



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

September – October 2023

Parish Milestone

After years of planning, saving and designing we have now accomplished the renovation of our temple. Our general contractor, Optimum Construction Co., and their sub-contractors, did a very good job, and in such a way that there was minimal impact upon our cycle of services. And, all of you parishioners have done a great job in accommodating limited disruption, dust and changes without complaint. Glory to God for all things!

Please notice that I wrote “accomplished” and not “completed” on purpose because there is much to be done going forward. We will begin reinstalling the best of our beloved iconography. We have a subset of people who have been working diligently to clean and catalog the existing icons, and creating a schematic to suggest locations for rehung. Fr. Alexei and I will consider all suggestions as we move ahead.

We are also in process of cleaning and electrifying our central chandelier so that it can be rehung. We are moving away from the oil lamps to electric in order to minimize smoke damage to our walls and ceilings, and to simply keep everything cleaner. There are two more chandeliers on order from Greece to be installed on the North and South ceilings. These are beautiful church chandeliers not home or commercial style.

A new carpet runner for the center of the nave has been ordered and should arrive in the next couple of weeks. It is a high-quality wool runner that should serve us for many years. New area rugs are in process of being selected and procured for the North and South extensions.

Going forward we may elect to contract more wall frescoes and additional free standing icons. There is also the possibility of installing “toweling” wainscot around the walls of the nave. All of this costs money so any progress is dependent upon raising additional funds. As it stands, we have a clean and newly painted base upon which we can adorn our temple. This will be an ongoing labor of love.

We have an architectural plan in hand for a new parish hall. Our current general contractor has provided us with a detailed quote for the building of this structure. If we were to begin today the cost would be \$1.34 million dollars. Our coffers have been very much depleted by our current project so a second project of this magnitude is not on the horizon. In the mean time, the Parish Council will be looking into other less costly options to serve our fellowship needs in the short term, e.g. a tent, a pavilion, or whatever.

Whenever there is change like this there is much room for temptation. We are making every effort to both restore that which we are accustomed to while looking to make the necessary changes for our new layout. It is likely that not everyone will be happy with everything, but please know that we are happy to hear from you regarding anything that you see or don't see as the case may be so that we can do our best to assure everyone of a blessed worship experience.

God has also amplified the above blessings by sending us a new assistant priest. As most of you already know, Fr. Alexei and Matushka Patricia Klar and their children are moving to our area. Fr. Alexei will be assigned to our parish as an assistant priest. He will be finishing up his work commitment in New Jersey until later in the Fall, but will likely be with us at least every second weekend for Services. Matushka Patricia and the children will take up residency in Windham, New Hampshire next week. I am particularly happy, of course, to have more of my family close by, but this goes even further with providing me with pastoral help that I am much in need of. Our bishops have been encouraging me for a number of years now to keep my eye out for help and a future replacement and I believe Fr. Alexei is the best possible candidate. I know that you will all welcome them into our parish family.

Please keep us in your holy prayers.

--Fr. Michael

St. Xenia of St. Petersburg Orthodox Church is a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, under the omophorion of Met. NICHOLAS 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
34 Elm Street
North Andover, MA 01845
(978) 204-0428

Confessions on Saturday during Vigil, on Sunday during the Hours, and by appointment.

Parish Council

President: Archpriest Michael Crowley	(978) 204-0428
Warden: Andrei Doohovskoy	(339) 223-4168
Secretary: Subdeacon David Nettleton	(203) 895-7636
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Sisterhood: Meghan Nettleton	(617) 309-6473
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Anthony Sarantakis	
Dmitri Nikshych	
Nicholas (Charles) Kronauer	
Choir Director: Laryssa Doohovskoy	(978) 841-5960
Church School Director: Alexei Doohovskoy	



Trapeza Schedule

* = strict fast

Please limit coffee hour to Bagels, Muffins/ Pastries, and Fruit.
The coffee hour will be outside, so each week will be **weather dependent**.

Coffee will be made each Sunday morning.

Important - whoever is on for coffee hour is in charge of cleanup as well.

