



***The Sunday after
Theophany***

***Troparion of the Resurrec-
tion, Tone 4***

When the women disciples learned from the angel, the joyous message of Thy Resurrection. They cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the Apostles: death is overthrown, Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy.

***Troparion of the Annuncia-
tion, Tone 4***

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

***Troparion of Epiphany,
Tone 8***

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bare witness to Thee, and called Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of His Word. O Christ, our God, who hast revealed Thyself and hast enlightened the world, Glory to Thee!

Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

January 9th , Tone 4, Matt.4:12-17

This Sunday falls between January 7th and 13th. The gospel (Matt. 4:12-17) is like and echo of the feast of Epiphany. It starts the imprisonment of the Precursor, something we shall speak of later on. At this news, Jesus leaves the region of the Jordan. He comes back into Galilee and stays at Capernaum. Thus, says the gospel, the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim is fulfilled: "The people that sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region of the shadow of death light is sprung up." This reminds us that Epiphany is the "feast of lights". The light manifested on the banks of the Jordan now spreads into Galilee. Little by little, it will spread to the whole world.

Jesus begins to preach. The theme of his preaching is exactly the same as John's: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". But, for John, the kingdom was "coming", whereas for Jesus, the kingdom is already "at hand": the kingdom is now identified with him who announces it. Jesus is the essence and the power of the kingdom. Nevertheless, this kingdom is only at its beginning. We shall see it grow, and it will not cease growing until the end of time.

This is what the epistle read at the Liturgy (Eph. 4: 7-13) announces, in which St. Paul declares that when the edification of Christ's body is completed we shall "all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ". The Liturgical Year, an abridgement of the history of salvation, represents this growth symbolically for us, from Christmas until the time after Pentecost. It thus outlines the development of our own inner life --the life of Christ in us.

From the Lives of the Saints...

THE HOLY MARTYR POLYEUCTUS

The Armenian city of Melitene was drenched with the blood of Christians, as was the entire country of Armenia. The first blood shed for Christ in this city was that of Saint Polyeuctus in the year 259 A.D., during the reign of Valerian. In Melitene were two friends: Nearchus and Polyeuctus. Both were officers--Nearchus baptized and Polyeuctus was unbaptized. When the command of the emperor was sent out concerning the persecution of the Christians, Nearchus prepared for death; but he was in great sorrow because he had not succeeded in

Christ is Born! Glorify Him Announcements and Activities

Cancellation of the Liturgy for St. Anthony— Tomorrow's planned Liturgy for St. Anthony is cancelled. Lord willing, we'll do the Liturgy for St. Anthony next year. Fr. Lawrence is at the present moment a bit swamped with numerous things that need to be done.

Saturday Great Vespers— on Saturday, at 5:30 PM.

Sunday Divine Liturgy— 10AM.

House Blessings— will begin the evening of January 6th. Fr. Lawrence placed a sign-up sheet for House Blessings in the Social Hall, on the table against the wall with the double doors to the patio. If, in addition to the blessing itself, you are interested in dining or having refreshments, you'll want to adjust the time you sign up for accordingly. You'll recall that we did not have House Blessings last year. There are, of course, still concerns about the new Omicron variant and its highly contagious profile. If you would prefer to not have Fr. Lawrence come for now, he understands completely and will gladly do it at another time when you are feeling more comfortable. We will need to be somewhat cautious with our schedules, as we do not want to have to close the church down from an outbreak of Covid. If anyone in the household is sick with a fever, just call Fr. Lawrence and we'll reschedule; better than having to close the parish for one to two weeks, under His Eminence's guidelines. If Fr. Lawrence falls ill, he will, of course, cancel and reschedule with you by phone. Our goal is, as always, to finish House Blessings before the start of Great Lent.

Church School/Adult Ed.— will next meet on Sunday, February 6th, at 9AM. We'll forego January 23rd, as it's the day of the Annual Meeting.

Coffee Hours— This week's Coffee Hour is bagels and coffee. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Matushka and Fr. Lawrence

Annual Meeting— **Mark Your Calendars to be sure to be here on Sunday, January 23rd. We need a little larger quorum to enact the bylaws changes arising from the new standardized Diocesan Bylaws that were adopted last October.** Last year we were outside in the wind for the meeting. Depending on weather—we'll see—my thought is that we can do a potluck outside and meet inside wearing our masks. Voting Members are defined in our Bylaws as those parishioners 18 years of age, have been to Confession and Communion at least once in the last 12 months and have supported the parish with Time, Talent and Resources, as they are able. If you have any doubts about your voting status, speak with Fr. Lawrence. Catechumens and friends of the parish may come and fully participate as observers.

Pray for... Hierarch Nikolai (Soraich)—battling cancer. Samir's friend, Johnny, who has been improving in the battle to save his sight. Brian, Sunday's brother. George and Alex, health problems. All those who have lost their lives or are suffering as a result of the cur-

verting his friend Polyeuctus to the True Faith. When Polyeuctus learned of the reason for Nearchus's sorrow, he promised to embrace the Faith. The following day Polyeuctus related this dream to Nearchus: the Lord Himself had appeared to him in light, removed Polyeuctus's old clothes from him and dressed him in radiant new clothes and sat him in the saddle of a winged horse. After this, Polyeuctus went to town, shredded the emperor's decree concerning the torturing of Christians, and destroyed many statues of idols. He was tortured and condemned to death. When he was brought to the place of execution, he looked at Nearchus in the throng of people and joyfully cried out to him: "Save yourself, my dear friend! Remember the vow of love confirmed between the two of us!" Later, St. Nearchus died by fire as a martyr for Christ. St. Nearchus is commemorated April 22.

THE VENERABLE EUSTRATIUS

Eustratius was a native of Tarsus. He was a great ascetic and a man of prayer. During the seventy-five years he spent in the monastery, Eustratius never laid down to sleep on his left side but always on his right. Throughout the Divine Services, from the beginning to the end, he repeated to himself: "Lord have mercy!" He reposed in his ninety-fifth year.

SAINT PHILIP, METROPOLITAN OF MOSCOW

Philip was born February 11, 1507 A.D. Once, while standing in church as a young boy, he heard the priest read from the Gospel: No man can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24). He became very frightened by these words, as though they had been spoken to him alone, and at that same moment he became enlightened by them. He then withdrew to the Solovki Monastery where, after a long and difficult novitiate (period of probation), he was tonsured a monk. In time, Philip became the abbot and shone as the sun, and the whole of Russia heard of him. Hence, Tsar Ivan the Terrible summoned Philip to fill the vacant see of the Metropolitan of Moscow in the year 1566 A.D. However, this holy man could not endure with indifference the atrocities of the terrible tsar, and therefore he counseled and rebuked him without fear. The tsar found some false witnesses against Philip, ousted him from office, ordered that he be dressed in a simple and tattered monastic cassock and imprisoned him in Tver on December 23, 1569 A.D. Malyuta Skuratov, one of the tsar's confidants, came to Philip's cell and suffocated him with a pillow. Shortly afterward, all those who were opposed to Philip died evil deaths. After several years, the body of the saint, which was discovered whole, incorrupt and fragrant, was translated to the Monastery of Solovki.

Prologue of Ochrid, edited and written by St. Nikolai

"There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives" (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)