

*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, December 3, 10
Great Vespers: 5pm

Sunday, December 4, 11
Divine Liturgy: 10am

**Coffee and fellowship will
follow the service**

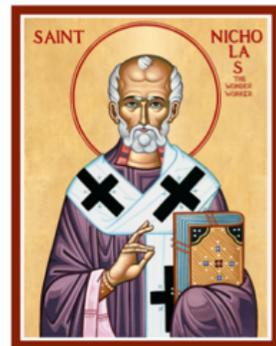
*The above services are at St.
Olympia Church
34 North Main Street
Norwood, NY, 13668*

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

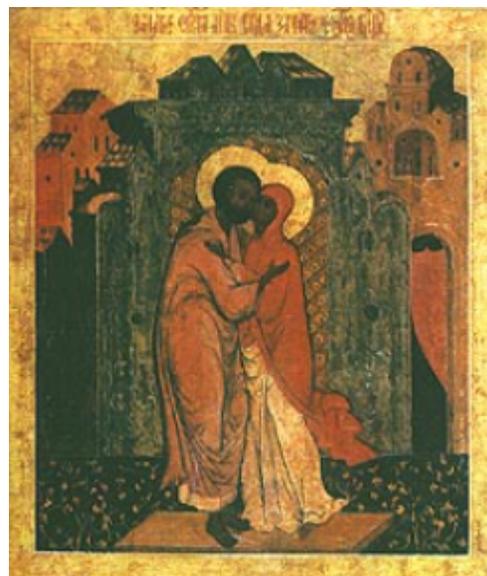
**Saint Nicholas
December 6**

O glorious Nicholas, the holy preacher of Christ,
you are the great and fervent protector of those in danger,
those on land and sea, far off or near;
for you are a most compassionate and mighty intercessor.
Therefore, as we assemble, we cry aloud:
"Pray to the Lord that we may be delivered from all danger!"

Vespers, Lord I Call, Stikhera



**The Conception of the Most Holy Theotokos
December 9**



Upcoming Diocesan Events

www.nynjoca.org

Diocesan Council Meeting

Thursday, December 8 at 11:00 AM
Diocesan Chancery, Bronxville NY

Presbyters' Council Meeting

Thursday, December 29 at 11:00 AM
Diocesan Chancery, Bronxville NY

WEEKDAY VESPERS AT THE HERMITAGE OF ST OLYMPIA

Weekdays at 4 PM

For information please contact Mother Sophronia at

mothersophronia@gmail.com

or via Facebook: Nun Sophronia Hofstead

The Conception by Righteous Anna of the Most Holy Mother of God December 9

Saint Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, was the youngest daughter of the priest Nathan from Bethlehem, descended from the tribe of Levi. She married Saint Joachim (September 9), who was a native of Galilee. For a long time Saint Anna was childless, but after twenty years, through the fervent prayer of both spouses, an angel of the Lord announced to them that they would be the parents of a daughter, Who would bring blessings to the whole human race.

The Orthodox Church does not accept the teaching that the Mother of God was exempted from the consequences of ancestral sin (death, corruption, sin, etc.) at the moment of her conception by virtue of the future merits of Her Son. Only Christ was born perfectly holy and sinless, as Saint Ambrose of Milan teaches in Chapter Two of his Commentary on Luke. The Holy Virgin was like everyone else in Her mortality, and in being subject to temptation, although She committed no personal sins. She was not a deified creature removed from the rest of humanity. If this were the case, She would not have been truly human, and the nature that Christ took from Her would not have been truly human either. If Christ does not truly share our human nature, then the possibility of our salvation is in doubt.

The Conception of the Virgin Mary by Saint Anna took place at Jerusalem. The many icons depicting the Conception by Saint Anna show the Most Holy Theotokos trampling the serpent underfoot.

“In the icon Saints Joachim and Anna are usually depicted with hands folded in prayer; their eyes are also directed upward and they contemplate the Mother of God, Who stands in the air with outstretched hands; under Her feet is an orb encircled by a serpent (symbolizing the devil), which strives to conquer all the universe by its power.”

