

*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 22, 29
Great Vespers: 5pm

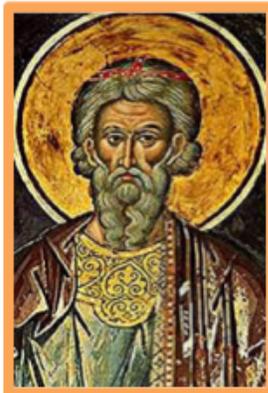
Sunday, October 23, 30
Divine Liturgy: 10am

**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***

**Martyr Arethas and 4,299 Martyrs with him
 October 24**



*Through the sufferings which Your holy
 martyrs Arethas and his companions endured
 for Your sake, O Lord, we beseech You, O Lover
 of mankind: heal all of our infirmities.*

Troparion

*Today the radiant feast of the passion-bearers
 Arethas and his companions comes to us as a
 herald of joy; as we celebrate it we glorify the
 Lord on high.*

Kontakion

The Martyr Arethas and with him 4,299 Martyrs suffered for the Lord Jesus Christ in the sixth century. Arethas was prefect of the Christian city of Negran in Arabia. The Arabian (or Omirite) king, Dunaan, who was Jewish, decided to eliminate Christianity from the land. He issued an edict that all followers of Christ were to be put to death. Because the inhabitants of Negran remained faithful to the Lord, Dunaan came with a large army to destroy the city...

Dunaan [said], "I do not demand that you should renounce the God of heaven and earth, nor do I want you to worship idols, I want merely that you do not believe in Jesus Christ, since the Crucified One was a man, and not God."

The holy martyrs replied that Jesus is God the Word, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Who for the salvation of mankind was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. Those suffering said, "We shall not abjure Christ, since He is Life for us. To die for Him is to find Life."

More than four thousand Christians, men, women, both the aged and children, from the city of Negran and surrounding villages suffered martyrdom for Christ.

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator 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.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate,
And suffered, and was buried; And the third day He rose 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 dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end...

From the Nicene Creed, 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

[Second Excerpt]

The Nestorian Controversy

In the fifth century a long and difficult controversy developed over the true understanding of the person and nature of Jesus Christ. The third ecumenical council in Ephesus in 431, following the teaching of Saint Cyril of Alexandria, was most concerned to defend the fact that the One who was born of the Virgin Mary was no one other than the divine Son of God in human flesh. It was necessary to defend this fact most explicitly because some in the Church, following Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople, were teaching that the Virgin Mary should not be called Theotokos—a term already used in the Church’s theology—because it was claimed that the Virgin gave birth to the man Jesus whom the Son of God had become in the incarnation, and not to the Son Himself. In this view it was held that there is a division between the Son of God born in eternity from God the Father and the Son of Man born from the Virgin in Bethlehem; and that although there is certainly a real “connection” between them, Mary merely gave birth to the man. As such, it was held, Mary could be called Theotokos only by some sort of symbolic and overly-pious stretching of the word, but that it is rather dogmatically accurate to call her Christotokos (the one who gave birth to the Messiah) or Anthropotokos (the one who gave birth to the Man that the Son of God has become in the incarnation).

Saint Cyril of Alexandria and the fathers of the council in Ephesus rejected the Nestorian doctrine and claimed that the term Theotokos for the Virgin Mary is completely and totally accurate and must be retained if the Christian faith is to be properly confessed and the Christian life properly lived. The term must be defended because there can be no division of any sort between the eternal Son and Word of God, begotten of the Father before all ages, and Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary. Mary’s child is the eternal and divine Son of God. He—and no one else—was born of her as a child. He—and no one else—was incarnate in human flesh from her. He—and no one else—became man in the manger in Bethlehem. There can be no “connection” or “conjunction” between God’s Son and Mary’s Son because they are in fact one and the same person. God’s Son was born of Mary. God’s Son is divine; He is God. Therefore, Mary gave birth to God in the flesh, to God as a man. Therefore, Mary is truly Theotokos. The battle cry of St Cyril and the Council in Ephesus was just this: The Son of God and the Son of Man—one Son!

