

Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures

"How I have loved thy law, O Lord! The whole day it is my meditation." (Ps 118:97)

Genesis 1:1-2

"In the Beginning God made heaven and earth. The earth was invisible and unfinished: and darkness was over the deep. The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the water." (OSB)

So begins the Biblical Narrative, and thus, so begins our story as God's creatures and as God's people. From the first words of Scripture, we are confronted with the impossibility of truly understanding anything about ourselves and our world apart from God the Creator as our reference point.

As the Fathers are keen to point out, too, the Trinitarian nature of God is already revealed in outline here. We see the Father who creates "all things visible and invisible"; we see the "Beginning" of God's creation which can be read as both a temporal reference point or, in a higher sense, as the Person of Wisdom, Christ himself (Prov 8.22 LXX; Jn 1.1; Rev 3.14), who is the divine Agent of the Father's creative acts; and we see the Holy Spirit brooding over the primordial waters as "a bird cover[s] the eggs with her body and impart[s] to them vital force from her warmth" (St. Basil, *On the Six Days* 2.6 [NPNF2 8.63]; Deut 32.11).

It is fitting to begin our year of reflections on the Law with this passage because of its harmony with the Feast today of Our Lord's Theophany in the Jordan River. It is as we look back from Theophany that we can clearly see the God of Genesis 1 as the Trinity. Similarly, we see the deep connection in the economy of salvation between creation and salvation (as "new creation"), and how these are unified in Christ's person and work. Just as creation was "born" from water, as it were, by the Spirit, so also our own rebirth and the renewal of all creation is prefigured in our Savior's baptism and emergence from the water, with the descent of the Spirit upon him.

In the expression, "heaven and earth," Scripture unfolds to us the stage on which the whole biblical drama will be played out, with creation as both spectator and participant. And we are presented with the two horizons which frame our existence such that we might always be reminded of our nature both as finite creatures of the dust of the earth and as divine image-bearers who were formed to participate in heavenly life and have "eternity in" our "hearts" (Eccl 3.11). The human, as we will see, is called to be a priestly mediator between these two realms, offering creation back to God in thanks and glory.

For further reading & reflection:

St. Basil the Great's *On the Six Days of Creation* (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf208.viii.ii.html>)



ST. PHILIP ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the
Antiochian Archdiocese

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH



His Grace Bishop THOMAS



Father Noah Bushelli, Pastor

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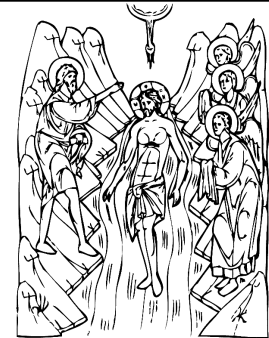


Father James Thayer

215-692-0890

January 6, 2019

THE THEOPHANY OF OUR
LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR
JESUS CHRIST



Festal Orthros Gospel: St. Mark 1:9-11
Epistle: Titus 2:11-15; 3:4-7
Liturgy Gospel: St. Matthew 3:13-17

APOLYTIKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST - Tone 1 - When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; the voice of the Father did bear witness unto Thee, and called Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove did confirm the constancy of the word. O Christ our God, Who did appear and illuminate the world, glory to Thee, O Lord.

KONTAKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST - Tone 4 - On this day Thou hast appeared * unto the whole world, * and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, * is signed on us who sing Thy praise * and chant with knowledge: Thou hast now come, * Thou hast appeared, O Thou Light unapproachable.

TODAY: Orthros 8:45 am; Divine Liturgy of St. Basil 10 am
Great Blessing of Water
Coffee Hour & Teens 11:45 am
Women of St. Philip, 12 pm
Outdoor Water Blessing @ Lenape Park, 1 pm

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Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:30 - 4:00; Friday 10:00 - 3:00

Fr Noah & Fr James are available for hospital visits. If you or anyone you know is in the hospital or homebound and would like a visit, please call the church office.

