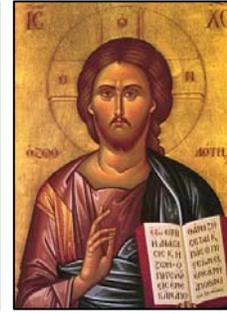




GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: www.patriarchate.org
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website: www.goarch.org
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website: www.atlanta.goarch.org
St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website: www.saintchristopherhoc.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church



313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210
Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, *Chancellor*

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, January 6, 2013

ON THIS DAY, WE REMEMBER THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST. *To Him be glory and dominion forever and always. Amen.*

Welcome, Visitors and Newcomers, to our Parish!

We invite you to enter your name, mail/email addresses in our Guest Register (near the entrance) if you are interested in joining and assisting with our mission's development. We want to keep you informed of our schedule and location of services. *You and your family are welcome; we look forward to knowing you. We invite you and your family to join and assist us often!*

Please consider that only baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians in canonical good standing may approach for Holy Communion. All are invited to partake of the Antidoron ("instead of the gifts") distributed at the conclusion of today's Divine Liturgy.

SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE

Liturgy of St. Basil Used TODAY

1./3./5./10. Hymn of the Theophany of our Lord – (Hymnal-pp.208-211):

This hymn is sung *after* the Great Doxology, *before and after* the Small Entrance, and instead of *Ithomen to fos*, “We have seen the true light” after the distribution of Holy Communion): “At Your baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest, for the Father’s voice bore You witness, by calling You His beloved Son, and the Spirit in the form of a dove, confirmed the truth of the Father’s Word. O Christ our God, You have appeared to us and enlightened the12

2. Hymn for Second Antiphon – (Hymnal-p.28):

On the occasion of today’s feast, we sing the following hymn instead of the regular Soson imas, “Save us, O Son of God”: “Save us, O Son of God, Who was baptized in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist, as we sing to You, Alleluia.”

4. Small Entrance Exclamation of the Priest:

On the occasion of today’s feast, the Priest intones the following at the Small Entrance: “Blessed in He Who comes in the Name of the Lord. God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us. Save us, O Son of God, Who was baptized in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist, as we sing to You, Alleluia.”

6. Kontakion of the Holy Theophany of our Lord – (Hymnal-p.-248-249):

This hymn is sung *after* the Small Entrance: “You have revealed Yourself to the world today, and Your light shines forth on us, who sing Your praise with full knowledge: You have come to us, O Lord; You are made manifest, O inaccessible Light.

7. Trisagion Hymn – (Hymnal-p. 292-293):

On the occasion of today’s feast, we sing the following hymn instead of the Trisagion hymn: “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves in Christ. Alleluia. (3)”

8. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (Hymnal-pp. 298-301):

Today, instead of “Axion Estin” or “Truly it is proper to call you blessed...”, we sing: In you, O woman full of grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of angels and the race of

mankind. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virginal souls, from you our God was incarnate and became a child, He who is God from all ages. By making your womb His throne He made you more spacious than all the heavens. In you, O woman full of grace all creation rejoices. Glory to you

9. Communion Hymn – (Hymnal-p. 327):

On the occasion of today's feast, the following hymn is sung instead of "Aineite" or "Praise the Lord": "The grace of God has appeared, for the salvation of all people. (Titus 2:11) (3) Alleluia."

SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES
FROM TODAY'S ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY

The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts. – St. John Chrysostom

Gospel Reading During Orthros Service (Mark 1:9-11)

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as He was coming up out of the water, he saw the Heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on Him. And a voice came from Heaven, "You are My Son, the Beloved; with You I am well pleased."

Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7)

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for Himself a people of His own who are zealous for good deeds.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to His mercy, through the water of rebirth and

renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Matthew 3:13-17)

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as He came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to Him and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

"And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with Whom I am well pleased." (Mt. 3:17)

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

THE FEAST OF LIGHTS

The celebrations of the events of the life of Jesus Christ as they are celebrated today were not instituted at the very beginning of the Christian era; they were held by the believers of the early Church as vivid commemorations without a connection with certain days and hymns, but as a real event of the Lord Who was present in the Church.

Later on, when the Church was firmly established and its believers were free to worship the True God, they decided to commemorate and observe annually in the calendar year the events of the life of the Church and especially those of the Life and Person of Jesus Christ, Whom they worshipped along with the Father and the Holy Spirit with prayers, hymns, and readings appropriate for

the occasion. The reason why the first Christians did not institute these celebrations and observances at the very beginning is mainly because of the persecutions of the Church and its believers.

For three entire centuries, the Church of Christ was underground, in catacombs, where under the grass and flowers of the earth was nourished the tree of faith and worship. The Church extended the Kingdom of God to the hearts of its faithful without pompous expressions. These winding underground centers, the catacombs, were both the workshop of the rebirth of the Christians and also their burial places. It is not our purpose here to develop further the struggles and faith of the early Church of Christ which, since then, has made the Church of the Living God “the pillar and bulwark of the truth.” What we wish to emphasize is that during the first three centuries, the Church of Christ developed a clear ecclesiastical conscience, both in theory and in practice; the Church formulated the principles of faith and worship and defended them with enormous sacrifices, fighting off both external and internal falsifications.

