



*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, May 25, June 1**  
**Great Vespers: 5pm**  
**Sunday, May 26, June 2**  
**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 the Paralytic** **May 26**



*Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad, for the Lord has shown strength with His arm. He has trampled down death by death. He has become the first born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy.*

*Troparion of the Paralytic*

*By Your divine authority, O Lord, as You raised up the paralytic of old, so raise up my soul, paralyzed by sundry sins and unseemly acts; so that being saved I may cry:  
"Glory to Your power, O compassionate Christ!"*

*Kontakion of the Paralytic*

## **Sunday of the Paralytic** **May 26**

Many miracles in the Old Testament involve water. To name but a few, the water of the Nile turned to blood after Moses lifted his rod and struck the water before Pharaoh and His servants (Exodus 7:20). Not only was the Nile turned to blood, but also "their rivers, their canals, their ponds, and all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone" (Exodus 7:19).

In chapter 14 of Exodus, Moses divided the waters of the Red Sea, and the Hebrews passed over as if on dry land. When they were safely across, the waters came together, and their Egyptian pursuers were drowned.

On their forty year journey to the Promised Land, the Hebrews camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for them to drink. The people murmured against Moses, asking him why he had led them out of Egypt. God told Moses to strike the rock at Horeb. Then water came out of it so that everyone could drink (Exodus 17:6).

In Judges 6:36-40 we read about Gideon and the dew on the fleece. When Gideon squeezed the fleece, there was enough to fill a bowl with water.

On the Fourth Sunday of Pascha, the Church remembers the man who lay paralyzed at the Sheep Pool in Jerusalem for thirty-eight years, waiting for someone to put him into the pool. The first person to enter the pool after an Angel troubled the water would be healed of his infirmities, but someone always entered the pool before him. Seeing the man, the Lord felt compassion for him and healed him.

The Lord healed the paralytic during the days of the Passover, when He had gone to Jerusalem for the Feast, and He remained there teaching and working miracles. According to Saint John the Theologian, this miracle took place on the Sabbath.

Like some Old Testament miracles, many of Christ's miracles also involved water, and they prefigure the Church's Baptism, which cleanses us of every sin. In the Sheep Pool, once a year, only one person was healed, but Christ saves endless multitudes by divine Baptism. Sometimes, as in the case of Saint Vladimir (July 15), Baptism can also heal our bodily infirmities.

In the Canon for the Paralytic, the Angel who stirred the water in the Sheep Pool is identified as the Archangel Michael. Some of the Troparia call him "Leader of the Angels," and "Supreme Commander" (Ode 1). In Ode 3 we ask him to "protect us from falling into the passions of life." In Ode 6, we ask Saint Michael to guide us on the paths of life." In Ode 8, we ask him to pray with all the Bodiless Hosts, that we may be granted deliverance from our offenses, correction of our life, and the enjoyment of eternal blessings.

As we remember the paralytic, let us ask Christ to "raise up our souls, paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts" (Kontakion of the paralytic).



## **Equal of the Apostles and Emperor Constantine with his Mother Helen** **May 21**

The Church calls Saint Constantine (306-337) "the Equal of the Apostles," and historians call him "the Great." He was the son of the Caesar Constantius Chlorus (305-306), who governed the lands of Gaul and Britain. His mother was Saint Helen, a Christian of humble birth. At this time the immense Roman Empire was divided into Western and Eastern halves, governed by two independent emperors and their co-rulers called "Caesars." Constantius Chlorus was Caesar in the Western Roman Empire. Saint Constantine was born in 274, possibly at Nish in Serbia. In 294, Constantius divorced Helen in order to further his political ambition by marrying a woman of noble rank. After he became emperor, Constantine showed his mother great honor and respect, granting her the imperial title "Augusta."

Constantine, the future ruler of all the whole Roman Empire, was raised to respect Christianity. His father did not persecute Christians in the lands he governed. This was at a time when Christians were persecuted throughout the Roman Empire by the emperors Diocletian (284-305) and his corulers Maximian Galerius (305-311) in the East, and the emperor Maximian Hercules (284-305) in the West.

After the death of Constantius Chlorus in 306, Constantine was acclaimed by the army at York as emperor of Gaul and Britain. The first act of the new emperor was to grant the freedom to practice Christianity in the lands subject to him. The pagan Maximian Galerius in the East and the fierce tyrant Maxentius in the West hated Constantine and they plotted to overthrow and kill him, but Constantine bested them in a series of battles, defeating his opponents with the help of God. He prayed to God to give him a sign which would inspire his army to fight valiantly, and the Lord showed him a radiant Sign of the Cross in the heavens with the inscription "In this Sign, conquer."

After Constantine became the sole ruler of the Western Roman Empire, he issued the Edict of Milan in 313 which guaranteed religious tolerance for Christians. Saint Helen, who was a Christian, may have influenced him in this decision. In 323, when he became the sole ruler of the entire Roman Empire, he extended the provisions of the Edict of Milan to the Eastern half of the Empire. After three hundred years of persecution, Christians could finally practice their faith without fear. Renouncing paganism, the Emperor did not let his capital remain in ancient Rome, the former center of the pagan realm. He transferred his capital to the East, to the city of Byzantium, which was renamed Constantinople, the city of Constantine (May 11). Constantine was deeply convinced that only Christianity could unify the immense Roman Empire with its diverse peoples. He supported the Church in every way. He recalled Christian confessors from banishment, he built churches, and he showed concern for the clergy.

