



# ST OLYMPIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

POTSDAM, NEW YORK 13676

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF AMERICA  
DIOCESE OF NY AND NJ



*Welcome to St. Olympia Orthodox Church,  
a young and, God willing, growing community of worshippers.*

*Our priest is Fr. Peter Irfan, Acting Rector.*

*You may reach him at 716-342-8520 (cell) or at fatherpeter777@yahoo.com.*

*Please join us for prayer and fellowship.*

*Divine Liturgies are held every Sunday at 10 am.*

*Great Vespers are held every Saturday evening at 5 pm.*

## Next Services

**Monday, March 25th**  
**Feast of the Annunciation**

**Divine Liturgy - 10:00 am**

### Parish update:

*Fr. Peter will hear confessions  
by appointment only for the  
next several weeks while he  
recovers from pneumonia.*

*We will resume our normal  
schedule of Matins and Ves-  
pers when he is well.*

**Saturday, March 30th**  
**Reader's Vespers - 5:00 pm**

**Sunday, March 31st**  
**Sunday of the Holy Cross**

(No Matins)

**Divine Liturgy - 10:00 am**

**Fellowship to follow**

at

**St. Olympia Chapel**  
**123 Main Street**  
**Potsdam, NY, 13676**

**Also:**

**Daily Vespers at 5 pm**

**St. Olympia Hermitage**  
**Edwards, NY**

*Visitors are welcome to attend.*

**E-mail:**

**mothersophronia@gmail.com**

## Save the date:

**Archbishop Michael will be with us to celebrate  
Presanctified Liturgy on Wednesday evening, April 10th**



## 55 Beatitudes of St. Ephrem

Translated by Fr. Ephrem Lash

### Introduction

This is one of a number of sets of Beatitudes in the writings of the Greek Ephrem. They are in the nature of apothegmata [aphorisms or maxims]. They cover many aspects on monastic life, though their application is much wider. They seem to have no particular arrangement, though from time to time thoughts on related topics, or with linked images, appear to be grouped together. There are numerous allusions to Holy Scripture.... The curious expression the skin of the flesh in number 48 is an allusion to the regulations for dealing with 'leprosy' in Leviticus 13. St Ephrem uses it to refer to the visible, the physical, body, which, despite its allure, will rot and exude putrefaction after death. As in a number of texts in these writings, St. Ephrem, towards the end of the series, is much preoccupied with death and the coming judgment.

