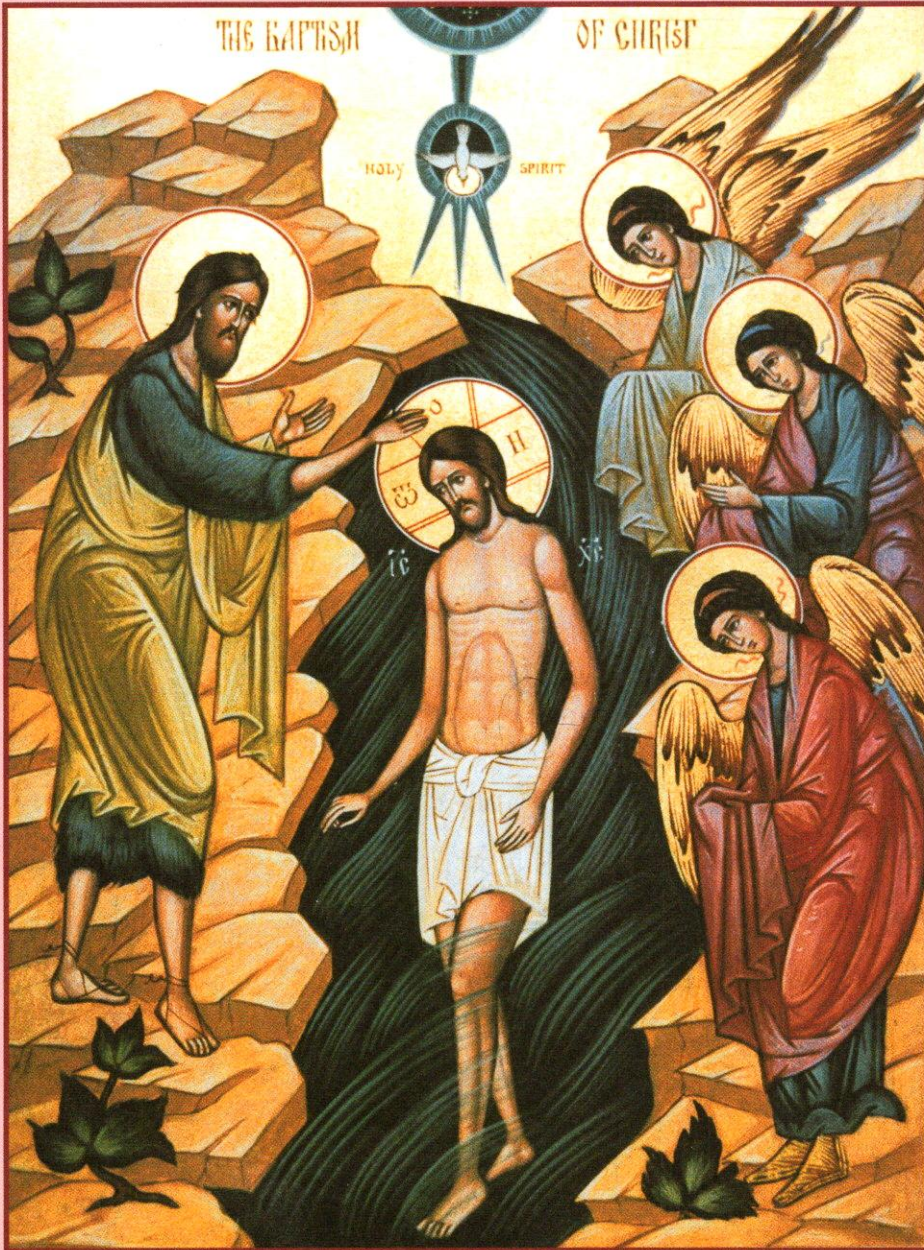


THE BAPTISM

OF CHRIST

HOLY

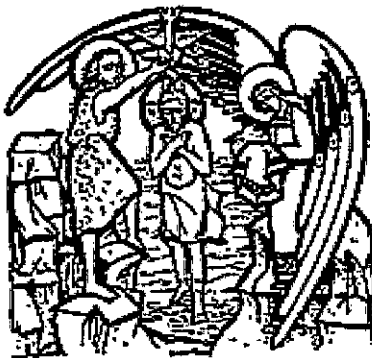
SPIRIT



## **Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church Bulletin**

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[www.sspeterandpauluoc.org](http://www.sspeterandpauluoc.org)  
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*Theophany*



