



## Weekly Bulletin

# Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

### After-feast Theophany

#### *Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 7*

By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death! To the thief, Thou didst open Paradise! For the myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy! And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy!

#### *Troparion of Theophany, Tone 1*

When Thou, O Lord was baptized in the Jordan, the Worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bear witness to Thee and called Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the Form of a Dove, confirmed the truthfulness of His words. O Christ, our God Who hast revealed Thyself, and hast enlightened the world, Glory to Thee

#### *Kontakion of Theophany, Tone*

Today, Thou hast appeared to the universe, and Thy light, O Lord, has shone on us, who with understanding praise Thee: Thou has come and revealed Thyself, O Light Unapproachable

### *The 32nd Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 7, January 14th, Luke 18:35-43*

Theophany is understood as a feast in which the event of the baptism of Jesus by John in the Jordan is commemorated and glorified (Mt. 3:13-17. Mk. 1:9-11. Lk. 3:21-22). This feast is called Theophany because during the baptism of the Lord the Divine, All-holy Trinity was revealed: God the Father spoke from heaven about the Son, the Son of God was baptized by John and was witnessed by God the Father, and the Holy Spirit descended on the Son in the form of a dove.

This explanation of the feast is given by the Holy Church in its troparion: "When Thou, O Lord, was baptized in the Jordan"... Since ancient times this feast also was known as the day of illumination and the feast of lights because God is the light and reveals Himself to illumine "those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death" (Mt. 4:16) and to save according to grace, who has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior" (2 Tim. 1:9-10) and because on the Eve of Theophany it was the custom to baptize the catechumens, which actually is spiritual illumination and during which many lamps are lit... The Lord, according to the teaching of St. John of Damascus, was baptized not because He Himself needed cleansing, but in order, having taken our cleansing upon Himself, to destroy the heads of the serpents in the water, "to bury human sin through water" and all of the old Adam, to fulfill the law, to open the mystery of the Trinity and, finally, to consecrate "the essence of water" and to grant us a paradigm and an example of baptism. Therefore the Holy Church, celebrating the baptism of the Lord, confirms our faith in the highest, incomprehensible mystery of the Three Persons in one Godhead and teaches us with equal honor to profess and glorify the Holy Trinity, One in Essence and Undivided; accuses and destroys the errors of the ancient false teachers: Patripassians or Sabellians, Arians, Macedonians and others who rejected the triunity of Persons in one Godhead, together with those false teachers who taught the human nature of the Son of God was a phantom; shows the necessity of baptism for the believers in Christ, inspires in us feelings of boundless gratitude to the Enlightener and the Cleanser of our sinful nature, teaches that our purification and salvation from sin is only by the power of grace of the Holy Spirit, and, specifying the necessity of the worthy use of the gifts of grace of baptism and the protection in purity of those precious garments of which we are reminded on the feast of the Baptism by the words: "as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27), commands us the purification of our souls and hearts in order to be worthy of the blessed life ...Theophany arose in apostolic times. It is mentioned in the Apostolic Constitutions, and from the 2nd century the witness of Clement of Alexandria about the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord and doing the night vigil, spent reading the Holy Scripture before this feast; in the 3rd century the Holy Martyr Hippolytus and Gregory of Neocaesaria

## **Announcements and Activities**

**Divine Liturgy for St. Anthony the Great**— Wednesday, at 9AM.

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

**Divine Liturgy**— Sunday, at 10AM.

**Coffee Hour**— This week's Coffee Hour is bagels and coffee. Next week's Coffee Hour will be the potluck before the Annual Meeting. Bring your favorite dish..

**Parish Council**— today, after the Liturgy and Coffee Hour.

**Church School/Adult Ed**— January 28th, at 9AM.

**Annual Meeting**— this is the second of three, required announcements before our Annual Meeting— which will take place next Sunday, January 21st, after the Divine Liturgy and a potluck. Voting members are, according to the Parish Bylaws, those who are 18 years of age, have received the Sacraments of Holy Confession and Holy Communion at least once in the past 12 months and offer support, as they are able, through the giving of Time, Talent and Resources. That may seem like it excludes others; it does not. We always welcome catechumens and those otherwise present to attend and contribute ideas. It just excludes non-Orthodox and non I always let members know that a portion of our income goes to the Diocese and the Central Church in order that the Diocese and the Central Church be funded.