SEPTEMBER

- 9/3 **BAKE SALE**
Mat. Helena Doohovskoy, Marianne DiMatteo, Tanya Nikshych, Olga McLellan, Katia Semyanko
- 9/10 Meghan Nettleton, Nick Chaplain, Seraphima Ann Dolan, Boris and Olga Dzikovski, Lexi Lehmkul
- 9/17 Natalya Kirichuk, Vera Sarantakis, Kristina Head, Damascene Cummings, Sasha Prokopenko
- 9/24 **ST. XENIA'S FEAST DAY**

OCTOBER

- 10/1 Pam Reed , Carolyn Savage, Diane Mendez, Claire Murphy
- 10/8 Johanna Bevel, Sasha Frost, Mat. Masha Doohovskoy, Celesta Liceaga
- 10/15 Mat. Kaleria Sarantakis, Juliana Capitani, Misha Medzhidov, Tanya Burke, Jane Rockwell
- 10/22 Olena Fedina, Vira Ajgaonkar, Ksenia Guryeva, Victoria Tkaczewski, Liliya Afanasyeva
- 10/29 Alexandra Gonzalez, Anna Kekis, Anne Warner, Juliana Rost, Dorothea Poletti

PARISH NEWS

~ **Church Workdays Upcoming** in preparation for our Parish Feast

Saturday, 9-Sep-2023, 12 noon - Outside tasks

We will need volunteers for a number of tasks to include:

- ❖ Painting the white columns at the church's front entrance (we will supply the paint)
- ❖ Spray-painting the metal handrails at the church's front entrance
- ❖ Washing the outside of all windows / window wells
- ❖ Decluttering unneeded basement items and disposing in dumpster
- ❖ General Weeding
- ❖ Tree and Bush Trimming
- ❖ Mulching
- ❖ Weeding and replanting the planter-box by the street entrance
- ❖ Organizing the tool closet under the basement Stairs
- ❖ Picking up trash around dumpsters
- ❖ Power Washing
- ❖ Cleaning the St. Xenia's mosaic/Resealing (at church entrance)
- ❖ Raking or Sweeping around grounds/deck as needed

We will be providing the materials needed for the above activities. If you have any tools that would be helpful, please feel free to bring them!

We will be planting flowers in the planter-box by the street entrance. If you would like to contribute funds or plants for this purpose, or have any questions, please contact: Andrei Doohovskoy, 339-223-4168

~ **Parish Feast sign-up**
Sunday, September 24th.

Met. Nicholas will be joining us.

Please follow this link to volunteer:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B054-BA5A623A7FC1-stxenias1>

SISTERHOOD NEWS

~ **BAKE SALE** ~ *September 3* ~ This is a fundraiser dedicated to Church beautification and the purchase of new rugs for our Nave.

~ Thank you to all who supported the Backpack Drive for local school children. 30 backpacks were delivered to the Methuen school system to help children in need.

~ Thank you also to all who donated gently used baby clothing for First Concern Pregnancy Center in Marlboro.

~ The Sisterhood is always eager to have more volunteers. If you would like to be of service, there are many opportunities to help. Please reach out to Meghan Nettleton with any questions stxeniasisterhood100@gmail.com

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Jane Rockwell, Peter Danas, Dimitri Nikshych and Laryssa Doohovskoy, Suzie Soloviov and Celesta Liceaga.

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

CHOIR NEWS

~ Children's Choir Rehearsals take place on Sunday mornings starting at 9:00am. All children ages 8 and older are welcome to attend. The Children's Choir prepares music and readings for upcoming services.

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

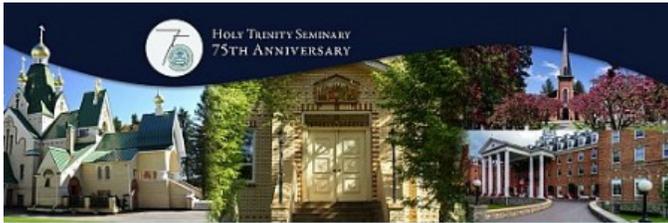
CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

Please be sure to register your children for Church School at the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BvU4Ck-G6HKun3JdX84Bgqkcmw_V8iklMdB9CD-wr6RM/view-form?edit_requested=true