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### **HOLY MYSTERIES**

**VISITATIONS OF THE SICK AND INFIRM** – If you are going into the hospital for any reason, please inform Father Stephen at the Rectory. Our hospitalization code for Christiana and Wilmington Hospitals is **UKR**.

**EMERGENCY CALLS** – Please call the Rectory anytime (day or night) in an Emergency!

**BAPTISMS** – Celebrated by appointment.

**CROWNING IN MARRIAGE** – Please discuss timing with Father prior to setting a date. At least six months notice is needed. There are three 2-hour courses that must be attended prior to the Wedding.

**BULLETIN DEADLINE** – The deadline for getting information printed in the Weekly Bulletin is Wednesday.

**SUNDAY COLLECTIONS** – For the Needs of the Parish; 2<sup>nd</sup> Youth Ministry

**January 18, 2026**  
**Volume 62: Number 03**  
**Schedule of Services and Activities**  
**Week of January 18 - 25, 2026**

Sunday, January 18 – Sunday before Theophany - Tone 7

8:30 AM – Confessions

9:10 AM – Prayers Preparation for Holy Communion

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy for the Faithful

Coffee Hour

**6:00 PM – Great Vespers and the Blessing of Water – Change of time!!**

Monday, January 19 - Theophany – Baptism of Our Lord

8:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, January 21 – Ven. Gregory Wonderworker and St. George Chozevite

7:00 AM – Divine liturgy (Veneration of the Relics)

8:00 AM – 100 lbs. Butter and Onions – need help!

Thursday, January 22

7:00 PM – Boy Scouts

Friday, January 23

7:00 AM – Peeling potatoes

3:00 PM – Making potato balls

Saturday, January 24

8:00 AM – Making pyrohy

Sunday, January 25 – Sunday of Zacchaeus - Tone 8

8:30 AM – Confessions

9:10 AM – Prayers Preparation for Holy Communion

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy for the Faithful

Coffee Hour

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – Sunday before Theophany – Matins: John 21:1-14; Liturgy: 2 Timothy 4:5-8; Mark 1:1-8; Vespers: 1 Corinthians 9:19-27; Luke 3:1-18; Blessing of Water: 1 Corinthians 10:1-4; Mark 1:9-11

Monday – Theophany – Liturgy of St. Basil - Matins: Mark 1:9-11; Liturgy: Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7; Matthew 3:13-17

Tuesday – Synaxis of the Prophet John the Baptist – Acts of the Apostles 19:1-8; John 1:29-34

Wednesday – Ven. Gregory Wonderworker of the Kyivan Caves – ST. George Chozevite – Matins: Matthew 11:27-30; Liturgy: Galatians 5:22-6:2; Luke 6:17-23

Thursday – Ven. Jonah of the Kyivan Caves – Matins: Luke 6:17-23; Liturgy: Galatians 5:22-6:2; Matthew 11:27-30

Friday – 1 Peter 1:1-2, 10-12, 2:6-10; Mark 12:1-12

Saturday after Theophany – Ephesians 6:10-17; Matthew 4:1-11

33 Sunday – Sunday after Theophany – Sunday Zacchaeus – Matins: John 21:15-25; Theophany – Ephesians 4:7-13; Matthew 4:12-17; Zacchaeus – 1 Timothy 4:9-15; Luke 19:1-10

