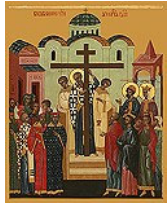


✠Bulletin✠

Week of January 11th to January 17, 2026



Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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31st SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 6

Afterfeast of the Theophany.

Ven. Theodosius the Great, the Cenobiarch (529).

Sunday after Theophany

Ven. Michael of Klops Monastery, Fool-for-Christ (Novgorod—ca. 1453-56).

St. Theodosius of Antioch (ca. 412). Ven. Theodosius, Metropolitan of

Trebizond (1392). The “ELETSKAIA” Icon of the Mother of God (1060).

Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

Sunday January 11, 2026

9:15 am - Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Saturday January 17th

4:30 pm – Great Vespers

Weekly Schedule

Sunday January 11th

- Change church colors to gold following Liturgy
- Inquirers & Catechism classes following Liturgy

The Kingdom of God is at Hand

By Fr. Luke A. Veronis

Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church

There is a story of an ancient monastery that had fallen on hard times. From a brotherhood that used to have more than 50 monks, there were less than a dozen left. The monastery used to be central to the life of the village, with saintly monks inspiring the people, yet now few people visited the monastery to find spiritual nourishment. A general feeling of spiritual apathy and lukewarmness was present in the monastery, and in the village.

One day a holy spiritual elder was passing through the village. He stopped at the monastery and stayed for a night. During his time there, each of the monks privately went to receive his blessing, to talk with him as well as to receive some spiritual nourishment. With each monk that came to the elder, he said the same thing. “Don’t tell anyone else this, but the Messiah is among you. He has come again, and dwells among you.”

The next morning the elder left, but each monk kept thinking about the perplexing words the elder had told him. The Messiah is among you. As they reflected more and more on this, they kept asking themselves, “Who is it? Is it Fr. John? Or is it Fr. Stavro? Or is it Fr. James?”

As the monks went about their daily work, whenever they passed one another, they began to act a little differently. “What if the Messiah is this brother?” And they began to treat each other with sincere respect and love, with deep humility and kindness. They listened carefully to each another and tried to outdo one other in their service and diakonia in the monastery as well as in the local village. In their daily liturgical services, they prayed fervently and opened their hearts to the movement of the Holy Spirit. They believed the Messiah was in their midst, and they wanted to act accordingly.

Slowly, the spirit of the monastery changed. An inner fire and spiritual zeal replaced any apathy and indifference. A community of love, divine love, developed and this Agape love became very apparent to the village at large. The villagers started to flock to the monastery for spiritual nourishment and guidance, experiencing the reality of the kingdom of God.

The Messiah was in their midst.

We hear something similar in the Gospel reading from Matthew 4:16-17, "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light... Light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The kingdom of God is at hand! In other words, the kingdom of God is present, here and now! It is not some far-off reality we must wait for. Heaven is not some future dream. The kingdom of God, the reign of God, is something we can experience here and now!

Do we realize this truth? Have we opened our lives to experience this Good News in our daily lives? If we truly understand and believe this reality, it can have the same impact in our lives that the message of the "Messiah in their midst" had for the ancient monastery and village. It changes the way we understand our present life and reality!

The kingdom of God is something we can taste and experience in our lives right now, **TODAY!** This first message Jesus proclaimed after His baptism and at the beginning of His public ministry was Good News – "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Repent – turn away from the lies and deception of the world.

Repent – turn away from any superficial pursuits which leave us empty and seeking for something with more meaning and purpose.

Repent – turn away from the darkness of arrogance, hatred, envy, pride, division, jealousy.

Repent – turn away from anything that is not of God and be filled with His presence!

Repent – turn away from all that leads to death and turn towards the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is at hand means God's reign should rule over our lives. We must allow divine love to be the guiding principle in all we do. We must cultivate mercy and forgiveness to be the spirit that governs all our relationships. We must strive for kindness and compassion as the fruit we show to every person we encounter. We must humbly serve one another and make this our goal in life, humbling and graciously serving the lowliest and the least of our brothers and sisters.

