

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

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** Serving the Orthodox Community in South Philadelphia for 110 years! **

Sunday, September 17, 2023 | 15th Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 6 – Sunday After the Elevation of the Cross.

Afterfeast of the Elevation of the Cross

Martyr Sophia and her 3 daughters Faith, Hope, & Love (ca. 137)

V. Rev. Mark W Koczak, Rector

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Deacon – Michael McCartney

Choir Director – Nina Patterson

Subdeacon – Daniel (Ken) Kavalkovich *Reader – Mark Klus*

Parish President - Matthew Andrews [Phone: 856.217.8075]

Weekly Schedule

Friday: September 22 – 6th Annual Two Holies & A Saint Golf Tournament at Ron Jaworski's Ramblewood Country Club in Mount Laurel, NJ. (Our parish is one of the three parishes hosting this golf tournament).

Saturday: September 23 – Great Vespers at **4:00PM**

Sunday: September 24 – Holy Protomartyr and Equal-to-the-Apostles Thecia
Holy New Martyrs of Alaska: Hieromonk Juvenaly and Peter the Aleut.
Reading of Hours – 9:30am
Divine Liturgy – **10:00am**
Fellowship Coffee Hour to follow the Readers Service

Thursday: September 28 – Blessed Mother Olga Book Club at **6:30PM** on the ZOOM media platform ONLY!!!

Texts for the Liturgical Service

Troparion (Tone 6)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; / the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, / seeking Thy most pure body. / Thou didst capture hell / not being tempted by it. / Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. // O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

Troparion (Tone 1 – Elevation of the Cross)

O Lord, save Thy people / and bless Thine inheritance! / Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians / over their adversaries; / and by virtue of Thy Cross, // preserve Thy habitation!

Troparion (Tone 5 – Martyrs)

Thou didst blossom in the courts of the Lord / as a fruitful olive tree, / O holy martyr Sophia; / in thy contest thou didst offer to Christ the sweet fruit of thy womb, / thy daughters Faith, Hope, and Love. // Together with them intercede for us all!

Kontakion (Tone 6)

When Christ God the Giver of Life, / raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, / He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Kontakion (Tone 1 – Martyrs)

The holy branches of noble Sophia, / Faith, Hope, and Love, / confounded Greek sophistry through Grace. / They struggled and won the victory // and have been granted an incorruptible crown by Christ the Master of all.

Kontakion (Tone 4 – Elevation of the Cross)

As Thou wast voluntarily raised upon the Cross for our sake, / grant mercy to those who are called by Thy Name, O Christ God; / make all Orthodox Christians glad by thy pow'r, / granting them victories over their adversaries // by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace!

Prokeimenon (Tone 7 – Sunday Before Elevation of the Cross)

Extol the Lord our God: / worship at His footstool for He is Holy!
v. The Lord reigns, let the people tremble!

Epistle Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:6-15

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. Alleluia (3x's) (Tone 1)

- v. Remember Thy congregation, which Thou hast gotten of old! Alleluia (3x's)
- v. God is our King before the ages; He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth. Alleluia (3x's)

Gospel Reading: Matthew 22:35-46

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?” They said to Him, “The Son of David.” He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying: ‘The LORD said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool’? If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?” And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

Instead of “It is truly meet ...” we sing Irmos of Ode 9:

Magnify, O my soul, / the most precious Cross of the Lord! / Thou art a mystical paradise, O Theotokos / who, though untilled, hast brought forth Christ; / through Him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth. / Now at its Exaltation, // as we bow in worship before it, we magnify thee.

Communion Hymn:

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!
The light of Thy countenance is signed upon us, O Lord. Alleluia (3x's)

*[Note: Today's readings for the Sunday After Elevation of the Cross are on Page 4 of the Bulletin & as follows:
Epistle – Galatians 2:16-20 & Gospel – Mark 8:34-9:1]*

Announcements

A Warm Welcome to all of our visitors & guests who worshiped with us today and who have joined us in celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Please join us in the church basement for our Fellowship and Coffee Hour.