Weekly Ministries & Stewards:

	This Week:	Next Week (Jan 13):
PROSPHORA BREAD:	Kristi Moore	Carolyn Kaminsky
EPISTLE READER:	Brian Fitzgerald	Catalin Tinjala
ALTAR CANDLES:	Psomiadis (Young Peter's birthday)	Hertanse Ibrahim (89th birthday)
USHERS:	David H & Steve K — <i>Speak to them if you have interest in helping with this ministry.</i>	
GREETERS:	Michael & Helen Heveran	Angie Drăghici
CLEANING TEAM:	Sdn. John & Maxine & Tatiana	The Hyatts
COFFEE HOUR:	Potluck	Daniela, Sharon, Gabi

Everyone is invited to stay for refreshments after the Divine Liturgy. Your assistance in cleanup is appreciated.

Giving Opportunities at St. Philip

- ✦ As the year comes to a close, please consider making a special offering to the **Needy Fund, Camp Scholarship Fund, Library Fund, Chapel Fund, and Pastoral Discretionary Fund.**
- ✦ Please consider **transferring stocks** to the church to maximize your giving to God's work at St Philip's, and to avoid capital gains taxes and to claim deductions.
- ✦ **St. Nicholas House:** Please give generously to meet the (now) **two \$10,000 Matching Gifts** for the purchase of the property next door.

Thank you and may God bless your generosity!

Mark Your Calendar:

Men's Fellowship
Saturday, January 19, 8-10 am

Feast of Presentation
February 1-2, 2019

Beginning of Lent
March 11, 2019

Lenten Retreat
March 30, 2019

We live Pascha to Pascha!
April 28, 2019

Home Blessings

Tis the Season for Home Blessings!

Sign up sheet is in the Narthex with the availabilities of both Fr. Noah and Fr. James. Please text/email them to confirm a date and time.

This Week:

Monday, Jan 7:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan 8:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.
Wed, Jan 9:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m. Compline & Patristic Reading 6 p.m.
Thurs, Jan 10:	SIXTH HOUR, 12 p.m.
Friday, Jan 11:	SIXTH HOUR 12 p.m.
Sat, Jan 12:	Intro to Orthodoxy, 4:30 p.m. VESPERS 6 p.m., Confession 7 p.m.
Sunday, Jan 13:	ORTHROS 8:45 a.m., Divine LITURGY 10 a.m. 40-Day Memorial for "Aunt Betty" Dovi Coffee Hour, SS, & Teens 11:45 a.m.

Pray For:

Living	Departed
Bp Alexander Baby Simeon Child Gregory Caroline & family Zerfenesh & family David H Paul (M) James E Lasha B Otari B Daniel H Mebrat Aristidis	Fr. Joseph "Aunt Betty" Ayele Sergius
Thomas, Elizabeth & all Missionaries	<u>St. Nina's List</u> Catechumens Tatiana (Sze), Evan, Tina New & Ex- pectant Mothers & children

Ministry Highlights

*"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."
1 Peter 4:10*

Look at this column each week to learn about one of the ministries of St. Philip. If you are interested in finding out more about serving, contact the Ministry Coordinator listed. Also, be sure to ask Fr. Noah for his blessing to serve! Do you have an idea for a new ministry, or you're not sure what ministry might be a good fit? Talk with Subdeacon David Hyatt – 218-576-8324 or jhyatt.duluth@gmail.com.

OUTREACH COLLECTION: Oral Care Products

SPIRITUAL WARFARE:

Taking Every Thought Captive to Christ
"Choose Life"

ATTENDANCE: At Vespers on Dec 29: 52 Divine Services on Dec 30: 168
OFFERINGS: Candles, \$341. Collections, \$1,406. Flowers, \$10. Youth, \$8. Book Shelf, \$34. Camping Fund, \$20. Christmas Card Fund, \$200. IOCC, \$50. Land Acquisition, \$1,600. Stewardship, \$3,279. Total received: \$6,948.

GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS & GENEROSITY!