

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

Alyson Seaman, niece of Linda Jankowski

Tatsiana DaGrosa on her birthday, offered by her family

**For Eternal Memory of:**

Olga, mother of Andrew Romanofsky, offered by her family

**Readings:**

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

**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 heard that John had been arrested, He withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth He went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

**Saturday service: Vespers – 6:30 PM****Sunday service:**

**Hours – 9:40 AM**

**Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**

**Private Confession – Half hour before any service.**

See Fr Matthew for other times.

**General Confession – 9:45 AM on the first Sunday of each month**

**Pannikhidas – after Divine Liturgy 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month**

**Coffee hour – after Liturgy, downstairs in the Community Room**

**Church School - Sunday 9:30 AM (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 for Coffee hour.**

**Announcements:**

- **The Sisterhood of the Protection of the Theotokos** has a meeting scheduled for today, after coffee hour.
- **Home Blessings** – There will be a sign-up sheet at the candle stand to inform Father that you wish to have your home blessed this year.
- The next **meeting of parish council** will be on Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, after coffee hour.
- Our **Annual Parish Meeting of the Parishioners** will be Sunday February 8, 2015 right after coffee hour. The annual meeting of the parishioners is for the election of the Parish Council and its officers, reports by the Rector and Council members, and for other business. Please contact Trudy Ellmore, the Council President, if you have an item that you want included on the agenda or if you plan to nominate someone for a Parish Council position.
- Our Orthodox Church Calendar for 2015 is available at the candle stand. It is the St. Tikhon's Lectionary Wall Calendar that contains Icons of feast days. It also contains the readings for the year along with feast and fast days.

**Special Announcements:**

- **Dues and assessments** are now being collected for the year 2015. Total Parish Membership Fee is \$200. Partial payments are gladly accepted. Please indicate on the check that it is to be applied to Membership.
- Parish dues for 2014 are still being accepted. Just a reminder.
- **Any Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail to:** Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org

## The Blessing of Homes:

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 the homes of the faithful Christians. On the feast of the Theophany, the Orthodox priest visits all the members of the Church in order to pray with them in the place where they live, and to bless their surroundings with the sanctified water.

According to the Orthodox Faith, the family is considered to be a "*small church*," and the family table is the "*home altar*" where the people gather each day to receive their "*daily bread*" from God with thanksgiving in the Name of Christ. Thus, during the Theophany season, the priest, who is the father of the greater "*family of God*," the Church community, comes to each of the "*small churches*" bringing the blessings of God the Father and all of the brothers and sisters in Christ.

The sanctification of the home takes place not only by the words of prayer, but by the sprinkling with the blessed water which, as we have seen, stands for the new creation of the Kingdom of God in which God Himself "*fills all things with Himself*" including even the smallest particles of material existence.

When the priest comes for his annual visit of prayer and blessing, he asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. All pray together for the good of the living and the dead of the family, and of all who live and have lived in the house. All sing together the great hymn, of salvation that Christ, the Son of the Father by the grace of the Holy Spirit, "*has revealed Himself and has enlightened the world.*" Thus the house itself, together with the living persons of the family, is "*filled with all the fullness of God.*"

When the priest comes to bless the family and its house on Theophany, although the details of the ceremony will differ according to local custom and tradition, the following general principles should be observed:

1. A lighted candle, an icon and a wide bowl for the blessed water should be placed on the table.
2. All radios, television sets, music players, etc. should be turned off.
3. All who are present in the house should come together and stand by the table until the very end of the service.
4. Those who are able, should join in the singing of the hymns and responses of the service.
5. The first names of those for whom special prayers are to be offered, including of course all members of the family and those living in the house, should be clearly printed on a sheet of paper, with the clear distinction between the living and the dead.
6. If it is the practice to give a gift to the priest at this time, the people should prepare it beforehand, but should not place it on the table with the holy objects. It should be given to the priest, if such is the custom, at the conclusion of the service.

(By -V. Rev. Thomas Hopko)

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E-Mail us at: [Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org](mailto:Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org)

## Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

*"The Joy of All the Sorrowful"*

*Founded 1966*

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Sunday after Theophany

Glory to  
Jesus Christ

Glory  
Forever

*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 — Tone 4

### Today the Church remembers:

#### Afterfeast of the Theophany

- Ven. Theodosius the Great, the Cenobiarch (529) ● Sunday after Theophany
- Ven. Michael of Klops Monastery, Fool-for-Christ (Novgorod—ca. 1453-56)
- St. Theodosius of Antioch (ca. 412) ● Ven. Theodosius, Metropolitan of Trebizond (1392) ● The "ELETSKAIA" Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos (1060)

January 11, 2015

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

Tone 6 of the Octoechos