



## ST OLYMPIA ORTHODOX CHURCH



*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, September 10, 17**  
**Great Vespers: 6 pm**

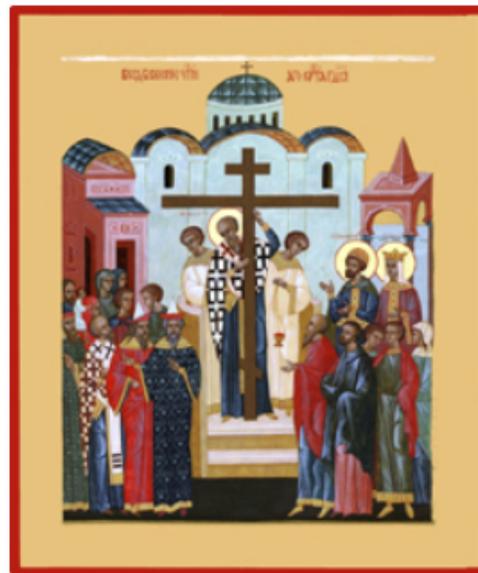
**Sunday, September 11, 18**  
**Divine Liturgy: 10am**

**Lunch and fellowship will  
follow the service**

*The above services are at  
St. Olympia Chapel  
34 North Main Street  
Norwood, NY, 1367*

*Mailing Address  
St. Olympia Orthodox  
Church PO Box 122  
Canton, NY 13617*

### **The Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross September 14**



*Before Your Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Your holy Resurrection we glorify.*

*O Lord, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries. And by virtue of Your Cross, preserve Your habitation.*

Troparion of the Cross

*As You were voluntarily raised upon the cross for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Your Name, O Christ God; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Your power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the Invincible trophy, Your weapon of Peace.*

Kontakion of the Cross

## Saint John Chrysostom on the Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross

Let us consider of what great blessings for us Christ's Cross has become the cause. For though the Lord's Cross sounds sad and bitter, it is in reality full of joy and radiance. For the Cross is the salvation of the Church; the Cross is the boast of those who hope in it; the Cross is reconciliation of enemies to God and conversion of sinners to Christ. For through the Cross we have been delivered from enmity, and through the Cross we have been joined in friendship to God. Through the Cross we have been freed from the tyranny of the devil, and through the Cross we have been delivered from death and destruction. 'When the Cross was not proclaimed, we were held fast by death; now the Cross is proclaimed, and we have come to despise death, as though it did not exist, while we have come to long for everlasting life. 'When the Cross was not proclaimed, we were strangers to paradise; but when the Cross appeared, at once a thief was found worthy of paradise. From such darkness the human race has crossed over to infinite light; from death it has been called to everlasting life, from corruption it has been renewed for incorruption. For the eyes of the heart are no longer covered by the darkness that comes through ignorance, but through the Cross they are flooded with the light of knowledge. The ears of the deaf are no longer shut by unbelief, for the deaf have heard the word of the Lord, and the blind have recovered their sight to see the glory of God. These are the gifts we are given through the Cross. What blessing has not been achieved for us through the Cross?

The Cross is proclaimed, and faith in God is confessed and truth prevails in the whole inhabited world. The Cross is proclaimed, and martyrs are revealed and confession of Christ prevails. The Cross is proclaimed, and the resurrection is revealed, life is made manifest, the kingdom of heaven is assured. The Cross has become the cause of all these things, and through the Cross we have been taught to sing. What then is more precious than the Cross? What more profitable for our souls? So let us not be ashamed to name the Cross, but let us confess it with total confidence.

Christ is hung upon the Cross, and the devil has become a corpse. Christ has been stretched on the Cross, and a standard of salvation has been given to the world. Christ has been nailed to the Cross, and every soul has been released from bonds. Christ has been fixed to the Cross, and all creation has been set free from the slavery of corruption. Christ has breathed his last on the Cross, and a new marvel has been shown to the world; for the sun's light is darkened. This what a prophetic saying cries out, "And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord, that the sun will set at midday, and the light will become dark in the daytime, and I will change all your feasts into grief and all your songs into laments" [Amos 8:9]. Do you see, beloved, how great a mystery the prophetic saying holds? For here the deeds of both are intimated: I mean of the Jews, who are under the law, and of the nations, who are outside the law, who both practice iniquity. For those who feast according to the law will grieve as they celebrate their feasts, and instead of songs, they make lamentations over Jerusalem. For Jerusalem will no longer hold solemn rites, and no feast will be celebrated in it. While pagan nations will mourn, making confession for their sins, and mourning is cause of blessedness. For scripture says, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" [Matthew 5:4]. They will mourn, then, over their empty feasts and lawless songs that they performed for the unclean demons. Take note then today how a pagan, repenting for the evil things he has done, laments and says with the prophet, "We have erred and strayed in our shame, and our sins have covered us, for we have been filled with our impiety. We have acknowledged the iniquities of our fathers". So then let us too lament and mourn for the evils that have been laid to our charge; let us cling to the Cross, placing all our hopes on the Cross, so that taught through the Cross, fixing our thought on heaven, being brought close to Christ our Saviour, we may be found worthy to be near God in the kingdom of heaven, in Christ our Lord himself, to whom be glory and might to the ages of ages. Amen

