



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

May - June 2019

On The Feast of the Ascension

St. Sebastian Dabovich

And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said: Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? (Acts 1:10, 11)

The “two men in white apparel,” who immediately after the ascension of the Lord appeared to the Apostles and asked them why they stood gazing up into heaven, were without doubt themselves inhabitants of heaven; therefore it is not to be supposed that this was displeasing to them, or that they desired to direct the gaze of those men of Galilee elsewhere. No. They desired only to put an end to the inert amazement of the Apostles when saying: Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? Having aroused them from their amazement, they draw them into meditation, and teach them and us with what thoughts we should gaze into heaven, following our Lord Jesus who hath ascended thither. This same Jesus, they added, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven.

The disciples of the Savior then beheld the exact fulfillment of His words which Mary Magdalene had recounted to them: I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God. They could not but conclude that those joyful visitations which He had bestowed upon them during the forty days after His resurrection from the dead, those instructive conversations with Him, that palpable communion between them and His divine humanity, were at that moment ended. When neither hand nor voice could any longer reach Him, they followed Him with their eyes, eager to detain Him; they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up. We can conceive what an immeasurable bereavement the Apostles must have felt after the ascension into heaven of

Jesus, who was all and everything in the world to them; and it is this very bereavement for which the heavenly powers hasten to console them when telling them that this same Jesus shall come.

In considering the circumstances of the ascension of Christ into heaven, we may first note the blessing which He then gave to the Apostles, and it come to pass, says the Evangelist Luke, while He blessed them He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. What an endless current of the grace of Christ is thus revealed unto us, Christians! The Lord begins a blessing, and before its completion ascends into heaven; for while He blessed them He was carried up into heaven. Thus even after His ascension does He still continue invisibly to impart His blessing. It flows and descends continuously upon the Apostles; through them it is diffused upon those whom they bless in the name of Jesus Christ; those who have received the blessing of Christ through the Apostles spread it among others; and thus do all who belong to the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church become partakers of the one blessing of Christ. As the dew of Hermon that descended upon the mountain of Zion, so does this blessing of peace descend upon every soul that riseth above passions and lusts, above vanity and the cares of the world; as an indelible seal does it stamp those who are of Christ in such a manner that at the end of the world He will by this very sign call them forth from the midst of all mankind, saying, Come ye blessed!

And now, my brethren, let us consider how needful it is for us to endeavor to gain now and to preserve this blessing of the Ascended Lord, which

descends upon us also through the Apostolic Church. If we have received and preserved it, we shall, at the future advent of Jesus Christ, be called together with the Apostles and the saints to participate in His kingdom: Come ye blessed! But if, when He shall call the blessed of His Father, this blessing either be not found in us, or we be found in possession only of the false blessing of men who themselves have not inherited the blessing of the Heavenly Father by grace and in the sacraments, then what will become of us? Yea, I say, let us consider this vital point before the opportunity be taken away.

The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night. From this same unexpectedness of His se-

cond coming our Lord Himself draws for us Christians a saving warning: Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Do not be led away by curiosity or credulity, and beware of such ones who pretend to know more than Christ hath granted them to know. Let us endeavor rather to know what failings we have, to number our transgressions, and to seek a limit to them in repentance. Let us take heed lest the children of this world and our own passions lull our spirits into sleep, till the approach of that longed for, yet dreadful hour: When the Lord come.

The blessing of the Lord come upon you by His grace and love towards man, always, now, and ever and unto the ages of the ages.

St. Xenia of St. Petersburg Orthodox Church is a parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, under the omophorion of Met. HILARION of Eastern America & New York. The parish newsletter is published bi-monthly under the direction of the Rev. Michael Crowley. In order to ensure timely delivery to our far-flung parish, please submit all notices by the 15th of the month prior to publication to Father Michael at frmichael@stxenia.org. Thank you.

Rector:

V. Rev. Michael Crowley
 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

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 Dmitri Nikshych
 Stephen (Richard) DiMatteo

Trapeza Schedule

* = strict fast

Trapeza can be whatever you would like to prepare, anything is appreciated. **Note: If you are preparing anything containing nuts or other allergens, please put a small label to that effect in front of your dish. Nut allergies are especially fatal to small children.**

A note about Trapeza etiquette: Standing, even for short periods of time, is often extremely difficult for older people and expectant mothers. It would be an act of Christian charity to allow them to collect their meal first and to be seated. It should go without saying that this courtesy should also be extended to visiting clergy.

