



*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.

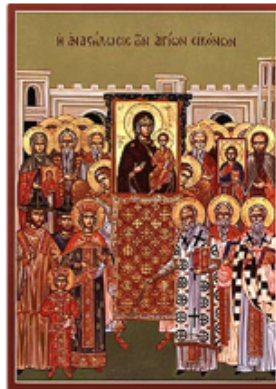
Upcoming Services:
Saturday, March 4, 11
Great Vespers: 5pm

**1st Sunday of Great Lent: Sunday of Orthodoxy
 March 5**

Sunday, March 5, 12
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*



Sunday of Orthodoxy

*No one could describe the Word of the
 Father; but when He took flesh from you, O
 Theotokos, He accepted to be described, and
 restored the fallen image to its former state
 by uniting it to divine beauty. We confess and
 proclaim our salvation in word and images.*
 Kontakion

Mailing Address
St. Olympia Orthodox Church
PO Box 122 Canton, NY13617

**Pan-Orthodox Sunday Vespers
 5 PM, March 5**

While our parish is not able to have our own Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers, we do encourage you to attend (virtually) a very special Pan-Orthodox service this Sunday evening, March 5th, at 5 pm. It will be live-streamed from St. George Antiochian Church in West Roxbury, MA.

Orthodox clergy and parishioners from ten churches and six jurisdictions from the Boston area will come together to pray. Our own Head Chanter/Choir Director, Jessica Suchy-Pilalis was invited to compose a number of hymns especially for this service. There will be two choirs: a chant choir directed by Charlie Marge, the director of the Boston Byzantine Choir, and a separate choir for choral music directed by Teri Stevens. There will be a variety of music traditions from the various parishes and the service will be in English.

With the blessing of Father Alexy, let us join them in prayer at www.stgeorgeofboston.org

Uncovering of the Precious Cross and the Precious Nails by Empress Saint Helen in Jerusalem

March 6

The Holy Empress Helen uncovered the Precious Cross and Nails of the Lord at Jerusalem in 326.

At the beginning of the reign of Saint Constantine the Great (306-337), the first Roman emperor to recognize Christianity, he and his pious mother Saint Helen decided to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. They also planned to build a church on the site of the Lord's suffering and Resurrection, in order to reconsecrate and purify the places connected with the Savior's death and Resurrection from the foul taint of paganism.

The empress Helen journeyed to Jerusalem with a large quantity of gold. Saint Constantine wrote a letter to Patriarch Macarius I (313-323), requesting him to assist her in every possible way with her task of the restoring the Christian holy places.

After her arrival in Jerusalem, the holy empress Helen began to destroy all the pagan temples and reconsecrate the places which had been defiled by the pagans.

In her quest for the Life-Creating Cross, she questioned several Christians and Jews, but for a long time her search remained unsuccessful. Finally, an elderly Hebrew named Jude told her that the Cross was buried beneath the temple of Venus. Saint Helen ordered that the pagan temple be demolished, and for the site to be excavated. Soon they found Golgotha and the Lord's Sepulchre. Not far from the spot were three crosses, a board with the inscription written by Pilate (John 19:19), and four nails which had pierced the Lord's Body.

Now the task was to determine on which of the three crosses the Savior had been crucified. Patriarch Macarius saw a dead person being carried to his grave, then he ordered that the dead man be placed upon each cross in turn. When the corpse was placed on the Cross of Christ, he was immediately restored to life. After seeing the raising of the dead man, everyone was convinced that the Life-Creating Cross had been found. With great joy the empress Helen and Patriarch Macarius lifted the Life-Creating Cross and displayed it to all the people standing about.

Uncovering of the Precious Cross March 6



40 Holy Martyrs of Sebaste March 9

In the year 313 Saint Constantine the Great issued an edict granting Christians religious freedom, and officially recognizing Christianity as equal with paganism under the law. But his co-ruler Licinius was a pagan, and he decided to stamp out Christianity in his part of the Empire. As Licinius prepared his army to fight Constantine, he decided to remove Christians from his army, fearing mutiny.

One of the military commanders of that time in the Armenian city of Sebaste was Agricola, a zealous champion of idolatry. Under his command was a company of forty Cappadocians, brave soldiers who had distinguished themselves in many battles. When these Christian soldiers refused to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, Agricola

locked them up in prison. The soldiers occupied themselves with prayer and psalmody, and during the night they heard a voice saying, "Persevere until the end, then you shall be saved."

On the following morning, the soldiers were again taken to Agricola. This time the pagan tried flattery. He began to praise their valor, their youth and strength, and once more he urged them to renounce Christ and thereby win themselves the respect and favor of their emperor.

Seven days later, the renowned judge Licius arrived at Sebaste and put the soldiers on trial. The saints steadfastly answered, "Take not only our military insignia, but also our lives, since nothing is more precious to us than Christ God." Licius then ordered his servants to stone the holy martyrs. But the stones missed the saints and returned to strike those who had thrown them. One stone thrown by Licius hit Agricola in the face, smashing his teeth. The torturers realized that the saints were guarded by some invisible power. In prison, the soldiers spent the night in prayer and again they heard the voice of the Lord comforting them: "He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live (John 11:25). Be brave and fear not, for you shall obtain imperishable crowns."

