



# St. Xenia Parish News

170 North Lowell Street, Methuen, MA 01844

January – February 2022

## Nativity Epistle of 1962

*By Saint John, Archbishop of Shanghai & San Francisco*

“Thou, Who art the God of peace and the Father of compassions, didst send unto us the Angel of Thy great Counsel, granting us peace.”

**T**he Angel-Messenger of the pre-eternal Counsel of the Holy Trinity comes to the earth. This is not an ordinary messenger; it is the Only-begotten Son of God Himself. He brings peace to men. "Peace be unto you," he said more than once to His disciples. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," He says to the apostles at the Mystical Supper, "not as the world giveth, give I unto you." And appearing after His Resurrection, again He says: "Peace be unto you." "For he is our peace," the holy Apostle Paul says concerning Him: "He came to the earth to reconcile man unto God by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. And having come, He preached peace to those afar off and to those near, because through Him we both have access unto the Father."

The wall that separated heaven and earth is destroyed; the sword that barred the way to the tree of life disappears. Unto man that had sinned comes his Creator, calling him into His embrace! By the mouths of the apostles, the Holy Spirit cries out: "In Christ, be ye reconciled to God." You that had sinned came not to God, but the Son of God, before Whom you sinned, came to you! He calls everyone to Himself; He gives forgiveness to everyone who merely thirsts for this. For without the desire of man himself, without at least his little effort, God's peace cannot settle in him. The Lord forces no one to come to Him, but calls everyone: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Come all ye who are heavy laden with sins, who are exhausted from your labors and who do not find rest! You shall find that inner peace, which you will find nothing on earth more desirable than. The soul will feel unearthly peace and joy.

The Magi who worshipped the Babe experienced that joy; the shepherds, finding Him lying in a manger, also felt it. But neither peace nor joy touched the heart of Herod and those who wanted to destroy the Babe. For evil desire and malice are incompatible with inner

peace. And whoever does not have inner peace, also sows strife and malice about.

The Church now calls us to meet Christ Who comes from heaven. What can we do in order to meet Him like the Magi, and not like Herod? "Ye that desire life, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking guile. Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it." It tends to be hard to do this; we are weak when it comes to everything good. But the Son of God even came for this: in order to strengthen us. Not for naught was He born in Bethlehem, which signifies "house of bread." He feeds us with heavenly food, His flesh. "God, the Lord and Creator of all, as a babe in the flesh, is worshipped in a poor manger, crying out: eat My body and through faith be made steadfast." These words of the divine Babe are directed to us. Let us hearken to His call! Let us follow the Magi; let us hasten with the shepherds! Our churches are now that cave of Bethlehem. Not illusory, but in reality does He, Who is now being born in His most pure flesh, rest in them. Let us worship Him; let us offer as a gift our thoughts and desires; let us confess our sins, and let us taste of His immaculate Body and Blood. Whoever did not do this earlier, let him at least accomplish it now, when the star of Bethlehem is already shining! Our minds will be enlightened and the heart will hear:

“Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace,  
good will among men!”

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 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication to Father Michael at [frmichael@stxenia.org](mailto: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**

President: Archpriest Michael Crowley (978) 204-0428  
 1. Warden: Andrei Doohovskoy (339) 223-4168  
 Secretary: Subdeacon David Nettleton (203) 895-7636  
 Treasurer: Nicholas (Charles) Kronauer (978) 265-6369  
 Sisterhood: Pam Reed  
 Cemetery: Natalie Pishenin (978) 761-3449  
 Daniel Hakim  
 Anthony Sarantakis  
 Dmitri Nikshych  
 Isaac (Shedly) Justinien  
 Choir Director: Laryssa Doohovskoy (978) 841-5960  
 Church School Director: Alexei Doohovskoy

**Trapeza Schedule**

Please limit coffee hour to Bagels, Muffins/ Pastries, and Fruit.  
 The coffee hour will be outside, so each week will be **weather dependent**.

*Please check the weather before your Sunday when bringing food.*

Coffee will be made each Sunday morning.

