

SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD,
GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST



Icon of Theophany -- January 6th

January 7, 2024: Sunday After Theophany		
Epistle: Eph. 4: 7-13		Gospel: Mt. 4: 12-17
This Weekend	4:00	+ Roman Kushner (John & Mary Ann Turko)
	10:30	For Our Parishioners)
Mon., Jan. 8	9:00	+ Ann Matkosky (Bill & Jane Granza)
Tues., Jan. 9	9:00	+ Molly Fabri (Lauren Telep)
Wed., Jan. 10	9:00	+ Barbara Chmil (Kerri, Rachel & Vanessa Mazur)
Thurs., Jan. 11	9:00	+ Gene Maslar (John & Mary Ann Turko)
Fri., Jan. 12	9:00	+ Pauline Kiballa (Mike & Sally Wilson-Huffstutler)
Sat., Jan. 13	No Morning Divine Liturgy	
	2:00	Confessions
	4:00 pm	For Our Parishioners
Sun., Jan. 14	10:30	+ Micky Klapatch (John & Mary Ann Turko)

Postfeast of The Holy Theophany of Our Lord

Antiphon 1

When Israel and Jacob's children came forth from Egypt, out from a barbarian people, * Judah became His sanctuary, Israel became His domain.

*Through the prayers of the Mother of God, * Savior, save us.*

The sea saw God's people coming and parted for them; * when the Jordan saw them coming, its running waters ceased to flow.

*Through the prayers of the Mother of God, * Savior, save us.*

Why is it, O sea, that you parted, * and what caused you,
O Jordan, to turn back your flow?

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, Savior, save us.

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Third Antiphon

Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord, let us acclaim God, our Savior.

O Son of God, baptized by John in the Jordan,

save us who sing to You Alleluia.

Let us come before His face with praise, and acclaim Him in psalms.

O Son of God, baptized by John in the Jordan,

save us who sing to You Alleluia.

For God is the great Lord and the great king over all the earth.

O Son of God, baptized by John in the Jordan,

save us who sing to You Alleluia.

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Entrance Hymn

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.

O Son of God, baptized by John in the Jordan,

save us who sing to You Alleluia.

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Hymn to the Mother of God

Extol, my soul, Christ the King, who was baptized in the Jordan. No tongue can fittingly sing your praises. * Even superior intelligences far above your world appear feeble when they praise you, O Mother of God. * But in your goodness, accept our faith; * for you see that godly love we bear towards you, * as you are the Patroness of Christians.

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Communion Verse

The grace of God has appeared * bringing salvation to all people.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

RELIGIOUS Q & A

QUESTION: What is the symbolism of gold, frankincense, and myrrh that magi brought to Jesus?"

ANSWER: Gold is a precious metal and as such was a very valuable commodity. Its value could very well have financed Joseph and Mary's trip

to Egypt. Gold is a symbol of divinity and is mentioned throughout the Bible. The gift of gold to the Christ child was symbolic of His divinity — God in the flesh.

Frankincense is a white resin or gum. It is obtained from a tree by making incisions in the bark and

allowing the gum to flow out. It is highly fragrant when burned and was therefore used in worship, where it was burned as a pleasant offering to God (Exodus 30:34). Frankincense is a symbol of holiness and righteousness. The gift of frankincense to the Christ-child was symbolic of His willingness to become a sacrifice, wholly giving Himself up, analogous to a burnt offering.

Myrrh was also a product of Arabia, and was obtained from a tree in the same manner as frankincense.

It was a spice and was used in embalming. It was also sometimes mingled with wine to form an article of drink. Such a drink was given to our Savior when He was about to be crucified, as a stupefying potion (Mark 15:23). Matthew 27:34 refers to it as "gall." Myrrh symbolizes bitterness, suffering, and affliction. The baby Jesus would grow to suffer greatly as a man and would pay the ultimate price when He gave His life on the cross for all who would believe in Him.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

"As rain is necessary that plants may live and be refreshed, so prayer is necessary for the nourishment of the life of the soul." -- St. John Chrysostom.

And yet, although prayer is so necessary, why do some people neglect it? A few reasons are: the weakness of human nature as a result of original sin; sloth; a personal attachment to the materialism of the world; failure to cooperate with the actual grace of God, etc.

Each day **adore** your Creator, the one God in three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; **thank** God for the countless graces received;

make reparation to God for your offenses; **petition** God for benefits for yourself and for others -- living and departed.

The Divine Liturgy includes the above four purposes, and is the greatest form of prayer that a creature can give to the Creator. Consistently participate in this Sublime Sacrifice!

Say all the traditional prayers with fixed number of words. But also use your own words to tell God of your anxieties, problems, sufferings, intentions, etc.

Parents and children should pray together at least once a day. *"A family that prays together stays together."*

In the words of St. Paul: *“pray without ceasing.”* Pray especially in time of spiritual and temporal danger. Never be a prayer-quitter; always persevere. Continue with your efforts

to ward off distractions. Finally, as St. Alphonsus Liguori reminds us: *“One who prays will be saved, but one who does not pray will be lost.”*

-- by Msgr. John Squiller

STEWARDS OF COMMITMENT

As infants our faith was given to us by our parents. They loved us enough to bring us to God and ask him to give us new life; and we were baptized.

As we celebrate the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, God is revealed to us. He shows us the way to salvation and like John the Baptizer, he calls to us “Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand.” It may sound like dooms day prophets, but it’s not. “Repent” simply means “turning back to God”.

This Sunday after Theophany we have the opportunity to recommit ourselves to our saying yes to Jesus, saying yes to the cross, saying yes to committing ourselves to carry on the work of love, and mercy, kindness and tolerance that Jesus preached and lived. As we sing “we who are baptized into Christ have put on Christ” may we choose for ourselves the Way, the Truth, and the Life that Jesus offers us as the Son of God.

