

### PASTORAL VISITATIONS

Please inform the Church Office 301-469-7990 (ext 300) of any loved ones who are hospitalized or "shut-ins," so they may be visited and receive the grace of Holy Communion.

### **2010 CALENDARS ARE AVAILABLE**

The new Ecclesiastical Calendars for 2010 have arrived. **They will be available on Sundays following Divine Liturgy at a table in the Founders Hall.** You may pick up *ONE* calendar per family in order to make certain that every family in the parish has one.

**FIFTY PLUS** Wishing all the members of the Fifty Plus Club and the community of St George a healthy AND HAPPY New Year. The first meeting of the New Year will be January 13, 2010 in the Founders Hall at 11:30am with the cutting of the Vasilopita.

**Literary Luncheon** On Feb. 20, 2010, The Philologists of St. George will be hosting their first Literary Luncheon, "In their Own Words". The program will feature George Tenet, George Pelecanos, Stefan Fatsis, and Nick Katsoris - four successful Greek-American authors who will speak about the influence their heritage had on their craft. The luncheon will be held at The Bethesda Country Club and doors will open at 11:30 am. Tickets are \$60. Sponsorships are also available. For further information, please go to [Philologists.org](http://Philologists.org) or call Catherine Sarlis at 301-469-7990. What a great way to support one of the many ministries of St. George.

**GOYA** Jan 9 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM GOYA rescheduled holiday party. Please Attend! We will have a load of fun! details to follow. Jan 17, 9:30 AM feed the hungry in the kitchen. Let's get together to help those in need!

**Parathosi Dance Troupe** Please support the Parathosi Dance Senior Truope's participation in the 2010 Greek Folk Dance Festival of the Metropolis of New Jersey, on January 16 in Annapolis. Any questions may be referred to Elaine Romas ([eromas@verizon.net](mailto:eromas@verizon.net)) or Irene Tzamaras ([itzamaras@comcast.net](mailto:itzamaras@comcast.net))

**Feed the Hungry** The next Feed the Hungry Sunday is **January 17**. We need drivers and cooks to help us out in preparing food for the shelters. Why not make New Year's resolution to directly help the homeless and hungry in Bethesda?

**Ladies Philoptochos** Today is Vasilopita Sunday~everyone will receive a piece of Vasilopita. The Ladies Philoptochos will pass a second tray for St. Basil's Academy. Thank you in advance for your generosity. We wish all of you and your families a joyous and Happy New Year! To join our Ladies Philoptochos, please contact, Lia Kent, [kent\\_amalia@yahoo.com](mailto:kent_amalia@yahoo.com), or 301-762-8976.

**A REMINDER: Please make sure that, when you give your Stewardship offering by CHECK, that you indicate on the memo line STEWARDSHIP 2010. Please assist our staff in correctly applying your check where it belongs!**

## **FOREFEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF THE LORD**

JANUARY 3, 2010



### **THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT GEORGE**

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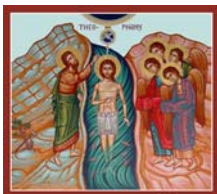
Proistamenos: Rev. Fr. Dimitrios J. Antokas

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Rev. Fr. George Khitiri

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Rev. Fr. Nicholas Despotides, Emeritus



Today our eyes are taken away from Bethlehem's cave and focused on the Jordan River. We hear in the Gospel passage from St. Mark, the announcement by John the Forerunner of "he who is mightier than I.....who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." In prophetically announcing the coming of Jesus as a man, John stress that Jesus has power, that His baptism reveals the Divine nature of the baby born in Bethlehem, that soon will be revealed the Savior — not privately to a few, but to the entire world. And so we turn our eyes to the beginning of Jesus public ministry — that time when he will make clear the will of His Father for us, when He will reveal the futility of sin and the wisdom of following Him. The Theophany of the Lord manifests that He is the Son of God, well-pleasing to the Father, and should be listened to. As we continue to remember the Lord's birth, let us resolve to move on the taking His public ministry to heart — to listen to His teachings and preaching, to live what He announces as "the Way", and to follow Him wherever He leads us — ultimately to the Cross and the empty tomb. The water we bless on Holy Theophany is a reminder of Christ's own baptism and the beginning of his ministry and the wonder of the redemption of man.

**EPISTLE II Timothy 4:5-8**

TIMOTHY, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

**TODAY'S READER: JEANNE KITSOULIS**

**GOSPEL Mark 1:1-6**

THE BEGINNING OF the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight' John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**Apolytikion for the Theophany of the Lord**

Lord, when You were baptized in the Jordan, the veneration of the Trinity was revealed. For the voice of the Father gave witness to You, calling You Beloved, and the Spirit, in the guise of a dove, confirmed the certainty of His words. Glory to You, Christ our God, who appeared and enlightened the world.



