

*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 10, 17
Great Vespers: 5pm

Sunday, December 11, 18
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*

**The Repose of Saint Herman of Alaska
 December 13**

*With what wreaths shall we crown the venerable Herman,
 leader of the Aleuts and apostle of Orthodoxy?
 He received the Valaam leavening of the Holy Spirit
 and preached the Gospel to the Aleuts in word and deed,
 disregarding, along with the flesh, all that is of the flesh.*

*With tears and prayers,
 with suffering and with prolonged fasting,
 and with a most immortal love for the people,
 he led them to Christ, Who has great mercy.
 Vespers, Lord I Call, Stikhera*



**The Holy Prophet Daniel
 and the Three Holy Youths
 December 17**



Troparion
*Great are the accomplishments
 of faith, for the Three Holy
 Youths rejoiced in the source of
 the flame, as if by restful
 waters, and the Prophet Daniel
 appeared as a shepherd of lions
 as of sheep. By their prayers, O
 Christ God, save our souls.*



OCA Parishes to Take Collection for the Diocese of Alaska

December 11, 2022, the Sunday before the feast day of [Saint Herman of Alaska](#), marks the first of an annual collection for the Diocese of Alaska.

At the [20th All-American Council](#) in Baltimore, MD, [His Grace Bishop Alexei](#) held a [forum updating the Church](#) on the challenges facing the Diocese of Alaska. In the face of such serious difficulties, the council passed the following resolution:

“Whereas Alaska is the cradle of Orthodoxy in America: Be it resolved that the 20th AAC asks the Holy Synod of Bishops to designate annually the Sunday closest to the December feast of Saint Herman, for a free-will collection from each parish in the Orthodox Church in America to support the Diocese of Alaska Clergy Endowment.”

The Diocese of Alaska is the birthplace of the Orthodox Christianity in North America and the mother diocese of the Orthodox Church in America. The entire Orthodox Church in America owes much to the Church in Alaska for its continuous faith and witness since Saint Herman and the first missionaries arrived in 1794.

In gratitude to the Alaskan faithful, and in fraternal love toward our fellow brothers and sisters in need, parishes of the OCA are asked to give generously on December 11, 2022.

UPCOMING DIOCESAN EVENTS

Presbyters' Council Meeting

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

Have you heard of CrossRoad?

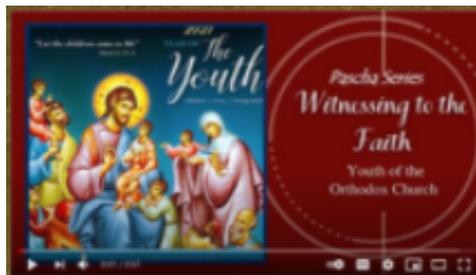
CrossRoad is a ten-day academic summer institute that prepares rising high school seniors and graduating seniors (current 11th and 12th graders) to make big life decisions and invites them to connect with the Orthodox Christian theological and spiritual tradition in a deep and meaningful way.

Please visit www.CrossRoadInstitute.org to learn about their amazing summer sessions in Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco. The priority deadline for applying is January 18, 2023, so please spend a moment to learn more.

Youth Witness to the Faith Series

(Presented By Assembly Of Canonical Orthodox Bishops Of The USA)

Includes an Introduction and Four Episodes on Pascha.



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

Holy Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths

December 17

The Holy Prophet Daniel is the fourth of the major prophets.

In the years following 600 B.C. Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians, the Temple built by Solomon was destroyed, and many of the Israelite people were led away into the Babylonian Captivity. Among the captives were also the illustrious youths Daniel, Ananias, Azarias and Misael.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon ordered that they be instructed in the Chaldean language and wisdom, and dressed them in finery. Handsome children of princely lineage were often chosen to serve as pages in the palace. For three years, they would be fed from food from the king's table. After this they would be allowed to stand before his throne. Daniel was renamed Baltasar, Ananias was called Shadrach, Misael was called Mishach, and Azarias was known as Abednego. But they, cleaving to their faith, disdained the extravagance of court, refusing to defile themselves by eating from the king's table and drinking his wine. Instead, they lived on vegetables and water.

The Lord granted them wisdom, and to Saint Daniel the gift of insight and the interpretation of dreams. The holy Prophet Daniel preserved his faith in the one God and trusted in His almighty help. He surpassed all the Chaldean astrologers and sorcerers in his wisdom, and was made a confidant to King Nebuchadnezzar.

Once, Nebuchadnezzar had a strange dream which terrified him (Daniel 2:1-6). He summoned magicians, sorcerers, and Chaldeans before him to interpret the dream. When they asked him what he had dreamt, the king refused to tell them. He said, "If you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins." The Babylonian wise men protested that no magician or sorcerer could be expected to do this. Only the gods could reveal the dream and its meaning, they told him.