UPCOMING EVENTS

HOLY TRINITY SEMINARY 75TH ANNIVERSARY



FRIDAY, SEPT 15- SUNDAY, SEPT 17

Christ Episcopal Church in Cooperstown, NY

*For further information, please contact **John Keller**, 75th Anniversary Coordinator, via e-mail: 75th@hts.edu or by phone at [315-409-1445](tel:315-409-1445).*

2023

St. Herman Conference

Dec. 22-26, 2023

Rochester, NY

Holy Protection

Russian Orthodox Church

For Orthodox young adults, ages 16-27

Registration deadline is Dec. 1

\$350/person quad occupancy

\$300 before Nov. 15

<https://sainthermanconference.org/index.html>

LIVES OF SAINTS

The Prophet Samuel (*Commemorated Aug 20/ Sept 2*)

was the 15th and last of the Judges of Israel, living more than 1146 years before the Birth of Christ. He was descended from the Tribe of Levi, and was the son of Elkanah from Ramathaim-Zophima of Mount Ephraim. He was born, having been besought of the

Lord through the prayers of his mother Anna (wherefore he received the name Samuel, which means "besought"), and even before birth he was dedicated to God. When the boy reached age 3, his mother went with him to Shiloh and in accord with her vow gave him over to the tabernacle in care of the high-priest Eli, who at this time was a judge over the Israelite nation. The prophet grew in the fear of God, and already at 12 years of age he had the revelation, that God would punish all the house of the high-priest Eli, because he did not restrain the impiety of his sons.

The prophecy was fulfilled when the Philistines, having slain in battle 30,000 Israelites (among them were also the sons of the high-priest, Hophni and Phinees), gaining victory and capturing the Ark of the Covenant with God. Hearing of this, the high-priest Eli fell from his seat backwards at the gate, and breaking his back, he died. The wife of Phinees, upon hearing what had happened in this very hour, gave birth to a son (Ichabod) and died with the words: "The glory is gone out from Israel, for the Ark of God is taken away" (1 Sam. [1 Kings] 4: 22).

Upon the death of Eli, Samuel became the judge of the nation of Israel. The Ark of God was returned by the Philistines on their own initiative, and after their returning to God, the Israelites returned to all the cities, which the Philistines had taken. Having gotten up in years, the Prophet Samuel made his sons -- Joel and Abiah -- judges over Israel, but they followed not in the integrity and righteous judgement of their father, since they were motivated by greed. Then the elders of Israel, wanting that the nation of God should be "like other nations" (1 Sam. [1 Kings] 8: 20), demanded of the Prophet Samuel that a king be established for them. The Prophet Samuel saw in this a deep downfall of the people, which until this time God Himself had governed, announcing His will through His chosen saints. Resigning the position of judge, the Prophet Samuel asked the people, whether they consent in his continued governance, but no one stepped forward for him. After denunciation of the first king, Saul, for his disobedience to God, the Prophet Samuel anointed as king Saint David, to whom he had offered asylum, saving him from the pursuit of king Saul. The Prophet Samuel died in extreme old age. His life is recorded in the Bible (1 Sam.

[1 Kings]; Sirach 46: 13-20). In the year 406 A.D. the relics of the Prophet Samuel were transferred from Judea to Constantinople.

Blessed John the Merciful of Rostov (also known as "Vlasaty" -- "the Hairy") (*Commemorated Sept 3/Sept 16*) asceticised at Rostov in the exploit of holy folly (iurodstvo), in it enduring deprivation and sorrow. He did not have a permanent shelter and at times took his rest at the house of his spiritual father -- a priest at the church of the All-Holy ("Veskhsyatsk"), or with one of the aged widows. Living in humility, patience and unceasing prayer, he spiritually nourished many a person, in which number was also the Monk Irinarkh, Hermit of Rostov (Comm. 13 January). After his lengthy life of pursuing asceticism he died on 3 September 1580 and was buried, according to his final wishes, alongside the church of Saint Blaise beyond the altar.

He had "hair upon his head abundantly", wherefore he was called "Vlasaty" or "Hairy". The title "Merciful" was bestowed upon Blessed John for the many healings that occurred at his grave, and also in connection with the memory of the holy Patriarch John the Merciful (VII Century, Comm. 12 November), whose name he had in common.