[orthodoxtimes.com/saint-john-chrysostom-on-the-universal-exaltation-of-the-precious-and-life-giving-cross/](http://orthodoxtimes.com/saint-john-chrysostom-on-the-universal-exaltation-of-the-precious-and-life-giving-cross/)



## History of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Excerpted from the Sermon by *Metropolitan of Pisidia Sotirios*

On September 14, the whole of the Orthodox world rejoices as we celebrate the Exaltation of the Holy Cross: ***“Behold, through the cross joy has come to the world!”*** (Paschal prayer)

Three historical events contributed to the establishment of this holiday:

**1<sup>st</sup>.** The discovery of the wood of the Holy Cross, in the year 326, by Saint Helen, mother of the Emperor Constantine the Great. When the Cross of the Lord was discovered near Golgotha and was miraculously identified as the true Cross of Christ, St. Helen worshiped it with tears and handed it over to Bishop Makarios of Jerusalem.

**2<sup>nd</sup>.** Saint Helen had laid the foundations of the Church of the Resurrection of the Lord over the site of the Holy Sepulchre, which was completed in the year 335, followed by its Inauguration. The next day, September 14 of the same year, the Elevation of the Holy Cross was held in the middle of the Church, with every ecclesiastical order, and everyone rushed to worship the Holy Cross with deep emotion and reverence.

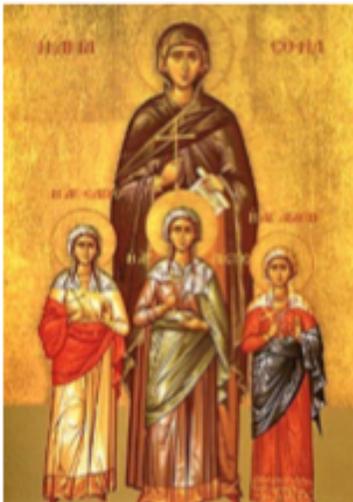
**3<sup>rd</sup>.** After three centuries, the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross was repeated once again. This is because, when the Persians invaded and conquered Jerusalem in 614, they snatched the Holy Cross from the Church of the Resurrection and held it for 14 years. In 628, the pious Emperor of Byzantium, Heraclius, defeated the Persians and returned the Holy Cross to Jerusalem. On September 14, 628, Emperor Heraclius, barefooted and in plain clothes, ascended to the Church of the Resurrection, in a procession, carrying the Holy Cross on his shoulders and handed it over to the Patriarch of Jerusalem Zacharias. The Patriarch received the Cross with deep emotion and raised it in the middle of the Church triumphantly, while all the faithful started singing together the hymn: ***“Save the Lord Your people and bless Your inheritance ...”***.

Since then, it has been established to officially celebrate the Exaltation of the Holy Cross throughout the Church, in both East and West.

The Holy Fathers of the Church, from the 4th century onwards, in their wonderful Sermons on the Holy Cross, highlight with many images and expressions the meaning of the Cross as well as the importance it bears in the life of the Church and of every believer. ...

[myocn.net/sermon-on-the-feast-of-the-exaltation-of-the-holy-and-life-giving-cross/](http://myocn.net/sermon-on-the-feast-of-the-exaltation-of-the-holy-and-life-giving-cross/)

## Martyr Sophia and Her Three Daughters, Faith, Hope, and Love September 17



*The Church celebrates and rejoices  
in the feast of the three daughters: Faith, Hope, and Love  
and their Mother Sophia, named for her wisdom:  
For in them she gave birth to the three godly virtues.  
Now they eternally behold their bridegroom, God the Word.  
Let us rejoice spiritually in their memory and cry:  
O our three Heavenly Protectors,  
establish, confirm and strengthen us in Faith, Hope and Love.*

*Troparion*