



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

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Please join us for prayer and fellowship.

Commemoration of the First Six Ecumenical Councils

July 14

Upcoming Services:
Saturday, July 13, 20
 Great Vespers: 5pm
Sunday, July 14, 21
 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*



Great Martyr Euphemia, the All-Praised July 11

*You are most glorious, O Christ our God, You have established the Fathers as lights upon the earth,
 and through them, You have guided all of us to the true Faith! O greatly compassionate one, glory to
 You.*

Troparion

*The preaching of the Apostles and the dogmas of the Fathers have confirmed one faith for the
 Church; and She, clad in the garment of truth woven from heavenly theology, teaches aright and
 glorifies the great mystery of piety.*

Kontakion

The Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils

July 14

In the Ninth Article of the Nicea-Constantinople Symbol of Faith proclaimed by the holy Fathers of the First and Second Ecumenical Councils, we confess our faith in “One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.” By virtue of the catholic nature of the Church, an Ecumenical Council is the Church’s supreme authority, and possesses the competence to resolve major questions of church life. An Ecumenical Council is comprised of archpastors and pastors of the Church, and representatives of all the local Churches, from every land of the “oikumene” (i.e. from all the whole inhabited world).

The Orthodox Church acknowledges Seven Holy Ecumenical Councils:

The First Ecumenical Council ([Nicea I](#)) (May 29, and also on seventh Sunday after Pascha) was convened in the year 325 against the heresy of Arius, in the city of Nicea in Bithynia under Saint Constantine the Great, Equal of the Apostles.

The Second Ecumenical Council ([Constantinople I](#)) (May 22) was convened in the year 381 against the heresy of Macedonias, by the emperor Theodosius the Great.

The Third Ecumenical Council ([Ephesus](#)) (September 9) was convened in the year 431 against the heresy of Nestorius, in the city of Ephesus by the emperor Theodosius the Younger.

The Fourth Ecumenical Council ([Chalcedon](#)) (July 16) was convened in the year 451, against the Monophysite heresy, in the city of Chalcedon under the emperor Marcian.

The Fifth Ecumenical Council ([Constantinople II](#)) (July 25) “Concerning the Three Chapters,” was convened in the year 553, under the emperor Justinian the Great.

The Sixth Ecumenical Council ([Constantinople III](#)) (January 23) met during the years 680-681, to fight the Monothelite heresy, under the emperor Constantine Pogonatos.

The fact that the Seventh Ecumenical Council ([Nicea II](#)) is not commemorated today testifies to the antiquity of today’s celebration. The Seventh Council, commemorated on the Sunday nearest to October 11, was convened at Nicea in the year 787 against the Iconoclast heresy, under the emperor Constantine and his mother Irene.

The Church venerates the Holy Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils because Christ has established them as “lights upon the earth,” guiding us to the true Faith. “Clad in the garment of truth,” the doctrine of the Fathers, based upon the preaching of the Apostles, has established one faith for the Church. The Ecumenical Councils, are the highest authority in the Church. Such Councils, guided by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and accepted by the Church, are infallible.

The Orthodox Church’s conciliar definitions of dogma have the highest authority, and such definitions always begin with the Apostolic formula: **“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...” (Acts 15: 28).**

The Ecumenical Councils were always convened for a specific reason: to combat false opinions and heresies, and to clarify the Orthodox Church’s teaching. But the Holy Spirit has thus seen fit, that the dogmas, the truths of faith, immutable in their content and scope, constantly and consequently are revealed by the conciliar mind of the Church, and are given precision by the holy Fathers within theological concepts and terms in exactly such measure as is needed by the Church itself for its economy of salvation. The Church, in expounding its dogmas, is dealing with the concerns of a given historical moment, “not revealing everything in haste and thoughtlessly, nor indeed, ultimately hiding something” (Saint Gregory the Theologian).

[A brief summary of the dogmatic theology of the First Six Ecumenical Councils is formulated and contained in the First Canon of the Council of Trullo \(also known as Quinisext\), held in the year 692.](#)

The 318 Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council are spoken of in this Canon I of Trullo as having: “with unanimity of faith revealed and declared to us the consubstantiality of the three Persons of the Divine nature and, ... instructing the faithful to adore the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with one worship, they cast down and dispelled the false teaching about different degrees of Divinity.”

