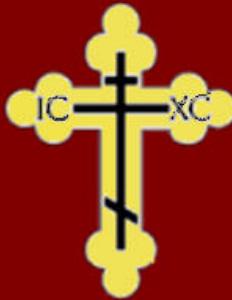




ST OLYMPIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

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 worshipers.*

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

Please join us for prayer and fellowship.

Upcoming Services:

Sunday, May 30, June 6

Hours: 9:10am

Divine Liturgy: 9:30am

Saturday, May 2, June 5

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 North Main Street
Norwood, NY, 13668

Mailing Address:
St. Olympia Orthodox Church
PO Box 122
Canton, NY 13617

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman



Kontakion, Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

*The Samaritan Woman came to the well in faith;
She saw You, the Water of Wisdom,
and drank abundantly
She inherited the Kingdom on High
and is ever glorified!*

Troparion, Holy Martyr Justin, the Philosopher

June 1

*O Justin, teacher of divine knowledge,
you shone with the radiance of true philosophy.
You were wisely armed against the enemy.
Confessing the truth you contended alongside the martyrs,
with them, ever entreat Christ our God to save our souls!*



SAVE THE DATES!

Saturday, July 10
Sunday, July 25

Potsdam Summer Fest
Patronal Feast Day

*Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with His Eminence, Archbishop Michael
Picnic to follow at the church.*

From Where Do We Draw Our Water?

By Father Steven Kostoff

Reflections in Christ, OCA Website

In my humble opinion, the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman (John 4:5-42) may just be the most profound and amazing dialogue ever recorded in human history. There are, of course, the incredible Platonic dialogues that present the attractive and irrepressible figure of the philosopher Socrates and his quest for moral and ethical truth. But with Jesus, there is someone “greater than Socrates” present. We were blessed yet again this past Sunday - the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman - to hear this passage during the Liturgy. The incomparable quality of this dialogue is based upon both the content and the identity of the two protagonists of the dialogue. This will be discussed more fully below. For the moment, we need to realize that this great dialogue has a carefully conceived and executed literary structure. That literary structure adds to the inherent drama, refined characterization, theological depth and overall quality of this unique and unforgettable scene in Saint John’s Gospel. This is an inspired text that can be read over and over endlessly and still inspire the reader as it yields endless insights into the revelation that comes in and through Jesus Christ – “the Savior of the world” (v. 42).

Jesus sat down by the well because He was “weary” from His journey. This “weariness” reveals the true humanity of Jesus. Having “become flesh,” He is subject to the “blameless passions,” those weaknesses of the flesh that are inherent to our human nature within the conditions of this “fallen world.” That would include hunger, thirst, fear, suffering and death. Jesus is not a divine figure roaming around the world “incognito” under the illusory veil of human flesh. He does not merely “seem” to be human. The Word actually became flesh, therefore freely accepting the human frailty that we all experience. Refreshing Himself at the well, Jesus was joined by a woman, a Samaritan, who came to the well to draw water and take it back to her village. At this point, the dialogue commences between the two and, since they are at the well, the dialogue initially centers around the theme of “water.” As is typical in these dialogues recorded in Saint John’s Gospel, a particular word or phrase will carry a double meaning—earthly and spiritual, we could say. Jesus informs the woman that if she had asked for a gift from God, she would have received “living water.” The woman, thinking in earthly or natural terms, would like to receive living water, for that would mean it would be fresh and flowing, coming from a fountain or stream and not from a well or cistern. But Jesus, who has come to reveal heavenly things, will “elevate” the dialogue to the spiritual level. By “living water,” He is drawing on Old Testament allusions that equate water with divine wisdom and revelation. And “living water” is also a clear reference to the Holy Spirit. This is made explicit a bit later in the Gospel: “He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” Now this He said about the Spirit, which those who believe in Him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:38-39).

