

***SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET,  
FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST JOHN***

In the Orthodox Church, it is customary on the day following the Great Feasts of the Lord and the Mother of God to remember those saints who participated directly in the sacred event. So, on the day following the Theophany of the Lord, the Church honors the one who participated directly in the Baptism of Christ, placing his own hand upon the head of the Savior.

St. John, the holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, whom the Lord called the greatest of the prophets, concludes the history of the Old Testament and opens the era of the New Testament. The holy Prophet John bore witness to the Only-Begotten Son of God, incarnate in the flesh. St. John was accounted worthy to baptize Him in the waters of the Jordan, and he was a witness of the Theophany of the Most Holy Trinity on the day of the Savior's Baptism.

The holy Prophet John was related to the Lord on His mother's side, the son of the Priest Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth. The holy Forerunner John was born 6 months before Christ. Archangel Gabriel announced his birth in the Temple at Jerusalem, revealing to Zachariah that a son was to be born to him.

Through the prayers offered beforehand, the child was filled with the Holy Spirit. St. John prepared himself in the wilds of the desert for his great service by a strict life, by fasting, prayer and sympathy for the fate of God's people.

At the age of thirty, he came forth preaching repentance. He appeared on the banks of the Jordan, to prepare the people by his preaching to accept the Savior of the world. In church hymnology, St. John is called a "bright morning star," whose gleaming outshone the brilliance of all the other stars, announcing the coming dawn of the day of grace, illumined with the light of the spiritual Sun, our Lord Jesus Christ.

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**HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH  
6822 BROADVIEW ROAD  
PARMA, OHIO 44134**

# THE TRINITARIAN

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**HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
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**CHURCH WEBSITE: <http://www.holy-trin.org>**  
V. REV. ALEXANDER GARKLAVS, PASTOR

Divine Liturgy at 9:00 A.M.  
Church School Every Sunday at 10:45 A.M.  
(During the Months of September thru May)

Vespers - Every Saturday - 5:00 P.M.  
Choir Rehearsals Every Thursday at 7:30 P.M.  
Michael N. Pilat, Choir Director

RECTORY: 963 John Glenn Drive, Seven Hills, Ohio 44131 Phone 216-524-8989

BULLETIN 10 - VOLUME LV

TONE 6

JANUARY 7, 2018

## ***THIRTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST***

***Sunday after the Theophany***

***Afterfeast of the Theophany***

***Synaxis of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John***

“When You, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bore witness to You, and called You His beloved Son. And the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of His word. O Christ, our God, You have revealed Yourself, and have enlightened the world, glory to You!”

Troparion, Tone I

“The memory of the righteous is celebrated with hymns of praise, but the Lord’s testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner. You were shown in truth to be the most honorable of the prophets, for you were deemed worthy to baptize in the streams of the Jordan Him whom they foretold. Therefore, having suffered for the truth with joy, you proclaimed to those in hell God who appeared in the flesh, who takes away the sin of the world and grants us great mercy.”

Troparion, Tone II

TODAY’S EPISTLE: EPHESIANS 4:7-13  
ACTS 19:1-8

TODAY’S GOSPEL: MATTHEW 4:12-17  
JOHN 1:29-34

### **HOLY WORSHIP THIS WEEK:**

Today, January 7

Saturday, January 13

Blessing of church, Fellowship Hall, and classrooms

5:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions

### **Daily Scripture Readings**

Monday, January 8

Tuesday, January 9

Wednesday, January 10

Thursday, January 11

Friday, January 12

Saturday, January 13

James 2:14-26

James 3:1-10

James 3:11-4:6

James 4:7-5:9

II Corinthians 4:6-15

I Peter 1:1-2,10-12, 2:6-10

Ephesians 6:10-17

I Thessalonians 5:14-23

Mark 9:42-10:1

Mark 10:2-12

Mark 10:11-16

Mark 10:17-27

Matthew 11:27-30

Mark 10:23-32

Matthew 4:1-11

Luke 16:10-15

**COMING EVENTS**

**JANUARY:**

- 8, Monday                    12:30 p.m. St. Elizabeth Book Circle  
                                     7:00 p.m. Parish Council meeting
- 14, Sunday                    Second Sunday Food Sale
- 21, Sunday                    6:00 p.m. Service of Supplication at St. Innocent Church
- 26-27                            Program at St. Paul: "Taming the Passions: Timeless Wisdom in Being Orthodox"
- 28, Sunday                    Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner

**FEBRUARY:**

- 1, Thursday                    6:30 p.m. IOCC European Wine Tasting

**PRAY FOR THE UNBORN:**

There will be a Service of Supplication for the unborn on Sunday, January 21, 6:00 p.m., at St. Innocent Church.

**BOOK CIRCLE:**

The St. Elizabeth Book Circle will meet Monday, January 8, at 12:30 p.m. We will complete reading The Winter Pascha by Fr. Thomas Hopko, pages 127-183. All are welcome.