The 150 Holy Fathers of the Second Ecumenical Council left their mark on the theology of the Church concerning the Holy Spirit, “repudiating the teaching of Macedonius, as one who wished to divide the inseparable Unity, so that there might be no perfect mystery of our hope.”

The 200 God-bearing Fathers of the Third Ecumenical Council expounded the teaching that “Christ, the Incarnate Son of God is One.” They also confessed that “she who bore Him without seed was the spotless Ever-Virgin, glorifying her as truly the Mother of God.

The 630 Holy Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council decreed that “the One Christ, the Son of God... must be glorified in two natures.”

The 165 God-bearing Holy Fathers of the Fifth Ecumenical Council “in synod anathematized and repudiated Theodore of Mopsuestia (the teacher of Nestorius), and Origen, and Didymus, and Evagrius, renovators of the Hellenic teaching about the transmigration of souls and the transmutation of bodies and the impieties they raised against the resurrection of the dead.”

The 170 Holy Fathers of the Sixth Ecumenical Council “taught that we ought to confess two natural volitions, or two wills [trans. note: one divine, and the other human], and two natural operations (energies) in Him Who was incarnate for our salvation, Jesus Christ, our true God.”

In decisive moments of Church history, the holy Ecumenical Councils promulgated their dogmatic definitions, as trustworthy delimitations in the spiritual battle for the purity of Orthodoxy, which will last until such time, as “**all shall come into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God**” (Ephesians 4: 13). In the struggle with new heresies, the Church does not abandon its former dogmatic concepts nor replace them with some sort of new formulations. The dogmatic formulae of the Holy Ecumenical Councils need never be superseded, they remain always contemporary to the living Tradition of the Church. Therefore the Church proclaims:

“The faith of all in the Church of God hath been glorified by men, which were luminaries in the world, cleaving to the Word of Life, so that it be observed firmly, and that it dwell unshakably until the end of the ages, conjointly with their God-bestown writings and dogmas. We reject and we anathematize all whom they have rejected and anathematized, as being enemies of Truth. And if anyone does not cleave to nor admit the aforementioned pious dogmas, and does not teach or preach accordingly, let him be anathema” (Canon I of the Council of Trullo).

In addition to their dogmatic definitions, the Holy Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils exerted great efforts towards the strengthening of church discipline. Local Councils promulgated their disciplinary canons according to the circumstances of the time and place, frequently differing among themselves in various particulars.

The universal unity of the Orthodox Church required unity also in canonical practice, i.e. a conciliar deliberation and affirmation of the most important canonical norms by the Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils. Thus, according to conciliar judgment, the Church has accepted: 20 Canons from the First, 7 Canons from the Second, 8 Canons from the Third, and 30 Canons from the Fourth Ecumenical Synods. The Fifth and the Sixth Councils concerned themselves only with resolving dogmatic questions, and did not leave behind any disciplinary canons.

The need to establish in codified form the customary practices during the years 451-680, and ultimately to compile a canonical codex for the Orthodox Church, occasioned the convening of a special Council, which was wholly devoted to the general application of churchly rules. This was convened in the year 692. The Council “in the Imperial Palace” or “Under the Arches” (in Greek “en trullo”), came to be called the Council in Trullo. It is also called the “Quinisext” [meaning the “fifth and sixth”], because it is considered to have completed the activities of the Fifth and Sixth Councils, or rather that it was simply a direct continuation of the Sixth Ecumenical Council itself, separated by just a few years.

The Council in Trullo, with its 102 Canons (more than of all the Ecumenical Synods combined), had a tremendous significance in the history of the canonical theology of the Orthodox Church. It might be said that the Fathers of this Council produced a complete compilation of the basic codex from the relevant sources for the Orthodox Church’s canons. Listing through in chronological order, and having been accepted by the Church the Canons of the Holy Apostles, and the Canons of the Holy Ecumenical and the Local Councils and of the holy Fathers, the Trullo Council declared: “Let no one be permitted to alter or to annul the aforementioned canons, nor in place of these put forth, or to accept others, made of spurious inscription” (2nd Canon of the Council in Trullo).

