



St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

July - August 2020

What is the most relevant, first, and last among all questions?

By Igumen Nektary (Morozov) (*Trans. by Liubov Ambrose, Pravoslavie.ru*)

Is there anyone who never felt trapped? Is there anyone who never reached a deadlock as a result of some life event, or another person's actions, or a health condition, or caused by the world condition or their own government, and, even more importantly, by their own mistakes? Quite possibly some people never experienced anything like it, yet the majority of people have reached a dead-end at least once in their lives, I am sure. Judging from my own experience, I can tell you it is always quite an ordeal. What should one do? If you choose this way, it will negatively affect you. Taking a different approach will only make things worse for you and affect others. When you think you have arrived at an effective solution, you realize there is no money to implement it. You cannot sit and do nothing, as time is short. You have no idea what should be done. You are on the verge of a nervous breakdown and your conscience is killing you. This is what it is like when we reach a dead-end. There is no way out, you feel trapped.

What is the solution? Do we have to wait for the EMS crew to arrive and drag you out of this trap? Hmm, I don't think they will be useful. Should you give up and stop fighting? Should you pray? But you have likely prayed, though it looked as if the heavens stayed shut and the Lord did not hear you. Now, it certainly comes across as the cause of the most unbearable pain and a major disaster.

Wait, it is not a major disaster yet. The main problem is when you cannot hear Him. Had you heard Him, you would not have been caught in a bind. The one who hears Him walks in His light and never gets lost. We feel lost, trapped, and wasting time only when we stop listening to Him. That is why I will take a risk to share the only viable, in my opinion, way out of any hopeless situation; plus it is a time-tested, effective, and salvific method. Say you were caught in a bind and already wasted time and feel worn out and hopelessly desperate trying to fix the situation on your own. Stop! Stand still and ask the one and only question: What exactly does the Lord want from you? Not what you WANT or what you NEED, nor what is the MOST COMFORTABLE thing for you to do, or what others EXPECT from you, but ask precisely this: what does THE LORD want from you? Or, better if you ask Him: "Lord, what do You desire for me to do? Give me the strength of my mind to understand and make it happen. Anything else is simply irrelevant!"

If you genuinely ask from your heart and are willing to act as you are told, the answer will surely arrive. It will be revealed either through other people's actions, or through your circumstances, or as a clear-cut and precise thought that would point a way out and offer the solution. Either way, you will see it perfectly well that this is the answer. Everything will fall into place; you will no longer feel like you are about to suffocate, and instead of darkness you will all of a sudden get a glimpse of light.

Why is this so? How does this "mechanism" work and why is it so versatile that it always operates without a glitch? Could it be that there are, in fact, only a select few of us who think it's imperative to know what is God's will or who is willing to accept and fulfill His will, and who the Lord does not ever abandon? It is just one of possible reasons. However, first and foremost, it is because the Lord allows us to feel trapped that we might give up our disastrous and rash idea of building our lives according to our own will, abandoning Him and neglecting the fact there is no reliable, unshakeable foundation of our being other than in Him.

Holy Scriptures is replete with stories supporting it as truth and law. Prophet Jonah, objecting to God's will for him to go to Nineveh and prophesy about repentance to its residents, runs away, as the Bible says, "from the presence of the Lord to Tarshish" (cf. Jonah 1:3), and suffers one affliction after another up to the point of finding himself in the belly of a whale. Only then was the insanity of his intentions revealed to him. Through his repentance he manifests the willingness to fulfill what his Maker and Creator had commanded him to do. Only then is he freed from his frightful jail in the most miraculous and extraordinary way: And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it cast up Jonah upon the dry land (Jonah 2:11).

What is the dead-end, how do we end up in one and why, and what does it consist of? We see a lot of things as unequivocally and implicitly relevant in our lives, again from the perspective of our wishes, opinions, beliefs, or beliefs of others. Whenever these important things are off-limits to us, whenever we are unable to reconcile our needs and convictions with reality, when the reality suddenly prevents us from moving forward—this is what we perceive as desperation and which creates the feeling of hopelessness and despondency about our existing situation.

