

Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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www.holycrossmedford.org

29th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, January 1, 2023

At a Glance

Why Christ's Baptism?—p 1-2

Liturgical and Events Schedule

Sunday, January 1

The Circumcision of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy followed by Social

Thursday, January 5

7:00 PM: Vespers Liturgy & Blessing of Water for Theophany

Saturday, January 7

9:00 AM: Community Luncheon:
Lasagna di Milano

5:00 PM: Divine Liturgy followed by children's Sunday School & Social

Today's Flowers

In celebration of Connor's 15th Birthday & In Loving Memory of Alexis Martinchuk - Given by John & Ellie Kuzma

The Baptism of the Lord

“When all were being baptized by John, the Lord also came with them. John restrained Him, saying, ‘It is I who ought to be baptized by You, yet you come to Me?’

‘Let it be so now,’ Jesus replied, ‘For thus we ought to fulfill all righteousness.’

Then John baptized Him. When Christ was immersed in the water, a fire flared up over it, for the ancient enemy, the devil, whom Scripture calls a serpent that makes its lair in the waters (ps. 73:13), was expelled from the very roots of existence. The water of Jordan, which had formerly been permeated with sin, were sanctified by the power of the Lord, and in the sacrament of this Baptism it received the power to bear children unto God. And the angels surrounded the river, waiting to receive under their protection those who would be born in its waters.

Having been immersed in the water, Christ prayed to the Father, and behold, heaven was opened, which had been closed by the misdeed of Adam, and now those who are baptized are able to ascend to the Throne of God.

The Lord did not tarry in the river, as

He had no sin and hence had no need of confessions, and after being immersed He immediately came out of the water.

And forthwith God the Father proclaimed from the heavens, *This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* (Mt. 3:17).

And the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove.

The Spirit took the form of a dove so as to indicate the end of the great flood of sin which had inundated the world. It was not, however, at the moment of His Baptism that Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit (as some heretics believe), for His conception in the womb of His Mother was accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit. Rather, this descent from above was so that through Jesus the Spirit might be bestowed upon believers.

Hence, immediately after baptism, in which through Christ we are adopted to sonship to the Father, we receive the gift of the Holy spirit through chrismation.

John the Forerunner bore witness to Him to all those assembled, saying, *This was He of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for He was before me. And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time, the*

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only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (John 1:15-18).

On this day, at the river Jordan, for the first time God clearly showed to men that He is three Personalities, and for this reason this day is also called Theophany – the showing forth of God. Formerly people were far from the Creator, and knew that He was one, but now, having become children of God through baptism, in the great flame we see three Suns, each shining in the other. And having seen this we are able to commune of the eternal life of the three Persons, Who abide in unoriginated love. This is why true baptism is only possible for those who believe rightly in the Trinity and are baptized in His true name.

*The Law of God, p340-342
Priest Dani.el Sysoev*

You are cordially invited to honor
**THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION
AS PRIEST OF
HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP
MICHAEL (DAHULICH)**

Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
Saturday, February 4, 2023
9:30 AM - Greeting of Archbishop
10:00 AM - Divine Liturgy
Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church,
365 Paramus Road, Paramus, New Jersey

A commemorative buffet luncheon will be held at 1:00 pm at the Brownstone, 351 West Broadway, Paterson, New Jersey 07522.

Luncheon donation is \$50 payable to the Diocese of New York and New Jersey. *Include individual names of those for whom reservations are made.*

Forward payment to: Mitered Archpriest Joseph Lickwar, 109 Grand Street, Jersey City, New Jersey 07302.

Reservation deadline: January 20, 2023.

Call or email Mitered Archpriest Joseph Lickwar at (201) 892-7233 or josephlickwar@gmail.com.

Home Blessings

Fr. John is available for Home Blessings this year. Contact him to schedule it for after January 6, 2023.

The invitation to the priest to come and bless your home is an invitation to ask for the mercy of God upon the household. The sprinkling of the Holy Water is a sign of God's presence in the home as an extension of His Holy House, the Church. It is a time to renew our commitment to God as we begin another year in His mercy and love for mankind.

The family is considered, by the Orthodox faith, to be a small church. The family table is the home altar where the members gather each day to receive their daily bread from [God](#) with thanksgiving in the name of Christ.

Traditions of the ceremony differ according to local custom, but these general guidelines should be observed:

- A candle with an [icon](#) and some holy water should be placed in a suitable place, such as kitchen or dining room table, or a [home altar](#).
- Also, a list of first names for whom prayers are to be offered, including members of the family and all those living in the house. The list should have a clear distinction between the living and the dead.

The Circumcision of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Troparion — Tone 1

Enthroned on high with the Eternal Father and Your divine Spirit, / O Jesus, You willed to be born on earth of the unwedded handmaid, your Mother. / Therefore You were circumcised as an eight-day old Child. / Glory to Your most gracious counsel; / glory to Your dispensation; / glory to Your condescension, O only Lover of mankind.

Kontakion — Tone 3

The Lord of all accepts to be circumcised, / thus, as He is good, excises the sins of mortal men. / Today He grants the world salvation, / while light-bearing Basil, high priest of our Creator, / rejoices in heaven as a divine initiate of Christ.