

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

Volume XX

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SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

**Commemoration of the Holy Righteous Kinsmen of the Lord:
Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, & James the Brother of the Lord;
Apodosis of the Nativity of Our Lord**

SERVICES THIS WEEK

SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY (Tone 8)

Prophet-King David, St Joseph, Apostle James
Saturday, 12 January (30 December, o.s.)

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 13 January (31 December, o.s.)

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
12:00 PM Annual Christmas Party

CIRCUMCISION OF THE LORD; St Basil

Monday, 14 January (1 January, o.s.)

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Vasilopita

HOLY THEOPHANY: The Baptism of the Lord

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

9:00 AM Royal Hours of Theophany
10:30 AM Great Vespers
6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

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

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy;
Great Blessing of Water

SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY (Tone 1)

Synaxis of St John the Forerunner

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

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 20 January (7 January, o.s.)

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

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Week of 13 January

Su	SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD	
	<i>11th Resurrectional Matins Gospel: John §67 (21:15-25)</i>	
	Gal. §200 (1:11-19)	Matt. §4 (2:13-23)
M	CIRCUMCISION OF THE LORD; St Basil the Great	
	<i>Vespers Paramia: (1) Genesis 17:1-7, 9-12, 14 • (2) Proverbs 8:22-30 • (3) Proverbs 10:31-11:12</i>	
	<i>Matins Gospel: John §36 (10:9-16)</i>	
	Col. §254 (2:8-12)	Luke §6 (2:20-21, 40-52)
	Heb. §318 (7:26-8:2)	Luke §24 (6:17-23a)
Tu	St Seraphim of Sarov	
	Gal. §213 (5:22-6:2)	Luke §24 (6:17-23)
W	Martyr Gordius	
	II Tim. §292 (2:1-10)	Matt. §36 (10:16-22)
Th	Synaxis of the 70 Apostles	
	Rom. §96 (8:8-14)	Luke §50 (10:1-15)
F	Eve of Theophany of the Lord: Royal Hours	
	<i>1st Hour: Isaiah 35:1-10 • Acts §33 (13:25-33a) • Matt. §5 (3:1-11)</i>	
	<i>3rd Hour: Isaiah 1:16-20 • Acts §42 (19:1-8) • Mark §1 (1:1-8)</i>	
	<i>6th Hour: Isaiah 12:3-6 • Rom. §91 (6:3-11) • Mark §2 (1:9-15)</i>	
	<i>9yj Hour: Isaiah 49:8-15 • Titus §302 (2:11-14; 3:4-7) • Matt. §6 (3:13-17)</i>	
	Eve of Theophany of the Lord: Vespers Liturgy	
F	<i>Vespers Paramia: (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 [III] Kings 2:6-14 • (6) IV [III] 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 [III] Kings 2:19-22 • (13) Isaiah 49:8-15</i>	
	1 Cor. §143 (9:19-27)	Luke §9 (3:1-18)
Sa	THEOPHANY: BAPTISM OF THE LORD	
	<i>Matins Gospel: Mark §2 (1:9-11)</i>	
	Titus §302 (2:11-14; 3:4-7)	Matt. §6 (3:13-17)
Su	SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY	
	Synaxis of the Forerunner	
	Eph. §224a (4:7-13)	Matt. §8 (4:12-17)
	Acts §42 (19:1-8)	John §3 (1:29-34)

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

Father David and Matushka Faith, Fr Deacon Seraphim and Matushka Anna Gail, Fr Deacon Steven and Matushka Hannah, Fr Dcn Stephanos and Matushka Juliana, and Reader Gregory and Claudia Maxey would like to thank all the Parishioners who gave cards and very generous gifts to their families on Christmas. The love that this demonstrated was overwhelming. May the Incarnate Lord abundantly bless you for your kindness.

Many thanks to those who donated for flowers for the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord. We also thank those who cleaned the church in preparation for the Feast, to those who picked up the Christmas flowers, and to those who decorated the church for the Feast. The church is very beautiful!

Many thanks to all those who made the services for Christmas so splendid: *Claudia Maxey*, who arranged the music and choir rehearsals for Christmas; *Reader Gregory*, who directed the choir on the services for the Nativity; *the Members of the Choir*, who attended rehearsals and those who sang at the festal services; *Fr Deacon Seraphim*, *Fr Deacon Steven*, *Fr Deacon Stephanos*, *our Subdeacons*, *Readers*, and *Servers* who assisted at the Christmas services.

St Elizabeth's Annual Christmas Party will take place today after the Divine Liturgy at the home of the Morrow Family at 90 Somerville Road; Basking Ridge, New Jersey 07920. All parishioners are urged to attend. We thank John and Tanya for opening their home to our Parish for the last several years.

The Parish Council will meet on the third Sunday of this month rather than the second Sunday, so as to conflict with our annual Parish Christmas Party.

January 14th on our secular calendar is January 1st on the Julian calendar. As such, it is often referred to as 'Russian New Year', because in pre-revolutionary Russia, from the time of Tsar Peter the Great, the Western European custom of observing the New Year on 1 January was adopted. The Russian Orthodox Church, however, continued the ancient custom of celebrating the Church New Year in September, not January. For the Church, 1 / 14 January is the double Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord and St Basil the Great. On this day, which is eight days after Christmas, the Lord Jesus Christ, in obedience to the Law of Moses, was brought by his parents to be circumcised. On this day also, one of the preeminent Fathers of the Church, Basil the Great, fell asleep in the Lord. This Feast is of a rank just below that of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church.

The Church began to celebrate the memory of Saint Basil the Great almost at once after his death. In a homily on his death, Saint Amphilochius, the Bishop of Iconium, said: 'Not without reason and not by accident was the divine Basil released from the body and translated from earth to God on the day of the Circumcision of Jesus, which is celebrated between the days of the Nativity and Baptism of Christ. Therefore, this most blessed one, in preaching and praising the Nativity and Baptism of Christ, extolled the spiritual circumcision, and

himself, having put off the body, was deemed worthy of ascending to Christ precisely on the sacred day of the commemoration of Christ's Circumcision. For this cause, it has been enacted to honor the memory of Basil the Great on this present day annually with celebration and solemnity.'

The Divine Liturgy will be served for St Basil's Day at St Elizabeth's on the morning of the Feast (14 January) at 9:30. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy we observe the beautiful custom of blessing and distributing 'St Basil's Bread' (called in Greek *Vasilopita*).

There is no fasting, nor prostrations or kneeling in prayer, from 7 January through 17 January (n.s.), even on Wednesdays and Fridays. This is because we joyfully celebrate the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord not just for one day, but throughout this period.

The Eve of Theophany (5 / 18 January) is a fast day on whatever day it falls, even Sunday. By fasting on this day, we prepare to celebrate the Feast of Theophany. We eat no meat, meat products, eggs, dairy products, or fish on this day. In the Russian practice, wine and olive oil are permitted on this day on whatever day it falls.

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 of 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.

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

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 Liturgies 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.