



*Welcome to St. Olympia Orthodox Church,
a young and, God willing, growing community of worshipers.*

*Fr. Nikolay Khalimonov, Priest-in-Charge, 323-851-7989, nkhalimonov@yahoo.com
Fr. Alexy Karlgut, Dean/Administrator, 607-759-1833*

Please join us for prayer and fellowship.

Upcoming Services:
Saturday, Sept 16, 23
Great Vespers: 5pm

Holy Prophet Jonah
September 22

Sunday, Sept 17, 24
Divine Liturgy: 10am
Coffee and fellowship
will follow the service



*The above services are
at St. Olympia Church
34 North Main Street
Norwood, NY, 13668*

*Mailing Address
St. Olympia Orthodox
Church PO Box 122
Canton, NY 13617*

**Conception of the Honorable Glorious Prophet,
Forerunner and Baptist John**
September 23

Be glad, O barren one who has not given birth until now, for behold, you have conceived the lamp of the Sun, and He shall enlighten all the earth, which is afflicted with blindness. Dance, O Zachariah, and cry out with boldness: The Prophet of the Most High is about to be born.

Troparion

The great and renowned Zachariah rejoices radiantly, and exults with his wife Elizabeth; for worthily does she conceive John the Baptist, whom the Archangel announced joyously, and men honor as an initiate of grace.

Kontakion

The Seal of the Prophets by Fr. Lawrence Farley **Reflections in Christ, June 22, 2018**

The importance of John the Baptizer may be gauged by the amount of paint and ink the Church spends on him. His portrait is painted and is found on every single icon-screen in all the churches, regardless of whether or not he is that church's patron saint. And many hymns have been written to celebrate his life... Fifty-seven feasts each year in fact: the feasts of his conception on September 23, his birth on June 24, his beheading on August 29, the Synaxis celebrating his role as the Lord's baptizer on January 7, the feasts of his relics on February 24 and May 25, and every Tuesday of the 52 weeks of the year, which celebrate him in the weekly liturgical cycle. That is a lot of feasts, requiring a lot of hymns.

This should only be expected for someone the Lord described as the greatest born of women (Matthew 11:11). Yet, as the Lord went on to say, even the least of those in the kingdom was greater than John, for John stood outside the coming kingdom, suffering death at the hands of Herod before he could enter it himself. John was, in fact, the embodiment of the Old Testament's message, and as such he stood at the end of the long line of sacred history. "All the prophets and the Law prophesied until John" (v.13), who was the final prophet, the seal of the prophets, for after him there could be no more Old Testament prophecy. He was the prophetic hinge, connecting the Old Covenant with the New. In his ministry and message we find the entirety of the Old Testament distilled and offered to the Church. Of that message, I would mention three things.

Firstly, John tells us to repent and that repentance is the only way to avoid the coming judgment of God. That judgment will be thorough — not a little pruning of a few stray sinful branches, but the felling of the whole tree. And repentance is urgently required, that that judgment is even now impending and threatening. The axe of divine judgment is being laid at the root to the tree; the first blow of the axe is imminent, and there is no time to lose.

One might perhaps imagine that being part of a religious body would be enough to save. It is not so. Many Jews imagined that as the children of Abraham and members of the Chosen People they were immune and safe from divine wrath. That wrath was for the Gentiles, not for Jews. They were the children of Abraham, and were therefore safe. John thundered against such presumption. Being a child of Abraham was no great thing: "Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham" (Matthew 3:9)...If the Jews of old were not saved by racial membership, neither are we Gentiles by ecclesiastical membership. What matters is repentance, which alone gives meaning to our inclusion in the Body of Christ. Repentance is not something we do before we can serve God; it is what serving God consists of.

Secondly, we may ask what do we repent of? What does God want from us? The Pharisees were sure that repentance consisted of scrupulous attention to the minutiae of the Law, and fastidious care in keeping the Sabbath and ritual purification. A truly devout person would wash one's hands before eating just in case they had contracted ceremonial defilement in the marketplace (see Mark 7:3f). Is that what repentance consists of? Does God primarily want us to be more religious? John taught otherwise. Repentance consisted of care for the poor and of contentment with one's lot. "He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise" (Luke 3:11). Notoriously sinful tax-collectors? Let them "collect no more than was appointed" for them, cheating no one. Soldiers? "Rob no one by violence, and be content with your wages" (v. 12-14).

