

'Baptize me', but from above the angels are watching that they may then say to me, 'Know yourself. Just how far will you go?' Therefore, as Moses said, choose another, for what you ask of me, Saviour, is greater than I, and I am afraid. I beg you. For how shall I baptize the unapproachable Light?"

8. He who foresees all, seeing the fear of the Forerunner, answered him, "It is good, John, it is good that you were afraid of me. Nonetheless, let be for now—for thus it is fitting—to fulfill what I have decided. Let be for now and shake off this cowardly fear; You owe me his ministry, and you must now perform it. Once before I sent Gabriel, and he performed his task well at your birth. You too then, send me your palm as an angel, that you may baptize the unapproachable Light."

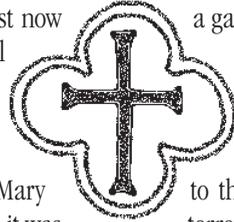
9. "Now you are frightened, Baptist, and tremble at this action as great. And so it is. But your cousin saw one that was greater. Look at Mary and consider how she carried me. Of course you will say to me, 'Then it was your wish'. Now too it is my wish. Do not hesitate, baptize me. Just lend me your right hand. I dwell in your spirit and I possess you wholly. Why then do you not stretch out your palm to me? I am within you and outside you. Why do you flee from me? Stand your ground and grasp the unapproachable Light."

10. "I am not asking, Baptist, that you overstep the bounds; I do not say, 'Say to me what you say to offenders,' nor 'Give me the advice you give sinners.' Simply baptize me in silence, and expectation of what will follow the baptism. Because in this way you will gain a dignity which does not belong to angels, for I will also make you greater than all the prophets. Not one of them saw me clearly, but only in types and shadows and dreams. But as he stands before you by his own will, you see, grasp the unapproachable Light."

11. "Set aside what you say and do what you hear. Do not bear witness to me; for in heaven I always have a faithful witness. Your witness, the people standing here clearly do accept. Let them be taught from heaven who I am and whose Offspring I am, what I am going to bestow on those I love. I shall open the heavens, I shall send down the Spirit, which I shall give them as a pledge. So come now, draw near to learn from where I blaze out, the unapproachable Light."

12. When he heard these ineffable and dread words, the son of the barren said to the Son of the Virgin, "If I still speak, do not be angry with me, Redeemer. For even now, necessity is preparing me to act with great boldness. That these people may learn who you are, must I then, Saviour, expose to danger my poor hand by thrusting it into a brazier? Once Oza stretched out his hand to steady the Ark, and he was cut off. Now, if I grasp the head of my God, how will I not be burned by the unapproachable Light?"

13. "Baptist and disputant, prepare at once, not for confrontation but for ministration. For look, you will see what I am accomplishing. In this way I am painting for you the fair and radiant form of my Church, granting to your right hand the power that after this I shall give to the palms of my friends and



the priests. I am showing you clearly the Holy Spirit, I am making you hear the voice of the Father as it declares me his true Son and cries, "This is the unapproachable Light."

14. After these dread words the offspring of Zachary cried to the Creator, "I hesitate no longer, but do what you command me." Having said this, he approached the Saviour as a slave his lord. He gazed at him, looking devoutly at the naked limbs of the one who orders the clouds to envelop the heavens like a garment, and again he contemplated in the middle of the streams the one who appeared in the middle of the three youths, dew in the fire and fire in the Jordan shining, gushing, the unapproachable Light.

15. But, seeing these wonders, the son of the priest in the office of a priest stretches out his palm and lays his hand on Christ as he cries to those who see it, "See in the Jordan the willing rain. Contemplate the torrent of delights, as it is written, in the streams of the waters, a great sea in a river. Let no one of them consider me daring. I act, not as foolhardy, but as a servant. He is Lord and he told me to do this; that is why I am baptizing the unapproachable Light."

16. "I was feeble as a mortal, but he as God of all gave me force, crying, 'Place your hand on me and I will give it strength.' For how could I have done it, had this not been what he said and what came to pass? How would I have had the power to baptize the deep, I who am clay, had I not first received and accepted power from on high? For now, with him standing by me, I sense that I am more than I was before. I am something else. I have been changed, I have been glorified, for I am seeing, I am baptizing the unapproachable Light."

17. "I no longer say as before, 'I may not loose the strap of his sandals,' for see, I advance from the feet to the head. I tread no longer the earth but heaven itself, for what I accomplish is of heaven. Rather I have surpassed the things on high, for they carry, but do not see whom they carry, while I now both see and baptize. Heaven rejoice and earth be glad, springs of waters be hallowed, for by appearing he has filled all things with blessing, he enlightens all mankind, the unapproachable Light."

