

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Volume XV

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6 / 19 January 2014

THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

THIS WEEK AT ST ELIZABETH'S

HOLY THEOPHANY

Saturday, 18 January (5 January o.s.)

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 19 January (6 January o.s.)

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy;
Great Blessing of Water;
Trapeza (coffee hour)

31st SUNDAY after PENTECOST (Tone 6)

SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY.

Saturday, 25 January (12 January o.s.)

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 26 January (13 January o.s.)

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
12:30 PM Parish Council Meeting

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Su	THEOPHANY: BAPTISM OF THE LORD	
	<i>Vespers Paramia:</i> (1) Genesis 1:1-13 •	
	(2) Exodus 14:15-18, 21-23, 27-29a •	
	(3) Exodus 15:22-16:1a • (4) Joshua 3:7-8, 15-17 •	
	(5) IV [II] Kings 2:6-14 • (6) IV [II] Kings 5:9-14 •	
	(7) Isaiah 1:16-20 • (8) Genesis 32:1-10a •	
	(9) Exodus 2:5-10 • (10) Judges 6:36-40 •	
	(11) III [I] Kings 18:30-39 • (12) IV [II] Kings 2:19-22 •	
	(13) Isaiah 49:8-15	
	<i>Matins Gospel:</i> Mark §2 (1:9-11)	
	Titus §302 (2:11-14; 3:4-7)	Matt. §6 (3:13-17)
31ST WEEK after PENTECOST		
<i>M</i>	Heb. §329 (11:17-23, 27-31)	Mark §42 (9:42-10:1)
<i>Tu</i>	Heb. §333 (12:25, 26, 13:22-25)	Mark §43 (10:2-12)
<i>W</i>	James §50 (1:1-18)	Mark §44 (10:11b-16)
<i>Th</i>	James §51 (1:19-27)	Mark §45 (10:17-27)
<i>F</i>	James §52 (2:1-13)	Mark §46 (10:23b-32a)
<i>Sa</i>	Saturday after Theophany	
	Eph. §233 (6:10-17)	Matt. §7 (4:1-11)
<i>Su</i>	31st Sunday after Pentecost	
	<i>9th Resurrectional Matins Gospel:</i> John §65 (20:19-31)	
	1 Tim. §280a (1:15-17)	Luke §93 (18:35-43)
	Sunday after Theophany	
	Eph. §224a (4:7-13)	Matt. §8 (4:12-17)

FASTING DAYS THIS WEEK

Day of Week	Date	Commemoration and Type of Fast
<i>Wednesday</i>	22 January (9 Jan, o.s.)	Martyr Polyeuctus of Armenia Normal Fast Day (<i>No oil</i>)
<i>Friday</i>	24 January (11 Jan, o.s.)	Ven. Theodosius the Great Fast: wine, & oil permitted

NAMEDAYS, BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

LAST WEEK

Namedays – 12th (Prophet-King David): David Seneko, Fr David Straut; 14th (St Basil the Great): Vasilissa Seneko; 15th (St Seraphim of Sarov): Dcn Seraphim Komleski; 15th (St Juliana of Lazarevo): Juliana Bibas.

Birthdays – 17th: Theodore Darenkov.

THIS WEEK

Namedays – 20th (St John the Baptist): Ivan Darenkov; 25th (Martyr Tatiana): Tanya Morrow.

Wedding Anniversaries – 25th: Ivan & Katya Darenkov.

THE REST OF JANUARY

Namedays – 27th (St Nina of Georgia): (Mrs.) Nina Fitzgerald, (Miss) Nina Fitzgerald; 30th (St Anthony the Great): Anthony Carris, Rdr Anthony Williams.

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

We thank John and Tanya Morrow for opening their home to our Parish for so many years for St Elizabeth's Annual Christmas Party which took place last Sunday after the Divine Liturgy. We also thank all who brought food and beverages for the meal, and all who attended, making the party such a success.

The Feast of the Theophany of the Lord Jesus Christ is celebrated on 6 / 19 January. It

commemorates the Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan and is one of the most important of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church. The unique pattern of liturgical services for this Holy Day exactly parallels that Christmas, underscoring the fact that in the early Church the events that these two Feasts commemorate were originally celebrated on the same day, and that the Feast of Theophany is no less important than the Nativity. In fact, there is one element added to the Feast of Theophany which is not present at Christmas: the Great Blessing of Water. This very special sacramental rite is ordinarily only performed twice each year: on the Eve of Theophany and on the Day of Theophany itself. (On the other days of the year, the Lesser Blessing of Water is performed instead.) The faithful should attend as many of the services as they are able for the Feast.

The Feast of Theophany is celebrated for nine days, from the Feastday itself through the *Apodosis* (Leave-taking) of the Feast on 27 January (n.s). The festal period of this Feast is one day longer than the usual eight days, underscoring how important this Feast is in our liturgical calendar. The troparion and kontakion of Theophany are chanted or read at all the services of the Church on each of the nine days. To celebrate the Feast at home, the troparion of the Feast (*'When Thou wast baptised in the Jordan ...'*) can be sung instead of the 'Our Father' before meals, while the kontakion of the Feast (*'Thou hast appeared today unto the whole world...'*) can be sung instead of the usual thanksgiving troparion after each meal. It would also be most appropriate to sing the troparion and kontakion of the Feast at the end of our morning and evening prayers at home.

The Great Blessing of Water that was performed yesterday on the Eve of the Feast and repeated today on the Feast of Theophany after the Divine Liturgy is connected to our celebration of the Baptism of the Lord. In cleansing the sins of humanity in the river Jordan, Christ crushed the heads of the invisible serpents (the demons) in the waters and sanctified the nature of water. In commemoration of this event the Great Blessing of Water is performed on the feast of the Theophany. (In fact, on this day, there are two blessings of water: one is inside the church on the

eve of the feast, while on the day itself the second is performed outside, at rivers and wells).

The practice of blessing water on the day of Christ's Baptism was already existed in the Third century. St. John Chrysostom calls this water "*agiasma*" — a holy thing. It has been known from ancient times that the Holy Water of the Theophany does not go bad. This holy water is used to sprinkle and bless icons, liturgical articles, priestly vestments and crosses. It is also used to bless houses, food, automobiles and other articles. When received with faith, it has the power to cure both physical and spiritual infirmities. Although holy water cannot replace Holy Communion, it can be taken instead of Communion by one who is, for one reason or another, deprived of the consolation of the Sacrament. During times of despondency, confusion and spiritual turmoil it offers tranquility and relief. For this reason Christians keep this blessed water in a special place in their homes and partake of it in the morning, before eating any food.

Those who would like Theophany Water should bring small bottles with them to church on the Feast or the Sunday following. Holy Water is always available to those who wish it year round. Just give your bottle to one of the clergy or an altar server after any service and they will fill it for you.

All homes in the parish should be blessed at Theophany. Ideally this is done during the Festal Period (19-27 January, n.s.), but in any case the house blessings should be completed before the beginning of the Great Fast (18 March, n.s., this year.) Please arrange a time with Father when he can come and bless your home.

The Parish Council meets next Sunday (the 4th Sunday of January) during coffee hour. It was moved from the second Sunday this month, so as to conflict with our annual Parish Christmas Party. All parish council members are asked to attend.