



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

January-February 2007

Sermon on the Feast of Theophany

by St. John of Shanghai & San Francisco

Today the nature of the waters is sanctified. Today the Son of God is baptized in the waters of Jordan, having no need Himself of cleansing, but in order to cleanse the sinful human race from defilement.

Now the heavens open and the voice of God the Father is heard: This is My beloved Son. The Holy Spirit descends upon the Saviour of the world, Who stands in the Jordan, thereby confirming that this indeed is He Who is the incarnate Son of God. The Holy Trinity is clearly made manifest and is revealed to mankind.

The waters of the Jordan are sanctified, and together with them all the waters of creation, the very nature of water. Water is given power to cleanse not only the body, but also man's whole soul, and to regenerate the whole man unto a new life through Baptism.

Through water all of nature is cleansed, for out of water the world was made, and moisture penetrates everywhere, giving life to everything else in nature. Without moisture neither animals nor plants can live; moisture penetrates into rocks, into every place in the world.

The waters are sanctified and through them the whole world, in preparation for renewal and regeneration for God's eternal Kingdom which is to come.

Every year on this day the glory of God is revealed, renewing and confirming what was accomplished at Christ's Baptism. Again the heavens are opened; again the Holy Spirit descends. We do not see this with our bodily eyes, but we sense its power. At the rite of blessing, the waters which are thereby sancti-

fied are transformed; they become incorruptible and retain their freshness for many years.

Everyone can see this — both believers and unbelievers, both the wise and the ignorant.

Whence do the waters acquire this property?

It is the action of the Holy Spirit.

Those who with faith drink these waters and anoint themselves with them receive relief and healing from spiritual and bodily infirmities. Homes are sanctified by these waters, the power of demons is expelled, God's blessing is brought down upon all that is sprinkled with these waters. Through the sanctifying of the waters God's blessing is again imparted to the whole world, cleansing it from the sins we have committed and guarding it from the machinations of the devil.

Today the Holy Spirit, descending upon the waters when the Cross of Christ is immersed into them, descends upon all of nature. Only into man He cannot enter without his will.

Let us open our hearts and souls to receive Him and with faith cry from the depth of our souls: "Great art Thou, O Lord, and marvelous are Thy works, and there is no word which sufficeth to hymn Thy wonders."

St. Xenia of Petersburg Orthodox Church is a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, under the omophorion of Metropolitan LAURUS, First Hierarch, and Bishop GABRIEL of Manhattan. The parish newsletter is published bi-monthly under the direction of the Rev. Michael Crowley. In order to ensure timely delivery to our far-flung parish, please submit all notices by the 15th of the month prior to publication to Margaret Lark at (603) 332-9613, e-mail: skovranok@verizon.net, or to Father Michael at tcrowley@maine.rr.com. Thank you.

Rector:

Rev. Michael Crowley
 16 Channel Road
 South Portland, ME 04106
 (978) 204-0428 (cell phone with voice mail)

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

Parish Council

President: Rev. Michael Crowley (207) 767-1889
 Starosta: Sdn. Constantine Desrosiers (603) 775-0320
 Secretary: Natalie Pishenin (978) 658-5564
 Treasurer: Anthony Sarantakis (978) 263-2016
 Sisterhood: Matushka Nancy Crowley (207) 767-1889
 Cemetery: to be determined by search committee.
 Interim, Rev. Michael Crowley

Peter Danas (978) 459-9541
 John Danas (978) 454-0315
 Alexei Doohovskoy (978) 897-1734
 Roberto Gonzalez (978) 692-1229
 Michael Johnson (603) 893-4593
 John Kekis (978) 456-9865
 Choir Director: Michael Lang (603) 465-9754

Trapeza Schedule

*** =Strict Fast (no meats, fish or dairy)**

If you cannot be at church on your assigned Sunday please call and switch with someone. If you have any questions contact Karen Schidlovsky at (603) 868-6410. Trapeza can be whatever you would like to prepare on your day. Some parishioners prefer to make a big lunch but this isn't necessary. As long as there is enough food for about 40 people anything is appreciated. Donuts, fruit and pastries are as acceptable as soup and sandwiches. Thank you in advance for your contribution.

