

January 7, 2024
Sunday after Theophany



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fighting the Good Fight with Faith

*Christ is Baptized! In the Jordan! ~ Christos Krescajetsja! Vo Jordani!
Христос Крестается! в Иордане!*

Propers for this Sunday: Resurrectional Tone 7: pg. 156 & For Theophany: pp. 316 - 318

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., JAN. 7	SUNDAY after THEOPHANY
8:30 A.M.	DIVINE LITURGY + George David , offered by Elaine Cevkovich
2:30 P.M.	Blessing of waters at Bridgewater Crossing
SUN., JAN. 14	SUNDAY of ZACCHAEUS
8:30 A.M.	LEAVE-TAKING of THEOPHANY DIVINE LITURGY + Mary Salamon , offered by Rich Mudron

Theophany Blessing:

TODAY, Fr. Geoff will administer the Great Blessing of the Water at the confluence of the Beaver and Ohio Rivers at Bridgewater Crossing at **2:30 PM**. Bridgewater Crossing is located on Mulberry Street Extension, Beaver, PA. This will be *in addition to* the Great Blessing of Water that takes place in our parish.

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Christos Krescajetsja! Vo Jordani!*

Happy Birthday Greetings:

January 10: Anne Gural, January 11: Diane Ketterer

Wedding Anniversaries this Week:

January 13: Kenneth & Joanne Futato

Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins

Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan

Josephine Maruhnich – **Beaver Elder Care** (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001)

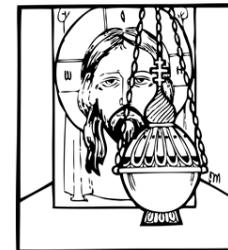
Betty Polas – **Apple Blossom Senior Living** (125 Apple Blossom Way, #307, Moon Twp., PA 15108)

Carol Huchko – **Concordia at Villa St. Joseph** (1040 State St, Baden, PA 15005)

Epistle Readers – January 7: Prudy Peya – January 14: JoAnn Hersh

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – January 7: R. Mudron – January 14: F. Hersh



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

January 7 - 13, 2024

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

Our Parishioners

Oh things strange beyond compare! How should the boundless River that makes glad the city of God have been dipped in a little water? The illimitable Spring that bears life to all, and has no end, was covered by poor and temporary waters! He who is present everywhere, and absent nowhere, who is incomprehensible to angels and invisible to men, comes to baptism according to His own good pleasure.

St. Hippolytus

Pirohi Sale This Week



Our next Pirohi sale will be this **Friday, January 12**. . **If you can spare some time to help make pirohi, work begins Tuesday at 9:00 A.M., other work days determined as we go. Friday, the day of the sale, come any time in the morning to help.** Any amount of time you can spare will be greatly appreciated. And order your dinner for Friday! Orders should be called in by **Thursdays at noon at (724) 375-6652**. God Bless our pirohi workers and customers!

Thank you!

Receive Him

John's preaching of repentance was not precisely the same as the preaching of Jesus, yet the Savior preaches in ways commensurable with John, for there is one God who sent them both. John first says "repent" in order to make ready a "people prepared" for God. Jesus, when he has received a people who have been made ready and who have already repented, does not merely say to them "Repent." For he does not preach in competition with the law and the prophets. When John had fulfilled the old covenant, Jesus "began to preach" the new, being himself the beginning of it. For this reason the words "he began" are not written of John, for he was an end. Moreover, the one preaches in the wilderness, the other in the midst of the people. (*Origen*)

L	O	C	U	S	T	S	S	M	E	JOHN
R	E	I	E	G	A	S	S	E	M	PREACHED
E	E	O	R	N	I	T	E	S	D	WILDERNESS
R	R	V	D	I	N	I	N	S	E	MESSAGE
T	R	A	I	E	V	I	R	E	H	REPENT
Y	L	A	P	R	A	E	E	G	C	VOICE
S	E	E	N	E	C	A	D	A	A	PREPARE
E	R	N	B	I	R	I	L	N	E	BELT
C	N	H	O	J	A	P	I	A	R	LOCUSTS
I	O	V	I	H	I	S	W	S	P	HONEY
										SANDALS
										RIVER

A Note from Fr. Geoff

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today is New Year's Eve, a day when the civil calendar turns a page, and many people make resolutions to better themselves in the year to come. For Christians, rather than simply "New Year's Day," January 1st also has liturgical significance. For Eastern Christians, it is the Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord. For Latin Catholics, it is the Solemnity of the Mother of God (roughly equivalent to our Synaxis of the Theotokos on December 26). And for Anglicans, Lutherans, and some other Protestants, it is the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus.

