

# Week of August 27th 2017

You can reach Fr. Luke at [frlukacs@gmail.com](mailto:frlukacs@gmail.com)

For emergencies, phone (315) 322-8425

Please leave a clear message and include your phone number

## Next Services

**Saturday, September 2nd**

Great Vespers at 5:00 pm

Fr. Luke is available to hear confessions following the service

**Sunday, September 3rd**

Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

**St. Olympia Chapel**  
123 Main Street  
Potsdam, NY  
All welcome!

## Schedule for Archbishop Michael's Visit

**Saturday, September 9th**

4:45 pm - Dinner with Parish Council and Fr. Luke

6:30 pm - Vespers at SUNY-Potsdam

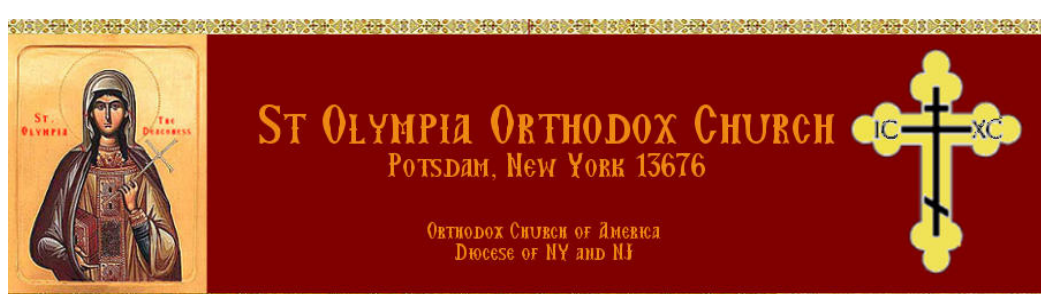
7:30 Lecture (see poster) followed by reception (park in lot 9)

**Sunday, September 10th**

9:00 am - Matins

10:00 am - Divine Liturgy

Noon - Parish Lunch with Vladyka Michael and Mat. Stavrevsky.



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](http://www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org)

## What's Behind That Smiling Face?

Practical Knowledge for the Challenge of Alzheimer's Disease



**Natalie Stavrevsky, RN, MBA**

Do you have a friend or family member with Alzheimer's? Are you a health care provider? Do you know someone who is caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's? Does Alzheimer's run in your family? If so, then this talk is for you! A frequently sought speaker on the issues of aging, Ms. Stavrevsky's has presented at: the Greater Rochester Area Partnership for the Elderly (GRAPE); National LTCI (Long-Term Care Insurance) Intercompany Conference; various multiple program events of Marriott Senior Living, Unity Health System, and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANA)

*Do not cast me off in the time of old age; Do not forsake me when my strength fails.*

-- Psalm 71:9

**Saturday, September 9th at 7:30 pm**

**Knowles Conference Center, SUNY-Potsdam**

**Vespers (Evening Prayer) Service at 6:30 pm**

Both events are free and open to the public



## Hope

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

Have you ever been in a difficult circumstance and, not being sure of what to do, sought the advice of family members, friends, neighbors, experts in the field? If so, why? Simple: when we're uncertain, confused, afraid, or just bewildered, we will listen to others, placing our hope in the wisdom and experience of those we trust. After all, hope is vital; indeed, it's critical for our everyday survival in life. The person who loses hope is a person running towards death. And God understands that. That's why in Romans 15:1-7, we're told in verse 4: "For whatever things were written before [in the past] were written for our learning [to teach us], that we through the patience [endurance] and comfort [encouragement] of the Scriptures might have hope."

