

## **SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH**

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### **SUNDAY/JANUARY 2**

**Sunday Before Theophany (Tone 7)**

**St. Seraphim of Sarov**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour

### **TUESDAY/JANUARY 4**

7:00p.m. Royal Hours of Theophany

### **WEDNESDAY/JANUARY 5**

**Eve of the Theophany**

**Strict Fast Day**

7:00p.m. Matins

8:00p.m. Great Blessing of Waters

### **THURSDAY/JANUARY 6**

**THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD**

**(One of "the 12 Great Feasts")**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

### **FRIDAY/JANUARY 7**

**Synaxis of St. John the Baptist**

9:30a.m. Akathist to the Baptist

### **SATURDAY/JANUARY 8**

9:30a.m. Akathist; Confessions

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

### **SUNDAY/JANUARY 9**

**Sunday After Theophany (Tone 8)**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour; Church School

11:45a.m. Movie: "Faith Like Potatoes"

### **Fast Days**

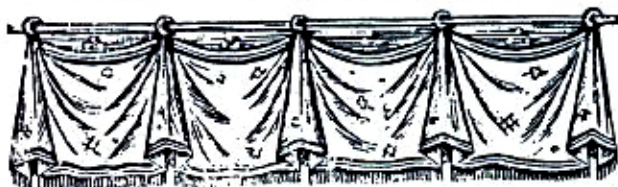
Wednesday/Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>

Friday/Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> (fish, wine & oil)



### **THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD**

Theophany is one of the most important feast we celebrate. This festival commemorates the event of the Lord's baptism. According to the Gospels, when Jesus came to be baptized heaven opened, the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove and God the Father by His heavenly voice gave witness that Jesus was His beloved Son. Jesus' baptism signified not only His own divine identity as the Son of god but also disclosed the glory of the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Thus, along with the themes of sanctification of the waters, purification from sin and renewal, Theophany also celebrates the revelation of God to the world. Theophany, means "divine manifestation" of God to the world as Trinity, the three great Lights of the Father, Son and Spirit, one in essence and glory.



### **Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!**

|               |                      |                     |
|---------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Jan. 14       | 40 <sup>th</sup> Day | John Chabra         |
| Jan. 02, 1947 |                      | Chariton Kucher     |
| Jan. 02, 1966 |                      | Mary Knaff          |
| Jan. 02, 1989 |                      | Charles Specian     |
| Jan. 03, 1962 |                      | Mary Tarby Adamcio  |
| Jan. 04, 1963 |                      | Christine Sudillo   |
| Jan. 04, 1970 |                      | Mary Dzurich        |
| Jan. 04, 1978 |                      | Peter Wilhousky     |
| Jan. 05, 1964 |                      | Nicholas Senko      |
| Jan. 05, 2004 |                      | Anna Sudia          |
| Jan. 06, 1952 |                      | Michael Kuzmiak     |
| Jan. 07, 1959 |                      | Ufim Nesteruk       |
| Jan. 07, 1963 |                      | Mary Borushko       |
| Jan. 07, 1967 |                      | Helen Knysh         |
| Jan. 08, 1963 |                      | Mathilda Blanchard  |
| Jan. 08, 1967 |                      | Katherine Karpinski |
| Jan. 08, 1978 |                      | Eustafey Gumenuk    |



### **March For Life – January 24<sup>th</sup>, Monday**

Bishop Michael will join Metropolitan Jonah and other Orthodox Christians in this day of prayer and witnessing in Washington, DC. Come along.

### **Offerings for the week of January 2**

Olive Oil – in memory of Michael and Justina; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; for the health of Cornelia; for the health of Arpastean family; for the health of Carol (birthday); and for Christine and Kyle.

Wine: for the health of Basil (namesday); for the protection of God and the Theotokos for Mariana, Stefan, Simona-Georgiana; Gabriela-Antoaneta and Gabriel.

Flowers: for Anna and family; in memory of John Chabra.

### **Winter Weather Conditions**

May necessitate a change in the schedule, please check the parish website for up-dates. Any necessary changes will be posted at least 1 hour before the scheduled event.

### **Fast-free Period: Dec. 25 – Jan. 4**

In this festal period we do not fast, nor kneel or make prostrations. In keeping with the festal character of these days, the Mystery of Marriage may not be performed nor Memorial Services held (except for those who may repose in this period).

