

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF JANUARY 1, 2012

SUNDAY/JANUARY 1

**Circumcision of our Lord & St. Basil
Sunday Before the Theophany**

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

MONDAY/JANUARY 2

St. Seraphim of Sarov

9:30a.m. Akathist to St. Seraphim

WEDNESDAY/JANUARY 4 (no fast)

7:00p.m. Royal Hours of Theophany

THURSDAY/JANUARY 5

Eve of Theophany (strict fast)

7:00p.m. Matins

8:00p.m. Great Blessing of Waters

FRIDAY/JANUARY 6 (fast free)

THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD

(One of "the 12 Great Feasts")

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

SATURDAY/JANUARY 7

Synaxis of St. John the Baptist

9:30a.m. Akathist to St. John; Confession

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

SUNDAY/JANUARY 8

Sunday After Theophany

St. Isidore and Martyrs of Livonia

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

Coffee Hour; Church School

11:45a.m. Movie: "The Blind Side"



FROM THE PRAYER FOR THE GREAT BLESSING OF WATERS

O King, Who lovest mankind, be present now as Thou wert then 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 to demons,

Inaccessible to evil powers and filled with angelic strength;

That all those 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.



Offerings for the week of January 1

Olive Oil – in memory of Michael and Justina, in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; for the health of Carol, Christine, Kyle and Libbye; for the health of John and Vera.

Wine – in memory of Joan and Sandy; in thanksgiving for our blessings and the health of Basil (namesday).

Namesday Greetings Many Blessed Years!

St. Basil/Jan. 1st: Basil Kulick and Vassily Neudachin

St. Juliana/Jan. 2: Juliana Bakaletz

Parish Synodicon

The Parish Synodicon is the listing of those who have fallen-asleep for whom a funeral was held here at Ss. Peter & Paul Church. There are those buried in our cemetery that had a funeral elsewhere and are not listed in the Parish Synodicon. A complete list for the entire year may be found on the parish website under "cemetery – parish synodicon."

Jan. 01, 1963 Peter Romanowski

Jan. 01, 1995 Michael Emilianov

Jan. 01, 2010 Paul Lebedz

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 Wilhousky

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 Knysz



To ask for a priest's blessing, an Orthodox Christian cups right hand over left to receive the blessing as a gift.

Fast-Free Period

From the Feast of the Nativity, Dec. 25th (after the Divine Liturgy) there is a general dispensation from all fasting thru Jan. 4th.

In this period of festal celebration, the church discipline instructs us not to kneel or make prostrations either in the church or at home. The serving of Memorial Services and Marriages are

not done in keeping with the character of these days.

Children 2012 Offering Envelopes

Are ready for pick-up. Please see Church School teachers for a box for the year.

Parish Wall Calendars 2012

The new wall calendars are on a table in the vestibule. We ask that each household take "one" calendar. In your planning for 2012, please note that "pink shaded" boxes are fasting days.

The Blessing of Homes

It is the custom with the Feast of the Holy Theophany, January 6th, to bring the newly-blessed waters into our homes and have our homes blessed by the priest. While the blessing of a home may take place anytime in the year, the usual and preferred time is the season of Theophany. The Blessing of Homes time this year is between January 7th and February 17th. If you wish to have your home blessed, please arrange a time with Father James.

The New Year Offers Us Opportunities and Resolutions:

- To embark upon some spiritual reading every day, at least the Epistle and Gospel reading listed on our parish wall calendars.
- To be faithful in observing the Wed. and Fri. fast days.
- To begin sound stewardship by offering a tithe (10%) or proportionate/percentage offering (3,5,7,9, etc. %) in our regular Sunday envelopes.
- To pray more; to study more; to forgive more and to be more thankful.

January Movie – "The Blind Side" – 11:45a.m. on Sunday, January 8th

"The Blind Side" the remarkable true story of Michael Oher, a homeless African-American youngster from a broken home, taken in by the Touhys, a well-to-do white family who help him fulfill his potential. At the same time, Oher's presence in the Touhys' lives leads them to some insightful self-discoveries of their own. Time: 76 minutes.



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

Celebrated on the 6th 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.

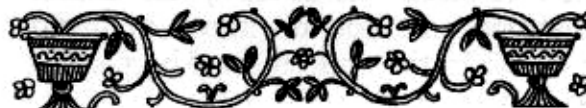
Translation by Fr. Stephen Janos from the "Reference Book for Clergy-Server"

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.



Homily on "THE THEOTOKOS" -- Seven Questions, Seven Answers

His Grace, Michael – Bishop of New York & the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

Question #1: Why is it that you worship Mary?

Answer: We don't worship her, we worship only GOD; we venerate her, honor her as first among the Saints: The Scripture itself tells us: *"For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed."* (Luke 1:48).

Question #2: Why call her "Theotokos," Mother of God, when God has no beginning?

Answer: She is the Mother of Jesus, Who is the Second Person of the Trinity, God Who became flesh – She is the Mother of God Incarnate. Elizabeth called her *"The Mother of my Lord"* (Luke 1:43). Not to call her that is to deny Jesus is God.

Question #3: What about Jesus calling her "Woman" not Mother in John 2:4 and 19:26?

Answer: And, in Revelation 12. Jesus is identifying her as the Woman, the one long waited for, the mother of the Messiah promised by God to the serpent in Genesis 3:15: *"I will place enmity between you and the woman, between her seed and your seed."*

Question #4: How is she ever-Virgin, when the Gospel says that Joseph knew not her til she brought forth her first-born Son?

Answer: "Til" means "up to the time" as Matthew 28:20: *"I will be with you always, even til the end of the world."* To be "first born" doesn't mean there is a second son; it means that he possesses all the rights and privileges spoken of in Exodus 13.

Question #5: What about His brothers James, Joses, Judas, Simon and sisters in Mark 6:3?

Answer: They are brethren in the sense of relatives. Saint Ambrose tells us they were Joseph's children by his first wife; some say they were Jesus' cousins. But they weren't Mary's children; if they were, why would Jesus on the Cross give her to the Beloved Disciple's care in John 19:26?

Question #6: Why do you ask her intercession; it says there is only one intercessor, Jesus?

Answer: There is only one intercessor before God the Father – Jesus. Mary and the Saints intercede for us before Christ, just as she did at the first miracle in John 2. It was at her request that Our Lord did His first miracle at the wedding in Cana.

Question #7: How can you say: "Most Holy Theotokos, save us," when only Jesus saves?

Answer: As the One Who died on the Cross, Jesus is The Savior. But, in a primal sense, as one who saves a man drowning, Mary saves us from dangers, as Joseph did for his brothers in Genesis 45:5: *"God sent me before you to save life."*