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

**JANUARY**

2 Justinien, Mat. Masha Doohovskoy, Hakim, Kristina Head  
 9 Potluck - Yolka  
 16 Potluck - Yolka  
 23 Alesia Alevtina, Natalia Avram, Raisa Avram  
 30 Nettleton, Chaplain, Mary Doohovskoy

**FEBRUARY**

6 Mat. Helena Doohovskoy, Dimatteo, Nikshych, Anna Johnson  
 13 Soloviev, McLellen, Lehmkuhl, Victoria Jackson  
 20 Fredette, Kirichuk, Vera Sarantakis  
 27 (Meatfare Sunday) Reed, Savage, Mendez

## PARISH NEWS

### Thank you

~ To everyone who helped decorate and clean the Church for Nativity!

~ Thank you also to everyone who contributed to the soup and bake sale to raise funds for the classroom in Haiti named in memory of Emilia Klar, Memory Eternal!

~ And to all who were able to contribute to the fundraiser for the Ukrainian family in need - Single mother, Ksenia, and her 4 children - thank you! We helped this family to get through the winter last year with money for firewood. This year, we raised enough money for firewood, food, and some clothes for the children.

~ Stay tuned for information regarding a food drive during Great Lent.

### Congratulations

~ To the newly-illuminated Caroline (Maria) Sullivan who was Baptized on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

~ To the Lehmkul family on the birth of their son Isaac on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and Baptism on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

~ To the Parfenov and Thomson families on the Baptism of their son Oliver (Alexander) on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

~ To Joshua (John Damascene) Cummings on his Baptism also on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

~ To Vicky (Johanna) Tkaczewski and her family on her upcoming Baptism on February 12<sup>th</sup>.

Many Years to All!

### Please Remember in Your Prayers

Jane Rockwell, Peter Danas, Dimitri Nikshych and Laryssa Doohovskoy.

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

**House Blessings** ~ Fr. Michael will begin scheduling house blessings after Theophany on Jan 19. There will be a signup sheet on the candle table or you may contact him directly.

## Sisterhood News

~ We will continue to offer a coffee hour during the winter as we are able.

~ If you would like to be on the Sisterhood email list, please send your email to:

[StXeniaSisterhood100@gmail.com](mailto:StXeniaSisterhood100@gmail.com)

## 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](mailto:stxeniachoir@gmail.com).

## Church School and Youth Group News

The Parish Yolka will be held in two sessions this year to accommodate our wonderfully growing Parish. Festivities will be held after Trapeza in the Parish basement on both days. Please contact Alexei Doohovskoy if you have questions. [www.adtrom-bone.com](http://www.adtrom-bone.com)

### YOLKA SCHEDULE

January 9 – Younger 3 classes

January 16 – Older 4 classes

The **St. Artemius Youth Group** is St. Xenia's youth group for children of the parish, ages 13-18. The youth group had its relaunch event on Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. The group got together for fellowship and apple picking at Parlee Farms in Tyngsborough, MA. The afternoon consisted of a hayride, apple picking in the orchards, and enjoying sweet treats from the farm kitchen. Thank you to parents for their help in making the outing such a great success.



If your child/children are ages 13-18 and you have not been receiving e-mails about the youth group, please feel free to reach out to Aaron Murphy via e-mail at: [aarondcmurphy@gmail.com](mailto:aarondcmurphy@gmail.com)

**The Monk Seraphim of Sarov**, (*Commemorated Jan 2/Jan 15*) a great ascetic of the Russian Church, was born on 19 July 1754. His parents, Isidor and Agathia Moshnin, were inhabitants of Kursk. Isidor was a

merchant involved in the construction of buildings, and towards the end of his life he began construction of a cathedral in Kursk, but he died before the completion of the work. His little son Prokhor -- the future Seraphim, remained in the care of his widowed mother, who raised her son in deep faith.

After the death of her husband, Agathia Moshnina continued with the construction of the cathedral, and one time when she took Prokhor along with her there, he stumbled and fell down from the belfry. But the Lord watched over the life of the future luminary of the Church: the terrified mother, running down, found her son unharmed.

Young Prokhor, endowed with an excellent memory, soon mastered his reading and writing. From the time of his childhood he loved to visit church-services and to read with his fellow students both the Holy Scripture and the Lives of the Saints, but most of all he loved to pray or to read the Holy Gospel in private.

At one point Prokhor fell grievously ill, and his life was in danger. In a dream the boy saw the Mother of God, promising to visit and heal him. Soon through the courtyard of the Moshnin home there came a church procession with the Znamenie (Sign) Icon of the Mother of God; his mother carried out Prokhor in her arms, and he kissed the holy icon, after which he speedily recovered.

