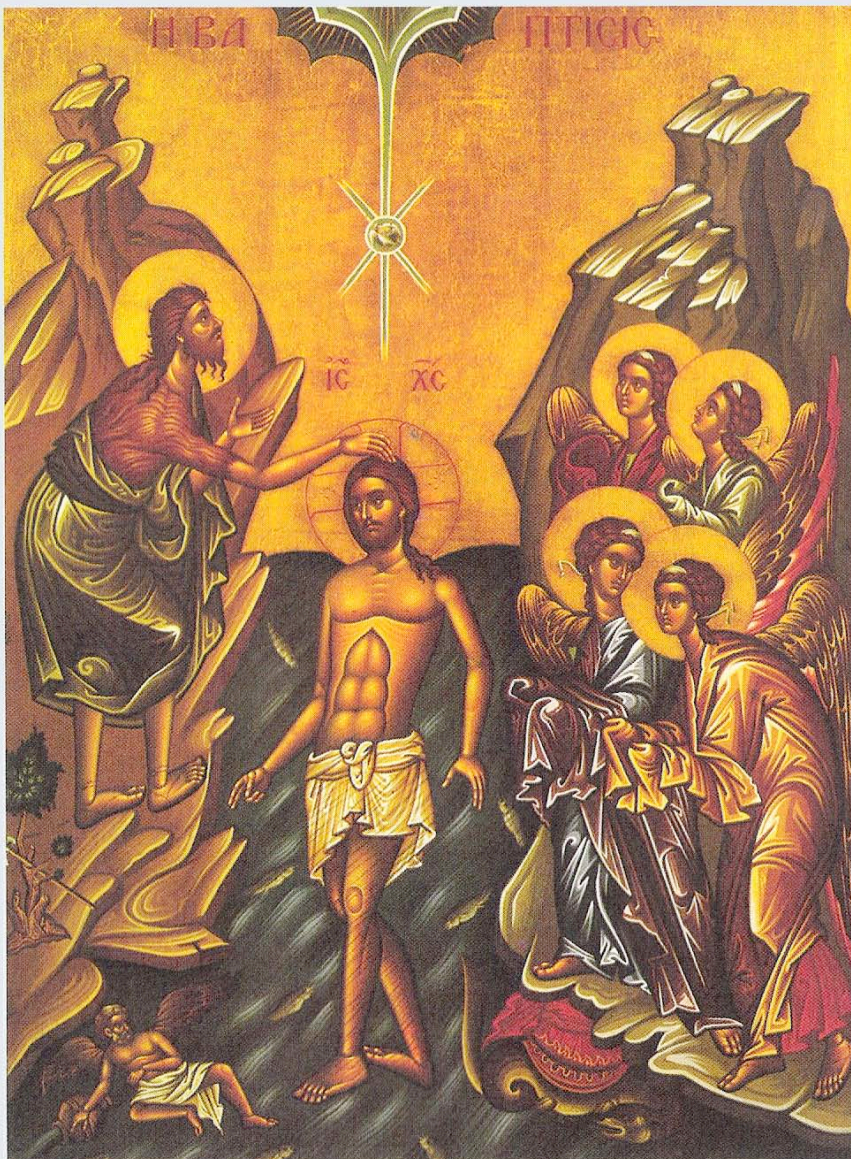


THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD



Icon of the Theophany of Our Lord -- January 6th

THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD

JANUARY 4, 2008

Tone 1

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 5 – JANUARY 11, 2009

MONDAY, JANUARY 5	10:00 AM – ROYAL HOURS 8:00 PM – «3 HAMI BOG!» GREAT COMPLINES WITH LYTIA
TUESDAY, JANUARY 6	THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD 10:00 AM – DIVINE LITURGY WITH GREAT BLESSING OF WATER † YAROSLAW SYSYN; REQ: MARIA SYSYN 6:00 PM – DIVINE LITURGY WITH BLESSING OF WATER
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7	SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIZER 10:00 AM – DIVINE LITURGY – SPECIAL INTENTION
SATURDAY, JANUARY 10	6:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
SUNDAY, JANUARY 11	8:00 AM LITURGY SPECIAL INTENTION 10:00 AM LITURGY FOR ALL PARISHIONERS

“Open Wide Your Hearts!” – Share 2008

“Give, and it shall be given to you.” Please remember our Eparchy and give to **Share 2008 Ukrainian Catholic Appeal**. If you haven’t received the mailing from our Bishop, there are extra envelopes in the back of the church.