And let's make clear from the outset that when we speak of this type of hope, we not talking what we desire (like a new bicycle for Christmas), or wishful thinking (like the miracles this latest diet fad will work on our belly fat), or about the kind of hope I have when I go to Florida to visit my sister and head out for a walk, not looking at the beautiful scenery but scanning the ground at my feet, "hoping" I won't run into a rattlesnake. That's not the kind of hope that God talks about. His kind of "hope" could best be described as an attitude of confidence, expectation, and trust. In Job 6:11-13, Job says: "What strength do I have, that I should hope? And what is my end [what prospects do I have], that I should prolong my life [be patient]? Is my strength the strength of stones? Or is my flesh bronze? Is my help not within me [do I have any power to help myself], and is success [now that success has been] driven from me?" Job was saying that if he had godly hope, he would be confident and he would live expecting good things to happen. Similarly, Proverbs 29:18 tells us "Where there is no vision the people perish." Without hope, people huddle up in the corner and die. No vision and no hope equal no life.

But in Hebrews 6:17-20 we're told, "God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel [wanting to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised], confirmed it with an oath, that by two immutable[unchanging] things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation [be greatly encouraged], who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast [firm and secure], and which enters the Presence behind the veil [the inner sanctuary of the temple behind the curtain], where the fore-runner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." As Christians, our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus Christ, and especially upon His Resurrection. Back in Romans 5:10, as we saw a few weeks ago, Paul reminds us that "if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved [made whole] by His life." Our hope is tied directly to the Lord's resurrection victory over the very worst that sin, death, and Hades can do to any person.

But how do we plug into the hope God offers? Romans 15:4 says we gain hope by "patience" or "endurance." It's God's good pleasure to give us the good and right desires of our hearts. But it is God's practice not to always give us what we want when we want it. We have to learn to wait upon God and learn the endurance of faith, the faith that trusts God no matter what our outward circumstance. OK. But, why would God delay fulfilling that for which we hope?

One possible reason could be so that we would gain appreciation for what He gives when it arrives. For example, when God created Adam, He didn't immediately give him Eve. In Genesis 2:18 we're told: "The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'" Then, almost inexplicably, God asks Adam to name all the animals. Say what? Couldn't God figure out names for all these creatures? Of course. But God wanted Adam to see and review all the rest of creation before Eve was given to him. Thus, when Adam first sets his eyes on Eve, in Genesis 2:23 he declares: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." God delayed in creating Eve, so that Adam would fully understand and appreciate the precious gift of human love he was to receive. Another possibility could be our need for purification and strengthening. Romans 5:2-5 tells us: "We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory [rejoice] in tribulations [our sufferings], knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who was given to us." God's delays serve to prepare us, to develop our spiritual muscles, to handle the responsibilities of our desires and the gifts we receive from God. Kids in their early teens desire the keys to the car, right? But are they emotionally ready and mature enough to get behind the wheel and drive responsibly? So also, many of the things we desire in this life, we're not ready to handle yet. We're not mature enough.

Now secondly Romans 15:4 tells us that we gain God's kind of Hope is through the encouragement of Scripture, as we're told in Psalm 119:43, "Take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped [put my hope] in Your ordinances;" and in verse 74, "Those who fear You will be glad when they see me, because I have hoped in Your word." And how do we lay hold of hope through the Scriptures? Simple: by see how God has dealt with other people down through the ages. In His personhood and character, God is consistent. He doesn't speak out of both sides of His mouth; He's not two-faced; and when God makes a promise, He keeps it. Again and again we need to come back to 2 Timothy 2:13, where the Apostle insists that even "if we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself." And the Scriptures show us that faithfulness.

But note the pattern repeated regularly throughout Scripture. Almost all the great lives of God's people went through a three-stage process. First there's a vision given of great potential. Next, the hope that was placed in the future, is destroyed and hope dies. But lastly the original vision is fulfilled. It wasn't until Abraham was 75 years old that God promised him and his wife a son. Abraham believed the promise originally; but it wasn't until 25 years had passed that God visited him on the plains of Mamre, Genesis 18:11 tells us "Abraham and Sarah were old and well advanced in age, and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing," because she was 90 and Abraham was 100. Their hope had died. Yet 9 months later the Lord's visit, Isaac was born in fulfillment of the vision. It's the same with Abraham's great-grandson Joseph, whose vision of greatness was destroyed when his brothers began to hate him and ended up selling him into slavery. But in Genesis 50:20 we see how Joseph later realized God's faithfulness, as he tells his brothers, "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good." And of course we have the prime example of God's faithfulness in Jesus Christ. When Jesus began His public ministry, a fire of hope was kindled in hearts waiting for God's Messiah. And every teaching out of His mouth and every miracle wrought by His hands seemed to confirm that this was indeed the Coming One. As two of His disciples remarked on the road to Emmaus, "We were hoping that it was He Who was going to redeem Israel." Such hope died on a cross that first Holy Friday. But three days later? "The Lord is risen indeed and has appeared to Simon!" If God can handle and overcome even the agonizing death of the Cross, what is there in your life or in mine He cannot handle? We lay hold of God's kind of hope by endurance, by the encouragement of Scriptures.

