

■ **Feast of Theophany** – Each year on January 6 the Byzantine Church commemorates the baptism of Jesus Christ in the Jordan River. This feast is often called “Epiphany” or “Theophany,” which means the Holy Manifestation of the Divinity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

One of the oldest feasts of the Eastern Church, it has been traced back to the beginning of the second century. The Western Church accepted this Great Feast from the Eastern Church in the third century. Part of the tradition of the Eastern Church is to bless water (Great Sanctification of Water).

Theophany, in 2019, falls on the first Sunday of January. Blessed water will be available at the end of the Divine Liturgy on January 6. If you would like to take some of the blessed water with you, please bring your own container.

■ **Continue to Remember in Prayer** – “They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword....” (Hebrews 11:37a)

Divine Liturgy Schedule

- Dec. 24...** **Vigil of Christmas**
Our Lady’s Chapel/Goshen House
5:30 p.m.
(Day of Precept/Obligation)
- Dec. 30...** **Sunday After Christmas**
Our Lady’s Chapel/Goshen House
10 a.m.
- Jan. 6...** **Feast of Theophany/
Blessing of Water**
Mother of God School
10 a.m.

Please lift up in prayer all those who are persecuted and deprived of liberty, everywhere in the world, even in our own country.

Please especially remember the peoples of Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Niger – the whole Middle East and Africa – who are literal martyrs for Christ. Also the people of Ukraine.

They are all our brothers and sisters, for all are one in Christ.

■ **Christmas Liturgy** – Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of Our Lord will be prayed with a vigil Divine Liturgy at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, December 24, in Our Lady’s Chapel in the Goshen House. There will be no Divine Liturgy served at Epiphany Mission on Christmas Day, Tuesday, December 25.

A prayerful welcome to our visitors and guests.

Liturgy Propers

Sunday of the Holy Ancestors
The Holy Ten Martyrs of Crete
Dedication of the Great Church of Holy Wisdom
in Constantinople
December 23, 2018
Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Troparion of the Resurrection – Tone 6 (p. 150)
Troparion of the Holy Fathers – Tone 2 (p. 285)
Kontakion of the Prefeast – Tone 2 (p. 284)
Prokeimenon of the Holy Fathers – Tone 4 (p. 287)
EPISTLE: Hebrews 11:9–10, 17–23 & 32–40
Alleluia of the Holy Fathers – Tone 4 (p. 287)
GOSPEL: Matthew 1:1–25
Communion Hymn of the Holy Fathers (p. 287)

[PAGE NUMBERS REFERENCE GREEN LITURGY BOOK]

CELEBRANT: FR. LEE GROSS

Come, O Jesus, Our Savior.
Redeem and Save Us.



Announcements

■ **Today’s Liturgy Intention** – Today’s Divine Liturgy is offered by Andy Haba for the blessed repose of +Janet Haba and +George Haba. *Vičnaja pam-jat.*

“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

– Revelation 21:4 (NKJV / OSB)

■ **Today’s Commemorations** – Today in the Byzantine Church is the Sunday before the Nativity, and commemorated as the Sunday of the Holy Ancestors. On this Sunday, the first chapter of the Gospel of Matthew is proclaimed. Often called the Genealogy of Jesus (verses 1-17), this reading has a wonderful message that points to the real meaning and power and joy of Christmas.

The key to the message is the women. This is a Hebrew genealogy; therefore, it should go from father to son, to son, to son, and so on. Who the mother is, is genealogically speaking, irrelevant. But there are five women listed among Jesus’ ancestors, four of which are: Tamar (v. 3); Rahab (v. 5); Ruth (v. 5); and Basheeba, referred to as “her that had been the wife of Urias” (v. 6). Why are these women listed in the genealogy of Christ? Strange enough (genealogically speaking) is that women are listed at all – but these women – and men – who certainly did not lead exemplary lives.

Throughout human history, and in our own lives, we see – painfully, tragically – that which is whole, being broken; that which is high and holy,

(Continued on a following page.)

Epiphany of Our Lord
Byzantine Catholic Church



Montgomery County
Mission

Mother of God Community School
20501 Goshen Road
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20879
301-482-0282
www.eolmission.org

Our community...

was established in October 1996 to meet the spiritual needs of Byzantine Catholics living in northern Montgomery County, southern Frederick County, and adjoining areas.

We celebrate our faith...

in a diverse community. We welcome all, regardless of ethnic or religious background who are committed to develop a deeper understanding of the Christian faith expressed in the Byzantine tradition and spirituality, and who wish to pray for and work towards the full communion of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches as sister Churches of the One Universal Church of Jesus Christ.

