

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



# ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

## OCA – Diocese of New York & New Jersey

The Most Reverend Michael, Archbishop of NY & the Diocese of NY/NJ

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searforce, Temporary Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson    Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Dean Inferrera

## HYMNS OF THE DAY

### Resurrectional Troparion in the Tone 6

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

### Troparion of the Feast in Tone 1

When Thou, O Lord, wast 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.

### Troparion for John the Baptist in Tone 2

The memory of the righteous is celebrated with songs of praise, but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for thee, O Forerunner. Thou wast shown indeed to be the most honorable of the Prophets, for in the waters thou didst baptize Him Whom thou didst preach. After suffering with joy on behalf of the truth, thou didst proclaim even to those in hell the God Who appeared in the flesh, Who takes away the sin of the world and grants us great mercy!

### Kontakion for John the Baptist in Tone 1

The river Jordan trembled, and was driven back, filled with fear at Thy coming in the flesh, while John drew back in awe as he fulfilled the ministry of the Spirit. The ranks of Angels stood amazed when they beheld Thee baptized in the stream. And we who were in darkness are filled with light. We praise Thee, O God made manifest, as Thou dost enlighten all.

### Kontakion of the Feast in Tone 4

Today Thou hast shone forth to the world, O Lord, and the light of Thy countenance has been marked on us. Knowing Thee, we sing Thy praises: "Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, O unapproachable Light."

### *Prayer Requests*

#### *For Health of:*

**Matushka Katherine White**, who after a serious fall broke her shoulder and fractured her lower leg, offered by Archbishop Michael & the Diocese of NY/NJ.

**His Grace, Bishop MARK (Forsberg)**, who has been in the hospital in a weakened state of health, offered by Archbishop Michael & the Diocese of NY/NJ.

#### *In Memory of:*

**Olga Romanofsky**, offered by the Romanofsky family.

### *Bulletin Sponsors*

**Romanofsky Family**

# SAINTS AND FEASTS OF THE DAY

JANUARY 7, 2018

**31<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. AFTERFEAST OF THE THEOPHANY. SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET, FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST JOHN. SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY.**



## *Afterfeast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*

On the first day of the Afterfeast of Theophany, the Church extols Saint John the Baptist as the greatest man born of a woman. He surpasses all the ancient prophets because he baptized the Messiah, Whose coming he foretold.



## *Synaxis of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John*

In the Orthodox Church it is customary, on the day following the Great Feasts of the Lord and the Mother of God, to remember those saints who participated directly in the sacred event. So, on the day following the Theophany of the Lord, the Church honors the one who participated directly in the Baptism of Christ, placing his own hand upon the head of the Savior.

Saint John, the holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, whom the Lord called the greatest of the prophets, concludes the history of the Old Testament and opens the era of the New Testament. The holy Prophet John bore witness to the Only-Begotten Son of God, incarnate in the flesh. Saint John was accounted worthy to baptize Him in the waters of the Jordan, and he was a witness of the Theophany of the Most Holy Trinity on the day of the Savior's Baptism.

The holy Prophet John was related to the Lord on His mother's side, the son of the Priest Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth. The holy Forerunner, John, was born six months before Christ. The Archangel Gabriel announced his birth in the Temple at Jerusalem, revealing to Zachariah that a son was to be born to him.

Through the prayers offered beforehand, the child was filled with the Holy Spirit. Saint John prepared himself in the wilds of the desert for his great service by a strict life, by fasting, prayer and sympathy for the fate of God's people.

At the age of thirty, he came forth preaching repentance. He appeared on the banks of the Jordan, to prepare the people by his preaching to accept the Savior of the world. In church hymnology, Saint John is called a "bright morning star," whose gleaming outshone the brilliance of all the other stars, announcing the coming dawn of the day of grace, illumined with the light of the spiritual Sun, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Having baptized the sinless Lamb of God, Saint John soon died a martyr's death, beheaded by the sword on orders of King Herod at the request of his daughter Salome. (On Saint John the Baptist, see Mt.3:1-16, 11:1-19, 14:1-12; Mark 1:2-8, 6:14-29; Luke 1:5-25, 39-80, 3:1-20, 7:18-35, 9:7-9; John 1:19-34, 3:22-26). The Transfer of the Right Hand of the holy Forerunner from Antioch to Constantinople (956) and the Miracle of Saint John the Forerunner against the Hagarenes (Moslems) at Chios:

The body of Saint John the Baptist was buried in the Samaritan city of Sebaste. The holy Evangelist Luke, who went preaching Christ in various cities and towns, came to Sebaste, where they gave him the right hand of the holy Prophet John, the very hand with which he had baptized the Savior. The Evangelist Luke took it with him to his native city of Antioch.

