

HOLY SPIRIT ORTHODOX CHURCH

Wantage, New Jersey
January 6, 2008

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.

Holy Spirit Orthodox Church - Wantage, NJ Archpriest Samuel Kedala, Rector

Joanne Patrick, Choir Director

Parish Council

Timothy Kachur, Sr. Warden

Mark Benda, Jr. Warden

Michael Olsen, Treasurer

Doris Livanos/Susan Matthews, Co/Recording Secretary

Council members

Edward Engelsman • Michael Chwan

Anna Seniw • Louis Matthews

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Holy Theophany

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Sunday January 6, 2008

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AND EVENTS

Today **THEOPHANY** Great Blessing of Waters
2:15 p.m. Blessing of the Parish Rectory
Monday, Jan. 7 7:35 a.m. Hours 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy–
the Synaxis of St. John the Baptist and Old Calendar Nativity
Wed. 7:30 p.m. Parish Council Meeting
Saturday, 6:00 p.m. Vespers / Confessions
Sunday, Jan. 13 9:15 Church School – 9:35 a.m. Hours, 10 AM Divine Liturgy

Today's commemorated feasts and saints... 32nd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 7.
THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. Ven. Macarius of Mt.
Athos (1431).

Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 (Epistle) – Matthew 3:13-17 (Gospel)

BULLETIN

Prayers are being offered today for **Kia Paskas** who will be going abroad to Spain to study for six months. May her work be fruitful and honor God, her family and herself. We look forward to her return.

Please see Father Samuel if you would like to be included in the **Right to life March** and Bus trip that will take place on **Tuesday, January 22, 2008, Washington DC.** Make reservations no later than Sunday, January 13.

Thank you to **Taisa and Ed Engelsman** for their donation of 7 Bottles of Communion Wine

Thank you to Tim Kachur for his donation of a bottle of Communion Wine.

No one hosted the Coffee Social last week. **No one** signed up to host the Social today. **No one** is signed up to host next week. **Please sign-up to host a future social.**

There is a sign-up Sheet downstairs for families who would like their **homes blessed.** It is traditional that each family in the Parish have their home Blessed each year.

Calendars for the Year 2008 are available downstairs at the Candle Desk.

Please help yourselves to **ONE Calendar per family.** If there are any extras after a month you may help yourselves to more calendars. **We Thank Peter, Joanne and Alexis Horvath (Pinkel Funeral Home, Sussex) for their generosity again this year. May our New Born Lord Grant them Many Years and repay them generously.**

For those of our community who have not yet participated in the Sacrament of Holy

Confession (during the Nativity Fast), Father Samuel will be available for you. Call for an appointment if you like or before or after Vespers. **We must come to Confession to receive Holy Communion.**

Please place a small donation in the basket at Coffee Social to help pay for the paper products.

A reminder to all who are worshipping at Holy Spirit Church, please turn off your cell phones or leave it in your cars until after Divine Liturgy

PLEASE PURCHASE gift cards for shopping at ShopRite and A & P stores. They are working out wonderfully. Very convenient for shopping. No cash, no checks, just a little card. They are great, and our church benefits by your using them.

WE HAVE SHOP RITE AND A&P GIFT CARDS-STOCK UP ON GIFT CARDS FOR YOUR REGULAR SHOPPING & AS GIFTS TO OTHERS

Please keep the following people in your prayers: Catherine Schwed, Thelma Macheska, Alyssa Karakos, Mary Kwak, Matushka Evelyn Kreta, Christopher, the infant Ella Jane, Corinne Matthews, infant Nicholai, Dan Taylor, Doug Taylor, Stephen Kachur, Pighi Mardaloescu, Valentina Bobrowsky, Archimandrite Joachim (Parr), Frank Higginbotham, Matushka Marie Kreta, Joanne Patrick, Feodora Apanasow, Archpriest Joseph Chupeck, the infant Logan Eugene, Evanthia, Loren Chwan, Jennifer, Matushka Vera Yuschak and Christine Molbury and her children

SEVEN DAY VIGIL CANDLES

By **Faye and Kayla Paskas** for the health, and salvation safe travel of **Kia Paskas** (in Spain for 6 months)

By **George and Despina Eptamenitis** in blessed memory of **+Doug** (Taylor) 1-1-08

By **the Goodwin Family** in Blessed memory of their father **+John** (Caracostas)

By **the Goodwin Family** in Blessed memory of their aunt **+Ismene** (Caracostas)

By **the Engelsman family** in Blessed memory of **+Stratos** (Michalaidis)–
1st Anniversary of his repose

By **Vagias family** for the health, and salvation of **Vagias Family**

Seven day vigil candles are available for the faithful to sponsor in memory of their departed, the sick, or for the general intentions (anniversaries, birthdays, weddings, baptisms, etc.). They will remain lit on the altar and table of oblation. The suggested donation is \$10.00 each and will burn for seven days. The intentions and those who offered them will be announced in the weekly bulletins. You may purchase your offering at the Parish Council office.

If you would like to have something published in the weekly bulletin, e-mail or bring typed copy to Father Samuel by Wednesday of the week prior to the Sunday you would like it published.

We welcome our guests who are worshipping with us today. Please join us downstairs for refreshments and fellowship. Please sign our guest book before you leave.