

**Week of
March 26th
2017**

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

Please leave a clear
message and include your
phone number

Next Divine Liturgy

**April 2nd
Sunday of
St. Mary of Egypt
10:00 am**

*Lenten lunch and
fellowship to follow*

All welcome!

**St. Olympia Chapel
123 Main Street
Potsdam, NY**



This past Sunday, we had the pleasure of welcoming Helen Revelas from Corning, NY. She is shown with her God-daughter, parishioner Emma Trulock.

Praying with the Psalms Building our Relationship with God

(from the writings of
St. Theophan the Recluse)

For Repentance; Asking for Forgiveness

Psalm 50/51* – “Have mercy
on me, O God...”

Praise and Worship of God

Psalm 102/103 – “Bless the
Lord, O my soul...”

Psalm 145/146 – “Praise the
Lord, O my soul...”

Building Trust in God

Psalm 22/23—“The Lord is my
Shepherd...”

Psalm 23/24—“The earth is the
Lord’s and the fullness there-
of...”

Psalm 115/116—“I believed,
wherefore, I spoke...”

Requesting the Lord’s help

Psalm 69/70—“O God, be at-
tentive unto helping me...”

**Septuagint numbering/Hebrew bible
numbering*

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.

Opportunities to Give

Our church still needs the fol-
lowing items for Holy Week
and Pascha. If you would like
to contribute, please contact
suchyjr@potsdam.edu

**Palm buds for Palm Sunday
Flowers for Holy Friday
and Pascha**

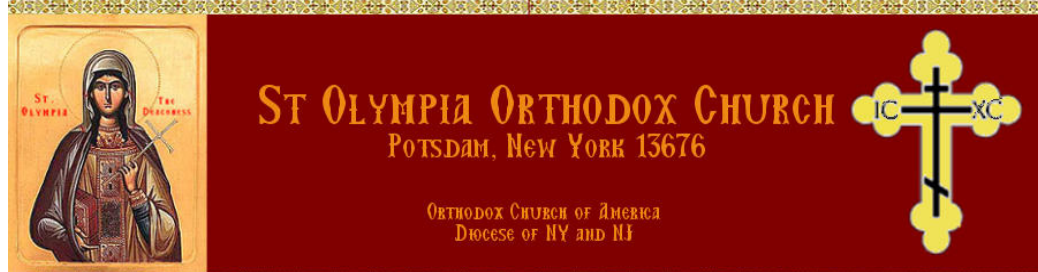
Planning Ahead

Archbishop Michael’s next visits
to Potsdam will be:

**Saturday-Sunday,
September 9-10, 2017**

Yard Sale

Our parish is planning a yard
sale inspired by items donated by
Mother Sophronia. The sale will-
benefit our building fund will be
held on a Saturday after Pascha.
Please keep this in mind as you
begin spring cleaning so that we
can grow the sale with your items.



**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



Parish News

On Wednesday evening, March 22nd, Vladyka Michael celebrated the Presanctified Liturgy with us last Thursday and spoke to use about spiritual striving and growth, and the frequent reading of seven psalms as recommended by St. Theophan the Recluse (see sidebar).

At the invitation of Vladyka Michael, three members of our parish council, Cindy Eyer, president, Greg Kalicin, treasurer, and Peggy Wheeler, secretary, attended the OCA Diocese of NY/NJ spring meeting of the New York State Deanery held on Thursday, March 23rd, in Syracuse, NY. Our representatives began by introducing St. Olympia’s troparion which was sung by all, and then gave short PowerPoint presentation that summarized for the audience our parish history, North Country life and ministry. The priests were very receptive; they listened carefully and offered prayers and assistance. It was exciting to see our priests and deacons gathered together with our bishop; to see their joy in the Lord and their enthusiasm for ministry. What a blessing for our parish to have their support!

The Fifth Sunday of Great Lent - St. Mary of Egypt

*The image of God was truly preserved in you, mother,
for you took up the Cross and followed Christ.
By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh, for it passes away,
but to care instead for the soul, since it is immortal.
Therefore your spirit, holy mother Mary, rejoices with the angels!*

Apolytikion (hymn) in Mode 4 Plagal

From the Foot of the Cross to the Topmost Rung of St. John’s Ladder The Personal Witness of St. Mary of Egypt

After the first three weeks of ascetical fasting, prayer and almsgiving as preparation, we Orthodox were presented with the Life Giving Cross of the Lord to bow down before and venerate. On the Sunday just passed, we praised the journey from an earthbound and corruptible life to a spiritual eternal heavenly life envisioned by St. John of Sinai as a ladder of Divine Ascent. As Father Luke so aptly demonstrated in his homily during the Divine Liturgy at Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery, the essential first step on this ladder is our humility before God. Seeing ourselves for who we really are in relation to God our creator and sustainer, we are able to begin advancing upward.

This coming Sunday, and during this 5th week of Lent at the service of Matins with the reading of the life of Mary of Egypt, we are presented with the personal story of one (of the many) who succeeded in making it to the top of the ladder. It is a story related for the most part both in her own words and in the words of St. Zozimas, a fellow ascetic who was seeking monastic perfection.

Addicted to satisfying her craving for sensual pleasures and power over others, Mary had no regard at all for God or for her fellow human beings as persons bearing God’s image. In Jerusalem on a pleasure-seeking voyage, she followed the crowd of sincere pilgrims to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. But an unseen force prevented her from entering the nave of the church. This grace-bearing jolt to Mary’s ego, in front of the icon of the Holy Theotokos, was God’s gift to her of an opportunity to begin a repentant life “across the Jordan.” At the end of her very hidden life on earth she was revealed to St. Zozimas, and through him to us, as having acquired theosis by the grace of God through her struggles with her passions. Once, her will was a total slave to the passionate cravings of her body and the whims of her emotional thoughts, yet she gained the ability to walk over the waters of the Jordan by the power of her faith, making the sign of the Cross upon the river.

When we take time during this week to read or hear read Mary’s story, may we be encouraged to follow her example. May we embrace the gift of repentance that God is offering us in these days of Lent by the prayers of St. Mary and the Holy Theotokos.

--Mother Sophronia



This icon shows St. Mary of Egypt transformed by her repentance and her ascetical struggles. She is no longer physically beautiful but rather exudes a spiritual “grace” and lightness. Her gesture indicates her humility, as does St. Zosimas’ offering of the Eucharist (her request of him at their first encounter). The Jordan river is in the background, dividing the landscape, and the colors of the mountains and desert are arid, reflecting the harshness of her life.

To read the full vita of St. Mary of Egypt as written by Sophronios of Jerusalem in the 7th century go to <http://www.antiochian.org/stmaryofegypt>