While still in his youth Prokhor matured his plans to entirely devote his life to God and to go off to a monastery. His pious mother did not object to this and she blessed him on his monastic path with a cross, which the monk all his life wore on his chest. Prokhor set off on foot with pilgrims going from Kursk to Kiev to venerate the Pechersk Saints.

The starets-elder schema-monk Dosiphei, whom Prokhor visited, blessed him to go off to the Sarovsk wilderness-monastery and there seek his salvation. Returning briefly to his parental home, Prokhor bid a final farewell to his mother and kinsfolk. On 20 November 1778 he arrived at Sarov, where the monastery then was headed by a wise starets-elder, Father Pakhomii. He amiably accepted him and put him under the spiritual guidance of the starets-elder Joseph. And under his direction Prokhor passed through many obediences at the monastery: he was the cell-attendant of the elder, he toiled in the making of bread and prosphora and at carpentry, he did duty as a church-attendant, and he did everything with zeal and fervour, just as though serving the very Lord Himself. By constant work he hedged himself in against boredom -- this being, as he later said, "the most dangerous temptation for newly-become monks,

which is doctored by prayer, abstaining from idle chatter, exertive handwork, by reading of the Word of God and by patience, since that it is engendered by pettiness of soul, neglectfulness and idle talk".

Prokhor already in these years, on the example of the other monks that went off into the forest for prayer, besought the blessing of the elder for free time likewise to withdraw into the woods, where in complete isolation he made the Jesus Prayer. After two years as a novice, Prokhor fell ill with dropsy, his body became swollen, and he was beset with suffering. His instructor Father Joseph and the other startsi-elders were fond of Prokhor, and they provided him care. The illness dragged on for about three years, and not once did anyone hear from him a word of complaint. The elders, fearing for his very life, wanted to call a doctor for him, but Prokhor asked that this not be done, in saying to Father Pakhomii: "I have given myself over, holy father, to the True Physician of soul and body -- our Lord Jesus Christ and His All-Pure Mother...", and he besought, that they might commune him with the Holy Mysteries. Prokhor then had a vision: in an inexpressible light there appeared the Mother of God accompanied by the holy Apostles Peter and John the Theologian. Pointing with Her hand towards he that was sick, the MostHoly Virgin said to Saint John: "This one -- is of our lineage". Thereupon with Her staff She touched the side of the sick man, and immediately the fluid that had swelled up his body began to flow through a sort of opening made, and he quickly became well. Soon at the place of the appearance of the Mother of God there was built an infirmary-church for the sick, and one of the side-chapels was dedicated in the name of the Monks Zosima and Savvatii of Solovetsk. The altar-table for the chapel was fashioned by the Monk Seraphim with his own hands from cypress wood, and he always communed the Holy Mysteries in this church.

Being eight years an obedient (novice) at the Sarov monastery, Prokhor accepted monastic tonsure with the name Seraphim, a name so finely expressive of his fiery love for the Lord and the desire zealously to serve Him. After a year, Seraphim was ordained to the dignity of monk-deacon. Earnest in spirit, he daily served in temple, incessantly praying even after the service. The Lord vouchsafed the monk graced visions during the time of church-services: repeatedly he beheld holy Angels, concelebrating with the brethren. The monk was vouchsafed one particularly graced vision during the time of Divine Liturgy on Holy Great Thursday, which was celebrated by the monastery-head Father Pakhomii and by Father Joseph. When after the Little Entrance with the

Gospel, the Monk-deacon Seraphim pronounced the words "O Lord, save the God-fearing, and hear us", and standing in the royal doorway, he lifted his oration (deacon's stole) with the exclamation prayer "And unto ages of ages", suddenly a bright ray of light blinded him. [trans. note: this prayer "O Lord, save the God-fearing..." in Divine Liturgy falls between the priest's exclamation "For holy art Thou..." and the choir's beginning of the "Holy God, Holy Mighty...". To Orthodox believers in the West, this is likely unfamiliar (even though found in Hapgood): its use apparently ceased in Russia after the Revolution, and was restored only recently with the demise of the Soviet Union, with other liturgical changes, such as the adding of Saint Seraphim of Sarov to the commemoration of the 6th rank of saints in Proskomedie, a particle being taken from the third prosphora for the rank of the Monastics.] Looking upwards, the Monk Seraphim beheld the Lord Jesus Christ, coming through the air from the western doors of the temple, surrounded by the Heavenly Bodiless Hosts. Reaching the amvon, the Lord blessed all the praying and entered into His Image located there to the right of the royal doors. The Monk Seraphim, in spiritual rapture viewing this miraculous vision, was able to utter neither a word, nor to move from the spot. They led him by the hand into the altar, where he just stood for another three hours, his face having changed colour from the great grace that shone upon him. After the vision the saint intensified his efforts: by day he toiled at the monastery, and nights he spent at prayer in the forest wilderness cell.