Blessed Nikita (*Commemorated Sept 9/Sept 22*) lived at Constantinople and occupied the position of "khartularium" ("letter-writer"). They call him "secretive" because, living in the world amidst the bustle of the city, with secret exploits of faith he reached spiritual perfection and was a great saint of God. His saintly life was revealed through unusual circumstances. Two friends, a certain priest and the deacon Sozontos, had quarreled. The priest died, and the deacon grieved that they had not been able to be reconciled. He told about the tormenting sin on his conscience to an experienced ascetic-elder. This one gave him a letter and ordered him to give it to the first person, whom Sozontos would meet at midnight at the temple of Hagia Sophia, the Wisdom of God. Saint Nikita the Khartularian appeared before him. Having read the letter, he began weeping and said, that it makes him responsible for this, and that it exceeds his strength, but with the prayers of the elder who had sent Sozontos, he would

strive to accomplish this. Making a prostration before the church doors, Saint Nikita said: "Lord, open to us the doors of Thine mercy", -- and the doors of the temple flew open by themselves. Leaving the deacon at the thresh-hold, Saint Nikita began to pray, and Sozontos beheld, how he shone with a strange light. Afterwards they went from the church, and the doors again closed. Approaching the church of the Blakhernae Mother of God, Saint Nikita again began praying and again the doors opened in front of them. In the church there shone a light, and from the altar there came out two rows of priests, among whom deacon Sozontos recognised his dead friend. Saint Nikita quietly said: "Father presbyter, chat with thine brother, and cease the enmity which ye have between ye". Immediately the priest and deacon Sozontos greeted each other. They hugged with love and were reconciled. The priest went back, and the doors closed by themselves. Blessed Nikita said to the deacon: "Brother Sozontos, save thine soul both for thyself and for my benefit. To the father that did send thee, say, that the purity of his holy prayers and his trust on God made possible the return of the dead". After these words Blessed Nikita became invisible for Sozontos. Having returned to his spiritual father the elder, the deacon with tears gave him thanks, that through his prayers, the great secret saint of God Nikita the Khartularian had done away with the sin from both the living and the dead.

Holy Nobleborn Prince Theodore (Feodor) of Smolensk and Yaroslavl', (*Commemorated Sept 19/Oct 2*) nicknamed the "Black" (i.e. "dark" or "swarthy"), was born in years terrible for Rus' -- those of the Mongol invasion, about 1237-1239, and at Baptism he was named after the holy GreatMartyr Theodore Stratilates (Comm. 8 February), who was particularly esteemed by the Russian warrior-princes. And holy Prince Theodore also was destined by God to be famed in the Russian Land by military exploits. In the year 1239, when through the prayers of the MostHoly Mother of God, the holy Warrior-Martyr Merkurii (Comm. 24 November) delivered Smolensk from being captured by Batu, the child Theodore was not in the city: they had taken him away and hidden him in a safe place during the warfare. In the following year of

1240 died his father, prince Rostislav, who was a great-grandson of holy Prince Rostislav of Smolensk and Kiev (+ 1168, Comm. 14 March).

His elder brothers as heirs divided among themselves the lands of their father, allotting to the infant child Theodore the small holding of Mozhaisk. Here passed his childhood, and here he studied Holy Scripture, the church-services and the military art.

In the year 1260 holy Prince Theodore was married to Maria Vasil'evna, daughter of holy Nobleborn Prince Vasiliï of Yaroslavl' (+ 1249, Comm. 3 July), and Theodore became prince of Yaroslavl'. From their marriage was born a son Mikhail, but Saint Theodore was soon widowed. He spent much of his time at military efforts and campaigns, and his son was raised by his mother-in-law, princess Xenia.

In the year 1277 the allied forces of the Russian princes, in union with the Tatar forces, took part in a campaign in the Osetian land and in the taking of "its famed city Tetyakov". In this war the allied forces gained a total victory. From the times of Saint Alexander Nevsky (+ 1263, Comm. 23 November), the khans of the Golden Horde -- seeing the uncrushable spiritual and the military strength of Orthodox Rus', were compelled to change their attitude towards it, and they began to draw the Russian princes into alliances, and the khans then turned to them for military assistance. The Russian Church providentially made use of this drawing closer, for the Christian enlightenment of the foreigners. Already in the year 1261, through the efforts of Saint Alexander Nevsky and Metropolitan Kirill III at Sarai, the capital of the Golden Horde, there was established a diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. In the year 1276, a Constantinople Council presided over by the patriarch John Bekkos (1275-1282) gave reply to questions of the Sarai Russian bishop Theognost about the order for baptising Tatars, and also the receiving into Orthodoxy of the Monophysite and Nestorian Christians among them. During these years also, holy Prince Theodore was at the Horde. Having distinguished himself by military exploits on the Osetian campaign, he gained special favourable attention from khan Mengu-Temir, who regarded the Orthodox Church with respect, and who as khan issued the first "yarlyk" ("decree" or "grant") about church tax-exemption for

