

**THE ORDER FOR THE READER TYPIKA SERVICE**  
**WHEN WE ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND CHURCH**

**SUNDAY JANUARY 10, 2021**

**31st SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 6. Afterfeast of the Theophany. Sunday after Theophany.**  
St. Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa (4th c.). St. Dometian, Bishop of Melitene (601). St. Marcian, Presbyter, of Constantinople (5th c.). Ven. Paul, Abbot of Obnora (Vologdá – 1429). Ven. Macarius, Abbot, of Pisma (14th c.). Bl. Theosebia the Deaconess, sister of Ss. Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa (385). Ven. Antipas the Athonite (1882). St. Theophan the Recluse, Bishop of Tambov (1894).

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**\*THE SERVICE TAKES PLACE IN FRONT OF OUR ICON CORNER\***

EVERYONE: O, God cleanse me a sinner and have mercy on me! (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. O, Heavenly King, the Comforter the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life. Come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Thy Name's sake.

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the Singing of the First Antiphon.

*Bless the Lord, O my soul! Blessed are Thou, O Lord! Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases. The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long suffering and of great goodness. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Blessed art Thou, O Lord!*

**THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon.**

**The reader continues:**

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

**READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.**

**EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Second Antiphon.**

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

*Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have being. Put not your trust in princes, in sons of men in whom there is no salvation. When his breath departs he returns to his earth, on that very day his plans perish. The Lord will reign forever; Your God, O Zion, to all generation.*

*Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God, Who for our salvation didst will to be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, Who without change didst become man and wast crucified, Who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: O Christ our God, trampling down death by death, save us!*

**THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon.**

**The reader continues:**

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

**READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.**

**EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Third Antiphon.**

*In Thy Kingdom remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.*

**Followed by the singing of the appointed Troparia for the day:**

**TROPAR FOR THE RESURRECTION, TONE 6**

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, // glory to Thee.

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,*

**TROPAR FOR THE FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD, TONE 1**

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bore 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.

*Now and Ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**TROPAR FOR ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA, TONE 4**

In truth thou wast revealed to thy flock as a rule of faith, an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence; thy humility exalted thee; and thy poverty enriched thee. O Hierarch Father Gregory, entreat Christ our God // that our souls may be saved!

**THE EPISTLE LESSON**

**READER: The Prokeimenon is in the 1<sup>st</sup> Tone:**

**Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee**

CHOIR: *Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee*

**READER: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just!**

CHOIR: *Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee*

**READER: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us.**

CHOIR: *As we have set our hope on Thee*

**READER: THE READING IS FROM THE EPISTLE OF THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS.**

**READER:** Ephesians 4:7-13 (*Sunday After Theophany*)

**Brethren:**

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men."

(Now this, "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

**READER:** And to your spirit: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia

*CHOIR:* Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**READER:** I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.

*CHOIR:* Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**READER:** For Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens.

*CHOIR:* Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia

THE GOSPEL LESSON

**READER:** And that we may be accounted worthy of hearing the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord God.

**EVERYONE:** Lord have mercy (3x)

**READER:** Let us listen to the Holy Gospel. The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

**EVERYONE:** Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

**READER:** Matthew 4:12-17 (*Sunday After Theophany*)

**Let us Attend!**

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee.

And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.”

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

**EVERYONE:** Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

**READER:** Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.

**Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.**

**Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.**

**THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION is not said  
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

**READER:** Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

**READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.**

**EVERYONE: Amen.**

**READER: The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.**

*READER: Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be put to shame.*

**READER: The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.**

*READER: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**READER: The Choir of Holy Angels and Archangels, with all the Powers of Heaven, sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.**

### **THE SYMBOL OF FAITH (THE NICENE CREED)**

**EVERYONE:** I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of light; true God of true God, begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried. And the third day He arose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets.