Any one of these aspects of our faith - Christ's submission to the Mosaic Law, his being born of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, and his being named "Jesus" - are worthy of our contemplation. Yet unlike Christmas, this feast doesn't have much festivity and celebration associated with it. Instead, most Christians in the West are more likely to be thinking of the New Year and the possibilities that lie ahead.

The passage of time is itself is something that is worth pondering. On the Sunday before Christmas, we heard the Gospel passage of the genealogy of Christ (Matt. 1). And in it, we saw something of the *providential nature* of the passage of time and history; that is, that God is mysteriously working his purposes out both despite us and through us, frail and fallible human beings. The Benedictine monk Victor-Antoine d'Avila-Latourrette put it this way:

We can only begin to fathom the mystery of time when we look at it from God's perspective. For Him, time and eternity are intertwined. Today, we find ourselves firmly rooted in time but already looking ahead to eternity. With the passing of another year, our time on earth gets shorter, and eternity is much closer.

Christians do not cling to time, but learn to use it wisely. The reason for our life on earth, for our earthly pilgrimage, lies elsewhere. As a saint once put it, "We are given our time on earth for only one purpose, to gain eternal life." We look forward to the promised land, to our eternal home with God... All things earthly, including ourselves, pass away. God alone remains the same.

As we enter the Year of our Lord 2024, go ahead and make resolutions if you wish. But let us not focus only on our earthly life, but on the life of the age to come. The things that will last into eternity are not money, wealth, prestige, honor or any of the vanities of this life. Instead, let us invest in heaven by participating even now in the life to come: worship, mercy, generosity, kindness, forgiveness, patience, humility, peaceableness, and the other virtues by which we are able to show love for God and our neighbor.

As St. Paul exhorts us in Ephesians, let us "make the best use of our time," seeking wisdom from God to order our days and our lives. And let us not forget the *sacred* meaning of time and history which the Church's liturgical calendar can help us to remember.

And may God bless you all in 2024.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Geoff

Sunday after the Holy Theophany of Our Lord

“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.”

Our answer to the light: three candles, candles of faith, of hope and of love.

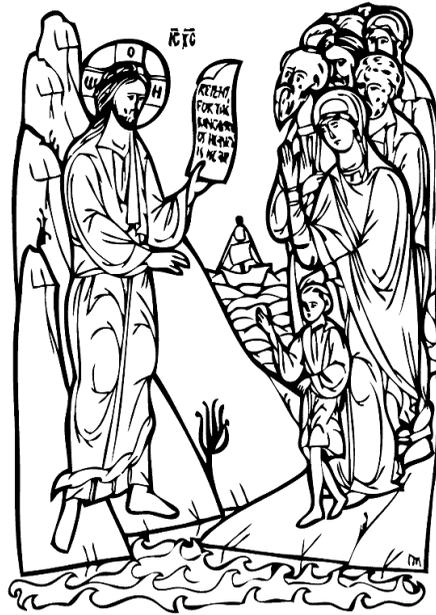
In the life of Jesus three lights were manifested: 1) the light of Nativity symbolized by the star that lead the Magi from the East to worship the Savior, it is the light of faith: we believe that Jesus is the Son of God; 2) the light of the Resurrection, which is the light of hope in eternal life; 3) the light of Pentecost, which is the light of Love; for the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Love.

