



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

November - December 2019

On the World and Family

by Elder Ephraim of Arizona

May an angel of God, my child, follow you and show you the path of God and of your salvation. Amen; so be it. I pray that God gives you health of soul, for this is a special gift of sonship which is bestowed only upon those souls that have been completely devoted to the worship and love of God.

The world attracts the youth like a magnet; worldly things have great power over the newly enlightened soul that just started to find its bearings and see its purpose in life and the duty calling him. "Friendship with the world is enmity with God. Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." God has stored up pleasures for eternity, for both He and our soul are eternal. There is no comparison between the pleasures of the world and the pure pleasures of God.

The pleasures of the world are obtained with toil and expenses, and after their momentary enjoyment, they are followed by various consequences, so that they are incorrectly called pleasures. The pleasures of God, however, do not have such consequences, because spiritual pleasures down here on earth are the firstfruits of an eternal series of pleasures and delights in the kingdom of God. Whereas on the contrary, one who has been corrupted by the pleasures of the world is compelled to undergo eternal damnation along with the first instigator of corruption, the devil.

The time of our life, my child, has been given to us as a sum of money so that each of us may trade for his salvation, and depending on the trade we deal in, we shall become either rich or poor. If

we take advantage of the "money" of time by trading to increase our spiritual wealth, then we shall truly be skilled traders, and we shall hear the blessed voice: "Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord."

At the end of our life, an exact account will be demanded of each one of us: how and where we spent the money of time, and woe to us if we have squandered it in movie theaters, in entertainments, in debauchery, in futile dreams, in carnal pleasures. Then what defense will our tied tongue be able to utter, and how will we be able to lift up our eyes and see our Christ, when He enumerates the countless benefactions which His boundless love profusely poured upon us?

Now that we have time, now that the money of time has not yet been spent completely and we still have it at our disposal, let us reflect sensibly on the vagrant world which seeks to rob us. Let us push it away like a putrid dead dog, and with that money let us run to buy precious works which, when tried by fire, will become very bright—gifts worthy of our Holy God, fit to be used as a decoration in the holy Jerusalem of Heaven. We should not purchase chaff, that is, punishable works of darkness, for we shall go down with them into the eternal fire of damnation, where the multitude of people who embezzled God's gifts will reap whatever they sowed! Sow good works with tears, and then in a time of visitation you will reap the sheaves of enjoying eternal life!

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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Alexei Rodzianko
Daniel Hakim
Andrei Doohovskoy
Anthony Sarantakis
Dmitri Nikshych
Stephen (Richard) DiMatteo

Trapeza Schedule

* = strict fast

Trapeza can be whatever you would like to prepare, anything is appreciated.

Note: If you are preparing anything containing nuts or other allergens, please put a label to that effect in front of your dish. Nut allergies are especially fatal to 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.

November

- 3 Pekar Family
- 10 Katia Fredette, Natasha Kirichuk,
Vera Sarantakis
- 17 Matushka Helena, Marianne Dimatteo,
Tanya Nikshych
- 24 Pam Reed, Carolyn Savage, Diane Mendez

December

- *1 Nancy Vaters, Brigid Amy Fischer,
L&A Doohovskoy, Ann Dolan
- *8 Olena Fedina, Ksenia Guryeva,
Elena Rodzianko
- *15 Nettleton/Chaplain/Bottos
- *22 Alexandra Gonzalez, Anna Kekis,
Marina Pavlova
- *29 Brigid Justinian, Masha Doohovskoy,
Sonya Carrascal

PARISH NEWS

Thank you!

To all who helped pull together a wonderful fall festival on October 31st!



Please Remember in Your Prayers ~

Athanasia Tamvlakis, Peter Danas, Dimitri Nikshych, Masha Harris, Laryssa Doohovskoy, and Matushka.

Please be sure to inform the Sisterhood if someone is in the hospital or shut in at home.

Congratulations!

To Fotini and Richie Dimatteo and families on the baptism of their baby, James, on October 26. We ask God's Blessing and many years to all!

To Mary and Andrei Doohovskoy and family on the birth of their baby, Natalia, on November 2. Mother and baby are doing well. Many years to all!