In 1793, at age 39, the Monk Seraphim was ordained to the dignity of priestmonk and he continued at serving in the temple. After the death of the monastery head Father Pakhomii, the Monk Seraphim, -- having before this received deathbed blessing for the new exploit of wilderness-dwelling, and having likewise received blessing of the new monastery-head Father Isaiah, -- went off to a wilderness cell some several kilometers from the monastery, in the deep forest. Here he devoted himself to solitary prayer, arriving at the monastery only on Saturday before the all-night vigil, and returning to his cell after Liturgy, at which he communed the Divine Mysteries. The monk spent his time at severe efforts. His cell rule of prayer he made according to the ustav-rule of the ancient wilderness-monasteries; from the Holy Gospel he never parted, reading through the course of the week all the New Testament, and he read likewise the holy fathers and the Divine-service books. The monk learned by heart many of the Church songs and sang them during his hours at work in the forest.

Around his cell he cultivated a garden and set up a bee-hive. Having seen to his subsistence, the monk kept to a very strict fast, he ate only once during the entire day, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he completely abstained from food. On the first Sunday of the Holy Forty-Days (Lent) he did not partake of food at all until Saturday, when he communed the Holy Mysteries.

The holy elder in his solitude was sometimes so immersed in his inner prayer of the heart, that at length he remained without stirring, neither hearing nor seeing anything around him. The schema-monk Mark the Silent and the monk-deacon Aleksandr, also wilderness-dwellers, would visit him every now and then, and finding the saint immersed in suchlike prayer, in reverent quiet they would leave, so as not to disrupt his contemplation.

In the heat of Summer the monk gathered moss in a swamp as fertilizer for his garden; the gnats relentlessly bit at him, but he good-naturedly endured this vexation, saying: "Passions are destroyed by suffering and by sorrow, either arbitrarily or as sent by Providence". For about three years the monk ate only a certain vegetable, which grew about his cell. All the more frequently there began to come not only monks, but also laypeople, -- for advice and blessing. This disrupted his solitude. Having besought the blessing of the monastery head, the monk at first barred the admittance of women to him, and then all the rest, having received a sign that the Lord approved of his intent for complete silence. Through the prayer of the monk, the pathway to his wilderness cell was blocked by huge branches blown down from ancient pine trees. Now only the birds, flocking to him in throngs, and the wild beasts, paid him visit. The monk fed a bear with bread from his hand, when they happened to bring him bread from the monastery.

Seeing the efforts of the Monk Seraphim, the enemy of the race of man roused up against him, and wanting to force the saint to foresake his silence, he decided to frighten him, but the monk shielded himself by prayer and by the power of the Life-Creating Cross. The devil conducted against the saint "mental warfare" -- persistent and continuous temptation. For repulsing the onslaughts of the enemy the Monk Seraphim intensified his toil, and took upon himself the exploit of pillar-dwelling. Each night he climbed up upon an immense rock in the forest and he prayed with up-raised hands, crying out: "God, be merciful to me a sinner". By day he prayed in his cell and likewise upon a stone, which he had brought from the forest, coming down from it only for brief rest and to refresh his body with a scant bit of food. The monk prayed

