

CHURCH BULLETIN	V. Rev. Fr. George Veselinovic, Parish Priest Monroeville, Pennsylvania 15146 412.622.4714 (cell) 412.856.8166 (office) <a href="mailto:dj.veselinovic@yahoo.com">dj.veselinovic@yahoo.com</a> <a href="http://www.stnicholasmonroeville.org">www.stnicholasmonroeville.org</a> <a href="mailto:stnicholasmonroeville@gmail.com">stnicholasmonroeville@gmail.com</a>	SUNDAY January 20, 2019
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### SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY

#### *Epistle: Ephesians (4: 7-13)*

Brethren, grace was given to each one of us according to the generous measure of Christ. Therefore, the Scripture says: "He ascended into heaven, he led a host of captives, he gave gifts to mankind." Now if he ascended into heaven that means that he had previously descended into the lower regions of the earth. For Christ first descended, then ascended above all the heavens, and filled the entire universe. He gave us some men as Apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors, some as teachers. It is their duty to train the saints, to minister to their needs, to build up the Church of Christ, and to enable us to achieve the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. So, we shall reach full growth, the maturity and the perfection of Christ.

#### *Gospel: Matthew (4: 12-17)*

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

#### TROPARION TONE I

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews; while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure Body; You did rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life: Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your Kingdom! Glory to Your dispensation, O You Who loves mankind.

#### THEOPHANY – TROPARION TONE I

When You, O Lord, was baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest! For the voice of the Father bore witness to You, and called You His beloved Son! And the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of His word. O Christ our God, who has revealed Yourself and has enlightened the world, glory to You.

#### SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST – TROPARION TONE II

The memory of the righteous is worthy of praise, but you, Forerunner, are well pleased by the Lord's own witness. You were indeed revealed as greater than the prophets, for in the waters

you baptized Him, Whom they foretold. Therefore, you joyfully suffered for the truth and proclaimed to those in Hades the gospel of the incarnate God, Who takes away the sins of the world, and grants us great mercy.

#### KONTAKION TONE I

As God, You did rise from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Yourself. Human nature praises You as God, for death has vanished! Adam exults, O Master! Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to You: You are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!

#### KONTAKION TO SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST – TONE VI

The river Jordan trembled and was driven back filled with fear at Your coming in the flesh, while John drew back in awe, as he fulfilled the ministry of the spirit. The ranks of angels stood amazed when they beheld You in the flesh baptized in the stream; and all of those, who were in darkness, are filled with light, praising You, God made manifest, Who enlightens all.

#### KONTAKION OF THE THEOPHANY - TONE IV

Today, You have appeared to the universe, and Your light, O Lord, has shone on us, who with understanding, praise You: "You have come and revealed Yourself, O Light Unapproachable!"

**SAINTS WE COMMEMORATE TODAY** – *Synaxis of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John*

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Matthew Shaffer**, son of Melissa Karas Shaffer needs our prayers, love, and support. Matthew is a wonderful, faithful young man and a member of our parish family. We are appealing for your compassion and help. Please see Father George and/or Nick Jokola. Make your checks payable to Melissa Karas Shaffer.

**Today** – Synaxis of St. John ó Srečna Slava! Happy Feast Day to those who celebrate!

**January 27<sup>th</sup>** – St. Sava Slava ó All are invited to please stay and celebrate with our children on their Feast Day. Banquet and program to follow Divine Liturgy.

**Pizza Fundraiser to benefit Matthew Shaffer** has been moved to Sunday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>. There is still time to place your order for a whole cheese or pepperoni pizza for only \$10. Contact Alexis Janiga ó 412-965-5602.

**After January 20th, Father George will begin blessing homes.**

**The St. Nicholas Jr. Choir** will resume rehearsal on Sunday, February 3. The choir is also looking for new members. Children, ages 7-17, are welcome to join. Rehearsals are held in the multi-purpose room immediately following Divine Liturgy.

The Jr. Choir has always been the starting point for our young singers to become members of the church choir. In fact, former junior members are now actively involved with church choir. For more information, please contact the director of the Jr. Choir, Janice Smargie at 412-351-5193 or email [jsmargie@msn.com](mailto:jsmargie@msn.com).

**Purse Bash** – A 3<sup>rd</sup> planning meeting will be held Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the church hall. The Purse Bash is scheduled for March 2, 2019. Ladies, it is not too late to join the group to help make this event a successful fundraiser. If you have any questions, please contact Sondra Deaunovich at [Sondra7890@comcast.net](mailto:Sondra7890@comcast.net) or 412-760-5796.