When we allow God to reign in our lives each day, we actually begin to experience the Kingdom of heaven, and our lives will be transformed! In fact,

the lives of everyone around us will encounter this heavenly kingdom and they will be changed as well. Just as the ancient monastery became an oasis of divine love which offered life-giving water to the village around, our experience of the kingdom of God as a present reality in our lives will transform our worldview and the way we taste everything in life. Our lives will change and the world around us will change because of us!

The kingdom of heaven is not some pie-in-the-sky dream that we hope to experience only after we die. Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is at hand! The kingdom of God is within us! The kingdom of God is a reality we can live today!

"The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light... Light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

May we all allow the divine light of Jesus Christ to shine brightly in our hearts and in our minds and in our lives, and as we allow His light to chase away all the darkness within, we will then begin to experience the kingdom of heaven as a present reality!

If we know that the Messiah is in our midst, we will also experience the kingdom of heaven at hand!

Schedule of Weekly Services

Saturday January 24th

4:30 pm - Great Vespers

Friday January 30th

8:45 am – Hours

9:00 am – Divine Liturgy

Synaxis of the Ecumenical Teachers and Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom.

Saturday February 14th

4:30 pm - Great Vespers

Sunday February 22nd

Following Divine Liturgy, Forgiveness Sunday Vespers

Monday February 23rd

5:30 pm - Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Wednesday February 25th

5:30 pm – Presanctified Liturgy

Inquirers & Catechism Class

Classes will be on Sundays following Divine Liturgy. For those new to understanding Orthodoxy or for those who want to expand your foundation, please join us for our classes. Please check the schedule for changes.

Annual Parish Meeting – January 18, 2026

Holy Cross annual parish meeting is scheduled for Sunday January 18, 2026 following Divine Liturgy. Per the Diocese of the South, Orthodox Church in America, Uniform Parish By-laws, Article IV, Section 1:

The Parish Meeting is the highest authority of the Parish as a civil corporation. All members of the Parish as defined in Article III, Section 1 which are those persons who have been baptized and chrismated, or otherwise canonically received, into the Church and who consciously uphold and profess the Orthodox Faith, who have been members for a period of six months and are at least eighteen years old may attend and vote at the Parish Meeting.

Prayer Requests

Helen Auld

Anne and Scott Peatross

Nicholas Kowalski

James Clark – Parishioner of St. Herman's

Carolyn – Robert & Debra's Forster's daughter

Robert Kozera

Megan – David & Phyllis Bartos' daughter

Rosemary – Friend of David & Phyllis Bartos

Please pray for our families in Ukraine

Leonid, Nadiia, Andrii, Halyna,

Volodymyr, Maryna, Dmytro, Bohdan,

Nadiia, Oleksandr, Tetiana,

Roman, Mykola

Anatoly, Olga, Maria, Andrei

Please let us know of anyone you would like to add to the Prayer Lists.

The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Variable Hymns and Readings

The First Antiphon

When Israel went forth from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, *(Ps. 113:1)*

***Refrain:* Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!**

Judah became His sanctuary, Israel His dominion. *(Ps. 113:2) (Refrain)*

The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back. *(Ps. 113:3) (Refrain)*

What ailed thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? O Jordan, that thou didst turn back? *(Ps. 113:5) (Refrain)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. *(Refrain)*

The Second Antiphon

I love the Lord because He has heard my voice and my supplication.

(Ps. 114:1)

***Refrain:* O Son of God, baptized in the Jordan, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!**

Because He inclined His ear to me, therefore I will call on Him as long as I live. *(Ps. 114:2) (Refrain)*

The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish, then I called on the Name of the Lord. *(Ps. 114:3-4a) (Refrain)*

Gracious and righteous is the Lord; our God is merciful. *(Ps. 114:5) (Refrain)*
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

("Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God...")

The Third Antiphon

O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever.
(Ps. 117:1)

Refrain: Tone 1 Troparion of the Feast

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan,
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.
For the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee,
and called Thee His beloved Son;
and the Spirit in the form of a dove
confirmed the truthfulness of His word.
O Christ our God, Who hast revealed Thyself//
and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

Let the house of Israel now confess that the Lord is good; for His mercy endures forever. (Ps. 117:2) *(Refrain Troparion of the Feast)*

Let the house of Aaron now confess that the Lord is good; for His mercy endures forever. (Ps. 117:3) *(Refrain Troparion of the Feast)*

Let those who fear the Lord now confess that the Lord is good; for His mercy endures forever. (Ps. 117:4) *(Refrain Troparion of the Feast)*

Tone 6 Troparion (Resurrection)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Thy grave,
seeking Thy most pure body.
Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it.
Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life.
O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead,//
glory to Thee.

