



Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church THE WEEKLY CHURCH BULLETIN

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2017

Κυριακή 31η Δεκεμβρίου 2017

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΩΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΩΝ

Αποστ: Β΄ Τιμ. 4:5-8

Ευαγγ: Μαρκου 1:1-8

Sunday After the Nativity of our Lord

Today's Readings

Epistle: 2 Tim. 4:5-8

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8



THE NEW YEAR – ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY

Another New Year is on our doorstep, and it is normal that we give extra thought to the new time frame. We all make the customary New Year's resolutions, only to have them short-lived. To this, there could only be one answer, and this was spoken by the Lord: "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 26:41) Our intentions may be honorable, but we so easily fall to the established routine of life, simply because we do not make the sufficient effort to move ourselves to follow the Christian course, which holds the fulfillment we all desire.

We hear people say that it is so often difficult to do the right thing, especially in a materialistic world where the competition is so great. It may be difficult, but not impossible. The Lord made no sugarcoated promises. He stated that, "the gate is narrow which leads unto life, whereas the gate is wide and the way is broad which leads unto destruction!" (Matthew 7:13-14)

One of the main problems in our life as Christians is that we do not give equal time to the needs of our soul. We often take extra pain to take care of our physical needs. And yet we just don't think very often about our spiritual needs.

We all seek happiness in life, but happiness does not mean the same thing to all people. People have to come to grips with themselves, and at the same time take life more seriously. When this happens, they will be convinced that happiness does not come from things that we may acquire. Happiness has its roots from deep within our soul. It has to source from the soul.

The proof of this is that as we mature and approach the golden years of life, we realize that the things that seemed so important in our youth are now only incidental, and the things we took for granted, in which we didn't place much importance, are the things that in the end become very precious to us.

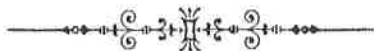
Our Lord Jesus does not command us. But He is forever reaching out, inviting us to follow Him. He asks us to unburden our heavy hearts and to take up our cross and follow Him. When we have the Lord with us, and truly believe this, no earthly burden will be too heavy to bear. We have to truly understand the great privilege it is to be a Christian. To believe and grow in Christ is a life-long process. Flowers do not bloom in a day nor does fruit ripen on the trees in a week. In the same gradual way, we can ascend the ladder of a Christian life.

May this New Year give us the great opportunity to give true substance to our faith. The choice is ours, and if this does happen, then we can say as did St Paul, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor the present, nor the future, nor evil forces above or beneath, nor anything in creation shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is Christ our Lord."

ST. BASIL THE GREAT

Basil of Caesarea, also called Saint Basil the Great was the Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, Asia Minor. He was an influential theologian who supported the Nicene Creed and opposed the heresies of the early Christian church, fighting against both Arianism and the followers of Apollinaris of Laodicea. His ability to balance his theological convictions with his political connections made Basil a powerful advocate for the Nicene position.

In addition to his work as a theologian, Basil was known for his care of the poor and underprivileged. Basil established guidelines for monastic life which focus on community life, liturgical prayer, and manual labour. The Eastern Orthodox Church has given him, together with St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. John Chrysostom the title of Great Hierarch.



THEOPHANY – THE FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

The Feast of the Holy Theophany of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is celebrated each year on January 6. The Feast commemorates the Baptism of Christ and the divine revelation of the Holy Trinity. At the Baptism of Christ, all three Persons of the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—were made manifest.

The Biblical story of the Baptism of Christ is recorded in all four of the Gospels: Matthew 3, Mark 1:1-9, Luke 3:21-22, and John 1:31-34. John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus and the one chosen by God to proclaim His coming, was preaching in the wilderness and was baptizing all who would respond to his message calling for repentance. As he was doing this, John was directing the people toward the one who would baptize them with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11).

The Scriptures tell us that Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. Initially, John would not do this, saying that Jesus should baptize him. Jesus said to John, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness (3:15). John consented and baptized Jesus.