**Kontakion for the Theophany of the Lord**

You appeared to the world today, and Your light, O Lord, has left its mark upon us. With fuller understanding we sing to You: "You came, You were made manifest, the unapproachable light."

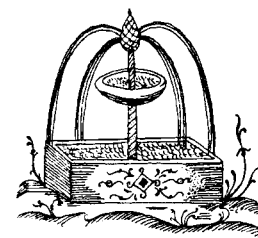
**PRAYER LIST:** Antonia "Nitsa" Kempf, Connie Kanaris, Diana Lazar, George Markomanolakis, Argie Palaivos, Katherine Panagakos, Priscilla Preuss, George Virvan, Sylvia Basdekas, George Speris, Mariah Smiley, Saxton, Doris Webb, the child Camille Feruzzi who is gravely ill, the child Heather Greene, Irene Pappas, Marty Levine, Lindsey Reijsoo, the child Ashley Lyvers, the child Alexis Ross, Thomas Jenkins, the child Joseph Saxon, Francine Bruggeman, Estrella Grandea Ocampo, Artie Constantinides, Stephanie Skanderis, Michael Giatzis, and Robert Shriver. **US ARMED FORCES:** (Col.) Fr. Alexander Webster, Rev. Fr. John Kalantzis, Lt. Nicholas Karnaze, Spc. Spiro Nino, John Xanthakos, Maj. Sydney Pennix, Colonel James Karas, and Gary Hogman (Iraq) and his wife Cindy.

**DIVINE SERVICES**

**Tuesday, January 5, 2010:** The Eve of the Theophany Orthros and Royal Hours 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, January 6, 2010:** The Feast of the Theophany Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy and Great Blessing of the Waters 9:30a.m.

**Thursday, January 7, 2010:** Feast of St. John the Forerunner Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.



**THE GREAT BLESSING OF THE WATERS ON THEOPHANY**

The Great Blessing of the Water is appointed twice at the Feast of Theophany. The first takes place on the paragon (the day of preparation for the Feast), and the other takes place on the day of the Feast itself. There is no difference between the two services. Where both Blessings are celebrated, some among the Faithful have adopted the pious custom of drinking the waters of the first blessing for health and spiritual refreshment (since the Fifth is a strict fast day), and then of sprinkling their homes with the water from the second blessing. The water from either service may just as well be used for both purposes. The Scriptures make it clear regarding the importance of water spiritually and physically, its place in hearts and souls and as a medium for God's cleansing, renewing, and healing work. Patriarch Bartholomew reminds us that as stewards of the earth's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters, Orthodox Christians anywhere in the world have an obligation to bend our energies to assure the future of the world's water resources for drinking, fishing, and swimming. Yes, we are not free to turn on the water tap, mindless of our stake in all efforts to clean up pollution and to pass on a heritage of clean, potable, life-supporting water to the human generations and all the other life forms after us. The men of Jericho approached the Prophet Elisha for his help with the city's springs, for they realized that their water supply problems were not merely an issue of physical contamination but were a difficulty having a spiritual dimension as well (vs. 19). There will be no instant solutions to the rapid degradation of the world's waters so long as human hearts and souls are not healed. Until we approach the basic elements of earth with reverence, we labor in vain to heal the springs of our cities and lands. The Great Blessing calls water "a gift of

sanctification, a deliverance from sins unto healing of soul and body and unto every expedient purpose." Let us realize our relationship with water as a fellow 'creature' upon which we depend both physically and spiritually. May God also open the eyes of our hearts to the sacramental role of water. In the great mystery of His infinite love, God cleansed the water of Jericho in a rite of blessing for life in that city and for the whole ecosystem within which it was situated. So let us also drink the Divinely blessed waters of Theophany and sprinkle them upon our homes, rejoicing as the Priests bless our homes. God, the Holy and Life-giving Trinity is among us giving "redemption, the blessing of Jordan," providing for the "remission of sins...protection against disease...destruction of demons" unto the cleansing of our hearts and souls. *Great art Thou, O Lord, and wondrous are Thy works and no words sufficeth to hymn Thy wonders. Glory toThee, O Lord. Glory to Thee.*

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 5TH, IS A STRICT FAST DAY IN PREPARATION FOR THE FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY**

**BLESSING OF THE WATERS IN OCEAN CITY**

Metropolitan Evangelos will officiate at the Agiasomos at St. George-by-the-Sea, January 9, beginning with Orthros at 8:30 a.m. Our GOYAN youth will participate. All are welcome to join in this service.

**MEMORIALS**

Today a Memorial Service will be offered for **Margarita Karas Campbell (40 Days)** requested by her daughter Barbara Campbell (Patrick) Potter and her grandchildren Alexa and Christian; for **Peter Panarites (40 Days)**, requested by his wife Helen and family; for **Panayiotis Andonyadis (1 Year)**, requested by his son Manolis and family; and for **Fedra Minettou (2 Years)**, requested by her daughter Milia Alexandrou and family. May their memories be eternal!