That's where we are mistaken. There may be plenty of important things but there is only one ABSOLUTELY IMPORTANT thing that was spoken about, heard, and repeated hundreds of times but entirely forgotten: But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness (Matthew 6:33). It is not just a commandment, an absolute decree, or a strict order. This instruction shows the way we are to go in order to stay on course. It is the method of building our life so that no one can destroy it. It is the reminder of our predestined path, and absolutely nothing can derail us from it except our own decisions.

Anything can be taken away from us, be it finances, health, social status, jobs, our loved ones, or our freedom. However, no one can deprive us of the most important thing: the ability to serve God. It always remains, under any circumstances, under the most favorable or most oppressive conditions.

Serving God is so many-faceted and all-encompassing that there exists no situation when it would be deemed impossible, some way or other—for our Heavenly Father seeks out those who worship Him in spirit and truth (cf. John 4:23); whereas for spirit and truth there exists neither obstacles nor roadblocks. Even when you are not only deprived of the freedom of movement but also unable to leave your bed of sickness, you can still serve God by patiently enduring the trial of illness and giving thanks to Him, saying it aloud if you can, and within your heart if your tongue fails you. In spirit and truth...

I always feel sorry for those who set certain specific goals in their lives and only see their happiness or, if put more broadly, the meaning of their lives, in bringing those goals to fruition. The more ambitious and grandiose their goals, I repeat, the more sorry I feel for them if all they have is goals and ambitions.

Too many things may become insurmountable obstacles on your path, or you may run upon rocks so that all prospects of success and great expectations of stellar results end up shattered to pieces! How should one deal with the disappointment when there is nothing but futile hopes and expectations, and they are the most important and precious things?

Truly I say, our deadlocks are of our own making. We cut off our escape routes. But how great is the grace of God when, even after the escape routes are cut off and all bridges seemingly burned, the Lord opens a new path leading to Him, and builds a new bridge that connects us to Him. Against all odds and under any circumstances, we have an opportunity to seize this miraculous chance. Losing it all and being deprived of everything, even if not for the first, or next, and even not for the last time, we must ask that only one and most essential question: "Lord, what do you expect of me? What do I have to do to please You?"

This is the question we should ask before starting anything. And it is never late to ask.

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 fmichael@stxenia.org. Thank you.

Rector:

V. Rev. Michael Crowley
34 Elm Street
North Andover, MA 01845
(978) 204-0428

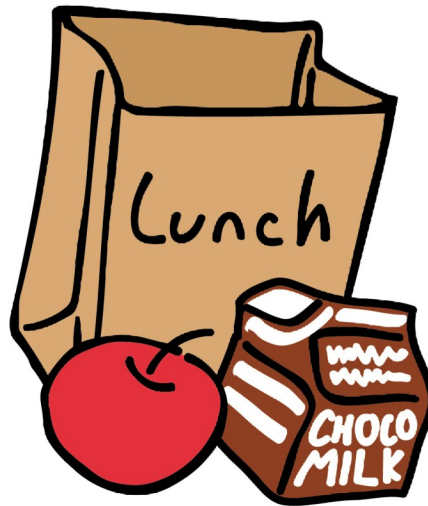
Confessions on Saturday during Vigil, on Sunday during the Hours, and by appointment.

Parish Council

President: Archpriest Michael Crowley (978) 204-0428
Fr. Constantine Desrosiers (603) 775-0320
Dcn. Alexander Doohovskoy (978) 369-4486
Dcn. John Sarantakis (978) 621-8842
Dcn Dimitri Doohovskoy (978) 835-1637
Starosta: John Kekis kekisi@gmail.com
Treasurer: Nicholas (Charles) Kronauer (978) 265-6369
Secretary: Subdeacon David Nettleton (203) 895-7636
Sisterhood: Pamela Ann Reed (978) 254-5043
Cemetery: Natalie Pishenin (978) 761-3449
Choir Director: Laryssa Doohovskoy (978) 841-5960
Church School: Alexei Doohovskoy
Alexei Rodzianko
Daniel Hakim
Andrei Doohovskoy
Anthony Sarantakis
Dmitri Nikshych
Stephen (Richard) DiMatteo

Trapeza Schedule

Organized Trapeza is on hold for the foreseeable future. We encourage everyone to bring their own lunches or snacks so that we may still gather in fellowship and community after Liturgy.



