

## Week of February 12th 2017

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Please leave a clear  
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### Next Divine Liturgy

February 19th  
Sunday of the Last  
Judgement  
(Meatfare Sunday)

123 Main Street  
Potsdam, NY  
10:00 am

Lunch and fellowship  
to follow

### A Special Gift

The icon below arrived last Sunday as we celebrated our anniversary. It is known as the icon of the Theotokos - Burning Bush and is from Mother Seraphima who lives in Ottawa. She had commissioned this icon which was written through the hand of our beloved Mother Sophronia. Because Mother Seraphima is moving to new quarters, she gifted the icon to our church with the request that we remember her in our prayers.



This icon is based on the miracle witnessed by Moses in the Old Testament. In Exodus, God calls to Moses on Mt. Horeb from the midst of a bush which "was burning, yet it was not consumed." The Church has always regarded the Unburnt Bush as a type (*typos*) of the Most Holy Theotokos giving birth to the Savior Christ, while remaining a Virgin. This imagery is to be found in the Church's hymnography and, as seen here, in iconography, where the burning bush is shown symbolically by the red-orange background and the unconsumed part in the mandorla (the blue area). In this icon, we also see the Mary holding Jacob's ladder (Gen. 28:12) which leads from earth to heaven, another Old Testament type or prefiguring of her role in the history of salvation.

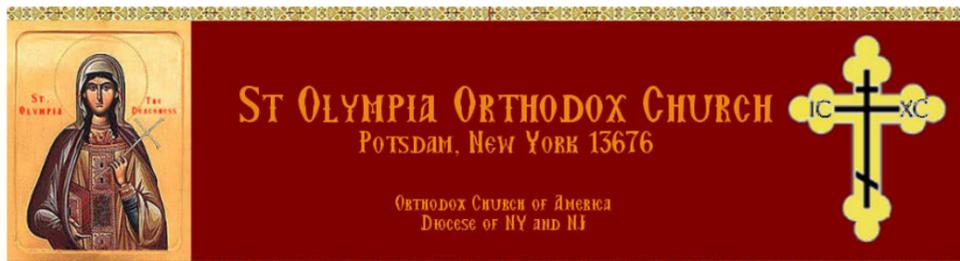
### Lenten Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

O Lord  
and Master of my life,  
take from me  
the spirit of slothfulness,  
faint-heartedness,  
lust for power  
and idle talk.

But give rather the spirit of  
chastity,  
humility,  
patience  
and love  
to your servant.

Yea, O Lord and King,  
grant me to see my own  
errors and not to judge my brother,  
for Thou art blessed  
unto ages of ages.

Amen.



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

Join us for prayer and fellowship. Divine Liturgies are held every Sunday and are primarily in English.

Visit us on Facebook or [www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org](http://www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org)



Our Orthodox Future

### Celebrating our Fifth Anniversary!

This past Sunday, St. Olympia Orthodox Church celebrated its fifth anniversary as a parish. Through God's grace, Vladyka Michael's steadfast support, and Vladyka Irene's generosity (enabling our priests, first Fr. David Edwards and now Fr. Luke Majoros, to serve us), our parish has blossomed. We began our first service in a lounge at SUNY-Potsdam and now have a beautiful, albeit small, chapel (and we still hold services on the campus occasionally).

It's hard to believe that in five short years we've grown from having only two liturgies a month to weekly Sunday liturgies and occasional feastday liturgies, and are poised to begin having Saturday vespers in the near future. We are the only Orthodox church in the largest county in New York State and most people who worship here live within a 35 mile radius. Our parishioners have included long-time Orthodox residents, undergraduate and graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and their families, as well as converts and others who are exploring our ancient faith as prayed and lived today. We are ethnically varied: Russian, Greek, Ukrainian, Middle Eastern, Albanian... and also converts from various backgrounds. Although we worship primarily in English, it is a good thing that Fr. Luke is a polyglot!

Through Vladyka Michael's involvement and support, we have had a campus lecture/presentation at least once a year. We have participated in food and clothing drives, assembled emergency relief kits and sent help to work on the new living quarters for Fr. Luke and his fellow monastics. We have had outreach services in churches in Potsdam and Canton.

Our library has grown to almost 400 titles, including writings of the Church Fathers, lives of saints, general introductions to the Orthodox faith, comparative religion, commentaries on Scripture, church history, pastoral concerns and Orthodox living, liturgics, iconography and hymnography. We have a small book store/gift shop.

For the first time, our Parish Council has approved an annual operating budget of \$12,500. We have established formal stewardship. It is a modest beginning and we can do more!

Now we must begin to look to the next five years and beyond. Our current chapel is only a temporary space. The property is not, and cannot be, zoned for church use. Not only is the chapel small with little room for growth, but without appropriate zoning, we cannot legally publicize the location of the church and therefore our ability to let the "Northodox" know that we are here is severely hampered. We need to move! To that end, a building fund has been established.

Help us to grow into more vibrant worshipping community, to deepen our roots and broaden our reach. We need your prayers and your financial support. All donations to the St. Olympia Building Fund or toward the stewardship of the parish are tax deductible. Checks may be made out to "St. Olympia Orthodox Church" and sent to Greg Kalicin, Treasurer, St. Olympia Orthodox Church, 123 Main St., Potsdam, NY 13676.

### Welcome to our Parish

We warmly welcome Elias Gantos to our parish. Elias is a freshman in Engineering and Management at Clarkson University. His hometown is Syracuse. God works in mysterious ways: recently, Elias had a telephone interview for a summer counseling position at Antiochian Village. His interviewer, who had studied Byzantine chant, made the connection between the locations of Clarkson and SUNY-Potsdam, and sent Elias contact information. Lo and behold, Elias discovered St. Olympia Orthodox Church! We look forward to have him worshipping with us and we appreciate his enthusiasm to find other Orthodox students at Clarkson!



### Save the Dates

Archbishop Michael's next visits to Potsdam will be:

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