In One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION is not said  
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

**READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.**

**EVERYONE:** Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**READER: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us and save us.**

**EVERYONE: Amen. (Followed by the singing of the appointed Kontakia)**

#### **KONTAKION FOR THE RESURRECTION, TONE 6**

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race.// He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

#### **KONTAKION FOR THE FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD, TONE 4**

Today Thou hast shone forth to the world, O Lord, and the light of Thy countenance has been marked on us. Knowing Thee, we sing Thy praises: "Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, // O unapproachable Light."

**READER: Lord have mercy (12x)**

**O All-Holy Trinity, Consubstantial Power, Undivided Kingdom, Origin of all Good: be graciously inclined unto me, a sinner. Make steadfast my heart and give it understanding, and take away from me every defilement. Enlighten my mind, that I may ever glorify, praise and worship Thee, and say: One is Holy, One is the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

**Blessed be the Name of the Lord, henceforth and forevermore. (3x)**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

PSALM 34

**READER:** I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be continually in my mouth. In the Lord shall my soul be praised; let the meek hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my troubles. Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be put to shame. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The Angel of the Lord will encamp around those who fear Him, and will deliver them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that hopes in Him. O fear the Lord, all you His saints; for there is no want for them that fear Him. The rich have become poor and have hungered; but they that seek the Lord shall lack no good thing. Come, O children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man that desires life, who loves to see days that are good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking deceit. Turn away from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears unto their supplication. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cried, and the Lord hear them, and He delivered them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are broken in heart, and will save them that are humble in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and out of them all shall the Lord deliver them. The Lord keeps all of their bones; not one of them shall be broken. The death of sinners is cruel, and they that hate the righteous shall do wrong. The Lord will redeem the soul of His servants, and none of them shall do wrong that hope in Him.

**READER:** More honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond than the Seraphim, without defilement, You gave birth to God the Word, True Theotokos, we magnify You.

**CHOIR:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Lord, Bless!

**READER:** May He, Who deigned to be baptized by John in The Jordan for us men and for our salvation, Christ our True God, through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, through the Prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, by the Power of the Precious and Life-Creating Cross, through the protection of the Bodiless Powers of Heaven, through the prayers of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, through the prayers of the holy glorious and all-laudable Apostles, through the Prayers of all the North American Saints, through the prayers of \_\_\_\_\_ the patron of this Holy Temple, of St. Gregory of Nyssa whom we commemorate today, of the holy and righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, have mercy on us and save us.

*(The faithful now come up and venerate the Precious Cross and Icons in our Icon Corner.)*

**READER:** Through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.

**CHOIR:** Amen. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

"THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK and NEW JERSEY EDUCATION CORNER"



## The Theophany of the Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ

Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord (Mt.3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by the St John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove. From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine "those who sat in darkness," and "in the region of the shadow of death" (Mt.4:16), and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace.

In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind.

The origin of the Feast of Theophany goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions (Book V:13). From the second century we have the testimony of St Clement of Alexandria concerning the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast.

There is a third century dialogue about the services for Theophany between the holy martyr Hippolytus and St Gregory the Wonderworker. In the following centuries, from the fourth to ninth century, all the great Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, John of Damascus, commented on the Feast of Theophany.

The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. St John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but "to bury human sin by water," to fulfill the Law, to reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and finally, to sanctify "the nature of water" and to offer us the form and example of Baptism.

On the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church proclaims our faith in the most sublime mystery, incomprehensible to human intellect, of one God in three Persons. It teaches us to confess and glorify the Holy Trinity, one in Essence and Indivisible. It exposes and overthrows the errors of ancient teachings which attempted to explain the Creator of the world by reason, and in human terms.

The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires us with a sense of deep gratitude for the illumination and purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism, keeping clean this priceless garb, for "As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal 3:27).

On the day of Theophany, all foods are permitted, even if the Feast falls on a Wednesday or Friday.

