



*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, Jun 10, 17
Great Vespers: 5pm**

Synaxis of the Saints of North America June 18

**Sunday, June 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*



As the bountiful harvest of Your sowing of salvation, the lands of North America offer to You, O Lord, all the saints who have shone in them. By their prayers keep the Church and our land in abiding peace through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One.

Troparion of the Synaxis of the Saints of North America



Holy Prophet Elisha



Holy Prophet Amos



Saint Doula

Holy Prophet Elisha

June 14

The Holy Prophet Elisha lived in the ninth century before the Birth of Christ, and was a native of the village of Abelmaum, near Jordan. By the command of the Lord he was called to prophetic service by the holy Prophet Elias [Elijah] (July 20).

When it became time for the Prophet Elias to be taken up to Heaven, he said to Elisha, “Ask what shall I do for you, before I am taken from you.” Elisha boldly asked for a double portion of the grace of God: “Let there be a double portion of your spirit upon me.” The Prophet Elias said, “You have asked a hard thing; if you see me when I am taken from you, then so shall it be for you; but if you do not see me, it will not be so” (4 [2] Kings 2: 10). As they went along the way talking, there appeared a fiery chariot and horses and separated them both. Elisha cried out, “My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” (4 Kings 2: 12). Picking up the mantle of his teacher which fell from the sky, Elisha received the power and prophetic gift of Elias. He spent more than 65 years in prophetic service, under six Israelite kings (from Ahab to Joash). While Elisha lived, he did not tremble before any prince, and no word could overcome him (Sirach 48: 13 [“Sirach” is called “Ecclesiasticus” in Catholic Bibles]).

The holy prophet worked numerous miracles. He divided the waters of the Jordan, having struck it with the mantle of the Prophet Elias; he made the waters of a Jericho spring fit for drinking; he saved the armies of the kings of Israel and Judah that stood in an arid wilderness by bringing forth abundant water by his prayer; he delivered a poor widow from death by starvation through a miraculous increase of oil in a vessel. This Shunamite woman showing hospitality to the prophet was gladdened by the birth of a son through his prayer, and when the child died, he was raised back to life by the prophet. The Syrian military-commander Namaan was healed from leprosy but the prophet’s servant Gehazi was afflicted since he disobeyed the prophet and took money from Namaan.

Elisha predicted to the Israelite king Joash the victory over his enemies, and by the power of his prayer he worked many other miracles (4 Kings 3-13). The holy Prophet Elisha died in old age at Samaria. “In his life he worked miracles, and at death his works were marvelous” (Sir. 48: 15). A year after his death, a corpse was thrown into the prophet’s grave. As soon as the dead man touched Elisha’s bones, he came to life and stood up (4 Kings 13: 20-21). The Prophet Elisha and his teacher, the Prophet Elias, left no books behind them, since their prophetic preaching was oral. Jesus, son of Sirach, praised both great prophets (Sir. 48:1-15).

Julian the Apostate (361-363) gave orders to burn the relics of the Prophet Elisha, Abdia (Obadiah) and John the Forerunner, but the holy relics were preserved by believers, and part of them were transferred to Alexandria. John of Damascus composed a canon in honor of the Prophet Elisha, and at Constantinople a church was built in his honor.

In the twentieth century, the humble priest Nicholas Planas had a great veneration for the Prophet Elisha, and was accounted worthy to see him in visions.

*An angel in the flesh and the cornerstone of the prophets,
the second forerunner of the coming of Christ,
glorious Elijah sent grace from on high to Elisha,
to dispel diseases and to cleanse lepers.
Therefore, he pours forth healings on those who honor him.
Troparion to Holy Prophet Elisha*

Holy Prophet Amos

June 15

The Holy Prophet Amos, the third of the Twelve Minor Prophets, lived during the eighth century before Christ. He was from Judah, and was born at Tekoah in the land of Zebulun, six miles south of Bethlehem. (The terms major and minor Prophets refer to the length of their books, not to their individual prominence. Although Amos is ranked third, his prophecy was the first to be recorded.)