Here we see the explication of the constant theme of the Old Testament prophets. All the prophets denounced social injustice and said that to know God was not to be religious, but to be kind to the poor (Jeremiah 22:16). One of them, Micah, summed it all up: "He has showed you, O man, what is good — what does Yahweh require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). The first and great commandment to love God manifests itself in its corollary, the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself. If you love God Whom you have not seen, you will surely also love your neighbor whom you have seen (1 John 4:20).

Thirdly, John teaches us that Christ is everything. Technically Jesus became John's disciple when He was baptized by him. Yet when John had his vision of a harmless dove descending upon Jesus after He was praying on the riverside after His baptism, John knew that Jesus was the sinless Messiah, the One Who would baptize in the Holy Spirit, the One Whose way he was preparing. When John's disciples found out that Jesus branched out on His own and was baptizing and making His own disciples, they were incensed and jealous on John's behalf. John was serene, recognizing in this the hand of God. Of course all men were going to Jesus and He was winning the hearts of Israel. Should not the bridegroom win the bride? John was simply the friend of the bridegroom, the Best Man, and like the Best Man he rejoiced to see the bridegroom win his bride. "He must increase, and I must decrease" (John 4:25-30).

John speaks these words to us as well. When our egos swell and we become angry at others, this is the sign that we must decrease, and let our egos shrink back to a normal size. Jesus Christ must increase in our lives so that all our attention is on Him. John was not just the Baptizer, he was the Forerunner, and his life had no other purpose than to reveal Christ and prepare His way. From his place on our icon-screens, John tells us that we also have no other purpose but to serve the Lord.

Saints of September 24



Synaxis of All Saints of Alaska

On the anniversary of the arrival of the Russian missionaries in Alaska (1794), we remember the New Martyrs Saint Peter the Aleut, Protomartyr of America, and Saint Juvenal.

Today Alaska rejoices and America celebrates, for the new world has been sanctified by martyrdom Kodiak echoes with songs of thanksgiving, Iliamna and Kenai observe the festival of faith. The Apostle and martyr Juvenaly is glorified, and Peter the Aleut is exalted by his voluntary sacrifice, in their devotion and love for the Lord they willingly endured persecution and death for the Truth, now in the Kingdom of Heaven they intercede for our souls!

Today Valaam joins Alaska in celebrating this joyous feast, as her spiritual son Juvenaly embraces the new martyr Peter with love. Together they suffered for the Lord in America and united the old world with the new by their voluntary sacrifice. Now forever they stand before the King of glory and intercede for our souls.

Protomartyr and Equal of the Apostles Thekla

You were enlightened by the words of Paul, O Bride of God, Thekla, and your faith was confirmed by Peter, O Chosen One of God. You became the first sufferer and martyr among women, by entering into the flames as into a place of gladness. For when you accepted the Cross of Christ, the demonic powers were frightened away. O all-praised One, intercede before Christ God that our souls may be saved.