May

- 5 Soloviev, McLellen, Lehmkuhl
- 12 Sunday of the Myrrh Bearing Women – Men’s Trapeza
- 19 Pekar, Ailena Kazlouski
- 26 Katia Fredette, Natasha Kirichuk, Vera Sarantakis

June

- 2 Mat. Helena, Marianne Dimatteo, Nikshych
- 9* Pam Reed, Carolyn Savage, Diane Mendez
- 16* Mary Doohovskoy, Fotini Dimatteo, Sonya Carrascal
- 23* Nancy Vaters, Brigid Amy Fischer, L&A Doohovskoy, Alesia Alevtina

Summer pot luck begins June 30

PARISH NEWS

Thank you!

To all who gave to the Great Lent Food Drive.

On Holy Thursday, Alexandra Gonzalez delivered all the food to St. Martha's Food Pantry.

They were VERY appreciative. We are so blessed to have the opportunity to give to our neighbors in need!

To everyone who helped with all the things needed for Holy Week. The Church looked clean and so beautiful with all the flowers. We had wonderful volunteers making food, prosphora, and Pascha eggs.

For the efforts of St. Xenia's parishioners, through baking and donations, during the Lenten Bake Sale. We raised over \$400 to support the orphanage in Belarus. Glory to God for all things!

Please Remember in Your Prayers ~

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

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

Congratulations!

To Andrew Warner and Laurie (Silouana) Kenworthy who will be married on Thomas Sunday, May 5th.

Sisterhood News ~

We will have our annual meeting on **Sunday, May 19th**. Depending on the weather, we will meet either down in the basement or outside on the picnic tables. Please grab a quick plate of food and join us.

Choir News ~

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

Building Expansion Update ~

Thank God, we are moving ahead with our building plans. We are working with JD LaGrasse & Associates (architects, engineers, land planners)

who our builder, Ken Surette, found and recommended to us. We are finalizing a plot plan with the placement of the new hall, to be submitted to the City Planning Board for approval. If all goes well, we will be breaking ground in the very near future.

Our strategy is to first build the new hall so that we can then move our Altar into it and serve there so the renovation of the church building can proceed quickly and efficiently.

Please continue your prayers, and your generous donations to the building fund. This is all doable, but there are many hurdles to cross and it is expensive.

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

Lilac Nights ~ ~ June 21, 2019 ~ ~ *An evening of fellowship and fun to benefit the Building Fund*



The poster for Lilac Nights features a purple background with white floral patterns on the left. The title "Lilac Nights" is written in a white cursive font at the top. Below it, the date "Friday, June 21, 2019" is also in white cursive. Underneath, the subtitle "An evening to benefit the St. Xenia's Building Fund" is in a smaller white font. The main body of the poster is a black and white photograph of the interior of the historic Methuen Music Hall, showing ornate architectural details and a stage area. Text on the poster includes: "Join us for a special evening at the historic Methuen Music Hall, a unique venue with 18th century charm and grandeur." and "Entertainment to include a cocktail hour, live DJ, special children's activities, and more." At the bottom left, the ticket prices are listed: "Tickets: \$50 per individual (15+), \$100 per family, Children 14 and under suggested donation of \$10".

for tickets, please go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/lilacnights2019>

Church Protocol ~

Concerning head coverings: We are a Traditional Russian Orthodox parish and thus, in accordance with Scripture (1Cor. 11:4-5), expect all women to wear head coverings for Divine Services. Girls under 7 years of age are not held strictly to the rule. I am aware that many of you have heard various ideas about this in other parishes or even from members of our parish. Whatever else you may have heard or believe, the expectation at St. Xenia's is that you will be in obedience to Tradition and wear head coverings.

DIOCESE NEWS

PASCHAL EPISTLE OF HIS EMINENCE
HILARION, METROPOLITAN OF EASTERN
AMERICA & NEW YORK, FIRST HIERARCH
OF THE RUSSIAN CHURCH ABROAD



Eminent Brother-Archpastors, Reverend Fathers,
dear Brothers and Sisters,

CHRIST IS RISEN!

With profound spiritual joy in the Lord I greet you all on this jubilant, joyous night of the Matins of the Resurrection of Christ and Paschal Liturgy! I greet you on the Resurrection of Christ, the most triumphant and exultant of all holidays! It is the feast of feasts and the festival of festivals, as the Paschal canon declares. But why is this so? Because in all the other holidays, the Lord is presented in the humble form of a servant, but in His Resurrection from the Tomb on the third day He is dis-

played in all His power and glory, as the Victor over hades and death.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation," the Lord said as He bade farewell to the Apostles. *"but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"* (John 16:33).