## DISCOURSE ON THE FEAST OF THE THOPHANY OF OUR LORD

*St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople*

We shall now say something about the present feast [of Holy Theophany, the Baptism of Christ]. Many celebrate the feastdays and know their designations, but the cause for which they were established they know not. Thus concerning this, everyone knows that the present feast is called Theophany; but what this is, and whether it be one thing or another, they know not. And this is shameful – every year to celebrate the feastday and not know its meaning. First of all therefore, it is necessary to say that there is not one Theophany, but two: the one actual, which already has occurred, and the second in the future, which will happen with glory at the end of the world. About this one and about the other you will hear today from Paul, who in conversing with Titus, speaks thus about the present: “The grace of God hath revealed itself, having saved all mankind, decreeing, that we reject iniquity and worldly desires, and dwell in the present age in prudence and in righteousness and piety.” And about the future: “Awaiting the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:11-13). And a prophet speaks thus about this latter: “The sun shalt turn to darkness, and the moon to blood at first, then shalt come the great and illuminating Day of the Lord” (Joel 2:31). Why is not that day, on which the Lord was born, considered Theophany – but rather this day on which He was baptised? This present day it is, on which He was baptised and sanctified the nature of water. Because on this day all, having obtained the waters, do carry it home and keep it all year, since today the waters are sanctified. And an obvious phenomenon occurs: these waters in their essence do not spoil with the passage of time, but obtained today, for one whole year and often for two or three years, they remain unharmed and fresh, and afterwards for a long time do not stop being water, just as that obtained from the fountains.

Why then is this day called Theophany? Because Christ made Himself known to all – not then when He was born, but when He was baptised. Until this time He was not known to the people. And that the people did not know Him, Who He was, listen to what John the Baptist says: “Amidst you standeth Him Whom ye know not of” (John 1:26). And is it surprising that others did not know Him, when even the Baptist did not know Him until that day? “And I – said he – knew Him not: but He that did send me to baptise with water, about this One did tell unto me: over Him that shalt see the Spirit descending and abiding upon Him, this One it is Who baptiseth in the Holy Spirit” (John 1:33). Thus from this it is evident, that there are two Theophanies, and why Christ comes at baptism and on whichever baptism He comes, about this... it is necessary to know both the one and equally the other. And first it is necessary to speak your love about the latter, so that we might learn about the former. There was a Jewish baptism, which cleansed from bodily impurities, but not to remove sins. Thus, whoever committed adultery, or decided on thievery, or who did some other kind of misdeed, it did not free him from guilt. But whoever touched the bones of the dead, whoever tasted food forbidden by the law, whoever approached from contamination, whoever consorted with lepers – that one washed, and until evening was impure, and then cleansed. “Let one wash his body in pure water” – it says in the

Scriptures – “and he will be unclean until evening, and then he will be clean” (Leviticus 15:5, 22:4). This was not truly of sins or impurities, but since the Jews lacked perfection, then God, accomplishing it by means of this greater piety, prepared them by their beginnings for a precise observance of important things. Thus, Jewish cleansings did not free from sins, but only from bodily impurities. Not so with ours: it is far more sublime and it manifests a great grace, whereby it sets free from sin, it cleanses the spirit and bestows the gifts of the Spirit. And the baptism of John was far more sublime than the Jewish, but less so than ours: it was like a bridge between both baptisms, leading across itself from the first to the last. Wherefore John did not give guidance for observance of bodily purifications, but together with them he exhorted and advised to be converted from vice to good deeds and to trust in the hope of salvation and the accomplishing of good deeds, rather than in different washings and purifications by water. John did not say, “wash your clothes, wash your body, and ye will be pure,” but rather, “bear ye fruits worthy of repentance” (Matthew 3:8). Since it was more than of the Jews, but less than ours, the baptism of John did not impart the Holy Spirit and it did not grant forgiveness by grace. It gave the commandment to repent, but it was powerless to absolve sins. Wherefore John did also say: “I baptise you with water... That One however will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Matthew 3:11). Obviously, he did not baptise with the Spirit.