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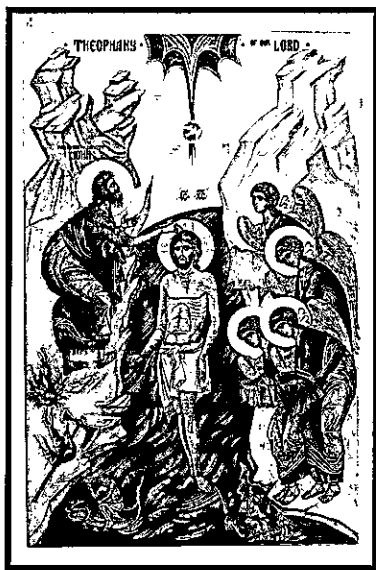
### The Blessing of the Water

The ceremonies of the great water blessing took hundreds of years to develop. We do not know the form of the original rite of the Jordan water blessing. Jacob of Edessa bore witness that the prayer "Great are You, O Lord..." came from Saint Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople (434-446); the stykhyra "The voice of the Lord cries over the waters" and the prayer "O Trinity transcendent in essence..." from Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (+c.641). Of the Great Water-blessing the Barbarini Euchologion from the 8<sup>th</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> century has only the great Litany which is different from our present day one, and three prayers. The Typicon of the great Church of the 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> century notes that, toward the end of the Liturgy, the Cantor, sings the tropar "the voice of the Lord" and while it is being sung, all go to the baptistry in the narthex (or vestibule) of the Church. Here the Deacon sings the ektenia and the patriarch reads the prayer for the sanctification of the water and blesses the water; 3 readings follow, and with the singing of the tropar the rite of water blessing is concluded. From the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the rite of Water Blessing became somewhat like our own, and in the 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries the rite of water-blessing reached its present form.

Around 1148 the Ipatian Chronicle mentions the Jordan Water blessing in Ukraine and calls it "Vodokhryshi" or "water-baptism". Originally it took place in our Church only on the vigil of the feast of the Theophany. Only after our Church began using the Jerusalem Typicon instead of the Studite Typicon, did she adopt

the two water blessings. Maxim the Greek (+1556) defends the new custom according to which water blessing took place on the day of the feast itself at the river or spring. The liturgicon of Metropolitan Cyprian (+1406) already had the present rite of Jordan water blessing.

In time, they're developed in our Ukrainian church certain rights connected with the great water blessing which the Greeks or other Slavonic Typicons do not have. The Greek typicon speaks only of a threefold cruciform submersion of the cross in the water at the end of the water blessing. The Russian tradition of the great water blessing has, besides this, a threefold blessing of the water with the hand. The Ukrainian Euchologion of Metropolitan Peter Mohyla of the year 1646, prescribes that after the first prayer the water be blessed three times cruciformly by making the sign of the cross in the water with a burning candle; after the second prayer – that it be breathed upon three times cruciformly...and after the third prayer – that it be blessed that it be blessed with the hand submerged in the water. The service of the Jordan blessing of water ends with the threefold cruciform blessing of the water with the cross by submerging it into the water, while the Tropar, O Lord, when You were baptized in the Jordan..." After the water blessing, the priest sprinkles the people with the holy water. Our people had a beautiful custom of erecting a cross of ice at the river where the water blessing took place. (A Byzantine Rite Liturgical Year, Pg. 338-339)



### The Icon of the Baptism of Our Lord

The composition of the icon for the Theophany developed between the 3rd and 6th centuries and has remained remarkably consistent over the centuries. In the 16th century the background consists of mountainous rocky peaks. The dark central area representing the waters of the Jordan look very much like the mouth of a cave, and it's reminiscent of a similar feature in the Nativity and Resurrection icons; Christ is portrayed standing naked in the Jordan, in a way that recalls some of the hymns; "O compassionate Savior, putting on the nakedness of Adam as a garment of glory, you make ready to stand naked in the flesh in the river Jordan." Christ's right hand is raised to bless the waters; On the left Saint John the Baptist places his right hand on the head of