The Samaritan woman responds with a certain confusion. She still cannot understand how Jesus can draw this “living water.” (She is not even sure why Jesus would speak with her—a woman of Samaria—“for Jews had no dealings with Samaritans”). Disregarding her objections, Jesus will further elaborate and elevate His meaning, culminating in what could serve as a magnificent definition of baptism “of water and the Spirit:” “Every one who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:13-14).

At this point the words of Jesus are beginning to penetrate the mind and heart of the Samaritan woman. Something about Jesus and about what He is saying is attracting her to His enigmatic words. (As the narrative progresses, she ultimately comes to believe that Jesus is the Messiah – 4: 29, 39). Her response captures her slow movement from the earthly level to the beginning of her elevation to the spiritual level, for her “request” vocalizes a “thirst” that is progressing beyond the merely natural level: “The woman said to him, ‘Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw’” (John 4:15).

As well as Saint John the Evangelist captures the distinctiveness and uniqueness of her character, the Samaritan woman is also representative of humanity “thirsting” and seeking to satisfy that thirst. On that level, she represents the endless human quest to go to the “well” – *any* well – from which to draw some “water” that will sustain our search and quench our thirst for that “something more” in life. The choices are endless. The wells are attractively presented. In our restlessness and spiritual confusion, we go from well to well, drinking this or that water, but always ending up with an unquenchable thirst. As much as our secularism and pop-culture frenzy has seemingly stifled that spiritual thirst that was more apparent in the past, the human spirit is still thirsting for the Holy Spirit of God. That is why the choices and the frenzied pursuits of the world are multiplying to a dizzying degree. If we try hard enough, perhaps we can cover up that basic human need for the divine. Perhaps we can make the thirst go away by drinking endlessly from a variety of wells. Or, perhaps there is nothing “out there” to satisfy our thirst. Perhaps the thirst is only an illusion....

Even though we are believing and practicing Orthodox Christians, do we periodically succumb to such a temptation? Do we try and quench our own thirst at “wells” other than the well of the Gospel and the Eucharist? Do we believe that if we travel enough, spend enough and accumulate enough, we can fool ourselves into thinking that that will quench our thirst? Why drink from the living water of the Gospels, when one can drink the stimulating water of a soap opera-type novel or splashy magazine? Why drink from the cup of the Bridegroom of the Church when one can dream of luxuriating in the whirlpools of the latest “bachelorette” or “bachelor” series? Why observe a fast of the Church when we can eat and drink to our heart’s content? Why drink from the difficult teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, when we can easily drink from the latest self-help book or the guidance of a financial guru? Of course, we will continue to go to church and fulfill our “religious obligations,” but the Church may only provide a “reservoir” of water kept for emergency situations. The real “fun” begins after and outside of Church! These are the types of temptations that we must always be vigilant toward. Yet, this leaves us with the question: *From where do we draw our “water”?*

When the Samaritan woman eventually left the well to return to her village and tell her fellow villagers about Jesus, she left behind the water jar that she brought with her to the well. This small detail did not escape the vigilant eye of the evangelist. She no longer thirsted for the water from the well, but was now intent upon the living water that came through the presence and teaching of Jesus. So she left her water jar behind to signify this. When we worship the Father, we receive the “living water” of “Spirit and truth.” This is an inexhaustible font of “water” that quenches our thirst for the meaning of life. The Spirit guides in a life that is lived within the light of God’s design for the world. It is the gift of God that we can ask Jesus for, and He will give it to us as He promised the woman of Samaria.

Martyr Justin the Philosopher and those with him at Rome

June 1

The Holy Martyr Justin the Philosopher was born around 114 at Sychem, an ancient city of Samaria. Justin’s parents were pagan Greeks. From his childhood the saint displayed intelligence, love for knowledge and a fervent devotion to the knowledge of Truth. When he came of age he studied the various schools of Greek philosophy: the Stoics, the Peripatetics, the Pythagoreans, the Platonists, and he concluded that none of these pagan teachings revealed the way to knowledge of the true God.