Metropolitan Kirill. In the chronicles it said: "And prince Feodor Rostislavich the emperor Mengu-Temir and his empress did favour fondly and did not want to permit him return back to Rus' on account of his bravery and the handsomeness of his face". Saint Theodore spent three years at the Horde. Finally, "the emperor did send him off with great honour", and the prince arrived in Yaroslavl'. His wife Maria had already died, and in the city ruled princess Xenia with her grandson Mikhail. The Yaroslavians would not let in the prince returning from the Horde: "not accepting him onto the city but saying to him: "this be the city of princess Xenia and Mikhailo is our prince"".

Saint Theodore had to return to the Horde. The empress, wife of khan Mengu-Temir, "did have exceedingly great fondness for him and did wish for him to give the hand of her own daughter". Such a marriage had tremendous significance for Rus'. For a long time the khan would not consent to this, considering the Russian princes to be "ulusniki" (i.e. "vassals" or "subjects"). To give in marriage his daughter to a Russian prince meant to acknowledge him as an equal in worthiness. And even more important: this meant the khan would acknowledge the primacy of Orthodoxy, since before the wedding rite of crowning it required that the Tatar princess would accept holy Baptism. The khan went along with this, since union with Russia was very important for him: "and he ordered his daughter be given to prince Feodor, and ordered first to baptise her, and he ordered the Orthodox faith not be desecrated". Thus was Saint Theodore married to the daughter of the mighty khan, who was baptised with the name Anna. "The emperor didst esteem exceedingly and commanded him be seated opposite himself, he built him a palace, and gave princes and bolyarini-nobles in retinue".

There at the Horde also were born Saint Theodore's sons -- holy Nobleborn Prince David (+ 1321) and holy Nobleborn Prince Konstantin. The tremendous influence, which Saint Theodore gained at the Horde, he used to the glory of the Russian Land and the Russian Church. Orthodoxy became all the more strengthened amongst the Tatars, and the Horde began to assimilate Russian customs, morals and piety. Russian merchants, architect-builders and skilled craftsmen carried Russian culture to the shores

of the Don, the Volga, the Urals and farther even into Mongolia itself. From this period archeologists find Orthodox icons, and crosses and lampadas, throughout all the former territories of the Golden Horde, since included into the makeup of Russia. Thus began a great missionary movement of the Russian Church towards the East, and the enlightening with the light of the Gospel truth of all the tribes -- all the way to the Great Ocean (i.e. the Pacific). Russian Orthodox princes and their retinues, participating as confederates in the Mongol campaigns, learned of and became familiar with the boundless expanses of Asia, Siberia and the Far East. In the year 1330, more than thirty years after the death of Saint Theodore, Chinese chronicles write about Russian retinues in Peking.

Saint Theodore lived in Sarai until 1290, when "news reached him from Rus', from the city of Yaroslavl', that his first son, prince Mikhail, had died". Having bestowed the prince rich gifts and a large retinue, the khan sent him back to Rus'. Having become again the prince at Yaroslavl', Saint Theodore began zealously to concern himself over the strengthening and building up of his city and principality. He had an especial love for the monastery of the Transfiguration of the Lord. His fame resounded throughout all Rus', and all the princes sought friendship and alliance with him. But most of all, he was fond of the son of Saint Alexander Nevsky, -- Andrei Aleksandrovich, supporting him in all undertakings, and when this prince Andrei became great-prince of Vladimir, he went with him on military campaigns; he was gladdened over the victories, and he grieved over his being cut down in defeat. In 1296 a bloody fratricidal war was just breaking out between two groups of princes: on the one side was Saint Theodore and Great-prince Andrei, and on the other side -- Saint Michael of Tver (+ 1318, Comm. 22 November) and Saint Daniel of Moscow (+ 1303, Comm. 4 March). But with the help of God the bloodshed was successfully averted. At a Vladimir "sitting of princes" (year 1296) the Vladimir bishop Simeon and the Sarai bishop Izmail managed to bring peace to both sides. This fact, that holy Prince Theodore and the Sarai Vladyka Izmail participated in the sitting, points out that Saint Theodore employed all his diplomatic talents and influence at

the Horde, to enable the establishing of peace in the Russian Land.

