

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Orthodox Church of America

A Parish of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

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January 24, 2021

33rd Sunday after Pentecost—Tone 8

Synaxis of the Holy New Martyrs
and Confessors of Russia

- 9:10 am - Hours
- 9:30 am - Divine Liturgy; Panakhida
Col. 3:4-11 Luke 18:35-43
Rom. 8:28-39 Luke 21:8-19 (S)

Schedule of Services

Tuesday, Jan. 26

- 7:00 pm - Akathist to Saint John,
Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord.

Friday, Jan. 29

- 7:00 pm - Moleben to the Most
Holy Theotokos:

Saturday, Jan. 30

- 5:00 pm - Great Vespers

Sunday, January 31

- 9:10 - Hours
- 9:30 - Divine Liturgy



WEEKLY BIBLE MESSAGE

Holy Blessed Xenia of Petersburg.

St. Xenia was the wife of Colonel Andrei Petrov, who served as a court chanter. At the age of 26, Xenia was widowed and, appeared to have lost her mind from grief: she distributed her possessions to the poor, dressed herself in the clothes of her reposed husband, and, as if having forgotten her own name, called herself by the name of her reposed husband - Andrei.

These eccentricities were not indicative of a loss of reason, however, but signified a complete disdain for earthly goods and human opinion, which places them at the center of existence. Thus, Xenia of Petersburg took upon herself the difficult podvig of foolishness for Christ's sake.

Having come to know the inconstancy of earthly happiness through the death of her beloved husband, Xenia strove toward God with all her heart, and sought protection and comfort only in Him. Earthly, transitory goods ceased to have any value for her. Xenia had a house; but gave it over to an acquaintance under the condition that it be used to shelter paupers. But Xenia herself, not having a refuge, would wander among the paupers of Petersburg. At night she would go out to a field, where she spent the time in ardent prayer.

When they began to build a church in the Smolensk Cemetery, Xenia, after the onset of darkness, would secretly carry bricks to the top of the construction, and thereby helped the masons erect the walls of the church.

Some of Xenia's relatives wanted to take her in and provide her with all necessities, but the blessed one replied to them: "I do not need anything."

Sensing the greatness of Blessed Xenia's soul, the inhabitants of Petersburg loved her, because she despised the earthly for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. If Xenia entered anyone's home, this was considered a good sign. Mothers rejoiced if she kissed their children. Cab drivers would ask permission of the blessed one to drive her a little, since after this the earnings would be guaranteed for the whole day. Merchants in the bazaars would try to give her kalach [cracknel bread] or some food; if Blessed Xenia took something from what was offered, all the wares of the seller were quickly bought up.

Xenia had the gift of clairvoyance. On the eve of the Nativity of Christ in 1762, she walked about Petersburg and said, "Bake blini! Tomorrow all Russia will bake blini!" The next day, the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna, suddenly died [blini is traditionally made at someone's death]. A few days before the murder of the royal youth, John VI (Antonovich, the great-great-grandson of Tsar Alexis Michailovich), who in infancy had been proclaimed the Russian Emperor, the blessed one wept and repeated, "Blood, blood, blood." Within a few days after Mirovich's unsuccessful conspiracy, the young John was killed.

Once, Xenia came to a home where there was a grown-up daughter. Turning to the girl, she said, "Here you are drinking coffee, while your husband is burying his wife at Okhta." After a certain time, this girl married that very widower who at that moment had been burying his first wife at the Okhta Cemetery.

Blessed Xenia died at the end of the eighteenth century, but tradition has not preserved either the year or day of her decease. She was buried in the Smolensk Cemetery, where she had helped build the church.

Pilgrimages to her grave began shortly after her decease. Blessed Xenia often appeared in visions to people in difficult circumstances, forewarned of dangers and saved them from calamities. The righteous one has not ceased to show compassionate love toward all who with faith have called upon her, and many instances of her help for the suffering and those in desperate situations are known.



Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Genevieve Bobenko, Barbara Bogart, Michael Bzik, Mary Ann Dolak, Dorothy Fabian, Barbara Kary, Margaret Kovalycsik, Kathleen Lazorzcyk, Dennis Maixner, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Sytagen, Eva Stashisky, Patricia Galley.

Announcement

♦ **Panikhida service:** today following the Divine Liturgy in memory of **Helen Prebish; Elizabeth Kreheln**, mother and grandmother of Helen Baron. As well as **Sharon Selever**, old friend of Helen Baron, who grew up in our parish.

♦ The objective of the **Youth and Camp Workers Conference (YCC)** is to offer an enriching and uplifting experience that will connect youth and camp workers and provide them with inspirational and challenging ideas to help them refine and improve their work. YCC is hosted by OYDNA, a working committee of individuals who serve as the departmental heads of the youth, college, and young adult ministry departments of the different Orthodox churches represented in the Assembly of Canonical Bishops of the United States.

The Orthodox Church in America is co-hosting the Conference and invites all Clergy, Youth Group Advisors, Church School Teachers, Youth Workers, Camp Directors, Camp Counselors, and anyone with an interest in serving our young people to attend!

Two of the main speakers are from the OCA, Dr. Peter Bouteneff and Fr. Sergius Halvorsen, and OCA youth will be featured during a panel presentation and discussion on the evening of January 28th. Information to participate in this event can be found on the Diocesan website: www.nynjoca.org.

♦ 2021 Church Calendars for your home or office are still available at the Candle Deck - pick up yours today!

