



# St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

May - June 2026

## The ROCOR Council of Bishops

From 29 April - 5 May 2026 in the Convent of the Venerable New-Martyr Grand Duchess Elizabeth in Buchendorf, Germany, the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia met, convening in connection with the celebration of the centenary of the German Diocese. The proceedings of the Council, presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas of Eastern America and New York, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, were participated in by His Eminence Metropolitan Mark of Berlin and Germany, Their Eminences Archbishops Kyrill of San Francisco and Western America and Gabriel of Montreal and Canada, Their Graces the Bishops John of Caracas and South America, Irenei of London and Western Europe, Theodosy of Manhattan, Luke of Syracuse, James of Sonora, Job of Stuttgart, Spyridon of Toronto, Michael of Boston, and Peter of Seattle.

At the session of the Council of Bishops on Thursday, 30 April, having discussed various liturgical and calendrical questions, it was resolved: 1) To entrust Bishop Peter of Seattle and Archpriest Seraphim Gan to review the text of the prayers "Save, O God, Thy people..." and "O Master, Most Merciful...", proposed by Archimandrite Roman (Krassovsky), to introduce amendments to the same, and to present them for consideration by the Synod of Bishops; 2) To propose to the Hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church that the commemoration of the translation of the relics of the Holy New-Martyrs of Alapaevsk to Jerusalem (17 / 30 January) be included in the general Church calendar.

On the same day, the Right Reverend Archpastors heard a presentation by Priest Roman Tarabrin, Ph.D., of the Diocese of the City of Moscow, Associate Professor of the Sechenov University and the Sretensky Theological Academy, entitled: "The experience of the Russian Orthodox Church in formulating a bioethical position: The case of assisted reproductive technologies." Thereafter, a commission on bioethical questions was established, to which were appointed Bishops Luke of Syracuse and Job of Stuttgart, with the right to co-opt into its membership ecclesiastical figures as well as scholars from amongst the Orthodox laity.

On Friday, 1 May, the German Diocese marked the centenary of its founding with a solemn Divine Liturgy in the Cathedral of the Holy New-Martyrs and Confessors in Munich. On this day, the conciliar Divine Service was led by the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas of Eastern America and New York, in concelebration with all the Hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad, as well as with His Eminence Metropolitan Peter of Prespa and Pelagonia (Macedonian Orthodox Church) and His Eminence Archbishop Tikhon of Ruza, Administrator of the German Diocese of the Moscow Patriarchate; Archimandrite Roman (Krassovsky), Head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem (of the ROCOR); the Dean of the Munich Cathedral, Archpriest Nikolai Artemoff; and some one hundred Priests and Deacons of the German Diocese and guests from across the world.

On Saturday, 2 May, the Council of Bishops, having heard a report by Deacon Pavel Lisitsin, a cleric of the Diocese of Great Britain and Western Europe, resolved: to invoke God's blessing upon the establishment of a charitable fund for the support of the clergy. On the same day, the Council considered the report of Bishop James of Sonora, chairman of the commission for the study of the life, legacy and veneration of the ever-memorable Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose). On the basis of this report, the following determination was made: 1) To receive the report; 2) Having recognised the righteous course of life of the ever-memorable Hieromonk Seraphim, to bless the process of preparing his ecclesiastical glorification among the ranks of our venerable Fathers; 3) To invoke God's blessing upon the further work of the aforementioned commission under the chairmanship of His Grace Bishop James.

On Monday, 4 May, in discussing the question of filling the vacant See of Mid-America, the Council of Bishops resolved to release Archbishop Gabriel of Montreal and Canada from the administration of the Mid-American Diocese, expressing gratitude to him for his labours, and to appoint His Grace Bishop Spiridon as Bishop of Chicago and Mid-America. On the same day, the Council heard the report of Bishop Peter of Seattle on the liturgical traditions of the Russian Church

Abroad, and the report of Metropolitan Mark of Berlin and Germany, entitled: "On certain saints encountered in the course of my life: Towards the opening of a conciliar discussion on the glorification of the pious strugglers (podvizhniki) of the Russian Church Abroad, who embody her spirit and heritage." Following His Eminence's presentation and the ensuing discussion, the task of preparing materials on Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky), Archbishop Tikhon (Troitsky), and a number of other pious individuals venerated in the Diaspora, presenting them for consideration by the Synod of Bishops by the end of the year, was entrusted to Archbishop Kyrill and Bishop Luke.