The connections of Saint Theodore the Black with his paternal origins -- Smolensk, were not sundered, though for him to be prince there would have been complicated. Thus, in the year 1297, Saint Theodore went on a campaign to Smolensk to renew his lawful right to the Smolensk principality, which had been usurped by his nephews. But to take the city and become anew the Smolensk prince did not transpire.

Soon after this campaign the holy warrior-prince took sick. On 18 September 1299 the saint of God gave orders that he be carried to the Saviour-Transfiguration monastery, and there he took monastic tonsure. Towards the end of the ritual, Saint Theodore asked to interrupt the service. With the blessing of the hegumen, and to fulfill the will of the dying prince, they carried him into the monastery courtyard, whither had already come a throng of the Yaroslavl' people. "And the prince did confess before all the people, whether he had sinned against anyone or held ill-feelings against anyone. And whoever had sinned against him or borne him enmity -- he blessed all and begged them pardon and in everything took upon himself the guilt before God and mankind". Only after this did the humble warrior complete his resolve to finish his unusual and much-troubled life's path with the acceptance of the angelic form.

All night the hegumen and the brethren prayed over the holy prince. At the second hour of the night they began to ring for matins. Administered the Holy Mysteries of Christ, Saint Theodore lay silently upon his monk's cot. When the monks began the third "Glory" of the Psalter, he made the sign of the Cross and gave up his soul to the Lord. His appearance at the grave was extraordinary: "Wondrous indeed was the look of the blessed one, upon the cot lay he not as one dead, but as one actually alive. His face did shine like as the rays of the sun, adorned by his venerable grey of hair, witnessing to his purity of soul and heart without malice".

After him at Yaroslavl' ruled his son -- Saint David (+ 1321). The second of his two younger sons, Konstantin, had evidently died earlier. The Church veneration of holy Prince Theodore within the

Yaroslavsk lands began soon after his death. During the years 1322-1327, with the blessing and commissioning of the Rostov bishop Prokhor, -- in memory by the Vladyka of the venerable Saint Theodore, -- there was written and adorned with miniatures the re-known Theodorov Gospel. Bishop Prokhor at first had been hegumen of the Saviour-Transfiguration monastery at Yaroslavl'. Actually, he knew the holy prince personally, and was able to be an eye-witness at his tonsure and public repentance before the people. Historians think, that the fine miniatures, sewn into this precious manuscript, had belonged to a rather earlier Gospel, the owner of which had been Saint Theodore the Black himself, and which he had brought with him to Yaroslavl' as a blessing from his native Smolensk.

On 5 March 1463, there were opened at Yaroslavl' the relics of holy Prince Theodore and his sons, David and Konstantin. The chronicler, an eye-witness to the event, recorded under the year: "At the city of Yaroslavl' in the monastery of the Holy Saviour they did bring up three great princes, prince Feodor Rostislavich and his sons David and Konstantin, and above the ground they did lay them. Great-prince Feodor was a man of great stature, and of his sons David and Konstantin they did lay them alongside, and their stature was less than his. They did lay within a single grave". This feature of the physical appearance of the holy prince so struck the senses of the eye-witnesses and those present at the time of the uncovering of the relics, that an account of this was entered into the Prologue's Saints-lives concerning Saint Theodore, and also into the text of the Iconographic Originals.