Tone 1 Troparion (Feast)

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan,
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.
For the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee,
and called Thee His beloved Son;
and the Spirit in the form of a dove
confirmed the truthfulness of His word.
O Christ our God, Who hast revealed Thyself//
and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

Tone 8 Troparion (Ven. Theodosius)

By a flood of tears you made the desert fertile,
and your longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance.
By the radiance of miracles you illuminated the whole universe.//
Our Father Theodosius, pray to Christ God to save our souls!

Tone 6 Kontakion (Resurrection)

When Christ God, the Giver of Life,
raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.//
He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 8 Kontakion (Ven. Theodosius)

Planted in the courts of your Lord, you blossomed beautifully with virtue,
and increased your children in the desert, showering them with streams of your
tears,
O chief shepherd of the divine flock of God.
Therefore, we cry to you: Rejoice, O Father Theodosius!

Tone 4 Kontakion (Feast)

Today Thou hast shone forth to the world, O Lord,
and the light of Thy countenance has been marked on us.
Knowing Thee, we sing Thy praises:
"Thou hast come and revealed Thyself,//
O unapproachable Light."

Tone 1 Prokeimenon (Sunday After)

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee! (Ps. 32:22)

V. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just! (Ps. 32:1)

Tone 7 Prokeimenon (Ven. Theodosius)

Precious in the sight of the Lord / is the death of His saints. (Ps. 115:5)

Ephesians 4:7-13 (Epistle, Sunday After theophany)

Brethren: But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:6-15 (Epistle, Saint Theodosius)

Brethren: For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Tone 5

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. (Ps. 88:1-2)

V. For Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens. (Ps. 88:3)

Tone 6

V. Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments. (Ps. 111:1)

Matthew 4:12-17 (Gospel, Sunday After Theophany)

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."

Matthew 11:27-30 (Gospel, Saint Theodosius)

All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Explanation of Today's Gospel Reading Matthew 4:12-17

By Blessed Theophylact

Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

12-13. 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, Jesus departs, teaching us not to throw ourselves into dangers. He departs into Galilee, which means "rolling down" for the Gentiles had rolled down into sin. He dwells in Capernaum, which means "house of comfort and consolation", because Christ came down from heaven to make the Gentiles the house of the Comforter. "Zabulon" means "nocturnal" and "Nephtalim", "a broadening". The life of the Gentiles, therefore, was both dark and broad, for they were walking not the narrow way, but the way leading to destruction.

14-16. 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.” “By the way of the sea” means “which is situated along the road of the sea”. The “great light” is the Gospel, for the law, too, was a light, but a small one. “The shadow of death” is sin, for sin is the likeness and silhouette of death. Just as death overpowers the body, so too does sin overpower the soul. The light has dawned on us, for we were not seeking it, but it appeared to us as if it were pursuing us.

17. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” From the time John was arrested, Jesus began to preach. For Jesus waited for John to first bear witness to Him and to prepare the way for Him, in the same manner in which servants make preparations for their masters. Being equal to the Father, the Lord also had John as a prophet, just as God the Father had the prophets who were before John; yet in truth these were the prophets of both the Father and the Son. **Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.** The kingdom of heaven is Christ, and it is also the life of virtue. For when someone lives as an angel on earth, is he not heavenly? So, the kingdom of heaven is within each one of us when we live as angels.

(Instead of “It is truly meet...,” we sing:)

Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin Theotokos,
more honorable than the heavenly hosts!
No tongue knows how to praise thee worthily, O Theotokos;
even Angels are overcome with awe praising thee.
But since thou art good, accept our faith;
for thou knowest our love inspired by God!
Thou art the defender of Christians, and we magnify thee.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil
tidings. *(Ps. 111:6b-7a)*
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!