At that time, the Hebrew nation was divided into two Kingdoms: Judah in the south, and Israel in the north. King Uzziah ruled in Jerusalem, but the other ten tribes of Israel were ruled by Jeroboam II, who was an idolater. At Bethel he set up an idol in the shape of a golden calf, which the people worshipped, turning away from the true God.

Simple and uneducated, yet fervent in his faith and zealous for the glory of God, this former shepherd of sheep and goats, and dresser of sycamore trees (Amos 7:14-15) was chosen by the Lord for prophetic service. He was sent to the Kingdom of Israel to denounce King Jeroboam's impiety, as well as that of the Israelites. The Prophet predicted great misfortunes which would befall Israel because of its ungodliness. As a result of his denunciations, Amos repeatedly endured beatings and torture.

Amaziah, the chief priest of the royal sanctuary at Bethel, hated Amos, who predicted that the Gentiles would conquer Israel; that they will slay the King, as well as Amaziah's children; that Amaziah's wife would become a harlot; and that Amaziah himself would die in a pagan land, because he led the people into adultery with idols (7:17). Amaziah became furious and had Amos beaten, but all of these prophecies were fulfilled. According to a later tradition, Uzziah, the son of Amaziah, struck the Prophet Amos with a club, seriously wounding him. He was taken to his native village of Tekoah in Judah, and died there after two days (circa 787 B.C.) He should not be confused with Amoz, the father of the Prophet Isaiah.

In iconography Amos is depicted as an old man with a pointed beard. His scroll reads: It is he who builds his ascent up to Heaven (Amos 9)

Saint Doulas the Passion-Bearer

June 15

Saint Doulas the Passion-Bearer was a monk at one of the Egyptian monasteries. He distinguished himself by his meekness, humility and obedience. For twenty years he endured the mockery, abuse and contempt of several of the monastic brethren. At first it was difficult for him to bear up and humbly endure the insult, but eventually he reached such a degree of passionlessness (apatheia), that he pitied his detractors and prayed for them with all his heart.

At the end of his life Saint Doulas underwent temptation. A certain monk stole some church vessels and hid them. When the Igumen and elders of the monastery started to investigate the theft, they accused Saint Doulas of this sin, because on that day he had not appeared at the Vigil service. Saint Doulas had always come to church before this, but he had been ill that day, and was unable to attend the service. They led Saint Doulas to the elders, to whom he protested his innocence, but his enemies slandered him, saying that they were witnesses of his sin. When he saw that they did not believe his words, Saint Doulas did not argue but said, "Forgive me, holy Fathers, I am a sinner." The Igumen ordered that the innocent Doulas be stripped of his monastic garb and dressed in secular clothes. Sobbing bitterly, Saint Doulas prayed, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, because of Thy Holy Name I clothed myself in monastic garb, but now, through my sins, it is stripped from me."

Saint Doulas was placed in chains, and the steward demanded to know where the church vessels were hidden, but the innocent passion-bearer only repeated, "Forgive me, I have sinned."

Then they turned him over to the civil authorities for trial and subjected him to torture, but the saint repeated, "I have neither silver, nor the lost vessels." The city eparch asked the monks what to do with him, since they had delivered him over to the secular court. They answered, "Do with him as the laws prescribe." The saint was sentenced to have both his hands cut off. Before the execution of the sentence the governor said, "Tell us where the vessels are and you shall go free." The saint answered, "Governor, do you want me to confess something that I did not do? I do not want to tell lies about myself, since every lie is from the devil." They took the saint to the place of execution. Finally, the perpetrator of the theft experienced remorse and went to the Igumen to confess that he had committed the crime.

After twenty years of exile and humiliation, Saint Doulas was allowed to return to the monastery. The monks began to ask forgiveness of the saint. Not only did he not bear them malice, but he was even grateful that they had given him the opportunity to wipe out his sins by enduring guiltless suffering. The saint asked the Lord to pardon his accusers.

After three days they found the saint had departed to the Lord while kneeling at prayer. His body was locked in the cathedral, and burial was delayed until the arrival of the Igumen and brethren of a nearby monastery. When everyone had gathered and gone into the church, the body of the innocent passion-bearer was not in the cathedral. Only his clothes and sandals remained.