PARISH NEWS

Please Remember in Your Prayers ~

Peter and Dorothea Danas, Dimitri Nikshych, Laryssa Doohovskoy, and Matushka Anna.

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

Congratulations!

To Petr & Ksenia on the birth of their daughter Vera on June 12th! Many years to mother, baby and the entire Guryev family! A meal train for the family may be found at this link:

<https://mealtrain.com/l1ym4r>

To the Prokopienko family on the Baptism of their son John Andrew on May 16th. God bless and grant many years to "Jack" and the whole Prokopienko family!

Choir News ~

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

DIOCESE NEWS

Sadly, St. Seraphim Camp is suspended for the Summer of 2020. We join the camp board members and advisory committee in praying that the camping and church community of St Seraphim will rise up even stronger in 2021.

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

The Holy Apostle Jude, (Commemorated July 2/June 19) among the rank of the Twelve Disciples of Christ, is descended from the lineage of King David and Solomon, and was the son of Righteous Joseph the Affianced from his first wife.

The Holy Apostle John the Theologian writes in his Gospel: "For none of his brethren believe on Him" (John 7: 5). Sainted Theophilact, Archbishop of Bulgaria, explains these words thus: at the beginning of the worldly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ -- the sons of Joseph, among whose number was Jude, did not believe in His Divine essence. The tradition relates that when Righteous Joseph the Affianced, having returned from Egypt, began to divide among his sons the worldly things belonging to him, he wanted to allot part also to Christ the Saviour, born miracu-

lously and incorruptibly from the All-Pure Virgin Mary. The brothers were opposed to this and only the eldest of them, James, accepted Christ Jesus in a joint ownership of his allotment, and for this he was termed Brother of the Lord. Later on Jude believed in Christ the Saviour as the awaited Messiah, and with all his heart he turned to Him and was chosen by Him into the number of the closest 12 disciples. But mindful of his sin, the Apostle Jude considered himself unworthy to be termed a brother with God and in his own soborno-catholic Epistle he calls himself merely the brother of James.

The Holy Apostle Jude also had other names: the Evangelist Matthew terms him "Levi, nicknamed Thaddeus" (Mt. 10, 3). The Holy Evangelist Mark also calls him Thaddeus (Mk. 3, 18), and in the Acts of the Holy Apostles he is mentioned under the name Barsaba (Acts 15, 22). This was customary at that time.

After the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Apostle Jude set off preaching the Gospel. He propagated the faith in Christ at first in Judea, Galilee, Samaria and Idumeia, and later -- in the lands of Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia, and finally he went to the city of Edessa. Here he finished that which was not completed by his predecessor, the disciple from the 70 -- Thaddeus. There is preserved an account, that the Holy Apostle Jude went preaching to Persia and from there wrote in the Greek language his soborno-catholic Epistle, in the brief wording of which consisted much profound truth. It contained dogmatic teaching about the Holy Trinity, about the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, about the separation of Angels good and bad, and about the Dread Last-Judgement. In its moral content the Apostle urges believers to guard themselves against fleshly impurity, to be diligent in their obligations in prayer, faith and love, to convert the lost to the way of salvation, and to guard themselves from the teachings of heretics. The Apostle Jude taught that faith alone in Christ is not sufficient, good works also are necessary, the evidence to Christian teaching.

The Holy Apostle Jude died a martyr about the year 80 in Armenia in the city of Arata, where he was crucified on a cross and pierced by arrows.

The Placement of the Venerable Robe of the MostHoly Mother of God at Blachernae: (Commemorated July 15/July 2) During the years of the reign of the Byzantine emperor Leo the Great the Macedonian (457-474), the brothers Galbius and Can-

didus, associates of the emperor, set out from Constantinople to Palestine to venerate at the holy places. In a small settlement near Nazareth they stopped for overnight lodging with a certain quite aged Hebrew woman. In her house the burning of candles and smoking incense caught the attention of the pilgrims. To their questions, as to what sort of sacred thing there was in her house, the pious woman for a long time did not want to give an answer, but after persistent requests she replied, that she had a very precious sacred item -- the Robe of the Mother of God, from which had occurred many miracles and healings. The MostHoly Virgin before the time of Her Dormition ("Falling-Asleep" or "Repose") bequeathed one of her garments to a pious Jewish maiden from the family-lineage of this house, having instructed her to hand it on after death to another virgin. Thus, from generation to generation, the Robe of the Mother of God was preserved in this family.

