

SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY: CIRCUMCISION OF THE LORD

January 1, 2023

Saturday, December 31st

5:00pm Vespertal Liturgy Sunday before Theophany: Circumcision of the Lord

Intention: Parishioners of Our Lady of Wisdom

Sunday, January 1st - Sunday before Theophany: Circumcision of the Lord

9:30am Adult Education: St. Ignatius of Brianchaninov

10:10am Third Hour

10:30am Divine Liturgy

Intention: Parishioners of Our Lady of Wisdom

Pot Luck following Liturgy

Monday, January 2nd

6:00am Jesus Prayer

Tuesday, January 3rd

6:00am Jesus Prayer

7:30am Matins

4:00pm Paraklesis

Wednesday, January 4th

6:00am Jesus Prayer

11:00am Divine Liturgy Helpers of St. Nicholas

Intention: +Rebecca Ellen Glantz

12:00pm Helpers of St. Nicholas Homeless Ministry

5:00pm Final Women's Bible Study: Ephesians

6:30pm Compline

Thursday, January 5th

7:30am Matins

5:00pm Vespertal-Liturgy for THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD

Friday, January 6th

10:00am Matins

11:00am Divine Liturgy: THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD

Saturday, January 7th

5:00pm Vespertal Liturgy Sunday after Theophany

Intention: Parishioners of Our Lady of Wisdom

Sunday January 8th - 28th Sunday After Pentecost

9:30am Adult Education: St. Ignatius of Brianchoninov

10:10am Third Hour

10:30am Divine Liturgy

Intention: +Mary Marlene Santo

Pot Luck following Liturgy

N.B, CONFESSION is available before and after every service.

Otherwise, please contact Fr. Nathan Symeon to set up an appointment

31st – Venerable **Melany**, a Roman Lady who, with her husband sold their possessions, distributed the proceeds to the poor and went into monasteries. She died A.D. 439.

1st – **Feast of Circumcision of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.** The name of Jesus given to the child on this occasion means “Saviour.” — **The Feast of St. Basil the Great, Archbishop** of Caesarea in Cappadocia, most famous of the Byzantine Church, and one of the four great Doctors called also “Patriarch of the Eastern Monks.” He died A.D. 379 (cf: January 30).

2nd – Our Holy Father, **Sylvester**, Pope of Rome, under his Pontificate was held the First Ecumenical Council at Nicea A.D. 325, the decrees of which were approved by him. He died A.D. 335, during the reign of Constantine the Great Emperor.

3rd – **St. Malachy**, Prophet. 400 B.C. – **St. Gordius, Martyr**, who suffered death A.D. 320, during the reign of Licinius, Emperor.

4th – **Synaxis of 70 Apostles**, whose names St. Dorotheus recorded. Our Venerable Father, Theoktistus, Hegumen-Abbot in Cucume of Sykleia.

5th – **SS. Theopemptus and Theonas**, Martyrs, martyred A.D. 290, during the reign of Diocletian. Syncletica, Venerable St. Micah, Prophet.

6th – **Theophany or Holy Manifestation of the Divinity of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.** One of the oldest feasts in the East, it has been traced back to the beginning of the 2nd century. The Western Church accepted this great Feast Day from the Eastern Church in the 3rd century.

7th – **Synaxis of St. John**, the glorious Prophet, Precursor and Baptist, who baptized our Lord Jesus Christ in the River Jordan.

8th – Our Venerable Father, **George**, The Chozebite and Emilian, Confessor. They were martyred A.D. 820, in the reign of Nicephorus Gennicus. Our Venerable Mother, Dominika, of Carthage, who lived in the year A.D. 374, in the reign of Theodosius the Great. **SS. Juliana and Basilissa**, martyred A.D. 300, during the reign of Diocletian, Emperor.

ADULT EDUCATION is held each Sunday morning from 9:30am until 10:10am, we will study the work of St. Ignatius, which teaches us the orthodox approach to theology, Bible Study, and the spiritual life.

BIBLE STUDY for women will resume Wednesday, January 4, 2023 at 5:00pm in the Parish Hall. **BIBLE STUDY** for men will resume Friday, January 6, 2023 at 6:00pm.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to our parishioners who celebrate birthdays this week: Matthew Nelson, January 5; Stephen Drechsler, January 8. *God Grant You Many Happy Blessed Years!*

THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD Vespertal-Liturgy and Blessing of Water and Oranges will be celebrated on Thursday, January 5, at 5:00pm.

THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Water and Oranges will be celebrated on Friday, January 6, at 11:00am.

BLESSED JORDAN WATER — Please bring your own Holy Water bottles to fill with the Blessed Jordan Water of Our Lord's Baptism to bless your homes.

BLESSING OF HOMES – If you would like your home blessed, please contact Fr. Nathan.

ALARM SYSTEM – Starting Monday, January 2, 2023 security alarms will be activated on all outside church doors. Please refrain from entering the church unless you have a passcode. If you need a passcode, please contact Fr. Nathan.