But what does “with the Holy Spirit and with fire” mean? Call to mind that day, on which for the Apostles “there appeared disparate tongues like fire, and sat over each one of them” (Acts 2:3). That the baptism of John did not impart the Spirit and remission of sins is evident from the following [words of] Paul, [who] “found certain disciples, and said to them: received ye the Holy Spirit since ye have believed? They said to him: but furthermore whether it be of the Holy Spirit, we shall hear. He said to them: into what were ye baptised? They answered: into the baptism of John. Paul then said: John indeed baptised with the baptism of repentance” – repentance, but not remission of sins; for whom did he baptise? “Having proclaimed to the people, that they should believe in the One coming after him, namely, Christ Jesus... they were baptised in the Name of the Lord Jesus: and Paul laying his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them” (Acts 19:1-6). Do you see, how incomplete was the baptism of John? If the one were not incomplete, would then Paul have baptised them again, and placed his hands on them? Having performed also the second, he showed the superiority of the apostolic Baptism and that the baptism of John was far less than his. Thus, from this we recognise the difference of the baptisms.

Now it is necessary to say, for whom was Christ baptised and by which baptism? Neither the former, the Jewish, nor the last – ours. Whence hath He need for remission of sins, how is this possible for Him, Who hath not any sins? “Of sin,” it says in the Scriptures, “worked He not, nor was there deceit found in His mouth” (1 Peter 2:22). And further, “who of you convicteth Me of sin?” (John 8:46). And His flesh was privy to the Holy Spirit. How might this be possible, when it in the beginning was fashioned by the Holy Spirit? And so, if His flesh was privy to the Holy Spirit, and He was not subject to sins, then for whom was He baptised? But first of all it is necessary for us to recognise, by which baptism He was baptised, and then it will be clear for us. By which baptism indeed was He baptised? Not the Jewish, nor ours, nor John’s. For whom, since thou from thine own aspect of baptism dost perceive, that

He was baptised not by reason of sin and not having need of the gift of the Spirit. Therefore, as we have demonstrated, this baptism was alien to the one and to the other. Hence it is evident, that He came to Jordan not for the forgiveness of sins and not for receiving the gifts of the Spirit, but so that some from those present then should not think that He came for repentance like others. Listen to how John precluded this: What he then spoke to the others then was, "Bear ye fruits worthy of repentance." But listen to what he said to Him: "I have need to be baptised of Thee, and Thou art come to me?" (Matthew 3:8, 14). With these words he demonstrated, that Christ came to him not through that need with which people came, and that He was so far from the need to be baptised for this reason – so much more sublime and perfectly purer than Baptism itself. For whom was He baptised, if this was done not for repentance, nor for the remission of sins, nor for receiving the gifts of the Spirit? Through the other two reasons, of which the one the disciple speaks, and about the other He Himself spoke to John. Which reason of this baptism did John declare? Namely, that Christ should become known to the people, as Paul also mentions: "John therefore baptised with the baptism of repentance, so that through him they should believe on Him that cometh" (Acts 19:4). This was the consequence of the baptism. If John had gone to the home of each and, standing at the door, had spoken out for Christ and said: "He is the Son of God," such a testimony would have been suspicious, and this deed would have been extremely perplexing. So too, if he in advocating that Christ had gone into the synagogues and witnessed to Him, this testimony of his might be suspiciously fabricated. But when all the people thronged out from all the cities to Jordan and remained on the banks of the river, and when He Himself came to be baptised and received the testimony of the Father by a voice from above and by the descent of the Spirit in the form of a dove, then the testimony of John about Him was made beyond all questioning. And since he said: "and I knew Him not" (John 1:31), his testimony put forth is trustworthy. They were kindred after the flesh between themselves, "wherefore Elizabeth, thy kinswoman, hath also conceived a son" – said the Angel to Mary about the mother of John (Luke 1: 36). If, however, the mothers were relatives, then obviously so also were their children. Thus, since they were kinsmen, in order that it should not seem that John would testify concerning Christ because of kinship, the grace of the Spirit organised it such, that John spent all his early years in the wilderness, so that it should not seem that John had declared his testimony out of friendship or some similar reason. But John, as he was instructed of God, thus also announced about Him, wherein also he did say: "and I knew Him not." From whence didst thou find out? "He, having sent me that sayeth to baptise with water, [is] the One [Who] did tell me" What did He tell thee? "Over Him thou shalt see the Spirit descending, like to a dove, and abiding over Him, that One is baptised by the Holy Spirit" (John 1:32-33). Dost thou see, that the Holy Spirit did not descend as in a first time then coming down upon Him, but in order to point out that preached by His inspiration – as though by a finger – it pointed Him out to all. For this reason He came to baptism.