Let’s go Caroling!

Between December 25 and February 2 we will be organizing visits to our parishioners, shut-ins, and nursing homes. If you are interested in participating or you would like to be visited or you know of someone who would like to be visited, please contact Xenia Moore or Fr. James.



Prayers For Those Serving In The Military

Let us especially remember in our prayers those family members and friends who are actively serving our country in the Armed Forces: Luke and Slavamira Haywas, Elizabeth Heltsley, Olena Hrivniak, Michael Lopes, Stefan Oborski, Raul Richelmi and Brian Tuthill. Please submit any names of those you would like remembered in the Liturgies to Fr. James.

Your Prayers Please!

Please remember in your prayers those people of our parish who are in hospitals, nursing homes and those who are not able to join us actively in our community. Remember especially the following: Katherine Andrus, Susie Boyko, Sonia Cronin, Bohdanchik James, Lesya Loznycky, Ken McDonald, Sophia Skop, and Ariadna Wall. Please let Fr. James know if there is anyone who should be added to this list.



Feast of the Theophany

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John, at the Jordan, to be baptized by him." Matthew 3,13)

Before the feast of the Theophany, Holy Church in her services exhorts her faithful: "Leaving the glorious miracle of Bethlehem, let us quickly hasten to the Jordan with an ardent spirit; there we shall witness an awesome mystery..." (Exapostilarion of Matins of the 3rd of January). That awesome mystery is the mystery of the Theophany of the Lord, the self-revelation of God at the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ in the river Jordan. In this mystery Jesus Christ reveals himself as the Messiah and Saviour. As Christ is baptized, the voice of his heavenly Father bears witness to the divine mission of Jesus: "You are my beloved Son, in you I am well pleased." (Mark 1,11) The Holy Spirit bears witness to him by descending upon him in the form of a dove. St. John the Baptist also bears witness as he points to him, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." (John 1,29)

The feast of the Theophany of our Lord is among the most ancient and greatest feasts of our Ecclesiastical Year. The name of this feast, its history, and the revelation of the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity that accompanied it, deserves special consideration here.

Name of the Feast

In the first centuries of Christianity, the feast of the Theophany was regarded as a collective feast for it embraced other events in the life of Jesus Christ which bore witness to his divinity - namely, his Nativity, the homage of the Wise Men from the East, his baptism, the miracle at Cana of Galilee and the miraculous multiplication of the loaves. Thus our name "Theophany" must be understood in the plural sense for it means a feast of holy Theophanies.

In ancient times, on the feast of the Theophany the solemn baptism of the catechumens took place. This baptism was also called light or enlightenment (illumination), and the catechumens were called "the enlightened". Hence the feast of the Theophany was called Enlightenment or Illumination, the Feast of Lights and Holy Lights, for Jesus came to enlighten all people, "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light; and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death, a light has arisen." (Matthew 4,16) Some authors are of the opinion that this feast was also called the feast of lights because during the baptism of the catechumens the church was lit up with a great number of candles, symbols of the light of the knowledge of the true God.

St. Gregory the Theologian (†389) entitled his sermon on the Theophany: "A sermon on the holy lights of the Theophanies of the Lord." He begins it thus: "Again my Jesus and again the mystery ... (i.e., again the new feast after the Nativity of Christ), the sublime and divine mystery, which announces to us heavenly light. For the holy day of lights, which has finally arrived and which we have become worthy to solemnize, had its beginning in the baptism of my Christ 'the true light that enlightens every man that comes into the world.'" (John 1,9) In a subsequent sermon on holy baptism he explains more elaborately what he means by enlightenment: "Yesterday we celebrated the glorious day of lights ... and today we shall talk about baptism and its beneficent influence upon us... Enlightenment is a help in our weakness, a putting aside of the body, a seeking after the Spirit, a fellowship with the Word, a renewal of creation, a drowning of sin, a partaking of light, and a dispelling of darkness.

