

Week of July 9th 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, July 15th
Great Vespers at 5:00 pm

Fr. Luke is available to hear confessions following the service

Sunday, July 16th
Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

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

All welcome!

Sayings from the Desert Fathers

Abba Evagrius (of Pontus) said, "It is a great thing to pray without distraction but to chant psalms without distraction is even greater."

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He also said, "Take away temptations and no-one will be saved."

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He also said "Always keep your death in mind and do not forget the eternal judgment, then there will be no fault in your soul."

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He also said, "Take away temptations and no-one will be saved."

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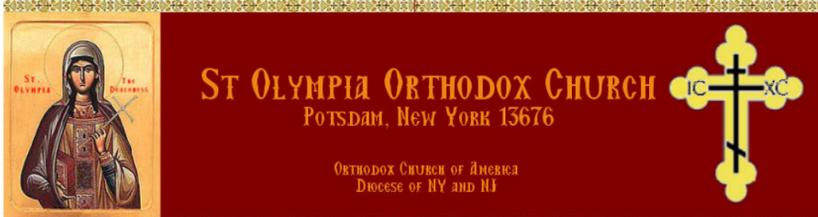
It was said of Abba Zeno, that from the outset he never wished to receive anything from anyone at all. Those who brought him something came away hurt that he had not accepted anything. Others came to him, wanting to receive some token from a great old man and he had nothing to give them so they too came away hurt. The old man said, "What shall I do, since those who bring things are hurt just as much as those who wish to receive something? I know what seems right to me: when someone brings me something, I will accept it and I will give it to anyone who asks me for something." So he did that and was at peace and satisfied everyone.

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An Egyptian brother came to see Abba Zeno in Syria, and accused himself to the old man about this temptations. Filled with admiration, Zeno said, "The Egyptians hide the virtues they possess and ceaselessly accuse themselves of faults they do not have, while the Syrians and the Greeks pretend to have virtues they do not have, and hide the faults of which they are guilty."

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It was said of Abba Zeno, that when he was living in Scetis, he came out of his cell by night, going in the direction of the marshes. He spent three days and three nights wandering at random. At last, tired out, his strength failing him, he fell down as though he were dying. Behold, a little child stood before him with bread and a jar of water and said to him, "Get up, and eat." He stood up and prayed, thinking that it was a delusion. The other said to him, "You have done well." And he prayed a second, and then a third time. The child said again, "You have done well." Then the old man stood up, took some food and ate. The child said to him, "As far as you have walked, so far are you from your cell. So then, get up, and follow me." Immediately he found himself in his cell. So the old man said to the child, "Enter, and let us pray." But when the old man went inside, the other vanished.



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

Sunday of the Ecumenical Councils

This coming Sunday, we celebrate all the holy people in the early centuries of the Church who came together in council by the Holy Spirit. These meetings are known as Ecumenical Councils because representatives came together from all over the known world. These councils were neither ordinary nor were they regular. Rather, they were called specifically to respond to attacks against what had been "traditioned" to the Church by the Apostles. "Traditioned" is not a verb in English, but it better reflects the intensity and meaning of the Greek verb that is also used in some of the letters of Paul (often translated as "give"). Kallistos Ware writes, "Tradition is far more than a set of abstract propositions—it is a life, a personal encounter with Christ in the Holy Spirit. Tradition is not only kept by the Church—it lives in the Church, it is the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church. The Orthodox concept of Tradition is not static but dynamic..."

The Ecumenical Councils were convened to clarify that which had been "traditioned" to them as a response to people who attempted to alter this theology. While this may seem "picky" to us, foreign ideas of how we understand our relationship with God had/have a real effect. Thus, the councils addressed many of the fundamental "principals" that are held by Orthodox, Catholic and many Protestants to this day in contrast to false beliefs.

It was (and is) recognized that much about God lies beyond human understanding, will always remain a "mystery" and that human language is an inadequate expression. Thus, in humility, the councils did not attempt to fully explain or define these "mysteries," but also excluded erroneous ways of thinking or expressing them that could cause the faithful to deviate into error or heresy.

It has been noted that each error considered at a council would undermine the relationship between God and mankind, and thus would also cloud or change our understanding of salvation. For example, Emperor Constantine the Great called the first council, the Council of Nicea, in 325 to address Arianism. Arius taught that Christ was not co-eternal with the Father but instead was a created being. The response of the council was that Christ was "begotten, not made" and homoousios (lit. of one essence) with the Father. One of the hymns of the day sums this up as follows:

You were begotten from the Father before the Morning Star,
But Arius taught wrongly that You were created.
In his ignorance he designated You as a creature,
Yet the Fathers of the Council in Nicea, O Lord,
Proclaimed that You are the Son of God,
Co-enthroned with the Father and the Holy Spirit.*

*Psalm 109 (LXX)

Other major heresies include Nestorianism (that Christ was two persons, one that was divine and one that was mortal), or Monothelism and Monophysitism (both indicate that He was not fully/truly human). All of these (and others) undermine Trinity as one God in Three Persons and Christ as fully God and fully human. Without these, salvation is not possible. Kallistos Ware sums this up. As follows. "No one less than God can save humanity; therefore if Christ is to save, He must be God. But only if He is truly human, as we are, can we humans participate in what he has done for us. A bridge is formed between God and humanity by the Incarnate Christ who is divine and human at once."