January

7 Christmas (pot luck)
 14 Nativity Play {pot luck}
 21 Mariana Haven, Josephine Kniazuk
 28 Anna Johnson, Nina Yakuboff, the Kasardas

February

4 Matushka Nancy, Megan Crowley, Katya Fredette
 11 Karen Schidlovsky, Nancy Harris (Meat Fare)
 18 Masha Harris, Kot Engalichev (Cheese Fare)
 *25 Helena Doohovskoy, Marianne DiMatteo, Laryssa Doohovskoy

Sisterhood News:

Our Giving Tree collection of gifts for Lazarus house was a success - collecting many much-needed supplies for the homeless.

Sisterhood dues are \$5 per year, and membership is open to all women of the parish. Our next meeting will take place on January 28th.

Thank You...

...to all who worked so hard on December 30th to beautify our church and grounds for the Feast of the Nativity.

...to Natalie DaSilva for her kind donation to our church of a lampada in memory of her dad, Andrew Slobodnik, who is laid to rest in our cemetery. It has been hung in front of the Vladimir Mother of God.

...to all who donated items for the Yolka, held on January 14th, especially to Natalie Pishenin for the donation of black socks and ears for the sheep.

... to Mireille Lang for directing our children's Yolka play, "Little Lost Lamb." Nice work, Mireille!

Please remember in your prayers...Nicholas, Lilly, Nina, Josephine, David, Vassilisa, Lilly Anne, Margaret, Fr. Roman & Matushka Irina Lukianov.

Please remember to inform the Myrrh-bearers Sisterhood if someone is in the hospital or shut in at home.

Financial Update: As of December 31, 2006 the balance on the church mortgage stands at \$59,335. If you have any questions, please see Subdeacon Constantine Desrosiers.

Congratulations:

...to the Gonzalez family – Roberto, Alexandra, and big sister Olivia – on the birth of Estéban Roberto, born on December 12. Many years to all!

...to Margaret and Jim Lark, who became grandparents for the second time on November 20.

Sunday School: Our children's Yolka is scheduled to take place on Sunday, January 14. Come and see the children perform a short play, musical pieces, choral pieces and do some carolling.

Speaking of the Yolka, please note the following announcement:

Yolka Trapeza: A sign-up sheet has been posted in the hall for volunteers to provide set-up and clean-up and pot-luck donations of food, including deserts, for the day of the children's Yolka. Please consider what you can help with and sign on!

Teen Sunday School lessons, which take place during Trapeza, will resume January 21. Topics to be covered include a short history of Old Testament Israel; the Sacraments of the Church; the historical origins of Great Lent; and, "What are Passions?"

A cemetery reminder: Burning candles and vigil lights are a fire hazard! Please extinguish all flames after visiting the cemetery. Thank you for your cooperation.

Also, please remember to keep the cemetery road clear, not only on Sundays, but also when visiting.

Basement Renovation Update: We have completed the majority of our work down in the basement. We now have lots of enclosed storage for our current and future needs. Four large built-in closets have been constructed to store all our yard equipment and supplies, tools and paints, and Sunday School supplies. The area under our altar has been walled off to make a storage area for religious items. All the walls and exposed ceiling rafters have been painted a clean, bright white. The floor has been painted gray. New lighting has been installed throughout, which has done a great deal to brighten the space. The "stage" area has dimmable spot lights ready for use by our Sunday School students for presentations, plays and pageants. Work is still ongoing on a retractable room divider which will be used to divide the basement into two separate Sunday School or meeting areas.

Our basement improvement fund-raising drive is still ongoing. Our need remains at @ \$3,000.

We are fortunate to have this new and more inviting space in which our parishioners, especially our children and young adults, can meet and learn. Come see our new and improved basement and stay for the young-adult Sunday School lessons which resume in late January!

A note concerning the frescos in our church: St. Xenia is blessed to have frescos painted on several of our walls. These were done by Father Yakov Ferens when he was a deacon. He is now pastor of a house church, St. John of Kronstadt Russian Orthodox Church, in San Diego, CA. The parish has recently received their bishop's blessing to begin collecting funds to build a new church. If you'd like to help Fr. Yakov's parish, donations can be sent to:

St. John of Kronstadt New Church Fund
5131 Rex Avenue
San Diego, CA 92105

Advanced Sunday School Classes Winter 2007

Date	Topic	Instructor
January 21	Socratic Dialogue	Subdeacon Constantine
January 28	Short History of Old Testament Israel	Reader Robert Stauffer
February 4	The Sacraments of the Church	Reader John Sarantakis
February 11	What are Passions?	Daniel McLellan
February 18	Forgiveness Sunday Vespers	No class
February 25	Historical Origins of Lent	Subdeacon Constantine
March 4	Images of the Theotokos in the Old Testament	Reader Robert Stauffer
March 11	Last Days and the Coming of Antichrist	Daniel McLellan
March 18	Pilgrimage to the Holy Land Slide Show	Meghan Crowley
March 25	Socratic Dialogue	Subdeacon Constantine

Before and after pictures of our renovated classroom area in the basement.



"On the Joint Divine Services Scheduled for May 2007 for the Signing of the Act of Canonical Communion"

The Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia on December 8, 2006, and the Holy Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate on December 26, 2006, approved the proposals of the Commissions of the Moscow Patriarchate on dialog with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and the Commission of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia on talks with the Moscow Patriarchate regarding the place, time and rite of the signing of the Act of Canonical Communion, and also the order of divine services connected thereto. These proposals were prepared at a joint session of the two Commissions in Cologne on October 26, 2006.

According to the plan, the signing of the Act of Canonical Communion is scheduled to take place on May 17, 2007. It is expected that on this day, when the Orthodox Church celebrates the feast of the Ascension of the Lord, His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia and the members of the Holy Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate, and the First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, His Eminence Metropolitan Laurus, along with the members of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, will gather at Christ the Savior Cathedral. After a short Molieben, the decrees of the Holy Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate and of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia on the confirmation of the Act of Canonical Communion will be read aloud, after which the Act itself will be read.

His Holiness the Patriarch and His Eminence the First Hierarch will sign the Act, greetings will be exchanged and Many Years then sung.

Immediately following the signing of the Act of Canonical Communion, His Holiness Patriarch Alexy, His Eminence Metropolitan Laurus and the other bishops will conduct Divine Liturgy. During the service, the Royal Doors will be open in the Paschal tradition, and the people of God can fully participate in the joy of the first joint partaking of the Eucharist by the hierarchs and clergymen of the then-united Russian Church.

On May 19, on the feast day of St Job of the Much-suffering and of St Job of Pochaev, which is also the birthday of Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II, His Holiness Patriarch Alexy and His Eminence Metropolitan Laurus, the bishops and clergymen of the Russian Church Abroad will perform Divine Liturgy at Uspensky Cathedral in Moscow's Kremlin.

On May 20, 2007, on the seventh week of Pascha, His Holiness Patriarch Alexy and His Eminence Metropolitan Laurus, along with the bishops and clergymen of Russia and from Abroad will perform the consecration of the Church of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia in Butovo, and then Divine Liturgy in the newly-consecrated church.

On May 15, 2004, Metropolitan Laurus, during his first official visit to Russia, and the members of His Eminence's delegation, prayed during divine services performed by His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II on Butovo Field, the place where an untold number of martyrs died at the hands of the godless regime, many of whom have been canonized as saints. On that day, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church performed the ceremony of the laying of the foundation of this new church, which is now being prepared for consecration. The First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia also participated in the laying of this foundation.

By the prayers of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, the Lord has blessed our path to achieving the holy task of restoring the unity of the Russian Church, which had endured great sorrows in the 20th century. We believe that through their heavenly intercession, this will be accomplished to the Glory of God and the joy of the people of the Church.

*Protopriest Alexander Lebedeff,
Los Angeles*

*Protopriest Nikolai Balashov
Moscow*

(from the official Web Site of the ROCOR)