The Council of Chalcedon

This teaching about Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, was further elaborated and explained by the definition of the fourth ecumenical council in Chalcedon in 451. This was necessary because there was a

tendency to stress the divine nature of Christ to such an extent that His true human nature was underplayed to the point almost of being rejected. At the fourth council the well-known formulation was made which says that Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son and Word of God is one person (or hypostasis) having two full and complete natures: human and divine. Inspired particularly by the letter of Saint Leo, the Pope of Rome, the fourth council insisted that Jesus is exactly what God the Father is in relation to His divinity. This was a direct reference to the Nicene Creed which claims that the Son of God is “of one essence with the Father,” which simply means that what God the Father is, the Son is also: Light from Light, True God from True God. And the council insisted as well that in the incarnation the Son of God became exactly what all human beings are, confessing that Jesus Christ is also “of one essence” with all human beings in respect to His humanity. This doctrine was and is defended as teaching nothing other than the apostolic faith as recorded in the Gospels and the New Testament writings, for example, those of the Apostle Paul:

... though He was in the form of God, [Jesus] did not count equality with God a thing to be clung to, but emptied Himself, taking on the form of a servant, being found in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2.6–8; See also Hebrews 1–2, John 1).

The critical words in the definition of faith of the Council of Chalcedon are the following:

Following the holy fathers we teach with one voice that the Son of God and our Lord Jesus Christ is to be confessed as one and the same [Person], and He is perfect in Divinity and perfect in Humanity, true God and true Man, of a rational soul and [human] body consisting, of one essence with the Father as touching His Divinity and of one essence with us as touching His Humanity; made in all things like unto us, with the exception of sin only; begotten of His Father before all ages according to His Divinity: but in these last days, for us men and for our salvation, born [into the world] of the Virgin Mary, Theotokos, according to His Humanity. This one and the same Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son [of God] must be confessed to be in two natures, without mixture and without change, without separation and without division [i.e., without fusing together Divinity and Humanity so that the proper characteristics of each are changed or lost; and also without separating them in such a way that there might be considered to be two Sons and not One Son only] and that without the distinction of natures being removed by such union, but rather that the peculiar property of each nature being preserved and being united in one Person and Hypostasis, not separated or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and only begotten, God the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Prophets of old have spoken concerning Him [e.g., the Immanuel of Isaiah 7.14], and as Jesus Christ has taught us, and as the Creed of the fathers has delivered to us.

A number of Christians did not accept the Council of Chalcedon and broke communion with those who did accept it. They did so because they thought that the council had in fact resurrected the wrong doctrine of Nestorius by insisting on the “two natures” after the incarnation, however strongly and firmly the “union” of the two natures was insisted upon. These Christians were called the monophysites (from the term meaning “one nature” after the incarnation), and they continue until today in separation from the Chalcedonian Orthodox in the Coptic, Ethiopian and Armenian churches. Hopefully, one day, by God’s grace, this dispute will be resolved and those who adhere to Chalcedon the Eastern Orthodox Christians, as well as the traditional Roman Catholics and Protestants—will come to a unity of faith with those who reject Chalcedon in regard to its explication of the union of the divine and the human in the one person of Christ our Lord. Whatever the future may hold by God’s grace, however, it is still the firm teaching of the Orthodox Church that the Council of Chalcedon is in strict adherence with the anti-Nestorian doctrines of Saint Cyril and the third ecumenical council in Ephesus. The virtue of the fourth council, in the Orthodox view, is that it defines very clearly the fact that when the Son of God was born as a man from the Virgin Mary, Theotokos, He did not cease to be God or change in His Divinity, while becoming a complete and perfect man in His incarnate Humanity. For salvation itself requires the perfect union of Divinity and Humanity in the one Person of Jesus Christ; 21 union where God is God and Man is Man, and yet where the two become one in perfect unity: without fusion or change, and without division or separation.