The representatives debated prayerfully and passionately. The proclamations of these councils often begin, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and us..." The Nicene Creed, an outgrowth of earlier local creeds used in the baptism of converts, is a concise exposition of the principles of Christian belief. It is an "answer" to the various heresies that beset the Church during the early centuries and remains on guard for us today. It is an important part of the baptismal service, and is sung or recited by the faithful at every Divine Liturgy to this day. The Nicene Creed is also recited by Catholics (with the inclusion of the *filioque*—an addition that was theologically unacceptable and was a principal cause the Great Schism in the 11th century) and many Protestant Church (with or without the *filioque*).

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages.

Light of light; true God of true God; begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made;

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man.

And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried.

And the third day He arose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father;

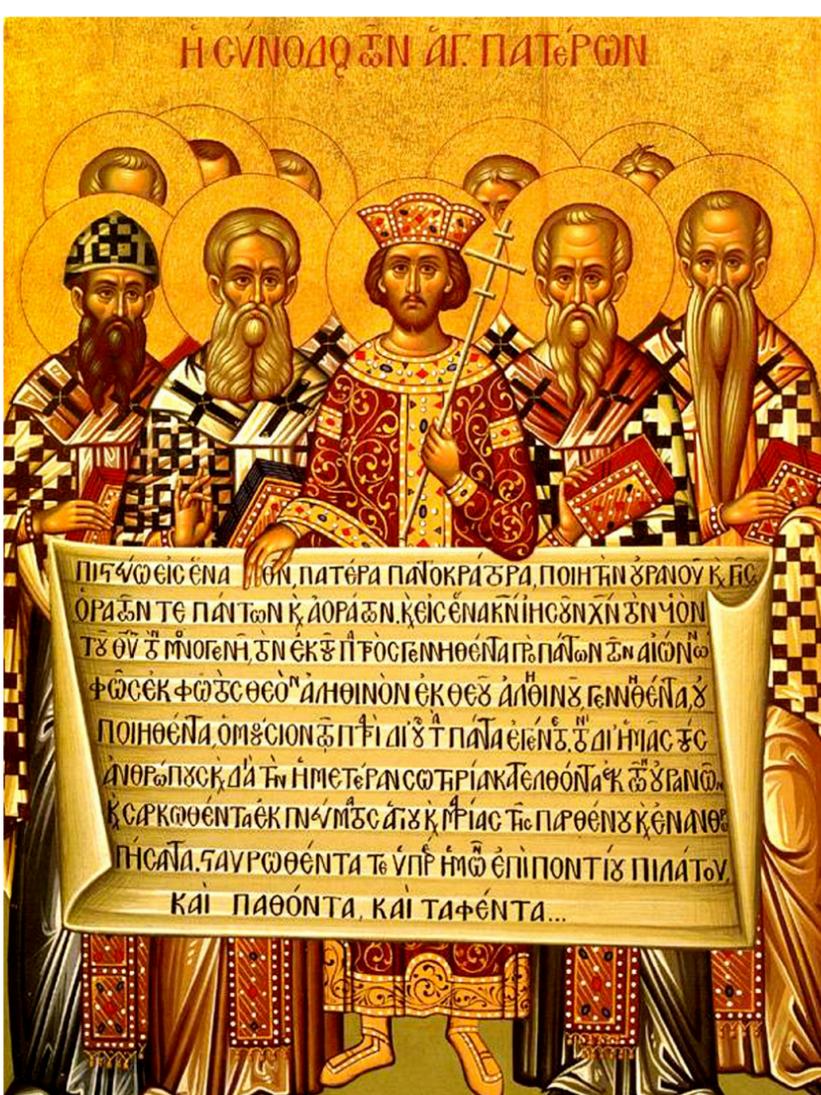
And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; Whose Kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spoke by the prophets.

[I believe] in one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.

I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.



The icon above shows the Emperor Constantine surrounded by some of the more preeminent attendees of the council. They are holding the text of the Nicene Creed in the original Greek.

It should be noted that this feast is actually somewhat moveable. It is to be celebrated on the Sunday that falls between the 13th and 19th of July in any given year. There is also a slight variance as to which councils are to be celebrated. The Typikon of the Great Church (Constantinople) lists just the Fourth Ecumenical Council (held in Chalcedon in 451 AD). The OCA, based on Russian typikon, lists the first six councils. As a result, the hymns (specifically, the majority of "prophers") chanted in vespers and matins differ somewhat.

Saint Andrew's Camp
IT'S NOT TOO LATE!
There's room for campers at Saint Andrew's Camp over the next 4 weeks!

Planning Ahead

St. Olympia Feast Day Celebration and Parish Picnic
Sunday, July 30th
after Divine Liturgy

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

Please collect items that you can contribute to this fund raiser. We ask that you pre-price these items before you bring them.

Archbishop Michael's next visit to Potsdam will be:

Saturday-Sunday, September 9-10, 2017