

**Week of
June 18th
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 24th
Great Vespers at 5:00 pm**

**Fr. Luke is available to hear
confessions following the service**

**Sunday, June 25th
Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am**

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

All welcome!

**Sayings from the
Desert Fathers**

There was in the Cells an old man called Apollo. If someone came to find him about doing a piece of work, he would set out joyfully, saying, "I am going to work with Christ today, for the salvation of my soul, for that is the reward he gives."

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As he was dying, Abba Benjamin said to his sons, "If you observe the following, you can be saved: be joyful at all times, pray without ceasing and give thanks for all things."

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Abba Gregory [the Theologian] said, "These three things God requires of all the baptized: right faith in the heart, truth on the tongue, temperance in the body."

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He also said, "The whole life of a man is but one single day for those who are working hard with longing."

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Abba Gerontius of Petra said that many, tempted by the pleasures of the body, commit fornication, not in their body but in their spirit, and while preserving their bodily virginity, commit prostitution in their soul. "Thus is good, my well-beloved, to do that which is written, and for each one to guard his own heart with all possible care." (Prov. 4:23)

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Abba Daniel told of another great old man who dwelt in lower Egypt who, in his simplicity, said that Melchizedek was the son of God. When blessed Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, was told about this he sent someone to him. Learning that the old man was a worker of miracles and that all he asked of God was revealed to him, and that it was because of his simplicity that he had given utterance to this saying, using guile the archbishop said to him, "Abba, I think that Melchizedek is the son of God, while a contrary though says to me, no that he is simply a man, high-priest of God. Since I am thus plagued, I have sent someone to you that you may pray God to reveal to you what he is." Confident of his gift, the old man said without hesitation, "Give me three days, I will ask God about this matter and I will tell you who he is." So he withdrew and prayed to God about this question. Coming three days later he said to the blessed Cyril that Melchizedek was a man. The archbishop said to him, "How do you know, Abba?" He replied, "God has shewn me all the patriarchs in such a way that each one from Adam to Melchizedek, passed before me. Therefore be sure that it is so." Then the old man withdrew, having preached to himself that Melchizedek was a man. Then the blessed Cyril rejoiced greatly.

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Abba Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus said, "The acquisition of Christian books is necessary for those who can use them. For the mere sight of these books renders us less inclined to sin, and incites us to believe more firmly in righteousness."

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He also said, "Reading the Scriptures is a great safeguard against sin."

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He also said, "Ignorance of the Scriptures is a precipice and a deep abyss."

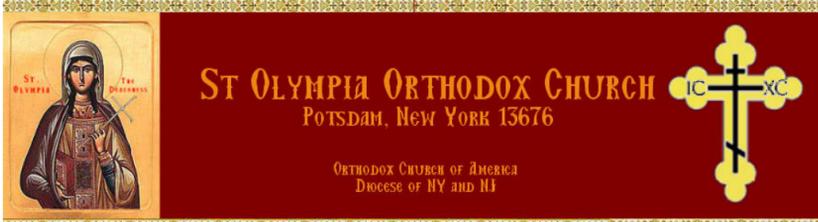
Planning Ahead

**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

The Gospel Lectionary

The Altar of an Orthodox Church is the area behind the iconostasis (icon screen) and is also known as the Sanctuary and Holy of Holies. It is a place of sacrifice. Front and center within the altar is a table that is usually made of wood or stone. This table is an icon of the throne of God from which comes the Grace that sanctifies all life. It also represents Golgotha since the Passion is reenacted upon it, and the tomb of Christ since by His death, death was destroyed.

Placed on the altar table are the most important objects of our worship. The first of these is the Lamb of God (Eucharist) as consecrated during the Liturgy and also housed within a tabernacle as reserved sacrament (for those who are ill, etc.). The second of these is the second way that we encounter Christ: as the Word of God. Often we see a beautiful book prominently placed on the altar table and perhaps assume it is the entire Bible. Depending on tradition, what we are seeing is actually either a Gospel book or Gospel lectionary. If it is the lectionary, it is called an *Evangelion* (lit. the good news or message of Christ). Otherwise it is called the *Tetraevangelion* (Good News as four), although the word *Evangelion* is often used generically for both types of Gospel presentations.

