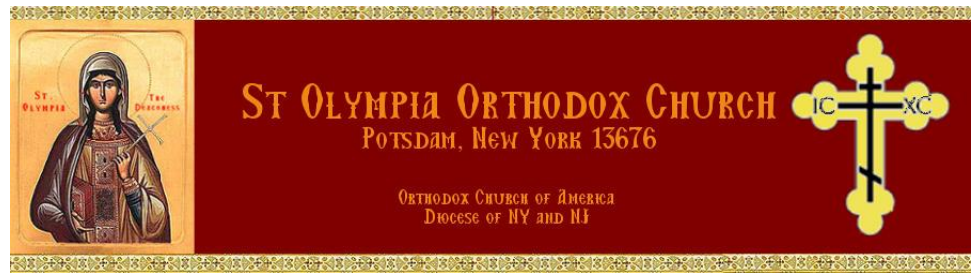


**Week of  
December 5, 2016**



**You can reach Fr. Luke at  
frlukacs@gmail.com or at  
(613) 925-3004**

**Leave a clear message with  
your phone number.**

Welcome to St. Olympia Orthodox Church, a young and, God willing, growing community of worshippers. Divine Liturgies are held every Sunday at 123 Main Street in Potsdam are primarily in English. You can learn more about us on Facebook and at [www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org](http://www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org)

## **Another Milestone – St Olympia Orthodox Church is Officially Tax Exempt**

Yesterday, we received official notice and documentation that St. Olympia Orthodox Church is a non-profit organization as part of the Orthodox Church of America under section 501 (C) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code. **All donations to St. Olympia Orthodox Church are now tax exempt.** As 2016 draws to a close, please consider giving a tax-exempt donation for the growth of our parish. Greg Kalicin, Parish Council Treasurer, will issue receipts upon request.

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### *Holiday Service Schedule:*

December 24<sup>th</sup> 4:00 pm  
(Saturday)  
**Christmas Eve Vigil**

December 25<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am  
(Sunday)  
**Christmas Liturgy**

January 1<sup>st</sup> 10:00 am  
(Sunday)  
**Liturgy of St. Basil &  
Circumcision of our Lord**

January 6<sup>th</sup> 10 am  
(Friday)  
**Liturgy for Epiphany  
and Blessing of the  
Waters**

## **Parish Council Takes Oath to Serve**



Yesterday, Fr. Luke blessed the members of St. Olympia Parish Council after administering the oath of office: Left to right: Jessica Suchy-Pilalis, Julio Gurrea, Fr. Luke Majoros, Cynthia Eyler, Greg Kalicin and Peggy Wheeler.

## Sanctified Time

### Fourth week of the Nativity Fast



We have journeyed past the mid-point of the fast and the first of the two preparatory Sundays, the Sunday of Forefathers, is on Dec 11th this year. On Dec. 9th we celebrate the memory of two outstanding women of faith and forebears of the Lord, the Righteous Prophetess Hanna and Saint Anna.

Both of these women lived Godly lives but were childless. In their times barrenness was seen as a sign the God had withdrawn His blessing from them and their spouses; it was not only a source of personal sorrow, but public humiliation as well. They both poured out their hearts to God, begging Him to send them a child. When God answered Hannah's prayer and she conceived Samuel she promised him to the Lord's service, and when she took the boy to the priest Eli at Shiloh she offered up a prophetic prayer which the Church continues to repeat as a Matins biblical canticle and which is remarkably similar to the prayer of the Theotokos sung at Matins daily. Saint Anna had given up hope of bearing a child since she was elderly but she prayed fervently to God to remove her disgrace. An angel visited her while at prayer in her garden and told her that she would conceive a child by Joachim her husband who had also been informed of the forthcoming miracle. Anna and Joachim also pledged the child to the service of God and, as we celebrated Nov. 21st, they took her to be raised in the Temple of the Lord.