Mankind strives daily to bury Christ and seeks to extract from the hearts of His faithful belief in His Resurrection, along with belief in our own. In recent times, many of us have been troubled and unsettled by alarming events of this world, the general apostasy from Christian norms and the crisis which has gripped Holy Orthodoxy, to say nothing of the persecution of the archpastors, clergy, and faithful of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Fear reigns everywhere, fear being the weapon of evil. It is on the basis of fear that the evil one builds his unholy kingdom. But wherever the heart not only firmly believes in, but trusts in, God, the power of evil ceases. When a person humbles himself under the omnipotent Hand of God, he preserves peace within the depths of his heart and gradually unites with the victory of Christ. Then the saving grace of God acts within him much more than man can achieve through his own efforts.

Upon this path, the symbol of the Cross of the Lord and our memory of the Resurrection of Christ embolden the Christian, granting us strength and courage, *"Through the Cross joy hath come into all the world,"* as we hear in one of the Paschal songs. The voice of Christ resounds through the centuries: *"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom"* (Luke 12:32). If we strive to be with Christ, then with us too is His Eternal Life and Fearlessness, Peace, Joy, and Light! Without Christ, there is depression, despair, uncertainty, and fear...

May the radiance of Christ the Life-Giver lead our footsteps towards the Kingdom of God, so that "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23) be disseminated in the world, moreover in the dioceses, monasteries, parishes, church institutions, and social organizations of the Russian Church Abroad, in the houses of Her clerics and God-

beloved flock. May the declaration “Christ is Risen” forever evoke in even those who have left their Father’s house unexpected trepidation, and remind us all of the need for struggle for genuine life, pointing to its source – the Resurrected Lord, with Whom and in Whom we, too, will arise again. Amen.

With Paschal joy in the Resurrected Christ and a request for your holy prayers,

+HILARION

Metropolitan of Eastern America & New York
First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad.

Pascha of the Lord 2019 A.D.

Parish Fundraiser in Enfield, CT ~ ~



Ladies Afternoon Tea
FUNDRAISER



MAY 19, 2019, 2-5PM
SAINT NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH
343 NORTH MAPLE ST ENFIELD, CT

PRICE: \$60 PER PERSON / \$100 FOR TWO



RSVP BY APRIL 20 to EDITH CROWLEY 413-598-0118
Emcrowley16@hotmail.com

Sainted Athanasias the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria, (Commemorated May 2/May 15) was a great father of the Church and a pillar of Orthodoxy. He was born in about the year 297 in the city of Alexandria into a family of pious Christians. He received a fine secular education, but still more he acquired profound knowledge by diligent study of the Holy Scripture. From his childhood years the future great hierarch Athanasias became known to the Alex-

andrian Patriarch, Saint Alexander (Comm. 29 May), through the following circumstances. One time a group of children, among whom was the lad Athanasias, was playing at the shore of the sea. The Christian children decided to baptise their pagan playmates. The lad Athanasias, whom the children chose as “bishop”, performed the baptism, precisely repeating the words, heard by him in church during this sacrament. Patriarch Alexander observed all this from a window. He then commanded that there be brought him the children and their parents, and having conversed with them for a long while, and having attested that the baptism performed by the children at play was in everything in accord with the Church *ustav* (rule), he acknowledged the Baptism as real and supplemented it with the sacrament of Chrismation. From this moment the Patriarch looked after the spiritual upbringing of the youth Athanasias and in time brought him into the clergy, at first as a reader, and then he ordained him to the dignity of deacon.

It was in this dignity of deacon that Saint Athanasias accompanied Patriarch Alexander in the year 325 to the First OEcumenical Council at Nicea. At the Council, Saint Athanasias stepped forth with a refutation of the heresy of Arius. This speech met with the approval of the Orthodox fathers of the Council, but the Arians -- those openly so and those concealed -- came to hate Athanasias and subjected him to persecutions for all the rest of his life.

