



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

May-June 2004

Preface to "The All-Night Vigil"

by Fr. Victor Potapov

The Christ denounced the scribes of His time for elevating rituals and rites to the level of exalted religious virtues, and He taught that the only service to God which is appropriate is that which is "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Denouncing the legalistic attitude toward the Sabbath day, the Christ said that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27). The Savior's harshest words were directed against the Pharisaical devotion to traditional ritual forms. On the other hand, Christ Himself visited, taught, and prayed in the Temple of Jerusalem, as did His apostles and disciples.

Faith expressed only in one's soul becomes an abstraction rather than a living faith. In order for faith to become a living faith, it must be realized in life. Participation in church religious rites is the realization of faith in our lives, and whosoever not only contemplates faith but lives it, of necessity participates in the liturgical life of the Church of Christ, attends Church, knows and loves the order of Church services.

Christ said, "Where two or three are gathered in My Name, there I am." (Matthew 18:20). One may call divine services the focus of a Christian's entire spiritual life. When a multitude is inspired by common prayer, they find themselves surrounded by a spiritual atmosphere which enables true prayer. At that point, the faithful enter into a mystical, sacramental communion with God, a state essential to genuine spiritual life. The holy fathers of the Church teach that just as a branch broken from a tree dries up because it is deprived of sap it needs to continue to exist, so a person severed from the Church no longer receives that strength, that grace, which lives in the divine services and mysteries of the Church, and which is essential for man's spiritual being.

The actions carried out in Orthodox divine services are distinguished by their religious realism, an immediacy placing the faithful in close proximity to the principal events of the Gospel, and as it were removing the barriers of time and space from between those who pray and the events commemorated. During Nativity services, we not only remember the birth of Christ, but Christ actually mystically is born. Likewise, He is resurrected on Holy Pascha. Through its divine services, the life of the Church is revealed to be the mystical accomplishment of God's Incarnation. The Lord continues to live in the Church and in the same human image which, once manifested, continues to exist throughout all time, and to the Church is given the ability to bring to life recollections of divine events, to endow them with power, so that we might become their

new witnesses and participants. Thus all of the divine services together acquire the meaning: the life of God, and the temple — His dwelling.

In the service of the All-Night Vigil, the Church conveys to the faithful a sense of the beauty of the setting sun and turns their thoughts toward the spiritual light of Christ. The Church also points the faithful towards prayerful consideration of the coming day and of the eternal light of the Heavenly Kingdom. The All-Night vigil is a service presenting the border between the day which has passed and the coming day.

St. Basil the Great described the aspirations which guided the ancient composers of evening hymns and prayers as follows: "Our fathers did not wish to receive the grace of evening light in silence; rather, they offered thanks as soon as it appeared."

In participating in the All-Night Vigil, the faithful in a sense prayerfully bid farewell to the past and welcome the future. Moreover, in the All-Night Vigil they are prepared for the Divine Liturgy and for the Mystery of the Eucharist.

The All-Night Vigil transports the faithful into a time long ago, into the services of the earliest Christians. For the earliest Christians, their evening meal, their prayers and commemorations of the martyrs and of the deceased, as well as the Liturgy comprised one whole, traces of which even today have been preserved in various evening services of the Orthodox Church. These traces include the blessing of bread, wine, wheat and oil, as well as those times in which the Liturgy is combined in one whole with Vespers — e.g. the Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts, celebrated during Great Lent, the Liturgy on the eve of the feasts of the Nativity of Christ and of the Baptism of our Lord, the Liturgy of Great Thursday, Great Saturday, and the night Liturgy on the Resurrection of Christ.

Reflecting on what we hear and see in Vespers, we are transported into the historical times of Old Testament humanity, and experience in our hearts that which they experienced.

Knowing what is depicted in Vespers and Matins makes it easy for us to understand and memorize the flow of Church services, the order in which they proceed, as well as the hymns, readings, and religious rites which they encompass.

(The preceding is a severely edited version of a much longer piece by Fr. Victor. It was shortened only for space considerations. FMC)

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@ttlc.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: Rdr. Constantine Desrosiers (603) 775-0320
 Secretary: Natalie Pishenin (978) 658-5564
 Treasurer: Tony Sarantakis (978) 263-2016
 Sisterhood: Matushka Nancy Crowley (207) 767-1889
 Cemetery: Lily Dombrowski (978) 851-2972
 Peter Danas (978) 459-9541
 Roberto Gonzalez (978) 692-1229
 Michael Johnson (978) 691-0045
 Anna Johnson (978) 691-0045
 John Kekis (978) 264-6604
 John Rush (603) 898-4315

Non-Council Ministries:

Sunday School: Michael Lang (603) 465-9754

Trapeza Schedule

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. Doughnuts, fruit and pastries are as acceptable as soup and sandwiches. Thank you in advance for your contribution.

