

Sunday before

the Theophany of Christ

January 4, 2009

Saintly Notes

Theophany (January 6)

Theophany (from Greek *theophania*, meaning "appearance of God") is one of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church, celebrated on January 6. It 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)

This observance commemorates Christ's baptism by John the Forerunner in the River Jordan, and the beginning of Christ's earthly ministry. The Feast of Theophany is the culmination of the Christmas Season, which starts on December 25 and ends on January 6. In mystic commemoration of this event, the Great Blessing of Water is performed on this day, and the holy water so blessed is used by the local priest to bless the homes of the faithful.

The feast is called Theophany because at the baptism of Christ the Holy Trinity appeared clearly to mankind for the first time -- the Father's voice is heard from Heaven, the Son of God is incarnate and standing physically in the Jordan, and the Holy Spirit descends on Him in the form of a dove.

This feast is also sometimes referred to as *Epiphany* by English-speaking Orthodox Christians, but that name more properly refers to the Western Christian feast falling on that same day and commemorating the visit of the Magi to the child Jesus. The term "Epiphany" does appear in the services for this feast, however.

Originally, there was just one Christian feast of the *shining forth of God to the world in the human form of Jesus of Nazareth*. It included the celebration of Christ's birth, the adoration of the Wisemen, and all of the childhood events of Christ such as his circumcision and presentation to the temple as well as his baptism by John in the Jordan. There seems to be little doubt that this feast, like Easter and Pentecost, was understood as the fulfillment of a previous Jewish festival, in this case the Feast of Lights.



Baptism of Jesus

Sunday before the Theophany of Christ

All Saints Orthodox Church, Raleigh NC
(www.allsaintsnc.org)
919-859-1332

The V. Rev. Nicholas R. A. Sorensen, Archpriest
The Rev. Philip Pelikan, Priest
The Rev. David Keim, Deacon

January 4, 2009

The Saints Whom We Remember

Synaxis of the Seventy Holy Apostles; Venerable Theoktistos of Sicily;
Venerable Martyrs Euthymios and his twelve companions
of Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos

This Week's Schedule

Today: 8:00a Orthros; 9:00a Church School; 10:00a Divine Liturgy
Monday: **Church Office Closed;** 6:30p Eve. Div. Liturgy for
Theophany/Great Blessing of the Water
Tuesday: 6:30p Building Committee
Wednesday: 9:15a Third Hour Prayer; 6:30p Vespers
Thursday: 6:30p Building Committee
Saturday: 2:30p Wedding; 5:30p Great Vespers; 6:30p Reception for Fr.
Philip.
Sunday: 8:00a Orthros; 9:00a Church School; 10:00a Divine Liturgy

Third Antiphon

Resurrection Troparion—Tone 4

Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation. And proudly broke the news to the Disciples, saying, Death hath been spoiled; Christ God is risen, granting the world Great Mercy.

Entrance Hymn

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

Troparion

of the Resurrection—Tone 4

See above.

Troparion

of Forefeast of Theophany—Tone 4

Make ready, O Zebulon, and prepare, O Nephtali, and thou, River Jordan, cease thy flow and receive with joy the Master coming to be baptized. And thou, Adam, rejoice with the first mother, and hide not your selves as ye did of old in paradise; for having seen thee naked, He appeared to clothe thee with the first robe. Yea, Christ hath appeared desiring to renew the whole creation.

Troparion

for All Saints—Tone 4

As with fine porphyry and royal purple Thy Church has been adorned with Thy martyr's blood shed throughout all the world. She cries to Thee, O Christ God, send down Thy bounties on Thy people, grant peace to Thy habitation and great mercy to our souls.

Kontakion

for Forefeast of Theophany—Tone 4

Today hath the Lord appeared in the courses of the Jordan, crying to John and saying, Be not dismayed at my Baptism; for I have verily come to save Adam, the first to be created.

The Trisagion

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal . . .

Epistle and Gospel

Today and Next Sunday

Today: (See insert)

Next Sunday:

Epistle: Eph. 4:7–13

Gospel: Matt.. 4:12–17

Alegalynarion

Tone 8

It is truly meet and right to bless thee . . .

Communion Hymn

Tone 8

Praise ye the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Alleluia.

After Communion

We have seen the true light . . .

Parish Notes

Altar Servers Today

Nicholas Christopoulos, Christian Christopoulos, William Christopoulos, Christopher Wingenbach, Ilya Moundous, Gabriel Pope.

Special Attention

- **Vote on the New Building Project.** The parish vote a few Sundays ago was almost unanimous (98 For; 3 Against) to build the new church addition. The Parish Council and Fr. Nicholas will now form a building committee to begin the process which should see ground breaking late Fall of 2009.
- **Estimated Giving Forms.** Please complete your **Estimated Giving Form.** *The completed form can be given to Ron Evancho (All Saints Financial Secretary), or to Ray Azrak, or may be left in the weekly offering in an envelope labeled "Estimated Giving Form."*
- **Blessed Bread Bakers Still Needed.** (Please see insert)
- **Please Note the Theophany Service and the Great Blessing of the Water on Monday at 6:30pm.** You may bring your clean Holy Water bottles to be refilled or request that a new bottle be given to you.
- **Epiphany House Blessings.** If you wish to have your house blessed this year please sign up for a time on the appropriate week when Father Nicholas is in your area. Sign up sheets with instructions are on the hall bulletin board.
- **Thank You! From All of Us to All of You!** On behalf of the whole Sorensen family, I want to thank all the members and friends of All Saints for their many expressions of love and Christmas blessings in 2008. We thank God for all of you and pray that God will bless y'all with a wonderful year of His Grace in A. D. 2009.

Epistle and Gospel Readings

Prokeimenion:

O Lord, save Thy people and
bless Thine inheritance.

*Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my
God.*

†**Epistle: 2 Tim. 4:5–8 (RSV)**

Timothy, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing.

†**Gospel: Mark. 1:1–8 (RSV)**

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, “Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all

the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes He Who is mightier than I, the strap of Whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

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A Word from Our Fathers

“Spiritual cultivation can take place only in the soil of the heart, for within it one can plant and sow spiritual seed. Then the rain of the energy of the Holy Spirit comes and brings forth fruit, which will be kept in two accounts: firstly, in Heaven, and then in the earthly account for the poor and for those who hunger spiritually.”

“When our heart has no love for Christ, we are like ships that have no fuel, no gas in their engines. We must always remember Christ with love. Then our soul will leap for joy.”

“Consider all people to be greater than yourself, though they may have many weaknesses. . . . Through the grace of God I consider all people to be saintly and greater than myself.”

(Elder Amphilochios of Patmos)

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Prospora Bread

Please let me ask you to spend a few minutes this morning reading this insert. It is a message about the significance of baking the Blessed Bread (Prospora) for the Divine Liturgies at All Saints and about the need for more bakers.

First, I want to thank, on behalf of all the members of All Saints, Mrs. Ana Oara who has been our Blessed Bread Coordinator for many years. She has probably baked more bread, more times, than anyone else in our parish, and to Ana we owe a great debt of thanks. Whenever bread was needed in an unexpected situation, Ana would stay up almost all night to bake it, so that we would have fresh blessed bread for our Divine Liturgy in the morning. Your faithfulness, Ana, has blessed all of us. May God bless you and your family!

Second, I would like to introduce Emilia Florea as our new Blessed Bread Coordinator. She will be taking over for Ana this year and will be asking for all of you to help with this very important and blessed ministry in our parish. Please carefully read her note below and contact her with a "yes I will bake" to her plea for more volunteers.

Thank you, Emilia, for taking on this responsibility!!!