The Life of holy Prince Theodore the Black was written, shortly after the uncovering of the relics, by the priest-monk Antonii of the Yaroslavsk Saviour monastery, with the blessing of the Metropolitan of Moscow and All Rus', Philip I. Another redaction of the Life was written by Andrei Yur'ev at the Kirillo-Belozersk monastery. A third and most detailed Life of Saint Theodore was included in the "Book of Ranks of Imperial Geneology", compiled under tsar Ivan the Terrible and metropolitan Makarii. The Russian people put together spiritual songs about holy Prince Theodore, which over the span of centuries

they sang in "the destitute wanderings". In them, the verses glorify the piety and the right-discernment, the beneficence and kind-heartedness of the saint, and his concern over the building and adorning of churches. The complexity of historical destinies, the roughness of the era, the numerous multitude of enemies -- not personal, but enemies of Russia and the Church, -- stress for us all the more clearly the great exploits of the saintly builders of the Russian Land.

The Nun Taisia, (*Commemorated Oct 8/Oct 21*) raised by her mother in a spirit far removed from Christian piety, led a depraved and dissolute life. She was famed for her beauty, alluring many on the path to sin.

The account about the prodigal Taisia spread throughout all Egypt and reached even the elder, Paphnutios, a strict ascetic who had converted to salvation many of the lost. Dressing himself into worldly attire, Paphnutios went to Taisia and asked her to name for him a place, where not only people but even God Himself would not see them. Taisia answered that this was impossible, since God is omnipresent everywhere, and He sees and knows all. Having seen in her soul the spark of the fear of God, the elder went further. He pointed out all the grievousness and loathesomeness of her sins, and he told her about the answering she would have to give before God for the souls of people corrupted and destroyed by her.

The words of Saint Paphnutios so affected the sinner, that she, having gathered up all her riches acquired in shameful a manner, then set them afire in the city square and withdrew with the elder to a monastery, where for three years she dwelt in seclusion. Having turned herself towards the East, Taisia incessantly uttered the short prayer: "My Creator, have mercy on me!". "From that minute, when I entered into the cell, all my sins constantly were before my eyes, and I burst out in tears in remembering them", -- said the Nun Taisia to the elder before her death. "It is for this, thine tears, and not for the austerity of thine seclusion that the Merciful Lord hath granted thee mercy", -- said Saint Paphnutios in answer to her.

The Icon of the Mother of God, named "Prosperess of Loaves" ("Sporitel'nitsa Khlebov"), (*Commemorated Oct 15/Oct 28*) was written at the blessing of the starets-elder of the Visitation Optina wilderness monastery, the priest-schemamonk Amvrosii (Ambrosii) (23/XI/1812 - 10/X/1891). Father Amvrosii, a great Russian ascetic of the XIX Century, was ardent with a childlike faith towards the Mother of God. He in particular revered all the feasts of the Mother of God and on these days he redoubled his prayer. With the icon, "Prosperess of Loaves", Father Amvrosii blessed the Shamordinsk women's monastery established in honour of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God, and founded by him not far from the Optina monastery.

On this icon the Mother of God is depicted sitting upon the clouds, and Her hands are extended in blessing. Beneath -- is a compressed field, and on it amidst the grass and flowers stand and lay sheaves of rye. Starets Amvrosii himself decreed the day of celebration -- 15 October, and called the image "Prosperess of Loaves", indicating by this, that the Most Holy Mother of God -- "is an Helper for people in their labours for the acquiring of their daily bread". Before his blessed death, Father Amvrosii ordered a large quantity of photo-replicas of this icon and distributed and sent them off to his spiritual children. For the singing of an akathist before the holy image, the starets composed a particular response: "Hail, Thou Full-of-Grace, the Lord is with Thee! Grant unto us unworthy ones the dew of Thy grace and the showing forth of Thine mercy!"

The day of burial of Father Amvrosii happened on 15 October -- the feastday of the icon. The first miracle from the holy icon was witnessed in 1891, when throughout Russia was a famine because of crop-failure, but in the Kaluzh district and on the

fields of the Shamordinsk monastery grain was produced. In 1892, already after the death of Father Amvrosii, his attendant Ivan Feodorovich Cherepanov sent a copy from the icon to the Pyatnitsk women's monastery in Voronezh district. In this locale there was a drought and famine threatened, but soon after a molieben served before the icon, "Prosperess of Loaves", it rained and ended the drought.