And there is a second reason, about which He Himself spoke. What exactly is it? When John said, "I have need to be baptised of Thee, and Thou art come to me?" He answered thus: "Stay now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill every righteousness" (Matthew 3:14-15). Dost thou see the meekness of the servant? Dost thou see the humility of the Master? What does He mean, "to fulfill every righteousness?" By righteousness is meant the fulfillment of all the commandments, as is said: "both

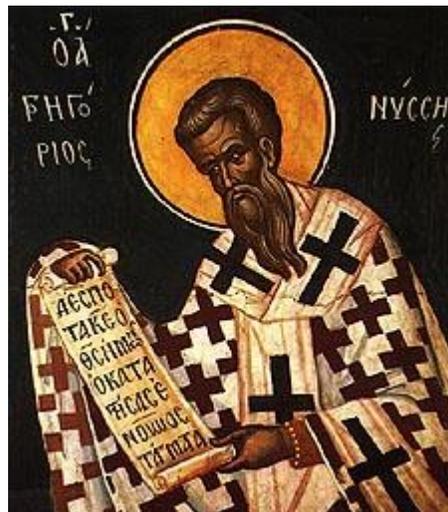
were righteous, walking faultlessly in the commandments of the Lord" (Luke 1:6). Since fulfilling this righteousness was necessary for all people – but no one of them kept it or fulfilled it – Christ came then and fulfilled this righteousness.

And what righteousness is there, someone will say, in being baptised? Obedience for a prophet was righteous. As Christ was circumcised, offered sacrifice, kept the sabbath and observed the Jewish feasts, so also He added this remaining thing, that He was obedient to having been baptised by a prophet. It was the will of God, then, that all should be baptised – about which John speaks: "He having sent me to baptise with water" (John 1:33); so also Christ: "The publicans and the people do justify God, having been baptised with the baptism of John; the pharisees and the lawyers reject the counsel of God concerning themselves, not having been baptised by him" (Luke 7:29-30). Thus, if obedience to God constitutes righteousness, and God sent John to baptise the nation, then Christ has also fulfilled this along with all the other commandments. Consider, that the commandments of the law are the main point of the two denarii. Our race needed to pay this debt; but we did not pay it, and we, falling under such an accusation, were embraced by death. Christ came, and finding us afflicted by it, paid the debt, fulfilled the necessary and seized from it those who were not able to pay. Wherefore He does not say: "It is necessary for us to do this or that," but rather "to fulfill every righteousness." "It is for Me, being the Master," says He, "proper to make payment for the needy." Such was the reason for His baptism – wherefore they should see that He had fulfilled all the law – both this reason and also that, about which was spoken of before. Wherefore also the Spirit descended as a dove, because where there is reconciliation with God – there also is the dove. So also in the ark of Noah the dove brought the branch of olive – a sign of God's love of mankind and of the cessation of the flood. And now in the form of a dove, and not in a body – this particularly deserves to be noted – the Spirit descended, announcing the universal mercy of God and showing with it, that the spiritual man needs to be gentle, simple and innocent, as Christ also says: "Except ye be converted and become as children, ye shall not enter into the Heavenly Kingdom" (Matthew 18:3). But that ark, after the cessation of the flood, remained upon the earth; this ark, after the cessation of wrath, is taken to heaven, and now this Immaculate and Imperishable Body is situated at the right hand of the Father. Having made mention about the Body of the Lord, I shall also say a little about this, and then the conclusion of the talk. Many now will approach the Holy Table on the occasion of the feast. But some approach not with trembling, but shoving, hitting others, blazing with anger, shouting, cursing, roughing it up with their fellows with great confusion. What, tell me, art thou troubled by, my fellow? What disturbeth thee? Do urgent affairs, for certain, summon thee? At this hour art thou particularly aware that these affairs of thine that thou particularly rememberest, that thou art situated upon the earth, and dost thou think to mix about with people? But is it not with a soul of stone naturally to think, that in such a time thou stand upon the earth, and not exult with the Angels with whom to raise up victorious song to God? For this Christ also did describe us with eagles, saying, "where the corpse is, there are the eagles gathered" (Matthew 24:28) – so that we might have risen to heaven and soared to the heights, having ascended on the wings of the spirit. But we, like snakes, crawl upon the earth and eat dirt. Having been invited to supper, thou, although satiated before others, would not dare to leave before others while others are still