May:

2 Mariana Haven, Josephine Kniaziuk, Irene LaPage
 9 Nicholas Kronaur and Vera Sarantakis
 16 Helena Doohovskoy, Marianne DiMatteo, Anna Kekis
 23 Alexandra Gonzalez and Xenia Rush
 30 Diane, Caroline and Pamela Reed

June:

6 All Saints Day Pot Luck

Please note that beginning the second week in June and continuing through the summer, there will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the parish hall for volunteer Trapeza hosts. Please consider signing up to keep this important ministry going throughout the summer.

Sisterhood News: The Women's Retreat held on March 27 was a great success. We had women from five different states, representing seven different Parishes. Our thanks to Matushka Maria Naumenko and Matushka Styliana Jackson for their presentations; hopefully Matushka Maria's lecture on the roles of Martha and Mary will be available on tape in the near future. We hope to make this an annual event!

Tickets are now available for "Lilac Nights," our dinner dance which is being put on with Holy Epiphany Church in Boston. June 4. Details elsewhere in this issue.

Sisterhood dues are \$5 per year, and membership is open to all women of the parish.

The sisterhood is planning a Yard Sale at the church on May 22 from 9 A.M. until 2 P.M. Please bring any yard sale items that you wish to donate to the church for the sale.

Thank You!

...once again, from the Sisterhood, to all the members of the parish who contributed to the success of our women's retreat, providing food for all our guests, and especially overnight accommodations for the out-of-state visitors.

...to Father Yakov, our iconographer, who spent three days at our parish completing the details on the frescoes behind the altar. We do appreciate all his hard work!

...to Father Michael, who has put a large number of icons throughout the nave of the church. These icons had previously been in storage, and greatly enhance the tone of our worship.

...to Gene Survillo, who orchestrated the loan of palms for Palm Sunday and Pascha, as well as a gift of a dozen Easter lilies for the Tomb of our Lord.

...to all who donated to the fund for flowers to decorate the Tomb of our Lord.

...to all who served, sang, and attended the many services during Great Lent and especially during Holy Week.

...to all the people who showed up for clean-up day. Our church sparkled for Pascha!

...an especially big thank-you to Father Michael for all his efforts in ministering to us during this particularly demanding season.

Many new faces were seen at Pascha this year. We hope these kind people will come and pray with us again and often, and that they feel welcome in our parish.

Please remember in your prayers... Nicholas, Paul, Nina, David, Basil, Vassilisa, Seraphim, Athanasia, Dimitri, Lily, Kyriaki, Genevieve, Anne, and Apostolos. Please remember to inform the Myrrhbearers Sisterhood if someone is in the hospital or shut in at home.

Financial Update: As of the beginning of May 2004, the balance on the church mortgage stands at \$82,092.64. If you have any questions, please see Reader Constantine Desrosiers.

Property Committee: Plans for Spring landscaping, particularly of the recently excavated portions of the cemetery should be forth coming.

St. Xenia Mosaic: Please consider making a donation towards the installation of this wonderful beautification of our church. We are on a very tight budget in our general fund and are in need of donations to complete this project.

Choir News: Michael Lang is planning a series of courses that will address the basics of choir conducting, such as pitching, developing perfect and relative pitch, conducting style, pitfalls and challenges peculiar to choir music and choral singing. The classes will begin in June, following the end of Sunday School. Interested parties, please contact Michael.

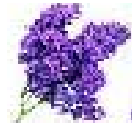
Pursuant to the topic of choir conducting, please keep in mind that the Summer School for Liturgical Music is scheduled somewhat later this year, to accommodate those who wish to participate in the World Youth Conference in San Francisco at the beginning of July. The Summer School is scheduled to run from July 11 to July 24, 2004. As in the past, our parish has funds set aside for a scholarship, and we would like to encourage all church musicians, as well as those interested in church reading, to consider this course.

Upcoming Events: The St. Seraphim Camp is scheduled to take place this year from August 1 – August 8. The cost per camper is \$150. For further details, please see Father Michael or Mathushka Anna, or visit the camp web site at www.orthodoxinfo.biz for registration info online.