The jewelled chest, containing the sacred Robe, was transferred to Constantinople. Saint Gennadios, Patriarch of Tsar'grad-Constantinople (+ 471, Comm. 31 August), and the emperor Leo, having learned of the sacred find, convinced themselves of the incorruptness of the holy Robe and with trembling they certified its authenticity. At Blachernae, near the seacoast, there was erected a new church in honour of the Mother of God. On 2 June 458 Sainted Gennadios with appropriate solemnity transferred the sacred Robe into the Blachernae church, placing it within a new reliquary.

Afterwards into the reliquary, together with the Robe of the Mother of God, was put also Her omophorion (i.e. the outer or over-robe) and part of Her belt-sash. This circumstance also set its seal upon the Orthodox iconography of the feast, in conjoining the two events: the Placing of the Robe, and the Placing of the Belt-Sash of the Mother of God in Blachernae. The Russian pilgrim Stefan Novgorodets, visiting Tsar'grad in about the year 1350, testifies: "We arrived at Blachernae, wherein lies the Robe upon an altar-throne in an imprinted reliquary".

More than once during the invasion of enemies the MostHoly Mother of God saved the city, to which She had bestown Her holy Robe. Thus it happened during the time of a siege of Constantinople by the Avars in 626, by the Persians -- in 677, and by the Arabs -- in the year 717. Especially relevant for us are events of the year 860, intimately connected with the history of the Russian Church.

On 18 June 860 the Russian fleet of prince Askol'd, in a force comprising more than 200 boats, having laid waste the coastal regions of the Black Sea

and the Bosphorus, entered into the Bay of the Golden Horn and threatened Constantinople. The Russian ships sailed into sight of the city, setting ashore troops who "proceeded before the city, stretching forth their swords". The emperor Michael III (842-867), leaving off his heading of a campaign against the Arabs, returned to the capital; all night he prayed, prostrate down upon the stone tiles of the church of the Blachernae Mother of God. Holy Patriarch Photios turned to his flock with preaching, calling for tears of repentance to wash away sins, and in fervent prayer to seek the intercession of the MostHoly Mother of God.

The danger grew with each passing hour. "The city was barely able to stand against a spear", -- says Patriarch Photios in another of his sermons. Under these conditions the decision was made to save the church holy-things, and foremost -- the holy Robe of the Mother of God, which was kept in the Blachernae church, not far from the shore of the bay. After making an all-night molieben, and taking it out from the Blachernae church, they carried the sacred Robe of the Mother of God in religious procession around the city walls, with a prayer they dipped its edge into the waters of the Bosphorus, and then they transported it to the centre of Tsar'grad -- into the church of Saint Sophia. The Mother of God by Her grace gave shelter and quelled the militance of the Russian warriors. An honourable truce was concluded. Askol'd lifted the siege of Constantinople. On 25 June the Russian army began to leave, taking with them a large tribute payment. A week afterwards, on 2 July, the wonderworking Robe of the Mother of God was solemnly returned to its place in the reliquary of the Blachernae church. In remembrance of these events an annual feastday of the Placing of the Robe of the Mother of God was established under 2 July by holy Patriarch Photios.

Soon, in October-November of the year 860, a Russian delegation arrived in Constantinople for concluding a treaty "in love and peace". In the conditions of the peace treaty they included articles about the Baptism of Kievan Rus', about the payment of an annual tribute by the Byzantines to the Russians, permission for them to serve with the Byzantine army, to carry on trade in the territory of the empire (primarily in Constantinople), and to send a diplomatic mission to Byzantium.