January 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 (19 Dec) M Boniface	2 (20 Dec) HM Ignatius of Antioch; St John of Kronstadt Wine & oil allowed	3 (21 Dec) VM Juliana	4 (2 Dec) GM Anastasia Wine & oil allowed	5 (23 Dec) 10 MM of Crete 10:00 AM Royal Hours of the Nativity	6 (24 Dec) M Eugenia 9:00 AM Fore-feast Divine Liturgy 6:30 Vigil of the Nativity
7 (25 Dec) 9:30 AM Nativity of our Lord Divine Liturgy	8 (26 Dec) St Joseph the Betrothed Fast Free Week	9 (27 Dec) Protomartyr Stephen	10 (28 Dec) 20,000 MM of Nicomedia	11 (29 Dec) Holy Innocents	12 (30 Dec) VM Anysia	13 (31 Dec) St Melania 6:30 Sunday Vigil
14 9:30 AM Circumcision of the Lord Divine Liturgy Tone 6 <i>Parish Yolka</i>	15 (2 Jan) St Sylvester: St Seraphim of Sarov	16 (3 Jan) Pr Malachi	17 (4 Jan) Synaxis of 70 Apostles	18 (5 Jan) HM Theopemptus 6:30 PM Vigil of Theophany Wine & oil allowed	19 (6 Jan) 9:30 AM Theophany of the Lord Divine Liturgy	20 (7 Jan) Synaxis of St John the Baptist 6:30 Sunday Vigil
21 9:30 AM Pentecost 32 Divine Liturgy Tone 7	22 (9 Jan) M Polyeuctus	23 (10 Jan) St Gregory of Nyssa	24 (11 Jan) St Theodosius Wine & oil allowed	25 (12 Jan) M Tatiana	26 (13 Jan) MM Hermylus & Stratonicus	27 (14 Jan) St Nina 6:30 Sunday Vigil
28 9:30 AM Publican & Pharisee Divine Liturgy Tone 8 <i>Parish Council Meeting</i>	29 (16 Jan) Chains of St Peter Fast Free Week	30 (17 Jan) St Anthony the Great	31 (18 Jan) SS Athanasius & Cyril			

February 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 (19 Jan) St Macarius; St Mark of Ephesus	2 (20 Jan) St Euthymius	3 (21 Jan) St Maximus 4:00 PM Class Bible Study 6:30 Sunday Vigil
4 9:30 AM Prodigal Son Divine Liturgy Tone 1	5 (23 Jan) HM Clement	6 (24 Jan) St Xenia of Petersburg	7 (25 Jan) St Gregory the Theologian	8 (26 Jan) St Xenophon	9 (27 Jan) St John Chrysostom	10 (28 Jan) St Ephraim 6:30 Sunday Vigil
11 9:30 AM Meatfare Sunday Divine Liturgy Tone 2	12 (30 Jan) Three Hierarchs Cheesefare Week	13 (31 Jan) SS Cyrus & John	14 (1 Feb) M Tryphon; St Brigid of Kildare 6:30 PM Vigil of the Meeting of the Lord	15 (2 Feb) 8:30 AM Meeting of the Lord Divine Liturgy	16 (3 Feb) SS Symeon & Anna	17 (4 Feb) St Isidore 4:00 PM Class Principles of Orthodoxy 6:30 Sunday Vigil
18 9:30 AM Forgiveness Sunday Divine Liturgy Tone 3	19 (6 Feb) St Bucolus Great Lent Begins	20 (7 Feb) St Parthenius	21 (8 Feb) GM Theodore	22 (9 Feb) M Nicephorus	23 (10 Feb) HM Charalampus	24 (11 Feb) HM Blaise 6:30 Sunday Vigil
25 9:30 AM Sunday of Orthodoxy Divine Liturgy Tone 4	26 (13 Feb) St Martinian	27 (14 Feb) St Auxentius	28 (15 Feb) Ap Onesimus			

Please remove my name from your mailing list.

I no longer wish to receive this newsletter.

Please add the following people to your mailing list:

Name _____

Address _____

Name _____

Address _____

Name _____

Address _____

St. Xenia Orthodox Church
170 North Lowell Street
P.O. Box 147
Methuen, MA 01844

Forwarding Service Requested

Postmaster: Dated Material

DIRECTIONS TO ST. XENIA CHURCH:

From I-93 North or South take Exit 46, Routes 110 and 113 Dracut and Lawrence. If you were travelling North on I-93, take the exit and go around the rotary and under the highway. Follow the signs and bear right off the rotary for Route 110/113 Dracut. **If you were travelling South on I-93,** bear right at the bottom of the exit ramp towards Route 110/113 Dracut.

Where Routes 110 and 113 split, bear right onto Route 113 towards Dracut. You will pass several cemeteries on your left, including the Polish National Catholic Cemetery. The very next gate on the left is the entrance to St. Xenia's. Please note that the church is on the left just before the Hickory Hill Golf course, so if you pass the golf course, you will have missed the church. Parking is available on church grounds.