Enlightenment is the chariot which raises us to God, making us co-travelers with Christ; it strengthens our faith, Perfects our mind, entrusts to us the keys of the kingdom of heaven; changes our lives, frees us from enslavement, loosens our chains, and changes our whole being. Enlightenment, - must I enumerate more? - is the best and most exalted of God's gifts... This gift, just as its giver, Christ, is called by many names... We call it a gift, grace, baptism, anointing, enlightenment, the garment of incorruptibility, bath of regeneration, a seal and all that is for us worthy of honor."

ПРАЗНИК ГОСПОДНЬОГО БОГОЯВЛІННЯ

“Тоді прибув Ісус із Галилеї на йордан до Йоана, щоб христитися від нього” (Матей 3, 13)

Св. Церква перед празником Господнього Богоявління у своїх богослуженнях взиває своїх вірних: “Вифлеєм оставивши, преславне чудо, скоро спішімо до йордану душею теплою і там побачимо страшне таїнство” (Світилен утрени з 3-го січня). Це страшне таїнство – це таїнство Господнього Богоявління, це Хрищення Господа нашого Ісуса Христа в ріці Йордані. В цьому таїнстві Ісус Христос об’являє себе, як Месію і Спасителя. Про Його Боже післанництво свідчить при Хрищенні сам Отець Небесний голосом із неба: “Ти еси Син мій любий, у тобі – моє уподобання” (Мар. 1, 11); свідчить Святий Дух, що у виді голуба сходить на Нього; свідчить і св. Іван Христитель вказуючи на Нього: “Ось Агнець Божий, який гріхи світу забирає” (Ів. 1, 29).

Празник Господнього Богоявління належить до найдавніших і найбільших празників нашого церковного року. На особну увагу заслуговує його назва, його історія та об’явлення таїнства Пресв. Трійці.

НАЗВА ПРАЗНИКА

Празник Господнього Богоявління у перших віках християнства уважався збірним празником, бо лучив у собі більше подій із життя Ісуса Христа, які свідчили про Його Божество, а саме, Його Різдво, поклін мудреців, хрищення, чудо в Кані Галилейській і чудесне розмноження хліба. Тому й нашу назву “Богоявління” треба розуміти у множині, бо вона означає празник святих Богоявлінь.

У давнину на празник Богоявління відбувалося урочисте хрищення оглашених, яке звано також світлом або просвіченням, а оглашенні звалися просвічені. Звідси і празник Богоявління звався просвіченням, празником світел і святими світлами, бо Ісус прийшов, щоб усіх просвітити. “Народ, який сидів у темноті – читаємо у св. Євангелії – побачив велике світло. Тим, що сиділи в країні й тіні смерті, - зійшло їм світло” (Мат. 4, 16). Деякі автори є тієї думки, що цей празник ще й тому звався празником світел, бо в часі хрищення оглашених освітлювано Божий храм великим množеством свічок, які були символом світла пізнання правдивого Бога.

Св. Григорій Богослов (†389) своїй проповіді на Богоявління дає таку назву: Слово на святі світла явлінь Господніх. Він так її починає: “Знову мій Ісус і знову таїнство... (себто знову новий празник після Христового Різдва), таїнство взнесле й божественне, що звіщає нам небесну світлість! Бо святий день світел, що його ми дочекалися і удостоїлися празнувати, має за початок Хрищення могого Христа “справжнє світло, що просвічує кожную людину, що приходить на світ” (Іван 1, 9). А в наступній проповіді про святе Хрищення він обширніше пояснює, що розуміє під просвіченням. “Вчора ми празнували - каже він - пресвітлий день світел... а сьогодні говоритимемо про хрищення і його благодійне, ділання на нас... Просвічення це підмога у нашій немочі, відложення тіла, прямування за Духом, приставання зі Словом, направа створення, потоплення гріха, причастя світла, розвіяння темноти.

Просвічення це колісниця, що підносить до Бога, співподорожування з Христом, скріплення віри, здосконалення ума, ключ царства небесного, переміна життя, скинення неволі, розв’язання кайдан, переміна єства. Просвічення, - чи маю ще більше вичисляти? - це найлучший і найвеличнійший з Божих дарів ... Та цей дар, як і його Датель Христос, зветься багатьма різними іменами ... Ми його зємо даром, благодаттю, хрищенням, помазанням, просвіченням, одіжжю нетління, купіллю відродження, печаттю і всім, що для нас гідне почеси”.

