



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

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Fr. Alexy Karlgut, Dean/Administrator, 607-759-1833*

Please join us for prayer and fellowship.

Upcoming Services:
Saturday, March 18, 26
Great Vespers: 5pm

Sunday, March 19, 25
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*

**3rd Sunday of Great Lent: Veneration of the Cross
March 19**

The Third Sunday of Lent is that of the Veneration of the Cross. The cross stands in the midst of the church in the middle of the Lenten season not merely to remind men of Christ's redemption and to keep before them the goal of their efforts, but also to be venerated as that reality by which man must live to be saved. "He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" (Mt.10:38). For in the Cross of Christ Crucified lies both "the power of God and the wisdom of God" for those being saved (1 Cor.1:24).



**The Annunciation
March 25**

*Today is the beginning of our salvation,
the revelation of the eternal mystery!
The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin
as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace.
Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos:
Hail, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with You!*

Troparion

The Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary March 25

The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the earliest Christian feasts, and was already being celebrated in the fourth century. There is a painting of the Annunciation in the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome dating from the second century.

The Greek and Slavonic names for the Feast may be translated as “good tidings.” This, of course, refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God and the salvation He brings. The background of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of Saint Luke (1:26-38). The troparion describes this as the “beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the eternal mystery,” for on this day the Son of God became the Son of Man.

There are two main components to the Annunciation: the message itself, and the response of the Virgin. The message fulfills God’s promise to send a Redeemer (Genesis 3:15): “I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for his heel.” The Fathers of the Church understand “her seed” to refer to Christ. The prophets hinted at His coming, which they saw dimly, but the Archangel Gabriel now proclaims that the promise is about to be fulfilled.

We see this echoed in the Liturgy of Saint Basil, as well: “When man disobeyed Thee, the only true God who had created him, and was deceived by the guile of the serpent, becoming subject to death by his own transgressions, Thou, O God, in Thy righteous judgment, didst send him forth from Paradise into this world, returning him to the earth from which he was taken, yet providing for him the salvation of regeneration in Thy Christ Himself.”

The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth in Galilee. There he spoke to the undefiled Virgin who was betrothed to Saint Joseph: “Hail, thou who art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

In contrast to Eve, who was readily deceived by the serpent, the Virgin did not immediately accept the Angel’s message. In her humility, she did not think she was deserving of such words, but was actually troubled by them. The fact that she asked for an explanation reveals her sobriety and prudence. She did not disbelieve the words of the angel, but could not understand how they would be fulfilled, for they spoke of something which was beyond nature.

Then said Mary unto the angel, “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” (Luke 1:34). “And the angel answered and said unto her, ‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: therefore also that which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.’ And Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.’ And the angel departed from her.” (Luke 1: 35-38)

In his Sermon 23 on the day of the Annunciation, Saint Philaret of Moscow boldly stated that “the word of the creature brought the Creator down into the world.” He explains that salvation is not merely an act of God’s will, but also involves the Virgin’s free will. She could have refused, but she accepted God’s will and chose to cooperate without complaint or further questions.

The icon of the Feast shows the Archangel with a staff in his left hand, indicating his role as a messenger. Sometimes one wing is upraised, as if to show his swift descent from heaven. His right hand is stretched toward the holy Virgin as he delivers his message. The Virgin is depicted either standing or sitting, usually holding yarn in her left hand. Sometimes she is shown holding a scroll. Her right hand may be raised to indicate her surprise at the message she is hearing. Her head is bowed, showing her consent and obedience. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon her is depicted by a ray of light issuing from a small sphere at the top of the icon, which symbolizes heaven. In a famous icon from Sinai, a white dove is shown in the ray of light.



Troparion of the Cross

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!

Kontakion of the Sunday of the Cross

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; it has mysteriously been quenched by the wood of the Cross! The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell: “Enter again into paradise.”

UPCOMING DIOCESAN & PARISH EVENTS

ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL'S NEXT VISIT TO OUR PARISH
6:00 Pm, Wednesday, March 29
For Presanctified Liturgy
Lenten dinner to follow the service

Diocesan Council Meeting

Thursday, March 23 at 11:00 AM
Diocesan Chancery, Bronxville NY

Holy Week Schedule at St Olymphia Orthodox Church

Good Friday, April 14, 7:00 pm – Lamentations

Holy Saturday, April 15

10:00 am – Divine Liturgy

11:30 pm – Resurrection Matins and Divine Liturgy – Holy Pascha!!!

Holy Pascha, Sunday, April 16

2:00 pm – Agape Vespers (Vespers of Love) followed by parish feast.

St Olymphia Orthodox Church – Next Parish Council Meeting

7:30 PM Monday, May 8, 2023

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

Martyr Photiné the Samaritan Woman, her sons, and those with them

March 20

*Illumined by the Holy Spirit, and refreshed by the
streams of Christ the Savior, O all-praised one,
you drank the water of salvation and gave it
abundantly to those who thirsted. O Great
Martyr and Equal of the Apostles Photiné,
entreat Christ God that our souls may be saved.*

Troparion