For three centuries, the Church developed its roots under the earth and watered them with the moisture of its catacombs and the blood of its martyrs. The Church spread its roots from Antioch to Rome. Alexandria, Jerusalem, Ephesus, Corinth, Thessalonica, and Athens also opened underground centers of the Christian faith which were warmed and brightened by the torches of devotion, sacrifice, and the cultivation of Christian character and conscience.

When the fullness of time came, that is, when the roots were ready to present an incorruptible trunk above the earth, then Divine Providence appointed political conditions and a remarkable personality, Constantine the Great, who not so much from a religious outlook as from a political foresight gave to the Church of Christ the right of free exercise in matters of faith and worship. This action of expediency was initiated and imposed by the emperor.

The Church of Christ came out of its refuge from the persecutions armed with the strength of love among its members and equipped for defense and for missionary endeavors. Now the Church could freely apply its principles.

The Church's first concern was the development of its prayer and worship, which ratify the faith and cultivate the relations of its members. This is why the 4th century is the golden link which connects the underground life of the Church with its later course on the surface of the earth. The celebrations of Theophany and Christmas, the writing of divine liturgies, the formulation of faith in the Creed, and so many other incidents are permanent foundations which took place during the 4th century and which developed as flowers springing from roots which had existed beforehand.

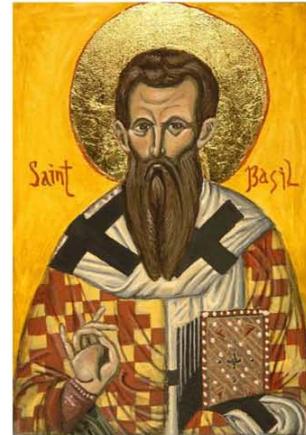
The life of the Church has kept the fragrance of these unwithering flowers until today, and their aroma has given to civilization the precious Christian atmosphere which we breathe today. If we of today hold lamps and torches in our hands and in our hearts, this light has been transmitted from the lamps and torches which were held burning by the men and women of the catacombs who gave this inheritance of faith from their hearts. *(from Fr. George Mastrantonis)*

Holy Theophany and the Blessing of the Waters:

During today's Feast of Theophany, water is blessed and given to the faithful to carry home and use throughout the year. By His Baptism in the Jordan, Jesus Christ touched our lives, the environment, and our whole world, revealing His Divinity and desire to make all things, nature and the world, holy. This is a sign that our lives are precious to the Lord and we are immersed in His love. Following today's Blessing (*Agiasmos*) of the Water, *Fr. George* will distribute blessed water to all present. *Please take extra bottles to share with family/friends who could not join us today.*

St. Christopher Philoptochos Society Invites You to Celebrate the

"Event of the Season"



St. Basil's Day

Saturday, January 12th

6 PM until 10 PM

THE EVENT CENTER at 313 DIVIDEND DRIVE

DINNER & FAMILY FUN!

SILENT & LIVE VASILOPITA AUCTIONS*!

****NOTE THIS CHANGE: PLEASE BRING ONE BEVERAGE for 6+ PEOPLE AND
VEGETABLE/FRUIT SIDE OR DESSERT FOR 6+ PEOPLE**

**Proceeds benefit St. Basil's Academy of Garrison NY*

On this our eleventh Feast of Holy Theophany at our St. Christopher parish, we continue to thank each of you for your presence and support. Although it may seem like we are just a handful of men, women and children, if we commit ourselves to serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we will experience the miracle of growth as the Holy Spirit brings others into His service to help us build His new church in the Peachtree City, Georgia area for the glory of God!

COMMUNITY SCHEDULE

Sunday, January 6 (Holy Theophany of our Lord and Savior):

- 7:30 am Orthros Service for Holy Theophany**
- 8:45 am Divine Liturgy of St. Basil for Holy Theophany & Blessing of Water/
Ice Cream Sundae Sunday**
- 10:45 am Religious Education Classes (*for all ages/grades*)**

Monday, January 7 (St. John the Baptist):

- 5:00 pm Great Vespers Service**
- 5:45 pm Divine Liturgy (Evening)/Memorial Service - Tzvetan Andreev**
- 7:00 pm Community Dinner (*please bring non-fasting food*)**

Thursday, January 10:

- 6:30 pm Choir Practice**

Saturday, January 12:

- 6:00 pm Philoptochos' Vasilopita Dinner at Event Center (*see inside*)**

Sunday, January 13 (Sunday After the Holy Theophany of our Lord and Savior):

- 7:45 am Orthros Service**
- 9:00 am Divine Liturgy/40-Day Memorial Service – Bishop John of Amorion/
Oath of Office for 2013 Parish Council/Coffee Fellowship**
- 10:45 am Religious Education classes**
- 11:30 am Hellenic Language Class**
- 11:45 am Parish Council Meeting/Parish Council Officer Elections**

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!