thus for 1,000 days and nights. The devil, shamed by the monk, hatched a plan to kill the saint and sent out robbers. Coming upon him while working in his garden, the robbers began to demand money from him. The monk had in his hands at this time an axe, he was physically strong and could have put up a fight, but he did not want to do this, having called to mind the words of the Lord: "Those taking up the sword wilt perish by the sword" (Mt. 26: 52). The monk, dropping his axe to the ground, said: "Do what ye intend to". The robbers began to beat the monk, with the butt-end of the axe they bloodied his head, broke several of his ribs, and then having tied him, they wanted to throw him in the river, but first they searched the cell for money. Having trashed everything in the cell and finding nothing in it besides icons and a few potatoes, they were shamed in their wicked deed and left. The monk, gaining consciousness, got to his cell, and suffering terribly, he lay there all night. In the morning with great difficulty he reached the monastery. The brethren were horrified, seeing the ascetic all bruised with wounds. For eight whole days the monk just lay there, suffering from his wounds; doctors were called for him, who were amazed that after such a beating he even remained alive. But the monk did not receive his healing from the physicians: the Queen of Heaven appeared to him in a subtle dream vision together with the Apostles Peter and John. Touching the head of the monk, the Most Holy Virgin granted him healing. After this instance the Monk Seraphim had to spend about five months at the monastery, and then he again went off to his wilderness cell. Left in posture stooped over always henceforth, the monk walked, leaning upon his staff or small axe, and he indeed forgave his abusers and asked that they not be punished.

After the death of the monastery head, Father Isaiah, -- a friend of the monk since his youth, -- the Monk Seraphim took upon himself the deed of silence, being completely cut off from any worldly ponderings for a most purified being in the presence of God in unceasing prayer. If the saint encountered a man in the forest, he fell face downwards and did not rise up, until the passerby had moved on. In such a manner of silence the starets-elder spent about three years, ceasing even to visit the monastery on Sundays. The fruit of silence for the Monk Seraphim was the acquisition of peace of soul and joy in the Holy Spirit. The great ascetic afterwards spoke thus to one of the monks of the monastery: "...my joy, I pray thee, acquire a spirit at peace, and then a thousand souls wilt be saved around thee".

The new monastery head, Father Nyphont, and the elder brethren of the monastery suggested to Father Seraphim that either as before he show up at the monastery on Sundays for participation in Divine services and communing the Holy Mysteries at the monastery, or that he return to the monastery. The monk chose the latter course, since it had become difficult for him to walk from the wilderness to the monastery. In Spring of the year 1810 he returned to the monastery after 15 years of living in the wilderness. Not breaking off with his silence, he added onto it also that of hermit enclosure, neither coming out anywhere nor admitting anyone, he dwelt in unceasing prayer and meditation on God. In his hermitage the Monk Seraphim discovered a height of spiritual purity and was vouchsafed of God the special gifts of grace -- perspicacity and wonderworking. Then the Lord sent His chosen one to serve people in an utmost monastic exploit -- "Starchestvo" ("being an elder"). On 25 November 1825 the Mother of God accompanied by the two sainted-hierarchs celebrated this day (i.e. PriestMartyr Clement, Pope of Rome, and Peter, Archbishop of Alexandria), appeared to the elder in a dream-vision and bid him emerge from his hermitage, so as to receive infirm human souls, needful of instruction, consolation, guidance and healing. The monastery head gave blessing to this change in the manner of his life, and the monk opened the doors of his cell to everyone. The starets saw into the hearts of people, and as a spiritual physician, he healed the infirmities of soul and body with a prayer to God and by words of grace. Those coming to the Monk Seraphim sensed his great love and with tenderness they hearkened to his amiable words, with which he turned to people: "my joy, my precious". The starets began to visit his own wilderness cell and water-spring, called Bogoslovsk, around which they built him a small cell. Coming out from the cell, the starets always carried on his shoulders a knapsack with stones. To the question as to why he did this, the saint humbly answered: "I oppress that which oppreseth me".

In the final period of his earthly life the Monk Seraphim especially concerned himself about his spiritual children -- the Diveevo women's monastery. While still in the dignity of monk-deacon he had accompanied the belated monastery head Father Pakhomii to the Diveevo community to its monastic leader, the nun Mother Alexandra -- a great woman ascetic, and then Father Pakhomii blessed the Monk Seraphim to concern himself always for the "Diveevo orphans". He was a genuine father for the sisters, who turned to him with all their spiritual and material diffi-

culties. His students and spiritual friends helped the saint to feed and nourish the Diveevo community: -- Mikhail Vasil'evich Manturov, healed by the monk from grievous illness and on the advice of the elder having taken upon himself the exploit of voluntary poverty; Elena Vasil'evna Manturovna, one of the Diveevo sisters, voluntarily consenting to die out of obedience to the elder for her brother, who was still needed in this life; Nikolai Aleksandrovich Motovilov, who likewise was healed by the monk. N. A. Motovilov recorded in writing the remarkable teachings of the Monk Seraphim about the goals of Christian life. In the last year of the life of the Monk Seraphim, one of those healed by him saw him standing in the air during the time of prayer. The saint strictly forbade this to be told of before his death.