The emperor deeply revered the victory-bearing Sign of the Cross of the Lord, and also wanted to find the actual Cross upon which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified. For this purpose he sent his own mother, the holy Empress Helen, to Jerusalem, granting her both power and money. Patriarch Macarius of Jerusalem and Saint Helen began the search, and through the will of God, the Life-Creating Cross was miraculously discovered in 326. (The account of the finding of the Cross of the Lord is found under the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, September 14). The Orthodox Church commemorates the Uncovering of the Precious Cross and the Precious Nails by the Holy Empress Helen on March 6.

While in Palestine, the holy empress did much of benefit for the Church. She ordered that all places connected with the earthly life of the Lord and His All-Pure Mother, should be freed of all traces of paganism, and she commanded that churches should be built at these places.

The emperor Constantine ordered a magnificent church in honor of Christ's Resurrection to be built over His tomb. Saint Helen gave the Life-Creating Cross to the Patriarch for safe-keeping, and took part of the Cross with her for the emperor. After distributing generous alms at Jerusalem and feeding the needy (at times she even served them herself), the holy Empress Helen returned to Constantinople, where she died in the year 327. **Because of her great services to the Church and her efforts in finding the Life-Creating Cross, the empress Helen is called "the Equal of the Apostles."**

The peaceful state of the Christian Church was disturbed by quarrels, dissensions and heresies which had appeared within the Church. Already at the beginning of Saint Constantine's reign the heresies of the Donatists and the Novatians had arisen in the West. They demanded a second baptism for those who lapsed during the persecutions against Christians. These heresies, repudiated by two local Church councils, were finally condemned at the Council of Milan in 316.

Particularly ruinous for the Church was the rise of the Arian heresy in the East, which denied the Divine Nature of the Son of God, and taught that Jesus Christ was a mere creature. By order of the emperor, the First Ecumenical Council was convened in the city of Nicea in 325. 318 bishops attended this Council. Among its participants were confessor-bishops from the period of the persecutions and many other luminaries of the Church, among whom was Saint Nicholas of Myra in Lycia. (The account about the Council is found under May 29). The emperor was present at the sessions of the Council. The heresy of Arius was condemned and a Symbol of Faith (Creed) composed, in which was included the term "consubstantial with the Father," at the insistence of the Emperor, confirming the truth of the divinity of Jesus Christ, Who assumed human nature for the redemption of all the human race.

After the Council of Nicea, Saint Constantine continued with his active role in the welfare of the Church. He accepted holy Baptism on his deathbed, having prepared for it all his whole life. Saint Constantine died on the day of Pentecost in the year 337 and was buried in the church of the Holy Apostles, in a crypt he had prepared for himself...

***Having seen the image of Your Cross in the heavens, like Paul you did not receive your call from men. O Lord, Your Apostle among kings, the Emperor Constantine, has placed the Imperial City in Your hand; always preserve it in peace, through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O only lover of mankind.***

**Troparion**

***Today Constantine and his mother Helen reveal the precious Cross, the weapon of the faithful against their enemies. For our sakes, it has been shown to be a great sign, and fearsome in battle.***

**Kontakion**

## **UPDATE, UPKEEP, UPGRADE, UPLIFT!**

As we continue to improve our church building, it is time to establish some regular routines for taking care of our church building.

The weekly cleaning and care of the church will take place on Fridays at 4:30.

There are many small projects that could also be done at that time too. All parishioners and friends of the parish are welcome to come and participate. John and Jonathan will be there to help you get started.

### **PARISH CURRENT NEEDS!**

*Holy Mother Olympia, Pray to God for us!*

#### **Protecting our stained-glass windows!**

Our newly-revealed 12-foot tall 19<sup>th</sup> century stained-glass windows need protection. Please consider sponsoring a Plexiglas storm window for \$700 installed or donating what you can toward this project in support. We have four stunning windows that we would like to cover before they get vandalized and six additional ones that we'd like to winterize.

#### **Providing area rugs for our sanctuary and altar area!**

We are also in need of sponsors for carpets. Now that the moldy, hole-y 1970s carpet has been ripped out and the floor refinished, we need some area rugs. We've ordered four thick oriental-style wool rugs at a tremendous discount. Two 9'6" x 13'6" rugs are already covered and two need "adoption" at \$575. Also a 4'6" x 6'6" oval (\$128), a 2' x 3' rug for before the altar. (\$30) and a 2' x 12' non-slip rug pad (\$42.50).

You may donate directly at [saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org](http://saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org) or if you would like more information, please contact Jessica Suchy-Pilalis.

## **UPCOMING DIOCESAN & PARISH EVENTS**

#### **Parish Council Meeting**

Monday, June 17, 7:30 PM via Google Meet

#### **Diocesan Council Meeting**

Monday, June 17, 11:00 AM -1:30 PM

Endicott, NY

#### **Presbyters Council Meeting**

Monday, June 25, 11:00 AM -1:30 PM

Zoom

**Those who sing in church are myrrhbearers.**

**Those who clean the church are myrrhbearers.**

**Those who prepare the flowers for the services are myrrhbearers.**

**Those who look after the garden are myrrhbearers.**

**Those who sew vestments and altar-coverings are myrrhbearers.**

**Those who bake prosphora are myrrhbearers.**

**Those who prepare tea or donate food or wash up are myrrhbearers.**

**Those who donate icons or make offerings of money are myrrhbearers.**

**Those who come and pray for the salvation of all are myrrhbearers.**

**All those who work for the Body of Christ, the Church, in this world, but are not of this world, are myrrhbearers, because they show that they too selflessly love Christ.**

**And what is the reward of myrrhbearers?**

**It is to be the first to see and know the Crucified Body of Christ Risen, the first to hear the words of the Angel resplendent and whiter than snow: Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is Risen!**

*Thanks to Jess; from Pascha Press*