Church canons, sanctified by the authority of the first Six Ecumenical Councils (including the rules of the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787, and the Constantinople Councils of 861 and 879, which were added later under the holy Patriarch Photius), form the basis of the Rudder, or Kormchaya Kniga (a canon law codex known as “Syntagma” or “Nomokanon” in 14 titles). In its repository of grace is expressed a canonical norm, a connection to every era, and a guide for all the local Orthodox Churches in churchly practice.

New historical conditions can lead to the change of some particular external aspect of the life of the Church. This makes creative canonical activity necessary in the conciliar reasoning of the Church, in order to reconcile the external norms of churchly life with historical circumstances. The details of canonical regulation are not fully developed for the various eras of churchly organization all at once. With every push to either forsake the literal meaning of a canon, or to fulfill and develop it, the Church again and again turns for reasoning and guidance to the eternal legacy of the Holy Ecumenical Councils, to the inexhaustible treasury of dogmatic and canonical truths.

Holy Great Martyr Euphemia

July 11

The Miracle of Saint Euphemia the All-Praised: The holy Great Martyr Euphemia (September 16) suffered martyrdom in the city of Chalcedon in the year 304, during the time of the persecution against Christians by the emperor Diocletian (284-305). One and a half centuries later, at a time when the Christian Church had become victorious within the Roman Empire, God deigned that Euphemia the All-Praised should again be a witness and confessor of the purity of the Orthodox teaching.

In the year 451 in the city of Chalcedon, in the very church where the glorified relics of the holy Great Martyr Euphemia rested, the sessions of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (July 16) took place. The Council was convened for determining the precise dogmatic formulae of the Orthodox Church concerning the nature of the God-Man Jesus Christ. This was necessary because of the widespread heresy of the Monophysites [“mono-physis” meaning “one nature”], who opposed the Orthodox teaching of the two natures in Jesus Christ, the Divine and the Human natures (in one Divine Person). The Monophysites falsely affirmed that in Christ was only one nature, the Divine [i.e. that Jesus is God but not man, by nature], causing discord and unrest within the Church. At the Council were present 630 representatives from all the local Christian Churches. On the Orthodox side Anatolius, Patriarch of Constantinople (July 3), Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem (July 2), and representatives of Saint Leo, Pope of Rome (February 18) participated in the conciliar deliberations. The Monophysites were present in large numbers, headed by Dioscorus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, and the Constantinople archimandrite Eutychius.

After prolonged discussions the two sides could not come to a decisive agreement.

The holy Patriarch Anatolius of Constantinople proposed that the Council submit the decision of the Church dispute to the Holy Spirit, through His undoubted bearer Saint Euphemia the All-Praised, whose wonderworking relics had been discovered during the Council’s discussions. The Orthodox hierarchs and their opponents wrote down their confessions of faith on separate scrolls and sealed them with their seals. They opened the tomb of the holy Great Martyr Euphemia and placed both scrolls upon her bosom. Then, in the presence of the emperor Marcian (450-457), the participants of the Council sealed the tomb, putting on it the imperial seal and setting a guard to watch over it for three days. During these days both sides imposed upon themselves strict fast and made intense prayer. After three days the patriarch and the emperor in the presence of the Council opened the tomb with its relics: the scroll with the Orthodox confession was held by Saint Euphemia in her right hand, and the scroll of the heretics lay at her feet. Saint Euphemia, as though alive, raised her hand and gave the scroll to the patriarch. After this miracle many of the hesitant accepted the Orthodox confession, while those remaining obstinate in the heresy were consigned to the Council’s condemnation and excommunication.

After an invasion by the Persians during the seventh century, the relics of Saint Euphemia were transferred from Chalcedon to Constantinople, into a newly built church dedicated to her. Many years later, during the period of the Iconoclast heresy, the reliquary with the relics of the saint was cast into the sea by order of the Iconoclast emperor Leo the Isaurian (716-741). The reliquary was rescued from the sea by the ship-owning brothers Sergius and Sergonos, who gave it over to the local bishop. The holy bishop ordered that the relics be preserved in secret, beneath a crypt, since the Iconoclast heresy was continuing to rage. A small church was built over the relics, and over the reliquary was put a board with an inscription stating whose relics rested within. When the Iconoclast heresy was finally condemned at the holy Seventh Ecumenical Council (in the year 787), during the time of Saint Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople (784-806) and the emperor Constantine VI (780-797) and his mother Saint Irene (797-802), the relics of the holy Great Martyr Euphemia were once again solemnly transferred to Constantinople.