Thereafter, the Council elected the members of the Synod of Bishops, constituted as follows: Metropolitan Mark of Berlin and Germany, First Vice-President; Archbishop Kyrill of San Francisco and Western Amer-

ica, Second Vice-President and Secretary; Archbishop Gabriel of Montreal and Canada; Bishop Irenei of London and Western Europe, Secretary for Inter-Orthodox Relations; Bishop Theodosy of Manhattan, Deputy Secretary; and Bishop Job of Stuttgart. Bishop Peter of Seattle was elected as an alternate member.

On Tuesday, 5 May, at the final session of the Council of Bishops, held in the assembly hall of the new site of the men's monastery of Venerable Job in Seifriedsberg, the Archpastors discussed and adopted the text of their conciliar epistle. Thereafter, a reception in honour of the Council of Bishops was offered by the brotherhood of the monastery, with the participation of the Governor of the Guenzburg District, Dr Hans Reichhart; the Mayor of Ziemetshausen, Ralf Wetzels; as well as local religious figures and other guests.

Since this was my first experience of the Council of Bishops, it was indeed inspiring and memorable in many ways. The convent in Buchendorf was absolutely wonderful. Being present in the early morning Divine Services each day was nothing short of heavenly. The Divine Liturgy in celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the German Diocese, held at the Cathedral in Munich, was magnificent. I believe there were 18 bishops and over 100 priests. The cathedral was packed with the faithful!

The Council itself echoed the familiar Psalm phrase "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" There were a number of very important issues discussed. While differing opinions and/or analyses were considered, there was no break in the unity.

A few of the highlights for me were: 1) The discussion and motions concerning "liturgical consistency," 2) the beginning of a fund for the care of clergy, 3) the creation of a commission to study bio-ethical issues, 4) and most inspiring, the movement towards the glorification of Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose).

With the recent inclusion of a number of priests from other jurisdictions, and particularly with the tremendous growth of English language missions throughout North America, there are many instances where liturgical language and custom has varied from the ROCOR tradition. I was delighted that the English language missions were finally being taken seriously! I believe the Council encouraged work in progress and definitely wanted consistent materials to be made available immediately.

We have had some recent experiences with clergy members reposing in the Lord without adequate accommodation for those family members left behind. Fr. Deacon Paul from London, a financial expert, proposed a simple way to deal with this going forward with the establishing of collected and monitored funds expressly for this purpose.

Modernity has presented all of us with many challenges in the bio-ethical arena, especially in the area of "reproductive technologies." We need pastoral clarity in this and so a commission was established for this study. The priest from the Moscow Patriarchate who presented to us was very sensible and knowledgeable.

Many of the faithful, both cradle and convert all over the world, have been inspired by the life and works of Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose). The commission to explore his official glorification has done great work in collecting and evaluating the necessary materials. Though their work is ongoing, the Council was overwhelmingly in favor of proceeding with the liturgical glorification of Hieromonk Seraphim as soon as possible.

Overall, there was much more but I have at least begun to share with you the important work of the Council, which I can assure you is totally concerned with the spiritual health and well-being of all members of the Church.

+ Bishop 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 Rt. Rev. Michael (Crowley), Bishop of Boston. In order to ensure timely delivery to our far-flung parish, please submit all notices by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication to Bishop Michael at [fr-michael@stxenia.org](mailto:fr-michael@stxenia.org). Thank you.

**Rector:**

His Grace, Bishop 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: Bishop Michael (Crowley)	(978) 204-0428
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Anthony Sarantakis, Emeritus	
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Joseph (Kami) Ajgaonkar	
Choir Director: Laryssa Doohovskoy	(978) 841-5960
Church School Directors:	
Matushka Patricia Klar	
Mary Doohovskoy	



## Trapeza Schedule

\* = strict fast  fish allowed

The coffee hour will be outside so each week will be **weather dependent**.

Coffee will be made each Sunday morning.