There are also icons in which Saint Anna holds the Most Holy Virgin on her left arm as an infant. On Saint Anna’s face is a look of reverence. A large ancient icon, painted on canvas, is located in the village of Minkovetsa in the Dubensk district of Volhynia diocese. From ancient times this Feast was especially venerated by pregnant women in Russia.

Today the bonds of barrenness are broken, God has heard Joachim and Anna. He has clearly promised them that beyond hope, they would bear a divine child, by whom the uncircumscribable One was born as a mortal Man, Who commanded the angel to cry to her: “Hail, O full of grace, the Lord is with you!”

Troparion of the Conception of the Theotokos

Today the world keeps festival at Anna’s conceiving, wrought by God; for she bore her who inexpressibly conceived the Word of God.

Kontakion of the Conception of the Theotokos

Excerpt from “Time and Eternity in Orthodox Worship”

By Dr. Jane M. deVyver

Standing in Two Worlds

As soon as we step into an Orthodox church, we are stepping into another world — another realm. We are stepping out of our everyday world, into the eternal world — and we have the opportunity to experience a foretaste of God’s heavenly Kingdom. The architecture of an Orthodox church, its icons and the way in which its Divine Services are conducted should all convey the reality of this other heavenly realm and help us to participate in it and experience it. In an Orthodox church building, with its icons and Divine Services, we are standing in two worlds, with one foot in the temporal world and one foot in the eternal world. We are given the opportunity to transcend the sense of time of our daily lives in the temporal world, and to encounter the transfigured and redeemed time of the Heavenly Kingdom.

St. Paul instructs us in several of his Epistles to *“redeem the time.”* There are many different meanings of this phrase, but one meaning is that in Orthodox Divine Services we can experience what we might call “redeemed time.”

Two Kinds of Time

In English, we are somewhat restricted in talking and thinking about time, partly due to the general lack of adequate words to express transcendent experience, and partly because we have just one word for ‘time’ — which generally refers to chronological, calendar time as measured by a clock. However, in the Greek language, with its inherent thought-patterns, the language in which the New Testament was written and the Eastern Fathers thought and wrote, there are two words for time.

“Chronos” (as in ‘chronological’) is the Greek word for the earthly, temporal, measurable, clock time where we live our everyday lives. “Chronos” time and space are chief characteristics of God’s created world and therefore are not bad in themselves, but are to be redeemed, along with everything else in the fallen world.

However, Greek (and some other languages) has a second word, (and therefore a second category of thought) for time — “kairos.” This refers to what we might describe as “Eternal” or “Divine time,” or “Transfigured time,” or “Redeemed time”— a realm wherein we step outside of and transcend the “clock” time of our everyday lives in the world. “Kairos” time is the realm of artistic creativity, wherein one “stands outside oneself,” and is caught up into another realm or level of existence. “Kairos” time is the present now time:

*“Today Christ is born! Today Christ is Risen! Today Christ is Baptized!
This is the day of salvation!”*

“Kairos” time is also the “fullness of time,” when the Eternal breaks into and penetrates our fallen earthly existence, transfiguring it and us, wherein we are granted the gift to temporarily catch a glimpse of standing in the Presence of God. This is the realm of what might be called “religious experience”—or having a “personal experience” of God; it is the present moment of repentance and conversion. We have stepped into “Kairos” time when we are “caught up” and don’t even notice the passage of “chronos” time.

“Kairos” is the transcendent time into which we are invited to enter and to experience in Orthodox Divine worship—the Divine time of this other world, this other realm. This is the “redeemed time” into which we are invited to enter when we step into an authentic Orthodox church temple. This is the “redeemed time” that we can experience in authentic Orthodox icons. This is the “redeemed time” in which we can participate during authentically-rendered Orthodox Divine Services.

The degree to which the architecture, icons and liturgy can enable us to temporarily transcend this fallen temporal world and have a foretaste of heavenly worship in God’s Presence can vary enormously, but the extent to which the earthly worship reflects the heavenly worship is the most important. When the Divine Services are sung and chanted and prayed in a way that reflects heavenly worship, then even a mediocre physical church building, with mediocre icons, (or even when served in a hospital, nursing home, prison, home, or other setting outside a church building), can be transformed temporarily into the eternal Kingdom and where those present are invited to participate in the continuous worship of heaven. This is a totally awesome gift that we are offered!