Everyone knew and esteemed the Monk Seraphim as a great ascetic and wonderworker. A year and ten months before his end, on the feast of the Annunciation, the Monk Seraphim was vouchsafed yet once more to have appear the Queen of Heaven in the company of the Baptist of the Lord John, the Apostle John the Theologian and twelve virgins, martyrs and monastics. The Most Holy Virgin conversed at length with the monk, entrusting the Diveevo sisters to him. Concluding the conversation, She said to him: "Soon, My dear one, thou shalt be with us". During this vision with the miraculous visit of the Mother of God, a certain Diveevo eldress was present, through the prayer of the monk for her.

During the final year of his life the Monk Seraphim became noticeably weaker and he spoke much about his approaching end. During this time they often saw him at his grave, set at the approaches to his cell, and which he had prepared for himself. The monk himself had pointed out the place, where finally they would bury him -- near the altar of the Uspenie-Dormition cathedral. On 1 January 1833 the Monk Seraphim one last time came to the Zosimo-Savvatiev church for liturgy and he communed the Holy Mysteries, after which he blessed the brethren and bid farewell, saying: "Ye seeking salvation, be not discouraged, but take heart, the day of crowns is prepared for us". On 2 January, the cell-attendant of the monk, Father Pavel, at six in the morning left his own cell heading for church, and he caught the smell of burning coming from the cell of the Monk Seraphim; in the cell of the monk candles always burned, and he had said: "While I yet live, there wilt be no fire, but when I die, my end shalt reveal itself with a fire". When they opened the doors, it appeared that the books and the other things had burned, but the monk himself remained upright on his knees before an icon

of the Mother of God in a position of prayer, but was already lifeless. His pure soul at the time of prayer was taken by the Angels and had flown off to the Throne of the All-Mighty God, to Whom the Monk Seraphim had been a faithful servant all his life.

**Sainted Alexei, Metropolitan of Moscow and All Russia the Wonderworker,** (*Commemorated Feb 12/ Feb 25*) (in the world Elevation), was born in the year 1292 (or by another source 1304) at Moscow into the family of the boyar-noble Theodore (Feodor) Byakont, a descendant of the Chernigov princely line.

The Lord early on revealed to the future saint his lofty destiny. At twelve years of age Elevation had set a snare for the netting of birds, and imperceptibly he dozed off and suddenly he heard quite distinctly a voice: "Alexei! Why toilest thou in vain? Thou art to be a netter of people" From this day on the lad tended towards seclusion, he frequently visited church, and at age fifteen he decided to become a monk. In 1320 he entered the Moscow Theophany monastery, where he spent more than twelve years at strict monastic efforts. As guides for him and his companions there were the reknown ascetics of the monastery, the startsi-elders Gerontii and Stefan, brother of the Monk Sergei of Radonezh. Metropolitan Theognist then bade the future saint to leave the monastery and manage the juridical affairs of the Church. The saint fulfilled this office for 12 years as vicar of the metropolitan. Towards the end of 1350 Vladyka Theognist had Alexei ordained as bishop of Vladimir; upon the death of the Metropolitan he became his successor in the year 1354. During this period the Russian Church was torn amidst great rifts and quarrels, in part because of the pretensions of the metropolitan of Lithuania and Volynia, Roman. In 1356, in order to put an end to the troubles and disturbances, the saint set off to Constantinople to the OEcumenical Patriarch. Patriarch Kallistos gave Saint Alexei the right to both be called and to consider himself Archbishop of Kiev and Great Russia with the title, "All-Venerable Metropolitan and Exarch". On the return journey during the time of a storm at sea the ship was in danger of shipwreck. Saint Alexei prayed and gave a vow to build a temple to the saint of that day, when the ship should come to shore. The storm subsided, and the ship arrived on 16 August. Moscow delightedly came out to meet the saint.

