of the seven youths and the details of the sealing-up of the cave on the orders of the emperor Decius. Going into the cave and seeing the youths alive, everyone rejoiced and perceived that the Lord, through their awakening from long sleep, was disclosing to the Church the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead. Soon the emperor himself arrived in Ephesus and conversed with the youths in the cave. Then the holy youths in view of everyone lay down their heads upon the ground and again fell asleep, this time until the General Resurrection. The emperor wanted to place each of the youths into a jeweled coffin, but appearing to him in a dream, the holy youths said, that their bodies were to be left in the cave upon the ground. In the XII Century the Russian pilgrim the hegumen Daniel saw in the cave these holy remains of the seven youths.

A second commemoration of the seven youths is celebrated on 22 October. (By one tradition, which entered into the Russian Prologue [of Saints Lives], the youths a second time fell asleep on this day; according to the notes of the Greek Menaion of 1870, they fell asleep first on 4 August, and woke up on 22 October. The holy youths are mentioned also in the service of the Church New Year -- 1 September).



ST. XENIA ORTHODOX CHURCH
P.O. Box 147 - Methuen, MA 01844
(phone) (978) 204-0428



JULY 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jun 28 (Jun 15) 4th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine & oil	Jun 29 (Jun 16) St. Tychon, bp of Amathus	Jun 30 (Jun 17) MM Manuel, Sabel, and Ismael of Persia	1 (Jun 18) M. Leontius & comp.	2 (Jun 19) Holy Apostle Jude	3 (Jun 20) HM Methodius, bp of Patara	4 (Jun 21) St. John of Shanghai & San Francisco the Wonderworker 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine & oil
5 (Jun 22) 5th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 4 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine & oil	6 (Jun 23) Meeting of the Vladimir Icon	7 (Jun 24) Nativity of John the Baptist	8 (Jun 25) VM Febronia of Nisibis	9 (Jun 26) Tikhvin Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos	10 (Jun 27) Ven. Sampson the Hospitable	11 (Jun 28) Unmercenaries Cyrus and John 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine & oil
12 (Jun 29) Ss. Peter & Paul 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	13 (Jun 30) Synaxis of the Twelve Apostles	14 (Jul 1) Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian	15 (Jul 2) Robe of the Most Holy Theotokos Fast: wine & oil	16 (Jul 3) HM Philip, metropolitan of Moscow	17 (Jul 4) Holy Royal Martyrs of Russia	18 (Jul 5) Ven. Sergius of Radonezh St. Elizabeth & Nun Barbara 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine & oil
19 (Jul 6) 7th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	20 (Jul 7) Ven. Thomas of Mt. Maleon	21 (Jul 8) "Kazan" Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos	22 (Jul 9) HM Pancratius, bp of Taormina Fast	23 (Jul 10) Placing of the Precious Robe of the Lord at Moscow	24 (Jul 11) GM Euphemia the All-praised, of Chalcedon Fast	25 (Jul 12) MM Proclus and Hilary of Ancyra 5:30 All-Night Vigil
26 (Jul 13) 8th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 7 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	27 (Jul 14) Ap. Aquila of the 70, and St. Priscilla	28 (Jul 15) St. Vladimir	29 (Jul 16) HM Athenogenes, bp of Heracleopolis Fast	30 (Jul 17) GM Marina of Antioch	31 (Jul 18) MM Emilian of Silistra and Hyacinth of Amastris Fast	Aug 1 (Jul 19) St. Macrina 5:30 All-Night Vigil



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AUGUST 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jul 26 (Jul 13) 8th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 7 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	Jul 27 (Jul 14) Ap. Aquila of the 70, and St. Priscilla	Jul 28 (Jul 15) St. Vladimir	Jul 29 (Jul 16) HM Athenogenes, bp of Heracleopolis Fast	Jul 30 (Jul 17) GM Marina of Antioch	Jul 31 (Jul 18) MM Emilian of Silistra and Hyacinth of Amastris Fast	1 (Jul 19) St. Macrina 5:30 All-Night Vigil
2 (Jul 20) 9th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 8 Prophet Elijah 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	3 (Jul 21) Prophet Ezekiel	4 (Jul 22) Equal-to-the-Apostles Mary Magdalen	5 (Jul 23) MM Trophimus, Theophilus, and comp. Fast: wine & oil	6 (Jul 24) M Christina of Tyre	7 (Jul 25) Dormition of the Righteous Anna Fast: wine & oil	8 (Jul 26) HM Hermolaus & comp. 5:30 All-Night Vigil
9 (Jul 27) 10th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 1 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	10 (Jul 28) Apostles of the 70: Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, and Parmenas	11 (Jul 29) M Callinicus of Gangra	12 (Jul 30) App. Silas and Silvanus of the 70 and comp. Fast	13 (Jul 31) Righteous Eudocimus of Cappadocia	14 (Aug 1) Procession of the Cross Fast	15 (Aug 2) Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: wine & oil
16 (Aug 3) 11th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: wine & oil	17 (Aug 4) "Seven Sleepers" of Ephesus Fast	18 (Aug 5) M Eusignius of Antioch 6:30 Vigil Fast	19 (Aug 6) TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	20 (Aug 7) M Dometius of Persia Fast	21 (Aug 8) St. Emilian the Confessor Fast: wine & oil	22 (Aug 9) Apostle Matthias 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: wine & oil
23 (Aug 10) 12th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: wine & oil	24 (Aug 11) Ven. Theodore of the Kiev Caves Fast	25 (Aug 12) MM Anicetus and Photius Fast	26 (Aug 13) St. Maximus the Confessor Fast: wine & oil	27 (Aug 14) Ven. Theodosius of the Kiev Caves 6:30 Vigil Fast	28 (Aug 15) DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	29 (Aug 16) Image Not-Made-By-Hands of our Lord Jesus Christ 5:30 All-Night Vigil
30 (Aug 17) 13th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 4 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	31 (Aug 18) MM Florus and Laurus	Sep 1 (Aug 19)	Sep 2 (Aug 20) Fast	Sep 3 (Aug 21)	Sep 4 (Aug 22) Fast	Sep 5 (Aug 23) 5:30 All-Night Vigil