### **The Parish Website: [www.ssppoc.org](http://www.ssppoc.org)**

Has posted – “schedule of services” – the parish calendar of services, events, adult studies, church school, meetings, deanery and diocesan events thru June of 2011. Check it out and plan your own calendar accordingly.

### **The Blessing of Homes**

With the newly-blessed Waters of Theophany (January 5<sup>th</sup>) will begin Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> thru Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>.

Please speak with Fr. James to arrange a date and time for your home blessing.

### **Parish Council Meeting**

January 20<sup>th</sup>, Thursday at 7:00p.m.

### **Annual Parish Meeting**

February 13<sup>th</sup>, Sunday at 11:45a.m. All reports for the Annual Meeting must be submitted no later than February 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **January Movie Presentation:**

**“Faith Like Potatoes” – The Story of a Farmer Who Risked Everything for God**

This award winning Christian film of 116 minutes has proven to captivate audiences both in South Africa and America. Based on the true life of a South African Farmer, Angus Buchan, it is set in the turbulent hills of the KZN Midlands. Angus’ manic quest for material success is slowly transformed into a wild love for God and people as he wrestles with faith, hope, natural disasters and tragic personal loss.

Sunday, Jan. 09 at 11:45a.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 11 at 7:00p.m.

All are invited! In the Conference Room. Bring a friend.

### **The Church New Year**

Is celebrated each year on September 1.

### **The Civil New Year**

Is observed each year on January 1.

### **New Year’s Sayings**

Don’t forget God in your New Year’s Resolutions  
Let your Resolutions be God’s Solutions.

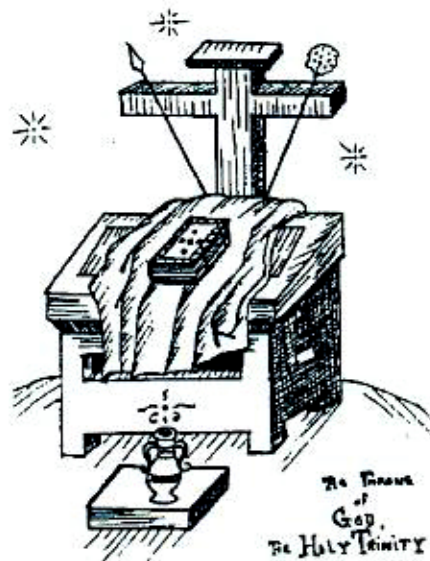
Jesus adds life to your years and years to your life

**THE FEAST OF THE HOLY THEOPHANY  
A PERSONAL APPROACH TO THE FEAST  
- by Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafaktos**

The feast of the Theophany or Epiphany points to many great theological truths. As a personal approach to the feast we should now add a few more things relating to our own baptism. Three indicative points should be particularly emphasised.

First, Those who are baptised and anointed are called Christians, both because they are disciples of Christ and because they have received the chrism from the Holy Spirit. Neither takes away the other, since we are disciples of Christ through the Grace which we receive through the sacraments. As St. Nikodemos the Hagiorite says, all Christians can be called anointed of the Lord, "anointed with the perfecting chrism" meaning the grace and communion of the Holy Spirit. If the kings, priests and prophets in the Old Testament are called anointed of the Lord because they are anointed with the imperfect and ritual oil, much more so are those who have been anointed with the Holy Chrism. John the Evangelist writes: "But the anointing which you have received from him abides in you" (I Jn. 2,27). And the Apostle Paul affirms: "he who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God,

Here, the  
Throne depicts  
God the Father,  
the Cross, God  
the Son and the  
vessel of Myrrh,  
God the Holy  
Spirit.



who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a deposit" (2 Cor. 1, 1-22). Anointing by the Holy Spirit, which is connected with the illumination and enlightenment of the nous, is the pledge of the Spirit, the seal of God.

Second. Through Baptism one receives the pledge of the Spirit, but with the possibility of fulfilment. St. Gregory Palamas says that just as the infant receives from his parents the possibility of becoming a man and of inheriting the paternal estate when he reaches the appropriate age, but loses it if he dies in the meantime, the same happens with the Christian. Through Baptism he receives the power to become a son of God and an inheritor of the eternal goods, if in the meantime he does not die of intelligible death, which is sin. Consequently, if then man loses his communion with God, if he dies spiritually, he loses the possibility which he received through Baptism. To be sure, grace is not lost, it does not abandon the heart of man, but it does not effect salvation.