1. Blessed the one who has become wholly free in the Lord from all the earthly things of this vain life and loved God alone, the good and compassionate.
2. Blessed the one who has become a good ploughman of the virtues and raised a harvest of fruits of life in the Lord, like a ploughed field bearing wheat.
3. Blessed the one who has become a good husbandman of the virtues and planted a spiritual vine, plucked the grapes and filled his presses with fruits of life in the Lord.
4. Blessed the one who has made his fellow servants glad with spiritual gladness from the fruit of the virtues, which he planted by toiling to give back the fruit of life in the Lord.
5. Blessed the one who stands in the assembly and prays like an Angel from heaven, keeping his thoughts pure day by day, and has given no entrance to the Evil One to make his soul a prisoner, far from God his Saviour.
6. Blessed the one who with understanding has loved weeping and with compunction rained tears upon the ground, like fair pearls before the Lord.
7. Blessed the one who loves holiness like the light and has not defiled his body with dark deeds of the Evil One in the sight of the Lord.
8. Blessed the one who keeps his body for holiness for the Saviour and has not shamed his soul by unnatural deeds, but remained well-pleasing to the Lord.
9. Blessed the one who has hated evil-doing that is full of shame and presented himself as a living sacrifice, well-pleasing to the Lord.
10. Blessed the one who always keeps the memory of God in himself, he will be wholly like an Angel from heaven upon earth, ministering to the Lord with fear and love.
11. Blessed the one who loves repentance that saves sinners and has not thought of doing ill, like someone ungrateful before God our Saviour.
12. Blessed the one who seated in his cell, like a noble warrior, guards the treasure of the kingdom, that is his body with his soul, blameless in the Lord.
13. Blessed the one who seated in his cell like Angels in heaven keeps his thoughts pure and with his mouth sings praise to the One who has authority over everything that breath.
14. Blessed the one who has become like the Seraphim and the Cherubim and never wearied in his spiritual ministry, unceasingly giving glory to the Lord.
15. Blessed the one who is always full of spiritual joy and has not grown slack in bearing the Lord's good yoke, for he will be crowned with glory.
16. Blessed the one who has cleansed himself of every stain of sins, so that with boldness he may receive into his own house the King of glory, our Lord Jesus Christ.
17. Blessed the one who draws near with fear and trembling and dread to the spotless Mysteries of the Saviour and has realized that he has received in himself eternal life.
18. Blessed the one who meditates on death each day and destroys the base passions lurking in the hearts of the vines, for he will be consoled in the moment of separation.
19. Blessed the one who continually remembers the fear of Gehenna and hastens with tears and groans to repent sincerely in the Lord, for he will be delivered from the great tribulation.
20. Blessed the one who continually humbles himself willingly; he will be crowned by the One who willingly humbled himself for our sake.
21. Blessed the one who sits in his cell with all devotion, as Mary sat at the Lord's feet, and hastens, like Martha, to receive him, the Lord and Saviour.
22. Blessed the one who is fired by the fear of God, ever having in himself the fervour of the Holy Spirit, and who has burned up the thorns and thistles of the thoughts.
23. Blessed the one who has not defiled his hands with unseemly deeds like one accursed, for about this there will be a judgment in the dread day in the presence of the Lord.
24. Blessed the one who farms fair and good thoughts each day and by hope conquers the wicked passion of despondency, by which the Lord's ascetics are warred upon.
25. Blessed the one who has become like a noble warrior in the Lord's work, rousing the idle, encouraging the faint-hearted in the way of the Lord.
26. Blessed the one who has become fruitful in the Lord, that he may have the holy Angels as guardians, as a fruitful tree has its own husbandman as guardian.
27. Blessed the one who loves gentleness with spiritual understanding and is not tripped up by the wicked Serpent, for he has as his hope the good and compassionate Lord.
28. Blessed the one who honors the Saints and loves his neighbor and has banished envy from his own soul; envy through which Cain became his brother's murderer.
29. Blessed the one who has rebuked the tyrant and not quailed at the flame of the pleasures, for his soul will be refreshed with dew by the dew of the Holy Spirit.
30. Blessed the one whose mind the dark diabolical cloud has not been able to invade and deprive of the sweet light and joy of the just.
31. Blessed the one the eyes of whose heart have been enlightened as he ever mirrors the Lord, for such a one has been unburdened of the passions and evil thoughts.
32. Blessed the one who loves good and fair words and hates base and destructive speech, because he will not become a prisoner of the Evil One.
33. Blessed the one who rebukes his neighbor with fear of God and has not deceived his soul, fearing each day the iron rod of the great Shepherd.
34. Blessed the one who in accordance with God's will obeys his neighbor and while enduring afflictions gives thanks. Such a one will be crowned, for he will become a confessor for the Lord.
35. Blessed the one who has not been worsted by the passion of despondency like a coward, but has found perfect endurance, by which all the Saints received their crowns.
36. Blessed the one who in accordance with God's will loves self-mastery and has not been condemned, thanks to his stomach, as a pleasure seeker and defiled, for such a one will be magnified by the Lord.
37. Blessed the one who has not been made drunk by wine like a prodigal, but has been made glad each day by the memory of the Lord, in whom all the Saints rejoice continually.
38. Blessed the one who manages his possessions in accordance with God's will and has not been condemned by God the Saviour as a lover of money without compassion for his neighbor.
39. Blessed the one who keeps vigil in prayer and reading and good work, such a one will become enlightened so that he does not sleep in death.
40. Blessed the one who has become a good spiritual net and caught many for the good Lord, such a one will greatly be praised by the Lord.
41. Blessed the one who has become a good example to his neighbour and not scandalized the conscience of his fellow servant by acting lawlessly, such a one will be eulogized by the Lord.
42. Blessed the one who has become long-suffering and compassionate and not become the slave of the barbarian, I mean anger and evil wrath, for such a one will be exalted by the Lord.
43. Blessed the one who, exalted by love, has become a city founded upon a mountain, from which the enemy, when he saw it, withdrew in fear, trembling at its security in the Lord.
44. Blessed the one who has shone by the light of faith of the Lord, like a radiant lamp on a tall lampstand, and has enlightened souls that are darkened, for they followed the heresy of the faithless and impious.
45. Blessed the one who loves truth continually and has not lent his mouth as an instrument of impiety by lying, for he fears the commandment about idle speech.
46. Blessed the one who, like one unwise, does not judge his neighbor, but as understanding and spiritual has struggled to throw the plank out of his own eye.
47. Blessed the one who heart has blossomed like a palm tree by rightness of faith and has not been thrust out, as by thorns, by the heresy of the faithless and impious.
48. Blessed the one who has kept the mastery of his eyelids and has not deceived himself with either mind or senses with regard to the skin of the flesh that a little while oozes putrefaction.
49. Blessed the one who has before his eyes the day of departure and has hated pride, before the weakness our nature has been proved as it rots in the tomb.
50. Blessed the one who considers those who sleep in their coffins in graves and has rejected every foul smelling desire, for he will rise in glory when the heavenly trumpet sounds, rousing all the children of humankind from sleep.
51. Blessed the one who observes with spiritual understanding the choirs of stars shining with glory and the beauty of the heavens and longs to contemplate the Maker of all things.
52. Blessed the one who keeps in mind the fire that came down on Mount Sinai and the sounds of the trumpets and Moses standing there with fear and trembling and who does not neglect his own salvation.
53. Blessed the one who does not set his hope on man, but on the Lord, who is coming again in great glory to judge the universe with justice, for he will be like a tree planted by waters and will not fail to bear fruit.
54. Blessed the one whose thought has been with grace, like a cloud filled with rain, and which waters souls for the increase of fruits of life; his praise will be for everlasting glory.
55. Blessed are those who watch according to God continually, for they will be overshadowed by God in the day of judgment, becoming sons of the bridal chamber, in joy and gladness they will see the Bridegroom. But I and my like, idle and pleasure-loving, will weep and lament as we watch our brothers in everlasting glory, while we are in torments.