



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

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Upcoming Services:

November 27, Wednesday

5pm – Vespers @ St. Olympia Hermitage

November 28, Thursday Thanksgiving

8am – Divine Liturgy (7:40am Hours)

November 30, Saturday

5pm – Great Vespers

December 1, Sunday

10am – Divine Liturgy (9:40am Hours)

December 4, Wednesday

5pm – Vespers @ St. Olympia Hermitage

December 5, Thursday

6pm – Great Vespers for St. Nicholas

December 6, Friday St. Nicholas

8am – Divine Liturgy (7:40am Hours)

December 7, Saturday

5pm – Great Vespers

December 8, Sunday

10am – Divine Liturgy (9:40am Hours)

**Hieromartyr Clement, Pope of Rome
November 25**



**Apostle Andrew, Holy and All-Praised First-Called
November 30**

Unshakeable and godlike towers of the Church, truly inspired and mighty pillars of the Faith, all-praised Clement and Peter, protect us all by your prayers.

Kontakion to Clement of Rome

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

Kontakion to Holy Apostle Andrew, the First-Called

Leavetaking of the Entry of the Most Holy Mother of God into the Temple

November 25

Sanctifying Time through the Feasts of the Church

By Fr. Steven Kostoff

Reflections in Christ, November 29, 2017

We recently celebrated one of the Twelve Great Feast Days of the Church's liturgical year—the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple. The festal cycle of the Church sanctifies time. By this we mean that the tedious flow of time is imbued with sacred content as we celebrate the events of the past now made present through liturgical worship. Notice how often we hear the word “today” in the hymns of this feast:

“Today let us, the faithful dance for joy....” “Today the living Temple of the holy glory of Christ our God, she who alone among women is pure and blessed....” “Today the Theotokos, the Temple that is to hold God, is led into the temple of the Lord....”

Again, we do not merely commemorate the past, but we make the past. We actualize the event being celebrated so that we are also participating in it. We, “today,” rejoice as we greet the Mother of God as she enters the temple “in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all.” Can all—or any—of this possibly change the “tone” of how we live this day? Is it at all possible that an awareness of this joyous feast can bring some illumination or sense of divine grace into the seemingly unchanging flow of daily life? Are we able to envision our lives as belonging to a greater whole: the life of the Church that is moving toward the final revelation of God's Kingdom in all of its fullness? Do such questions even make any sense as we are scrambling to just get through the day intact and in one piece, hopefully avoiding any serious mishaps or calamities? If not, can we at least acknowledge that “something” essential is missing from our lives?

I believe that there are a few things that we could do on a practical level that will bring the life of the Church, and its particular rhythms, into our domestic lives. As we know, each particular feast has a main hymn called the troparion. This troparion captures the over-all meaning and theological content of the feast in a somewhat poetic fashion. As the years go by, and as we celebrate the feasts annually, you may notice that you have memorized these troparia, or at least recognize them when they are sung in church. For the Great Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos Into the Temple, the festal troparion is the following:

***Today is the prelude of the good will of God, of the preaching of the salvation of mankind.
The Virgin appears in the temple of God, in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all.
Let us rejoice and sing to her: Rejoice, O Fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation!***

The celebration of a Great Feast of the Church is never a one-day affair. There is the “afterfeast” and then, finally, the “leavetaking” of the feast. So this particular feast extended from November 21 until November 25. A good practice, therefore, would be to include the troparion of the feasts in our daily prayers until their leavetakings. That can be very effective when parents pray together with their children before bedtime, as an example. Perhaps even more importantly within a family meal setting, it would be appropriate to sing or simply say or chant the troparion together before sitting down to share that meal together. The troparion would replace the usual prayer that we use, presumably the Lord's Prayer. All of this can be especially effective with children, as it will introduce them to the rhythm of Church life and its commemoration of the great events in the life of Christ and the Virgin Mary. Do you have any Orthodox literature in the home that would narrate and then perhaps explain the events and meaning of the Great Feast Days? Reading this together as a family can also be very effective. A short Church School session need not be the only time that our children are introduced to the life of the Church. The home, as we recall, has been called a “little Church” by none other than Saint John Chrysostom. Orthodox Christianity is meant to be a way of life, as expressed by Father Pavel Florensky in *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*: “The Orthodox taste, the Orthodox temper, is felt but is not subject to arithmetical calculation. Orthodoxy is shown, not proved. That is why there is only one way to understand Orthodoxy: through direct experience... to become Orthodox, it is necessary to immerse oneself all at once into the very element of Orthodoxy, to begin living in an Orthodox way. There is no other way.”

Hieromartyr Clement, Pope of Rome

November 25

The Hieromartyr Clement, Pope of Rome, was born at Rome into a rich and illustrious family. Separated from his parents from childhood by force of circumstances, Clement was raised by strangers. Living in Rome, the youth received a fine education; he was surrounded by luxury, and had access to the imperial court. But these comforts brought him no joy, and pagan wisdom failed to attract him. He began to ponder the meaning of life.

When the news of Christ and His teaching began to reach the capital, Saint Clement left his home and estate and went to the lands where the Apostles were preaching. At Alexandria Saint Clement met the holy Apostle Barnabas, listening to his words with deep attention, and perceiving the power and truth of the Word of God. Arriving in Palestine, Saint Clement was baptized by the holy Apostle Peter and became his zealous disciple and constant companion, sharing his toil and sufferings with him. Shortly before his own sufferings and death, Saint Peter consecrated Saint Clement as Bishop of Rome. After the death of the Apostle Peter, Saint Linus (67-79) was the next Bishop of Rome, succeeded by Saint Anacletus (79-91), and then Saint Clement (92-101).

