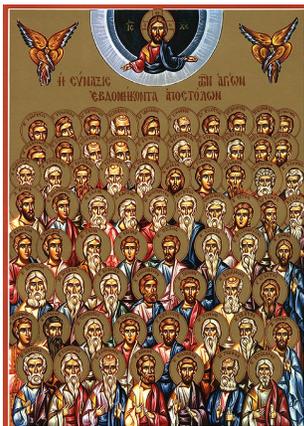




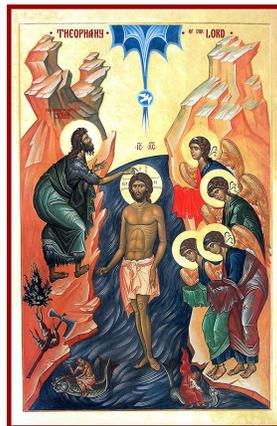
NEWSLETTER & DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

33rd Week after Pentecost

Monday, January 18 — Sunday, January 24, 2021



**Synaxis of the Seventy
Apostles**



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



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

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~ A NOTE FROM FATHER JOHN ~

"Adam sinned through pride. He wanted to be exalted, to become like God. But Christ came to fulfill the righteousness of God and to expiate Adam's pride by His humility. Adam wanted to exalt himself before God, but God humbled Himself before man. Christ descended into the waters, receiving baptism from His servant. John, trembling, placed his hand on His Master and God, while Christ humbly bowed His head before him. Christ's humility unlocked the heavens. The heavens were then opened and the voice of God the Father was heard: "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." (St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco) So God humbles himself to show us the way the truth and the life. We see humility and His true desire to save us from the fallenness Adam and Eve gave to us. May each of you be Blessed during this time of Theophany.

Christ is Baptized:

In the Jordan!

~ “TWITTER SUMMARY” ~

The main points from Sunday's sermon, in 280 characters or less!

There are some men in prison that have done terrible things. The worst. One man was terrified of baptism and did not think God could ever forgive him for the things that he had done. He said that he didn't deserve to live. Nevertheless he gave his life confession and then slept better than he had in a long time. The next day, when he emerged from the waters of baptism he shined with the uncreated light of God's grace so much that others saw and wanted to be baptized as well.

~ THOUGHTS FOR EVERY DAY ~

Scripture and liturgical readings to enrich your prayer life every day of the week

**~ MONDAY~
(1/18)**

Holy Scripture:

1 Corinthians 9:19-27
Luke 3:1-18

Excerpt from the Menaion:

Troparion of the Forefeast, Tone IV —

Once, the River Jordan was turned back by the mantle of Elisha when Elijah was borne aloft, and the waters were parted on either side, and the path which before was wet became dry for him, as a true image of baptism, whereby we pass through the flow of life. Christ hath appeared in the Jordan to sanctify the waters.

Commemoration of the Day:

Eve of the Theophany

**~ TUESDAY~
(1/19)**

Holy Scripture:

Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7
Matthew 3:13-17

Excerpt from the Menaion:

Theophany of our Lord, Troparion, Tone I —

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan,/ the worship of the Trinity was made manifest;/ for, the voice of the Father bare witness unto Thee,/ calling Thee His beloved Son;/ and the Spirit in the form of a dove/ confirmed the certainty of His word./ O Christ our God, Who hast appeared and enlightened the worlds,// glory be to Thee!

Commemoration of the Day:

The Holy Theophany of Our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ (Baptism of the Lord)

**~ WEDNESDAY~
(1/20)**

Holy Scripture:

Acts 19:1-8 Forerunner
John 1:29-34 Forerunner

Excerpt from the Menaion:

Synaxis of St. John the Baptist,

Troparion, Tone II —

The memory of the righteous is celebrated with hymns of praise, but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for thee, O forerunner. Thou wast truly shown to be more honorable than the prophets, in that thou wast counted worthy to baptize in the streams Him Whom thou didst proclaim. Wherefore, having suffered, rejoicing, for the truth, even unto those in hades didst thou proclaim God, Who had manifested

**~ THURSDAY~
(1/21)**

Holy Scripture:

1 Peter 4:12-5:5
Mark 12:38-44

Excerpt from the Menaion:

Kontakion of our Venerable father George, the Khozebite, Tone IV "Thou hast appeared" —

Thou hast been shown to be an all-radiant beacon/ illumining with divine rays the faithful who cry out to thee:/ Pray for us to Christ the Master,/ Who appeared in the streams of the Jordar// and hath enlightened mortals.

Commemoration of the Day:

St. George the Chozebite, abbot (7th c.) and St. Emilian Bishop of Cyzicus (9th c.)

Himself in the flesh, Who taketh away the sin of the world, and granteth us great mercy.