Christ and with his left points to the one he is baptizing. On the right three angels attend on this mystery, showing the participation of the heavenly host at the

baptism of him who is both God and man; their hands are covered in the traditional manner of veneration; the clothes they are holding are sometimes interpreted as the Lord's garments. At the top of the icon we see the dark blue segment of a circle representing the divine realm, and from that segment comes a dark ray; In a small circle between the divine realm and the head of Christ the dove is represented, and beneath this figure the dark ray divides into three; The Trinitarian nature of the Theophany is made clear in the icon. The whole scene is very concisely expressed in one of the hymns for the feast: "A strange wonder it was to see the Maker of heaven and earth stand naked in the river, and as the servant received baptism from a servant for our salvation. The choirs of angels were filled with amazement, fear and joy. Joining with them, we worship you: O Lord, save us.

In some icons the scene is embellished with further details. Sometimes we see the gates of heaven shone open against the background of the divine realm at the top of the icon. Some icons incorporate additional small scenes of the Baptist preaching and baptizing, and in some cases putting an axe to the root of a tree (Matthew 3:10; Luke 3:9); There may be a larger number of angels. Fishes are sometimes shown in the water around Christ, and also Dragons, in accordance with the imagery in the hymns derived from Psalm 74: 13 "You did divide the sea by your might; You broke the heads of the Dragons on the waters." Frequently we see a male and a female figure in the water- personifications of the Jordan and the sea. The place of these figures in the icon is linked to Old Testament events which were seen to prefigure the baptism, namely the turning back of the Jordan by Elisha to create a path across the river, and the crossing of the Red Sea in the account of the exodus from Egypt; Both events being brought together in Psalm 114: 3. These images help to interpret Christ's baptism as opening a path to new life, and the placing of the figure of Christ against the waters that evoke the symbolism of both death and life reminds us that the path to new life is through his death. The story of the flood Genesis 6-9 is one of the Old Testament events which came to be seen as prefiguring baptism; It involved destruction and a new beginning, God's judgment and mercy, and was used by early Christian teachers in their exposition of the significance of baptism (1 Peter 3: 18-22). In the icon, as in the scriptures, the waters of the Jordan and the presence of the dove as the symbol of the spirit recalled the story of the flood and its significance for Christian theology. In the icon the strong vertical line formed by the body of Christ and the ray descending from the heavenly realm create a powerful axial symmetry around which the other figures are grouped. This vertical axis is to the left of the center of the icon; St. John is placed to the left of Christ at a higher position in the icon, thereby emphasizing the humility of Christ who comes as the servant of God to be

baptized by a servant; The broader right section of the icon is occupied by the three angels. The outer curved edge of the Baptist figure, the disposition of the angels bowing before Christ, and the bottom edge of the waters seemed to be contained within a circle; It is as if there is an unseen mandorla within which all the figures in the icon are contained. This use of form within the icon reinforces the truth that this event is being celebrated as the Theophany- the manifestation of God through the incarnate Son whose love takes him to the waters of baptism, not out of need for forgiveness, but in order to provide a way for the children of Adam to find their way to become children of God through the waters of the new rite of Christian baptism which Christ institutes.

The icon of the baptism of Christ is reminiscent of four other festival icons, and some reflections on these links is worthwhile. As already suggested, the way in which the Jordan river is depicted brings to mind The Cave in the Christmas icon and in the raising of Lazarus, and the underworld in the anastasis icon. God the sun descends to earth, descends into the waters of the Jordan, calls Lazarus from the grave, and descends to Hades. In icons of the theophany and the ascension the gates of heaven may be shown wide open; Heaven, open at the baptism for the Spirit to descend, is again open at the Ascension for Christ to enter in, bearing our humanity. As Christ's descent into the Jordan carried our sinful humanity through the waters of cleansing and redemption, and His Ascension carried humanity up to the throne of God, so in a similar way the church is called to be present in this world amid the life of the old Adam, while at the same time rejoicing that it is already united to the new Adam and the glory of heaven. (Festival Icons for the Christian Year, Pgs. 54 - 57)

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**Saint George the Chozivite**  
**Commemorated on January 8(21)**

Saint George the Chozebite was born on the island of Cyprus toward the end of the sixth century. After the death of his parents, he went to Palestine to worship at the holy places. Here he entered into the monastic community of Chozeba between the River Jordan and Jerusalem, and he later became head of this monastery. St George presented the monks example in fasting, vigil and physical efforts. Having lived as an angel upon the earth, he died in peace.