Fr. Nicholas

Dear Members of All Saints,

Baking Prospora Bread is a wonderful and meaningful offering to the Lord. Aside from the physical effort of making it, this bread, which will become the Body of Christ, is also made with spiritual ingredients: your sacrifice of time, patience and prayer. And so, body and soul, "we place ourselves on Your Holly Altar through this bread, to be used by You in any way you feel will help to enlarge Your Kingdom. Accept our gift and make us worthy to receive the greater gift when You consecrate this bread and give it back to us as Your precious Body".

However, despite the spiritual involvement and benefit there are not many people who bake Prospora Bread in our parish. Even though there were classes taught at Church and encouragements from Father Nicholas and Ana Oara, still, only four persons from our Church took this responsibility seriously and baked the bread on a regular basis. It is worth to mention them here: Ana Oara, Karen Cook, Ileana Ibanescu and Emilia Florea. There are other names occasionally on the list, and we'd like to thank them for their contribution, but there is a need for more committed people. We all partake the Body and Blood of Christ at the Liturgy, let us also participate in the work of bringing these gifts to the Altar.

For those of you who do not bake yet on a regular basis and those who are interested to start baking Prospora Bread for the first time, it is good to remember that good bread comes with willingness and practice, it doesn't just happen. It may be a good idea to read a book from the library about bread making, but one class with Ana Oara or Emilia Florea, may be enough to put you on the list for the following month.

For those of you who are already baking Prospora Bread regularly, the assignment sheet will be posted on the board in the parish hall a few days before the beginning of a new month. If the dates do not fit your schedule, please trade them with someone else on the list and inform Emilia Florea about the change.

Please also be prepared for an emergency phone call, in case there is a need for more Prospora Bread at one time. Please contact Emilia Florea if you would like to bake for a specific date (telephone # 303-3360; email Emilia_florea@yahoo.com)

With the hope that we will see more people interested in baking good Prospora Bread in the next year, we'd like to thank all those involved in 2008. Your work has been a blessing for all of us.

Emilia C. Florea

Prospora Bread List

January 2009

Date	Name	Phone #
January 4 th	Emilia C. Florea	303-3360
January 11 th	Ana Oara	469-5340
January 18 th	Karen Cook	270-4855
January 25 th	Ileana Ibanescu	460-9718

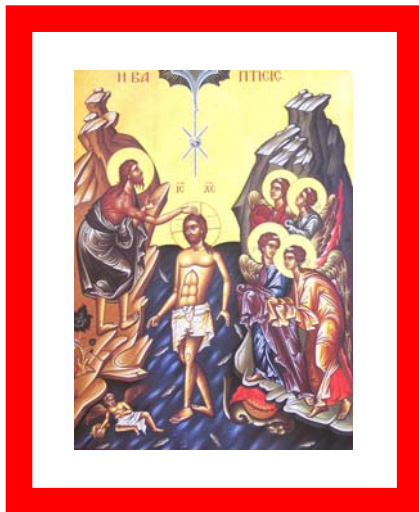
For the month of January, please bake 7 breads at one time (5 for Sunday's Liturgy and 2 to be stored in the freezer). Please write your name and date on a note with the 2 breads that you put in the freezer.



Instructions for Epiphany House Blessings 2009

This year Epiphany house blessings will begin on January 7th and conclude on February 11th. This is that special time of year when the priest comes to bless the parishioners homes with the Holy Water from the feast of the Theophany (January 6th). Each room of your home will be sprinkled with the Holy Water and the appropriate prayers of blessing spoken. Preparation for the priest's visit includes placing an icon, a candle, and a list of people (living and departed) for whom you want the priest to pray on the kitchen or dining room table (the priest will start the service of blessing from this table unless you have an icon corner where you normally say prayers, in which case, he will start there). In addition, all radios, TV's, stereos, etc. should be turned off, and all in the household should gather to participate in the blessing.

It is not necessary to have your home blessed every year but if you would like for Father Nicholas to come to your home, please sign-up on the sheets on the hall bulletin board at the church. Please note that there is a specific sheet for the area in which you live. Father will be in your area on the dates specified. When you sign the sheet please make note of the time and the date.



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