Most important was the point about the Baptism of Rus'. The continuator of the Byzantine "Theophanes Chronicles" relates, that "their delegation arrived in Tsar'grad with a request for them to be made participants in holy Baptism, which also was

fulfilled". An Orthodox mission was sent to Kiev to fulfill this mutual wish of the Russians and the Greeks. Not very long before this (in 855) holy Equal to the Apostles Cyril (Kirill) the Philosopher (+ 869, Comm. 14 February and 11 May) had crafted a Slavonic alphabet and translated the Gospel. With the mission to Kiev essentially in particular there was sent Saint Cyril with his brother, the holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Methodios (+ 885, Comm. 6 April and 11 May), together with books translated into Slavonic. This was at the initiative of Sainted Photios, whose student Saint Cyril was. The brothers spent the winter of 860/861 at Kherson (Chersonessus), and in the spring of 861 they were at the River Dneipr, with prince Askol'd.

There stood a difficult choice facing prince Askol'd, just as afterwards it faced holy prince Vladimir: both the Jews on the one hand and the Mahometans on the other wanted to bring him into their faith. But under the graced influence of Saint Cyril, the prince made his choice in favour of Orthodoxy. At the end of the year 861 Cyril and Methodios returned to Constantinople and carried with them from prince (or, as the Kievan princes called themselves during the IX-XI Centuries, "kagan") Askol'd to emperor Michael III. Askol'd thanked the emperor for sending him "such men, who showed by both word and by example, that the Christian faith -- is holy". "Persuaded, -- Askol'd further wrote, -- that this is the true faith, we bid them to baptise at their intent in the hope for us also to attain sanctity. We are all -- friends of the kingdom and prepared to be of service to thee, as requested".

Askol'd accepted holy Baptism with the name Nikolai, and many also of his retinue were baptised. Right directly from Tsar'grad, the capital of Orthodoxy, through the efforts of the holy Apostles to the Slavs there arrived in Rus' both the Slavonic Divine-services and the Slavonic written-language. At Kiev Saint Photios appointed the Metropolitan Michael, and the Russian metropolitan was entered into the notation-lists of dioceses of the Constantinople Patriarchate. Holy Patriarch Photios in a Circular missive of the year 867 called the Baptism of the Bulgarians and the Russians as among the chief accomplishments of his arch-hierarchical service. "The Russians, which lifted their hand against the Roman might, -- he wrote, almost quoting literally from the missive of Askol'd, -- at the present time replaced even the impious teaching, which they held to formerly, with the pure and genuine Christian faith, and with love having established themselves in the array of our friends and subjects". (The Byzantines reckoned as "subjects" all

accepting Baptism from Tsar'grad and entering into military alliance with the empire.) "And to such an extent has flared up within them the desire and zeal of faith, that they have accepted bishops and pastors, and they embrace Christian sanctity with great zeal and fervour".

The feastday of the Placement of the Robe of the MostHoly Mother of God in Blachernae reveals itself also as a feastday of the canonical establishing of the Russian Orthodox metropolitanate in Kiev. By the blessing of the Mother of God and by the miracle from Her holy Robe was accomplished not only the salvation of Tsar'grad from the most terrible siege in all its history, but also the salvation of the Russians from the darkness of pagan superstition, to life eternal. Together with this, the year 860 brought recognition to Kievan Rus' from Byzantium, and it signified an equitably-justified emergence of the young Russian realm into the arena of history.

The attempt of prince Askol'd to renew the Christian evangelisation begun by the holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called, and intended by him as a religious and state reform, ended unsuccessfully. The time of affirmation of Christianity in the Russian Land had not yet come. The adherents of the old paganism were too strong, and the princely power was too weak. In the clash of Askol'd with the pagan Oleg in 882 the Kievans betrayed their prince -- Askol'd accepted a martyr's death at the hand of hired killers, tricked by deceit into the camp of his enemies for talks.