**Troparion - Tone 5** - God-bearing Father George, \* you cultivated the word of grace \* and gathered the splendid fruits of righteousness, \* having chosen the way of godliness.\* Therefore, you partook of the glory of Christ; \* intercede with Him unceasingly \* that He may have mercy on our souls.

**Kontakion - Tone 4** - You have appeared as a brilliant light \* and have illumined with divine rays those who cry to you, \* O George. Pray for us to Christ the Master, \* Who appeared in the waters to illumine those born on earth.

**Venerable Gregory, Wonderworker of the Kiev Near Caves  
Commemorated on January 8/21**

Saint Gregory was tonsured at the Kiev Caves monastery in the time of Saint Theodosius (May 3). The saint devoted much time to reading books, which were his sole possession. He had the ability to bring thieves to their senses. Several times robbers broke in on him in his cell or in the garden, but the saint reasoned with them, the thieves repented, and began to lead honest lives.

Once, when the monk went to the Dnieper River for water, some servants of Prince Rostislav caught sight of the Elder and rudely began making fun of him. The saint answered them, "Children, when you should be asking for everyone's prayers, you are displeasing God. Weep, for disaster approaches. Repent and ask God to be merciful to you on the Day of Judgment. All you will find death in the water with your prince." By orders of the enraged Prince Rostislav, the monk was bound hand and foot, and he was drowned in the Dnieper with a stone around his neck. Still, his prediction came true. Rostislav did not return from the campaign. In that same year of 1093 the twenty-year-old prince drowned in sight of his brother, Vladimir Monomakh, trying to save himself as he fled from the Polovetsians.

Several sources identify Saint Gregory with Saint Gregory, a composer of Canons in honor of the holy Prince Volodymyr, Saint Theodosius, and the holy Martyrs Boris and Hleb. But Saint Gregory, compiler of canons, lived later and died in about the year 1120. Saint Gregory the Wonderworker died in 1093 and was buried in the Near Caves. His memory is celebrated also on September 28 and on the second Sunday of Great Lent.

**Troparion — Tone 8** - With the streams of your tears, you cultivated the barrenness of the desert, / and by your sighting's from the depths, your labors bore fruit a hundredfold, / and you became a luminary of the world, radiant with miracles, / O Gregory our Father. Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

Kontakion — Tone 2 - Having divinely armed yourself with purity of soul / and firmly grasping unceasing prayer as a spear, you have slain the armies of the demons. / Therefore, we beseech you, O Father Gregory: / "Always intercede for those who honor you. "

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### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY** - is expressed to Daniel Coppock, 1/18 & Anastasios Pantelopulos, 1/24. May God grant them a very happy birthday and keep them for many, happy and blessed years!

**CONGRATULATIONS!!** – are expressed to Andrew Duncan who participated in the Chester County Art Association 2026 Juried Members Exhibition and won the Philadelphia Pastel Society Board of Director's Award for his painting of "Asta". The Exhibit continues until January 29, 2026 at the Chester County Art Association at 100 North Bradford Avenue in West Chester, PA. Monday – Friday: 10AM – 5PM and Saturday 11AM – 4PM; closed Sundays. You can check it out at [www.PhiladelphiaPastelSociety.org](http://www.PhiladelphiaPastelSociety.org).

### PYROHY & FOOD SCHEDULE FOR THE BAZAAR

Saturday, January 24  
Saturday, February 14  
Saturday, February 28  
Saturday, March 14  
Making Holubtsi – Saturday, March 21

**100th ANNIVRSARY** – will be held on Saturday, July 17th with a 10:00 AM – Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with a Banquet at the Claymont Ballroom. Mark your calendars! Our first fund Raiser for the event is the sale of T-shirts (\$10) polo shirts (\$15 ) and sweat shirts (\$20) with the Anniversary Logo on them thanks to the art and stitching work of Michael Kapelus.

