

Theophany of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

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 Saint 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 Saint 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 Saint 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.

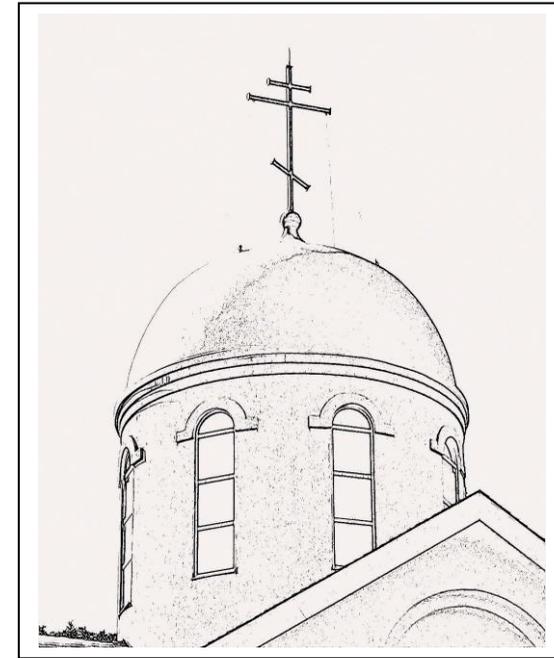
The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. Saint John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but “to bury human sin by water,” to fulfill the 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 Undivided. It exposes and overthrows the errors of ancient teachings which attempted to explain the Creator of the world by reason, and in human terms.

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.

WEEKLY



BULLETIN

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!

Troparion of the Annunciation to the Theotokos

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

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Rev. Fr. Michael Pejovic, *Attached Priest*

Matthew Petrides, *Senior Warden*

January 2, 2022

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Forefeast of the Theophany

Tone 3. Repose of Ven. Seraphim, Wonderworker of Sarov (1833). Sunday before Theophany. St. Sylvester, Pope of Rome (335). Ven. Sylvester of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—12th c.). Righteous Juliana of Lazarévsk (Múrom—1604). Hieromartyr Theogenes, Bishop of Parium on the Hellespont (ca. 320).

Today's Readings:

Epistle: 2 Timothy 4:5-8 and Galations 5:22-6:2

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8 and Luke 6:17-23

Upcoming Service Schedule:

Today – **9:00am Divine Liturgy**

Wednesday – **6:00pm Compline & Blessing of Waters** (*Theophany*)

Thursday – **9:00am Divine Liturgy** (*Theophany*)

Saturday – **10:00am Baptism of Joel Bridge**

Saturday – **6:00pm Great Vespers**

Sunday – **9:00am Divine Liturgy**

Next Sunday's Readings:

Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17



*The Theophany of
Our Lord and
Savior Jesus Christ*

The Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors program is an essential vehicle for funding the activities and programs of our diocese. Please consider participating in the program. For more information, please visit the diocesan website at www.nynjoca.org.

Special Prayers

We pray for **all** our parish family members, but we pray especially for those who are ill and afflicted. Among them are **Roberta Collins; Zoran Pejovic; Lidia Zemlanicky, Ingrid Kopec; Betty James; Manya Shark; Deryl Tczap; Rdr. John Economou; Margaret Makara; Ann Marie and Dennis Gahr, and Dorothy Studier.**

We are happy that you have joined us for worship today and hope that you will join us for coffee hour after the service. Please note that **reception of the Holy Eucharist** is only for baptized members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared with prayer, fasting, and periodic confession. You are encouraged to receive the blessed bread that is offered at the end of the service and which may also be offered to you by one of your neighbors during Communion.

Annunciations

TODAY – Please join us for **Coffee Hour** after the Divine Liturgy. **Team #2** is in charge of today's ministry effort. Everyone is invited to participate.

TODAY – **NO Church School** classes will take place today.

TODAY – **Parish Calendars for January 2022** are now available. Please consult the calendar for parish services and events. Changes to the calendar will be announced by email and/or at the end of the Sunday Divine Liturgy.

THIS WEDNESDAY is a strict fast day. Our food intake should be minimal and of a Lenten nature.

THIS THURSDAY is the Great **Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**. The list of Divine Services for the Feast is located on the opposite page.

THIS SATURDAY – The **baptism of Joel Bridge** will take place at 10:00am in the church.

Houseblessings will take place this year. Those who are comfortable with having their homes blessed should place their name on the **sign-up sheet** located in the church narthex or **contact Father Gary directly** by phone or email to set up a date and time. Those who are not comfortable with this are welcome to wait until conditions are more favorable.

NEXT SUNDAY – **Team #3** will oversee the Coffee Hour.

The **Parish Annual Meeting** is currently scheduled to be held after the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, January 16, 2022**. Reports will be made available prior to the meeting. Please plan to attend the meeting in person.

The **wearing of masks** continues to be strongly encouraged whenever people are gathered either in the church building or in the parish hall.

Grocery Gift Cards are available for sale. Please see Cathy Berger or Olga Pasick at Coffee Hour to make purchases.

Keep up on OCA news by visiting www.oca.org, diocesan news by visiting www.nynjoca.org, and parish news by visiting www.ooca-brick.org.

MANY YEARS
Birthdays this week:
Tuesday – Steve May

***Please pray for vocations to
the Holy Priesthood!***