When Jesus came up from the water, the heavens opened suddenly, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him. The Bible records that the Spirit descended like a dove and alighted on him. When this happened, a voice came from heaven and said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” This was the voice of God the Father.

Christ’s baptism in the Jordan was “theophany,” a manifestation of God to the world, because it was the beginning of our Lord’s public ministry. It was also a “theophany” in that the world was granted a revelation of the Holy Trinity. All three Persons were made manifest together: the Father testified from on high to the divine Sonship of Jesus; the Son received His Father’s testimony; and the Spirit was seen in the form of a dove, descending from the Father and resting upon the Son.

The theme of “manifestation” or “revelation” is also expressed in Scripture with the symbolism of light. In the hymn of the Feast we sing, “Christ has appeared and enlightened the world.” Thus, January 6 is also known as the Feast of Lights. The Church celebrates on this day the illumination of the world by the light of Christ.

KORAES SCHOOL NEWS

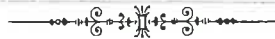
Ευτυχισμένο το νέο έτος! 2017 has been an exceptional year at Koras. Our school has been blessed with so many amazing donations of time, talent, and gifts. The Christmas Program was a joyous occasion that celebrated the reason for the season. We are so grateful to so many groups of people and individuals that made the event a huge success. A special shout-out to the Crosby Family for all they do for Koras. Their love for Koras and the parish is very much appreciated. Congratulations to Demetri Argyris, sixth grade and Evneki Crenshaw, eighth grade for winning the Greek Agrafon Essay Contest. They will be recognized at a luncheon in January with their families. If you have time and wander down the east hallway leading to the school from the East Room, you will notice beautifully decorated giving trees. If you are ever wondering how to support the students, feel free to take a leaf and donate an item to a classroom. Thank you for your generous spirit!

Beth Lind, Principal



Ὁ π. Αθανάσιος, ὁ Πρόεδρος καί τὰ μέλη του Διοικητηκοῦ Συμβουλίου, τό προσωπικό τῆς ἐκκλησίας καί του σχολείου ἐπί τῆ ἑναρξῆ τοῦ νέου ἔτους εὐχονται στά μέλη καί σέ ὅλους τούς πιστούς τήν εὐλογία καί τή χαρά τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὑγεία καί εἰρήνη στό καθένα καί στά σπίτια τους

ΧΡΟΝΙΑ ΠΟΛΛΑ καί ΕΥΤΥΧΕΣ ΤΟ ΝΕΟ ΕΤΟΣ



Δευτέρα 1η Ιανουαρίου - ΠΕΡΙΤΟΜΗ ΤΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ
ΜΝΗΜΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΩΤΟΧΡΟΝΙΑ

Ὡρα 9:30 π.μ. - 11:15 π.μ. - Θεία Λειτουργία / Κοπή τῆς Βασιλόπιτας

Παρασκευή 5η Ιανουαρίου - ΠΑΡΑΜΟΝΗ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΕΙΩΝ

Ὡρα 7:30 π.μ. Ἀνάγνωση Ὡρῶν Θεοφανείων

Ὡρα 8:30 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία / ΑΓΙΑΣΜΟΣ / ΗΜΕΡΑ ΑΥΡΕΤΗΡΑΣ ΝΗΣΤΕΙΑΣ

Σάββατο 6η - ΤΑ ΑΓΙΑ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΕΙΑ

Ὡρα 8:00 π.μ. Ὁρθρος καί Θεία Λειτουργία καί ἡ Ἀκολουθία τοῦ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΓΙΑΣΜΟΥ

Ὡρα 7:00 μ.μ - Μέγας Ἑσπερινός εἰς τόν εορτάζοντα Ἱερὸν Ναόν του Αγίου Ἰωάννου, Des Plaines