**EUROPEAN WINE TASTING:**

IOCC Cleveland is hosting a Wine Tasting on Thursday, February 1 at the Copperstone Event Center. Doors open at 6:30; dinner is served at 7:00. There will be live music. Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased from Diane Hastings or Paula Svilar. All are invited to enjoy a taste of European wine and learn about IOCC's work around the world.

**"TAMING THE PASSIONS":**

St. Paul Church invites all to a program Jan. 26, 7:00-8:00; Jan. 27, 10:00-2:00; presented by Fr. Barnabas Powell. See details in the Fellowship Hall.

**HOUSE BLESSINGS:**

Father Alexander will be blessing homes during the Epiphany season. Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall if you would like your home blessed; or call the church office at 216-524-4859 and leave your name, address, and phone number. Father will contact you regarding the date and time for your home blessing.

**SECOND SUNDAY FOOD SALE:**

Please keep in mind our monthly fundraising event to aid our General Fund. The next sale will be January 14; plan to donate your specialty homemade goods.

**TRINITARIAN COVERS:**

The covers today are offered in memory of Richard Roark by the Bellack Family.

**SAVE THE DATE:**

Plan to join your HTOC family on Sunday, Jan. 28, for the Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner.

**FLOWERS:**

The flowers today are offered by Janice and Ted Strauss in memory of Anastasia Filipowicz.

**SPECIAL COLLECTION**

This summer the Orthodox Church in America will gather in St. Louis for the 19th All American Council. As our Diocese of the Midwest is hosting this Council, our Bishop Paul has asked that Diocesan parishes take up special collections to help our Orthodox brothers and sisters who live in Alaska and Mexico. Economic conditions and the high cost of travel from these distant locations make their coming to the Council extremely difficult; the combined collections from all of the Diocesan parishes will enable some of the clergy and laity from faraway to travel to St. Louis and participate in this important gathering.

**THE GIFTS WE OFFER TO THE LORD WE LOVE**

REGULAR COLLECTION, DECEMBER 31	\$ 8048.50
CHURCH ADMINISTRATION ASSESSMENT	711.50
BUILDING FUND	105.50
MORTGAGE FUND	38.50
CANDLES	93.00
IN MEMORY OF FATHER JOHN KLEMBARA	30.00

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

Bulletin 10 – Volume LV

January 7, 2018

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**WHY THEOPHANY IS A GREAT FEAST**

*“O compassionate Savior, putting on the nakedness of Adam as a garment of glory, You make ready to stand naked in the flesh in the river Jordan. O marvelous wonder! How shall the waters receive You, O Master and Lord, who, as it is written, has covered the roof of heaven with waters? O Jesus, our Benefactor, we all sing praises of Your Theophany!” (Theophany Forefeast)*

Theophany, also known as Epiphany, is more than one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church. It is not an exaggeration to place it with Pentecost as being second only to the Feast of the Resurrection in its extensive significance for Christianity. Somewhat overshadowed in popular piety by Christmas, Theophany is the older and more theologically rich feast. Among some Christians to this day, Theophany is the commemoration of both the birth *and* baptism of Jesus Christ.

The baptism by John in the Jordan River is the specific event at the center of the Feast, but it is John’s *recognition* of Jesus as Savior that defines Theophany. From descriptions in the New Testament, we know that John was engaged in baptizing many people. We can imagine, as it has been portrayed artistically, Jesus coming to the river as John is engaged in preaching and baptizing; and as He does, John announces, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” John goes on to say, “I have baptized you with water but One who is mightier will baptize with the Holy Spirit.” John’s proclamations become the first announcements of the Messiah, that is, Christ. Jesus’ arrival at the river becomes His *appearance* to the world as God. This is precisely what “theophany” means in Greek. In addition to the manifestation of Jesus as the divine One, a yet more awesome revelation takes place. As the dove descends, symbolically representing the Holy Spirit, a voice from heaven is heard, “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well pleased.” Thus, at the critical moment of the beginning of His ministry, Jesus appearance (theophany) also becomes the “appearance” (Theophany) of the Holy Trinity.

Theologically profound and fundamental to comprehending who Jesus is and what He does, the Feast of the Theophany is also significant in that it inaugurates access to restoration and salvation to all humanity – including you and I. The Feast’s hymns reiterate this. For example: “Christ came to baptism, working thereby our restoration, for He is God rich in mercy” and, “through baptism Christ forms us anew who had grown corrupt.” The hymns also point out that Jesus did not really *need* to be baptized; as John says to Him, “I need to be baptized by You.” Nevertheless, Jesus condescends to be baptized in order to demonstrate, and to initiate for us, the way to salvation: through baptism, which is our repentance and the conversion of our hearts from evil to righteousness. “The Son of God accepted the restoration of baptism to enable spiritual adoption for our sake” (St. Maximus the Confessor). The “greatness” of Theophany may be even greater than we sinners can really understand, but it is nevertheless wonderfully revealed whenever a baptism occurs, especially when beautiful and innocent infants are lovingly immersed in the holy waters, whereby they are initiated into eternal spiritual rebirth.

*Fr. Alexander Garklaus*