After the death of holy Patriarch Alexander, Saint Athanasias was unanimously chosen his successor to the Alexandria cathedra-seat. He long refused, accounting himself unworthy, but at the insistence of all the Orthodox populace that it was in agreement, at age 28 he was ordained to the dignity of bishop and put at the head of the Alexandrian Church. For 47 years Saint Athanasias guided the Church, and during this time he suffered much persecution and grief from his antagonists. Several times he was expelled from Alexandria and hid himself from the Arians in desolate places, since they repeatedly tried to kill him. Saint Athanasias spent more than 20 years in his exiles, and returned then to his flock, and then again was subjected to banishment. There was a moment in time when he remained as the only

Orthodox bishop, a moment when all the other bishops had deviated into heresy. At the false-councils of Arian bishops he was declared deprived of the bishop's dignity. Despite the persecution of many years, the saint continued firmly to defend the purity of the Orthodox faith, and he wrote incessantly both missives and tracts against the Arian heresy. When Julian the Apostate (361-363) began a persecution against Christians, his wrath then first fell upon Saint Athanasias, whom he considered the great pillar of Orthodoxy. Julian intended to kill the saint so as to strike Christianity a grievous blow, but he himself soon perished infamously. Mortally wounded by an arrow during the time of a battle, he cried out with despair: "Thou art victorious, Galilean". After the death of Julian, Saint Athanasias guided the Alexandrian Church for seven years and died in 373, at age 76.

Numerous works of Saint Athanasias have been preserved: four "Orations", directed against the Arian heresy; likewise an Epistle to Epictetos, bishop of the Church of Corinth, about the Divine and Human natures in Jesus Christ; four Epistles to Serapion, bishop of Thmuis, about the Divine Holy Spirit and Its Equality with the Father and the Son -- directed against the heresy of Macedonias. There have been preserved also other works of apologetical character in defence of Orthodoxy, among which is the Letter to the emperor Constantius. Commentaries of Saint Athanasias on Holy Scripture are known of, and also books of a moral didactic character, as well as a detailed biography of the Monk Anthony the Great (Comm. 17 January), with whom Saint Athanasias was very close. Saint John Chrysostom advised every Orthodox Christian to read this life. The memory of Saint Athanasias is celebrated also on 18 January conjointly with the memory of Saint Cyril of Alexandria.

The Holy Martyr Pakhomii (*Commemorated May 7/May 20*) was born in Little Russia. He had the name Prokopii and in childhood he was taken captive by Tatars, who sold him over into slavery to a certain Turk in the city of Usaki (Philadelphia in Anatolia). He spent 17 years in servitude, enduring patiently all the insults and abuse. Gaining his freedom, for 12 years he asceticised on Holy Mount Athos under the guidance of

the starets-elder priestmonk Joseph, who tonsured him into monasticism with the name Pakhomii. Pakhomii afterwards resettled into the Kausokali skete-monastery, where he lived under the guidance of the starets-elder Akakios. Saint Pakhomii then returned to Usaki, where he openly confessed himself a Christian. The Turks arrested him and began to demand his acceptance of Mahometanism. Saint Pakhomii refused and was beheaded in the city of Usaki on the day of the Ascension of the Lord, 7 May 1780. The relics of the holy martyr rest on the island of Patmos, in the monastery of the holy Apostle John the Theologian.

Sainted Stephen, Patriarch of Constantinople, (*Commemorated May 17/May 30*) was the younger son of the emperor Basil the Macedonian and was a brother by birth of the emperor Leo the Wise. He received the priestly dignity under the Patriarch Photios. When Patriarch Photios was compelled in the year 886 to resign the patriarchal throne, Saint Stephen was elevated to the Constantinople cathedra-chair. The saint vigilantly stood watch over his spiritual flock, he was merciful and interceded for the defenseless, he concerned himself about widows and orphans, and distinguished himself by extreme temperance. He died peacefully in the year 893 and was buried in the Sikellian monastery.

Sainted Mitrophanes, Patriarch of Constantinople, (*Commemorated June 4/June 17*) was a contemporary of Saint Constantine the Great (306-337). His father, Dometius, was by birth a brother of the Roman emperor Probus (276-282). Having reasoned out the falseness of the pagan religion, Dometius came to believe in Christ. During a time of terrible persecution of Christians at Rome, Saint Dometius set off to Byzantium with two of his sons, Probus and Mitrophanes, and began to be instructed in the law of the Lord by Bishop Titus, a man holy of life. Seeing the ardent desire of Dometius to labour for the Lord, Saint Titus ordained him presbyter. And after the death of Titus there was elevated upon the bishop's throne first Dometius (272-303), and

thereafter his sons, Probus (303-315) and in 316 -- Saint Mitrophanes.