You brought joy to the Orthodox and shame to the defenders of heresy, for you confirmed what the Fathers of the Fourth Council had correctly taught. Glorious martyr Euphemia, fair virgin of Christ, entreat Christ God to grant us His great mercy.

Troparion

For the sake of Christ your Bridegroom you underwent struggles in both martyrdom and faith. Now intercede with the Mother of God that heresies and the insolent enemies of the Orthodox be placed underfoot. You received and guarded that which was defined by the six hundred and thirty God-bearing Fathers, all-praised Euphemia.

Kontakion

PARISH CURRENT NEEDS!
Holy Mother Olympia, Pray to God for us!

PROTECTING OUR STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS

We have finished scraping, priming, and painting the exterior trim of four stained-glass altar windows in the altar. These are ready for the plexiglass storm windows needed for both protection and energy efficiency—this will keep the altar cooler in summer and warmer in winter! To date, we have raised approximately \$1500 of the \$2,800 needed for all four windows. Please contribute toward this project. Every little bit helps. Go to saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org to donate online or send a check to St. Olympia Orthodox Church, P.O. Box 122, Canton, NY 13668.

SUMMER CHURCH PROJECT – Re-mortaring the stone foundation and re-sloping the ground.
All workers at all skill levels welcome!

Phase 1 Ted Ritzko will lead this project kick-off by showing people how to remove old mortar, mix and apply new mortar in the gaps in our foundation. The more willing hands we have, the faster this will go. No previous mortaring experience necessary. If we do not finish within the day, we will continue in the late afternoon on the following days.

Phase 2 will be scheduled upon completion of Phase 1. This will involve re-sloping the earth on the north and west sides of the church so that water doesn't flow towards the foundation and into the basement. We will spread stone and then topsoil. When that is done, we will need to reseed the lawn.

HELP KEEP OUR CHURCH BEAUTIFUL
Holy Mother Olympia, Pray to God for us!

Can you give a little time on a Friday afternoon at 4:30 pm?

If so, come help John and Jonathan keep our church clean.

You could help

Vacuum

Clean the kitchen

Clean a bathroom

Wash a floor (upstairs or down)

Wash a basement window or two, inside or out

Sift the candle sand and replenish

Spray or pull up weeds

Trim bushes

Sweep the south sidewalk or front steps

Dust and when needed, polish a few pews

Dust windowsills and icons

Wipe down a wood paneled wall in lower level or stair well with Old English

Do something you see that needs doing (check in with John or Jonathan just in case!)

Meanwhile, by your prayers, our parish and our parish building will blossom!

UPCOMING DIOCESAN & PARISH EVENTS

Potsdam Summer Fest – Saint Olympia Orthodox Church Booth

Saturday, July 13 *Save the date!*

Diocesan Council Meeting

Tuesday, July 23, 11:00 AM -1:30 PM

Bronxville, NY

Saint Olympia Feast Day Celebration with Archbishop Michael

Wednesday, July 24, Vigil

Thursday, July 25, Divine Liturgy

Fellowship meal will follow at the Hermitage of Saint Olympia



Wisdom from Saint John Chrysostom

Speaking about Saints Priscilla and Aquila:

"How am I to become like them," you may ask, "since I don't have Paul as a guest in my house?" But if you wish, you may have him more precisely than they did. For it was not the sight of Paul that made them of such character, but his words. Hence, if you so desire, you may have Paul and Peter and John and the whole choir of the Prophets, along with the Apostles, continually conversing with you. Just take the books of these blessed ones, and continually read their writings, and they will be able to make you like the wife of the tentmaker."

From his Homily 30 on Romans

"Reading the Scriptures is like sifting through treasure. With treasure, if one finds even a tiny nugget he can gain for himself great wealth. Just so with the Divine Scriptures, for even in a short phrase one can find a great depth of meaning, wealth beyond telling.

From his First Sermon on Genesis

"And the Divine Scriptures not only resemble treasure, for they are also like a spring gushing forth abundant waters in a mighty flood."

Grace shining forth from your mouth like a beacon has illumined the inhabited earth; it has disclosed to the world treasures which wealth cannot buy; and has set forth for us the height of humility. Instructing us by your words, O Father John Chrysostom, intercede with the Word, Christ God that our souls may be saved.

Troparion