Blessed Cleopatra (*Commemorated Oct 19/Nov 1*) came from the village of Edra near Mount Tabor in Palestine. She was a contemporary of the holy Martyr Uaros and beheld his voluntary suffering. After the execution, blessed Cleopatra transferred the body of the holy martyr to her own country and buried him with reverence. Cleopatra had but a single and beloved son, John, who had attained the honourable rank of officer. To the great sorrow of his mother, John suddenly died. Cleopatra with tears of grief turned to the relics of the holy Martyr Uaros, beseeching him for the resuscitation of her son.

When Uaros and her son appeared to Cleopatra in a dream, radiant in bright attire with crowns upon their heads, -- she perceived, that the Lord had received her son into the heavenly host, and was comforted. After this blessed Cleopatra started to live by a church, built by her over the relics of the holy Martyr Uaros and her son John, and she strove to acquire the grace of God by good deeds. She distributed her property to the poor and spent her time in prayer and fasting. After seven years of righteous life the blessed saint reposed (c. 327).



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SEPTEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug 27 (Aug 14) 12th Sunday after Pentecost Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy 12:30 Great Vespers of Dormition Fast: wine & oil	Aug 28 (Aug 15) DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS 9:00 Matins & Divine Liturgy	Aug 29 (Aug 16)	Aug 30 (Aug 17) Fast	Aug 31 (Aug 18)	1 (Aug 19) Fast	2 (Aug 20) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
3 (Aug 21) 13th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 4 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	4 (Aug 22)	5 (Aug 23)	6 (Aug 24) 7:00 Class Fast: wine & oil	7 (Aug 25)	8 (Aug 26) Fast: wine & oil	9 (Aug 27) 12 Noon Parish Workday 5:30 All-Night Vigil
10 (Aug 28) 14th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 5 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	11 (Aug 29) Beheading of the Baptist Fast: wine & oil	12 (Aug 30)	13 (Aug 31) 7:00 Class Fast: wine & oil	14 (Sep 1) The Church New Year	15 (Sep 2) Fast	16 (Sep 3) 12 Noon Parish Workday 5:30 All-Night Vigil
17 (Sep 4) 15th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	18 (Sep 5)	19 (Sep 6)	20 (Sep 7) 5:30 Vigil "Nativity of the Theotokos" Fast: wine & oil	21 (Sep 8) NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy	22 (Sep 9) Fast: wine & oil	23 (Sep 10) Visit of Metropolitan NICHOLAS 5:30 All-Night Vigil
24 (Sep 11) Glorification of St. Xenia 9:00 Meeting of the Bishop 9:30 Hierarchal Divine Liturgy Noon Banquet	25 (Sep 12)	26 (Sep 13) 5:30 Vigil "Elevation of the Cross"	27 (Sep 14) ELEVATION OF THE CROSS 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Fast: wine & oil	28 (Sep 15)	29 (Sep 16) Fast	30 (Sep 17) 5:30 All-Night Vigil



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OCTOBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 (Sep 18) 17 th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 8 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	2 (Sep 19)	3 (Sep 20)	4 (Sep 21) Fast: wine & oil	5 (Sep 22)	6 (Sep 23) Fast: wine & oil	7 (Sep 24) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
8 (Sep 25) 18 th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 1 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	9 (Sep 26)	10 (Sep 27)	11 (Sep 28) Fast: wine & oil	12 (Sep 29)	13 (Sep 30) 5:30 Vigil "Protection of the Theotokos" Fast: wine & oil	14 (Oct 1) Protection of the Theotokos 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy 12:30 Great Vespers
15 (Oct 2) 19 th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 2 9:00 Matins and Divine Liturgy	16 (Oct 3)	17 (Oct 4)	18 (Oct 5) Fast: wine & oil	19 (Oct 6)	20 (Oct 7) Fast: fish, wine & oil	21 (Oct 8) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
22 (Oct 9) 20 th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	23 (Oct 10)	24 (Oct 11)	25 (Oct 12) Fast: wine & oil	26 (Oct 13)	27 (Oct 14) Fast	28 (Oct 15) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
29 (Oct 16) 21 st Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 4 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	30 (Oct 17)	31 (Oct 18)	Nov 1 (Oct 19) Fast	Nov 2 (Oct 20)	Nov 3 (Oct 21) Fast	Nov 4 (Oct 22) 5:30 All-Night Vigil