



*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.

Great Martyr Marina of Antioch **July 17**

Upcoming Services:
Saturday, July 20, 27
Great Vespers: 5pm
Sunday, July 21, 28
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*



Holy, Glorious Prophet Elijah **July 20**

Adorned with the beauty of virginity, you have been crowned with unfading crowns, O Marina. Having shed your blood in holy martyrdom, and radiant with the miracles of healing, you have received from the hand of your Creator the prize of victory.

Kontakion to Great Martyr Marina of Antioch

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 the Holy, Glorious Prophet Elijah

Holy, Glorious Prophet Elijah

July 20

The Holy Prophet Elijah is one of the greatest of the prophets and the first dedicated to virginity in the Old Testament. He was born in Tishba of Gilead into the Levite tribe 900 years before the Incarnation of the Word of God.

Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus gives the following account about the birth of the Prophet Elijah: “When Elijah was born, his father Sobach saw in a vision angels of God around him. They swaddled him with fire and fed him with flames.” The name Elijah (the Lord’s strength) given to the infant defined his whole life. From the years of his youth he dedicated himself to the One God, settled in the wilderness and spent his whole life in strict fasting, meditation and prayer. Called to prophetic service, which put him in conflict with the Israelite king Ahab, the prophet became a fiery zealot of true faith and piety.

During this time the Israelite nation had fallen away from the faith of their Fathers, they abandoned the One God and worshipped pagan idols, the worship of which was introduced by the impious king Jereboam. Jezebel, the wife of king Ahab, was devoted to idol worship. She persuaded her husband to build a temple to the pagan god Baal, which led many Israelites away from the worship of the true God. Beholding the ruin of his nation, the Prophet Elijah began to denounce King Ahab for impiety, and exhorted him to repent and turn to the God of Israel. The king would not listen to him. The Prophet Elijah then declared to him, that as punishment there would be neither rain nor dew upon the ground, and the drought would cease only by his prayer. Indeed, the word of Elijah was a torch (Eccles. 48: 1). The heavens were closed for three and a half years, and there was drought and famine throughout all the land.

During this time of tribulation, the Lord sent him to a cave beyond the Jordan. There he was miraculously fed by ravens. When the stream Horath dried up, the Lord sent the Prophet Elijah to Sarephta to a poor widow, a Sidonian Gentile who suffered together with her children, awaiting death by starvation. At the request of the prophet, she prepared him a bread with the last measure of flour and the remainder of the oil. Through the prayer of the Prophet Elijah, flour and oil were not depleted in the home of the widow for the duration of the famine. By the power of his prayer the prophet also performed another miracle: he raised the dead son of the widow.

After the end of three years of drought the Merciful Lord sent the prophet to appear before King Ahab, and promised to send rain upon the earth. The Prophet Elijah told the king to order all of Israel to gather upon Mount Carmel, and also the priests of Baal. When the nation had gathered, the Prophet Elijah proposed that two sacrificial altars be built: one for the priests of Baal, and the other for the Prophet Elijah who served the True God.

The Prophet Elijah told them to call on their gods to consume the sacrificial animals with fire, and he would call on his. Whichever was first to send fire on the sacrifice would be acknowledged as the true God. The prophets of Baal called out to their idol from morning till evening, but the heavens were silent. Towards evening the holy Prophet Elijah built his sacrificial altar from twelve stones, the number of the tribes of Israel. He placed the sacrifice upon the wood, gave orders to dig a ditch around the altar and commanded that the sacrifice and the wood be soaked with water. When the ditch had filled with water, the prophet turned to God in prayer. Through the prayer of the prophet fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice, the wood, and even the water. The people fell down to the ground, crying out: “Truly, the Lord is God!” Then the Prophet Elijah had all the pagan-priests of Baal put to death, and he began to pray for rain. Through his prayer the heavens opened and an abundant rain fell, soaking the parched earth.

King Ahab acknowledged his error and repented of his sins, but his wife Jezebel threatened to kill the prophet of God. The Prophet Elijah fled into the Kingdom of Judea and, grieving over his failure to eradicate idol worship, he asked God to let him die. An angel of the Lord came before him, strengthened him with food and commanded him to go upon a long journey. The Prophet Elijah traveled for forty days and nights and, having arrived at Mount Horeb, he settled in a cave.

The Lord told him that the next day Elijah would stand in His presence. There was a strong wind that crushed the rocks of the mountain, then an earthquake, and a fire, but the Lord was not in them. The Lord was in “a gentle breeze” (3 Kings 19: 12). He revealed to the prophet, that He would preserve seven thousand faithful servants who had not worshipped Baal.