We continually resolve...

to gather in His Name, share the truth of our Faith, and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to everyone.

Please Remember

"Is anyone among you sick? ...the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up."

James 5:14-15 NKJV/OSB

OUR MISSION COMMUNITY

- Jeff Sesok
- Ron Pytel.
- Lou Shanks.
- Rosemary Chisarick.
- Doris and Rich Fejka.
- Raymond Klimkosky.

OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- Mary Neimiller
- Yazmine Nickerson.
- Paula and Tom Tate & Family.
- Christine Dennis.
- Peggy Winkelmann.
- Laura Hinkle.
- Doran Coady.
- Ann Tracy.
- Travis Waters.
- Bertha Bergan.
- Arlene Kollar.
- Jamee Kruse.
- Joseph and Nancy Dillmann.
- Paul and Mary Ellen Sorensen.
- Tony Tworkoski.
- Linda Oros.
- Mike DiMarino.
- Robert and Doris Kreger.
- Robert Diethrich.
- Lucy Fontenot
- Patricia Minihane.
- Brother Joseph Comber, CFX.

SPECIAL INTENTION

- Elizabeth Basarab.
- Sally Pekarik.
- Fr. Conan Timoney.
- Fr. Lee Gross.
- Deacon Peter Turko.



Pray for Our Community

"Return, we beseech You, O God of hosts; Look down from heaven and see, and visit this vine and the vineyard which

Your right hand has planted, and the branch that You made strong for Yourself."



Psalms 80:14-15 NKJV/OSB

Food Pantry

Our community places a food collection basket near the information table as you enter the gymnasium. Don't forget those who are less fortunate. Nonperishable food items, diapers, baby food, and personal care items are always in demand. The Food Pantry Program, administered by St. Martin of Tours Roman Catholic Church in Gaithersburg, supports the working poor of our area.



"...for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to Me. ...Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me."

Matthew 25:35-36, 40 NKJV/OSB

(Continued from a previous page.)

falling. The message here is that in human history, and very specifically, in our own lives, God can and does act to undo this tragedy. He takes what is broken and makes it whole; He takes what is fallen and raises it up! He produces, from this very humble, very "mortal" family tree, one who is capable of giving birth to His immortal Son.

For the fifth and final woman in the genealogy is "Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." Mary, who replied to the Archangel Gabriel, when he had delivered the shocking news of her impending maternity, with these words: "Behold the maidservant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word!"

Mary, who is the fruit of this family tree, is the proof of God's ability and His passionate desire to make right all the things that have gone wrong. By her free choice and assent, God Himself is born into the world to make it new, whole, and holy once more.

By our free choice and assent, the same thing can happen to us, in us. If we are willing, God is able. If we are even willing to consider being willing, it is a start – and sometimes it is enough! This is the real meaning and power and joy of Christmas. "Let it be to me according to your word!"

[Text adapted from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Orthodox Christian Fellowship.]

On this date, December 23, the Byzantine Church also commemorates the Ten Martyrs of Crete, who suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Diocletian, and the Dedication of the Great Church of Holy Wisdom (*Hagia Sophia*) in Constantinople, present-day Istanbul.

■ **Vigil of Christmas Fast** – The Vigil of Christmas (December 24) is observed as a day

of strict fast (no meat or dairy products). In celebration of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, the period from Christmas Day through January 3, however, is free from fasting and abstinence.

■ **Christmas Greetings** – Our Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic greeting to one another from Christmas Day through Christmastide is "Christ is born!" The response is "Glorify Him!"

In Slavonic (transliterated), it is "Christos razhdajetsa!" And the response, "Slavite Jeho!"

Liturgically, the Christmas season for the Eastern Churches runs 40 days (mirroring the 40 days following Pascha) from the Feast of the Nativity to the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple on February 2.

■ **The Holy Supper: Christmas in the Carpatho-Rusyn Tradition** – The Carpatho-Rusyn people maintain a wide variety of customs associated with all the holidays of the year, but few of them are as elaborate or as eagerly awaited as those associated with the Feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ.

The entire drama of events associated with Christmas is made present in the Rusyn home by the observance of the Christmas Eve Holy Supper (*Svjatyj Večer/Velija*). The custom of the Holy Supper is observed wherever Rusyns live, but variations in customs and foods served at the meal are found from region to region, village to village, even among different families. These variations not only testify to the richness of the Rusyn culture, but in the unity of a tradition kept by all Rusyns.

To find out more about observing the Christmas Eve Holy Supper, go to www.wirnowski.com/Carp/Nat_HolyNight.html