When the Moslems seized Antioch centuries later, a deacon named Job brought the holy hand of the Forerunner from Antioch to Chalcedon. From there, on the eve of the Theophany of the Lord, it was transferred to Constantinople (956) and kept thereafter.

In the year 1200, the Russian pilgrim Dobrynya, who later became Saint Anthony, Archbishop of Novgorod (February 10), saw the right hand of the Forerunner in the imperial palace. From the Lives of the Saints we learn that

in the year 1263, during the capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders, the emperor Baldwin gave one bone from the wrist of Saint John the Baptist to Ottonus de Cichon, who then gave it to a Cistercian abbey in France.

The right hand continued to be kept in Constantinople. And at the end of the fourteenth to the beginning of the fifteenth centuries, the holy relic was seen at Constantinople in the Peribleptos monastery by the Russian pilgrims Stephen of Novgorod, the deacon Ignatius, the cantor Alexander and the deacon Zosimus. When Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453, sacred objects were gathered up at the the conqueror's orders and kept under lock in the imperial treasury.

In the Lives of the Saints is clear testimony that in the year 1484 the right hand of the holy Forerunner was given away by the son of the Moslem sultan Bayazet to the knights of Rhodes to gain their good will, since a dangerous rival for Bayazet, his own brother, had allied himself with them. A contemporary participant, the vice-chancellor of Rhodes, Wilhelm Gaorsan Gallo, also speaks of this event. The knights of Rhodes, having established their base on the island of Malta (in the Mediterranean Sea), then transferred the sacred relic they had received to Malta.

When the Russian Tsar Paul I (1796-1801) became Grand Master of the Maltese Order in honor of the holy Prophet John, the right hand of the Baptist, part of the Life-Creating Cross and the Philermos Icon (October 12) of the Mother of God (from Mt Philermos on the island of Rhodes) were transferred in 1799 from the island of Malta to Russia [because of the Napoleonic threat], to the chapel at Gatchina (October 12). In the same year these sacred items were transferred into the church dedicated to the Icon of the Savior Not Made by Hands at the Winter Palace. A special service was composed for this Feast.

Besides the Synaxis of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, the Russian Orthodox Church celebrates his memory on the following days: September 23, his Conception; June 24, his Nativity; August 29, his Beheading; February 24, the First and Second Finding of his Head; May 25, the Third Finding of his Head; October 12, the Transfer of his Right Hand from Malta to Gatchina (1799).

### ***St. Pachomius of Keno Lake***

Saint Pachomius is commemorated on the Saturday after Theophany. He founded a monastery dedicated to the Transfiguration of the Lord near Lake Keno, and tonsured Saint Anthony of Siya (December 7) as a monk in 1508. He did not entrust Saint Anthony to one of the other monks, but he himself took him under his wing and trained him in asceticism and in the spiritual life. Saint Anthony possessed every virtue and resisted every temptation, purified his mind and soul from the passions, and freed himself from worldly attachments.

When the time came for Saint Anthony to leave the monastery and live in solitude, Saint Pachomius blessed him to follow this path saying, "May the Lord bless you, my child. May the Lord's will be done."

Saint Pachomius was a great ascetic and a clairvoyant Elder, a good and faithful servant who entered into the joy of his Lord in 1515.



### ***St. Brannock of Braunton***

Saint Brannock lived in the sixth century, and tutored the children of the Welsh ruler Brychan. He went with King Brychan on a pilgrimage to venerate the tombs of the Apostles. On the way home, he stopped in Brittany and remained there several years.

Eventually, the saint returned to Wales and settled at Braunton, where he built a church. His holy relics are said to rest beneath the altar of the Braunton church.



### ***St. Cedd of Lastingham***

Saint Cedd was a missionary and bishop who spread the faith throughout England during the seventh century.

The eldest of four brothers, all of whom became priests, he was born in 620 AD into a noble Northumbrian family. At an early age, he began studies at the Lindisfarne Priory, where he became familiar with Irish monasticism. After pursuing further studies in Ireland, he was sent by Bishop Finan of Lindisfarne to evangelize the people of Essex. He baptized many of the locals, built several churches, and founded monasteries in Bradwell-on-Sea and East Tilbury.