The Parishes of St. Xenia and Holy Epiphany Orthodox Churches
invite you to



Lilac Nights



A semi-formal evening of dinner and dancing for the entire family, young and old alike

Friday, June 4, 2004

7:00 pm to midnight

(Dinner served at 8:00)

St. John of Damascus Hall

Dedham, Massachusetts

** Dinner * Dancing * Cash Bar * Raffle **

Russian/American music provided by *Showtime Band*

Adults \$30

Children 5-16 \$15

To buy your tickets, contact Lena Jarostchuk, 978 266 1339,

lenaj2@comcast.net, or Christina Gaudet, 617 323 8538

A limited number of tickets are available. Tickets will not be sold at the door.

The Russian Corner

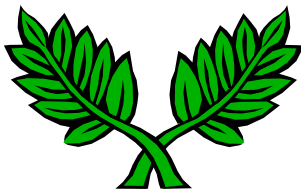
Editor's Note: Summer, that most beloved of seasons, will soon be upon us once again. For a new perspective, read this brief essay by the great Russian author, Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy.

WHAT KIND OF DEW IS FOUND ON THE GRASS?

What kind of dew is found on the grass?

When, on a sunny morning in summer, you go into the woods, you will find in the fields, in the grass, diamonds. All the diamonds are shining and made iridescent by the sun in all different colors – yellow, red and blue. When you come closer and examine closely, you will see that those are the drops of the dew that gathered in the triangles of the grass and are shining in the sun. The leaf of the grass is shaggy, and as downy as velvet. And the drops are rolling along the leaf, not moistening it. When you carelessly tear off that leaf with the dew, then the drop will slide, like a bright ball, and you won't see how it will slip by on the stem.

Sometimes, you tear off such a little cup. Slowly, you bring it to your mouth and drink the dew, and it seems as if that little drop of dew is the most delicious of all drinks....



St. Xenia Church Bookstore

Anna Johnson and Fr. Michael have been collaborating on the renewal of the St. Xenia Bookstore. The bookstore is a very important part of our church community. It not only provides an important revenue stream for our church, it much more importantly provides an excellent selection of spiritual reading material for our members and those who visit us.

Anna recently made a trip to the Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville and, after working closely with the person in charge of the bookstore, returned with a number of new titles, prayer books and other materials for the revitalization of our bookstore stock. Fr. Michael is also working on an order from the representative of a Greek publisher of outstanding titles in English language editions. And this is only the beginning. Anna always brings back new “treasures” from her trips to Russia and she will be going again this Summer.

The plan is to move the location of the bookstore from the church hall to the basement of the church directly at the bottom of the stairs coming from the narthex. Since we are in the process as well of augmenting the heat in the basement with a new gas heater, this should prove to be an excellent location. The church hall is very crowded on Sunday mornings after Liturgy and is not the easiest place to “shop” the bookstore.

We are looking forward to a grand re-opening very soon. Please take the time browse through our new titles. Fr. Michael will be happy to recommend specific reading for individuals as well.

Spiritual reading is one of the true pillars of our Orthodox life. We need to constantly refresh ourselves with these precious jewels, not too long ago inaccessible to English-only readers, to counteract the flood of information coming our way from the antichrist. We are foolish to believe that we are unaffected by this media barrage which tends to isolate us from the true life of the Church and healthy relationships to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