Thus, those who had accused Saint Doulas of sin, were shown to be unworthy of burying his holy body.

Synaxis of the Saints of North America

June 18

Today the choir of Saints who were pleasing to God in the lands of North America now stands before us in the Church and invisibly prays to God for us. With them the angels glorify Him, and all the saints of the Church of Christ keep festival with them; and together they all pray for us to the Pre-Eternal God.

Kontakion

On the second Sunday after Pentecost, each local Orthodox Church commemorates all the saints, known and unknown, who have shone forth in its territory. Accordingly, the Orthodox Church in America remembers the saints of North America on this day. Saints of all times, and in every country are seen as the fulfillment of God's promise to redeem fallen humanity. Their example encourages us to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us" and to "run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). The saints of North America also teach us how we should live, and what we must expect to endure as Christians

Although it is a relatively young church, the Orthodox Church in America has produced saints in nearly all of the six major categories of saints: Apostles (and Equals of the Apostles); Martyrs (and Confessors); Prophets; Hierarchs; Monastic Saints; and the Righteous. Prophets, of course, lived in Old Testament times and predicted the coming of Christ.

The first Divine Liturgy in what is now American territory (northern latitude 58 degrees, 14 minutes, western longitude 141 degrees) was celebrated on July 20, 1741, the Feast of the Prophet Elias, aboard the ship Peter under the command of Vitus Bering. Hieromonk Hilarion Trusov and the priest Ignatius Kozirevsky served together on that occasion. Several years later, the Russian merchant Gregory I. Shelikov visited Valaam monastery, suggesting to the abbot that it would be desirable to send missionaries to Russian America.

On September 24, 1794, after a journey of 7,327 miles (the longest missionary journey in Orthodox history) and 293 days, a group of monks from Valaam arrived on Kodiak Island in Alaska. The mission was headed by Archimandrite Joasaph, and included Hieromonks Juvenal, Macarius, and Athanasius, the Hierodeacons Nectarius and Stephen, and the monks Herman and Joasaph. Saint Herman of Alaska (December 13, August 9), the last surviving member of the mission, fell asleep in the Lord in 1837.

Throughout the Church's history, the seeds of faith have always been watered by the blood of the martyrs. The Protomartyr Juvenal was killed near Lake Iliamna by natives in 1799, thus becoming the first Orthodox Christian to shed his blood for Christ in the New World. In 1816, Saint Peter the Aleut was put to death by Spanish missionaries in California when he refused to convert to Roman Catholicism.

Missionary efforts continued in the nineteenth century, with outreach to the native peoples of Alaska. Two of the most prominent laborers in Christ's Vineyard were Saint Innocent Veniaminov (March 31 and October 6) and Saint Jacob Netsvetov (July 26), who translated Orthodox services and books into the native languages. Father Jacob Netsvetov died in Sitka in 1864 after a life of devoted service to the Church. Father John Veniaminov, after his wife's death, received monastic tonsure with the name Innocent. He died in 1879 as the Metropolitan of Moscow.

As the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, an event of enormous significance for the North American Church took place. On March 25, 1891, Bishop Vladimir went to Minneapolis to receive Saint Alexis Toth (May 7) and 361 of his parishioners into the Orthodox Church. This was the beginning of the return of many Uniates to Orthodoxy.

Saint Tikhon (Bellavin), the future Patriarch of Moscow (April 7, October 9), came to America as bishop of the diocese of the Aleutians and Alaska in September 1898. As the only Orthodox bishop on the continent, Saint Tikhon traveled extensively throughout North America in order to minister to his widely scattered and diverse flock. He realized that the local church here could not be a permanent extension of the Russian Church. Therefore, he focused his efforts on giving the American Church a diocesan and parish structure which would help it mature and grow...