But the deed of Blessed Askol'd (the Ioakimov Chronicle calls him such) was not extinguished in the Russian Church. Oleg the Sage, having killed Askol'd, after him occupied the Kiev principedom, and called Kiev the "Mother of Russian Cities" -- this is a literal translation of the Greek expression "Russian metropolia" (i.e. "mater-polis"). The most ancient chronicles of Kiev preserved the grateful memory of the first Kievan Christian-prince: the church of the Prophet of God Elias, built by Askol'd and afterwards mentioned in the Treaty of Igor with the Greeks (in year 944), is on the place where at present stands the church of this name, and there is also the church of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, erected in the decade of the 950's over the grave of Askol'd by holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Ol'ga. The most important achievement of Askol'd, entering forever into the Church-inheritance not only of Rus', but of also all Orthodox Slavdom -- is the Slavonic Gospel and Slavonic Divine-services, rendered such by the work of the holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Cyril and Methodios. In Kiev at the court of Askol'd in 861 was set the

beginning of their apostolic activity among the Slavs, and continued afterwards in Moravia and Bulgaria. Following Blessed Askol'd, speaking the words of the ancient "Alphabetic Prayers", "there soars in flight now the Slavonic tribe -- to Baptism all striving".

With the miracle of the Robe of the MostHoly Mother of God at Blachernae are connected several outstanding works of Byzantine Church hymnology and homiletics. To Saint Photios belong two sermons, one of which was given by him immediately within days of the siege of Constantinople, and the other -- soon after the departure of the Russian forces. And with the campaign of Askol'd against Tsar'grad is connected also the composition of a remarkable "Akathist to the MostHoly Mother of God", the source of which certain Church histories ascribe also to holy Patriarch Photios. This Akathist comprises a basic part of the Divine-services of the day of Praise to the MostHoly Mother of God (i.e. the "Saturday of the Akathist" -- Saturday in the 4th Week of Great Lent).

It is not only Byzantine sources that relate the events of the year 860, but also Russian historical chronicles. The Monk Nestor the Chronicler, stressing the significance of the Russian campaign against Tsar'grad, notes that from this time "it was begun to be called the Russian Land". Certain of the chronicles, among them the Ioakimov and Nikonov, preserved accounts of the Baptism of Prince Askol'd and Kievan Rus' after the campaign against Tsar'grad. The popular commemoration concerning this is firmly associated with the names of the Kievan princes Askol'd and Dir, although in the opinion of historians, Dir was prince of Kiev somewhat earlier than Askol'd.

The veneration of the feast of the Robe-placing was known of old in the Russian Church. Saint Andrei Bogoliubsky (+ 1174, Comm. 4 July) erected in the city of Vladimir at the Golden Gates a church in honour of this feastday. At the end of the XIV Century part of the Robe of the Mother of God was transferred from Constantinople to Rus' by Sainted Dionysii, Archbishop of Suzdal' (+ 1385, Comm. 26 June).

The holy Robe of the Mother of God, earlier having saved the capital of Byzantium, later also saved the capital Moscow from hostilities. Tatars of the Horde of the princeling Mazovshi in the Summer of 1451 approached beneath the walls of Moscow. Saint Jona, Metropolitan of Moscow, by means of constant prayer and church services encouraged the defenders of the capital. On the night of 2 July, relates the chronicle, great confusion occurred within the Tatar

camp. the enemy abandoned their plundered goods and in disarray speedily departed. In memory of the miraculous deliverance of Moscow, the metropolitan Saint Jona erected in the Kremlin the church in honour of the Robe-placing, making it his primary church. It burned, but in its place thirty years afterwards was built in the years 1484-1486 a new church, likewise dedicated to the feast of the Placing of the Robe of the Mother of God. This temple, standing at present, continued to serve as the primary church of Russian metropolitans and patriarchs until the cathedral of the Twelve Apostles was built under patriarch Nikon.

Blessed Saint Vasilii (Basil), Moscow Wonderworker, (*Commemorated Aug 15/Aug 2*) was born in December 1468 on the portico of the Elokhoysk church in honour of the Vladimir Icon of the MostHoly Mother of God, outside Moscow. His parents were common folk and sent their son for training in the cobbler's (shoemaker's) craft. During the time of teaching his apprentice the master happened to be a witness to a certain remarkable occurrence, wherein he perceived, that his student was no ordinary man. A certain merchant had brought grain to Moscow on a barge and then went to order boots, specifying to make them such and so, since he would not pick them up for a year. Blessed Vasilii uttered weeping: "I would thee leave them such, since thou will not wear them out". To the perplexed questioning of the master the apprentice explained, that the man making the order would not put on the boots, but rather would soon be dead. After several days the prediction came true.