<i>Sunday Collection: December 21, 2008:</i>	
8:00 AM	\$284.00
10:00 AM	\$545.00
Pancake Breakfast:	\$169.00
Bake Sale:	\$492.00
<u>Card Sales, etc...</u>	<u>\$247.00</u>
Total:	\$1,737.00
<i>Christmas Collection: December 25, 2008:</i>	
10:00 PM Christmas Eve:	\$245.00
<u>10:00 AM Christmas Day:</u>	<u>\$2,809.00</u>
Total:	\$3,054.00
<i>Sunday Collection: December 28, 2008:</i>	
8:00 AM	\$70.00
10:00 AM	\$338.00
<u>Candles:</u>	<u>\$49.50</u>
Total:	\$457.50

“Blessing homes of Byzantine Christians is done each year on or after the feast of Theophany. This act is the central sign of God’s sanctification of all things through Christ’s baptism in the river Jordan and his epiphany to the world.

Small churches – The family is considered, by the Eastern Christian faith, to be a small church. The family table is the home altar where the members gather each day to receive their daily bread from God with thanksgiving in the name of Christ.

Sanctification of the home – The sanctification of the home takes place with prayer and the sprinkling of holy water. The priest, at this annual visit, asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. Everyone of the house, prays together for the living and the dead of the family, and all who live and have lived in the house. They all sing the hymn of salvation and process from room to room while the priest blesses the house.

Traditions of the ceremony differ according to local custom, but these general guidelines should be observed:

A candle with an icon and some holy water should be placed in a suitable place, such as kitchen or dining room table, or a home altar. Also, a list of first names for whom prayers are to be offered, including members of the family and all those living in the house. The list should have a clear distinction between the living and the dead. If it is the practice to give the priest a gift, it should not be placed with the holy objects on the table. It can be prepared in advanced, but given at the conclusion of the service.

When the priest comes, all who are present in the house should gather around the icon with the candle. They should, if they are able to join in, say the Trisagion Prayers and sing of the Troparion of the Feast of Epiphany. Then a family member leads the priest through the house with the candle. As he goes, he sprinkles holy water, and prays for a blessing upon each room and the activity that goes on there. When they have gone through the entire house, the family gathers again around the table and the priest blesses each person present.” - Orthodoxwiki

If you wish to have your home blessed, please fill out the request slip included in the bulletin and drop in the collection, or call Fr. James to arrange a time.

Українська Католицька Парафія Матері Божої Неустаючої Помочі

Церква Святого Пророка й Предтечи Йоана Хрестителя
Святиня Святого Миколая, Архієпископа Мір Лікійського, Чудотворця

Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Church of the Holy Prophet, Forerunner and Baptizer John
Shrine of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycea

4400 Palm Avenue
La Mesa, CA 91941
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

Папox: о. Яків Бенькстон
Pastor: Fr. James Bankston
frjames@mac.com
Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

The Baptism of the Lord and Our Baptism

The prophet proclaimed, "He desires mercy," thereby announcing from on high the mystery of baptism and the immeasurable grace of the Crucified. It is Christ who desires mercy, and this was His reason for becoming man. He who was born without opening the virginal womb "will turn again and take pity on us." Indeed, He has taken pity on us by freeing us from error. Upon the cross He triumphed over all sin. "He has cast our sins into the depths of the sea," for He has washed them away in the saving waters of Baptism.

Consider what Baptism is and proclaim its grace. All blessings are contained in it. It purifies the world; it restores nature. It is a speedy redemption, a simple remedy, a liquid fire that burns away sin, a sponge that purifies the conscience, a garment that never wears out. It is a womb that conceives without passion, a tomb in which those who are buried are born again. It is the ocean in which sins are drowned, the element that witnesses to the devil's defeat. It is the seal of Him who takes possession of the fortress, the unfailing advocate before the Judge. It is the stream that extinguishes the fires of hell, the grace that gives admission to the supper of the Lord. It is a mystery, both old and new, foreshadowed even in the time of Moses. To Christ our God be glory forever, through endless ages. Amen.

Basil of Seleucia

I would like to have Fr. James bless my home.

Прошу прийти і поблагословити наш дім.

(Fr. James will call to arrange a time - о. Яків подзвонить щоб домовитись)

Ім'я/Name: _____

Адреса/Address: _____

Тел:/Telephone: _____