*While hospitality is a cherished tradition at St. Xenia's, we each serve according to our own abilities and circumstances. Even on weeks when we are only able to offer a light snack following the Divine Liturgy, that offering is still a meaningful and generous gift to our fellow parishioners.*

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

**Please refer to list on refrigerator for all that should be checked.**

### MAY

- 05/03 Ksenia Guryeva, Olena Fedina, Tanya Nikshych, Liliya Afanasyeva, Mary Doohovskoy  
Anna Medzhidova
- 05/10 Nataliya Orbite, Alevtina Khusanova, Liudmilla Diakonova, Svetlana Duka, Tanya Burke, Diane Mendez
- 05/17 Mat Patricia Klar, Alexandra Gonzalez, Vira Ajgaonkar, Johanna Bevel, Sasha Prokopienko
- 05/24 Meghan Nettleton, Brigid Justinien, Elizabeth Victoria Jackson, Maria Bottos, Nicholas Chaplain
- 05/30 Dorothea Poletti, Kristina Head, Sasha Oxnard, Lisa Andreasen, Olga McLellan, Damascene Cummings

### JUNE

- 06/07 Mat. Masha Doohovskoy, Mat. Helena Doohovskoy, Marianne DiMatteo, Sasha Frost, Juliana Rost
- 06/14  Mat. Kaleria Sarantakis, Juliana Capitanio, Anne Marie Hakim, Vera Sarantakis, Seraphim Silva
- 06/21  Ksenia Guryeva, Olena Fedina, Tanya Nikshych, Liliya Afanasyeva, Mary Doohovskoy  
Anna Medzhidova
- 06/28  Nataliya Orbite, Alevtina Khusanova, Liudmilla Diakonova, Svetlana Duka, Tanya Burke, Diane Mendez

## PARISH NEWS

~ Thank you to all who contributed to the wonderful Holy Week and Pascha services and celebrations. We are incredibly blessed to have such a dedicated community.

~ Thank you to the Brotherhood for a delicious trapeza honoring the Sisterhood and the Holy-Myrrh-bearing Women.

### Congratulations

~ To Constantine (Benjamin) Bode on his Baptism, March 28<sup>th</sup>!  
*MANY YEARS!*

### Please Remember in Your Prayers

Fr. Constantine, Fr. Alexander, Nicholas, Peter, Dimitri, Laryssa, Celesta, Wladislaw, and Matushka Alexandra.

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

### Condolences

~ To the family of Daniel McLellan who reposed in the Lord April 28<sup>th</sup>. The funeral will be Saturday, May 9, 11 am at St. Xenia's.

~ To the family of Jane Rockwell who reposed in the Lord May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

*Memory Eternal!*

## SISTERHOOD NEWS

~ The Sisterhood is meeting monthly on Wednesdays at 7:00pm. Meetings begin with an Akathist to the Mother of God and then work through a curriculum put out by the podcast Filled with Less, intended to "inspire you to live the Christian life with simplicity and intention."

~ 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](mailto:stxeniasisterhood100@gmail.com)  
<https://www.stxenia.org/sisterhood>

## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

The Brotherhood's vision is to create a brotherhood that:

- Supports the spiritual growth of our parish

- Assists with the physical maintenance and beautification of our church
- Creates opportunities for fellowship and mutual support
- Participates in charitable works for our broader community

If you would like to update any information or if you know of other men in our parish who might be interested in joining, please contact Dan Poletti or Marques Bevel at [stxenibrotherhood@gmail.com](mailto:stxenibrotherhood@gmail.com).

### REMINDERS

- ❖ Now that we have a Bishop serving regularly, there is a slight change to the response after the last petition of the Fervent Supplication.

After the serving clergy states ...

*...and for all the people here present who await thy great and abundant mercy.....*

The congregation now responds with:

*And thine episcopacy, holy priesthood and diaconate may the Lord God remember in His Kingdom always now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

- ❖ During the ***Cherubic Hymn, the Gospel Reading, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and Communion***, all who are able, should remain standing and all should refrain from walking around the Naïve unless absolutely necessary.
- ❖ It is completely acceptable, as well as an act of consideration, to step out of Liturgy if you find your child needs to take a break or be consoled.
- ❖ If you do leave the Naïve during the Liturgy, before returning, pause to listen to what is happening in the service before re-entering. If it is any of the above-mentioned times, wait to re-enter.
- ❖ As Parishioners wait for Holy Communion, the Clergy are preparing and receiving their Holy Communion. Please refrain from chatting and be prayerfully attentive to the readings and Hymns.