And lastly, Romans 15:1-2 tells us we attain God's hope by true servanthood. Do you remember what the disciples always seemed to be arguing about: who among them was the greatest? In Luke 22:25-27, we hear Jesus reply: "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves." But they didn't get it, not until after that first Pascha. Only then did they begin to grasp what St. Paul later articulates in Philippians 2:5-11, that it was precisely because the pre-eternally Word "emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant" and precisely because "He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the Cross," that the Father "also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name." Loving and obedient servanthood is the path by which God leads us to our happiest and most fulfilled and most at peace self. And isn't that really our hope all the way along?



### The Students Are Here!

We welcome Zachary Price (Crane), Abigail Ajumn and Svetlana Kononenko (both from SLU). We hug Emma Trulock (who is a native) and welcome back Mariathi Stakos (Crane)



Visiting our parish on August 20th were (from left to right): Matushka Anastasia Richards, Deacon Demetrios Richards, Father Luke, Nino Shvelidze, Richard Blauvelt, and Lana Kononenko.

This was a home-coming for Deacon Demetrios (a Clarkson graduate) and Richard (whose family still lives in Potsdam). Lana is an incoming freshman at SLU.

### Glory to God!

Our parish had its first building fund raiser--a well-stocked yard sale on the lawn in front of our chapel. We had beautiful weather and a solid stream of people stopping by. While the final total is not in, it has exceeded our expectations! Thanks to all who contributed goods, especially Mother Sophronia, as well as time and energy.

A number of bargain hunters also got a quick tour of our chapel. One man said he had passing glimpses at night while plowing the streets and was happy to get a closer view. Many of them asked wonderful questions.

Our fund raiser also benefited two local charities. The C.O.R.C. Store (our local equivalent to Good Will) received the remaining clothing, linens. We donated all other household goods and furniture to Best Friends (a thrift shop that benefits the Potsdam Humane Society).

## Sayings from the Desert Fathers

Abba Isidore of Pelusia said, "Prize the virtues and do not be the slave of glory; for the former are immortal, while the latter soon fades."

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He also said, "Many desire virtue, but fear to go forward in the way that leads to it, while others consider that virtue does not even exist. So it is necessary to persuade the former to give up their sloth and teach the others what virtue really is."

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He also said, "The heights of humility are great and so are the depths of boasting; I advise you to attend to the first and not to fall into the second."

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Abba John of the Cells told us this story: "There was in Egypt a very rich and beautiful courtesan, to whom noble and powerful people came. Now one day she happened to be near the church and she wanted to go in. The sub-deacon, who was standing at the doors, would not allow her to enter saying, 'You are not worthy to enter the house of God, for you are impure.' The bishop heard the noise of their argument and came out. Then the courtesan said to him, 'He will not let me enter the church.' So the Bishop said to her, 'You are not allowed to enter it, for you are not pure.' She was filled with compunction and said to him, 'Henceforth I will not commit fornication any more.' She brought her wealth and the bishop burnt it all in the fire. Then she went into the church, weeping and saying, 'If this has happened to me below, what has happened to me above?' So she was converted and became a vessel of election."

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Abba Isidore the Priest said, "If you fast regularly, do not be inflated with pride, but if you think highly of yourself because of it, then you had better eat meat. It is better for a man to eat meat than to be inflated with pride and to glorify himself."