The Old Testament mentality treated childlessness and personal tragedy and loss as a Divine judgment against a person for sin, thus Job says: "the Lord gives and the Lord takes away", and Hannah in her prayer says; "the Lord kills and the Lord makes alive." But the Fathers of the Christian Church saw it differently in light of the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ. It is in suffering that righteousness is clearly revealed. God revealed Job as a model of righteousness and perseverance and in the end restored to him, in the sight of his scoffers, all that he had lost as a sign of His favor. The child granted to Hannah and Elkanah would be a prophet in Israel who would anoint David as King. And it would be from the lineage of David that Jesus would be born many generations later by the offspring of Anna and Joachim. Both Samuel and Mary the Theotokos were clearly born by the will and grace of God acting in the lives of their righteous parents. St. Anna continues to this day to be venerated as the intercessor for the childless before God and many miracles are attributed to her intercession. St. Tikhon's Monastery in Waymart, PA, is home to the myrrh-streaming icon of St. Anna holding the Theotokos.

--Mother Sophronia

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***“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.”***

***(Colossians 3:23-24)***

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## Opportunity to Serve

There is an opening on the Parish Council for a sixth member. This is an exciting time of growth for our parish. If you would like to serve, please contact Cindy Eyler.

The Parish Council would like to express gratitude to Jim Pullano for the service he gave in spite of the many time and travel conflicts that he faced.

## New Additions to our Parish Library

**Christ at Work: Orthodox Christian Perspectives on Vocation** ed. by Anne Mitsakos Bezzerides. This book is the product of a grant from the Lily Foundation for the theological exploration of vocation. There is a companion study guide. It includes the following essays:

*Pursuing the Mind of Christ: Lessons on Vocation from the Old Testament* by Paul Tarazi

*Seek First His Kingdom: An Invitation to Christian Vocation* by John Barnet

*“A Life Worthy of God:” Vocation according to St. Paul* by Theodore Sylianopoulos

*Considering Vocation: The Witness of the Fathers* by Khaled Anatolios

*In the Image of God: Mystical Theology and Secular Vocations* by Demetrios S. Katos

*The Call of the Virgin Mary* by Deborah Belonick

*Vocation and Ethics* by Stanley Harakas

*The Priesthood of the Laity* by Paul Meyendorff

**Guide to Byzantine Iconography, Vol. 2** by Constantine Cavarnos. Detailed, illustrated explanation of ten major icons of the festal cycle and of the iconography of God (the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit), of the Theotokos, of St. John the Baptist and of the Angels, followed by illuminating remarks of St. Nectarios and Phtios Kontoglou on iconographic “Types” and “Archtypes.” (from the back cover)

**Where Moth and Rust do not Consume: An Anthology on Christian Giving** by Anthony M. Coniaris

## Greek Pastry Sale in Watertown

St. Vasilios Greek Orthodox Church at 502 Franklin Street in Watertown, NY, is holding its annual Greek Pastry and Bread Sale this Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 6 pm and Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup> from 9 am until they are sold out (usually fairly early). The pastries are made by members of the parish and are absolutely wonderful!



## Save the Dates

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*I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess.*

*--Anonymous*

Archbishop Michael's next visits to Potsdam will be:

- Wednesday, March 22, 2017, for Presanctified Liturgy
- Saturday-Sunday, September 9-10

## Two Diocesan Events this Weekend

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Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church ~ Syracuse NY



You are cordially invited to the  
**Annual Advent Retreat**  
 "The Book of JOB and Suffering"  
 given by  
**Archbishop Michael**  
 December 10th, 10 am - 4 pm

10 am - Akathist  
*First Session*  
 Light Lunch Provided  
*Second Session*  
 Confessions  
 5 pm Great Vespers

RSVP by leaving a message at (315) 468-0442  
 (for meal planning purposes, please)

## The Two Comings of Christ

a retreat given by Drs. David & Mary Ford

**Saturday, December 10th, 2016**  
 Christ the Saviour Church in Paramus, New Jersey

**Divine Liturgy – 9am**  
*followed by Agape*

**Session I – 11am**