After his consecration to the episcopacy as Bishop of Essex, he reinstated Saint Paul's in London as the main seat of his diocese. He remained fond of his northern homeland and made regular visits there. On one such occasion in 658, he was approached by King Aethelwald of Deira who, finding Saint Cedd to be a good and wise man, pressed him to accept a parcel of land at Lastingham in Yorkshire on which to build a monastery. Saint Cedd eventually agreed, laying the foundation stones after the parcel had been cleansed through prayer and fasting. He became the first Abbot of Lastingham and remained so while still ministering to his flock in Essex.

Saint Cedd died in Lastingham during a great plague that also claimed the life of his brother Cynebil. Eventually, he was buried under the altar of a little stone church built at Lastingham in honor of the Mother of God. His relics were later transferred to the Litchfield Cathedral, which had been built by his brother Chad.

## GOSPEL AND EPISTLE READINGS

### Epistle Reading

#### **Prokeimenon, Tone 1 (Sunday after the Theophany):**

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee! (*Psalm 32:22*)  
vs. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just! (*Psalm 32:1*)

#### **Prokeimenon, Tone 7 (St John the Baptist):**

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in Him. (*Psalm 63:11*)

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### **The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Ephesians 4:7-13 (Sunday after the 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;

#### **Acts 19:1-8 (St John the Baptist)**

**In those days**, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve of them in all. And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, arguing and pleading about the kingdom of God.

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#### **Alleluia, Tone 5 (Sunday after the Theophany):**

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.  
(*Psalm 88:2*)  
vs. For Thou hast said: "Mercy will be established forever; My truth will be prepared in the heavens." (*Psalm 88:3*)

#### **Alleluia, Tone 5 (St John the Baptist):**

Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. (*Psalm 96:11*)

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## **Gospel Reading**

### **Sunday after the Theophany**

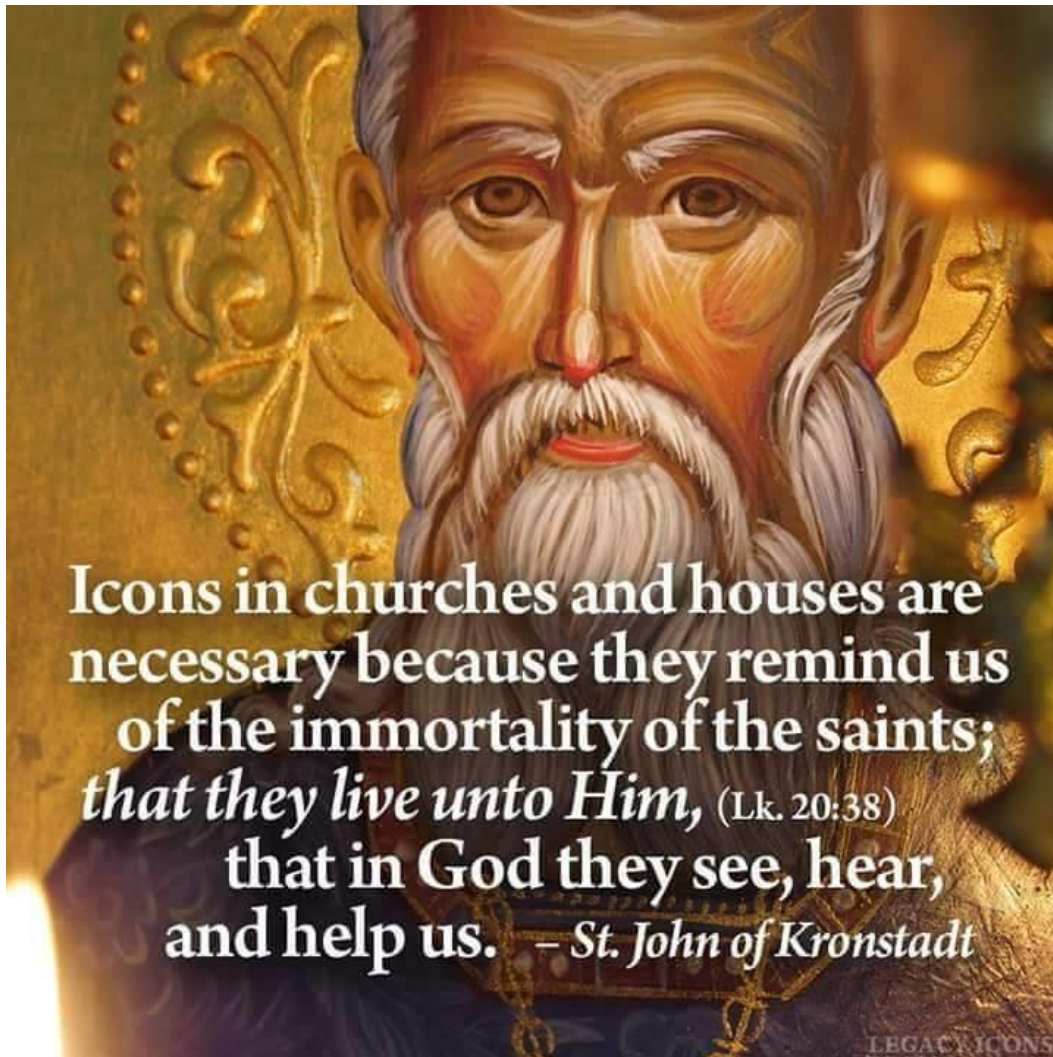
#### **The Reading is from Matthew 4:12-17**

