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**Sunday, January 4, 2026**

*Sunday Before Theophany*

8:45am: Orthros

10am: Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

## Hymns of the Day

### Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Plagal First Mode

Let us worship the Word who is unoriginate \* with the Father and the Spirit, and from a Virgin was born \* for our salvation, O believers, and let us sing His praise. \* For in His goodness He was pleased \* to ascend the Cross in the flesh, and to undergo death, \* and to raise up those who had died, \* by His glorious Resurrection.

## **Ἀπολυτίκιον Ἀναστάσιμον. ᾠχος πλ. α'**

Τὸν συνάναρχον Λόγον Πατρὶ καὶ Πνεύματι, τὸν ἐκ Παρθένου τεχθέντα εἰς σωτηρίαν ἡμῶν, ἀνυμνήσωμεν πιστοὶ καὶ προσκυνήσωμεν· ὅτι ἠϋδόκησε σαρκί, ἀνελθεῖν ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ, καὶ θάνατον ὑπομεῖναι, καὶ ἐγείραι τοὺς τεθνεώτας, ἐν τῇ ἐνδόξῳ ἀναστάσει αὐτοῦ.

## **Apolytikion of the Forefeast in the Fourth Mode**

O Zabulon, prepare, and be ready, Nephthalim. \* Jordan River, hold your course, and exultantly receive \* the Master who is coming to be baptized. \* Adam leap for joy with Eve the Foremother. \* No longer hide yourselves, as once in Paradise; \* for having seen you naked He has appeared \* to clothe you in your former vesture. \* The Christ has appeared, wishing to renew \* the entire creation.

## **Apolytikion of Saint Nicholas in the Fourth Mode**

An example of the faith and a life of humility: \* as a teacher of abstinence you did inspire and lead your flock, \* and through the truthfulness of your deeds \* were exalted to greatness through your humility, \* uplifting all, and by poverty gaining wealth. \* Father and hierarch Saint Nicholas, \* intercede with Christ our God \* that our souls may be saved.

## **Kontakion of the Forefeast in the Fourth Mode**

To the flowing streams today \* of River Jordan \* comes the Lord and cries aloud \* to John the Baptist, and He says, \* “Be not afraid to baptize me now; \* for I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man.”

# Gospel and Epistle Readings

## Orthros Gospel

### John 20:11 – 18

At that time, Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus has lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” Saying this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.”

Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabboni,” which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, “Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and she told them that he had said these things to her.

## Epistle Reading

### 2 Timothy 4:5 – 8

Timothy, my son, always be watchful, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race,

I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

## **Gospel Reading**

### **Mark 1:1 – 8**

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

John was baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

## **Saints and Feasts**

### **Sunday Before Holy Theophany**

About the beginning of our Lord’s thirtieth year, John the Forerunner, who was some six months older than Our Saviour according to the flesh, and had lived in the wilderness since his childhood, received a command from God and came into

the parts of the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins.

Then our Saviour also came from Galilee to the Jordan, and sought and received baptism though He was the Master and John was but a servant. Whereupon, there came to pass those marvellous deeds, great and beyond nature: the Heavens were opened, the Spirit descended in the form of a dove upon Him that was being baptized and the voice was heard from the Heavens bearing witness that this was the beloved Son of God, now baptized as a man.

From these events the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the great mystery of the Trinity were demonstrated. It is also from this that the present feast is called “Theophany,” that is, the divine manifestation, God’s appearance among men. On this venerable day the sacred mystery of Christian baptism was inaugurated; henceforth also began the saving preaching of the Kingdom of the Heavens.

## **Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles**

The Seventy Disciples and Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ are those Whom our Saviour chose in addition to the Twelve and sent forth unto the work of preaching. With the passage of time, others were added to their number by the Holy Apostles, who, with the accompaniment and assistance of the Seventy, were preaching the Gospel of Christ in various lands. Although their number eventually exceeded seventy, they were all nonetheless referred to as “of the Seventy” out of reverence for the number of Apostles which the Lord chose.

After the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord, and after Pentecost, on which all the Apostles and men and women disciples of Christ, together with the Most Holy Theotokos (some 120 in number), were gathered in the upper chamber, they received the grace of the All-holy Spirit and went

forth throughout the ends of the world, everywhere preaching and teaching the Gospel of Christ, and leading to the true Faith the peoples who were sunk in the darkness of impiety and idolatry.

## Wisdom of the Fathers

“Baptism is the end of the Old Testament, and beginning of the New. For its author was John, than whom was *none greater among them that are born of women*. The end he was of the Prophets: *for all the Prophets and the law were until John*; but of the Gospel history he was the first-fruit. . . . All the Prophets were admirable, but not greater than John. It is not I that dare to compare Prophets with Prophets: but their Master and ours, the Lord Jesus, declared it: *Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John*: He saith not ‘among them that are born of virgins,’ but *of women*. . . .

“Seest thou how great a man God chose as the first minister of this grace?— a man possessing nothing, and a lover of the desert, yet no hater of mankind: who ate locusts, and winged his soul for heaven: feeding upon honey, and speaking things both sweeter and more salutary than honey: clothed with a garment of camel’s hair, and shewing in himself the pattern of the ascetic life; who also was sanctified by the Holy Ghost while yet he was carried in his mother’s womb. Jeremiah was sanctified, but did not prophesy, in the womb: John alone while carried in the womb leaped for joy, and though he saw not with the eyes of flesh, knew his Master by the Spirit: for since the grace of Baptism was great, it required greatness in its founder also.”

- St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 3, §6.

# Parish Prayer List

Please remember in your God-pleasing prayers the servants of God:

Robert Tewis; Robert (Tikhon) Foster; Lance (Stylianos) Schmitt

*If you would like for yourself or a loved one to be added to the prayer list, please contact Fr. Jeremy.*

## Parish Information

### House Blessings

Following the feast of Holy Theophany (January 6), we have the tradition of blessing homes. If you would like to schedule a house blessing for the days following Holy Theophany, please contact Fr. Jeremy.

### Church School

Church School for our children begins following Holy Communion. We have two classrooms: one for elementary-school ages, and one for middle school and up. Please allow our Church School kids and their teachers to come up for Communion first.

### Introduction to Orthodox Christianity

Our Adult Ed class meets on Sundays following coffee hour. We meet in the classrooms downstairs. Any who would like to learn more about our Orthodox Faith, whether a newcomer or a life-long member, are welcome to attend. Please contact Fr. Jeremy to be added to the distribution list for readings.

## Byzantine Chant Classes

Byzantine chant classes take place on **Saturdays at 4pm**. If you are interested in learning and helping out, please feel free to attend!

## Men's Breakfast

Our next Men's Breakfast will take place on Saturday, **February 7 at 8am**. Feel free to invite a friend!

## Ladies' Potluck Luncheon

Our Ladies' Potluck Luncheon group meets on the second Thursday of each month! The next luncheon will take place in the Church hall on **Thursday, January 8** at 12pm.



## This Week at St. Nicholas

- Monday, January 5 **Eve of Theophany**: 8:30am Orthros and Royal Hours, 6pm Vespers Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
- Tuesday, January 6 **Holy Theophany**: 8:30am Orthros, 9:30am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
- Wednesday, January 7: 6pm Small Paraklesis
- Thursday, January 8: 12pm Ladies' Luncheon
- Saturday, January 10: 4pm Byzantine Chant Class, 5pm Great Vespers