

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

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6 / 19 January 2020

HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES THIS WEEK

THEOPHANY OF THE LORD

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

Vigil Service cancelled

Sunday, 12 January (30 December, o.s.)

8:30 AM Festal Matins;
Confessions
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy;
Great Blessing of Water
Trapeza (coffee hour)

SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY (Tone 5)

Martyrs Hermylus & Stratonicus of Belgrade

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;
Trapeza (coffee hour)

FASTING DAYS Week of 19 January

Day of Week	Date	Commemoration and Type of Fast
<i>Wednesday</i>	22 January (9 Jan, o.s.)	HM Philip, Met. of Moscow Fast: wine & oil permitted
<i>Friday</i>	24 January (11 Jan, o.s.)	St Theodosius the Great Fast: wine & oil permitted

SCRIPTURE READINGS Week of 19 January

THEOPHANY: BAPTISM OF THE LORD		
	<i>Matins Gospel:</i> Mark §2 (1:9-11)	
	Titus §302 (2:11-14; 3:4-7)	Mt §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)	Mt §7 (4:1-11)
	Col. §249a (1:3-6)	Luke §81 (16:10-15)

<i>Su</i>	Sunday after Theophany	
	31st Sunday after Pentecost	
	<i>10th Resurrectional Matins Gospel:</i> John §66 (21:1-14)	
	Eph. §224a (4:7-13)	Mt §8 (4:12-17)
	1 Tim. §280a (1:15-17)	Luke §93 (18:35-43)

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Many Years to the Machuskiy family! Baby Melania was baptized on Saturday, 18 January, prior to the beginning of the Divine Liturgy for the Eve of Theophany. We congratulate Melania's Godmother, Inna Yanovsky, her parents Aleksandr and Irina, and her sister, Krystyna!

A special collection for the Haiti Mission of ROCOR will be taken at St Elizabeth's during the Sundays of January. As you know, Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and our Haitian Orthodox brethren are too poor to fully support the needs of their young church. They need the help of those of us who have more than enough. Please give generously.

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.

Concerning Confession and Holy Communion: Those who have been to Confession any time since the Eve of the Nativity of the Lord may receive Holy Communion at the Liturgy on the Feast of Theophany itself (19 January, n.s.), provided that no serious sin has been committed which would require another Confession and that the other usual preparations for Holy Communion are observed (i.e. attendance of the Vigil Service the evening before Holy Communion, reading the Pre-Communion Prayers, and the forgiveness of others). Likewise, those who have been to Confession for the Feast of the Theophany may receive Holy Communion at the Liturgy the following two Sundays under the same conditions.

The Feast of Theophany is celebrated for nine days, from the Feast day 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 baptized 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 practice of blessing water on the day of Christ's Baptism 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 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 (2 March, n.s., this year.) Please arrange a time with Father when he can come and bless your home.

22 January 2020 is the 47th anniversary of the tragic decision of the Supreme Court of the United States to permit the destruction of children in the womb through all nine months of pregnancy. Since that time, millions of unborn babies are put to death each year in our country. Please pray for the unborn, for our Nation, for our civil authorities, on 22 January.

The annual 'March for Life' will take place in Washington this year on Friday, 24 January. Many Orthodox Christians from all over the United States will be traveling to Washington on that day to join with the 'Orthodox Christians for Life' in witnessing to the stand of our Orthodox Church against the grave sin of abortion. The March begins with a rally at the Mall at 7th Street in Washington at 11 AM. Thereafter, the March will proceed along Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court Building. At the conclusion of the March, Orthodox clergy will lead Orthodox participants in prayer. Please pray for the unborn and for the March participants on 24 January.

Petitions Added to the Augmented Litany On the Sunday Nearest 22 January

Deacon: Again we pray, O Lord our God, that by Thy great mercy Thou wouldst bring to repentance all those who contemplate killing their children through the grave sin of abortion, and all those who would participate in the destruction of innocent children in the womb; revive the natural feelings of these mothers and fathers for their children; and prevent them committing this great sin against innocent blood. Render not unto them according to their deeds, but by Thy great mercy convert them, and unite them to Thy Church, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray: have mercy, O God, on Thy children condemned to death by the unjust judgement of men. Soften the hearts of those that seek their violent destruction and rescue them that are being led forth to the slaughter, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray, O Lord our God: Look down from heaven, therefore, and behold, and forsake

us not utterly, but quickly cleanse our land and the whole world of the wickedness of those that oppose thee, O God, Who art mighty in strength and wondrous in wisdom, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*