Trapeza Reminders ~

Thank you to all who generously donate their time and energy to provide such wonderful meals for us all after Liturgy each Sunday. Please remember to check the clean-up list posted in the kitchen before leaving for the day to make sure everything is done and if people have been mingling outside, be sure to check for garbage left behind. It would also be most helpful if bathroom trash was emptied along with kitchen trash after Trapeza.

If anyone would like to volunteer to help with Trapeza, please contact Judy Engalichev @ dujy-kot@comcast.net. New groups or individuals are always welcomed!

Sisterhood News ~

Once again, we are having a coat drive for the homeless and needy children in the Methuen school system. This year we are targeting children in grades K-4. With the help of the sisterhood and with Fr. Michael's blessing, Natalie Pishenin will be collecting through the Sunday before Thanksgiving, November 24th.

New hooded jackets, gently used, and newly washed are all acceptable. Zippers, snaps, etc. must be in working order and gender-neutral colors are preferred if possible.

There is a great need in Methuen for these jackets, so your donation will surely make a positive impact on a young child's life! Thank you for your support!

Sunday School News ~

Please mark your calendars for the 2020 Yolka to be held on January 12th. Rehearsals will likely begin right after Thanksgiving.

Choir News ~

In preparation for Nativity services, regular rehearsals will be held on the following dates after Trapeza:

November 3, 17
December 1, 5, 29
January 5

Children's Choir will begin after Thanksgiving on Saturday afternoons with adult classes happening simultaneously. Please look for more information forthcoming.

As always, if you have a private service - wedding, baptism, funeral, etc. - and would like to have choir singers, please contact Laryssa at stxeniachoir@gmail.com.

Building Expansion Update ~

As many of you know from the Annual Meeting, we are forced to delay construction of the new hall. We had anticipated a cost of @ \$750k, but found that it would be more like \$900k-\$1.2m—out of our reach for the hall only since we cannot further delay expansion of the church itself.

We have sufficient funds in hand without borrowing from the bank for the church modifications.

We have contracted with another architect for the church expansion and will have plans very soon.

We intend to get everything prepared this winter so that we can break ground immediately after Pascha.

Continue praying that our goals can be met.

Please continue your prayers, and your generous donations to the building fund.

There are several ways you can still contribute or pledge - envelopes and pledge forms are available at the candle counter. We also have a Paypal account on the St. Xenia website.

DIOCESE NEWS

ST. HERMAN
CONFERENCE
DECEMBER 23-27,
2019
REGISTRATION NOW
OPEN
HOLY EPIPHANY ~
BOSTON, MA

It has been over four decades since the first St Herman's gatherings. The Conference continues to serve as a platform for drawing young people into church, educating them and allowing them an opportunity to socialize. There is now an average of around 200 participants. The organizers coordinate Orthodox lecture topics, workshops with more intimate groupings, question and answer sessions, missionary projects, church choir singing and conducting. The participants have had lessons in icon painting, and other Russian and popular crafts and activities. They have explored host cities and bonded together as friends and in their faith.

The conference is open to all Orthodox youth age 16 and older. The registration fee includes all lodging (quad occupancy), meals and local transportation. The price for the conference is \$350 per person based on quad occupancy. Early registration deadline before Dec. 1 will give you a discount of \$50 - after discount cost \$300.

For more information and to register, go to:
<https://sthermanconference.com/index.html>

Blessed Elezboi, Emperor of Ethiopia,
(Commemorated Oct 24/Nov 6) lived during the time when Arabia was ruled by the oppressor of Christians, Dunaan. Pious Elezboi was unable to look on indifferently as believers in Christ were being massacred, and he declared war on Dunaan. But his military campaign was unsuccessful. Wanting to learn the reason for his defeat, Elezboi at the prompting from above turned to a certain hermit, who revealed to the emperor, that he

had proceeded unrighteously in deciding to take revenge against Dunaan, since the Lord had said: "Vengeance is Mine, and I shalt mete it forth!" (Heb. 10: 30). The hermit counselled Blessed Elezboi to devote his final days of life to God, so as to flee the wrath of God for his self-willed revenge, and then to defeat Dunaan. Saint Elezboi made a vow to the Lord, and having set off with his army against the enemy, he defeated and captured and executed him. After the victory the saint resigned as emperor, secluded himself within a monastery and for 15 years he dwelt in strict fast and ascetic deeds (+ c. 553-555).