St Xenia Orthodox Church

May 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<i>1</i> 6:30 PM Sunday Vigil (18 April) St John the Decapolite
<i>2</i> 9:30 AM Hours 10:00 AM The Paralytic Divine Liturgy Tone 3	<i>3</i> (20 April) St Theodore Trichinas	<i>4</i> 7:30 PM Vespers of Mid-Pentecost (21 April) HM Januarius; HM Theodore	<i>5</i> (22 April) St Theodore	<i>6</i> (23 April) GM George	<i>7</i> (24 April) M Sabbas	<i>8</i> 6:30 PM Sunday Vigil (25 April) Ap Mark
<i>9</i> 9:30 AM Hours 10:00 AM Samaritan Woman Divine Liturgy Tone 4 12:00 PM Young People's Class	<i>10</i> (27 April) HM Symeon	<i>11</i> (28 April) Ap Jason & comp.	<i>12</i> (29 April) 9 MM of Cyzicus	<i>13</i> (30 April) Ap James	<i>14</i> (1 May) Pr Jeremiah	<i>15</i> 6:30 PM Sunday Vigil (2 May) St Athanasius
Fr. Michael & Matushka in Ireland						
<i>16</i> 9:30 AM Hours 10:00 AM Blind Man Divine Liturgy Tone 5 <i>Fr. Joakim Provatakis Serving</i>	<i>17</i> (4 May) VM Pelagia of Tarsus	<i>18</i> (5 May) GM Irene	<i>19</i> 6:30 PM Vigil of Ascension (6 May) Pr Job	<i>20</i> 9:00 AM Hours 9:30 AM Ascension Divine Liturgy	<i>21</i> (8 May) Ap John the Theologian	<i>22</i> 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Yard Sale 6:30 PM Sunday Vigil (9 May) St Nicholas
<i>23</i> 9:30 AM Hours 10:00 AM Fathers of the 1st Council Divine Liturgy Tone 6 12:00 PM Young People's Class	<i>24</i> (11 May) SS Cyril & Methodius	<i>25</i> (12 May) St Epihanius	<i>26</i> 7:30 PM Bible Study -- Epistle to the Ephesians (13 May) VM Glyceria	<i>27</i> (14 May) M Isidore of Chios	<i>28</i> (15 May) St Pachomius	<i>29</i> 6:30 PM Sunday Vigil (16 May) St Theodore the Sanctified
<i>30</i> 9:30 AM Hours 10:00 AM Pentecost Sunday Divine Liturgy	<i>31</i> Day of the Holy Spirit					

St Xenia Orthodox Church

June 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<i>1</i> (19 May) HM Patrick of Prussa	<i>2</i> (20 May) M Thalalaeus	<i>3</i> (21 May) SS Cons- tantine & Helena	<i>4</i> 7:00 PM "Lilac Nights" Dinner Dance (22 May) M Basiliscus	<i>5</i> 6:30 PM Sunday Vigil (23 May) St Mich- ael of Synada
Fast Free Week						
<i>6</i> 9:30 AM Hours 10:00 AM All Saints Divine Liturgy Tone 8	<i>7</i> (25 May) 3rd Find- ing of the Head of the Forerunner Fish, wine & oil allowed	<i>8</i> (26 May) App Carpus & Alphaeus Wine & oil allowed	<i>9</i> (27 May) HM Therapon; St John the Russian	<i>10</i> (28 May) St Nicet- as of Chalcedon Wine & oil allowed	<i>11</i> (29 May) V Theodosia	<i>12</i> 6:30 PM Sunday Vigil (30 May) St Isaacius Fish, wine & oil allowed
Apostles' Fast						
<i>13</i> 9:30 AM Hours 10:00 AM All Saints of Russia Divine Liturgy Tone 1 Fish, wine & oil allowed	<i>14</i> (1 June) M Justin & comp.	<i>15</i> (2 June) St Nicephorus Wine & oil allowed	<i>16</i> (3 June) MM Licil- linan & comp.	<i>17</i> (4 June) St Metro- phanes of Constantinople Wine & oil allowed	<i>18</i> (5 June) HM Dorotheus	<i>19</i> 6:30 PM Sunday Vigil (6 June) St Bessar- ion; St Hilarion Fish, wine & oil allowed
Apostles' Fast						
<i>20</i> 9:30 AM Hours 10:00 AM Pente- cost 3 Divine Liturgy Tone 2 Fish, wine & oil allowed	<i>21</i> (8 June) GM Theo- dore the General Wine & oil allowed	<i>22</i> (9 June) St Cyril of Alexandria Wine & oil allowed	<i>23</i> 7:30 PM Bible Study -- Epistle to the Ephesians (10 June) HM Timothy of Prussa	<i>24</i> (11 June) App Bartholomew & Barnabas Fish, wine & oil allowed	<i>25</i> (12 June) St Onup- hrius; St Peter the Athonite	<i>26</i> 6:30 PM Sunday Vigil (13 June) M Aquilina Fish, wine & oil allowed
Apostles' Fast						
<i>27</i> 9:30 AM Hours 10:00 AM Pente- cost 4 Divine Liturgy Tone 3 Fish, wine & oil allowed	<i>28</i> (15 June) Pr Amos	<i>29</i> (16 June) HM Tychon Wine & oil allowed	<i>30</i> (17 June) MM Manuel & comp.			
Apostles' Fast						

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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.