

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

*Fr. Nikolay Khalimonov, Priest-in-Charge, 323-851-7989, nkhalimonov@yahoo.com  
Fr. Alexy Karlgut, Dean/Administrator, 607-759-1833*

*Please join us for prayer and fellowship.*

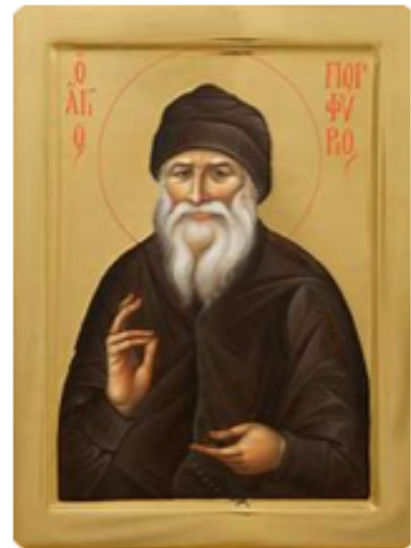
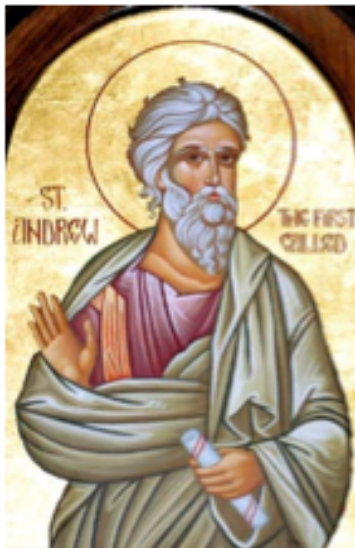
**Upcoming Services:**  
Saturday, Nov 25, Dec 2  
Great Vespers: 5pm

**Holy Apostle Andrew, the First Called  
November 30**

**Sunday, Nov 26, Dec 3**  
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, NY 13617*



**Saint Porphyrios, Wonderworker of Kavso Kaliva  
December 2**

***O Andrew, as the First-called of the Apostles and brother of their Leader, entreat the Master of all to grant peace to the world and to our souls great mercy.***

**Troparion**

***O ye faithful, let us honor Porphyrios, the offspring of Euboia the Elder of all Greece, an initiate of theology, and a true lover of Christ; from childhood he was filled with divine gifts; those possessed by demons are delivered, the sick are healed, and they cry with faith: "Glory to Him Who strengthened you. Glory to Him Who sanctified you. Glory to Him Who, through you, works healings for all."***

**Troparion**

## Commemoration of the Weeping Icon of the Mother of God “of the Sign” at Novgorod November 27

The Icon of the Mother of God “Of the Sign”, depicts the Most Holy Theotokos with prayerfully uplifted hands, and the Divine Infant is at Her bosom in a mandorla (or sphere). This depiction of the Mother of God is regarded as one of the very first of Her iconographic images. In the mausoleum of Saint Agnes at Rome is a depiction of the Mother of God with hands raised in prayer with the Infant Christ sitting upon Her knees. This depiction is ascribed to the fourth century. There is also an ancient Byzantine icon of the Mother of God “Nikopea” from the sixth century, where the Most Holy Theotokos is depicted seated upon a throne and holding in Her hands an oval shield with the image of the Savior Emmanuel.

Icons of the Mother of God, known as “The Sign”, appeared in Russia during the eleventh-twelfth centuries, and were so called because of a miraculous sign from the Novgorod Icon in the year 1170.

In that year the allied forces of Russian appanage princes, headed by a son of Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky of Suzdal, marched to the very walls of Great Novgorod. For the people of Novgorod, their only remaining hope was that God would help them. Day and night they prayed, beseeching the Lord not to forsake them. On the third night Bishop Elias of Novgorod heard a wondrous voice commanding that the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos be taken out of the church of the Savior’s Transfiguration on Ilina street, and carried about on the city walls.

When they carried the icon, the enemy fired a volley of arrows at the procession, and one of them pierced the iconographic face of the Mother of God. Tears trickled from Her eyes, and the icon turned its face towards the city. After this divine Sign an inexpressible terror suddenly fell upon the enemy. They began to strike one another, and taking encouragement from the Lord, the people of Novgorod fearlessly gave battle and won the victory.