reclining. But here, when the sacred doings are going on, thou at the very middle would pass by everything and leave? Is it for a worthy excuse? What excuse might it be? Judas, having communed that last evening on that final night, left hastily as all the others were still reclining. Here these also are in imitation of him, who leave before the final blessing! If he had not gone, then he would not have made the betrayal; if he did not leave his co-disciples, then he would not have perished; if he had not removed himself from the flock, then the wolf would not have seized and devoured him alone; if he had separated himself from the Pastor, then he would not have made himself the prey of wild beasts. Wherefore he (Judas) was with the Jews, and those (the apostles) went out with the Lord. Dost thou see, by what manner the final prayer after the offering of the sacrifice is accomplished? We should, beloved, stand forth for this, we should ponder this, fearful of the coming judgement for this. We should approach the Holy Sacrifice with great decorum, with proper piety, so as to merit us more of God's benevolence, to cleanse one's soul and to receive eternal blessings, of which may we all be worthy by the grace and love for mankind of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom with the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, and worship now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa

January 10



Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, was a younger brother of Saint Basil the Great (January 1). His birth and upbringing came at a time when the Arian disputes were at their height. Having received an excellent education, he was at one time a teacher of rhetoric. In the year 372, he was consecrated by Saint Basil the Great as bishop of the city of Nyssa in Cappadocia.

Saint Gregory was an ardent advocate for Orthodoxy, and he fought against the Arian heresy with his brother Saint Basil. Gregory was persecuted by the Arians, by whom he was falsely accused of improper use of church property, and thereby deprived of his See and sent to Ancyra.

In the following year Saint Gregory was again deposed in absentia by a council of Arian bishops, but he continued to encourage his flock in Orthodoxy, wandering about from place to place. After the death of the emperor Valens (378), Saint Gregory was restored to his cathedra and was joyously received by his flock. His brother Saint Basil the Great died in 379.

Only with difficulty did Saint Gregory survive the loss of his brother and guide. He delivered a funeral oration for him, and completed Saint Basil's study of the six days of Creation, the Hexaemeron. That same year Saint Gregory participated in the Council of Antioch against heretics who refused to recognize the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God. Others at the opposite extreme, who worshipped the Mother of God as being God Herself, were also denounced by the Council. He visited the churches of Arabia and Palestine, which were infected with the Arian heresy, to assert the Orthodox teaching about the Most Holy Theotokos. On his return journey Saint Gregory visited Jerusalem and the Holy Places.

