

CROSSROADS

Sunday's Scriptures:

Epistle:

2 Timothy 4:5-8

Gospel:

Mark 1:1-8

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**Monday, January 5
7 PM**

***Vesperal Liturgy & the
Blessing of Water for
Epiphany***

Epiphany & the Blessing of Homes



We'll celebrate the Feast of Epiphany with a Vesperal Liturgy on Monday evening, January 5.

This will include beautiful and insightful hymnography, Old Testament prophecies, and the Blessing of Water (a 2nd Blessing will take place on Sunday, January 11, at the end of the Divine Liturgy).

Epiphany means "manifestation or revelation" and Theophany – a similar word used for the Feast – is "the manifestation or revelation of God."

While the Feast marks the beginning of Christ's ministry, it's a celebration of the way the Holy Trinity is always working together:

“It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. IO And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens departing and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. II Then a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mark 1:9-11).

The Festal Troparion summarizes this passage:

When You, O Lord, were 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, You have revealed Yourself//
and have enlightened the world, glory to You.

This is the Hymn that will be sung during the Blessing of Water and when the church and our homes will be blessed.

While I don't have a specific schedule for the Blessing of Homes, those who are interested can either contact me directly or leave a message in the church office and we'll work out a date and time.

Holy Water can be obtained at our church after the Blessing(s) of Water from the container in the front – please bring a container.

Here are some ways of preparing for your Home Blessing:

- 1) set aside some table space
- 2) have a candle, a cross or icon on the table, and a bowl for Holy Water and
- 3) a list of names – divided into two columns – for the living / for the departed

We will be hearing the story of Zacchaeus later in January and here's how his story enters as well into the Home Blessing Prayer:

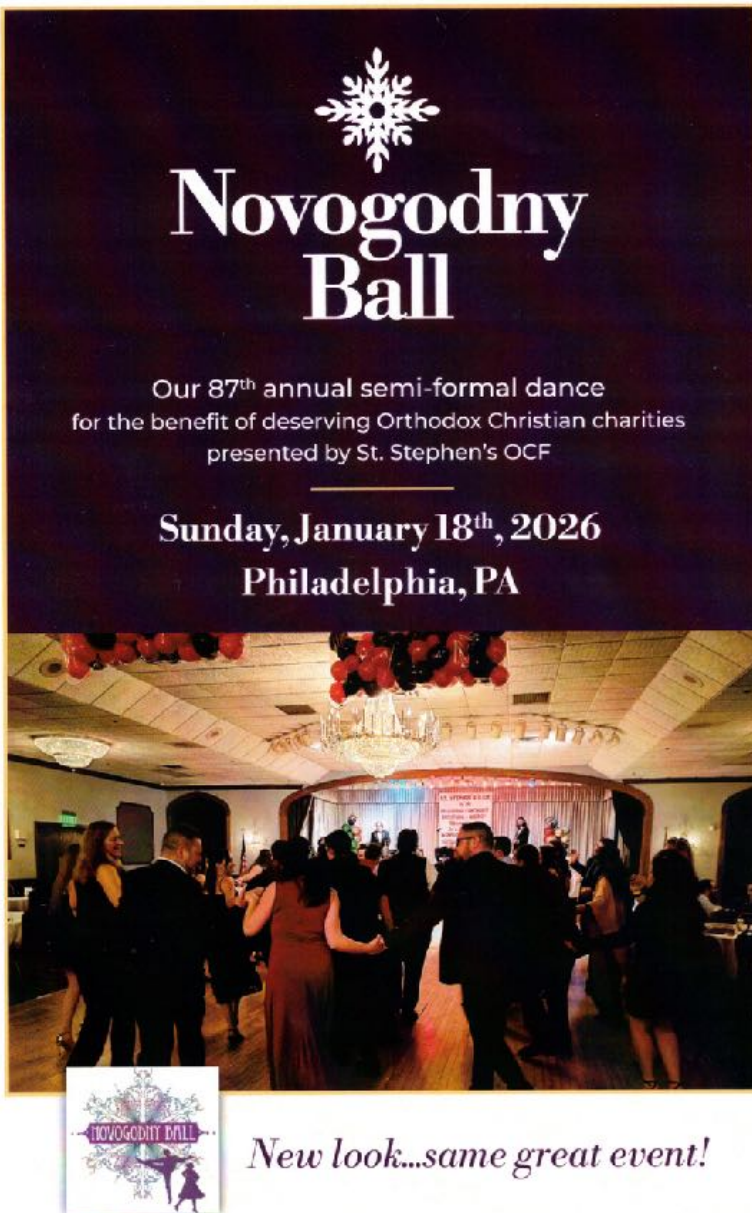
O God, our Savior, the true light, who was baptized in the Jordan by John, to renew all people by the waters of regeneration, and who condescended to enter under the roof of Zacchaeus, bringing salvation to him and to all his house: as the same Lord, also keep safe from harm those who dwell here; grant to them your blessings, purification, and health of body and soul; grant all their petitions that are for their salvation and eternal life; for You are blessed, together with your eternal Father and Your most holy, good and life creating Spirit, now and to ages of ages. Amen.