Archimandrite Raphael Hawaweeny was consecrated by Bishop Tikhon and Bishop Innocent (Pustynsky) at Saint Nicholas Cathedral in New York on March 13, 1904. As Bishop of Brooklyn, Saint Raphael was a trusted and capable assistant to Saint Tikhon in his archpastoral ministry. Saint Raphael reposed on February 27, 1915.

The first All American Council took place March 5-7, 1907 at Mayfield, PA, and the main topic was "How to expand the mission." Guidelines and directions for missionary activity, and statutes for the administrative structure of parishes were also set forth.

In the twentieth century, in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, countless men, women, and children received the crown of martyrdom rather than renounce Christ. Saints John Kochurov (October 31) and Alexander Hotovitzky (December 4 and August 7) both served the Church in North America before going back to Russia. Saint John became the first clergyman to be martyred in Russia on October 31, 1917 in Saint Petersburg. Saint Alexander Hotovitzky, who served in America until 1914, was killed in 1937.

In addition to the saints listed above, we also honor those saints who are known only to God, and have not been recognized officially by the Church. As we contemplate the lives of these saints, let us remember that we are also called by God to a life of holiness.

Pentecost 2023 at St. Olympia Orthodox Church



John reading the Epistle



Our Pentecost Icon



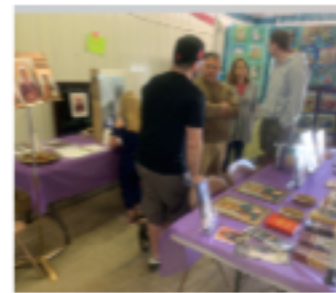
Mother Sophronia



Craft & Vendor Show, Franklin County, June 3, 2023



Our new brochure



*As with fine porphyry and royal purple,
Your church has been adorned with Your martyrs' blood shed throughout all the world.
She cries to You, O Christ God:
Send down Your bounties on Your people,
grant peace to Your habitation, and great mercy to our souls!*

Troparion of the Synaxis of Saints

Departments Release “Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs”

The 16-chapter “Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs: A Manual for Adult Instruction,” is now available for free download. A cooperative effort of the Departments of the Orthodox Church in America, the groundbreaking work is an offering to the Church to assist clergy and parishes in their work of instructing inquirers and the faithful in the truths of the Orthodox Christian Faith. This work is not meant to replace time-trusted books and publications which have taught generations but to work in concert with them.

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, Project Manager for the Departments of the OCA, said, “We presented this to His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon several years ago, to bring together interested pastors, teachers, and scholars from across the Orthodox Church America and produce a presentation of the Orthodox Faith that would emphasize developing an Orthodox Christian worldview. Because of the technology available, it would be a living document that could be periodically refined and perfected. With the initial publication of this manual, we will now work to develop supportive media for teachers to present the lessons in an effective way.”

Chancellor of the OCA, Archpriest Alexander Rentel, stated, “We commend this manual for use in our parishes and institutions, and indeed, to all inquirers and Christians who desire to know more about the Orthodox Faith. We are grateful to the authors and contributors to this volume and especially to the donors who generously support the missionary outreach of the Church.”

The PDF file is formatted to be printed easily in 8 1/2' x 11" book format.

The 250-page work can be downloaded for free at oca.org/about/departments.

UPCOMING DIOCESAN & PARISH EVENTS

St Olympia Orthodox Church – Next Parish Council Meeting

7:30 PM Monday, June 19, 2023

Diocesan Council Meeting

Tuesday, July 18, at 11:00 AM

Diocesan Chancery, Bronxville NY

Presbyter's Council Meeting

Thursday, July 27, at 1:00 PM

Zoom

WEEKDAY VESPERS AT THE HERMITAGE OF ST OLYMPIA

Weekdays at 5 PM

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

or via Facebook: Nun Sophronia Hofstead.

Unless we look at a person and see the beauty there is in this person, we can contribute nothing to him. One does not help a person by discerning what is wrong, what is ugly, what is distorted. Christ looked at everyone he met, at the prostitute, at the thief, and saw the beauty hidden there. Perhaps it was distorted, perhaps damaged, but it was beauty none the less, and what he did was to call out this beauty."

~ Metropolitan Anthony Bloom of Sourozh