

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

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Upcoming Services:

May 3, Saturday

5pm – Great Vespers

May 4, Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women

10am – Divine Liturgy (9:40am Hours)

May 6, Tuesday

6pm – Molieben to St Alexis Toth

May 9, Friday

8am – Divine Liturgy (Martyr Christopher)

May 10, Saturday

5pm – Great Vespers

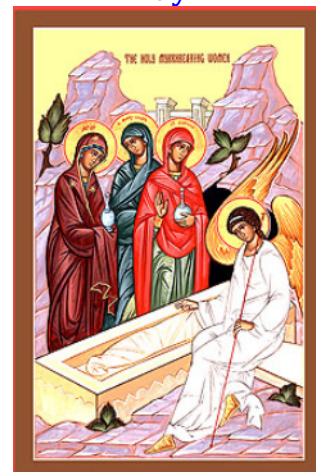
May 11, Sunday of the Paralytic

10am – Divine Liturgy (9:40am Hours)

*Weekday Daily Vespers, 5pm @ the Hermitage

**Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing
Women**

May 4



The angel came to the Myrrhbearing women at the tomb and said: Myrrh is meet for the dead; but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption! So proclaim: The Lord is risen, granting the world great mercy!

Troparion



Day of Rejoicing

The Tuesday after Saint Thomas Sunday

April 29

*Remembering Orthodox Christians from all
ages who have died in the hope of the
Resurrection*

The Myrrhbearing Women *(Compiled from Father Hopko and the Lives of the Saints)*

The third Sunday after Pascha is dedicated to the myrrhbearing women who cared for the body of the Saviour at his death and who were the first witnesses of His Resurrection. The three troparia of Holy Friday are sung once again and from the theme of the day:

The noble Joseph, when he had taken down Thy most pure body from the Tree, wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices, and placed it in a new tomb.

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life Immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead. The angel came to the myrrhbearing women at the tomb and said: Myrrh is fitting for the dead, but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption! So proclaim: The Lord is risen, granting the world great mercy.

You visited Christ the Lord in the night, / and were born from above¹ being received, as it were, as a secret Apostle. / With good courage you disputed with the Pharisees and Scribes² / and followed the Savior. / Taking Him dead from the Cross, / you wrapped Him in cloths with myrrh and laid Him in the tomb, / O fervent³ Nikódēmos.

The Myrrh-bearing women are those women who followed the Lord, along with His Mother. They remained with her during the time of the saving Passion, and anointed the Lord's body with myrrh. Joseph and Nikódēmos asked for and received the Lord's body from Pilate. They took it down from the Cross, wrapped it in linen cloths and spices, then they laid it in a tomb, and then they placed a great stone over the entrance of the tomb.

According to the Evangelist Matthew (27:57-61) Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joses (Mark 15:40) were there sitting opposite the sepulchre, and they saw where He had been laid. This other Mary was the Mother of God. Not only were these present, but also many other women, as Saint Luke says (24:10).

Today the Church honors

Saints Mary Magdalene (July 22),
Mary the wife of Cleopas (May 23),
Joanna (June 27),
Salome, mother of the sons of Zebedee (August 3),
Martha and Mary, sisters of Lazarus (June 4),
and the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary,
who was the stepmother of her husband Joseph's sons James (October 23) and Joses (October 30).

Today we also remember Saint Joseph of Arimathea (July 31), who was a secret disciple (John 19:38), and Saint Nikódēmos, who was a disciple by night (John 3:3; 19:38).

The holy right-believing Queen Tamara of Georgia is honored twice during the year: on May 1, the day of her repose, and also on the Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women. On this day the Church also remembers All Saints of Thessalonica, Saint Seraphim Bishop of Phanar (December 4, 1610), the New Martyr Elias Arduinis (January 31, 1686), and the New Martyr Demetrios of the Peloponnesos (April 13, 1803).

You commanded the myrrhbearers to rejoice, O Christ! By Your Resurrection, You stopped the lamentation of Eve, the first mother! You commanded them to preach to Your apostles: The Savior is Risen from the tomb!

Kontakion

Day of Rejoicing **April 29**

On Tuesday of Saint Thomas week we remember those Orthodox Christians from all ages who have died in faith, and in the hope of resurrection.

There are indications of this commemoration in the sermons of the Fathers of the Church. Saint John Chrysostom, for example, mentions it in his homily "On the Cemetery and the Cross."

In pre-Revolutionary Russia bars remained closed and alcoholic beverages were not sold until this Day of Rejoicing so that the joy people felt would be because of the Resurrection, and not an artificial joy brought on by alcohol.

Today the Church remembers its faithful members at Liturgy, and koliva is offered in remembrance of those who have fallen asleep. Priests visit cemeteries to bless the graves of Orthodox Christians, and to share the paschal joy with the departed. It is also customary to give alms to the poor on this day.



Apostle James



Saint Matrona

Apostle James, the Brother of Saint John the Theologian

April 30

The Holy Apostle James, the son of Zebedee, was the brother of Saint John the Theologian, and one of the Twelve Apostles. He and his brother, Saint John, were called to be Apostles by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who called them the “Sons of Thunder” (Mark 3:17). It was this James, with John and Peter, who witnessed the Raising of the Daughter of Jairus, the Lord’s Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, and His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Saint James, after the Descent of the Holy Spirit, preached in Spain and in other lands, and then he returned to Jerusalem. He openly and boldly preached Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, and he denounced the Pharisees and the Scribes with the words of Holy Scripture, reproaching them for their malice of heart and unbelief.

The Jews could not prevail against Saint James, and so they hired the sorcerer Hermogenes to dispute with the apostle and refute his arguments that Christ was the promised Messiah Who had come into the world. The sorcerer sent to the apostle his pupil Philip, who was converted to belief in Christ. Then Hermogenes himself became persuaded of the power of God, he burned his books of magic, accepted holy Baptism and became a true follower of Christ.

The Jews persuaded Herod Agrippa (40-44) to arrest the Apostle James and sentence him to death (Acts 12:1-2). Eusebius provides some of the details of the saint’s execution (CHURCH HISTORY II, 9). Saint James calmly heard the death sentence and continued to bear witness to Christ. One of the false witnesses, whose name was Josiah, was struck by the courage of Saint James. He came to believe in Jesus Christ as the Messiah. When they led the apostle forth to execution, Josiah fell at his feet, repenting of his sin and asking forgiveness. The apostle embraced him, gave him a kiss and said, “Peace and forgiveness to you.” Then Josiah confessed his faith in Christ before everyone, and he was beheaded with Saint James in the year 44 at Jerusalem.

Saint James was the first of the Apostles to die as a martyr.

As a soldier of the Lord you were ranked among the choir of Apostles. Together with your brother, O James, you clung wholeheartedly to the Savior. Armed with the power of the Spirit you proclaimed Him to all, and were slain by the sword. Therefore, we sing your praises.

Troparion

You heard the divine voice when it called to you, O glorious James; therefore, casting off the love of father, friends, and companions, together with your brother John, you hastened to Christ, and you were worthy to behold the divine Transfiguration of the Lord.

Kontakion

Saint Matrona of Moscow

May 2

Matrona Dimitrievna Nikonova was born in 1881 in the village of Sebino, Tula province, into a God-fearing peasant family. This village is located twenty kilometers from Kulikovo field. During her childhood. Matrona, blind from birth, received from God the gift of spiritual vision, and penetration into mysteries of God's Providence. The grace which rested upon her was manifested in the gifts of prayer, spiritual reasoning, knowledge, and clairvoyance. Early on, people started

coming to her for advice. At first, it was just local residents, and then visitors from other regions. In her seventeenth year, Matrona's legs suddenly became paralyzed, and she permanently lost the ability to walk. She never complained because of her ailments, but humbly bore the cross God had given to her.

Matrona left for Moscow in 1925, which became the place of her ascetical service, and of her righteous repose. Persecuted by the atheists, Matrona was constantly forced to change her place of residence, finding refuge in the homes of believers. An endless stream of people visited Matrona, thirsting for spiritual healing, instruction, and her prayerful help. By her prayers, the infirm were healed of paralysis, or suffering from mental and physical ailments. Her prophecies and predictions helped many people to avoid danger and death, and to find the right path in difficult circumstances. Numerous testimonies of these miraculous events have been preserved.

After her righteous repose, which occurred in 1952, many people came to Matrona's grave in the Danilov cemetery, veneration of the deceased increased, and miracles and healings took place. In 1999, by the decision of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Eldress Matrona of Moscow was numbered among the righteous Saints for local Church veneration in Moscow, and in the Moscow diocese. Her revered relics rest in the Stavropegiat Protection Convent in Moscow.

Saint Matrona is commemorated on May 2, on March 20, on the Sunday before Sept. 10, the Synaxis of the Moscow Saints, and on Oct. 5, the Synaxis of the Tula Saints.

Offspring of the land of Tula, angelic ascetic of the city of Moscow, blessed Eldress Matrona. You remained blind from birth until the end of your life, but you received spiritual sight, clairvoyance, and intercession from God. Most of all, you received the gift of healing the spiritual and bodily illnesses of all who come to you and ask you with faith, O our joy

Troparion

Today, O faithful, let us glorify the divinely-wise blessed Eldress Matrona, who blossomed in the land of Tula and who gloriously adorned the city of Moscow; for she, not knowing the light of day, was illumined by the light of Christ and was enriched with the gift of healing. Having been a migrant and a wanderer on earth, now, in the heavenly Bridal Chamber, she stands before God's throne and prays for our souls.

Troparion

Called to serve Christ from your mother's womb, O righteous Matrona, you walked the path of sorrows and tribulations, showing steadfast faith and piety, you were well pleasing to God. Therefore, honoring your memory, we pray to you: Help us to abide in the love of God, O blessed eldress!

Kontakion

Ephesians 4:1-3

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

St. John Chrysostom, on the profound unity of believers in Christ:

What is this "unity of the Spirit"? Just as in the human body there is a spirit that holds it all together, even though the body is comprised of different members, so also here. For this reason the Spirit was given: that He might unite into one those who are separated by race and various customs. For the old and the young, the poor and the rich, the child and the youth, the woman and the man -- every soul becomes one, even more so than if there were one body. For this spiritual relationship is much greater than that of the body, and the preciseness of the unity is more complete.

From his *Homily 9 on Ephesians*

UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS

Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday, April 29, 7:30 PM

Book Club

Thursday, May 1, 5:45–7:15 PM at the Church. We will be reading selections from Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Contact Joseph Stark for more information.

UPCOMING DIOCESAN EVENTS

Camp Fundraiser

Sunday, May 4, at 4:00 PM – A “Spaghetti and Song” fundraiser for St. Andrew’s Camp will be held at Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church in Endicott. Tickets can be purchased at <https://givebutter.com/KzEdEw>.

Young Adult Retreat

Friday, May 16 – Sunday, May 18 @ St. Andrew’s Camp. Open to Orthodox young adults, catechumens, and inquirers age 18-35. For questions, contact LonnBologna@gmail.com or text 203-258-5324.

Parish Council Conference, NYS Deanery West

Saturday, June 14, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Syracuse, NY. The theme of the 2025 Parish Council Conferences is "Integrating New Converts into Our Parish Families."

Altar Server Retreat, NYS Deanery

Saturday, June 28 at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Endicott, NY.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

SAFETY – Please steer clear of the basement as work intensifies. You may still use the bathroom, but please avoid the kitchen area and debris.

Coffee Hour – Please consider sponsoring a meal after Liturgy. There are still some open slots this coming Sunday. Sign up [here](#) or on the list at Church.

~PARISH NEEDS~

Bottled water | Volunteers to help with regular cleaning of the Church | Maintenance work at the Hermitage

Let us consider, brethren, how far Mary Magdalene was from the dignity of Peter, the leader of the apostles, and John, Christ's beloved theologian, and yet at that time she was counted worthy to experience much greater things than they did.

When they ran to the tomb, they saw only the linen cloths and the napkin, whereas she, by reason of the determined and patient endurance with which she remained to the end standing at the door of the cave, saw not just the angels but also the Lord of the angels risen from the dead in the flesh, before the apostles saw Him. She heard Him with her own ears and became a minister of the commandments from His divine mouth.

This temple (the church building) is a figure of that cave... Anyone who is determined to hasten to that truly divine cave that holds God, stand there and remain to the end, gathering his thoughts and lifting them up to God, will not only recognize the words of divinely inspired Scripture proclaiming, like angels, the divinity and humanity of the Word man for our sake, he will also certainly see the Lord with the eyes of his mind and, we can say, without exaggeration, his bodily eyes.

For if anyone looks with faith at the mystical table and bread of life placed upon it, he sees the person of the Word of God.

Saint Gregory Palamas