**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."

#### **John 1:29-34 (St John the Baptist)**

**At that time,** he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John bore witness, "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

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# PARISH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

### Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am: No Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K -  
Grade 3

### Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Vespers

### Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K -  
Grade 3

### Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Vespers

### Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K -  
Grade 3

### Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Vespers

**Request & Bulletin Sponsor:** Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

**Memorial Candles:** Candles can be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one.

**Private Confessions:** Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times.

**General Confession:** Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

**Receiving Holy Communion:** Holy Communion is offered to those baptized Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves for the reception of the Sacrament by prayer and fasting. Blessed Bread is available for all our visitors at the very end of the Divine Liturgy.

**Pannikhida Service:** The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

**Special Announcements** for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail: [OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com](mailto:OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com)

**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.

### *Orthodox Quote of the Day*

The fruits of the earth are not brought to perfection immediately, but by time, rain and care; similarly, the fruits of men ripen through ascetic practice, study, time, perseverance, self-control and patience.

**St. Anthony the Great**



## The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon

**St. Anthony the Great**

*We must not react, we must be at peace*

Each day brings on new challenges regarding the health of your soul. Those moments when a family member or coworker makes a remark that are meant to anger you, are those times you need to guard your heart. When those around you are gossiping about someone, that is an opportunity for you to keep silent. The driver who’s just cut you off on the freeway; the woman who pushes her way in front of you in the check out line; the rude neighbor; all are moments in time when you can take control and grow stronger spiritually.

Trials and temptations, when confronted with a peaceful heart, bring forth healing and make the soul that much stronger and healthier. Reacting does nothing but bring forth paralysis of the soul, binding us to our fallen nature. Receiving all these temptations with a peaceful heart and not reacting to outside negative stimulus, helps strengthen you for the next round of trial and temptation. Little by little, you will find that the Peace of Christ fills your every waking moment, bringing on a joyful spirit and a peaceful heart.



### Daily Reflection

#### Water Bursts Forth in the Desert



*”Be glad, thirsty desert: let the wilderness exult, and flower as the lily. And the desert places of Jordan shall blossom and rejoice; the glory of Libanus has been given to it, and the honour of Carmel; and my people shall see the glory of the Lord, and the majesty of God. Be strong, weakened hands and feeble knees. Comfort one another, fainthearted ones; be strong, fear not; behold, our God renders judgment, and he will render it; he will come and save us. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear. Then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the stammerers shall speak plainly; for water has burst forth in the desert, and a channel of water in a thirsty land.” (Is 35: 1-6, Septuagint-translation)*

This is one of the prophecies read during the services of Theophany, on which we celebrate Christ’s coming to the river Jordan and being baptized there, at 30 years of age, thus inaugurating His public ministry for all of us, “for the life of the world.” The God-Man’s appearance in our midst; His immersion into the “waters” of our lives and continuous, sanctifying presence brings new life and productivity to our “weakened hands” and our “feeble knees.”

Today let me re-connect with Him, once again, and join the creative flow of God’s unifying, life-bringing presence in our “thirsty desert.” Thank You, Lord, for showing up in my life, again and again, to lead me out of the impasses of self-centered fear and self-reliance. “O Christ, our God, You have revealed Yourself and have enlightened the world, glory to You!” (Troparion-hymn of Theophany)