### MINISTRY SCHEDULE

(Please find a substitute if you cannot make a given week)  
January 18 – Sonya Patronik and John Plachuta  
January 25 - Sonya Patronik and John Plachuta  
February 1 – Linda Hnatow and Matthew Andreas  
February 8 – Linda Hnatow and Matthew Andreas  
February 15 – Victor Kaliakin and Sonya Patronik  
February 22 – Victor Kaliakin and Sonya Patronik

**BREADS FOR SALE** – All of our frozen breads are available for \$5. See Kathy Duncan if you are interested.

**CALENDER OF EVENTS - 2026**

Sunday, February 1 – Annual Meeting  
Monday, February 23 – 1<sup>st</sup> Day of the Great Fast  
Saturday, March 28 – Spring Bazaar  
Sunday, April 5 – Palm Sunday – Easter Egg Hunt  
Sunday, April 12 – Resurrection of the Lord  
Sunday, April 19 – St. Thomas Sunday – Visiting Cemeteries  
Sunday, May 31 – Pentecost  
Monday, June 8 – Apostle' Fast  
Sunday, July 12 – Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul – Patronal Dinner  
Saturday, November 7 – Fall Bazaar  
Saturday, November 28 – St. Philip Fast  
Sunday, December 20 – UOL Cookie Sale

**GREETER MINISTRY SCHEDULE**

January 18 - Kathy and Michael Chalfont  
January 25 - Sandy Cramer  
February 1 - Sonya Patronik  
**February 8** - Zina Twardus and Nancy Tur  
February 15 – David and Eve Lazaration

**READERS MINISTRY SCHEDULE**

January 18 - Linda Hnatow  
January 25 - Jean Roeth  
February 1 - Thomas Scholz  
February 8 – Andrew Duncan  
February 15 – John Plachuta  
February 22 – Thomas Sulpizi  
March 1 - Pani Elizabeth Hutnick

**CLEANING OF THE CHURCH MINISTRY SCHEDULE**

Week of January 19 - Thomas and Lynn Sulpizi  
Week of January 26 - Nancy Hlywiak, Jean Roeth, Zina Twardus  
Week of February 2 - Earle and Jennifer Robinson  
Week of February 9 - Michael Tilson & Linda Hnatow, Irene Maskaly  
Week of February 16 - Mark & Laura Andreas  
Week of February 23 - Earle and Jennifer Robinson

