

Holy Theophany 2018

The word “Theophany” perfectly describes the occasion when our Lord, Jesus Christ, was baptized at the age of 30, just before beginning His three-year witness of proclaiming the “Good News” of His Heavenly Father, which continues to be instilled and work in each of us through God’s Holy Spirit.



On Saturday, January 6th, we commemorated this early Feast of the Orthodox Church. The day before, on Friday morning, we began our vigil by offering the Service of the Royal Hours in anticipation of the Feast, recalling its significance to humankind.



Pictured are Michael, Maria, and Kirk, who joined other parishioners, as readers:

O Christ our God, Who at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth, are worshipped and glorified, long suffering and plenteous in mercy and compassion; Who love the just and show mercy to the sinners; Who call all men to salvation through the promise of the blessings to come: Do you, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present time, and direct our lives according to Your commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set our minds right; clear up our thoughts, and deliver us from every sorrow, evil and distress. Surround us with Your holy Angels so that being guarded and guided by their presence, we may arrive at the unity of the faith and the knowledge of Your ineffable glory; for blessed are you unto the ages of ages. Amen.

On January 6th, we offered the Great Blessing of the Waters:

And now, Master, do you yourself sanctify this water by your Holy Spirit.

Give to all who partake of it sanctification, blessing, cleansing, health.

And save, Lord, our faithful Rulers.

And guard them under your protection in peace. Subdue beneath their feet every foe and enemy. Grant them all their requests that are for salvation and eternal life. Remember, Lord, our Archbishop N., the whole order of Presbyters, the Diaconate in Christ, every rank of the clergy, the people here present and our brethren who with good reason are absent, and have mercy on us in accordance with your great mercy. So that through elements and through Angels and through mortals and through things visible and through things unseen, your all-holy name may be glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.





Following church services on Theophany, Fr. George joins our youth in front of our new *Icon of Christ Welcoming the Children*. He reminded them that Jesus always welcomes us to His House and loves them very much.

We glorify You, only-begotten Son of God, without father from Your Mother, without mother from Your Father. For in the preceding feast we saw you as a babe, but in the present one we see you full and perfect man, our God, made manifest as perfect God from perfect God. For today the moment of the feast is here for us and the choir of saints assembles here with us, and Angels keep festival with mortals. (Excerpt from Blessing of the Waters)

After the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 7th, our Philoptochos sponsored its annual Hands of Love Community Vasilopita (Bread of St. Basil) to benefit St. Basil's Academy.

Many thanks to all who brought Vasilopites that were sold to raise funds for St. Basil's Academy. Likewise, thanks to *Helen Psihountas* for chairing the luncheon and auction and all who brought the delicious soup and sandwiches... they were refreshing and comforting during this cold spell in Atlanta! *Additional thanks to those who stayed to clean up afterwards and "undecorated our Christmas Tree!"*





Congratulations to Chrissy & Nicholas, on their recent engagement. Fr. George offered a special blessing on January 7th with their family members present... ***Kala Stephana!***



On January 7th, Orthodox Christians throughout the world using the Julian (Old) Calendar celebrated the Nativity of our Lord. We express:

“ХРИСТОС СЕ РОДИ ! CHRIST IS BORN!”

to the Taylor Family who were blessed to worship at Saints Peter & Paul Serbian Orthodox Church of Atlanta with my Brother Priest, Fr. Miladin Blagojevic, yesterday.



I wanted to thank the Taylor family for supporting faithfully *both* their parishes throughout the year. I was touched that although they were planning to be away yesterday as noted, Milena still offered in behalf of her family the *Prosfora* (Offering Bread) that became the Body of Christ. Likewise, she made two beautiful Vasilopites that helped our Hands of Love effort. On behalf of our Philoptochos Society, I invite those who needed to be away yesterday to donate to our Hands of Love St. Basil's effort during January. Thank you! Blessed 2018 to all!

– Fr. George Tsahakis, 1/8/18

You appeared today to us on earth, O Master, and Your light was signed on us who cry aloud to You and say with understanding, O Christ our God: You came and shone forth, O Light unapproachable. (Kontakion Hymn of Theophany)