In spite of problems on every side, Saint Alexei concerned himself everywhere over his flock: he sent forth bishops, he established life-in-common monasteries (on the model of the Trinity Lavra, founded by the Monk Sergei), and he brought order

to relations with the khans of the Horde. The saint himself occasioned more than once to journey to the Golden Horde. In 1357 the khan demanded of the greatprince, that the saint should come to him and heal the blindness of Taidul, his spouse. "The request and the matter is beyond my powers, -- said Saint Alexei, -- but I do believe in Him That gaveth the blind man to see, and that He shalt not disdain my prayers of faith". And actually, through his prayer, and being sprinkled with holy water, the wife of the khan was healed.

When Greatprince Ioann died, his young son Dimitrii (the future Donskoy), still in age a minor, was taken under the saint's guardianship. The holy vladyka had much toil in reconciling and appeasing princes obstinate against accepting the authority of Moscow. Nor did the metropolitan neglect the work of organising new monasteries. In 1361 he founded the Saviour Image Not-Wrought-by-Hand monastery at the Yauza in Moscow (the disciple of the Monk Sergei -- Andronikov by name -- was the first hegumen of the monastery), from the vow he had given back on his return journey from Constantinople, when the ship had suffered woe. There was also the Chudov monastery -- in the Moscow Kremlin; likewise, ancient monasteries were restored: the Annunciation monastery at Nizhni-Novgorod, and the Konstantino-Eleninsk [Constantine and Helen] at Vladimir. And in 1361 there was built a women's life-in-common monastery after his name (the Alekseev).

Saint Alexei reached the advanced age of 78, having spent 24 years upon the metropolitan cathedra-seat. He reposed on 12 February 1378 and was buried in accord with his last-wishes at the Chudov monastery. His relics were uncovered in a miraculous manner 50 years later, after which there began the veneration of the memory of the great Sainted-Hierarch and Man of Prayer for the Russian Land.

**The Monk Dositheos,** (*Commemorated February 19/ March 4*) a disciple of the Monk Abba Dorotheos (Comm. 5 June), lived during the VI-VII Centuries, and was raised in a rich and reknown family. Young Dositheos listened to tales about the holy city of Jerusalem from the servants of his grandfather, a military-commander, and this kindled within him the desire to go there. Soon his wish came true. At Gethsemane, he gazed for a long time at the depiction of the Dread Last Judgement. Suddenly he saw beside him a woman, who explained pointing out to him, what was depicted in the image. The youth asked: "How be it possible to avoid the eternal torments?" To this ques-

tion followed the reply: "Fast, be not given to the fleshly, pray constantly". After this his strange guide suddenly became invisible. Dositheos started to search about in vain, since She conversing with him had been the MostHoly Mother of God Herself. The appearance of the Mother of God produced on the youth a strong impression, and he decided to enter a monastery headed by Abba Serid, and populated by such great ascetics as the monastic-elder Barsonophios (Comm. 6 February) and John (Comm. 19 June). Dositheos, having made fervent entreaty to be accepted amongst the brethren, was sent off as a student to the monastic-elder Dorotheos. The Monk Dositheos bore obedience in the monastery sickward, caring for all the infirm. The Monk Dorotheos trained his student in abstinence and fasting, with the gradual lessening of the quantity of daily bread consumed. He also weaned the youth from vexation and anger, by constantly reminding, that every unkind word said to a sick person, is said simultaneously to Christ Jesus Himself. By revealing his thoughts to the elder and by unhesitating obedience the Monk Dositheos liberated his soul from the proclivities of the passions. Spending five years at the ascetic deed of tending the sick and obedience to his monastic elder, the Monk Dositheos himself fell into serious sickness. Patiently enduring his sufferings, he never complained and he prayed constantly. Not long before his death he asked a message be conveyed to the elder Barsonophios: "Father, grant me pardon, I cannot much longer live". That one sent back to him the reply: "Hold on, my son, for the mercy of God be yet not far off". After several days the Monk Dositheos again had conveyed to the elder the message: "My master, I cannot much longer live". Thereupon the Monk Barsonophios blessed him to expire to God, and he himself asked the dying one to pray for all the brethren, when he should stand before the Holy Trinity. The brethren were astonished that the great Abba Barsonophios would ask prayers of a monk, who had lived at the monastery for only all of five years and without any greatest ascetic accomplishment. But after the death of the monk, a certain experienced ascetic was praying that there might be revealed to him the final resting place of the departed fathers of the monastery, and he saw in a dream vision young Dositheos amidst the assemblage of these saints. The Monk Dositheos was vouchsafed great glory in the Kingdom of Heaven for his perfect obedience to the monastic elder and for his full forbearance from his own will.