The virtuous life, charitable works and prayerful activity of Saint Clement converted many to Christ. He once baptized 424 people on the day of Pascha. Among the baptized were people of all social classes: slaves, officials, and even members of the imperial family.

The pagans, seeing the success of his apostolic preaching, denounced Saint Clement to the emperor Trajan (98-117), accusing the saint of insulting the pagan gods. The emperor banished Saint Clement from the capital, sending him to the Crimea, to work at a stone quarry near the city of Cherson. Many of the saint's disciples followed after him voluntarily, preferring to go into exile rather than live without their spiritual Father.

When he arrived at the place of exile, Saint Clement found many Christian believers there, sentenced to labor under harsh conditions amidst a scarcity of water. He prayed together with the condemned, and the Lord appeared to him in the form of a lamb and revealed the location of a spring, from which gushed forth a veritable river of water. This miracle attracted a multitude of people to Saint Clement. Hearing the zealous preacher, hundreds of pagans were converted to Christ. Each day 500 or more men were baptized. And there in the stone quarry, a church was built, in which he served as priest.

The apostolic activity of the saint aroused the wrath of the emperor Trajan, and he ordered that Saint Clement be drowned. They threw the martyr into the sea with an anchor tied to his neck. This occurred in the year 101.

The saint's faithful disciples Cornelius and Fibius asked the people to pray that the Lord would permit them to see the martyr's body. The sea drew back a distance of three miles from the shore and the people walked out on the seabed until they found a marble cave shaped like a church. There they found the incorrupt body of their archpastor in this "Angelic Church" formed by God. After this, each year on the anniversary of Saint Clement's martyric death the sea receded, and for seven days Christians were able to venerate his holy relics.

During the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Nikēphoros (802-811), by divine providence, the sea failed to withdraw, and the relics of Saint Clement became inaccessible for fifty years. In the time of the emperor Michael and his mother Theodora (855-867), Saints Cyril and Methodius visited Cherson. When they learned of the concealed relics of Saint Clement, they asked Bishop George of Cherson to pray that the Lord would show them the relics of the hieromartyr.

Saints Cyril and Methodius walked along the shore in procession with the clergy who came with them from Constantinople. Through the fervent prayers of everyone gathered there, the holy relics of Saint Clement miraculously appeared on the surface of the sea at midnight. They solemnly took them to the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople. A portion of the relics were then brought to Rome by Saints Cyril and Methodius, but a large portion of the relics was later brought to Kiev by the holy Prince Vladimir (July 15) and placed in the Desyatin-Tithe church, together with the relics of Saint Fibius, where a chapel dedicated to Saint Clement had been built. The hieromartyr Clement is widely venerated in Russia. From ancient times, many churches have been dedicated to him.

Saint Clement, who belongs to the Apostolic Fathers, has left to us a spiritual legacy (two Epistles to the Corinthians) the first written examples of Christian teaching after the writings of the holy Apostles.

O God of our Fathers, always act with kindness towards us; take not Your mercy from us, guide our lives in peace through the prayers of the hierarchs Clement and Peter.

Troparion

Apostle Andrew, 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.

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

Fall Fellowship

at St. Olympia's



26 October

Movie Night: *Chronicles of Narnia*

2 November

Board Game Night



9 November

Movie Night: *Man of God*

16 November

Mariam's Book : *Where the Monsters Grew*



23 November

Movie Night: *The Island (Ostrov)*

30 November

Talent Show



7 December

St. Nicholas Day Party

Saturdays after Vespers

UPCOMING DIOCESAN & PARISH EVENTS

Work Days

There will be no work days during the week of Thanksgiving. *Thank you* to everyone who has donated their time, talent, treasure, and muscle to help the Church!

Daily Vespers & Lenten Meal

Wednesday, November 27, 5:00 PM @ the Hermitage (10 Prospect St., Norwood)
Please let Mother know if you plan to join (315-663-5008, mothersophronia@gmail.com).

Fall Fellowship: Talent Show

Saturday, November 30, 6:00 PM (following Vespers)

St. Nicholas Day Party

Saturday, December 7, 6:00 PM (following Vespers).
We are also planning to bless the Norwood Emergency Fleet, stay tuned for details.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Toys for Tots – Please bring any new toys and place them in the big box in the side narthex.

Angel Tree – Buy an outfit for a kid-in-need! More information in the side narthex or ask Father.

Support the DDB – Archbishop Michael encourages us all to consider making a year-end gift to the Distinguished Diocesan Benefactor Fund (DDB). This is the Fund that has been supporting our mission and our seminarians, including our current priest.

Coffee Hour – There are still plenty of slots available. Sign up [here](#) or on the list at Church.

PARISH NEEDS – We are looking for a photographer to take pictures during services and events, and a webmaster to post updates to Facebook, etc. Please let Father know if you are interested.

“We are all made to be temples of God. We are all created to be dwelling places of His glory. We are all fashioned in His image and likeness to be abodes of His presence...

Jesus Christ, the Son, Word and Image of God, is physically and spiritually formed in the body of Mary so that He might be formed in us as well (see Galatians 4:19 – *My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.*)

This is the meaning of Christmas, which is the meaning of life itself: Christ in us and we in Christ, God with us and we with God. The Spirit in our hearts so that the Spirit can flow out from us, sanctifying the world around us.

This is not mere symbolism, the high-blown language of the liturgy and scriptures. This is serious business. It is a matter of life and death.”

Father Thomas Hopko: *The Winter Pascha*