Announcements

THANK YOU!!! - Parish Giving Project - Ukrainian Orphanage

The parish would like to thank everyone for their donations over the past two Sundays for our parish giving project for a Ukrainian Orphanage. This project is in connection with Matushka Maggie Zlatkowski from Saint Stephens Cathedral in Northeast Philadelphia. Our parish received over **\$650** in donations!

The parish generated a check for all our donations received to St. Stephens Cathedral, and their Ukrainian Orphanage Project. From there, the donations will be handed directly to the IOCC and they will disburse the funds to the institute for the children with mental disabilities from Uzhhorod (the center's name is Road of Life). The Center serves in total 277 children with mental disabilities. Currently, 30 children from the families displaced by the conflict are getting treatment at this Center. Due to IOCC's project, 20 new displaced families will be hosted.

Please continue to pray for all in the Ukraine, especially the innocent children who are caught up in the war. Thank You!

Epistle Reading: Galatians 2:16-20 (Sunday After Elevation of the Cross)

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Gospel Reading: Mark 8:34-9:1 (Sunday After Elevation of the Cross)

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

Announcements (cont.)

Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Health for the Living:

Lauren Phillips offered by Nina Patterson
Emily Gerasimoff, Cheryl Homa offered by Catherine Kavalkovich
Christopher Velez, Sharon Orr offered by Catherine Kavalkovich
Neil Hourahan offered by Sandra Hourahan
William Walker offered by David Pellack

May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Memory for the Departed:

Anna Homa offered by Ron Homa
Julia and John Drimak offered by the Hourahan Family
May Their Memories Be Eternal!

The Flowers decorating the cross on the Tetrapod (for the Elevation of the Cross Holy Day this past week) are in the memory of Michael and Mary Spack donated by the Herbert Family.

Vigil Cross Candles – 9/10/23

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Please remember in your prayers:

Jane Kelly; Anne (Homa) Killoran; Sheba Patton; Joseph Rabik; Peter Witiak; and all those who are serving in our Armed Forces!

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Announcements (cont.)

Please ensure that your Mobile Phone is set to Silent (or at least set on vibrate) during the Divine Liturgy! Thank You!!!

*******Special weekly collections taken after Gospel or Sermon*******

In addition to our general collection, the parish takes a special collection each week to fund certain parish projects. By the action taken at the Fall General Parish Meeting held back on Sunday, October 10, 2021, the parish body approved that the special collection for the first three Sundays of the month be earmarked towards the repairing/fixing/replacing of the roofs of both houses that the parish owns (now known as the Row House Fund).

The fourth Sunday (and fifth, when it occurs) the special collection will be earmarked towards Charity.

This new collection schedule began back on Sunday, October 17, 2021.

Please be generous with your offering. Every little bit counts. Thank You!

Cash Flow Activity (September)

<u>Week of Sun Sep 3 to Sat Sep 9</u>	<u>September Month To Date</u>	
Attendance:	20	20 (average)
Funds In:	\$ 1,626.00	\$ 1,626.00
Funds Out:	(\$ 208.27) <i>Reimburstment</i>	\$ 2,156.52
Net Surplus/(Deficit):	\$ 1,834.27	(\$ 530.52)

Thank you all for your continuous offerings to maintain the parish!

Shop Rite Gift Cards: If you need to purchase Shop Rite Gift Cards, please see either David Pellack or Ken Kavalkovich to secure them. Your purchase of a Shop Rite Gift Card is an additional fundraising project that helps support the church at no additional expense to the purchaser.

Calendar of Events

2023 Monthly/Quarterly Schedule

- 1st Sunday of each month** – Monthly Panikhida immediately after Divine Liturgy.
- 2nd Tuesday of each month** – Bible Study at 6:30pm on ZOOM media platform.
- 4th Thursday of each month** – Book Club at 6:30pm on ZOOM media platform.
- 5th Sunday of each quarter** – Quarterly Parish Council Meeting after Liturgy.