At age 16 the saint arrived in Moscow and began the thorny exploit of foolishness. In the burning Summer heat and in the crisp harsh frost he walked about bare-legged and bare-foot through the streets of Moscow. His actions were strange: here he would upset a stand with kalachi, and there he would spill a jug with kvas. Angry merchants throttled the blessed saint, but he took the beatings with joy and he thanked God for them. But then it was discovered, that the kalachi were poorly cooked, the kvas was badly prepared. The reputation of Blessed Vasilii quickly grew: in him they perceived a fool, a man of God, a denouncer of wrong.

A certain merchant was intent to build on Pokrovna in Moscow a stone church, but thrice its arches collapsed. The merchant turned for advice to the blessed saint, and he pointed him toward Kiev: "Find there John the Cripple, he will give thee the advice, how to construct the church". Having journeyed

to Kiev, the Merchant sought out John, who sat a poor hut and rocked an empty cradle. "Whom dost thou rock?" -- asked the merchant. "My beloved mother I do bewep, long indigent for my birth and upbringing". Only then did the merchant remember his own mother, whom he had thrown out of the house, and it became clear to him, why he was in no way able to build the church. Having returned to Moscow, he brought his mother home, begged her forgiveness and built the church.

Preaching mercy, the blessed saint helped first of all those, who were ashamed to ask for alms, but who all the while more were more in need of help than others. There was an instance, where he gave away a rich imperial present to a foreign merchant, who was left without anything at all and, although for three days already the man had eaten nothing, he was not able to turn for help, since he wore fine clothing.

Harshly did the blessed saint condemn those, who gave alms for selfish reasons, not from compassion for the poor and destitute, but hoping for an easy way to attract the blessings of God upon their affairs. One time the blessed saint saw a devil, which took on the guise of a beggar. He sat at the gates of the All-Pure Virgin's church, and to everyone who gave alms, he rendered speedy help in their affairs. The blessed saint exposed the wicked trick and drove away the devil. For the salvation of one's neighbours Blessed Vasiliï visited also the taverns, where he endeavoured, even in people very much gone to ruin, to see a grain of goodness, and to strengthen and encourage them by kindness. Many observed, that when the saint passed by a house in which they madly made merry and drank, he with tears clasped the corners of that house. They enquired of the fool what this meant, and he answered: "Angels stand in sorrow at the house and are distressed about the sins of the people, but I with tears entreat them to pray to the Lord for the conversion of sinners".

Purified by great deeds and by the prayer of his soul, the blessed saint was vouchsafed also the gift of foreseeing the future. In 1547 he predicted the great conflagration of Moscow; by prayer he extinguished a conflagration at Novgorod; one time he reproached tsar Ivan the Terrible, that during the time of Divine-services he was preoccupied with thoughts about the construction of a palace on the Vorob'ev hills.

Blessed Vasiliï died on 2 August 1557. Saint Metropolitan of Moscow Makarii with an assemblage

of clergy made the funeral of the saint. His body was buried at the Trinity church, in the trench where in 1554 was being annexed the Pokrov cathedral in memory of the conquest of Kazan. The glorification of Blessed Vasiliï was by a Sobor-Council on 2 August 1588, which His Holiness Patriarch Job proclaimed.

In a description of the appearance of the saint characteristic details were preserved: "All bare, in the hand a staff". The veneration of Blessed Vasiliï was always so strong, that the Trinity temple and the attached Pokrov church are to the present named the temple of Blessed Vasiliï [i.e. the famous Saint Basil's in Moscow].

The chains of the saint are preserved at the Moscow Spiritual Academy.

The Prophet Micah, (*Commemorated Aug 27/ Aug 14*) the 6th of the Twelve Minor Prophets, was descended from the Tribe of Judah and was a native of the city of Morastha, to the south of Jerusalem, wherefore he was called a Morasthite. His prophetic service began around the year 778 before the Birth of Christ and continued for almost 50 years under the kings of Judah -- Joatham, Akhaz, and Righteous Hezekiah (721-691 B.C., Comm. 28 August).

