

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

*Fr. Nikolay Khalimonov. Priest-in-Charge, 323-851-7898
Fr. Alexy Karlgut, Dean/Administrator, 607-759-1833*

Please join us for prayer and fellowship.

Upcoming Services:
Saturday, October 15, 22
Great Vespers: 5pm

Sunday, October 16, 23
Divine Liturgy: 10am

**Lunch and fellowship will
follow the service**

*The above services are at St.
Olympia Chapel
34 North Main Street
Norwood, NY, 13668*

*Mailing Address
St. Olympia Orthodox Church
PO Box 122 Canton, NY13617*



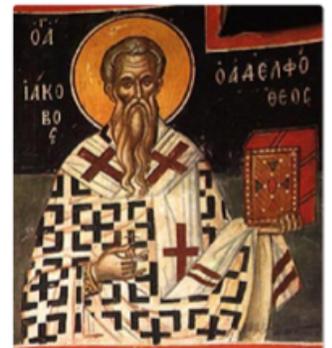
**Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke
October 18**

*Let us praise with sacred songs the holy Apostle Luke,
the recorder of the joyous Gospel of Christ
and the scribe of the Acts of the Apostles,
for his writings are a testimony of the Church of Christ:
He is the physician of human weaknesses and infirmities.
He heals the wounds of our souls,
and constantly intercedes for our salvation!*

**Holy Apostle James, the Brother of the Lord
October 23**

*As the Lord's disciple you received the Gospel,
O righteous James;
as a martyr you have unflinching courage;
as God's brother, you have boldness;
as a hierarch, you have the power to intercede.
Pray to Christ God that our souls may be saved.*

Troparion



Holy Apostle James, the Brother of God, was the son of Righteous Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos. ...Saint James believed in Christ and became His apostle. He was chosen as the first Bishop of Jerusalem. Saint James presided over the Council of Jerusalem and his word was decisive (Acts 15). In his thirty years as bishop, Saint James converted many of the Jews to Christianity. Annoyed by this, the Pharisees and the Scribes plotted together to kill Saint James. ...Saint James' martyrdom occurred about 63 A.D. The holy Apostle James composed a Divine Liturgy, which formed the basis of the Liturgies of Saints Basil the Great and John Chrysostom. The Church has preserved an Epistle of Saint James, one of the books of the New Testament...

The Church distinguishes between the holy Apostle James the Brother of God, and Saint James the son of Zebedee and Saint James the son of Alphaeus.

*O Only Begotten Son and Immortal Word of God,
Who for our salvation didst will to be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary,
Who without change didst become Man and was crucified;
O Christ our God, trampling down death by death,
Who art One of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit, save us.*

Divine Liturgy, OCA text

And He was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man . . .

<https://www.oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/doctrine-scripture/the-symbol-of-faith/incarnation>

By Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko

The divine Son of God was born as a man from the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1; Luke 1). The Church teaches that the virgin birth is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (Is 7.14), and that it is as well the fulfillment of the longings of all men for salvation which are found in all religions and philosophies in human history. Only God can save the world. Man alone cannot do it because it is man himself who must be saved. Therefore, according to Orthodox doctrine, the virgin birth is necessary not at all because of a false idolization of virginity as such or because of a sinful repulsion to normal human sexuality. Nor is it necessary as some would contend to give “added weight” to the moral teachings of Jesus. The virgin birth is understood as a necessity because the one who is born must not be merely a man like all others needing salvation. The Saviour of the world cannot merely be one of the race of Adam born of the flesh like all of the others. He must be “not of this world” in order to save the world.

Jesus is born from the Virgin Mary because he is the divine Son of God, the Saviour of the world. It is the formal teaching of the Orthodox Church that Jesus is not a “mere man” like all other men. He is indeed a real man, a whole and perfectly complete man with a human mind, soul and body. But he is the man which the Son and Word of God has become. Thus, the Church formally confesses that Mary should properly be called Theotokos, which means literally “the one who gives birth to God.” For the one born of Mary is, as the Orthodox Church sings at Christmas: “. . . he who from all eternity is God.”

*Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One!
Angels, with shepherds, glorify Him! The wise men journey with the star! Since for our sake the eternal God was born
as a little child! (Kontakion of the Nativity)*

Jesus of Nazareth is God, or, more accurately, the divine Son of God in human flesh. He is a true man in every way. He was born. He grew up in obedience to his parents. He increased in wisdom and stature (Luke 2.51–52). He had a family life with “brethren” (Mark 3.31–34), who according to Orthodox doctrine were not children born of Mary who is confessed as “ever-virgin,” but were either cousins or children of Joseph.