Once, when he was strolling in a solitary place beyond the city and pondering about where to seek the way to the knowledge of Truth, he met an old man. In the ensuing conversation he revealed to Justin the essential nature of the Christian teaching and advised him to seek the answers to all the questions of life in the books of Holy Scripture. “But before anything else,” said the holy Elder, “pray diligently to God, so that He might open to you the doors of Light. No one is able to comprehend Truth, unless he is granted understanding from God Himself, Who reveals it to each one who seeks Him in prayer and in love.”

In his thirtieth year, Justin accepted holy Baptism (between the years 133 and 137). From this time Saint Justin devoted his talents and vast philosophical knowledge to preaching the Gospel among the pagans. He

began to journey throughout the Roman Empire, sowing the seeds of faith. “Whosoever is able to proclaim Truth and does not proclaim it will be condemned by God,” he wrote.

Justin opened a school of Christian philosophy. Saint Justin subsequently defended the truth of Christian teaching, persuasively confuting pagan sophistry (in a debate with the Cynic philosopher Crescentius) and heretical distortions of Christianity. He also spoke out against the teachings of the Gnostic Marcian.

In the year 155, when the emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161) started a persecution against Christians, Saint Justin personally gave him an Apology in defense of two Christians innocently condemned to execution, Ptolemy and Lucias. The name of the third remains unknown.

In the Apology he demonstrated the falseness of the slander against Christians accused unjustly for merely having the name of Christians. The Apology had such a favorable effect upon the emperor that he ceased the persecution. Saint Justin journeyed, by decision of the emperor, to Asia Minor where they were persecuting Christians with particular severity. He proclaimed the joyous message of the imperial edict throughout the surrounding cities and countryside.

The debate of Saint Justin with the Rabbi Trypho took place at Ephesus. The Orthodox philosopher demonstrated the truth of the Christian teaching of faith on the basis of the Old Testament prophetic writings. Saint Justin gave an account of this debate in his work Dialogue with Trypho the Jew.

A second Apology of Saint Justin was addressed to the Roman Senate. It was written in the year 161, soon after Marcus Aurelius (161-180) ascended the throne.

When he returned to Italy, Saint Justin, like the Apostles, preached the Gospel everywhere, converting many to the Christian Faith. When the saint arrived at Rome, the envious Crescentius, whom Justin always defeated in debate, brought many false accusations against him before the Roman court. Saint Justin was put under guard, subjected to torture and suffered martyrdom in 165. The relics of Saint Justin the Philosopher rest in Rome.

In addition to the above-mentioned works, the following are also attributed to the holy martyr Justin the Philosopher:

- 1) An Address to the Greeks
- 2) A Hortatory Address to the Greeks
- 3) On the Sole Government of God

Saint John of Damascus preserved a significant part of Saint Justin's On the Resurrection, which has not survived. The church historian Eusebius asserts that Saint Justin wrote books entitled

The Singer, Denunciation of all Existing Heresies, and Against Marcian

In the Russian Church the memory of the martyr is particularly glorified in temples of his name. He is invoked by those who seek help in their studies.

The holy martyrs Justin, Chariton, Euelpistus, Hierax, Peonus, Valerian, Justus and the martyr Charito suffered with Saint Justin the Philosopher in the year 166. They were brought to Rome and thrown into prison. The saints bravely confessed their faith in Christ before the court of the prefect Rusticus. Rusticus asked Saint Justin, whether he really thought that after undergoing tortures he would go to heaven and receive a reward from God. Saint Justin answered, “Not only do I think this, but I know and am fully assured of it.”

The prefect proposed to all the Christian prisoners that they offer sacrifice to the pagan gods. When they refused he issued a sentence of death, and the saints were beheaded.

Christ is risen, and (death and hell) are overthrown.

Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen.

Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice.

Christ is risen, and life reigns.

St. John Chrysostom, Paschal Sermon