



# ST OLYMPIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

POTSDAM, NEW YORK 13676

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

DIocese of NY and NJ



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

*Our priest is Fr. Paul Fedoroff, Priest-in-Charge.  
You may reach him at [priestpaulfedoroff@gmail.com](mailto:priestpaulfedoroff@gmail.com) or 518-573-7987 (cell)*

*Please join us for prayer and fellowship.\*\**

**Upcoming Services:**  
**At the Norwood Church**  
**February 7, 14**  
**Hours: 9:10am**  
**Divine Liturgy: 9:30am**  
**February 6, 13**  
**Vespers: 5pm**

**Confessions: Saturday after  
Vespers, Sunday before  
Liturgy, otherwise by  
appointment.**

**Coffee after Liturgy!**  
**\*\*Social Distancing guidelines  
must be observed.**

***St. Olympia Orthodox Church***  
***34 Main Street***  
***Norwood, NY, 13668***

## Annual Parish Meeting!

February 21, following Liturgy



**Icon of the Mother of God "Ivëron"**  
February 12

The original icon, *The Holy Icon of Panagia Portaitissa*, encased in gold, at the Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos.

Panagia Portaitissa means "She who resides by the door" or "Keeper of the Gate"



The Monk Gabriel  
retrieving the icon  
From the sea.

The widow casting the  
icon into the ocean.



## Icon of the Mother of God “Ivéron”

During the reign of Emperor Theophilus (829-842) the Byzantine Empire raged with the heresy of iconoclasm. In accordance with the emperor’s command, thousands of soldiers pillaged the empire, searching every corner, city, and village for hidden icons. Near the city of Nicaea there lived a certain pious widow who had concealed an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. Before long the soldiers discovered it, and one of them thrust his spear into the image. But by God’s grace his terrible deed was overshadowed by a miracle: blood flowed forth from the wound on the face of the Mother of God. The frightened soldiers quickly fled.

The widow spent the whole night in vigil, praying before the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. In the morning, according to God’s will, she took the icon to the sea and cast it upon the water. The holy icon stood upright on the waves and began to sail westward. Time passed, and one evening the monks of the Ivéron Monastery on Mt. Athos beheld a pillar of light, shining upon the sea like the sun (ca. 1004). The miraculous image lasted several days, while the fathers of the Holy Mountain gathered together, marveling. Finally they descended to the edge of the sea, where they beheld the pillar of light standing above the icon of the Theotokos. But when they approached it, the icon moved farther out to sea.

At that time a Georgian monk named Gabriel was laboring at the Ivéron Monastery. The Theotokos appeared to the fathers of the Holy Mountain and told them that Gabriel alone was worthy to retrieve the holy icon from the sea. At the same time, she appeared to Gabriel and told him, “Enter the sea, and walk out upon the waves with faith, and all will witness my love and mercy for your monastery.” The monks of Mt. Athos found Gabriel at the Georgian monastery and led him down to the sea, chanting hymns, and censuring with holy incense. Gabriel walked out upon the water as though upon dry land, took the icon in his arms, and obediently carried it back to shore. This miracle occurred on Bright Tuesday.

While the monks were celebrating a paraklesis of thanksgiving, a cold, sweet spring miraculously gushed forth from the ground where the icon stood. Afterwards they took the icon to a church and set it down in the sanctuary with great reverence. But the next morning one of the monks came to light a lamp and discovered that the icon was no longer where they had left it; now it was hanging on a wall near the entrance gate. The disbelieving monks took it down and returned it to the sanctuary, but the next day the icon was again found at the monastery gate. This miracle recurred several times, until the Most Holy Virgin appeared to Gabriel, saying, “Announce to the brothers that from this day they should not carry me away. For what I desire is not to be protected by you; rather I will overshadow you, both in this life and in the age to come. As long as you see my icon in the monastery, the grace and mercy of my Son shall never be lacking!”

Filled with exceeding joy, the monks erected a small church near the monastery gate to glorify the Most Holy Theotokos and placed the wonderworking icon inside. The holy icon came to be known as the “Ivéron Mother of God” and, in Greek, Portaitissa. By the grace of the miraculous Ivéron Icon of the Theotokos, many miracles have taken place and continue to take place throughout the world.

***When I enter a room in which there are no icons, I seem like a blind person, faceless, without having a window to the sky***

**St Justin Popovich**

***If someone asks you, why do you pray to heartless icons, what is the use of them to you? Tell them that we receive incomparably more benefits from our icons than from the most kind and charitable person; tell them that there always comes from icons gracious power and help to our souls, delivering us from sins, sorrows and diseases, especially from the icons of the Savior and the Mother of God; that a single hearty faith in them, as living and near us, saves us from evil sorrows, passions and spiritual darkness, that if touching the Savior’s robes and the shawls of the apostles made the sick healthy, then the faces of the Savior and Our Lady are strong to heal the believers from all sorrow, by faith in the Lord and the Mother of God.***

**St John of Kronstad**