

# THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

## WEEKLY BULLETIN

Volume XVI

Number 19

12 / 25 January 2015

**SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY (SUNDAY OF ZACCHEUS) (Tone 8)**  
**Afterfeast of the Theophany; Martyr Tatiana of Rome**

### THIS WEEK AT ST ELIZABETH'S

#### SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY (Tone 8)

**Sunday of Zacchaeus; Martyr Tatiana of Rome**

*Saturday, 24 January (11 January o.s.)*

6:00 PM Vigil Service;  
Confessions

*Sunday, 25 January (12 January o.s.)*

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy;  
Trapeza (coffee hour)  
12:30 PM Parish Council Meeting

#### SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN & PHARISEE (Tone 1)

**Sunday of Zacchaeus; Martyr Tatiana of Rome**

*Saturday, 31 January (18 January o.s.)*

6:00 PM Vigil Service;  
Confessions

*Sunday, 1 February (19 January o.s.)*

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

### NAMEDAYS, BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

#### LAST WEEK

**Namedays** – 20th (St John the Baptist): Ivan Darenkov.

#### THIS WEEK

**Namedays** – 25th (Martyr Tatiana): Tanya Morrow; 27th (St Nina of Georgia): (Mrs.) Nina Fitzgerald, (Miss) Nina Fitzgerald.

**Birthdays** – 27th: George Seneko.

**Wedding Anniversaries** – 25th: Ivan & Katya Darenkov.

#### MONTH OF FEBRUARY

**Namedays** – 3rd (St Maximos the Confessor): Maximos Bibas; 4th (Apostle Timothy): Timothy Morrow; 6th (St Xenia of Petersburg): Xenia Whitacre; 7th (St Gregory the Theologian): Gregory Welsh; 25th (St Alexis of Moscow): Alexei Darenkov.

**Birthdays** – 2nd: Vasilissa Seneko; 5th: John Morrow; 14th: Peter Mladineo; 20th: Daniel Palko; 24th: Frank Fitzgerald; 26th: Elena Kostin; 27th: Nadezhda Sexton; 28th: Seraphima Morrow.

**Baptism Anniversaries** – 12th: Anna Straut (1984).

### SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

<i>Su</i>	<b>32nd Sunday after Pentecost (Sunday of Zacchaeus)</b>	
	<i>11th Resurrectional Matins Gospel: John §67 (21:15-25)</i>	
	1 Tim. §285a (4:9-15)	Luke §94 (19:1-10)
	<b>Sunday after Theophany</b>	
	Eph. §224a (4:7-13)	Matt. §8 (4:12-17)
<b>33RD WEEK after PENTECOST</b>		
<i>M</i>	1 Pet. §59 (2:21b-3:9)	Mark §54 (12:13-17)
<i>Tu</i>	1 Pet. §60 (3:10-22)	Mark §55 (12:18-27)
<i>W</i>	1 Pet. §61 (4:1-11)	Mark §56 (12:28-37)
<i>Th</i>	1 Pet. §62 (4:12-5:5)	Mark §57 (12:38-44)
<i>F</i>	2 Pet. §64 (1:1-10a)	Mark §58 (13:1-8)
<i>Sa</i>	2 Tim. §293 (2:11-19)	Luke §88 (18:2-8a)
<i>Su</i>	<b>The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee</b>	
	<i>2nd Resurrectional Matins Gospel: Mark §70 (16:1-8)</i>	
	2 Tim. §296 (3:10-15)	Luke §89 (18:10-14)

### FASTING DAYS THIS WEEK

Day of Week	Date	Commemoration and Type of Fast
<i>Wednesday</i>	28 January (15 Jan, o.s.)	St Paul of Thebes; St John Calabytes Normal Fast Day ( <i>No oil</i> )
<i>Friday</i>	30 January (17 Jan, o.s.)	St Anthony the Great Fast: fish, wine, & oil permitted

### THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Parish Council meets this Sunday** (the 4th Sunday of this month) during coffee hour. (Because the January Meeting is so late in the month, it will serve as both the January and February Parish Council Meetings.) All parish council members are asked to attend.

**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 on the Feast of Theophany 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. Holy Water is always available to those who wish it year round. Just give your bottle to Father 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 (23 February, n.s., this year.) Please arrange a time with Father when he can come and bless your home.

**St Elizabeth's Annual Meeting** will be held on the second Sunday of March. The Annual Meeting will replace the usual March Parish Council Meeting. The Rector, Church Warden, and Treasurer will present year-in-review reports for the past year. Planning for the current year will also take place. Parishioner concerns will be heard. All voting members of the Parish are asked to attend.

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### The Blessing of Water

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

At the beginning of the procession, the clergy come forth through the Royal Gates. The rector carries the holy Cross, preceded by people bearing banners, icons and lighted candles. During the procession, the choir sings: "The voice of the Lord upon the water cries aloud..." and other hymns of the feast. Then there are readings from the Old Testament, the Epistle and the Gospel relating to the Baptism of Christ.

The Old Testament lessons are prophecies concerning the regenerative power of God's grace, which the Prophets compare to water.

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose ... Then (during the time of the Messiah) the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water ... Lo, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye ... Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say 'Praise the Lord, call upon His name, declare His doings among the people'" (See Isaiah 35:1-10, 55:1-13, 12:3-5).

After the reading of the Gospel, the deacon reads a litany with special petitions for the blessing of the water. The priest reads a prayer, in which he asks God to bestow purification, sanctification, health and blessings upon all those that partake of the blessed water or splash themselves with it. After the prayer, the priest immerses the cross in the water three times, as the troparion of the feast is sung: "When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan, O Lord ..." Following this, the priest sprinkles the church, the people and their homes with the blessed water.

The practice of blessing water on the day of Christ's Baptism was already existent 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.

Thus, let us greet the glorious feast of Christ's Baptism with joy, thanking our Saviour for regenerating us by water and the Spirit and for opening to us the path to His heavenly kingdom.

- Bishop Alexander (Mileant)