

Week of June 11th 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

Saturday, June 17th
Great Vespers at 5:00 pm

Fr. Luke is available to hear
confessions following the service

Sunday, June 18th
Saints of America
Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

Both services at
St. Olympia Chapel
123 Main Street
Potsdam, NY

Food Drive

Thanks to all who brought
canned and dry goods for the
food pantry.

Now he who supplies seed to the
sower and bread for food will also
supply and increase your store of
seed and will enlarge the harvest of
your righteousness.

--2 Corinthians 9:10

Sayings from the Desert Fathers

Agathon was a young man when
he became a disciple of Abba Po-
emen in Thebaid. Later, he lived in
Sketis and then close to the Nile,
not far from Troe.

It was said concerning Abba Ag-
athon that some monks came to
find him having heard tell of his
great discernment. Wanting to
see if he would lose his temper
they said to him, "Aren't you that
Agathon who is said to be a for-
nicator and a proud man?" "Yes,
it is very true," he answered.
They resumed, "Aren't you that
Agathon who is always talking
nonsense?" "I am." Again they
said "Aren't you Agathon the
heretic?" But he replied, "I am
not a heretic." So they asked
him "Tell us why you accept-
ed everything we cast you but
repudiated this last insult." He
replied, "The first accusations I
take to myself, for that is good
for my soul. But heresy is sep-
aration from God. Now I have
no wish to be separated from
God." At this saying they were
astonished at his discernment
and returned, edified.

Someone asked Abba Agathon,
"Which is better, bodily asceti-
cism or interior vigilance?" The
old man replied, "Man is like a
tree, bodily asceticism is the fo-
liage, interior vigilance [is] the
fruit. According to that which
is written, 'Every tree that bring-
eth not forth good fruit shall be
cut down and cast into the fire,'
[Matt.3:10] it is clear that all our
care should be directed towards
the fruit, that is to say, guard of
the spirit; but it needs the pro-
tection and the embellishment
of the foliage, which is bodily
asceticism."

The brethren also asked him,
"Amongst all good works, which
is the virtue which requires the
greatest effort? He answered,
"Forgive me, but I think there
is no labour greater than that of
prayer to God. For every time
a man wants to pray, his ene-
mies, the demons, want to pre-
vent him, for they know that it
is only by turning him from prayer
that they can hinder his journey.
Whatever good work a man un-
dertakes, if he perseveres in it,
he will attain rest. But prayer is
warfare to the last breath."

It was said of [Abba Agathon]
and of Abba Amoun that, when
they had anything to sell, they
would name the price just once
and silently accept what was
given them in peace. Just as,
when they wished to buy some-
thing, they gave the price they
were asked in silence and took
the object adding no further
word. [Ed. note: to this day, cul-
tures in the Middle East embrace
bargaining for a price as a point of
honor.]

It was also said of him that,
coming to the town one day to
sell his wares, he encountered a
sick traveler lying in the public
place without anyone to look
after him. The old man rented a
cell and lived with him there,
working with his hands to pay
the rent and spending the rest
of his money on the sick man's
needs. He stayed there four
months till the sick man was
restored to health. Then he re-
turned in peace to his cell.

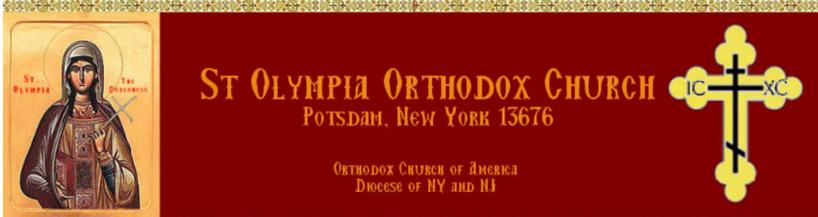
Planning Ahead

Parish Rummage Sale
to benefit our building fund
Saturday, August 26, 2017

Please keep this in mind as you
do your spring cleaning!

Archbishop Michael's next
visit to Potsdam will be:

Saturday-Sunday,
September 9-10, 2017



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

We are pleased to announce
that we now have Vespers on Saturday evenings at 5:00 pm.
Fr. Luke will be available to hear confessions after the service.

The Feast of the Saints of America

This coming Sunday is one of the newest Orthodox celebrations on the cal-
endar, so new that not all jurisdictions officially recognize it. This past Sun-
day, we remembered all of the saints, known and unknown, while also recog-
nizing that some saints are so well-known that they have their own feast
days. The modern-day saints of America also have their own separate feast
days, but on this coming Sunday we are given the opportunity recognize
the work of the Holy Spirit in our own land. Below is an icon of the saints
already glorified (the Orthodox way of canonizing a saint).