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



**JANUARY 2022**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Dec 26 (Dec 13) 27th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 2  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Fast: fish, wine, & oil	Dec 27 (Dec 14)	Dec 28 (Dec 15)	Dec 29 (Dec 16)	Dec 30 (Dec 17)	Dec 31 (Dec 18)	1 (Dec 19)  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: wine & oil
2 (Dec 20) Sunday before Nativity  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Fast: wine & oil	3 (Dec 21)	4 (Dec 22)	5 (Dec 23)	6 (Dec 24) EVE OF NATIVITY  9:00 Royal Hours 10:00 Vespers Liturgy 5:30 Vigil  Fast: wine & oil	7 (Dec 25) NATIMTY OF THE LORD  9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy  Fast free	8 (Dec 26)  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast free
9 (Dec 27) Sunday after Nativity  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Fast free	10 (Dec 28)	11 (Dec 29)	12 (Dec 30)	13 (Dec 31)	14 (Jan 1) Circumcision of the Lord  Fast free	15 (Jan 2)  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast free
16 (Jan 3) 30th Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 5  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy  Fast free	17 (Jan 4)	18 (Jan 5) EVE OF THEOPHANY  9:00 Royal Hours 10:00 Vespers Liturgy Blessing of Waters 5:30 Vigil  Fast: wine & oil	19 (Jan 6) THEOPHANY OF THE LORD  9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Blessing of Waters  Fast free	20 (Jan 7) Synaxis of the Baptist  Fast	21 (Jan 8)	22 (Jan 9)  5:30 All-Night Vigil
23 (Jan 10) 31st Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 6  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	24 (Jan 11)	25 (Jan 12)	26 (Jan 13)  Fast	27 (Jan 14)	28 (Jan 15)  Fast	29 (Jan 16)  5:30 All-Night Vigil
30 (Jan 17) St. Anthony the Great  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	31 (Jan 18)	Feb 1 (Jan 19)	Feb 2 (Jan 20)  Fast: wine & oil	Feb 3 (Jan 21)	Feb 4 (Jan 22)  Fast	Feb 5 (Jan 23)  5:30 All-Night Vigil



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**FEBRUARY 2022**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Jan 30 (Jan 17)</b> <b>St. Anthony the Great</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>Jan 31 (Jan 18)</b>	<b>1 (Jan 19)</b>	<b>2 (Jan 20)</b>  Fast: wine & oil	<b>3 (Jan 21)</b>	<b>4 (Jan 22)</b>  Fast	<b>5 (Jan 23)</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>6 (Jan 24)</b> <b>St. Xenia of Petersburg</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>7 (Jan 25)</b>	<b>8 (Jan 26)</b>	<b>9 (Jan 27)</b>  Fast: wine & oil	<b>10 (Jan 28)</b>	<b>11 (Jan 29)</b>  Fast	<b>12 (Jan 30)</b> <b>Three Holy Hierarchs</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>13 (Jan 31)</b> <b>Publican &amp; Pharisee Tone 1</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>14 (Feb 1)</b>  5:30 Vigil  Fast free	<b>15 (Feb 2)</b> <b>MEETING OF THE LORD</b>  9:30 Hours & Divine Liturgy Blessing of Candles  Fast free	<b>16 (Feb 3)</b>  Fast free	<b>17 (Feb 4)</b>  Fast free	<b>18 (Feb 5)</b>  Fast free	<b>19 (Feb 6)</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast free
<b>20 (Feb 7)</b> <b>Prodigal Son Tone 2</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>21 (Feb 8)</b>	<b>22 (Feb 9)</b>	<b>23 (Feb 10)</b>  Fast	<b>24 (Feb 11)</b>	<b>25 (Feb 12)</b>  Fast: wine & oil	<b>26 (Feb 13)</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil
<b>27 (Feb 14)</b> <b>Last Judgement - Meatfare Tone 3</b>  9:30 Hours and Divine Liturgy	<b>28 (Feb 15)</b>  Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	<b>Mar 1 (Feb 16)</b>  Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	<b>Mar 2 (Feb 17)</b>  Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	<b>Mar 3 (Feb 18)</b>  Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	<b>Mar 4 (Feb 19)</b>  Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil	<b>Mar 5 (Feb 20)</b>  5:30 All-Night Vigil  Fast: dairy, fish, wine, & oil