## CHOIR NEWS

~ All young singers in the parish are invited to participate in the Children's Choir. We meet on Sunday mornings at 9 am.

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

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

~ Please remember, we will hold two Trapeza lines on Sundays. One for the Sunday School Children and another for all others.

~ Please note, at least one class will be held in the basement **during** Trapeza.

LIMITED SPACE REMAINING

REGISTER NOW FOR  
**Saint Seraphim Camp**

[stseraphimcamp.org/registration](https://stseraphimcamp.org/registration)

Campers Entering Grades 3 – 8  
July 26 – August 2, 2026

Campers Entering Grades 9 – 12  
August 2 – August 9, 2026

## LIVES OF SAINTS

**The Holy Disciple and Evangelist Mark,** (*Commemorated April 25/May 8*) named also John-Mark (Acts 12: 12), was a Disciple from among the Seventy, and was also a nephew of the Disciple Barnabas (Comm. 11 June). He was born at Jerusalem. The house of his mother Mary adjoined the Garden of Gethsemane. As Church Tradition relates, on the night of the Sufferings of Christ on the Cross he followed after Him, wrapped in a linen winding-cloth, and he fled from the soldiers catching hold of him (Mk. 14: 51-52). After the Ascension of the Lord, the

house of his mother Saint Mary became a place of prayerful gatherings of Christians and a lodging for certain of the Apostles (Acts 12: 12).

Saint Mark was a very close companion of the Apostles Peter and Paul (Comm. 29 June) and of the Disciple Barnabas. Saint Mark was at Seleucia together with Paul and Barnabas, and from there he set off to the island of Cyprus, and he crossed over the whole of it from East to West. In the city of Paphos Saint Mark was an eye-witness, of how the Apostle Paul had struck blind the sorcerer Elymas (Acts 13: 6-12).

After working with the Apostle Paul, Saint Mark returned to Jerusalem, and then with the Apostle Peter he arrived in Rome, from whence at the latter's bidding he set out for Egypt, where he became founder of the Church.

During the time of the second evangelic journey of the Apostle Paul, Saint Mark met up with him at Antioch. From there he set out preaching with the Disciple Barnabas to Cyprus, and then he went off again to Egypt, where together with the Apostle Peter he founded many churches, and then also at Babylon. From this city the Apostle Peter directed an Epistle to the Christians of Asia Minor, in which he points to Saint Mark as his spiritual son (1 Pet. 5: 13).

When the Apostle Paul came in chains to Rome, the Disciple Mark was at Ephesus, where the cathedra-seat was occupied by Saint Timothy (Comm. 4 January). The Disciple Mark arrived together with him in Rome. There also he wrote his holy Gospel (c. 62-63).

From Rome Saint Mark again set off to Egypt. At Alexandria he made the beginnings of a Christian school, from which later on emerged such famous fathers and teachers of the Church, as Clement of Alexandria, Sainted Dionysios (5 October), Sainted Gregory Thaumaturgos ("Wonderworker", Comm. 5 November), and others. Zealous with the arranging of Church Divine-services, the holy Disciple Mark compiled the order of Liturgy for the Alexandrian Christians.

Later on in preaching the Gospel, Saint Mark also visited the inner regions of Africa, and he was in Libya at Nektopolis.

During the time of these journeys, Saint Mark received inspiration of the Holy Spirit to go again to Alexandria and confront the pagans. There he visited at the home of the dignitary Ananias, for whom he healed a crippled hand. The dignitary happily took him in, hearkened with faith to his narratives, and received Baptism. And following the example of Ananias, many of the inhabitants of that part of the city

where he lived were baptised after him. This roused the enmity of the pagans, and they gathered to kill Saint Mark. Having learned of this, the holy Disciple Mark made Ananias bishop, and the three Christians: Malchos, Sabinos and Kerminos -- presbyters.

The pagans pounced upon Saint Mark when he was making Divine-services. They beat him, dragged him through the streets and threw him in prison. There Saint Mark was granted a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who strengthened him before his sufferings. On the following day the angry crowd again dragged the holy disciple through the streets towards the court-room, but along the way Saint Mark died with the words: "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit".

The pagans wanted to burn the body of the holy disciple. But when they lit up the bon-fire, everything grew dim, thunder crashed and an earthquake occurred. The pagans fled in terror, and Christians took up the body of the holy disciple and buried it in a stone crypt. This was on 4 April in the year 63. The Church celebrates his memory on 25 April.