The Celebration of the Sobor (Assemblage) of the Leader of the Heavenly Hosts Michael, and the Other Heavenly Bodiless Hosts

Commemorated on November 8

The Celebration of the Sobor (Assemblage) of the Leader of the Heavenly Hosts Michael, and the Other Heavenly Bodiless Hosts was established at the beginning of the IV Century at the local Laodician Council, which occurred several years before the First OEcumenical Council. The Laodician Council by its 35th Canon condemned and renounced as heretical the worship of angels as creators and rulers of the world and it affirmed their proper Orthodox veneration. A feastday was established in November – the ninth month from March (with which month the year began in ancient times) – in accordance with the 9 Ranks of Angels. The eighth day of the month was decreed for the intended Sobor (Assemblage) of all the Heavenly Powers – in conjunction with the Day of the Dread Last-Judgement of God, which the holy fathers called the "Eighth Day", – since after this age in which the seven days [of Creation] have elapsed will come the "Eighth Day", – and then "shalt come the Son of Man in His Glory and all the holy Angels together with Him" (Mt. 25: 31).

Saint Stefan (Stephen) Miliutin, King of Serbia, his brother Dragutin, and their mother Elena (Helen): *(Commemorated Oct 30/Nov 12)*

Saint Stefan was the younger son of king Stefan Urosh I, and grandson of First-Crowned King Saint Stefan (Comm. 24 September). He ruled Serbia from 1275 to 1320. Stefan Miliutin received the throne from his elder brother Dragutin, a true Christian, who after a short reign transferred power over to his brother, and he himself in loving solitude withdrew to Srem, where he did secret ascetic deeds in a grave-pit, dug by his own hand. During his righteous life, Saint Dragutin toiled much over converting the heretic Bogomils to the true faith. His death occurred on 2 March 1316.

Saint Stefan Miliutin, having become king, bravely by both word and by deed, defended the Orthodox Serbs and other same-faith peoples from numerous enemies. Pious Stefan did not forget to thank the Lord for His beneficence. More than 40 churches were built by him, as also many monastery and vagrant hostels. The saint particularly concerned himself with the Athonite monasteries.

When the Serbian kingdom fell, the monasteries remained centres of national culture and Orthodoxy for the Serb nation. Saint Stefan died on 29 October 1320 and was buried at the Bansk monastery. After two years his undecayed relics were uncovered.

Saint Elena, the pious mother to her sainted sons, after the death of her husband devoted her whole life to pious deeds: she built a shelter for the impoverished, and constructed a monastery for those wanting to live in purity and virginity. Near the city of Spich she erected the Rechesk monastery and endowed it with the necessities. Before her death, Saint Elena accepted monasticism and expired to the Lord on 8 February 1306.

The Monk Lazaros of Galiseia *(Commemorated Nov 7/Nov 20)* was born in Lydia, in the city of Magnesium. As a youth educated and loving God, Lazaros became a monk at the monastery of Saint Sava, the founder of great ascetic piety in Palestine. The monk spent ten years within the walls of the monastery, winning the love and respect of the brethren for his intense monastic effort.

Ordained presbyter by the Jerusalem Patriarch, the Monk Lazaros returned to his native country and settled not far from Ephesus, on desolate Mount Galiseia. Here he was granted a wondrous vision: a fiery pillar, rising up to the heavens, was encircled by Angels, singing: "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered". On the place where this vision appeared to the saint, he built a church in honour of the Resurrection of Christ and took upon himself the feat of pillar-dwelling. Monks soon began to flock to the great ascetic, thirsting for wise spiritual nourishment by the Divinely-inspired word and blessed example of the saint. Thus arose a monastery.

Having received a revelation about his impending end, the monk related this to the brethren, but through the tearful prayers of all, the Lord prolonged the earthly life of Saint Lazaros for another 15 years.

The Monk Lazaros died at 72 years of age, in the year 1053. The brethren buried the body of the saint at the pillar, upon which he had pursued asceticism. The saint was glorified by many miracles after his death.

