



*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, Feb 10, 17
Great Vespers: 5pm

Sunday, Feb 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, NY 13617

Sunday of Zacchaeus **February 18**



“Today salvation is come to this house” (Luke 19:9)



**Our newly illumined brothers and sisters in Christ with Father Alexey
 at Divine Liturgy last Sunday**
 (Photo from Mother Sophronia)

Sunday of Zacchaeus

February 18

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is also preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about Zacchaeus the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man, and how his life was changed simply because he “sought to see who Jesus was” (Luke 19:3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through Lent towards Pascha. It is the first movement of salvation.

Our lenten journey begins with a recognition of our own sinfulness, just as Zacchaeus recognized his. He promised to make restitution by giving half of his wealth to the poor, and by paying to those he had falsely accused four times as much as they had lost. In this, he went beyond the requirements of the Law (Exodus 22:3-12).

The example of Zacchaeus teaches us that we should turn away from our sins, and atone for them. The real proof of our sorrow and repentance is not just a verbal apology, but when we correct ourselves and try to make amends for the consequences of our evil actions.

We are also assured of God’s mercy and compassion by Christ’s words to Zacchaeus, “Today salvation is come to this house” (Luke 19:9). After the Great Doxology and Trisagion at Sunday Matins (when the Tone of the week is in Tone 1, 3, 5, or 7) we sing the Troparion of the Resurrection: “Today salvation is come to the world, let us sing praises to Him Who arose from the tomb, and is the Author of our life. For having destroyed death by death, He has given us the victory and great mercy.”

Zacchaeus was short, so he climbed a tree in order to see the Lord. All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We are also short in our spiritual stature; therefore we must climb the ladder of the virtues. In other words, we must prepare for spiritual effort and growth.

Saint Zacchaeus is also commemorated on April 20.

Saint Mariamne, the sister of the Apostle Philip

February 17

Righteous Mariamne “The Apostolic Virgin” and sister of the holy Apostle Philip (November 14), made a vow of virginity and became the companion of her brother Philip and the holy Apostle Bartholomew (June 11), actively assisting them in their apostolic work.

The Church historian Nikēphóros Callistus describes their successful preaching in the Phrygian city of Hieropolis, where they were arrested and locked up in prison. They put the Apostle Philip to death on a cross, but Saint Mariamne and Saint Bartholomew were set free. Saint Bartholomew went to preach the Gospel in India. Saint Mariamne, after burying the body of Saint Philip, preached the Gospel at Lykaonia (Asia Minor). She died there in peace.



Saint Mariamne
February 17

The Sacraments (*continued*)
From *The Orthodox Faith* - Volume II: Worship
By Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko

Holy Eucharist

The Holy Eucharist is called the “sacrament of sacraments” in the Orthodox tradition. It is also called the “sacrament of the Church.” The eucharist is the center of the Church’s life. Everything in the Church leads to the eucharist, and all things flow from it. It is the completion of all of the Church’s sacraments—the source and the goal of all of the Church’s doctrines and institutions.

As with baptism, it must be noted that the eucharistic meal was not invented by Christ. Such holy ritual meals existed in the Old Testament and in pagan religions. Generally speaking the “dinner” remains even today as one of the main ritual and symbolic events in the life of man.

The Christian eucharist is a meal specifically connected with the Passover meal of the Old Testament. At the end of his life Christ, the Jewish Messiah, ate the Passover meal with his disciples. Originally a ritual supper in commemoration of the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, the Passover meal was transformed by Christ into an act done in remembrance of him: of His life, death and resurrection as the new and eternal Passover Lamb who frees men from the slavery of evil, ignorance and death and transfers them into the everlasting life of the Kingdom of God.

At the supper Christ took the bread and the wine and ordered his disciples to eat and drink it as his own Body and Blood. This action thus became the center of the Christian life, the experience of the presence of the Risen Christ in the midst of his People (see Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 6 and 13; Acts 2.41–47; 1 Corinthians 10–11).

As a word, the term eucharist means thanksgiving. This name is given to the sacred meal—not only to the elements of bread and wine, but to the whole act of gathering, praying, reading the Holy Scriptures and proclaiming God’s Word, remembering Christ and eating and drinking his Body and Blood in communion with him and with God the Father, by the Holy Spirit. The word eucharist is used because the all-embracing meaning of the Lord’s Banquet is that of thanksgiving to God in Christ and the Holy Spirit for all that he has done in making, saving and glorifying the world.