He was a contemporary of the Prophet Isaiah. His denunciations and predictions were in regard to the separate kingdoms both of Judah and of Israel. He foresaw the misfortunes, threatening the kingdom of Israel before its destruction, and to Judah, during the incursions under the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib. To him belongs a prophecy about the birth of the Saviour of the world: "And thou, Bethlehem, house of Euphratha, though small wilt be in the thousands of Judah, from thee to Me wilt come an eldest, that will be King in Israel, Whose coming forth is from the beginning of days forever" (Mic. 5: 2). From the words of the Prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 26: 18-19), the Jews evidently were afraid to kill the Prophet Micah. His relics were discovered in the IV Century after the Birth of Christ at Baraphsatia, through a revelation to the bishop of Eleutheropolis, Zeuinos.



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



JULY 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jun 28 (Jun 15) 3rd Sunday after Pentecost Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine & oil	Jun 29 (Jun 16)	Jun 30 (Jun 17)	1 (Jun 18)	2 (Jun 19)	3 (Jun 20)	4 (Jun 21) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine & oil
5 (Jun 22) 4th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine & oil	6 (Jun 23)	7 (Jun 24) Nativity of the Baptist	8 (Jun 25)	9 (Jun 26)	10 (Jun 27)	11 (Jun 28) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: fish, wine & oil
12 (Jun 29) 5th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 4 Ss. Peter & Paul 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	13 (Jun 30)	14 (Jul 1)	15 (Jul 2) Fast: wine & oil	16 (Jul 3)	17 (Jul 4) Fast: fish, wine & oil	18 (Jul 5) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
19 (Jul 6) 6th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 5 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	20 (Jul 7)	21 (Jul 8)	22 (Jul 9) Fast	23 (Jul 10)	24 (Jul 11) Fast	25 (Jul 12) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
26 (Jul 13) 7th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	27 (Jul 14)	28 (Jul 15) St. Vladimir	29 (Jul 16) Fast	30 (Jul 17)	31 (Jul 18) Fast	Aug 1 (Jul 19) 5:30 All-Night Vigil



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



AUGUST 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jul 26 (Jul 13) 7th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 6 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	Jul 27 (Jul 14)	Jul 28 (Jul 15) St. Vladimir	Jul 29 (Jul 16) Fast	Jul 30 (Jul 17)	Jul 31 (Jul 18) Fast	1 (Jul 19) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
2 (Jul 20) 8th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 7 Prophet Elijah 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	3 (Jul 21)	4 (Jul 22)	5 (Jul 23) Fast: wine & oil	6 (Jul 24)	7 (Jul 25) Fast: wine & oil	8 (Jul 26) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
9 (Jul 27) 9th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 8 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	10 (Jul 28)	11 (Jul 29)	12 (Jul 30) Fast	13 (Jul 31)	14 (Aug 1) Procession of the Cross Fast	15 (Aug 2) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: wine & oil
16 (Aug 3) 10th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 1 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: wine & oil	17 (Aug 4) Fast	18 (Aug 5) 5:30 Vigil "Transfiguration" Fast	19 (Aug 6) TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	20 (Aug 7) Fast	21 (Aug 8) Fast: wine & oil	22 (Aug 9) 5:30 All-Night Vigil Fast: wine & oil
23 (Aug 10) 11th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 2 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy Fast: wine & oil	24 (Aug 11) Fast	25 (Aug 12) Fast	26 (Aug 13) Fast	27 (Aug 14) 5:30 Vigil "Dormition" Fast	28 (Aug 15) DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS 9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Fast: fish, wine, & oil	29 (Aug 16) 5:30 All-Night Vigil
30 (Aug 17) 12th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3 9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	31 (Aug 18)	Sep 1 (Aug 19)	Sep 2 (Aug 20) Fast	Sep 3 (Aug 21)	Sep 4 (Aug 22) Fast	Sep 5 (Aug 23) 5:30 All-Night Vigil