Κυριακή 7η - ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΒΑΠΤΙΣΤΟΥ

Ὡρα 8:00 π.μ - 11:15 π.μ Ὁρθρος καί Θεία Λειτουργία



ΤΑ ΑΓΙΑ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΕΙΑ

Τα Αγία Θεοφάνεια εἶναι μία ἀπό τις ἀρχαιότερες εορτές της ἐκκλησίας μας ἡ οποία θεσπίσθηκε το 2ο αἰῶνα μ.Χ. καὶ ἀναφέρεται στη φανέρωση της Αγίας Τριάδας κατὰ τὴ βάπτισις του Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἡ ἱστορία της βάπτισις ἔχει ὡς ἐξῆς: Μετὰ ἀπὸ θεία ἐντολή ὁ Ἰωάννης ὁ Πρόδρομος ἐγκατέλειψε τὴν ἐρημικὴ ζωὴ καὶ ἦλθε στὸν Ἰορδάνη ποταμὸ ὅπου κήρυττε καὶ βάπτιζε. Ἐκεῖ παρουσιάσθηκε κάποια ἡμέρα ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ζήτησε νὰ βαπτισθεῖ. Ὁ Ἰωάννης, ἀν καὶ τὸ Ἅγιο Πνεῦμα τὸν εἶχε πληροφόρησει ποῖος ἦταν ἐκεῖνος πὸν ζητοῦσε νὰ βαπτισθεῖ, στὴν ἀρχὴ ἀρνείται νὰ τὸν βαπτίσει ἰσχυρίζομενος ὅτι ὁ ἴδιος ἔχει ἀνάγκη νὰ βαπτισθεῖ ἀπὸ Ἐκεῖνον. Ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὁμῶς τὸν ἐξήγησε ὅτι αὐτὸ ἦταν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὸν ἐπεισε νὰ τὸν βαπτίσει. Καὶ τότε μπροστὰ στα ἐκπληκτὰ μάτια τῶν θεατῶν διαδραματίσθηκε μία μοναδικὴ καὶ μεγαλειώδης σκηνή, ὅταν με τὴν μορφή ἐνός περιστερίου κατήλθε τὸ Ἅγιο Πνεῦμα καὶ κάθισε ἐπάνω στὸ βαπτιζόμενο Ἰησοῦ, ἐνῶ συγχρόνως ἀκούσθηκε ἀπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸ ἡ φωνὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ ὁποία ἔλεγε: «Οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ Υἱὸς μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα».

Πηγή: www.saint.gr

Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΣ Ο ΜΕΓΑΣ

Ὁ Μέγας Βασίλειος, μία ἀπὸ τις μεγαλύτερες μορφές τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, γεννήθηκε περὶ τὸ 330 μ.Χ. στὴν Καισάρεια τῆς Καππαδοκίας. Ἐλαβε τὴν πρώτη χριστιανικὴ διαπαιδαγώγησή του ἀπὸ τὴ μητέρα καὶ τὴ γιαγιά του καὶ διδάχθηκε τὰ πρῶτα γράμματα ἀπὸ τὸν πατέρα του. Σπούδασε στὶς σχολές τῆς Καισαρείας τῆς Καππαδοκίας καὶ τοῦ Βυζαντίου, καὶ τέλος διδάχθηκε στὴν Ἀθῆνα ρητορικὴ, φιλοσοφία, ἀστρονομία, γεωμετρία καὶ ἰατρικὴ. Ἐπέστρεψε στὸν Πόντο, περὶ τὸ 356 μ.Χ., καὶ βαπτίσθηκε Χριστιανὸς ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἐπισκόπου Καισαρείας Διανίου.

Τὸ 362 μ.Χ., χειροτονήθηκε πρεσβύτερος ἀπὸ τὸν Ἐπίσκοπο Καισαρείας Εὐσέβιο. Τὸ ἔτος 370 μ.Χ., ἐξελέγη Ἐπίσκοπος Καισαρείας. Ἀγκάλιασε τοὺς γέροντες, τὰ παιδιά, τις γυναῖκες καὶ τοὺς ἄνδρες, τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς καὶ φρόντιζε καθημερινὰ γιὰ τὴν τροφή τους. Οἰκοδόμησε κοντὰ στὴν Καισάρεια ἕνα συγκρότημα πτωχοκομείου καὶ νοσοκομείου, τὴ Βασιλειάδα, πὸν ἔγινε τὸ ταμεῖο τῆς εὐσέβειας καὶ τῆς ἀγάπης.