The *Evangelion* as a book type contains only those passages of the Gospels that are read liturgically. This type of collection goes back to at least c. 700 AD. The passages from the Gospels are employed in two complementary liturgical cycles, movable (set according to the date of Pascha) and fixed (such as Christmas which is always on December 25th). The first section of the *Evangelion* contains the readings that are movable. This begins with the Gospel of John (Pascha to Pentecost), followed by Matthew (Pentecost to the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14th), Luke (from then until the beginning of Great Lent) and Mark (during Great Lent). The second section presents the pericopes (lit. cutting around, i.e., the passages to be read) for feasts that are on fixed calendar dates. These begin on September 1st, the first day of the liturgical year. By contrast, the *Tetraevangelion* has the complete Gospels in the order found in the New Testament. The beginning and end of each pericope is listed in the margin and is numbered, and there is a table that lists where the passage of a given day is to be found.

The *Evangelion* had specific liturgical and sacramental roles. At the beginning of the liturgy, it would have been brought from the *skeuophylakion* (treasury--in earlier times this was a separate building that housed valuable liturgical items) into the church via procession. It was carried by a deacon who was followed by the priest (what we now call the "small entrance") and placed on the altar table on top of the *antimins* (the cloth on which the consecration of the Holy Gifts takes place). Today, the *Evangelion* is kept on the altar table so the procession is symbolic of this earlier time. Later in the Divine Liturgy it is carried to and from the ambo for the Gospel reading of the assigned pericope of the day.



*Fr. Luke brings forth the Evangelion during
the Divine Liturgy*

As the Word of God, this book is presented publicly at other times, liturgical and sacramentally. For example, during the ordination of a bishop, the *Evangelion*, representing Christ, is laid open and face down upon the neck of bishop-elect. This is to show that he will guide his flock as did Christ and bear the yoke of Christ, the Church.

During the service of Holy Unction, the *Evangelion* is placed on a small table in front of the altar and seven Gospel pericopes are read, if possible, by seven different priests. During the matins of Holy Saturday (celebrated on Holy Friday evening), the *Evangelion* is carried during the procession of the tomb of Christ to show that while physically dead in His humanity, He is also the Son begotten before all ages: "In the beginning was the Word..." An *Evangelion* would also be placed on the throne of the Patriarch if he was absent from the service. The *Evangelion* as an icon of Christ is so important in the Orthodox mindset that during Ecumenical Councils and other church councils, the book was placed on a throne in the meeting room.

Although other liturgical books are, for the most part, undecorated, because of prominent role that the *Evangelion* plays, the covers were often decorated. They were (and are) often in gold, the artistic representation of heaven and holiness, or made of a high-quality cloth when gold was not possible. Generally, leather was not used because the Word of God is life and the use of a dead skin of an animal was seen as antithetical.

There have been many different designs for the cover, such as the 12th-century one shown at right. However, today, the most common scheme is to have central icons of the Crucifixion and Resurrection on the front and back covers, respectively, with icons of the four Evangelists placed in each corner (below).



*Front cover, Evangelion
Constantinople, 12th c.
Now in the skeuophylakion of the
Great Lavra, Mount Athos*



*Typical decorative icon scheme for the Evangelion
Back cover (left): Resurrection - placed upwards on Saturday and Sunday
Front cover (right): Crucifixion - placed upwards on weekdays
Both covers: medallions of the four Evangelists*

**Diocesan Youth Day
2017 Registration Form**



**DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS
THURSDAY AUGUST 10, 2017**

**Complete information and registration forms
are on the diocesan website and here:**

http://nynjoca.org/files/2017/Youth-Day/2017_YOUTH_DAY_REGISTRATION_FORM.pdf