SHOP RITE COUPONS

This is not a commercial for Shop-Rite, but thanks to the 15 families and individuals who regularly purchase Shop-Rite gift cards at Holy Cross during the year, the parish earned a total rebate of **\$817.50** for the parish General Fund.

Cards are available in denominations of \$100, \$50, \$25, and \$20.

Shop-Rite sells the cards in bulk to us at a 5% discount. The gift cards are available from **Larry Skvir** every Sunday at coffee hour. If you regularly shop at Shop-Rite and don't use the gift cards, please consider purchasing them in 2026.



Novogodny Ball

Our 87th annual semi-formal dance
for the benefit of deserving Orthodox Christian charities
presented by St. Stephen's OCF

Sunday, January 18th, 2026
Philadelphia, PA

New look...same great event!

Event Information: New Location

When: January 18, 2026

Location: Cannstatter's
9130 Academy Rd, Philadelphia, PA 19114

Time: Dinner starts at 5:30pm
Dancing starts at 7:30pm

In addition to the cash bar, hot food may also be purchased during the dance, i.e. kielbasa sandwich, fries, and more.

Register Online This Year!

For the benefit of our guests, ticket prices are lower this year. You can make a reservation or contribute by using the enclosed Reservation Form or by visiting www.novogodnyball.com to register online. Tickets must be ordered by Sunday, January 11. Tickets are not sold at the door.

EARLY BIRD PRICING (postmarked on or before Dec. 14)		
Dinner & Dancing	Adult (age 23+)	\$85
	Student (Age 13-22)	\$75
	Child (Age 12 & under)	\$30
Dance Only	Adult (age 23+)	\$45
	Student (Age 13-22)	\$35
	Child (Age 12 & under)	\$10
REGULAR PRICING (postmarked after Dec. 14)		
Dinner & Dancing	Adult (age 23+)	\$90
	Student (Age 13-22)	\$80
	Child (Age 12 & under)	\$30
Dance Only	Adult (age 23+)	\$50
	Student (Age 13-22)	\$40
	Child (Age 12 & under)	\$10

Seeking Volunteer(s)

His Eminence, Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey need a few people to help in various Diocesan Ministries.

Diocesan Communications Team—Volunteers Needed



The Diocese of New York & New Jersey is forming a Diocesan Communications Team to assist with maintaining and strengthening our digital presence. Volunteers may serve in one area or collaborate across roles, depending on interest, skills, and availability. No one is expected to do everything; even modest, consistent help is valuable.

Website Support (Orthodox Web Solutions)

Assist with basic website updates and posting announcements. Familiarity with Orthodox Web Solutions is helpful but not required; willingness to learn is essential.

Estimated time commitment: 1–2 hours per week (remote and flexible).

Social Media Support

Assist with Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube posting and content organization. Video creation and basic editing skills are a plus, but not required.

Estimated time commitment: 1–3 hours per week, shared among team members.

Regional Coverage (Archbishop's Visits)

Because the Diocese spans New York and New Jersey, volunteers are sought to assist with local coverage of the Archbishop's visits in their own region (North/South Jersey, NYC, Long Island, Upstate NY, Western NY). Responsibilities may include taking photographs, short video clips, or recordings of homilies when appropriate.

Estimated time commitment: occasional, event-based, you will not be asked to travel outside your region; typically 2–4 hours per visit, which includes attending the Divine Services during which His Eminence presides.

Use this form to submit your interest for Communications- <https://form.jotform.com/253645524628160>



The Department of Youth Ministry

Fr. Martin and Matushka Dennise Kraus are in need of some assistance with the Youth Ministry Program.

Men's Mountain Respite

This ministry is seeing wonderful growth. Are there any men in the Diocese who would be willing to assist Fr. Martin with planning and executing retreats?



Diocesan Stewardship Publication

This quarterly publication has languished for several years due to the lack of an Editor. Do you have a heart for Stewardship and enjoy writing?

Skills needed:

- 1) Ability to write and compile information about Stewardship.
- 2) Familiarity with Microsoft Publisher.
- 3) Prepare and format publication.
- 4) Submit to Chancery by appropriate deadline.

Stewardship

is heart work



"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Matthew 6:19-21

If you are willing to help His Eminence, Archbishop Michael and serve the Diocese of New York and New Jersey with any of these Ministries, please contact the Chancery Office.

Phone: 914-779-6580

Email: info@nynjoca.org

Some Ways to Support our Parish

Here are some ways that this can be done:

- 1) **Cash** (If an annual record of this donation is desired then it should be put in an envelope with your name on it, so that a record can be kept and a receipt eventually will be prepared and available).
- 2) **Monthly Envelopes** can be sent to your home (see Fr. John if you would like to donate this way).
- 3) **A Check** can be made out to the church and given in the donation basket or left in the church office.
- 4) **Having a check sent directly from your bank account to the church** (in the same way that bills can be paid on your computer through your bank).

Address the check to:

Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross
Box 805
Medford, NJ 08055

- 5) **Using our online app, tithe.ly** – Please note that there is a 3% processing fee - this can be added to the donation or it will be subtracted from the donation):

- 1) You can use the **QR Code** at our website: <https://holycrossmedford.org/>



- 2) Go to: https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithe.ly/give-one-time/1197928
- 3) TEXT the word, **“Give” to: 1-833-854-9049**

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