The king ordered all the wise men of Babylon to be executed. When they sought Daniel and his companions to put them to death, Daniel asked that the king's sentence not be carried out. He said that he could tell the king what he dreamt, for it had been revealed to him in a vision. Daniel was brought before the king and was able to reveal not only the content of the dream, but also its prophetic significance. After this, the king elevated Daniel to be ruler of the whole province of Babylon, and the chief of all the wise men.

During these times King Nebuchadnezzar ordered a huge statue to be made in his likeness. It was decreed that when people heard the sound of trumpets and other instruments, they should fall down and worship the golden idol. Because they refused to do this, the three holy youths Ananias, Azarias and Misael were cast into a fiery furnace.

[The Holy Youths Ananias ("God is gracious"), Azarias ("whom God helps"), and Misael ("Who is what God is?") were companions of the Holy Prophet Daniel. They were chosen to serve in the king's palace with Daniel (Daniel 1:6) and were all from the tribe of Judah. They gave Ananias the Chaldean name Shadrach ("royal"), Azarias the Chaldean name Abednego ("servant of Nego"), and Misael the Chaldean name Meshach ("guest"). ... The Seventh and Eighth Odes of the nine Biblical Odes at the back of the Psalter are taken from The Song of the Three Holy Youths (found in the Septuagint text of the Old Testament used by the Orthodox Church).]

The flames shot out over the furnace forty-nine cubits, felling the Chaldeans standing about, but the holy youths walked in the midst of the flames, offering prayer and psalmody to the Lord (Daniel 3:26-90).

The Angel of the Lord appeared in the furnace and cooled the flames, and the young men remained unharmed. This "Angel of Great Counsel," as he is called in iconography, is identified with the Son of God (Daniel 3:25, Isaiah 9:6). In the first Canon for the Nativity of the Lord (Ode 5), the Church sings: "Thou hast sent us Thine Angel of Great Counsel." The emperor, upon seeing this, commanded them to come out, and was converted to the true God.

Under King Baltasar, Saint Daniel interpreted a mysterious inscription ("Mane, Thekel, Phares"), which had appeared on the wall of the palace during a banquet (Daniel 5:1-31), foretelling the downfall of the Babylonian kingdom. Under the Persian emperor Darius, Saint Daniel was slandered by his enemies, and was thrown into a den with hungry lions, but they did not touch him, and he was not harmed. The emperor Darius then rejoiced over Daniel and ordered people throughout his realm to worship the God of Daniel, "since He is the living and eternal God, and His Kingdom shall not be destroyed, and His dominion is forever" (Daniel 6:26).

The holy Prophet Daniel grieved deeply for his people, who then were undergoing righteous chastisement for a multitude of sins and offenses, for transgressing the laws of God, resulting in the grievous Babylonian Captivity and the destruction of Jerusalem: "My God, incline Thine ear and hearken; open Thine eyes and look upon our desolation and that of Thy city, in which Thy Name is spoken; for we do not make our supplication before Thee because of our own righteousness, but because of Thy great mercy" (Dan 9:18). Because of Daniel's righteous life and his prayers for the people's iniquity, the destiny of the nation of Israel and the fate of all the world was revealed to the holy prophet.

While interpreting the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar, the holy, glorious Prophet Daniel spoke of a great and final kingdom, the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ (Dan 2:44). The prophetic vision about the seventy weeks (Dan 9:24-27) speaks about the signs of the First and the Second Comings of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is connected with those events (Daniel 12:1-12).

Saint Daniel interceded for his people before King Cyrus, who esteemed him highly, and who decreed freedom for the Israelite people. Daniel himself and his fellows Ananias, Azarias and Misael, all survived into old age, but died in captivity. According to the testimony of Saint Cyril of Alexandria (June 9), Saints Ananias, Azarias and Misael were beheaded on orders of the Persian emperor Cambyses.

Saint Daniel and the three holy youths are also commemorated on the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, and on the Sunday of the Holy Fathers (Sunday before the Nativity).

*Cleansed by the Spirit
your pure heart became a vessel of clearest prophecy;
you saw things far away as if they were near.
When cast into the den you tamed the lions.
Therefore we honor you, O blessed Prophet, glorious Daniel.*

Kontakion to the Holy Prophet Daniel

*You would not worship an image made by hands, O thrice-blessed youths;
but shielded by the ineffable Essence, you were glorified through your ordeal by fire. In the midst of the
unbearable fire you called upon God, crying:
"Hasten, O compassionate One, and in Your mercy come to our aid,
for if You will, You can do so."*

Kontakion to the Three Holy Youths

Troparion of the Nativity of Christ

*Your Nativity, O Christ our God,
has shone to the world the Light of wisdom!
For by it, those who worshipped the stars,
were taught by a Star to adore You,
the Sun of Righteousness,
and to know You, the Orient from on High.
O Lord, glory to You!*



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!*