

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

Volume XXI

Number 20

13 / 26 January 2020

THE SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY (*Tone 7*)

Afterfeast of the Theophany; Holy Martyrs Hermylus & Stratonicus

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES THIS WEEK

SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY (*Tone 7*)
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)

33RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (*Tone 8*)
(Zacchaeus Sunday) St Euthymius the Great
Saturday, 1 February (19 January, o.s.)

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 2 February (20 January, o.s.)

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

SCRIPTURE READINGS Week of 26 January

<i>Su</i>	Sunday after Theophany	
	31st Sunday after Pentecost	
	<i>10th Resurrectional Matins Gospel: John §66 (21:1-14)</i>	
	Eph. §224a (4:7-13)	Mt §8 (4:12-17)
	1 Tim. §280a (1:15-17)	Luke §93 (18:35-43)
32ND WEEK after PENTECOST		
<i>M</i>	James §53 (2:14-26)	Mark §48 (10:46-52)
<i>Tu</i>	James §54 (3:1-10)	Mark §50 (11:11-23)
<i>W</i>	James §55 (3:11-4:6)	Mark §51 (11:22b-26)
<i>Th</i>	James §56 (4:7-5:9)	Mark §52 (11:27-33)
<i>F</i>	1 Pet. §58 (1:1-2, 10-12, 2:6-10)	Mark §53 (12:1-12)
<i>Sa</i>	1 Thess. §273 (5:14-23)	Luke §84 (17:3-10)
<i>Su</i>	32nd Sunday after Pentecost (Sunday of Zacchaeus)	
	<i>10th Resurrectional Matins Gospel: John §66 (21:1-14)</i>	
	1 Tim. §285a (4:9-15)	Luke §94 (19:1-10)



FASTING DAYS Week of 26 January

Day of Week	Date	Commemoration and Type of Fast
<i>Wednesday</i>	29 January (16 Jan, o.s.)	Chains of the Apostle Peter Fast: wine & oil permitted
<i>Friday</i>	31 January (18 Jan, o.s.)	Ss Athanasius & Cyril of Alexandria Fast: wine & oil permitted

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!

Today is the last Sunday of our special collection for the Haiti Mission of ROCOR will be taken at St Elizabeth's during the Sundays of January. They need the help of those of us who have more than enough. If you have given to this worthy cause, may God bless you. If not, please consider Please giving today.

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 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 customarily performed outside, at rivers and wells).

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. 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 (2 March, n.s., this year.) Please arrange a time with Father when he can come and bless your home.

HOLY WATER

From a Sermon of Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco

On Theophany, the Day of the Lord's Baptism, every year a great miracle is performed. The Holy Spirit, coming down upon the water, changes its natural properties. It becomes incorrupt, not spoiling, remaining transparent and fresh for many years. This Holy Water receives the grace to heal illnesses, to drive away demons and every evil power, to preserve people and their dwellings from every danger, to sanctify various objects whether for church or home use. Therefore, Orthodox Christians with reverence

drink Holy Water — a great *Agiasma* (holy thing), as the Greeks call it.

One should always have at home enough Theophany water to last the whole year, and make use of it at every need: in cases of illness, leaving on a journey, whenever one is upset, students prior to examinations, etc. People who drink a little Holy Water daily, before eating any kind of food, do well. It strengthens the powers of our soul — if it is done with prayer and reverence, and one does not merely expect a mechanical result from it.

Every priest should take care to bless a sufficient quantity of water for his church, so that it will be on hand for the course of the whole year for every need and to be given out to those who ask for it; and parishioners should provide themselves at Theophany with Holy Water for the whole year and even so that it can be kept for future years.

<http://www.orthodoxphotos.com/readings/john/2/>

Prayer Before Consuming Prophora and Holy Water

O Lord my God, may Thy holy gift and Thy holy water be unto the enlightenment of my mind, unto the strengthening of my spiritual and physical powers, unto the health of my soul and body, unto the taming of my passions and weaknesses, according to Thy limitless mercy, through the prayers of Thy Most-pure Mother and of all Thy Saints. Amen.

<https://stnektariosroc.org/2013/10/prayer-before-consuming-prophora-and-holy-water/>

LOOKING AHEAD

A special collection for Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, New York, has been mandated by our Metropolitan and the Synod of Bishops of ROCOR on the Sunday nearest the Feast of the Three Hierarchs: 12 February, n.s. A special collection will be taken at St Elizabeth's during the Sundays of February. This collection will help the Orthodox Theological Seminary of our Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to continue to educate the future clergy of our Church in a spirit of fidelity to Orthodox Tradition in a monastic setting. Funds are needed to pay faculty, provide scholarships to students, maintain facilities, and expand programming. Holy Trinity Seminary now conducts instruction in the English language and is moving forward to with plans to institute a Master of Divinity (MDiv) program. Please give generously.