As a man Jesus experienced all normal and natural human experiences such as growth and development, ignorance and learning, hunger, thirst, fatigue, sorrow, pain, and disappointment. He also knew human temptation, suffering, and death. He took these things upon himself “for us men and for our salvation.”

Since, therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely it was not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect . . . to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted (Hebrews 2.9–18).

Christ has entered the world becoming like all men in all things except sin.

He committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he trusted to him [God the Father] who judges justly (1 Peter 2.22; Hebrews 4.15).

Jesus was tempted, but he did not sin. He was perfect in every way, absolutely obedient to God the Father; speaking His words, doing His works, and accomplishing His will. As a man, Jesus fulfilled his role perfectly as the Perfect Man, the new and final Adam. He did all things that man fails to do, being in everything the most perfect human response to the

divine initiative of God toward creation. In this sense, the Son of God as man “recapitulated” the life of Adam, i.e., the entire human race, bringing man and his world back to God the Father and allowing for a new beginning of life free from the power of sin, the devil, and death.

As the Saviour-Messiah, Christ fulfilled as well all of the prophecies and expectations of the Old Testament, fulfilling and crowning in final and absolute perfection all that was begun in Israel for human and cosmic salvation. Thus, Christ is the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, the completion of the Law of Moses, the fulfillment of the prophets and Himself the Final Prophet, the King and the Teacher, the one Great High Priest of Salvation and the Perfect Sacrificial Victim, the New Passover and the Bestower of the Holy Spirit upon all creation.

It is in this role as Messiah-King of Israel and Saviour of the world that Christ insisted upon His identity with God the Father and called Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life: the Resurrection and the Life, the Light of the World, the Bread of Life, the Door to the Sheepfold, the Good Shepherd, the Heavenly Son of Man, the Son of God, and God Himself, the I AM (Gospel of Saint John).

Defense of the Doctrine of Incarnation

In the Orthodox Church the central fact of the Christian faith, that the Son of God has appeared on earth as a real man, born of the Virgin Mary in order to die and rise again to give life to the world, has been expressed and defended in many different ways. The first preaching and the first defense of the faith consisted in maintaining that Jesus of Nazareth is in truth the Messiah of Israel, and that the Messiah Himself—the Christ—is indeed truly Lord and God in human form. The first Christians, beginning with the apostles, had to insist on the fact that not only is Jesus truly the Christ and the Son of God, but that He has truly lived and died and risen from the dead in the flesh, as a true human being.

By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God (1 John 4.2).

For many deceivers have gone into the world, men who will not acknowledge the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh . . . (2 John 7).

In the early years of the Christian faith, the defenders of the faith—the apologists and martyrs—had as their central witness and task the defense of the doctrine that Jesus, being the Son of God in human flesh, has lived on earth, has died, has been raised by the Father, and has been glorified as the only King and Lord and God of the world.

The Ecumenical Councils

In the third and fourth centuries attempts were made to teach that although Jesus is truly the incarnate Son and Word of God, that the Son and Word Himself is not fully and totally divine, but a creature—even the most exalted creature—but a creature made by God like everything else that was made. This was the teaching of the Arians. Against this teaching, the fathers, such as Athanasius of Alexandria, Basil the Great, his brother, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory the Theologian of Nazianzus defended the definition of faith of the first and second ecumenical councils which held that the Son and Word of God—incarnate in human form as Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah—Christ of Israel—is not a creature, but is truly divine with the same divinity as God the Father and the Holy Spirit. This was the defense of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity which preserved for the Church of all ages the faith that Jesus is indeed the divine Son of God, of one essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one of the Holy Trinity.

At the same time, in the fourth century, it was also necessary for the Church to reject the teaching of a certain Appolinarius, who claimed that although Jesus was indeed the incarnate Son and Word of God, the incarnation consisted in the Word merely taking a human body and not the fullness of human nature. This was the doctrine that Jesus had no real human soul, no human mind, no human spirit, but that the divine Son of God, who exists eternally with the Father and the Spirit, merely dwelt in a human body, in human flesh, as in a temple. It is for this reason that every official doctrinal statement in the Orthodox Church, including all of the statements of the ecumenical councils, always insists that the Son of God became man of the Virgin Mary with a rational soul and body; in other words, that the Son of God really became human in the full meaning of the word and that Jesus Christ was and is a real human being, having and being everything that every human being has and is. This is nothing other than the teaching of the Gospels and the New Testament scriptures generally.

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same nature . . . [being] made like His brethren in every respect . . . (Hebrews.14–17)

[end of first excerpt]