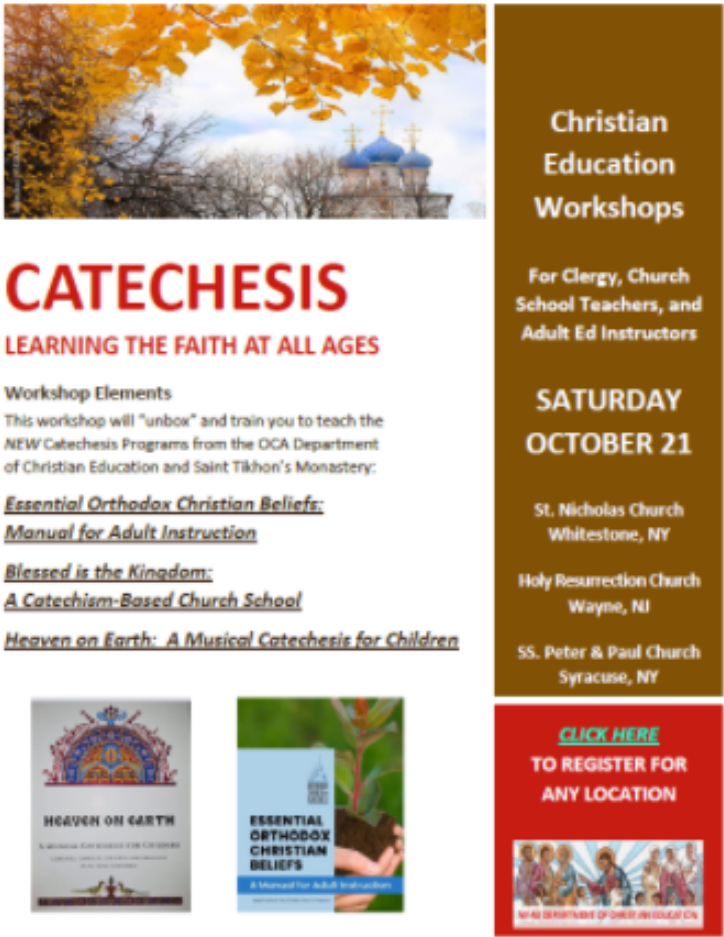
O glorious Thekla, virginity was your splendor, the crown of martyrdom your adornment and the faith you trust! You turned a burning fire into refreshing dew, and with your prayers appeased pagan fury, O First Woman Martyr!

Venerable Silouan of Mount Athos

O all-blessed Father Silouan, flaming zealot of the seraphim's love for the Lord and fervent imitator of Jeremiah who wept for the people, hearing the call of the Mother of the Lord of Hosts, with wise courage you spewed out the sinful serpent and withdrew from the snares of the world to the mountain of Athos, where in labors and prayer, joined with tears, in abundance you acquired the grace of the holy Spirit with which our hearts are enflamed. Being strengthened by you, we cry out with compunction: My Lord, my Life and the Joy of your saint, save the world and us from all cruel things!

O Silouan, beloved of God, truly amazing preacher of humility and radiance warmed by the love for mankind of the Holy Spirit: The Russian Church rejoices in your labors. All monks on the Athonite mountain and all Christian people are rejoicing as well, turning themselves towards God with the love of children. Beseech Him for us, you who have seen God and are equal to the angels, that burning with your love our souls may be saved.

**ANNOUNCING
DIOCESAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WORKSHOPS,
Saturday, October 21, 2023
In All Three Deaneries
10 AM to 3 PM**



Christian Education Workshops

For Clergy, Church School Teachers, and Adult Ed Instructors

**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 21**

St. Nicholas Church
Whitestone, NY

Holy Resurrection Church
Wayne, NJ

SS. Peter & Paul Church
Syracuse, NY

[CLICK HERE](#)
TO REGISTER FOR
ANY LOCATION



CATECHESIS
LEARNING THE FAITH AT ALL AGES

Workshop Elements
This workshop will “unbox” and train you to teach the NEW Catechesis Programs from the OCA Department of Christian Education and Saint Tikhon’s Monastery:

*Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs:
Manual for Adult Instruction*

*Blessed is the Kingdom:
A Catechism-Based Church School*

Heaven on Earth: A Musical Catechesis for Children



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Sign up link is on the Diocesan website: “*Click Here*” on the poster

PARISH WISH LIST

A wish list to help our parish grow!

SPECIAL, one-time needs or items

A **Changing Table** for our newly remodeled, accessible restroom

RECURRING needs:

Paper Plates (small and large), **Paper Bowls**, **Hot Cups**

Napkins

Plastic Utensils, especially **Forks**

Paper Towels

Toilet Paper

Holy Mother Olympia, pray to God for us!

UPCOMING DIOCESAN & PARISH EVENTS

Presbyter's Council Meeting

Thursday, September 28, at 1:00 PM

Diocesan Chancery, Bronxville NY

St Olympia Parish Council Meeting

Monday, October 2, 7:30 PM via Google Meet

WEEKDAY VESPERS 5 PM AT THE HERMITAGE OF ST OLYMPIA

For information please contact Mother Sophronia at mothersophronia@gmail.com

or via Facebook: Nun Sophronia Hofstead.

Afterfeast of the Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross September 15-21



O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by the virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.

Troparion

As Thou was mercifully crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Thy name; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace.

Kontakion