**Pray for...** Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy**— who are ill. **Jonathan**— ill. **Reposed Barbara Ranjo**. . **Laure**— battling Cancer. **Paul**— ill **Ralph**—ill **Archpriest Lawrence**, from Canada, progressive eye disease. **Tsige Roman**— our beloved Tsige reposed on December 3rd. Please keep praying for her homeland of Ethiopia. **Brian**— ill. **Jonathan**—ill. **Katia**— sister of Shkbarra's . **Patrick**, reposed. **Heather Mary**— uncommon fatigue **Lou Mendez**. Battling ongoing health issues. **George and Steve**, a request from Luci. F. Dr. Joseph— personal needs. **Lance**— special request for prayers. **Christian**— prayers for upcoming surgery. **Michelle**— looking for housing. Mike Meko's Mother-in-law, **Lois**. Recovering from a fall. Larissa's newly-reposed husband **Raphael**. Departed **Matushka Priscilla** and **Newly-departed, George**. **Luci F. recovering from surgery**. **Newly-Departed Marylyn**; ill, **Diane**, ill, **Colin**. **Injured, Cody**. **John Truman**— lightheadedness and a recent fall. **Daniel** reposed, Tom and Amy, lost their son

rea; in the 4th century, the Holy Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, Ambrose of Milan, John Chrysostom, Augustine and many others talked about the event of Holy Theophany during the divine service for this feast; the Fathers of the Church: of the 5th century: Anatolius of Constantinople, of the 7th century: Andrew and Sophronius of Jerusalem; of the 8th century: Cosmas of Maium, John of Damascus and Germanus of Constantinople; of the 9th century, Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzas deposited many church hymns for this feast, that up to now are sung by the Church...

(taken from *The Server's Handbook*, by Bulgakov)

### **From the Lives of the Saints... SAINT SAVA [SABAS], ARCHBISHOP OF SERBIA**

Sava was born in 1169 A.D. He was the son of Stefan Nemanja the Grand Župan of Serbia. As a young man, Sava yearned for the spiritual life, for which he fled to the Holy Mountain [Mt. Athos], where he was tonsured a monk and lived according to the ascetic rule with rare zeal. Stefan Nemanja followed the example of his son and came to the Holy Mountain, where he was tonsured a monk and eventually fell asleep in the Lord as the monk Simeon.

Sava obtained the independence of the Serbian Church from the Byzantine emperor and the patriarch, and became the first Archbishop of Serbia. Together with his father, he built Hilandar Monastery and, after that, many other monasteries, churches and schools throughout the Serbian lands. On two occasions he made pilgrimages to the sacred places in the Holy Land. He restored peace between his two brothers, who were estranged because of a struggle for power. He restored peace between the Serbs and their neighbors. In establishing the Serbian Church, he also established the Serbian state and culture. He instilled peace between all the Balkan peoples and worked for the benefit of all--for which he was loved and respected by all who lived in the Balkans. He gave a Christian soul to the Serbian people--a soul that did not perish with the eventual collapse of the Serbian state. Sava reposed in Trnovo, Bulgaria, during the reign of Emperor Asen, on January 12, 1236 A.D., after becoming ill following the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of Theophany. King Vladislav translated his body to the Milešev Monastery, from which Sinan Pasha removed St. Sava's relics, to burn them on Vračar hill in Belgrade on April 27, 1595 A.D.

### **SAINT NINA, ENLIGHTENER OF GEORGIA**

Nina was a relative of St. George the Great-martyr and Juvenal the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Her parents belonged to the nobility in Cappadocia, and--since her parents were tonsured in the monastic state--Nina was educated under the tutelage of Patriarch Juvenal. Hearing about the people of Georgia, the virgin Nina, from an early age, desired to go to Georgia and to baptize the Georgians. The Most-holy Mother of God appeared to Nina and promised to take her to this land. When our Lord opened the way, the young Nina indeed traveled to Georgia, where, in a short period of time, she gained the love of the Georgian people. Nina succeeded in baptizing the Georgian King Mirian, his wife Nana and their son Bakar who, later on, zealously assisted Nina's missionary work. During her lifetime, Nina traveled throughout Georgia, converting the entire nation to the Christian Faith. She did her work at the time of the terrible persecution of Christians at the hands of Emperor Diocletian. Having rested from her many labors, Nina reposed in the Lord in the year 335 A.D. Her body is entombed in the Church of the Holy Great-martyr George in Bodbe Convent. She worked many miracles during her life and after her death.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, by St. Nikolai (Velimirovich)

*"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)*