On the following day the judge repeated the interrogation in front of the torturer, but the soldiers remained unyielding. It was winter, and there was a severe frost. They lined up the holy soldiers, threw them into a lake near the city, and set a guard to prevent them from coming out of the water. In order to break the will of the martyrs, a warm bathhouse was set up on the shore. During the first hour of the night, when the cold had become unbearable, one of the soldiers made a dash for the bathhouse, but no sooner had he stepped over the threshold, then he fell down dead.

During the third hour of the night, the Lord sent consolation to the martyrs. Suddenly there was light, the ice melted away, and the water in the lake became warm. All the guards were asleep, except for Aglaius, who was keeping watch. Looking at the lake he saw that a radiant crown had appeared over the head of each martyr. Aglaius counted thirty-nine crowns and realized that the soldier who fled had lost his crown. Aglaius then woke up the other guards, took off his uniform and said to them, "I too am a Christian," and he joined the martyrs. Standing in the water he prayed, "Lord God, I believe in You, in Whom these soldiers believe. Add me to their number, and make me worthy to suffer with Your servants." Then a fortieth crown appeared over his head.

In the morning, the torturers saw with surprise that the martyrs were still alive, and their guard Aglaius was glorifying Christ together with them. They led the soldiers out of the water and broke their legs. During this horrible execution the mother of the youngest of the soldiers, Meliton, pleaded with her son to persevere until death. They put the bodies of the martyrs on a cart and committed them to fire. Young Meliton was still breathing, and they left him on the ground. His mother then picked up her son, and on her own shoulders she carried him behind the cart. When Meliton drew his last breath, his mother put him on the cart with the bodies of his fellow sufferers. The bodies of the saints were tossed in the fire, and their charred bones were thrown into the water, so that Christians would not gather them up.

Three days later the martyrs appeared in a dream to Saint Peter, Bishop of Sebaste, and commanded him to bury their remains. The bishop together with several clergy gathered up the relics of the glorious martyrs by night and buried them with honor.

The names of the forty martyrs are: Cyrion, Candidus, Domnus, Hesychius, Heraclius, Smaragdus, Eunocius, Valens, Vivianus, Claudius, Priscus, Theodulus, Euty chius, John, Xanthius, Helianus, Sisinius, Aggias, Aetius, Flavius, Acacius, Ecdicius, Lysimachus, Alexander, Elias, Gorgonius, Theophilus, Dometian, Gaius, Leontuis, Athanasius, Cyril, Sacerdon, Nicholas, Valerius, Philoctimon, Severian, Chudion, Aglaius, and Meliton.

Forty Martyrs of Sebaste

March 9

Let us honor those noble soldiers of the Master of all, for they were united by their faith as they passed through fire and water; and being enlisted by Christ, they entered into divine refreshment. Now those pious warriors stand and intercede with Christ God for those who cry out: "Glory to Him Who strengthened you. Glory to Him Who crowned you. Glory to Him Who made you wondrous, O Forty Martyrs."

Troparion



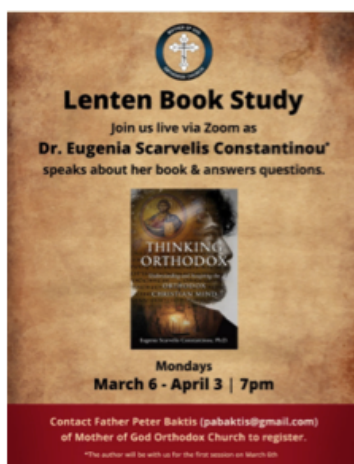
UPCOMING DIOCESAN & PARISH EVENTS

St Olympia Orthodox Church – Parish Council Meeting
7:30 PM Tuesday, March 7, 2023 via Google Meet
Contact a Council member to log on.

ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL'S NEXT VISIT TO OUR PARISH – WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29 FOR PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY

Diocesan Council Meeting
Thursday, March 23 at 11:00 AM
Diocesan Chancery, Bronxville NY

LENTEEN STUDY POSSIBILITIES
(check the Diocesan website for more information www.nynjoca.org)



WEEKDAY VESPERS AT THE HERMITAGE OF ST OLYMPIA Weekdays at 4 PM

For information please contact Mother Sophronia at mothersophronia@gmail.com
or via Facebook: Nun Sophronia Hofstead

**The person that is struggling to the best of his abilities,
who has no desire to live a disorderly life,
but who—in the course of the struggle for faith and life—falls and rises again and again,
God will never abandon.**

**And if he has the slightest will not to grieve God,
he will go to Paradise with his shoes on.**

**The Benevolent God will, surprisingly, push him into Paradise.
God will insure that he takes him at his best, in repentance.
He may have to struggle all his life, but God will not abandon him;
He will take him at the best possible time.**

St. Paisios the Athonite