Sometimes people can intuitively experience this sense of transcendence of time, space and place—the transcending of the temporal, everyday life of the ‘world’— without knowing just how to express in words the experience of standing with one foot in heaven and one foot on the earth. But on the other hand, sometimes the opposite might occur, for it is also very easy—and an enormous temptation that must be rigorously resisted—to bring the experiences of our daily, temporal life in the fallen world into the life of the Church and its Divine Services. We also can be tempted to bring with us the experience of both secular and heterodox music. Usually we do this without even being aware of what we are doing,

because it is a unconscious expression of how we have been socialized in our lives in the culture around us. Let us reflect a bit about what this means in practice, to help us recognize it when it occurs.

Orthodox Worship Transports us into the Eternal Realm

Every Christian is called to *“be in the world, but not of the world.”*

But this is a very difficult and life-long struggle, and is totally contradictory to everything that the culture around us teaches. But what exactly does it mean to be in the world but not of the world? One concise explanation of what this phrase means is that while we live our daily lives in the physical world around us, our values and priorities must be focused on God’s values and His priorities.

That is—our hearts are to be committed to acquiring the treasures of God’s spiritual riches over all temporal, earthly wealth and power, and what the ‘world’ considers to be important. Participating in the “kairos” experience of Eternity in Orthodox worship can be a significant component of helping us not to be a part of the fallen world, while yet living in it.

Our encounter with the Church, and its icons and liturgy is supposed to lift us up out of this world, and transport us temporarily into the heavenly, eternal realm, where the worship of God is continuous. But in order to have the opportunity for this to occur, we have to cooperate with the Lord in achieving this goal in a number of ways: in the way in which we design our Orthodox churches; in the way in which we paint our Orthodox icons; and most importantly, in the way in which we sing and chant the Divine Services. We must cooperate with God and have authentic Orthodox church architecture, authentic Orthodox icons, and authentic Orthodox Divine Services— authentic, precisely because they accurately reflect Orthodox Theology and Tradition.

Vital Principle: Orthodox Worship on Earth Is a Reflection of Divine Worship in Heaven

What steps can we take in our personal effort to cooperate with God in order to achieve these goals? To start with, we need to accept what is perhaps the most fundamental and vital principle of Orthodox liturgical theology, namely, that Divine Worship on earth is a reflection of Divine Worship in Heaven, and a foretaste of the fullness of Divine Worship that is to come. We proclaim this essential principle every time we sing the Cherubic Hymn in the Divine Liturgy:

“Let us who mystically represent the cherubim, and who sing the thrice-holy hymn to the life-creating Trinity, now lay aside all earthly cares. That we may receive the King of All, Who comes invisibly upborne by the angelic hosts.”

The meaning of these words is truly awesome and even mind-boggling—that we sinful and inadequate and frail human beings, are allowed to represent the cherubim, who are the angels, second in rank to the seraphim, who worship God continually before His Holy Throne and Altar.

The concept of earthly worship reflecting heavenly worship does not start with Christianity, but is received by Orthodox Christians from the Old Testament Jewish Tradition. God instructed Moses to create a Tabernacle modeled on the heavenly Tabernacle, and gave careful detailed instructions about how to make the Tabernacle, and how to do the liturgical rites to be performed in the Tabernacle, which are also modeled on those of heavenly worship.

The Tabernacle of Moses, and its successor, the Temple in Jerusalem, are explicitly described by God to Moses as a correspondence between the invisible heavenly prototype and its visible counterpart on earth. The Church, which is the New Jerusalem and an image of God’s Heavenly Jerusalem, continues the Old Testament concept of the correspondence between the earthly temple and worship and their heavenly prototypes. In the New Testament, there are various descriptions of heavenly worship, especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in the Apocalypse or Revelation of St. John. This correspondence between the invisible heavenly prototype and the visible earthly expression is a vital characteristic of Christian architecture and worship from the earliest Christian centuries, and is a fundamental principle of Orthodox liturgical theology. ...

<https://frjohnpeck.com/time-and-eternity-in-orthodox-worship/>



Kontakion of the Nativity of Christ

*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 a star!
Since for our sake the Eternal God was born as a Little Child!*