The story of our Christian life is the story of our illumination by Jesus. Jesus comes as “a great light” to those who languish in the darkness of ignorance, despair, and hatred. 1) To those who sit in the darkness of ignorance, He lights the candle of knowledge; 2) to those who sit in the darkness of despair, He lights the candle of hope; 3) to those who sit in the darkness of hatred, He lights the candle of love. And with these three theological virtues He lights candles of joy, forgiveness, peace, and meaning in the lives of people today.

When we enter the Church we light a candle. The processions of the Gospel and of the offerings are accompanied by candles. This is to remind us that we have received light from Christ and that, like Him, we too, ought to be lighting candles in the lives of people. We have the mission to spread the light of Christ in the world. He said of himself: “I am the light of the world.” The same thing He said to us: “You are the light of the world.” Then He added explaining what does mean to be the light of the world: “A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Mat. 5:14-16).

-Archbishop Cyril (Bustros)

Christ is Baptized! In the Jordan!



Christos Krescajetsja! ~ Vo Jordani!

The Holy Theophany Feast

We are currently in the Post-festive period of Holy Theophany, and it is designated to be a continuation of Our Lord Jesus' Baptism and the revelation of the Holy Trinity. This Sunday is referred to as the “Sunday after the Enlightenment.” This designation comes from the early Church from the Holy Mystery of Baptism which was referred to as the “Enlightenment.” It was the usual practice to administer baptism or the enlightenment on the Theophany Feast since Jesus' own baptism was being commemorated on this important feast day. At that time catechumens who were prepared for their initiation and admission into the Church received baptism, chrismation, and eucharist on that day. Therefore, this Sunday calls us to reflect on the importance of one's own baptism, and how its relevance and personal effect have called us to be God's new chosen people. What a privilege that has been bestowed upon us! We have been satiated with Jesus' Light and have partaken of the sanctified Jordan Water. We have been invested with Christ Himself. It is a time to ask ourselves if we have been living in accordance with His teachings and witnessing to His very presence. Our Faith goes far beyond being personal. It is to be shared with all that we meet. Are you reflecting the joy of this event which promises us heavenly glory or are we like others who are depressed and saddened by the negative events that surround us?



Blessing of Homes for Theophany

As is our pious Byzantine tradition, Fr. Geoff will be available to come to your home with the recently blessed Jordan water and bless your home. This short service only takes a few minutes and is a wonderful way for you to "bring your faith home" and unite your home and family life with the life that we share together as a parish community. If you would like to have Fr. Geoff come to bless your home this year, please print your name, address, and phone number on the sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Fr. Geoff will then call you to set up a convenient time for the rite of blessing.



*In our Byzantine Rite, we have inherited many meaningful customs which make our liturgical worship inspiring, spiritually rich and close to the heart of our people. **The Holy Spirit reminds us “not to reject the traditions of our elders, which they have learned from their fathers”***

(Sirach 8:9).

Seasonal Christian Greeting for the Theophany Feast

The greeting that we salute each other with January 6 - 14 is **Christ is Baptized!** The response is **In the Jordan!** And in Slavonic, **Christos Krescajetsja!** With the response **Vo Jordani!** Let us glorify the Lord this festive season by greeting and responding with this traditional custom celebrating the Lord Jesus' Baptism!

ST. GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Religious: Sr. Mary Virginia O' Carm

Holy Protection Convent, 1000 Clinton St. 724-378-0238



Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, Louisa Hersh, David Klacik, Dan Pinchot

Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff - Grounds Keepers: Rich Mudron, Rob Dzumba, Francis Hersh

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation Before and after Liturgies, or by appointment

Holy Mysteries of Initiation Contact the pastor

Holy Mystery of Anointing Contact the pastor prior to surgery or in the event of illness

Holy Mystery of Marriage Contact the pastor six months prior to wedding

Pirohi Sales 2nd Friday of each month

St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club Everyone welcome to participate

Opportunities for StewardshipChurch and grounds cleaning and maintenance: Every Saturday,

Pirohi making: 2nd week of each month.

Wherefore, O Master, sanctify this water by your Holy Spirit!

Grant sanctification, blessing, cleansing, and health to all who touch it, are blessed with it, or who partake of it...