In the year 310, a church was built over the relics of the holy Disciple Mark. In the year 820, when the Mahometan Arabs had established their rule in Egypt and those of this different faith oppressed the Christian Church, the relics of Saint Mark were transferred to Venice and placed in the church of his name.

In the ancient iconographic tradition, which adopted symbols for the holy Evangelists borrowed from the vision of Saint John the Theologian (Rev. 4: 7), the holy Evangelist Mark is depicted by a lion -- symbolising the might and royal dignity of Christ (Rev. 5: 5). Saint Mark wrote his Gospel for Christians from among the gentile-pagans, since he emphasises predominantly the words and deeds of the Saviour, in which particularly is manifest His Divine Almightyness. The many particularities of his account can be explained by his proximity to the holy Apostle Peter. All the ancient writers testify, that the Gospel of Mark represents a concise writing-down of the preaching and narratives of the first-ranked Apostle Peter. One of the central theological themes in the Gospel of Saint Mark is the theme of the power of God, doing the humanly impossible, wherein the Lord makes possible that which of man is impossible. By the efficacy of Christ (Mk. 16: 20) and the Holy Spirit (Mk. 13: 11), His disciples are to go forth into the world and preach the Gospel to all creatures (Mk. 13: 10, 16: 15).

**The Monk Theodosii (Feodosii) of Pechersk,** (*Commemorated May 3/May 16*) was the initiator of a life-in-common *ustav* (rule) and a father of monasticism in the Russian land. He was born at Vasilevo, not far from Kiev. From his youthful years he felt an irresistible attraction for the ascetic life, and led an ascetic lifestyle while still in his parental home. He disdained childish games and attractions, and constantly went to church. He himself asked his parents to let him go to study reading of the holy books, and through his evident abilities and rare zeal, he quickly learned the reading of the books, such that everyone was amazed at the intellect of the lad. At 14 years of age he lost his father and remained under the supervision of his mother -- a woman strict and domineering, but very much loving her son. She many a time chastised her son for his yearning after asceticism, but he remained firmly committed to his path. At 24 years of age he secretly left his parental home and took monastic vows, with the blessing of the Monk Antonii (Anthony), at the Kievo-Pechersk monastery with the name Theodosii. After four years his mother found him and with tears besought him to return home, but the saint himself persuaded her to remain in Kiev and accept monasticism in the monastery of Saint Nicholas at the Askol'd cemetery.

The Monk Theodosii toiled at the monastery more than others and not seldom he took upon himself part of the work of the other brethren: he carried water, chopped wood, ground up the rye-grain and carried the flour to each monk. On cold nights he uncovered his body and let it be food for gnats and mosquitoes, the blood flowed on him, but the saint patiently occupied himself with handicrafts and sang psalms. In church he appeared before others and, standing at a place, he did not leave it until the finish of Divine-services; the readings he listened to with particular attention.

In 1054 the Monk Theodosii was ordained to the dignity of priest-monk, and in 1057 he was chosen hegumen. The fame of his deeds attracted a number of monks to the monastery, at which he built a new church and cells, and he introduced the Studite common-life monastic-rule (*ustav*), a copy of which was made by his commissioning at Constantinople. In the dignity of hegumen the Monk Theodosii continued to fulfill very difficult duties at the monastery. The monk usually partook of only dry bread and cooked greens without oil. The nights passed for him without sleep in prayer, such that the brethren often took notice of this, although the chosen one of God also tried to conceal his efforts from others. No one was to see when the Monk Theodosii dozed lightly, and usually

he rested sitting. During the period of Great Lent the saint withdrew into a cave situated not far from the monastery, where he asceticised with no one seeing. His attire was a coarse hair-shirt worn straight over his body, such that in this old man looking like a beggar it was impossible to recognise the reknown hegumen, deeply respected by all that knew him.

