

**Feast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:**

**Last Friday the Church celebrated the Theophany of our Lord.**

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. 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)

*When You, O Lord were baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bore witness to You, and called You His beloved Son. And the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of His word. O Christ, our God, You have revealed Yourself and have enlightened the world, glory to You!*

See us on the web at:

[ChurchMotherOfGod.org/bulletin](http://ChurchMotherOfGod.org/bulletin)

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Sunday Bulletin

**Church of the Mother of God**  
*"The Joy of All the Sorrowful"*

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Glory to  
Jesus Christ

Glory Forever

**Theophany**

*Of old, the river Jordan  
turned back before Elisha's mantle at Elijah's ascension.  
The waters were parted in two  
and the waterway became a dry path.  
This is truly a symbol of baptism  
by which we pass through this mortal life.  
Christ has appeared in the Jordan to sanctify the waters!*

Troparion-Afterfeast of the Theophany

**On this day the Church remembers:**

**Afterfeast of the Theophany • Sunday after the Theophany**

- Ven. George the Chozebite, Abbot (6<sup>th</sup> c.) • Ven. Domnica of Constantinople (474) • St. Emilian the Confessor, Bishop of Cyzicus (9<sup>th</sup> c.) • Ven. Gregory, Wonderworker of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—1093) • Ven. Gregory the Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> c.) • Hieromartyr Isidore and 72 others at Yuriev (Estonia—1472) • St. Paisius of Uglich (1504) • Hieromartyr Carterius of Caesarea in Cappadocia (304) • Martyrs Theophilus the Deacon, and Helladius, in Libya (4<sup>th</sup> c.) • Martyrs Julian and his wife, Basilissa, and with them Marcionilla, her son Celsus, Anthony, Anastasius, 7 children and 20 soldiers, at Antinoë in Egypt (313) • Ven. Elias the Hermit, of Egypt (4<sup>th</sup> c.) • Martyr Abo the Perfumer, of Tiflis (Georgia—790)

**January 8, 2012**

Tone 5 of the Octoechos.  
Sunday after Theophany

30<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

**Today's Bulletin Sponsors are:****For health of:**

**Olga Romanofsky**, mother of Andrew, on her birthday, offered by her family.

**Readings:**

- **Ephesians 4:7-13** (Sunday after Theophany)
- **Matthew 4:12-17** (Sunday after Theophany)

**BRETHREN**, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

**At that time**, Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward He was hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But He answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took Him to the holy city, and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will give His angels charge of you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again, it is written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'" Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; and he said to Him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.'" Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

**Sunday service:**

**Hours - 9:40 AM** **Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**  
**(General Confession – 9 50 AM on the first Sunday of each month)**  
**(Pannikhidas – after Divine Liturgy 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month)**

**Church School - 9:30 AM** **Coffee hour after Liturgy**  
 (no classes 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month)

**We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy, downstairs, for Coffee hour.**

**Announcements:**

- **Please contact Father Boris about having your home blessed.** The central sign of God's sanctification of all things through Christ's epiphany to the world and His baptism in the Jordan River is the act of blessing homes of faithful Christians. During the Epiphany season, Father Boris can visit members of the parish in order to pray with them in the place where they live, and to bless their surroundings with the sanctified water.
- **Dues and assessments are being collected for the year 2012**, Total Parish Membership Fee is now \$200. Partial payments are gladly accepted.

**Special Announcements:**

- **The next meeting of the Parish Council will be January 29**, after coffee hour.

**Reminder:**

- Upcoming bulletins can be sponsored; this can be done with the signup sheet at the candle stand.
- Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail to: [Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org](mailto:Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org)