The sacrament of the eucharist is also called holy communion since it is the mystical communion of men with God, with each other, and with all men and all things in him through Christ and the Spirit. The eucharistic liturgy is celebrated in the Church every Sunday, the Day of the Lord, as well as on feast days. Except in monasteries, it is rarely celebrated daily. Holy Communion is forbidden to all Orthodox Christians on the week days of Great Lent except in the special communion of the Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts (see below) because of its joyful and resurrectional character. The eucharist is always given to all members of the Church, including infants who are baptized and confirmed. It is always given in both forms—bread and wine. It is strictly understood as being the real presence of Christ, His true Body and Blood mystically present in the bread and wine which are offered to the Father in his name and consecrated by the divine Spirit of God.

In the history of Christian thought, various ways were developed to try to explain how the bread and the wine become the Body and Blood of Christ in the eucharistic liturgy. Quite unfortunately, these explanations often became too rationalistic and too closely connected with certain human philosophies.

One of the most unfortunate developments took place when men began to debate the reality of Christ’s Body and Blood in the eucharist. While some said that the eucharistic gifts of bread and wine were the real Body and Blood of Christ, others said that the gifts were not real, but merely the symbolic or mystical presence of the Body and Blood. The tragedy in both of these approaches is that what is real came to be opposed to what is symbolic or mystical.

The Orthodox Church denies the doctrine that the Body and the Blood of the eucharist are merely intellectual or psychological symbols of Christ’s Body and Blood. If this doctrine were true, when the liturgy is celebrated and holy communion is given, the people would be called merely to think about Jesus and to commune with him “in their hearts.” In this way, the eucharist would be reduced to a simple memorial meal of the Lord’s last supper, and the union with God through its reception would come only on the level of thought or psychological recollection.

On the other hand, however, the Orthodox tradition does use the term “symbols” for the eucharistic gifts. It calls the service a “mystery” and the sacrifice of the liturgy a “spiritual and bloodless sacrifice.” These terms are used by the holy fathers and the liturgy itself.

The Orthodox Church uses such expressions because in Orthodoxy what is real is not opposed to what is symbolical or mystical or spiritual. On the contrary! In the Orthodox view, all of reality—the world and man himself—is real to the extent that it is symbolical and mystical, to the extent that reality itself must reveal and manifest God to us. Thus, the eucharist in the Orthodox Church is understood to be the genuine Body and Blood of Christ precisely because bread and wine are the mysteries and symbols of God’s true and genuine presence and manifestation to us in Christ. Thus, by eating and drinking the bread and wine which are mystically consecrated by the Holy Spirit, we have genuine communion with God through Christ who is himself “the bread of life” (John 6.34, 41).

I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh (John 6.51).

Thus, the bread of the eucharist is Christ’s flesh, and Christ’s flesh is the eucharistic bread. The two are brought together into one. The word “symbolical” in Orthodox terminology means exactly this: “to bring together into one.”

Thus we read the words of the Apostle Paul:

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, “This is My body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death, until He comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread and drinks the cup in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord (1 Corinthians 11.23–26).

The mystery of the holy eucharist defies analysis and explanation in purely rational and logical terms. For the eucharist—and Christ Himself—is indeed a mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven which, as Jesus has told us, is “not of this world.” The eucharist—because it belongs to God’s Kingdom—is truly free from the earth-born “logic” of fallen humanity.



Greatmartyr Theodore Stratelates “the General”

February 8

*Truly enlisted with the King of Heaven,
you became an outstanding general for Him,
passion-bearer Theodore;
you armed yourself wisely with the weapons of faith
and conquered hordes of demons,
revealing yourself as a victorious athlete.
Therefore, in faith we always call you blessed.*

Troparion

PARISH WISH LIST

A wish list to help our parish grow!

SPECIAL, one-time needs or items

LED lights or lanterns e.g. strings of Christmas lights, to illuminate our entrances temporarily.
(Electrical work needed must be postponed until the summer.)

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

Presbyters Council Meeting

Thursday, February 22, 11 AM

Diocesan Chancery

Bronxville, NY

Lenten Women's Retreat: Friday, March 22 – Sunday, March 24, 2024

St Andrews Camp – see the Diocesan website to register

WEEKDAY VESPERS AT THE HERMITAGE OF ST OLYMPIA

Beginning February 14, Vespers Services return to 5PM

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

or via Facebook: Nun Sophronia Hofstead.

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people.

And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2: 41–47