One time the Monk Theodosii was returning from GreatPrince Izyaslav. The coachman, not recognising whom he was, said gruffly: "Thou, monk, art always on holiday, but I constantly am at work. Get up on my place, and let me ride in the carriage". The holy elder meekly complied and drove the servant. Seeing how boyar nobles along the way bowed to the monk driving the horses, the servant took fright, but the holy ascetic calmed him, and upon their arrival gave him a meal at the monastery. Trusting on the help of God, the monk did not keep a large supply of food at the monastery, and therefore the brethren were in want of their daily bread. Through his prayers, however, unknown benefactors appeared at the monastery and furnished the necessities for the brethren. The great princes, and especially Izyaslav, loved to listen to the spiritual discourse of the Monk Theodosii. The saint was not afraid to denounce the mighty ones of this world. The unjustly condemned always found in him a defender, and judges would review matters at the request of the hegumen revered by all. The monk was particularly concerned about the destitute: he built for them at the monastery a special courtyard where anyone in need could receive food and drink. Having sensed beforehand his own end, the Monk Theodosii peacefully expired to the Lord in the year 1074. He was buried in a cave dug out by him, into which he secluded himself during lenten periods. The relics of the ascetic were found uncorrupt in the year 1091. The Monk Theodosii was enumerated to the ranks of the saints in 1108. From the written works of the Monk Theodosii there have survived to our time: 6 discourses, 2 missives to GreatPrince Izyaslav, and a prayer for all Christians. The Vita (Life) of the Monk Theodosii was compiled by the Monk Nestor the Chronicler, a student of the great abba, a mere 30 years after his repose, and it was always one of the favourite readings of the Russian nation. An account about the Monk Theodosii also is located under 28 September.

**The Holy Martyress Helikonida** (*Commemorated May 28/June 10*) lived during the III Century in the city of Thessalonika. During a time of persecution against the followers of Christ, Saint Helikonida arrived in the city of Corinth and began to urge the pagans to

give up serving senseless idols and instead worship the One True God, the Creator of the universe. She was arrested for this preaching and brought before the governor Perinaus, who both by flattery and by threats in vain attempted to persuade the saint to offer sacrifice to idols. The holy martyress was subjected to tortures, but she bravely endured them. They then threw her into an hot furnace, but she emerged from it unharmed, because an Angel of the Lord had cooled the flames. Thinking the saint a "sorceress", the governor pondered over new torments for her. From her head they began to tear at the skin, and to burn at her breast and head with fire. And having halted the torture, the judge again attempted to urge Saint Helikonida to offer sacrifice to the idols, promising her honours and the title of priestess. Suddenly the saint appeared to consent, and with merriment the pagan-priests and the people led her to the pagan-temple amidst the sounds of trumpet and drum and, at the request of the saint, they left her there alone. But Saint Helikonida, filled with an heroic strength, cast down and smashed all the idols. Having waited a long while, the pagan-priests went into their temple. Seeing the destruction, they went into a vicious rage and cursed at the holy virgin with shouts of: "Put the sorceress to death!" They began to beat the holy martyress, and then they threw her into prison, where she spent 5 days. In prison Christ the Saviour together with the holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel appeared to the holy martyress and healed her of her wounds. Finally, they despatched the saint for tearing-apart by wild beasts. They set loose upon her three hungry lions, but the beasts came up to the martyress meekly and lay down at her feet. The pagan mob shouted and demanded "Death to the sorceress". But at this point the lions pounced up from the arena and jumped at the people, who fled in terror. Not knowing what else to do, the governor gave orders to cut off the head of Saint Helikonida. The saint went with joy to execution and heard a Voice, summoning her to the Heavenly habitations. Her body was reverently buried by Christians.

Her end transpired in the year 244.

**The Holy Martyr Theodotos** (*Commemorated June 7/June 20*) lived in Galatian Ancyra in the III Century. He was distinguished by an especial kindness and concern. At the height of the persecution under Diocletian (284-305) he provided Christians all the necessities and gave them shelter in his home, where secretly they made Divine-services. Saint Theodotos visited the Christian captives in prison, paid their bail, and reverently gave burial to the bodies of martyrs

thrown for devouring by wild beasts. One time he dragged out of the water and gave burial to the bodies of seven holy martyresses, drowned in the sea (Comm. 18 May). They reported about this to the governor. Having refused to offer sacrifice to idols and having denounced the pagan folly, Saint Theodotos confessed the true faith in Christ, for which they subjected him to terrible tortures and beheaded him with the sword (+ 303). They wanted to burn up the body of the holy martyr, but a storm having arisen made it futile to attempt this, and they gave him over to a Christian for burial.