Christ gave a commandment to His Disciples to make disciples of all the nations, "baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28, 19-20). "Baptising" and "teaching to observe" show the manner in which man is spiritually completed.

Third. When the Grace of Baptism is clouded by sin, then the baptism of repentance and tears must follow. The monastic tonsuring is called a second baptism, because it establishes the life of repentance and purification, through which man reaches his former glory. St. Gregory of Nyssa says characteristically: "Even one tear of repentance is equivalent to the water of baptism, and a painful groan brings back the grace which had departed for a while". Of course this tear must be shed in the atmosphere of repentance, as the Orthodox Church teaches and expresses it.

Christ was baptised in order to observe the law and to bring His Grace to the water, to the whole of creation and to man. So He gave to each one of us the possibility of attaining the Grace of adoption, of theophany in our personal life. This manifestation of God constitutes 'Theognosia' the knowledge of God, and since knowledge of God is an existential fact, it also brings salvation.





## The Theophany of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ

Celebrated on the 6<sup>th</sup> Day of the Month January

Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord (Mt.3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by the St John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove. From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine "those who sat in darkness," and "in the region of the shadow of death" (Mt.4:16), and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace.

In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind.



The origin of the Feast of Theophany goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions (Book V:13). From the second century we have the testimony of St Clement of Alexandria concerning the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast.

There is a third century dialogue about the services for Theophany between the holy martyr Hippolytus and St Gregory the Wonderworker. In the following centuries, from the fourth to ninth century, all the great Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, John of Damascus, commented on the Feast of Theophany.

The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. St John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but "to bury human sin by water," to fulfill the Law, to reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and finally, to sanctify "the nature of water" and to offer us the form and example of Baptism.

On the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church proclaims our faith in the most sublime mystery, incomprehensible to human intellect, of one God in three Persons. It teaches us to confess and glorify the Holy Trinity, one in Essence and Indivisible.

The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires us with a sense of deep gratitude for the illumination and purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism, keeping clean this priceless garb, for "As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal 3:27).

On the day of Theophany, all foods are permitted, even if the Feast falls on a Wednesday or Friday.

*Translation by Fr. Stephen Janos from the "Reference Book for Clergy-Server"*

### Troparion - Tone 1

When Thou, O Lord, was baptized in the Jordan the worship of the Trinity was made manifest, for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee and called Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of His word. O Christ, our God, Who hast revealed Thyself and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee!

### Kontakion - Tone 4

Today Thou hast shown forth to the universe, and Thy light O Lord has shone on us, who with understanding praise Thee. Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, O Light unapproachable.



## FROM THE PRAYER FOR THE BLESSING OF WATER

O King, Who loves mankind, be present now as Thou wast at the Jordan through the coming of Thy Holy Spirit and sanctify this water. And confer upon it: the grace of redemption, the blessing of the Jordan. Make it a source of incorruption, a gift of sanctification, a forgiveness of sins, a protection against disease, a destruction of demons, inaccessible to evil powers and filled with angelic strength; that all who draw from it and drink of it may have it: for the cleansing of their soul and body, for the healing of their passions, and for the sanctification of their homes, and for every purpose that is fitting.



### House Blessing: The Purpose

The annual blessing of homes is a custom of special beauty and significance. We again ask Christ to bless and enter into our homes and our lives. We ask Him to be with us, as we desire to be with Him. We ask that by the sprinkling of blessed water, the Holy Spirit renew us, our families and our lives in our homes. As Christ brought salvation to the house of Zacchaeus; we ask for the same for all dwelling in our homes.

### House Blessing: The Order

The house being cleaned and ready, we dress in an honorable manner (as we would for church). When the priest arrives, we greet him at the door, having turned off any radio, TV, or other noise based element. Animals that may cause disruption by being startled by the sprinkling water should be placed out of the way. On a small table before icons, a small but wide-mouthed bowl full of newly blessed water is placed. Together with a list of names of those who reside in the home, a lighted candle and censor (if you have one) are also placed on the table. These items are arranged prior to the arrival of the priest. At the beginning of the service for the blessing of the home, a family member leads the priest throughout the home, carrying the lighted candle. The rest of the household follows and then returns to the table for the final prayer and blessing with water upon those present.