The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and vulnerable adults that conforms to the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. For additional information regarding the eparchial Safe Environment Program or to report any incidents or concerns, please contact:

Sbdcn Paul Kilroy, Safe Environment Program Coordinator

Cell: (480) 745-0316 -- Office: (602) 861-9778 ext. 203 -- Email: sbdcnkilroy@ephx.org

Dcn. Michael Hanafin, Victim Assistance Coordinator

Cell: (480) 307-5182 -- Email: vac@ephx.org

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

January 5th — Vigil of the Theophany Our tradition is to carry the Icon of the Theophany in procession into the Church, followed by the anointing of the faithful with the Oil of Gladness before the Divine Liturgy begins. January 6th — Theophany and the Many Traditions There are three major traditions of the Italo-Greek Church that make up the celebration of this great feast day: (1) the blessing of water; (2) the blessing of the Church doors (continuing with the blessing of the parishioners' homes); and (3) the distribution of oranges. Now, to explain how the profession of faith regarding the Theophany is shown, what happens in the Italo-Greek Church, is that water is blessed and sanctified, symbolizing how Jesus sanctified the waters of the River Jordan and regenerated all mankind at the Mystery of Baptism. In order to show that symbolism, the water is blessed first with a three-part lit candelabra, which is immersed in water, relit to show that the Holy Spirit has now entered the water (Figure 16) so when we baptize someone in the water, although we cannot see the Holy Spirit, He is present in the water. All we see is the external water being poured over a person's head, which symbolizes the forgiveness of sin and the regeneration of the person as Jesus had blessed the waters of the Jordan and regenerated all mankind by doing so.

In Southern Italy, in the Italo-Greek tradition, when the water is blessed by the priest, the three candles lit by the priest represent Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When the candles are plunged into the water (which is done three times), there is a prayer each time the candles are doused. Then, the candles are relit, showing the presence of the Holy Spirit. After that, incense is ambulated around the baptismal font, or the fountain or the river where the service takes place, so we understand the Holy Spirit is now present. After the incensation, the Incense is always used in the Eastern Church to show the presence of the Holy Spirit, Who is the Guide and Guardian of the Church. priest takes a cross with Christ's Baptism reflected on it, and makes the sign of the Cross in the water. Since Baptism means "to be plunged;" this act symbolizes Christ plunging into the water to regenerate us. It shows we die from natural life and go on to supernatural life. Once the cross is immersed the first time, the priest throws it into the font (or river, or source of water present in the Church), and the divers (or children) pick it up, saying: "Christ has risen from the Dead and you are raised from the Dead", showing that, once you are plunged into the water, you have eternal life, to never die again. The priest then takes this blessed water and blesses the faithful with it.

The second part of the tradition then begins. The priest takes the water, after its blessing, and marks the people with what we now call "Jordan Water" because it symbolizes and recalls that Jesus was baptized in the Jordan. This Jordan Water recalls the blessings of Christ regenerating mankind, removing sin from the world, regenerating all mankind to the goodness with which the Father originally created them. After the water is splashed on the congregation, the water is taken to each of the doors of the Church. The doors are blessed and marked with the first two digits of

the year of the blessing, followed by "K+M+B+[the year of the blessing]", using a cross in-between each symbol. For example, the doors would be marked "20+K+M+B+17" for the celebration on January 6, 2017.²³ This tradition symbolizes that we accept the fact Jesus has been visited here in this 23 the initials represent the names of the Three Kings who came to see Jesus: Kaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. In some traditions, they also represent the abbreviation of the Latin phrase "Khristus Mansionem Benedicat" –May Christ bless this house"/Church.

The prayer that is prayed is an ancient one: "Oh God our Savior, the true Light, Who was baptized by the river Jordan by John to renew all men by the waters of regeneration, and Who condescended to enter under the roof of Zacchaeus to bring salvation to him and to all in his house, keep safe also from all harm those who dwell here; grant them your blessing, purification and bodily health, and all their petitions for their salvation and life everlasting: For blessed are You, together with Your Eternal Father, and Your all-Holy, Gracious and Life-Giving Spirit, now and ever, and forever. Amen." Figure 18: Blessing of Church Doors That same chalk and Jordan Water is then given to the people to bless their own homes.²⁴ They mark the doorpost of their homes the same way – to show that God has visited their homes. In remembrance of the fact that the Angel passed over the houses of the Jews on Passover, so they marked their homes that were dedicated to the Lamb, and that was blood that was put on their homes at Passover. The likeness of the two explains the tradition which is over 4,000 years old. The last portion of the tradition involves the distribution of oranges. Oranges are used because they were available at the time, as it was the fruit blooming in Italy. The priest has a barrel full of oranges which, after blessing them, he throws them from the Holy Place among the faithful, who catch them to bring them home with them (Figure 19). It is the understanding that by catching the fruit, they have caught the gift of the Holy Spirit and the want and desire to fulfill that which Christ Himself did. The oranges contain lots of seeds of new life. If the faithful plant the seeds found in the orange, they will have new life and, therefore, it was the way the people could express their new life received in Baptism.