Blessed Maxim, Fool-for-Christ, (Commemorated Nov 11/Nov 24) lived at Moscow. About his parentage, time and place of birth, nothing is known. Saint Maxim chose one of the most difficult and thorny paths to salvation, voluntarily for the sake of Christ having taken upon himself the guise of a fool. Summer and winter Maxim walked about almost naked, bearing with prayer both the heat and cold. He had a saying: "Fierce though be the winter, yet sweet be paradise". Rus' very much loved its holy fools, it esteemed their deep humility, it heeded their wisdom, expressed profitably and aphoristically in the proverbial sayings of the people's language. And everyone heeded the holy fools: everyone from the great princes on down to the least beggar.

Blessed Maxim lived at a difficult time for the Russian people. Tatar incursions, droughts, epidemics were endemic and people perished. The saint said to the unfortunate: "Not everything is by the weave of the wool, some be opposite... They have won the fight, admit it, and bow the lower; weep not for the beaten, weep rather the unbeaten; let us show tolerance and in this we shalt at least be human; gradually even raw firewood ignites; for toleration may God grant salvation". But the saint did not only speak words of consolation. His angry denunciations frightened the mighty of his world. Blessed Maxim was wont to say to the rich and illustrious: "An idolatrous house, and a conscience corrupted; everyone is baptised, let everyone pray; God doth detect every wrong. He deceiveth not thee, nor deceivest thou He".

Blessed Maxim died on 11 November 1434 and as buried at the church of the holy Princes Boris and Gleb. Miraculous healings began occurring from the relics of the saint of God. In a circular missive of 1547, metropolitan Makarii enjoined "the singing and celebration at Moscow to the new Wonderworker Maxim, Fool-for-Christ". That same year on 13 August the relics of Blessed Maxim were uncovered undecayed. The church of Saints Boris and Gleb, at which the saint was buried, burned in the year 1568. On its place was built a new church, which they consecrated in the name of Saint Maxim, Fool-for-Christ. And into this church was put the venerable relics of Saint Maxim.

The Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Mother of God

(Commemorated on November 21, Dec 4)

The Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Mother of God happened, according to the preserved accounts of Holy Tradition, in the following manner. The parents of the Virgin Mary, Righteous Joakim and Anna, in praying for a solution to their childlessness,

gave a vow that if a child were born to them, they would dedicate it to the service of God.

When the Most Holy Virgin reached three years of age, the holy parents decided to fulfill their vow. Having gathered together their kinsfolk and acquaintances, and having dressed the All-Pure Mary in Her finest clothes, and with the singing of sacred songs and with lighted candles in their hands they carried Her to the Jerusalem Temple. There the high-priest with a throng of priests met the maiden of God. In the Temple, the stairway led up fifteen high steps. The Child Mary, so it seemed, could not Herself make it up this stairway. But just as they placed Her on the first step, strengthened by the power of God, She quickly made it up over the remaining steps and ascended to the highest. Then the high-priest, through an inspiration from above, led the Most Holy Virgin into the Holy of Holies, and herein of all people it was only the high-priest that entered one time a year with a purifying sacrifice of blood. Therefore all those present in the Temple were astonished at this most unusual occurrence.

Righteous Joakim and Anna, having entrusted their Child to the will of the Heavenly Father, returned home. The Most Blessed Mary remained in the domicile for girls, situated near the Temple. Round about the Temple, through the testimony of Holy Scripture (Exodus 38; 1 Kings 1: 28; Lk. 2: 37), and also the historian Josephus Flavius, there were many living quarters, in which dwelt those dedicated to the service of God.

The earthly life of the Most Holy Mother of God from the time of Her infancy to the time of Her ascent to Heaven is shrouded in deep mystery. Her life at the Jerusalem Temple was also a secret. "If anyone were to ask me, – said Blessed Jerome, – how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth, – I would answer: that is known to God Himself and the Archangel Gabriel, Her constant guardian".