JESUS AT THE WINDOW

There was a little boy visiting his grandparents on their farm. He was given a slingshot to play with out in the woods. He practiced in the woods but he could never hit the target. Discouraged, he headed back to dinner. As he was walking back he saw Grandma’s pet duck. Just on an impulse, he let the slingshot fly, hit the duck square in the head and killed it. He was shocked and grieved. In a panic,

he hid the dead duck in the woodpile only to see his sister watching.

Sally had seen it all but she said nothing. After lunch that day Grandma said, “Sally, let’s wash the dishes.” But Sally said, “Grandma, Johnny told me he wanted to help in the kitchen.” Then she whispered to him, “Remember the duck?” So Johnny did the dishes. Later that day, Grandpa asked if the children wanted to go fishing and Grandma

said, "I'm sorry but I need Sally to help make supper." But Sally just smiled and said, "Well, that's all right because Johnny told me he wanted to help." She whispered again, "Remember the duck?"

So Sally went fishing and Johnny stayed to help. After several days of Johnny doing both his chores and Sally's he finally couldn't stand it

any longer. He came to Grandma and confessed that he had killed the duck. Grandma knelt down, gave him a hug and said, "Sweetheart, I know. You see, I was standing at the window and I saw the whole thing. But, because I love you, I forgave you. I was just wondering how long you would let Sally make a slave of you."

KEEP GREETING ONE ANOTHER

A reminder to all: just as we prepared for Christmas with a 40-day preparation and fasting period, so now we celebrate the bright days of Christmas, New Year's, and Theophany for 40 days. Please continue to sing our beautiful Christmas carols, and to greet one another with our traditional "Christos Razhdayetsia! Slavite Yeho! Christ

is Born! Glorify Him!" During the darkness of the Winter months, do all you can to keep the bright light of Christ burning brightly! Let Christ shine through you!

Note: according to tradition, we continue to sing Christmas carols up until the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord on February 2nd.

HOLY WATER KEPT AT HOME THE YEAR AROUND

It is customary to take holy water home and preserve it for use from time to time. St. John Chrysostom alluded to this practice when he wrote: "The faithful take water home and keep it throughout the year." Some bless themselves with it after confession, crossing their foreheads with

it as a physical expression that the Master has cleansed His soiled disciple. Others blessed themselves with it each morning. Others keep the holy water and home in order to partake of it in time of illness or other personal or family needs.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

It is very rare that the Divine Liturgy is canceled, especially on a Sunday. I want to encourage those of you who must walk further or more importantly, who drive to church, to PLEASE USE COMMON SENSE, when making a determination about attending the Divine Liturgy on the

snowy, icy, inclement weekend or even more so on the weekday. If attendance means putting yourself and others at risk, I am sure the Lord understands if you should decide to pray at home. Please use common sense and a well-informed conscience when making such a decision.

WBS PENGUINS HOCKEY

We are considering having a Parish Group outing to a Wilkes-Barre Scranton Penguins Hockey game. The date would be on Saturday, Feb-

ruary 24, 2024 at 6 pm. If you are interested in attending, please let Fr. Nestor know as soon as possible so that tickets may be obtained.

CHRISTMAS CAROL SING ALONG

“YOU ARE INVITED to join Saints Peter & Paul Ukrainian Greek Catholic Parish for their 29th Annual Christmas Carol Sing Along in the church at 635 North River Street in Wilkes-Barre, Sunday, January 7th, 2024 starting at 2 p.m. Join in the singing of some very sacred, joyful

and inspiring Christmas Carols. Afterwards, please join us in the lower church hall for a Christmas Fellowship Social. Please bring a friend or family member, and share the joy of Christmas with them, as we all welcome the Newborn Son of God into our hearts and homes.”

COLLECTION PROCESSING TEAM...

The Collection Processing Team for the month of January 2024 is Team

#1: Jerry Sereditch, Michaelene Davis, and Gloria Jablonski.

Sunday Collection for Dec. 30 & 31: \$

Ss. Cyril & Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church

135 River St., Olyphant, PA 18447-1435

Telephone: 570-291-4451 Fax: 570-489-6918

Web Site: stcyrils.weconnect.com

E-Mail: sscyrilandmethodius@comcast.net

Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

Let Us Venerate Today the Baptism of Christ ... Wash Yourselves and Be Clean

I cannot restrain my joy; my heart is deeply moved and filled with delight. Forgetting my weakness, I long to undertake the mission of the great John the Baptist; though I am not the Forerunner, I have indeed come from the desert!

Christ receives the sacrament of enlightenment, or rather He enlightens us with His brilliance. He is baptized; let us go down into the water with Him so that we may also come up with Him. John is baptizing, and Jesus comes to him. Christ certainly sanctifies the man who now baptizes Him, but His purpose is chiefly to bury the old Adam in the waters and, above all, to sanctify the waters of the Jordan by His baptism in them so that just as He was spirit and flesh, those who would later be baptized might be sanctified by the power of the Spirit and by water.

John refuses; Jesus insists. "It is you that should be baptizing me!" says John. The torch addresses the Sun, the voice speaks to the Word. Jesus comes out of the water, drawing the world with Him, as it were, and raising it up when it had hitherto been sunk in the abyss. He sees the heavens not being rent, but opening of their own accord.

The first Adam had of old closed heaven to himself and us, just as he had seen the earthly paradise being closed to him, with a fiery sword barring access. The Holy Spirit bears witness. Here all is in perfect harmony, for the testimony comes from heaven, just as He to whom the Spirit bears witness has come from heaven.

St. Gregory the Theologian