

Week of August 13th 2017

You can reach Fr. Luke at frlukacs@gmail.com

For emergencies, phone (315) 322-8425

Please leave a clear message and include your phone number

Next Services

Monday, August 14th
Great Vespers at 5:00 pm

Tuesday, August 15th
The Dormition of the Theotokos

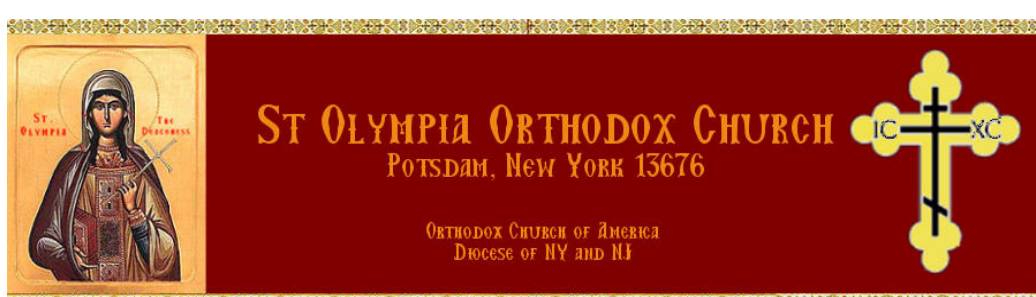
Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

Saturday, August 19th
Great Vespers at 5:00 pm

Fr. Luke is available to hear confessions following the service

Sunday, August 20th
Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

St. Olympia Chapel
123 Main Street
Potsdam, NY



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. Fr. Luke Majoros is our presbyter.

Visit us on Facebook or www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org

Parish Rummage Sale

to benefit our building fund

Saturday, August 26th 2017, 9 am - 3 pm

HELP WANTED!

Please contact Peggy Wheeler at pwheeler@stringpedagogy.com to let her know what days/hours you are available to help. Opportunities are:

Friday, August 25th 1 pm - 8 pm - price and organize items

Saturday, August 26th 8 am - 9 am - Set up
9 am - 3 pm - Staffing the sale
3 pm - 4 pm - Clean-up

If you are contributing items, please pre-price them. Donations may be dropped off after Liturgy on August 20th or on Friday, August 25th. If these times are not convenient, contact Peggy Wheeler for an alternative.

Sanctified Leadership

Note: the following article has been written by an anonymous contributor. It is included here by permission.

In Ecclesiastes 1:9, a world-weary King Solomon laments, "That which has been is what will be; that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun." He laments that nothing ever changes, that nobody ever learns from history. True! Consider the Christians at Corinth 2,000 years ago. They'd developed strong loyalties to different leaders in the Church. Now, there's nothing wrong with appreciating one's pastor or Bishop. But those guys lost sight of the fact that the Church has only one true Head, Shepherd and focus: the risen Lord Jesus Christ; leaders are only Christ's servants and under-shepherds.

Have you and I learned from their mistakes? Not really. Too many people and parishes still either put their pastor or Bishop up on an impossibly high pedestal that they're shattered when his fallen humanity peeks through and he proves himself a sinner just like the rest of us; or they have impossibly high expectations that no human being could ever meet, and feel cheated when Fr. Whoever works no miracles. But 1 Corinthians 3:9-17 teaches solid lessons on the true nature of the Church and church leadership.

Firstly, **leaders are servants**. Our reading begins at verse 9; but note in verse 5 how St. Paul asks, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one." That word "minister" is *diakonos*, from which we get the word "deacon," which means "a waiter, one who serves at table;" and in the culture of that day, the *diakonos* was only one step up from a slave. Well, those who serve in positions of leadership in the Church---whether that be deacon, priest, bishop, parish council member, church-school teacher, secretary, kids'-camp leader, what-ever---need to remember that they are **not** "franchise owners" of their position, but servants of Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Church, tasked with carrying out their responsibilities as the Lord has assigned to each; and to do so in imitation of the Master Who, in Matthew 20:28, tells the apostles He's training to be leaders that He Himself, "the Son of Man, did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Secondly, in verse 6-7, the Apostle teaches that **leaders do not achieve results; God does**. "I planted, Apollos watered, but **God** gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but **God** Who gives the increase." If we expect leaders to "fix" everything that's wrong, rebuild and restore what is fallen, bring in new members, produce a budget surplus, and make our parish the envy of the world, we're doomed to bitter disappointment. In and of themselves, human leaders can accomplish **nothing** of lasting good. Rather, as God Himself tells us in Zechariah 4:6, it's "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD." So without the inspiration, leading, and power of the Holy Spirit, neither individuals nor committees nor synods nor councils can produce anything other than hot air and an all-too-brief flash in the pan. If we want positive results that will last, it is to God we must look, with repentance, constant prayer, fasting, surrendered obedience, and diligence in the gifts He has given us for the common good.

Thirdly, in verses 8-9, we learn that **leaders are not solo stars but teammates**: "Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building." Leaders share in one and the same purpose: to be used by God to help the Church grow and bear fruit, that is, to gather, nurture and equip believers. And because, as Romans 12:6 teaches, we do have "gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us," getting anything positive accomplished is always a team effort of pooled gifts, pooled efforts, and pooled prayer. And note in verse 9 how the Apostle stresses that the Church is **God's** field, not ours; **God's** building, not ours. God is the owner; and leaders are simply servants of God, doing what He has called them to do. And that's our next lesson: that **the Church belongs to God**. Holy Trinity Orthodox Church is not my church, not your church, not our church; it's either God's Church, or it's not the Church at all. God is the owner; and to God belongs all the glory, all the praise, all the credit, as the Lord Jesus reminds us in Luke 17:10, "So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

Because the Church belongs to God, **the Church must be built on God's foundation**. St. Paul switches from agriculture to architecture when he says in verse 10-11, "According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise [or, skilled] master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it." Why? "For **no** other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Christian faith and the Christian Church are not primarily about morality or philosophy, but, says Philippians 3:8-10, about Jesus Christ, "that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings." That's the Church's one and only foundation. Get that wrong, and the whole building will collapse.