**The "Meet it is" ("Dostoino Est") Icon of the Mother of God** (*Commemorated June 11/June 24*) is situated at the high place of the altar of the cathedral church of the Kareia monastery on Mount Athos.

On a certain Sunday, and living not far off from Kareia, an elder went to the monastery for the all-night vigil. In the cell remained a novice, and with the onset of night there was a knock from an unknown monk. At the time of the all-night vigil, when it was necessary to sing the "More Honourable than the Cherubim...", both stood before the Icon of the Mother of God, called "The Merciful" ("Miluiuschaya"), and the guest remarked that they should sing "Meet it is in Truth...". During the time of the singing of the previously unheard song the Icon of the Mother of God brightened with an heavenly light, and the novice wept with joy. At his request this wondrous song, for want of paper, was written on stone, which became softened like wax, under the hand of the strange singer. Calling himself Gabriel, the stranger then became invisible. The Icon of the Mother of God, before which was first sung the "Meet it is", was transferred to the cathedral church of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God at Kareia (the administrative centre of Athos). The stone-tablet, with the song inscribed on it by the Archangel Gabriel, was taken to Constantinople during the time when the Patriarch was Sainted Nicholas Chrysoberges (+ 995, Comm. 16 December). Numerous copies of the "Meet it is" ("Merciful") Icon are revered as holy in Russian churches. At the Galerna Harbour of Peterburg there was erected a church with five cupolas in honour of the Merciful Mother of God, and into it they put a grace-bearing "Merciful" icon sent from Athos.

**The Holy Martyr Doulos** (*Commemorated June 15/June 28*) was a pious christian from the city of Praetoriada. At the height of a persecution against Christians under Maximian (305-313) they arrested him and sent

him to trial under the Cilicia district governor Maximus. Before the beginning of the trial the saint firmly besought the Lord to grant him the power of words for a denunciation of idol-worship.

At the interrogations the holy martyr bravely confessed Christ and forcefully denounced the false religion of the pagans and their gods with their shameful human vices and passions. The governor tried to confute his faith in Christ, but he was not able to resist against the grace-given words of Saint Doulos. The governor flew into a rage, tortured him without pity and after interrogation dispatched him back into prison. At each new interrogation the saint appeared strong in spirit and body, prepared for new torture. At the final interrogation for Saint Doulos, they broke his lower jaw, they broke his knees, and they bound him to the chariot of the governor and dragged him about. In this manner of suffering the holy martyr died, having signed himself with the sign of the cross.

They untied his body from the chariot and threw it into the river. The river current carried the remains of the holy Martyr Doulos to his native city right up to shore. Dogs of shepherds discovered the holy body. One of them sat and guarded the body of the holy martyr from birds, and another brought in its teeth a shepherd's robe and covered up the body of the saint. The shepherds led christians to the body of the holy Martyr Doulos, who then made the burial.



