

- ✧ All those present in the house should come together and stand by the table until the conclusion of the service.
- ✧ The first names of those for whom special prayers are to be offered during the service should be clearly printed on a sheet of paper, with the clear distinction between the living and the departed.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- ✧ Come to Church as a family to celebrate the Feast Day.
- ✧ Place an icon of the Theophany in a special place in your home. Discuss the festal icon with your children, and help them to identify each figure.
- ✧ The Feast has an “afterfeast” period of 7 days. Use the Troparion and Kontakion hymns as prayers before and/or after meals, and as part of the children’s evening prayers during this period.
- ✧ Containers for Holy Water can be prepared by the children for receiving Holy Water at Church. They should be washed thoroughly and can be decorated on the outside.
- ✧ Children should be familiar with the “how” and “why” of preparing for the Home Blessing by the priest. Let your children help you to prepare. Children, along with the parents, can learn the Troparion for the Home Blessing. Have the children lead the priest from room to room carrying a lighted candle.



FOR MORE
INFORMATION,
PLEASE
CONTACT:



COME CELEBRATE THE FEAST: THE THEOPHANY OR EPIPHANY





THE THEOPHANY CELEBRATED ON JANUARY 6

Epiphany means shining forth or manifestation. The feast is often called Theophany, which means the shining forth and manifestation of God. The emphasis in the present-day celebration is on the appearance of Jesus as the human Messiah of Israel and the Divine Son of God, One of the Holy Trinity with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Thus, in the baptism by John in the Jordan, Jesus identifies Himself with sinners as the “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (Jn 1:20), the “Beloved” of the Father whose messianic task it is to redeem men from their sins (Lk 3:21; Mk 1:35). And He is revealed as well as One of the Holy Trinity, testified to by the voice of the Father, and the Spirit in the form of a dove. The Holy Trinity is the central epiphany glorified in the feast (Fr. Thomas Hopko, *The Orthodox Faith: Volume 2, Worship*).

THE THEOPHANY IN SCRIPTURE AND HYMNS

Epistle: Titus 2:11-14

Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

Matins, Stichera on the Praises, Tone 1

The true Light has appeared and bestows enlightenment on all. Christ who is above all purity is baptized with us; He brings sanctification to the water and it becomes a cleansing for our souls... Salvation comes through washing; and through water, the Spirit; by descending into the water we ascend to God. Wonderful are Your works, O Lord, glory to You.

Divine Liturgy, Troparion, Tone 1

When You, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest! For the voice of the Father bare 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, who has revealed Yourself and has enlightened the world, glory to You!

Divine Liturgy, Kontakion, Tone 4

Today You have appeared to the universe, and Your light, O Lord, has shone on us, who with understanding praise You: You have come and revealed Yourself, O Light Unapproachable!

THE BLESSING OF HOMES

Christ, by entering the Jordan, sanctified it and with it, all creation. Material creation, once again became “very good” as it was in the beginning. The central sign of God’s sanctification of all things through this feast is the act of blessing the homes of faithful Christians. The priest visits all the members of the Church in order to pray with them in their homes, and to bless their surroundings with blessed water. He asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. Thus the house itself, together with members of the family, is “filled with all the fullness of God.” The following general principles should be observed for the home blessing:

- ✧ A lighted candle, an icon and a wide bowl for the blessed water should be placed together on a table.
- ✧ All computers, televisions, and music should be turned off.