Further, **the Church must be built with God's materials, according to God's blueprints**. In verses 12-13, Paul warns: "Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw---each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done." How and on what we've built our lives as individuals and as the Church **will** be tested by the scrutiny of that God Who, says Hebrews 12:29, is "a consuming fire." And that judgment has only two possible outcomes. Verse 14 says, "If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward," the reward of having lived a life that meant something. But, warns verse 15, "If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss [the loss of seeing our whole life amount to nothing], though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire." In the Scriptures and the rest of Holy Tradition, God has given us His blueprint for His Church and for our lives; and to deviate from that blueprint is to build something which cannot and will not last.

Lastly, **the Church is God's temple**. In verses 16-17 Paul says, "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy the temple. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are." The Church, the temple where God dwells, is us, His people; and we're told in Ephesians 4:3 to be "diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." And the person who brings discord and division, especially as a matter of personal ego, is defiling the temple of God and stands in immediate peril of being destroyed, not in time, but in eternity. Hence, we must take every care to keep in step with the Holy Spirit as He carries out His sovereign work among us, centering on and exalting the risen Lord Jesus Christ, the only Head of the Church. When we do that, we affirm that the Church is God's temple, where He dwells by His Spirit.



Diocesan Music Conference Workshop for Readers and Musicians



Date: Saturday, September 9, 2017
Place: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 575 Scarsdale Road, Crestwood, NY 10707
Time: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Fee: Suggested donation \$20 (Checks to Diocese of New York & New Jersey)
Instructor: V. Rev. J. Sergius Halvorsen, PhD

Church reading is a vital ministry. Do you ever read the Epistle, chant the Hours or read psalms or Old Testament readings at Vespers? Have you ever wondered why we chant instead of reading in a speaking voice?

At the Workshop for Church Readers we will review the theology that guides and informs our liturgical ministry. We will address practical concerns regarding rubrics, melodic patterns for reading, and how to chant the Prokimenon and Alleluia in synergy with the choir. You will also have an opportunity to receive vocal coaching and practice the strategies learned at the workshop. Most importantly, we will do all of this within a supportive community of fellow readers and liturgical musicians, so that we may ultimately glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Whether or not you are a tonsured reader, if you read in Church or simply want to know more about reading in Church, then this workshop is for you.

Father Sergius Halvorsen received his M.Div. from St. Vladimir's Seminary in 1996, and completed his doctoral dissertation at Drew University in 2002. From 2000 to 2011 he taught at Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell Connecticut, where he also served as Director of Distance Learning. He was ordained to the diaconate in 1999 and to the priesthood in February 2004. Fr. Sergius is an accomplished liturgical musician, he was director of the 1995 SVS Octet, and over the last ten years has contributed to a number of "Archangel Voices" recordings. He is Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program and Assistant Professor of Homiletics and Rhetoric at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary.

Sayings from the Desert Fathers

Some old men were entertaining themselves at Scetis by having a meal together; amongst them was Abba John the Dwarf. A venerable priest got up to offer drink, but nobody accepted any from him except John. They were surprised and said to him, "How is it that you, the youngest, dared to let yourself be served by the priest? Then he said to them, "When I get up to offer drink, I am glad when everyone accepts it, since I am receiving my reward. That is the reason, then, that I accepted it, so that he also might gain his reward and not be grieved by seeing that no one would accept anything from him." When they heard this, they were all filled with wonder and edification at his discretion.

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Some brethren came one day to test him to see whether he would let his thoughts get dissipated and speak of the things of this world. They said to him, "We give thanks to God that this year there has been much rain and the palm trees have been able to drink, and their shoots have grown, and the brethren have found manual work." Abba John said to them, "So it is when the Holy Spirit descends into the hearts of men--they are renewed and they put forth leaves in the fear of God.

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Abba Poemen said of Abba John the Dwarf that he had prayed God to take his passions away from him so that he might become free from care. He went and told an old man this: "I find myself in peace, without an enemy." The old man said to him, "Go, beseech God to stir up warfare so that you may regain the affliction and humility that you used to have, for it is by warfare that the soul makes progress." So he besought God and when warfare came, he no longer prayed that it might be taken away, but said, "Lord, give me strength for the fight."

* * *

Abba John the Dwarf also said this to a certain brother about the soul which wishes to be converted. "There was in a city a courtesan who had many lovers. One of the governors approached her, saying, "Promise me you will be good, and I will marry you." She promised this and he took her and brought her to his house. Her lovers, seeking her again, said to one another, "That lord has taken her with him to his house, so if we go to his house and he learns of it, he will condemn us. But let us go to the back, and whistle to her. Then, when she recognizes the sound of the whistle she will come down to us; as for us, we shall be unassailable." When she heard the whistle, the woman stopped her ears and withdrew to the inner chamber and shut the doors." The old man then said that this courtesan is the passions, that her lovers are the passions and other men; that the lord is Christ; that the inner chamber is the eternal dwelling; those who whistle are the evil demons, but the soul always takes refuge in the Lord.

Planning Ahead

Archbishop Michael's next visit to Potsdam will be:

Saturday-Sunday, September 9-10, 2017