

Today's Bulletin Sponsor are:**For the health of:**

Lore Stefy, offered by the Dawson family.

Readings:

Titus 2:11-14;3:4-7 (*Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ*)

Matthew 3:13-17 (*Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ*)

TITUS, my son, the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

At that time, Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Saturday service:

Vespers – 6:30 PM

(Private Confession – After Vespers by appointment.)

Sunday service:

Hours - 9:40 AM **Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**
(General Confession – 9:45 AM on the first Sunday of each month)
(Pannikhidas – after Divine Liturgy 3rd Sunday of each month)

Church School

All classes will meet every Sunday.

Grades 5-8 – 9:30 am

Preschool and Grades K through 4 – immediately after communion.

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

Announcement:

- The **Great Blessing of Water** takes place in the Orthodox Church on the Feast of the Theophany. (We will be blessing water today.)
- The **annual meeting of the parishioners will be Sunday, February 16th**, after coffee hour. The meeting is for the election of the Parish Council and its officers, and for the transaction of any other business that may come before the meeting.

Reminders:

- We offer general confession the first Sunday of each month, and Private Confession after Vespers by appointment on Saturday evenings. It is important that every Orthodox Christian go to confession.
- Upcoming bulletins can also be sponsored by using the signup sheet at the candle stand. If using the signup sheet, please give two weeks' notice.
- Announcements or Prayer Requests for the bulletin, can be submitted by E-Mail to: Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org
- Prospora (bread) is available at the candle stand. Before the Divine Liturgy, while the Hours are being read, the faithful can have the bread sent into the altar with a list of names for prayers of health and salvation for the living and for the repose of the departed servants of God. (Bread must be purchased a week in advance of the Sunday Liturgy.)
- The Living Clean Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.
- The Grey Book Step Meeting Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.

Feast of the 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).

*Today You have shown forth to the world, O Lord,
and the light of Your countenance has been marked on us.*

Knowing You, we sing Your praises.

You have come and revealed Yourself, O unapproachable Light.

Kontakion – Tone 4

To read more about the saints remembered today, see:

<https://oca.org/saints/lives/2020/01/05>

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Christ is Born!

Glorify Him!

**Eve of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior
Jesus Christ**

*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!*

Troparion - Tone 1

Today the Church remembers:

Eve of Theophany • Sunday before Theophany • Hieromartyr Theopemptus, Bishop of Nicomedia, and Martyr Theonas (303) • Ven. Syncletica of Alexandria (ca. 350) • Prophet Micah (9th c. BC) • Virginmartyr Apollinaria of Egypt (ca. 470) • Ven. Phosterius the Hermit (9th c.) • Ven. Menas of Sinai (6th c.) • Ven. Gregory of Crete (ca. 820) • Ven. Romanos, Martyr (1694)

January 5, 2020

29th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Tone 4 of the Octoechos
(Theophany)