Martyred 62 Clergy and 300 Laymen:

(Commemorated Dec 8/Dec 21) This occurred during the time of the emperor Zenon (474-491). The ruler of the Vandal kingdom in North Africa, Guneric, came under the influence of heretic Arian bishops and started up a fierce persecution against the Orthodox. When believers had gathered at one of the churches and secretly celebrated Divine Liturgy, barbarian soldiers burst into the church. Part of the worshippers fled, but 300 men – those most firm in the true faith – voluntarily gave themselves over to torture and were beheaded. Of the 62 clergy, two were burnt, and tongues were cut out from the rest. But by a miraculous Divine power they continued to preach and to oppose the Arian false-teachings.



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



NOVEMBER 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Oct 27 (Oct 14) 19th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy 12 Noon Annual Parish Meeting	Oct 28 (Oct 15)	Oct 29 (Oct 16)	Oct 30 (Oct 17)	Oct 31 (Oct 18)	1 (Oct 19)	2 (Oct 20) Demetrius Saturday 4:30 General Pannyhida 5:30 All-Night Vigil
			Fast	3:00 Fall Festival	Fast: wine & oil	
3 (Oct 21) 20th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	4 (Oct 22)	5 (Oct 23)	6 (Oct 24)	7 (Oct 25)	8 (Oct 26)	9 (Oct 27) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
			Fast: wine & oil		Fast: wine & oil	
10 (Oct 28) 21st Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 4 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	11 (Oct 29)	12 (Oct 30)	13 (Oct 31)	14 (Nov 1)	15 (Nov 2)	16 (Nov 3) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
			Fast		Fast	
17 (Nov 4) 22nd Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 5 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	18 (Nov 5)	19 (Nov 6)	20 (Nov 7) 6:30 Vigil Archangel Michael Fast	21 (Nov 8) Synaxis of the Archangel Michael 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy	22 (Nov 9)	23 (Nov 10) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
			Fast		Fast: wine & oil	
24 (Nov 11) 23rd Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	25 (Nov 12)	26 (Nov 13)	27 (Nov 14)	28 (Nov 15) Thanksgiving Day	29 (Nov 16)	30 (Nov 17) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine, & oil
			Fast: wine & oil	Fast	Fast: wine & oil	



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DECEMBER 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 (Nov 18) 24th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 7 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	2 (Nov 19) Fast	3 (Nov 20) 6:30 Vigil Fast: wine & oil	4 (Nov 21) ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	5 (Nov 22) Fast: wine & oil	6 (Nov 23) Fast	7 (Nov 24) 3:30 Children's Choir & Adult Class 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine, & oil
8 (Nov 25) 25th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 8 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	9 (Nov 26) Fast	10 (Nov 27) Fast: wine & oil	11 (Nov 28) Fast	12 (Nov 29) Fast: wine & oil	13 (Nov 30) Fast: wine & oil	14 (Dec 1) 3:30 Children's Choir & Adult Class 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine, & oil
15 (Dec 2) 26th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 1 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	16 (Dec 3) Fast	17 (Dec 4) Fast: fish, wine, & oil	18 (Dec 5) 6:30 Vigil Fast: wine & oil	19 (Dec 6) St. Nicholas 9:00 Hours & Divine Liturgy (St. Nicholas, Enfield) Fast: fish, wine, & oil	20 (Dec 7) Fast	21 (Dec 8) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine, & oil
22 (Dec 9) 27th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	23 (Dec 10) St. Herman Conference, Holy Epiphany, Roslindale Fast	24 (Dec 11) St. Herman Conference, Holy Epiphany, Roslindale 6:00 Vigil of St. Herman Fast: wine & oil	25 (Dec 12) St. Herman Conference, Holy Epiphany, Roslindale 9:00 Meeting of the Bishop, Hours & Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	26 (Dec 13) St. Herman Conference, Holy Epiphany, Roslindale Fast: wine & oil	27 (Dec 14) St. Herman Conference, Holy Epiphany, Roslindale Fast	28 (Dec 15) 3:30 Children's Choir & Adult Class 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine, & oil
29 (Dec 16) 28th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	30 (Dec 17) Fast: wine & oil	31 (Dec 18) Fast: wine & oil	Jan 1 (Dec 19) Fast	Jan 2 (Dec 20) Fast	Jan 3 (Dec 21) Fast	Jan 4 (Dec 22) 3:30 Children's Choir & Adult Class 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine, & oil