



*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.

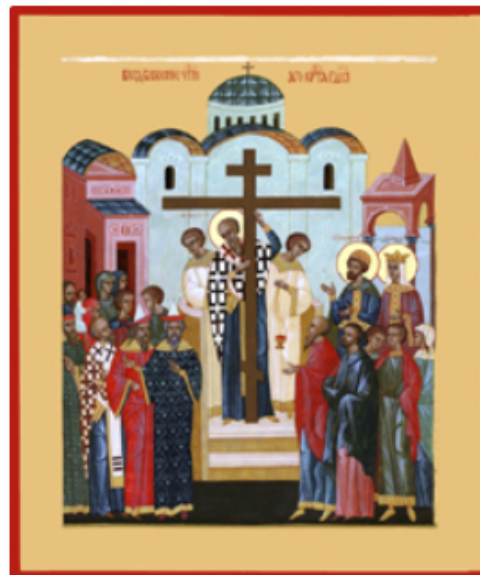
Upcoming Services:
Saturday, Sept 9, 16
Great Vespers: 5pm

Sunday, Sept 10, 17
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 Universal Exaltation of the Precious and
 Life-Giving Cross
 September 14**



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

Troparion

As Thou was mercifully crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Thy name; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace.

Kontakion

Old Testament Readings at Vespers of the Exaltation of the Cross

The Reading is from Exodus. [15:22-16:1a]

Chapter 15:22-27

Thus Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the desert and found no water to drink. Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore he named that place Bitterness. Then the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" So he cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them. There He proved him, and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is pleasing in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His ordinances, I will put none of the diseases on you that I brought on the Egyptians; for I am the Lord your God who heals you." Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve fountains of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

Chapter 16: 1a

Now they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai.

The Reading is from Proverbs. [3:11-20]

My son, do not despise the instruction of the Lord, neither grow weary under His reproof. For whom the Lord loves He instructs, and chastises every son He receives. Blessed is a man who finds wisdom, and a mortal who sees discernment; For the profits gained from wisdom are better than the treasures of gold and silver. And wisdom is more valuable than precious stones, and nothing evil will withstand her; She is well known to all who come near her, and no honor is worthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand, and in her left hand are riches and glory; Righteousness proceeds from her mouth, and she carries law and mercy upon her tongue. Her ways are good ways, and her paths are in peace. She is a tree of life for all who cleave to her, and she is security for those who lean upon her as upon the Lord.

The Reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah. [60:11-16]

Thus says the Lord, Your gates, Jerusalem, shall be opened continually and they shall not be shut day or night, to bring you the power of the Gentiles, and their kings leading them.

For the nations and their kings who will not serve you shall perish, and those nations will be utterly desolate. The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, with the cypress, the pine, and the cedar together, to glorify My holy place. The sons of those who humbled and provoked you shall go to you in fear, and you shall be called City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Because you were forsaken and hated, and there was no one to help you; therefore, I will make you an eternal joy, the gladness of generations to generations. You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, and eat the wealth of kings. You shall know I am the Lord who saves you, and the God of Israel who delivers you.



Elevation of the Cross

From *The Orthodox Faith, Volume II*, by Fr. Thomas Hopko

The Elevation of the Cross, celebrated on the fourteenth of September, commemorates the finding of Christ's Cross by Saint Helen, the mother of the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century; and, after it was taken by the Persians, of its recovery by the Emperor Heraclius in the seventh century at which time it was "elevated" in the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem. From this latter event the "universal elevation" of the Cross was celebrated annually in all of the churches of the Christian Empire.

The day of the Elevation of the Cross became, as it were, the national holiday of the Eastern Christian Empire similar to the Fourth of July in the United States. The Cross, the official emblem of the Empire which was placed on all public buildings and uniforms, was officially elevated on this day by the bishops and priests. They blessed the four directions of the universe with the Cross, while the faithful repeated the chanting of "Lord have mercy." This ritual is still done in the churches today after the solemn presentation and elevation of the Cross at the end of the Vigil service of the holy day following the Great Doxology of Matins.

The troparion of the feast which was, one might say, the "national anthem" sung on all public occasions in the Christian Empires of Byzantium and Russia, originally petitioned God to save the people, to grant victory in war and to preserve the empire "by the virtue of the Cross." Today the troparion, and all the hymns of the day, are "spiritualized" as the "adversaries" become the spiritually wicked and sinful including the devil and his armies, and "Orthodox Christians" replace the names of ruling officials of the Empire.