Upon a time having come to Byzantium, the emperor Constantine was delighted by the beauty and comfortable setting of the city. And having seen the holiness of life and sagacity of Saint Mitrophanes, the emperor took him back along to Rome. Soon Constantine the Great transferred the capital from Rome to Byzantium and he brought Saint Mitrophanes there. In the year 325 there was convened the First OEcumenical Council for resolving the Arian heresy. Constantine the Great had the holy fathers of the Council bestow upon Saint Mitrophanes the title of Patriarch. In such manner, the saint became the first Patriarch of Constantinople. Saint Mitrophanes was himself

very old, and was not able to be present at the Council, and he sent in place of himself the khore-bishop (vicar bishop) Alexander. At the close of the Council the emperor together with the holy fathers visited with the ailing Patriarch. At the request of the emperor, the saint disclosed his choice of worthy successor to himself -- Bishop Alexander, foretelling, that after Alexander there would be elevated upon the patriarchal throne Paul (at that time a reader), and to the Patriarch of Alexandria Alexander he foretold, that his successor would be the archdeacon Saint Athanasias.

Saint Mitrophanes peacefully expired to God in the year 326, at age 117. His relics rest at Constantinople, in a church, erected in his memory.



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



MAY 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Apr 28 (Apr 15) PASCHA 12 Midnight Matins, Hours and Divine Liturgy 12 Noon Agape Vespers Fast free	Apr 29 (Apr 16) Bright Monday 9:00 Matins & Divine Liturgy Procession Activities for Children Fast free	Apr 30 (Apr 17) Bright Tuesday Fast free	1 (Apr 18) Fast free	2 (Apr 19) Fast free	3 (Apr 20) Fast free	4 (Apr 21) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast free
5 (Apr 22) Thomas Sunday 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy 1:00 Blessing of Graves	6 (Apr 23)	7 (Apr 24) Radonitsa 10:00 General Pannyhida in Cemetery	8 (Apr 25) Fast: fish, wine & oil	9 (Apr 26)	10 (Apr 27) Fast: wine & oil	11 (Apr 28) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
12 (Apr 29) 3rd Sunday of Pascha: The Myrrh-bearing Women. Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	13 (Apr 30)	14 (May 1)	15 (May 2) Fast: fish, wine & oil	16 (May 3)	17 (May 4) Fast: wine & oil	18 (May 5) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
19 (May 6) 4th Sunday of Pascha: The Paralyzed Man. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	20 (May 7)	21 (May 8) St. John the Theologian 6:30 Vespers of Mid-Pentecost	22 (May 9) Mid-Pentecost Fast: fish, wine & oil	23 (May 10)	24 (May 11) Ss. Cyril and Methodius Fast: fish, wine, & oil	25 (May 12) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
26 (May 13) 5th Sunday of Pascha: The Samaritan Woman. Tone 4 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	27 (May 14)	28 (May 15)	29 (May 16) Fast: wine & oil	30 (May 17)	31 (May 18) Fast: wine & oil	Jun 1 (May 19) 5:30 All-Night Vigil



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JUNE 2019						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 26 (May 13) 5th Sunday of Pascha: The Samaritan Woman. Tone 4 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	May 27 (May 14)	May 28 (May 15)	May 29 (May 16) Fast: wine & oil	May 30 (May 17)	May 31 (May 18) Fast: wine & oil	1 (May 19) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
2 (May 20) 6th Sunday of Pascha: The Blind Man. Tone 5 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	3 (May 21) Ss. Constantine & Helen	4 (May 22)	5 (May 23) 6:30 Vigil of the Ascension Fast: fish, wine & oil	6 (May 24) ASCENSION OF THE LORD 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy	7 (May 25) Fast: fish, wine & oil	8 (May 26) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
9 (May 27) 7th Sunday of Pascha: Fathers of the 1st Council. Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	10 (May 28)	11 (May 29)	12 (May 30) Fast	13 (May 31)	14 (Jun 1) Fast	15 (Jun 2) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
16 (Jun 3) PENTECOST 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	17 (Jun 4) Day of the Holy Spirit 9:00 Matins & Divine Liturgy Fast free	18 (Jun 5) Fast free	19 (Jun 6) Fast free	20 (Jun 7) Fast free	21 (Jun 8) Fast free	22 (Jun 9) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast free
23 (Jun 10) 1st Sunday after Pentecost. All Saints. Tone 8 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	24 (Jun 11) Apostles' Fast Begins Fast: fish, wine & oil	25 (Jun 12) Fast: fish, wine & oil	26 (Jun 13) Fast	27 (Jun 14) Fast	28 (Jun 15) Fast	29 (Jun 16) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine & oil
30 (Jun 17) 2nd Sunday after Pentecost. All Russian Saints. Tone 1 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine & oil	Jul 1 (Jun 18) Fast	Jul 2 (Jun 19) Fast	Jul 3 (Jun 20) Fast	Jul 4 (Jun 21) Fast	Jul 5 (Jun 22) Fast	Jul 6 (Jun 23) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: wine & oil