Later, the Lord commanded Elijah to anoint Elisha into prophetic service. Because of his fiery zeal for the Glory of God the Prophet Elijah was taken up alive into Heaven in a fiery chariot. The Prophet Elisha received Elijah’s mantle, and a double portion of his prophetic spirit.

According to the Tradition of Holy Church, the Prophet Elijah will be the Forerunner of the Dread Second Coming of Christ. He will proclaim the truth of Christ, urge all to repentance, and will be slain by the Antichrist. This will be a sign of the end of the world.

The life of the holy Prophet Elijah is recorded in the Old Testament books (3 Kings; 4 Kings; Sirach/Ecclesiasticus 48: 1-15; 1 Maccabees 2: 58). At the time of the Transfiguration, the Prophet Elijah conversed with the Savior upon Mount Tabor (Mt. 17: 3; Mark 9: 4; Luke. 9: 30).

Orthodox Christians of all times, and in all places, have venerated the Prophet Elijah for centuries. The first church in Russia, built at Kiev under Prince Igor, was named for the Prophet Elijah. After her Baptism Saint Olga (July 11) built a temple of the holy Prophet Elijah in her native region, at the village of Vibuta.

In iconography the Prophet Elijah is depicted ascending to Heaven in a fiery chariot, surrounded with flames, and harnessed to four winged horses. We pray to him for deliverance from drought, and to ask for seasonable weather.

Prophet Elijah of great renown, seer of the mighty, mighty works of God, by your command you held back the rain! Pray for us to the only Lover of mankind!

Kontakion

The Still Small Voice of God Metropolitan Tikhon, July 20, 2020

My Beloved Brethren and Blessed Children in the Lord, Christ is in our midst! It seems fitting today to say a few words about the Prophet Elijah and the still small voice of God in our lives.

The Prophet Elijah, whose memory we celebrate today, lived in tumultuous times. The people of Israel had rejected God and turned to idols, and their reigning government violently persecuted the Holy Prophet. Fleeing to the desert to seek refuge, the Lord asked him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah responded: "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the people of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." In response, the Lord commanded Elijah to stand on the mountain before Him. After showing the prophet a great wind, a mighty earthquake, and fire, God finally spoke to Elijah in "a still, small voice."

Through this account, the example is given to us of how we, as the Body of Christ, should reveal God to the world through our words. When we perceive that our society has reverted from Christianity to idolatry, and when we sense that some levels of government in our society are treating Christians unfairly, our task as the Church is not to manifest God through tempestuous outrage, earth-quaking tirades, or emotionally-fired speech. Neither, as Elijah was tempted to do, should we give in to self-pitying or defeatism. Rather, as the Church it is our task to manifest God's presence through a still, small voice.

God's still small voice is not condescending, it is not insulting, it does not seek to harm. It is not profane, rude, or violent.

Rather, God's still small voice is still, because it is balanced and considerate. It is small, because it is humble and often rejected.

But it is nevertheless a voice! And indeed, when we have words to say that glorify God and manifest Truth to the world, then indeed, we should open our mouth, and the Spirit will inspire us to be the heralds of God's love.

Engaging with one another by remote and online means more than ever in these months, in the midst of forceful and loud storms in society, let us first allow the Lord to speak to us in a still small voice, through engaging with Him in prayer, silence, and contemplation. Then, let us allow Him to speak through us, through whatever physical or media means we are using, to be the vehicles of His still small voice. Through the use of kind words, through the use of considerate speech, through the use of reason - logos - rather than emotion, we fulfill our role as Christ's Church to be God's voice.

The Church will always be "small" in the world's eyes; appearing foolish or irrelevant. Yet we know the truth hidden to the world: Our Church's authentic voice is the most rational and true voice in the world. This paradox exists because our wisdom does not belong to the world, as Saint Paul says: "Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is folly with God" (1 Corinthians 3:18-19). Our wisdom is found in the paradox of Christ on the Cross: His death appeared foolish, it appeared irrelevant, but in reality, it was the most important historical event that has ever happened. It ushered in the new Creation, bringing about the Resurrection of all. His death and resurrection, indeed, are the vivid manifestation of God's still small voice: by appearances small and despised, but in reality, Truth and Life-giving.

So, let us follow the Divine command, and "be still, and know that I Am God" (Psalm 45/46:10). And by our living as still and small men and women of prayer in the midst of the tumults of the world, our great and mighty Lord will paradoxically be manifested to the world through us.

May the Holy Prophet Elijah intercede for us so that we might all humbly transmit the still small voice of our almighty, all-powerful, and all-loving God so that the world might come to know He Who Is.

Great Martyr Marina of Antioch

July 17

Saint Marina was born into the family of a pagan priest from the city of Antioch, in the center of the Roman Province of Pisidia in Asia Minor. She was raised by a wet nurse who lived on an estate owned by Marina's mother, who died when the Saint was still an infant. From the nurse or from an unnamed man of God from the wanderers Marina learned the basics of Christianity at the age of twelve.

After hearing the story of the conception and birth of Jesus Christ by the Most Holy Virgin, Marina's faith in the Christian God was strengthened, and it was her intention to renounce worldly temptations. She decided she would never marry and, despite the fact that she attracted the attention of men, she would become the bride of Christ. Some sources explicitly indicate on her willingness to "lay down her life for the Lord."

Olymbrios, the imperial governor of that region, was fascinated by Marina's beauty and wanted to marry her. The Saint did not hide the fact that she was a Christian. Then the ruler gave her into the care of a noble woman, hoping that she would persuade the girl to deny Christ. Then Olymbrios offered her his hand and heart publicly, in the center of the city, from the prefect's podium, but Saint Marina remained unwavering in her refusal.

The temptations of this life, which promised her fame and fortune, were immediately replaced by physical suffering. The forces that made it possible to overcome physical suffering and the temptation to end pain at the cost of apostasy, the Martyr drew from prayers to the Lord. The Saint bravely endured cruel tortures: she was beaten with rods, her body was raked with tridents, they drove nails into her, and burned her with fire.

But even this, the second level of temptation did not exhaust the Saint's feat (podvig). The source of the third level of testing was Satan himself, whose onslaught was also threefold.

The first time the devil appeared to the Saint in prison, on the night after the first day of torture, when she prayed, as the Coptic Life clarifies, she folded her arms crosswise. In Russian hagiography, it is emphasized that Marina asked the Lord: "Let me see the Enemy of the human race fighting against me. Let him come face to face before me. You are the Judge and Ruler of the living and the dead, so judge between me and the devil. Deliver me from perdition. Help me to overcome him, send Satan to hell by Your invincible power."

Taking the form of a serpent (dragon), Satan devoured the captive. But Saint Marina was able to pray in his belly, and she made the Sign of the Cross, which tore the dragon apart. Once again on the floor of the dungeon, Marina saw Satan himself in the corner, who began a second physical onslaught on the Saint.

The peculiarity which distinguishes the Great Martyr Marina from other holy virgins, and even men, is that the girl made active physical resistance to Satan. After entering into single combat with him, Saint Marina continued to pray. Noticing a copper hammer lying in the corner of the dungeon, she grabbed it and began to beat Satan on the head with it, holding him by the horns, and stepping on his neck, Saint Marina said: "Depart from me, O lawless one."

After that, the heavens opened, and the Martyr's body was healed of her wounds from the previous day. A voice from above encouraged her, urging her not to be afraid of anything.

But the devil made a third onslaught on the girl. Under the guise of the frankness of the story of his atrocities, he tried to draw her into those sins to which the Saint was opposed. But Marina defeated the Father of lies, making the Sign of the Cross over him. The abyss swallowed up Satan, and the Saint spent the rest of the night in prayers of thanksgiving and joy until the day of her final contest began.

The eparch tried again to break the Holy Virgin's resistance by torture. The Martyr was suspended on a tree, scorched with fire, dunked in a barrel of water - and that became her Holy Baptism. Suddenly, as she was being submerged in the water, a light shone, and a snow-white dove descended upon the girl with a golden crown in its beak.

The astonished crowd began to praise God and declared themselves to be Christians. The governor ordered everyone to be executed. On that day, together with the fifteen-year-old bride of Christ Marina, 15,000 people were beheaded. This occurred in the year 304. ...

In Greek and Coptic icons of the Great Martyr Marina, there is either a dragon or a devil in the form of a dark-skinned man, a short man with horns. In the latter case, the Saint holds him with one hand by a horn, or a tuft of hair, and with the other hand she is about to strike him with a hammer.

Today Marina crushes the head of the Enemy, having received a crown of victory from Heaven; she bound and struck the one whom the Prophets could not restrain. Therefore, she became an adornment of the Martyrs, as well as their glory.

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

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, 6 PM, Vigil

Thursday, July 25, 10 AM, Divine Liturgy

Fellowship meal will follow at the Hermitage of Saint Olympia



When in fear, trembling and unworthiness we are yet permitted to receive the divine, undefiled Mysteries of Christ, our King and our God,

we should then display even greater watchfulness, strictness and guard over our hearts, so that the divine fire, the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, may consume our sins and stains, great and small.

For when that fire enters into us, it at once drives the evil spirits from our heart and remits the sins we have previously committed, leaving the intellect free from the turbulence of wicked thoughts.

**St. Hesychius the Theologian of Jerusalem,
Disciple of St. Gregory the Theologian
Philokalia, Vol. 1 p.179**