In the year 381 Saint Gregory was one of the chief figures of the Second Ecumenical Council, convened at Constantinople against the heresy of Macedonius, who incorrectly taught about the Holy Spirit. At this Council, on the initiative of Saint Gregory, the Nicene Symbol of Faith (the Creed) was completed.

Together with the other bishops Saint Gregory affirmed Saint Gregory the Theologian as Archpastor of Constantinople.

In the year 383, Saint Gregory of Nyssa participated in a Council at Constantinople, where he preached a sermon on the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In 386, he was again at Constantinople, and he was asked to speak the funeral oration in memory of the empress Placilla. Again in 394 Saint Gregory was present in Constantinople at a local Council, convened to resolve church matters in Arabia.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa was a fiery defender of Orthodox dogmas and a zealous teacher of his flock, a kind and compassionate father to his spiritual children, and their intercessor before the courts. He was distinguished by his magnanimity, patience and love of peace.

Having reached old age, Saint Gregory of Nyssa died soon after the Council of Constantinople. Together with his great contemporaries, Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, Saint Gregory of Nyssa had a significant influence on the Church life of his time. His sister, Saint Macrina, wrote to him: "You are renowned both in the cities, and gatherings of people, and throughout entire districts. Churches ask you for help." Saint Gregory is known in history as one of the most profound Christian thinkers of the fourth century. Endowed with philosophical talent, he saw philosophy as a means for a deeper penetration into the authentic meaning of divine revelation.

Saint Gregory left behind many remarkable works of dogmatic character, as well as sermons and discourses. He has been called "the Father of Fathers."

**Orthodox Christian Stewardship** is a way of life, which acknowledges accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God. A primary goal of Stewardship is to promote spiritual growth and strengthen faith. Becoming a Steward begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. As Stewards, we affirm that every aspect of our lives comes as a gift from Him. Stewardship calls on the faithful to cheerfully offer back to God a portion of the gifts with which they have been blessed. **Orthodox Christian Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges** accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God by teaching and giving examples of a virtuous life to all (St. John Chrysostom). A primary goal of Stewardship is to strengthen our understanding of the teachings and dogmas of The Orthodox Faith through supporting the work of The Church. This can be found in The Divine Services as reiterated by St. John of San Francisco: "The Divine Services in their composition contain all the fullness of the dogmatic teaching of the Church and set forth the path of salvation." Fulfilling our responsibility of continual learning begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. Through being Stewards of the Gospel and of The Orthodox Church, Education calls on the faithful to cheerfully receive instruction given to the Church by Our Lord, Holy Scripture, The Divine Services, and The Holy Fathers of the Church. Through Orthodox Christian Stewardship, The Church promotes spiritual growth and strengthened faith and calls on all of us to bring the faith and love of Our Lord to every aspect of our lives as gifts from Him through our time, talents, and treasures. During this year, let us come together as a Diocesan Family and recommit ourselves to both spiritual growth of our Life in Christ as well as through Orthodox Christian Stewardship by attending the Divine Services, attending the many opportunities of Education for both Adults and Children through Parish Education, gatherings, and fellowship and by supporting our Parishes and Diocese in the many endeavors through which, by the Grace of God, we will bring the light and love of Our Lord to all!

***LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE IN LOVE. 1 Cor.16:14***

***YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND. Matt. 22:37***

***YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. Matt. 22:39***

***LOVE YOUR ENEMIES AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU. Matt. 5:44***

***LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND, LOVE DOES NOT ENVY, LOVE DOES NOT BOAST, LOVE IS NOT PROUD, LOVE IS NOT SELFISH, LOVE IS NOT PROVOKED. 1Cor. 13:4***

***LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS, LOVE ALWAYS HAS FAITH, LOVE ALWAYS HAS HOPE, LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS. LOVE NEVER FAILS! 1Cor. 13:7,8***