Commemoration of the Day:

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

**~ FRIDAY ~
(1/22)**

Holy Scripture:

Hebrews 13:17-21 Hieromartyr Philip
John 10:9-16 Hieromartyr Philip

Excerpt from the Menaion:

Troparion — Tone 4

By sharing in the ways of the Apostles, / you became a successor to their throne. / Through the practice of virtue, you found the way to divine contemplation, O inspired one of God; / by teaching the word of truth without error, you defended the Faith, / even to the shedding of your blood. / Hieromartyr Phillip, entreat Christ God to save our souls.

Commemoration of the Day:

Hieromartyr Philip, metropolitan of Moscow and all Russia (1569).
St. Jonah (Peter in schema), founder of Holy Trinity Monastery in Kiev (1902)

**~ SATURDAY ~
(1/23)**

Holy Scripture:

Hebrews 7:26-8:2 St. Theophan
John 10:9-16 St. Theophan

Excerpt from the Menaion:

Holy Hierarch Theophan, Troparion, Tone VIII —

O instructor of Orthodoxy / teacher of piety and purity / O godly-wise hierarch Theophan the ascetic of Vyshynsk / through thy writings thou hast explained the Word of God / and hast thou shown to all believers the way to salvation / pray that Christ God will save our souls.

Commemoration of the Day:

St. Theophan the Recluse, bishop of Tambov (1894)

**~ SUNDAY ~
(1/24)**

Holy Scripture:

2 Corinthians 4:6-15 Venerable
Matthew 11:27-30 Venerable

Excerpt from the Menaion :

St. Theodosius the Coenobiarch,

Troparion, Tone VIII —

With the streams of thy tears thou didst irrigate the barren desert, / and with sighs from the depths of thy soul thou didst render thy labors fruitful an hundredfold. / Thou wast a beacon for the whole world, radiating miracles. // O our father Theodosius, entreat Christ God that our souls be saved.

Commemoration of the Day:

“Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, their words unto the ends of the world.”

[Prokeimenon of Pentecost, Tone 8, Liturgy]

To read more:

<https://www.holytrinityorthodox.com/calendar/>

~ PONDER THIS ~

A few thoughts to ponder in light of this week's lessons and sermons.

Baptism in Christ

Theophany is the baptismal feast of feasts. It announces and celebrates as much about our own baptism as it does that of Christ. Both Scripture and the Church Fathers bear witness to the fact that our “illumination” becomes a reality only insofar as it enables us to participate in Christ’s own baptism and in the life and works that flowed forth from it.

The feast proclaims two interrelated yet apparently contradictory themes: the death of believers, and their new birth to eternal life. As the apostle Paul declares in Romans 6, our true death occurs as we enter the baptismal waters. There we “die” with Christ, in order to be raised with him into a new mode of existence. “We have been buried with him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we also might walk in newness of life” (6:4). The sacramental grace conferred by baptism, and not our physical, biological demise, thus marks our true death. It signifies and accomplishes our dying to the “old Adam” and our rebirth as the “new man,” in the image of the crucified and resurrected “Second Adam,” the eternal Son of God (cf. 1 Cor 15:45-49).

At the same time, as Jesus affirms in John 3, baptism is a “new birth,” a “birth from above” (the term *anôthen* signifies both “again” and “from on high”; this is what leads to Nicodemus’ confusion in John 3:4). Paul expresses the same idea in Titus 3:5 with the term *palingenesia*, “rebirth” or “regeneration.” Baptism through water accomplishes the washing away of sins, incorporation into the Body of the glorified Christ, the Church, and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

~LOOK IT UP~

Did you know: By His immersion in the Jordan, Christ sanctified not only the waters of the Jordan, but the whole nature of the waters, as the Church cries out in its hymns: “Christ hath appeared in the Jordan to sanctify the waters” (troparion of the forefeast); “Today the nature of the waters is sanctified” (troparion at the Blessing of the Waters). Since there is water everywhere, by sanctifying the waters, Christ thereby sanctified all of creation and the entire universe

Read more: <https://www.pravmir.com/homily-on-the-feast-of-the-lords-theophany/>

~ PRAYER CORNER ~

- Father John and Matushka Deborah.
- Please keep in prayer our older parishioners who, if they contract the COVID-19 virus, will be in greater risk of serious health complications.
- Anna and her family
- Please keep in prayer our heroic parishioners who work in the health care profession and are on the front lines of our society’s fight against the Novel Corona Virus and COVID-19 disease.

~ BOOKSTORE ~

- New extra-large icons from Russia!
- *The Heavenly Banquet: Understanding the Divine Liturgy* by Fr. Emmanuel Hatzidakis now in stock!
- New to the bookstore: Writings of St Ephraim, St Gregory, & St Dionysios



To submit **commemorations for the next Divine Liturgy**, to make an appointment with Fr. John to give **confession by telephone**, to alert us to any pastoral needs, to submit an item for the **Prayer Corner**, or just to chat, please contact Fr. John or Mat. Deborah using the following contact information:

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Matushka Deborah Tomasi * (310) 849-9451 * deborahTomasi@yahoo.com

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!