In remembrance of the miraculous intercession of the Queen of Heaven, Archbishop Elias established a Feastday in honor of the Sign of the Mother of God, which the Russian Church celebrates to the present day. The Athonite hieromonk Pachomius the Logothete, who was present at the festal celebration of the Icon in Russia, composed two Canons for this Feast.

On certain Novgorod Icons of the Sign, the miraculous occurrences of the year 1170 were also depicted. For 186 years afterwards, the wonderworking icon remained in the Savior-Transfiguration church on Ilina street. In 1356 it was transferred to a church built in Novgorod in honor of the Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos “of the Sign,” which became the cathedral church of the monastery of the Sign.

Numerous copies of the Sign Icon are known throughout Russia. Many of them were also glorified by miracles in their local churches, and were then named for the place of the appearance of the miracle. Similar copies of the Sign Icon are the icons of Dionysievo-Glushets, Abalaka (July 20), Kursk, Seraphim-Ponetaev and others.

*Having obtained you as an unassailable rampart and a source of miracles, O Most Pure Theotokos, we your servants vanquish the assaults of enemies. Therefore we entreat you: “Grant peace to your city, and great mercy to our souls.”*  
**Troparion**



**Weeping Icon**



**“Kursk-Root” Icon**

*We celebrate the appearance of your revered Icon of the Sign, O Theotokos, whereby you have granted your people a wondrous victory over the enemies of your city. Therefore, we cry to you with faith: “Rejoice, O Virgin, the boast of Christians.”*  
**Kontakion**

## **“Kursk-Root” Icon of the Mother of God**

**November 27**

The Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God “Of the Sign” is one of the most ancient icons of the Russian Church. In the thirteenth century during the Tatar invasion, when all the Russian realm was put to the extremist tribulation, the city of Kursk, ravaged by the Horde of Batu, fell into desolation.

One day in the environs of the city a hunter noticed the ancient icon, lying on a root face downwards to the ground. The hunter lifted it and saw that the image of the icon was similar to the Novgorod “Znamenie” Icon. With the appearance of this icon immediately there appeared its first miracle. Just as the hunter lifted up the holy icon from the earth, right then, at that place where the icon lay, gushed up strongly a spring of pure water. This occurred on September 8, 1259. The hunter decided not to leave the icon in the forest and settled on as a resting place an ancient small chapel, in which he put the newly-appeared image of the Theotokos. Soon inhabitants of the city of Ryla heard about this, and being in location not far away, they began to visit the place of the appearance for venerating the new holy image.

They transferred the icon to Ryla and put it in a new church in honor of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos. But the icon did not long remain there. It disappeared and returned to its former place of appearance. The inhabitants of Ryla repeatedly took it and carried it to the city, but the icon incomprehensibly returned to its former place. Everyone then realized, that the Theotokos preferred the place of appearance of Her Icon. The special help granted by the Mother of God through this icon is bound up with important events in Russian history: with the war of liberation of the Russian nation during the Polish-Lithuanian incursion in 1612, and the 1812 Fatherland war. From the icon several copies were made, which also were glorified.

## **Apostle Andrew, the Holy and All-Praised First-Called**

**November 30**

The Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called was the first of the Apostles to follow Christ, and he later brought his own brother, the holy Apostle Peter, to Christ (John 1:35-42). The future apostle was from Bethsaida, and from his youth he turned with all his soul to God. He did not enter into marriage, and he worked with his brother as a fisherman. When the holy Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John began to preach, Saint Andrew became his closest disciple. Declaring Christ to be the Lamb of God, Saint John the Baptist himself sent to Christ his own two disciples, the future Apostles Andrew and John the Theologian.

After the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, Saint Andrew went to the Eastern lands preaching the Word of God. He went through Asia Minor, Thrace, Macedonia, he reached the River Danube, went along the coast of the Black Sea, through Crimea, the Black Sea region and along the River Dniepr he climbed to the place where the city of Kiev now stands.

He stopped overnight on the hills of Kiev. Rising in the morning, he said to those disciples that were with him: “See these hills? Upon these hills shall shine forth the beneficence of God, and there will be a great city here, and God shall raise up many churches.” The apostle went up around the hills, blessed them and set up a cross. Having prayed, he went up even further along the Dniepr and reached a settlement of the Slavs, where Novgorod was built. From here the apostle went through the land of the Varangians towards Rome for preaching, and again he returned to Thrace, where in the small village of Byzantium, the future Constantinople, he founded the Church of Christ. The name of the holy Apostle Andrew links the mother, the Church of Constantinople, with her daughter, the Russian Church.

On his journeys the First-Called Apostle endured many sufferings and torments from pagans: they cast him out of their cities and they beat him. In Sinope they pelted him with stones, but remaining unharmed, the persistent disciple of Christ continued to preach to people about the Savior. Through the prayers of the Apostle, the Lord worked miracles. By the labors of the holy Apostle Andrew, Christian Churches were established, for which he provided bishops and clergy. The final city to which the Apostle came was the city of Patra, where he was destined to suffer martyrdom.

The Lord worked many miracles through His disciple in Patra. The infirm were made whole, and the blind received their sight. Through the prayers of the Apostle, the illustrious citizen Sosios recovered from serious illness and Maximilla and Stratokles, the wife and brother of the governor of Patra, were healed. The miracles accomplished by the Apostle and his fiery speech enlightened almost all the citizens of the city of Patra with the true Faith.

Few pagans remained at Patra, but among them was the prefect of the city, Aegeatos. The Apostle Andrew repeatedly turned to him with the words of the Gospel. But even the miracles of the Apostle did not convince Aegeatos. The holy Apostle with love and humility appealed to his soul, striving to reveal to him the Christian mystery of life eternal, through the wonderworking power of the Holy Cross of the Lord. The angry Aegeatos gave orders to crucify the apostle. The pagan thought he might undo Saint Andrew's preaching if he were to put him to death on the cross.

Saint Andrew the First-Called accepted the decision of the prefect with joy and with prayer to the Lord, and went willingly to the place of execution. In order to prolong the suffering of the saint, Aegeatos gave orders not to nail the saint's hands and feet, but to tie them to the cross. For two days the apostle taught the citizens who gathered about. The people, in listening to him, with all their souls pitied him and tried to take Saint Andrew down from the cross. Fearing a riot of the people, Aegeatos gave orders to stop the execution. But the holy apostle began to pray that the Lord would grant him death on the cross. Just as the soldiers tried to take hold of the Apostle Andrew, they lost control of their hands. The crucified apostle, having given glory to God, said: "Lord Jesus Christ, receive my spirit." Then a blazing ray of divine light illumined the cross and the martyr crucified upon it. When the light faded, the holy Apostle Andrew had already given up his holy soul to the Lord. Maximilla, the wife of the prefect, had the body of the saint taken down from the cross, and buried him with honor.

A few centuries later, under the emperor Constantine the Great, the relics of the holy Apostle Andrew were solemnly transferred to Constantinople and placed in the church of the Holy Apostles beside the relics of the holy Evangelist Luke and Saint Paul's disciple Saint Timothy.



***Let us praise Andrew, the divine preacher, the namesake of courage, the first-called of the Savior's disciples and the kinsman of Peter. As he once called to his brother, now he cries out to us: "Come, for we have found Him whom the world desires!"***

**Kontakion**

### **Saint Porphyrios, Wonderworker of Kavsokaliva December 2**

The Holy Elder Porphyrios (in the world Evangelos Baïraktaris) was born on February 7, 1906 at Euboia,<sup>1</sup> in the village of Agios Ioannis in the province of Karystia. His parents were devout, God-loving people. His father was Leonidas Baïraktaris, and his mother Eleni was the daughter of Antonios Lambros, who was a psalti in the village and had met Saint Nektarios (November 9) The Saint's family was large and his parents were poor farmers who found it difficult to support themselves. Thus his father was obliged to leave for America, where he worked on the construction of the Panama Canal.

Young Evangelos was the fourth child of the family. He tended sheep on a mountain and attended only one year of elementary school, when he was forced to go to Chalkida to work when he was only seven years old. He worked for two



or three years in a shop, then later he went to Piraeus, where he worked for two years in the grocery store owned by a relative.

At the age of twelve he left for the Holy Mountain in secret, desiring to emulate Saint John the Hut Burner (January 15), whom he loved very much, after he had read his Life. God's grace led him to the hermitage of Saint George of Kavsokalyvia where he lived in obedience to two Elders, Panteleimon (who was also a Spiritual Father) and Ioannikios (his brother according to the flesh) who was a priest. Evangelos devoted himself to these two Elders with great love and absolute obedience, and who had a reputation for being unusually austere.

He was tonsured as a monk at the age of fourteen and received the name Niké̄tas. After two years he was tonsured into the Great Schema. A little later, God granted him the gift of clairvoyance.

At the age of nineteen, the Elder became seriously ill, which forced him to leave the Holy Mountain. Then he returned to Euboia, where he lived in the Monastery of Saint Charalambos at Leuka. In 1926, at the age of twenty, he was ordained as a priest at Saint Charalampos of Kymi by Porphyrios III, the Archbishop of Sinai, who gave him the name Porphyrios. At the age of twenty-two he became a Spiritual Father and Confessor. Shortly thereafter, he was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite. Then he worked for a time as a parish priest at Tsakaioi, a village of Euboia.

Father Porphyrios lived for twelve years in the Holy Monastery of Saint Charalampos, ministering to the people as their Spiritual Father and Confessor; and then for three years at Ano Bathia, in the deserted Saint Nicholas Monastery.

On the eve of Greece's entry into World War II in 1940, Elder Porphyrios was sent to Athens, where took up his duties as a priest and a Spiritual Father at the Athens Polyclinic. As he himself said, he lived there for thirty-three years as if it were only one day, devoting himself completely to his spiritual work of relieving the pain and sickness of his patients.

In 1955 he settled in Kallísia, where he had leased Saint Nicholas Monastery from the Holy Monastery of Penteli, along with the rural area that surrounded it, which he cultivated with great diligence. At the same time, he enjoyed his prolific spiritual work.

In the summer of 1979, he settled in Milesi with the dream of building a monastery. At first he lived in a trailer under adverse conditions, then later in a huge cell of concrete blocks, where he endured the many trials because of his health. In 1984 he moved into a room in a monastery which was being built. Even though the Elder was very sick and blind, he worked unceasingly and tirelessly to complete the work. When the cornerstone of the katholikon of the Monastery of the Transfiguration was laid on February 26, 1990, he was able to see his dream come true.

In the final years of his earthly life he began to prepare for his repose. He wished to retire to the Holy Mountain to his beloved Kavsokaliva, where secretly and quietly, just as he had lived, he would deliver his soul to her Bridegroom. Many times people heard him say, "Now that I have grown old, I want to go and die up there."

Indeed, in June 1991, sensing his death, and not wanting to be buried with honors, he left for the hut of Saint George at Kavsokaliva, where he had been tonsured as a monk 70 years before. At 4:31 on the morning of December 2, 1991, he delivered his soul to the Lord, whom he had loved so much during his lifetime. His last words were those of Christ's prayer, which he loved and so often repeated: "that they all may be one" (John 17:21).

The Canonization of Elder Porphyrios took place during the session of the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on November 27, 2013.

### **Portrait of Saint Porphyrios 1906-1991**



***Wholeheartedly, let us praise Porphyrios, the most holy temple of the Comforter, and beloved of the Most Pure Theotokos; for he loves and heals all, he guards us and intercedes for us so that we might attain théosis. Therefore, we cry: "Rejoice, O Father Porphyrios."***

**Kontakion**

## PARISH WISH LIST

*A wish list to help our parish grow!*

### SPECIAL, one-time needs or items

A **Changing Table** for our newly remodeled, accessible restroom

### RECURRING needs:

**Paper Plates** (small and large), **Paper Bowls**, **Hot Cups**

**Napkins**

**Plastic Utensils**, especially **Forks**

**Paper Towels**

**Toilet Paper**

*Holy Mother Olympia, pray to God for us!*

## UPCOMING DIOCESAN & PARISH EVENTS

### Diocesan Council Meeting

Thursday, December 7, 11 AM

Diocesan Chancery, Bronxville, NY

### WEEKDAY VESPERS 5 PM AT THE HERMITAGE OF ST OLYMPIA

For information please contact Mother Sophronia at [mothersophronia@gmail.com](mailto:mothersophronia@gmail.com)

or via Facebook: Nun Sophronia Hofstead.



Jessica's family, Lambros and her sister, Mara, joined us for services recently. They were here for a series of concerts at the Crane School of Music – The Music of Gregoria Karides Suchy, A Centennial Celebration.

**Axios!**