**ST. XENIA ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
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MAY 2026						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Apr 26 (Apr 13)</b> <b>Myrrhbearing Women Sisterhood Feastday</b> <b>9:00 AM, Meeting of the Bishop, Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>Apr 27 (Apr 14)</b>	<b>Apr 28 (Apr 15)</b>	<b>Apr 29 (Apr 16)</b>	<b>Apr 30 (Apr 17)</b>	<b>1 (Apr 18)</b>	<b>2 (Apr 19)</b>  <b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>
<b>3 (Apr 20)</b> <b>Sunday of the Paralytic</b>  <b>9:00 AM Hours &amp; Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>4 (Apr 21)</b>	<b>5 (Apr 22)</b>	<b>6 (Apr 23)</b> <b>Mid-Pentecost</b>  <b>Fast</b>	<b>7 (Apr 24)</b>	<b>8 (Apr 25)</b>  <b>2:30 PM Pannyhida for Daniel McLellan</b>	<b>9 (Apr 26)</b>  <b>11:00 AM Funeral of Daniel McLellan</b>  <b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>
<b>10 (Apr 27)</b> <b>5th Sunday of Pascha</b> <b>The Samaritan Woman</b> <b>9:00 AM Meeting of the Bishop, Hours &amp; Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>11 (Apr 28)</b>	<b>12 (Apr 29)</b>	<b>13 (Apr 30)</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>14 (May 1)</b>	<b>15 (May 2)</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>16 (May 3)</b>  <b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>
<b>17 (May 4)</b> <b>6th Sunday of Pascha: The Blind Man. Tone 5</b> <b>9:00 AM Meeting of the Bishop, Hours &amp; Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>18 (May 5)</b>	<b>19 (May 6)</b>	<b>20 (May 7)</b>  <b>5:30 PM Vigil of the Ascension</b>  <b>Fast: fish, wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>21 (May 8)</b> <b>ASCENSION OF THE LORD</b> <b>St. John the Theologian</b> <b>7:30 AM, Hours &amp; Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>22 (May 9)</b>	<b>23 (May 10)</b>  <b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>
<b>24 (May 11)</b> <b>7th Sunday of Pascha: The Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council. Tone 6</b> <b>9:00 AM Meeting of the Bishop, Hours &amp; Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>25 (May 12)</b>	<b>26 (May 13)</b>	<b>27 (May 14)</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>28 (May 15)</b>	<b>29 (May 16)</b>  <b>Fast: wine &amp; oil</b>	<b>30 (May 17)</b>  <b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>
<b>31 (May 18)</b> <b>PENTECOST</b>  <b>9:00 Meeting of the Bishop, Hours and Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>Jun 1 (May 19)</b> <b>Day of the Holy Spirit</b> <b>Jordanville Feast Day</b>	<b>Jun 2 (May 20)</b>	<b>Jun 3 (May 21)</b> <b>Ss. Constantine &amp; Helen</b>	<b>Jun 4 (May 22)</b>	<b>Jun 5 (May 23)</b>	<b>Jun 6 (May 24)</b>  <b>5:30 All-Night Vigil</b>



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JUNE 2026						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>May 31 (May 18)</b> <b>PENTECOST</b>  9:00 Meeting of the Bishop, Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>1 (May 19)</b> Day of the Holy Spirit Jordanville Feast Day  Fast free	<b>2 (May 20)</b>  Fast free	<b>3 (May 21)</b> Ss. Constantine & Helen  Fast free	<b>4 (May 22)</b>  Fast free	<b>5 (May 23)</b>  Fast free	<b>6 (May 24)</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast free
<b>7 (May 25)</b> 1st Sunday after Pentecost. All Saints. Tone 8 9:00 AM, Meeting of the Bishop, Hours & Divine Liturgy	<b>8 (May 26)</b>  Fast	<b>9 (May 27)</b>  Fast	<b>10 (May 28)</b> 7:00 AM Midnight Office  Fast	<b>11 (May 29)</b>  Fast	<b>12 (May 30)</b> 7:00 AM Midnight Office & Preparation for Holy Communion  Fast	<b>13 (May 31)</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: fish, wine & oil
<b>14 (Jun 1)</b> 2nd Sunday after Pentecost. All Russian Saints. Tone 1 9:00 AM, Meeting of the Bishop, Hours & Divine Liturgy	<b>15 (Jun 2)</b>  Fast	<b>16 (Jun 3)</b>  Fast	<b>17 (Jun 4)</b> 7:00 AM Midnight Office  Fast	<b>18 (Jun 5)</b>  Fast	<b>19 (Jun 6)</b> 7:00 AM Midnight Office & Preparation for Holy Communion  Fast	<b>20 (Jun 7)</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: fish, wine & oil
<b>21 (Jun 8)</b> 3rd Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 2  9:00 AM, Meeting of the Bishop, Hours & Divine Liturgy	<b>22 (Jun 9)</b>  Fast	<b>23 (Jun 10)</b>  Fast	<b>24 (Jun 11)</b> 7:00 AM Midnight Office  Fast	<b>25 (Jun 12)</b>  Fast	<b>26 (Jun 13)</b> 7:00 AM Midnight Office & Preparation for Holy Communion  Fast	<b>27 (Jun 14)</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: fish, wine & oil
<b>28 (Jun 15)</b> 4th Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 3  9:00 AM, Meeting of the Bishop, Hours & Divine Liturgy	<b>29 (Jun 16)</b>  Fast	<b>30 (Jun 17)</b>  Fast	<b>Jul 1 (Jun 18)</b> 7:00 AM Midnight Office  Fast	<b>Jul 2 (Jun 19)</b>  Fast	<b>Jul 3 (Jun 20)</b> 7:00 AM Midnight Office & Preparation for Holy Communion  Fast	<b>Jul 4 (Jun 21)</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: wine & oil