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by the virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation (Troparion).

As Thou was mercifully crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Thy name; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace (Kontakion).

The holy day of the Elevation of the Cross, although it has an obviously "political" origin, has a place of great significance in the Church today. It remains with us as a day of fasting and prayer, a day when we recall that the Cross is the only sign worthy of our total allegiance, and that our salvation comes not by "victories" of any earthly sort but by the only true and lasting victory of the crucifixion of Christ and our co-crucifixion with him.

When we elevate the Cross and bow down before it in veneration and worship to God, we proclaim that we belong to the Kingdom "not of this world," and that our only true and enduring citizenship is with the saints in the "city of God" (Ephesians 2.19; Hebrews 11.10; Revelation 21–22).

The first Old Testamental reading of the Vespers of the day tells of the "tree" which changes the bitter waters into sweetness—the symbol of the Tree of the Cross (Exodus 15.22–16.1). The second reading reminds us that the Lord chastens and corrects those whom He loves and that Divine Wisdom is "a Tree of life to those who lay hold upon her and trust in her, as in the Lord" (Proverbs 3.11–18). Again the reference is to the Cross which is, as the epistle reading of the day proclaims, "to those who are called . . . the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1.24).

The third Old Testament reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah which tells of the "city of the Lord" where both Jews and Gentiles will live together and "shall bow themselves down" at the place of God's feet and "shall know that I the Lord am Thy Saviour and Thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Israel" (Isaiah 60.11–16). Here we have the direct reference to God's city where men shall worship at His feet; and together with the psalm line repeated constantly during the services which calls us to "bow before His footstool," we have once again the reference to the Holy Cross (Psalms 99.5, 110.1, et al.).

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy resurrection, we glorify
(Hymn of Veneration before the Cross).

This central hymn of the Elevation of the Cross which lasts for eight days in the Church is sung many times. It replaces the Thrice-Holy of the Divine Liturgy. The normal antiphons are also replaced by special verses from the psalms which have direct reference to Christ's crucifixion on the Cross (Psalms 22, 74, 99). At the Matins, in the gospel reading from Saint John, Christ says that when He is elevated on the Cross He will draw all men to Himself (John 12.28–36). The long gospel reading at the Divine Liturgy is the passion account from this same gospel.

Thus, at the Elevation of the Cross the Christians make their official rededication to the crucified Lord and pledge their undivided allegiance to Him by the adoration of His holy feet nailed to the life-creating Cross. This is the meaning of this holy day of fasting and repentance in the Church today.

Martyr Sophia and her three daughters at Rome September 17

The Holy Martyrs Saint Sophia and her Daughters Faith, Hope and Love were born in Italy. Their mother was a pious Christian widow who named her daughters for the three Christian virtues. Faith was twelve, Hope was ten, and Love was nine. Saint Sophia raised them in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Saint Sophia and her daughters did not hide their faith in Christ, but openly confessed it before everyone.

An official named Antiochus denounced them to the emperor Hadrian (117-138), who ordered that they be brought to Rome. Realizing that they would be taken before the emperor, the holy virgins prayed fervently to the Lord Jesus Christ, asking that He give them the strength not to fear torture and death. When the holy virgins and their mother came before the emperor, everyone present was amazed at their composure. They looked as though they had been brought to some happy festival, rather than to torture. Summoning each of the sisters in turn, Hadrian urged them to offer sacrifice to the goddess Artemis. The young girls remained unyielding.

Then the emperor ordered them to be tortured. They burned the holy virgins over an iron grating, then threw them into a red-hot oven, and finally into a cauldron with boiling tar, but the Lord preserved them.

The youngest child, Love, was tied to a wheel and they beat her with rods until her body was covered all over with bloody welts. After undergoing unspeakable torments, the holy virgins glorified their Heavenly Bridegroom and remained steadfast in the Faith.

They subjected Saint Sophia to another grievous torture: the mother was forced to watch the suffering of her daughters. She displayed adamant courage, and urged her daughters to endure their torments for the sake of the Heavenly Bridegroom. All three maidens were beheaded, and joyfully bent their necks beneath the sword.