How is a saint made? First of all, we are all called to be in synergy with God
through the Holy Spirit as we strive to become more Christ-like during our
lives. In the case of a holy person, this synergy is strong and deep. Almost
always, people who know or knew the saint well and could see how grace-
filled s/he was share stories of the saint's life. Through the Holy Spirit, the
"fame" of a saint grows and spreads through the community and outward to
the whole Church. Often, there are miracles or appearances of these holy
people. So it is more correct to say that God makes the saint and the Church,
in the fullness of time, acknowledges this.

Such is the case with Blessed Mother Olga of Alaska, a saint-in-the-making.
The following is excerpted from an unattributed biography found at http://miteriko.blogspot.ca/2010/12/blog-post_5942.html

Sometimes I find after reading about the life of a particular saint, that
their holiness seems so unattainable, because their lives are so different
from mine that I walk away discouraged. This is not the case with Bless-
ed Olga of Alaska. Little Olga, or Olinka, was born to the Michael family
on February 2, 1916. Olga grew up in the northern Eskimo village of
Kwethluk, Alaska, surrounded by traditional Yup'ik charity. From her
heart, this same charity overflowed naturally to all others, regardless of
race or religion.

Mother Olga was a midwife and healer and was known for her fore-
knowledge of who was pregnant even before they did. Often situations
of abuse would be made known to her within the privacy of the steam
bath or as the village midwife. In the heat of their sorrow, she would
heal, revive and console these souls, like a cool stream on a hot sum-
mer's day...

Although her life seems ordinary, her love for God and neighbor was
extraordinary. Olinka was aware of Jesus in all the people she met. Her
children remember her giving away their clothes before they had out-
grown them. She used to say to them, "If you see your dress on some-
one else, please don't mention it or say anything about it." To neigh-
bors, she was quick to lend a helping hand, no matter how difficult the
task. People remember her stopping whatever she was doing in order
to help with just about anything. ... She knew the needs of commu-
nities far away and would send them traditional fur boots and parkas
as donations to be raffled. This knowledge of their need was given her
directly through prayer.

Mother Olga was steadfast and faithful... Through her prayers, her hus-
band, Postmaster Nicolai Michael became Father Nicolai. He was the
first Eskimo priest from her village of Kwethluk, where there was an
amazing overflowing of seminarians. Kwethluk's population in those
days was about two hundred. In her life time, more than twenty men set
out for seminary to become readers, deacons and priests. There is no
other generation in Alaska yet that has had such an anointing to serve
God. To put that in perspective, one man of every 10 families came to
serve the Lord.... Matushka [title for the wife of the presbyter] Olga was
literally the fountain of holiness in her community.

Olga was a hidden treasure, who out of a life of deep and continuous
prayer gathered into her soul the sweet dew of grace. She was very
humble and unassuming; very quiet. Visitors to her house, while her
husband was the priest in Kwethluk, say that she was almost invisible,
so gentle and complete was her sense of hospitality and service. Bish-
op GREGORY told me once that although he knew her, and had been
served his favorite dish, salmon pie, she was so quiet and reserved that
he did not know of her blessedness. Her closest friends were not at all
surprised.

After a year's reprieve from cancer, Blessed Olga fell asleep in the Lord
on November 8, 1979 at the age of 63. The first known appearance of
Blessed Olga occurred in 1995, in New York, to a suffering woman, a
complete stranger, who was not Orthodox. This sufferer had been be-
seething the Mother of God for help. In answer to her plea, Theotokos
appeared with Blessed Olga, who then healed her. With that miracle,
veneration naturally began.... Soon after that an unofficial version of
her Moleben [a service of supplication] and Magnification were writ-
ten in thanksgiving. Later His Beatitude Metropolitan JONAH visited
Kwethluk the week of July 31, meeting with all her surviving children.
While there he served a Panakahida [memorial service] at her grave site
and venerated the first icon of her as part of her ongoing canonization
process.

By her simple piety, honesty, humility, and her gift of Yup'ikness, Blessed
Olga provides a contemporary example to all of us of holiness. Bless-
edness is not attained only by those who live in caves, dwell deep in
the woods, or in a monastery. In the little village of Kwethluk, faithfully
living out the Holy Mystery of Marriage, day by day participating in the
Orthodox way of life, God manifested in Mother Olga's soul all the fruits
of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Because of this grace, Matush-
ka Olga is called the "Northern Light of Alaska"...

Here we see the emergence of a new saint, the first woman saint to be de-
clared in North America. Both an icon and a photo of her are shown below:

