

**Week of  
June 25th  
2017**

**You can reach Fr. Luke at  
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**For emergencies, phone  
(315) 322-8425**

**Please leave a clear  
message and include your  
phone number**

### **Next Services**

**Saturday, July 1st  
Great Vespers at 5:00 pm**

**Fr. Luke is available to hear  
confessions following the service**

**Sunday, July 2nd  
Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am**

**Both services at  
St. Olympia Chapel  
123 Main Street  
Potsdam, NY**

**All welcome!**

### **Sayings from the Desert Fathers**

Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus, said, "It is a great treachery to salvation to know nothing of the divine law."

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The same abba said, "The righteous sin through their mouths, but the ungodly sin in their whole bodies. This is why David sings, 'Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth and keep the door of my lips.' (Ps. 141:3) And again, 'I will take heed to my ways that I do not sin with my tongues.'" (Ps 39:1)

\* \* \*

The same abba said, "God remits the debts of sinners who are penitent, for example, the sinful woman and the publican, but of the righteous man he even asks interest. This is what he says to his apostles, "Except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and the pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:20)

\* \* \*

He also said, "God sells righteousness at a very low price to those who wish to buy it: a little piece of bread, a cloak of no value, a cup of cold water, a mite."

\* \* \*

He added, "A man who receives something from another because of his poverty or his needs has therein his reward, and because he is ashamed, when he repays it he does so in secret. But it is the opposite for the Lord God; he receives in secret, but he repays it in the presence of the angels, the archangels and the righteous."

\* \* \*

The same old man said, "David the prophet prayed late at night; waking in the middle of the night, he prayed before the day; at the dawn of day he stood before the Lord; in the small hours he prayed, in the evening and at mid-day he prayed again, and this is why he said, 'Seven times a day have I praised you.'" (Ps. 119: 164)

### **Planning Ahead**

**Parish Rummage Sale  
to benefit our building fund  
Saturday, August 26, 2017**

*Please collect items that you  
can contribute to this  
fund raiser*

**Archbishop Michael's next  
visit to Potsdam will be:**

**Saturday-Sunday,  
September 9-10, 2017**



**ST OLYMPIA ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**POTSDAM, NEW YORK 13676**

**ORTHODOX CHURCH OF AMERICA  
DIOCESE OF NY AND NJ**



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

**Join us for prayer and fellowship. Divine Liturgies are held every Sunday  
and are primarily in English. Fr. Luke Majoros is our presbyter.**

**Visit us on Facebook or [www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org](http://www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org)**

## **The Feast of Ss. Peter and Paul**

We are now well into the fast of the apostles, and will celebrate the feast of Ss. Peter and Paul on June 29th. It is a celebration of what the Lord can do with our lives if we allow it. These two saints are contrasting examples of this.

St. Peter's original name was Simon—we might think of him as Simple Simon for he was just an unlearned and poor fisherman. But Jesus knew that Simon could be something much greater. He renamed him Cephas, which translated as Petros, the Greek work for rock. Peter was at Jesus' side throughout His ministry and saw the Lord work many miracles, yet he stumbled mightily and denied Christ three times, as the Lord foreknew. Peter wept bitterly and repented of his weakness. He became a fearless and powerful teacher/preacher/evangelist. On Pentecost, 3000 were converted to the faith when they heard him speak. Peter preached throughout Judea, traveled to Palestine, Asia Minor, Italy, Samaria, Caesaria, Joppa and Lydia. He helped found the churches in Antioch and Rome. However, his spiritual journey matched or exceeded the many miles that he traveled.

St. Peter authored two letters that are included in the canon of the New Testament. These letters are termed "universal" or "general" because they are not addressed to a particular church but to an entire region, the churches in five provinces in Asia Minor. The theme of the first letter is a strong encouragement for Christians suffering persecution to stay faithful to their baptism. The second letter is an admonishment to not be swayed by heretical teachings such as Gnosticism. Instead, he writes that they must be "partakers of the divine nature." (2 Peter 1:4) This is a goal for all of us. The Orthodox Study Bible comments that "this does not mean we become divine by nature. If we participated in God's essence, the distinction between God and man would be abolished. What this does mean is that we participate in God's energy, described by a number of terms in scripture, such as glory, life, love, virtue, and power. We are to become like God by His grace, and truly His adopted children, but never become God by nature." Saint Peter, a simple man from humble beginnings grew mightily in his faith, and lived and died to defend it.

By contrast, St. Paul was well-educated—a fearless, passionate leader on the "wrong side of the fence." God tapped into Paul's strength and zeal to the point where Paul had driving desire to take on the deadly mission to spread the Gospel, rather than defeat it. He was a brilliant orator with a lot of savvy. As he grew in Christ's love, he had become such a partaker of the Divine Nature described by St. Peter that he was able to say, "[I]t is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me..." Gal 2:20. St. Paul wrote about half of the 27 books that were to become part of the New Testament and was known for being an apostle to the gentiles.

**Leaders of the Apostles,  
and teachers of the universe:  
entreat the Master of all  
to grant peace to the world,  
and to our souls great mercy!**

In his commentary on Matthew 16:13-19, St. John Chrysostom refers to Peter as a *koriphaios* of the Apostles, a word that is difficult to translate. Above, in the Apolytikion (dismissal hymn) of the feast, Peter and Paul together are described by this same word, translated as "leaders." In ancient Greek theater, the *Koryphaioi* were the leaders of a twelve-member chorus that set the stage for the drama to unfold. They were the pillars of the chorus, and Ss. Peter and Paul were seen in the same light. It is for this reason that the Church celebrates their holiness together, as it has done since at least the 3rd century AD. The feast is followed the next day by a commemoration of all twelve apostles (Judas having been replaced by Matthias).

The first icon of Ss. Peter and Paul shows the two men holding a church building as if presenting a precious object, symbolic of their work in spreading the Gospel and growing the Church. Peter holds a scroll and Paul holds a book of Scripture, indicating that they both contributed divinely-inspired writings to what would become the New Testament. The second icon shows the two saints embracing in brotherly love --an indication of their unity in the Holy Spirit. Even though Paul wrote about correcting Peter (Gal. 2:11-21), Peter praises Paul and his writings (2 Peter 3:14-16), equating Paul's letters to the Scriptures (which at that time would have meant Old Testament--a prophetic statement, indeed). Both were martyred in Rome by Nero c. 67 AD. Paul was beheaded and Peter was crucified upside down because he felt unworthy to be put to death in the exactly same fashion as the Lord.