In order to intensify Saint Sophia's inner suffering, the emperor permitted her to take the bodies of her daughters. She placed their remains in coffins and loaded them on a wagon. She drove beyond the city limits and reverently buried them on a high hill. Saint Sophia sat there by the graves of her daughters for three days, and finally she gave up her soul to the Lord. Even though she did not suffer for Christ in the flesh, she was not deprived of a martyr's crown. Instead, she suffered in her heart. Believers buried her body there beside her daughters.

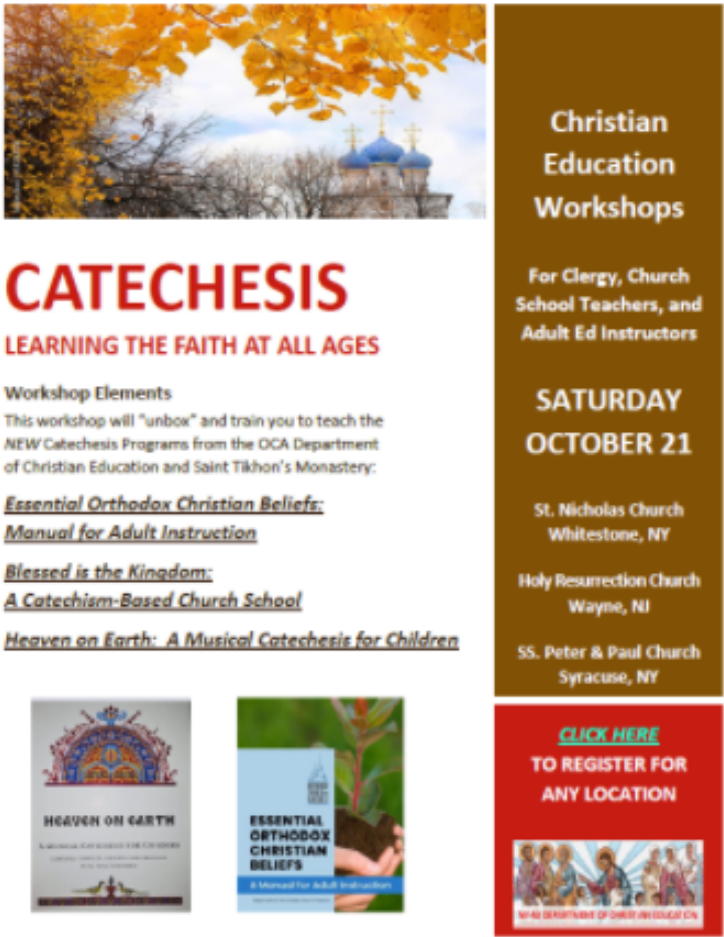
The relics of the holy martyrs have rested at El'zasa, in the church of Esho since the year 777.



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

**ANNOUNCING
DIOCESAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WORKSHOPS,
Saturday, October 21, 2023
In All Three Deaneries
10 AM to 3 PM**



Christian Education Workshops

For Clergy, Church School Teachers, and Adult Ed Instructors

**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 21**

St. Nicholas Church
Whitestone, NY

Holy Resurrection Church
Wayne, NJ

SS. Peter & Paul Church
Syracuse, NY

[CLICK HERE](#)
TO REGISTER FOR
ANY LOCATION



CATECHESIS
LEARNING THE FAITH AT ALL AGES

Workshop Elements
This workshop will “unbox” and train you to teach the NEW Catechesis Programs from the OCA Department of Christian Education and Saint Tikhon’s Monastery:

*Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs:
Manual for Adult Instruction*

*Blessed is the Kingdom:
A Catechism-Based Church School*

Heaven on Earth: A Musical Catechesis for Children



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Sign up link is on the Diocesan website: “*Click Here*” on the poster

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

Presbyter's Council Meeting

Thursday, September 28, at 1:00 PM

Diocesan Chancery, Bronxville NY

St Olympia Parish Council Meeting

Monday, October 2, 7:30 PM via Google Meet

WEEKDAY VESPERS 5 PM AT THE HERMITAGE OF ST OLYMPIA

For information please contact Mother Sophronia at mothersophronia@gmail.com

or via Facebook: Nun Sophronia Hofstead.