## **MEETINGS**

**Annual Meeting** – Sunday, February 1

**Parish Board** – Wednesday, February 11 @ 6:30 PM

### **PLEASE REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL** – Metropolitan

Antony, Archbishop Daniel, Archimandrite Raphael, Father George Bazylevsky, Father Vasyl Dovhan, Father Oleh Hucul, Father Andrew Molewski, Father James Weremedic, Father Volodymyr Wronskyj, Matushka Andrejuk, Matushka Laura Odell, Matushka Lisa Weremedic, Pani Matka Oksanna Bazylevsky, Pani Matka Maryann Ozlanski, Jonathan Angelo, Colby Atkinson, Shannon Austin, Joyce Belles, Joyce Bendoakas, Ethel Bernhard, Irene Billon, James Bolton, Maria Borowenski, Betty Bosland, Becky Bosley, Angie Brengle, Paul Brengle, Patricia Bringle, Richard Bringle, John Brick, Fedir Bukacz, Christine Cain, Mark Cello, Erik Colazo, Alex Czernik, Sharon Dalaski, Stephen Dalecki, David Dalldorf, Taylor Davis, Peter DiVirgilio, James Dudrick, Kathleen Dugan, Mary Eagleton, Maria Economou, Rose Eldridge, Archantula Fanjoy, Mary Farell, Kandi Fullerton, James Garrett, Lisa Gee, Peter Glenn, Ivan Golovnirov, Kathleen Gortva, Staci Gray, Charles Gunther, David Hamilton, Richard Haslam, Rick Hastings, Victoria Herrschaft, Carla Hitchings, Greg Hitchings, Alicia Hlywak, John Hlywak, Daniel Holoziak, Jennifer Huertes, Serhii Ivashyna, Violet Jaskolka, Stephen Johnson, Bill Jones, Linda Josepinson, Michael Kapelus, Walter Katolik, Diane Keyser, Wendy Klinedinst, Tommy Knight, Judith Kocinski, Lorissa Kozakova, Francis Lano, Ed Lavender, Ron Lazaration, Joan Libera, Karen Livick, Charles Lontor, Alla Lysenko, Jeremy Madea, Andrew Makolynyk, Jean Marano, Frederick McCarthy, Fred McKirachan, Stephen McNulty, Ronald Michel, Mary Ann Michalcewicz, Michelle Michalcewiz, Lisa Miller, Matthew Miller, Mary Elizabeth Moran, Barry Morris, Elsie Moroz, Karen Needham, Julie Neff, Ann Nester, Rick Orner, Sienna Ozboya, Betty Painter, Anastasios Pantelopulos, Anthony Pantelopulos, Daphne Pantelopulos, George Pantelopulos, Linda Phillips, Joseph Pierson, Barry Pinkowicz, Janilyn Pinkowicz, Bernice Pinkowicz, Joseph Porini, Robert Powers, Joanne Procak, Joseph Ptak, Carol Purse, Chuck Redden, Patricia Redden, Sharon Reigh, Christopher Riehl, Arlene Roginski, Wyatt Roland, Andrea Roman, Jeff Rozwadowski, Glenn Runyan, Carol Rusk, Richard Scharba, Isaac Schmidt, Clay Seman, John Serth, Larissa Serth, Dawn Sheets, Justin Sheets, Emily Smitheman, Georgie Smolyar, Alexandra Sparco, Natalia Stanford, Rich Steinman, Joseph Stevens, Noel Strobino, Charles Joseph Sweeney, Evelyn Synczyszyn, Michael Synczyszyn, Pavlo Tabak, Nicholas Taylor, Sue Taylor, Elenora Thomas, Brysen Tomei, Dominic Tomei, Mark Tomei, Violet Tomei, Aria Tonner, Mariel Trimble, Martha Vignali, Jack Vognetz, Margaret Vognetz, Marilyn Wagner, Olena Wasylevska, James Watts, Chris Way, Leah Way, Barbara Weeks, Laura Worley, Jack Ziegler & James Zook

## THEOPHANY – MANIFESTATION OF GOD

**T**his is one of the magnificent Feasts of the Church, like a diamond which sheds its rays on things spiritual to all men of all ages. It is not simply a commemoration of the Baptism of Christ in the waters of the Jordan. Its very name goes beyond that: **Theophany**, meaning manifestation or the revealing of God.

When Jesus was grown, He came to the Jordan where John the Baptist had been baptizing people. The Lord also asked to be baptized, and though St. John protested in humility, he took Him in the waters for the rite. Then the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove and hovered over Christ. And the voice of the Father was heard proclaiming, **"This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased."**

And so the identity of Jesus was now clear. He was the **"son of Mary"** to be sure, but He was the **"Son of God"** as well, God and Man. But the revealing aspect of this event involves more than the Person of Christ. It involves the very being of God. God was revealed as **TRINITY** at the Baptism. God the Father's voice was heard, God the Son was in the water, God the Holy Spirit revealed His presence by the dove. No wonder this became one of the Church's great Holydays, and remains so to this day!

Another term used for this Feast is **"Enlightenment"** or **"Illumination,"** because it marked the time when the Light of the World, Jesus Christ, revealed Himself to mankind and began the work of dispelling the darkness of sin and death. This term is often associated with the rites of Baptism and Chrismation for it is then that the Light of Christ comes to dwell in us and enlighten us.