Readers Schedule:

Today (Sep 17)
3rd Hour: Matthew Andrews
6th Hour: Daniel S Herebert
Epistle: Reader Mark Klus
and Matthew Andrews

Next Week (Sep 24)
Daniel S Herbert
Dr. David Albrecht
Sbdcn Daniel Kavalkovich
and Daniel S Herbert

Fellowship Coffee Hour & Cleaning Teams:

If you have volunteered to host coffee hour, please check which Team you are on and when your Team is hosting coffee hour on the calendar printout which is located in the white/clear 3-ring binder located on the display case outside of the office room.

Please continue to check our parish website, social media pages, and your emails regularly for updated information on the parish regarding parish services & events in September & October 2023.

Friday, September 22 – The 6th Annual Golf Tournament of the “Two Holies and a Saint” (sponsored by Orthodox Church of the HOLY Cross in Medford, NJ; Assumption of the HOLY Virgin Orthodox Church in Philiadelphia, PA; and SAINT Stephen Orthodox Cathedral in Philadelphia, PA). at Ron Jaworski’s Ramblewood Country Club in Mount Laurel, NJ. Golf Registration deadline has passed! **Proceeds from the tournament will benefit special needs children in Uzhhorod, Ukrainian!**

Thursday, September 28 – Blessed Mother Olga Book Club at **6:30PM** on the ZOOM media platform **ONLY!**

Tuesday, October 10 – Bible Study at **6:30PM** on ZOOM media platform **ONLY!**

**** Sunday November 5 – Visitation of Archbishop MARK to our parish! ****



Martyr Sophia and her three daughters: Faith, Hope and Love [September 17th]

The Holy Martyrs Saint Sophia and her Daughters Faith, Hope and Love were born in Italy. Their mother was a pious Christian widow who named her daughters for the three Christian virtues. Faith was twelve, Hope was ten, and Love was nine. Saint Sophia raised them in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Saint Sophia and her daughters did not hide their faith in Christ, but openly confessed it before everyone.

An official named Antiochus denounced them to the emperor Hadrian (117-138), who ordered that they be brought to Rome. Realizing that they would be taken before the emperor, the holy virgins prayed fervently to the Lord Jesus Christ, asking that He give them the strength not to fear torture and death. When the holy virgins and their mother came before the emperor, everyone present was amazed at their composure. They looked as though they had been brought to some happy festival, rather than to torture. Summoning each of the sisters in turn, Hadrian urged them to offer sacrifice to the goddess Artemis. The young girls remained unyielding.

Then the emperor ordered them to be tortured. They burned the holy virgins over an iron grating, then threw them into a red-hot oven, and finally into a cauldron with boiling tar, but the Lord preserved them.

The youngest child, Love, was tied to a wheel and they beat her with rods until her body was covered all over with bloody welts. After undergoing unspeakable torments, the holy virgins glorified their Heavenly Bridegroom and remained steadfast in the Faith.

They subjected Saint Sophia to another grievous torture: the mother was forced to watch the suffering of her daughters. She displayed adamant courage, and urged her daughters to endure their torments for the sake of the Heavenly Bridegroom. All three maidens were beheaded, and joyfully bent their necks beneath the sword.

In order to intensify Saint Sophia's inner suffering, the emperor permitted her to take the bodies of her daughters. She placed their remains in coffins and loaded them on a wagon. She drove beyond the city limits and reverently buried them on a high hill. Saint Sophia sat there by the graves of her daughters for three days, and finally she gave up her soul to the Lord. Even though she did not suffer for Christ in the flesh, she was not deprived of a martyr's crown. Instead, she suffered in her heart. Believers buried her body there beside her daughters.

The relics of the holy martyrs have rested at El'zasa, in the church of Esho since the year 777.