Γιὰ τὴν Ὁρθόδοξη Ἀνατολικὴ Ἐκκλησία τὸ μεγαλύτερο ἔργο τοῦ Μεγάλου Βασιλείου εἶναι ἡ Θεία Λειτουργία αὐτοῦ, πὸν τελεῖται καὶ σήμερα σὲ καθορισμένες ἡμέρες τοῦ λειτουργικοῦ ἔτους: τὴν ἡμέρα τῆς μνήμης τοῦ Μεγάλου Βασιλείου, τις παραμονές τῶν τριῶν μεγάλων Δεσποτικῶν ἑορτῶν, Χριστουγέννων, Θεοφανείων καὶ Πάσχα (Μέγα Σάββατο), τις πέντε Κυριακές τῆς Μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστῆς καὶ τὴ Μεγάλῃ Πέμπτῃ.

Ὅταν πλησίαζε ἡ ὥρα νὰ παραδώσει τὴν ἀγία του ψυχὴ στὸν Θεό, προσῆλθαν στὴν κλίνη του ὅλοι σχεδὸν οἱ Χριστιανοὶ τῆς πόλεως. Ἐκεῖνος τοὺς δίδασκε καὶ τοὺς εὐλογοῦσε. Προσευχόμενος στὸν Κύριο εἶπε: «Εἰς χεῖρας Σου Κύριε, παραθήσομαι τὸ πνεῦμα μου», καὶ κοιμήθηκε.

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, January 1:

**FEASTDAY OF THE NAMING OF CHRIST and
ST. BASIL THE GREAT**

9:30 – 11:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy
Cutting of the Vasilopita

The Church office will be closed in
Observance of the New Year Holiday

Friday, January 5:

EVE OF THEOPHANY (STRICT FAST DAY)

7:30 a.m. Royal Hours of Epiphany
8:30 a.m. Vespertal Liturgy/Blessing of the
Waters

Saturday, January 6:

FEASTDAY OF THEOPHANY

8:00 a.m. Orthros / Divine Liturgy followed by
Great Blessing of the Waters
7:00 p.m. Vespers at St. John the Baptist Church

Sunday, January 7:

**SYNAXIS (OR GATHERING) IN HONOR OF
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST**

8 – 11:15 a.m. Orthros and Divine Liturgy

OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2018 Offering Envelopes are
available in the Church Office for
those who are interested.

CALENDARS

The 2018 Church Calendars have been mailed

FASTING NOT REQUIRED

Those who strive and struggle are rewarded,
therefore, fasting is not required beginning
December 25th through January 4th, however,
Friday, January 5th is a STRICT FAST DAY.

See you...



...Next SUNDAY!

MEMORIALS

6 Month Nectarios Charalampous
6 Month Konstantinos Vitogiannis
5 Years Ismini Koutouvidis
20 Years Nikolas Koutouvidis

† May their memory be eternal. †

FUNERALS

The following funerals were held recently.

Ioannis Spatharakis - December 28th
Alexandria (Alice) Gialamas – December 30th

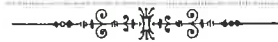
† May their memory be eternal. †

SACRAMENTS

**NO BAPTISMS ARE
PERMITTED FROM**

December 26th to January 6th in
anticipation of the celebration
of Christ's Baptism

Fr. Tom, together with
Mr. Mark Dinos, President,
Mr. Steven Argires, Chairman of the Board,
all the members of the Parish Council and
the Church and School personnel,
wish to extend to each and everyone
a very Happy New Year
filled with God's blessings.



"The shepherds returned,

glorifying and praising

GOD

for all the things
they had

heard and seen,

which were

just as they had been told."

– Luke 2:20