**The Committee for the 2019 SNF Summer Golf Tournament** has met and is excited to begin planning for this big event for our church and local SNF lodges. To be successful, we will need everyone's help! There will be many opportunities for you to contribute. The Committee will keep you informed of our progress over the coming months. Pam Matejevich will be coordinating volunteers for the event which will take place August 7-11, 2019. Reach out to Pam or to Chairman Dushan Markoff to offer your help or ask any questions!

### REMINDERS

**Adult Bible Study** – Classes cancelled until further notice.

**Vespers** ó Saturday evening 6:00 p.m.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT: *Life of Saint John*

St. John was the son of the Prophet Zacharias and Elizabeth, who was a kinswoman of the Virgin Mary. St. John is known as the ðForerunnerö and ðBaptist.ö He is known as the Forerunner because he preceded Christ and taught repentance, which prepared men for Jesus' teaching and His ministry. He even recognized Christ as the Messiah as early as when they were both still in their mothers' wombs. According to Holy Tradition, the Virgin Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth and when they embraced John leapt in his mother's womb, which is considered his first acknowledgment of Christ as Messiah.

After his birth, St. John's father Zacharias was murdered in the temple. He and his mother fled to the desert and he was raised there. Thus he lived as an ascetic from the earliest part of his life. He ate plants and roots and wore rough clothing. When he grew, he baptized people in the Jordan, teaching repentance, but also saying that someone greater would come after him and baptize with the Holy Spirit.

St. John always spoke the truth and because Herod did not appreciate his criticism, he was imprisoned. Later he was beheaded, as the result of a promise Herod gave to his step-daughter to give her anything she asked. The daughter was convinced by her mother to ask for John's head on a platter.

It is a strict fast day in recognition of the way in which he died, but it is also a joyous feast day because John's life was such a luminous example for monastics, martyrs and all Christians to follow him.

### ***THEOPHANY - THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD***

Today we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord, also called Theophany or Epiphany, words which mean the Appearance of God, and this Feast is also called the Enlightenment. For that is exactly what this Feast is about, it is the first public Appearance of Christ, the beginning of His public preaching at the age of 30, and so the Enlightenment of mankind.

Theophany is in fact one of three Trinitarian Feasts in the Church Year, where 'the worship of the Trinity is made manifest'. For today the voice of the Father bears witness that, 'This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased', and the Spirit is seen in the form of a dove. Another such Feast is Pentecost, also called Trinity or Trinity Sunday, where the Son sends down the Spirit from the Father, from Whom the Spirit proceeds. Thirdly, there is also the Feast of the Transfiguration, where the voice of the Father is also heard and the Spirit is seen in the form of the Light of Tabor transfiguring the Son.

Today's Feast proves to the world that Christ is both God and man, that He has two natures. On the one hand, the Father calls Him 'My beloved Son' and the Spirit bears witness. On the other hand, as St John the Baptist shows in his humility that he is unworthy even to undo Christ's shoelaces, the sinless human nature of Christ did not need baptism. Christ underwent baptism in his human nature only because He needed to set us an example, to undergo all that we must undergo in order to be worthy of the Kingdom of God. Christ was indeed human flesh and blood - you cannot baptize a spirit or a ghost - Christ truly took on Himself our human nature.

In the icon of today's Feast we see in the waters of the Jordan a serpent-monster, a demon lurking in the water. Until the time of Christ, the whole world lay in evil. Through Christ's Coming, however, the whole world can be purified and redeemed. This process began with the purification of water, on which all life depends, of which our own bodies are mainly made up. Through Christ's Baptism the way is open for the baptism of the whole of mankind and the purification of the whole Cosmos. Christ's Baptism was the beginning of the purging of the world from evil. Those who reject Baptism allow the world to be filled with evil once more. This is why we baptize the new-born child, before the seeds of evil can come to lurk in his soul. This is why we sprinkle with Theophany water our homes and work-places, our cars and buses - so that no evil can lurk in them.

But what does Baptism mean for us, however, who are already baptized?

Although we believe that there is only One Baptism, in Church practice we use the word baptism in a figurative sense, for the sacrament of Confession is often called 'a second baptism'. It is through the 'second baptism' of Confession that we can renew ourselves by preparing ourselves to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, in the same way as the waters of the Jordan received Christ bodily when He was baptized. Thus among us too the old waters of the Jordan of human sin can be driven back and sin flees, as the demon-serpent is driven out of us by the Appearance of Christ and His Enlightenment of us.