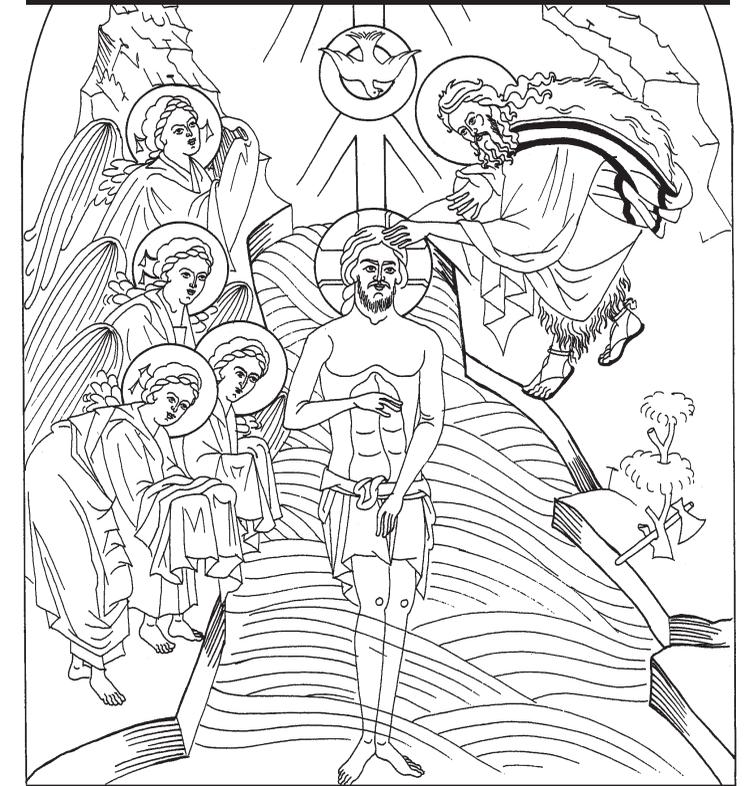
18. At the divine command, Zachary's offspring raises his mind on high, and stretching out his palm places it on the King, washes in the streams, then leads back to land the Lord of land and sky, whom the One who cried, "This is my beloved Son" pointed out from heaven by a voice as by a finger. To the Father himself then and to the Son who was baptized and to his Spirit I cry, "Crush those who afflict my soul; end my errors, my Redeemer, the unapproachable Light."

<https://www.stnicholasoc.org/on-the-theophany/>

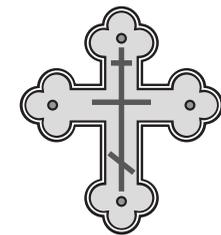


SS. Constantine and Elena Orthodox Church

January 7, 2018



SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE FORERUNNER



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PARISH LIFE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2018: SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY/

SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE FORERUNNER (TONE 6, MATINS GOSPEL 9)

8:40 am Matins

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

1:00 pm Mystery of Holy Baptism for John Parmar

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10

6:15 pm Daily Vespers

7:00 pm Special Study: Hymns and Icon of Theophany

SATURDAY JANUARY 13

5:00 pm Mystery of Confession (by appointment, please)

6:00 pm Great Vespers (followed by confessions)



PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND OF OUR PARISH:

James Barnes, Victor Cosgarea, Jay Hanko, Jan Isham, Zachary Waltz, Margaret Wey.

LOOKING AHEAD...

Next Sunday's readings (29th Sunday after Pentecost/Leavetaking of Theophany): Colossians 1:12-18; Luke 17:12-19.

Sunday, January 28

1:00 pm Annual Parish Assembly (for qualified voting parish members)

Monday, January 29

6:30 pm Vespers with Litia for the Three Hierarchs

Tuesday, January 30

8:00 am Divine Liturgy for the Three Hierarchs (with Academy students)

Thursday, February 1

6:30 pm Vigil for the Meeting of Our Lord

Friday, February 2

8:00 am Divine Liturgy for the Meeting

COFFEE HOUR SIGNUP

The coffee hour signup sheet for this new year is posted on the bulletin board in the hall. Many slots remain unfilled so far, in particular at the end of February and in March. Please take a look and sign up right away.

HOUSE BLESSINGS BEGIN

The period after the Feast of the Theophany is house blessing time: a time to rededicate our homes and our lives to Christ, and ask God's blessing for the coming year. This year's period is shorter: Great Lent begins on February 19; it is advised to have all house blessings completed before then, so combining several in each day/evening will help. Once again there will be a sign up sheet for home blessings on the bulletin board in the church hall, with suggestions for concentrating on the various areas of the city in the same time period. Any

possible daytime appointments would be helpful and welcome. Please take a look at your calendars, and sign up on the sheet. Call the church office or call/text Fr. David's cell phone (317.627.2282) to make an appointment.

CALENDARS FOR NEXT YEAR

The 2018 calendar are here! Another fabulous parish calendar, featuring photos from our life together; the pocket calendars from the Episcopate chancery; the wall calendars (in Romanian) from our Episcopate; and the small tear-off calendars (sponsored by our friends at Stephen's Mortuary), in the box by the narthex table inside the front doors.

SPECIAL STUDY THIS WEDNESDAY...

The Wednesday evening, in place of our usual study of "The Heavenly Banquet," another special session will be offered on the Feast of the Theophany, using the festal icon in the nave and contemplating the meaning of the Feast through the readings and hymns of the services. Our friend Theodore Nottingham plans to be on hand to videotape the session, so it will be available in the near future to those who cannot be present. Be there if you can – the discussion is always uplifting. We will serve Daily Vespers at 6:15, and the session will start just after that, around 7 pm.

FROM THE TREASURER

Thank you so much to all who contributed to the Alms Fund and the Temple Beautification Fund these last few weeks. Both had gotten very low and are now much improved! It was brought to the Parish Council's attention about a year ago that some people might be interested in donating stocks and/or bonds to the church (especially to help bolster the Capital Improvement Fund). If you or anyone you know might be interested in doing so, we now have an account with Stifel which can receive such donations. Below is the pertinent information that you would need in order to donate directly. You can also reach out to Isaac Lashbrook, Ed Rensink, or Olivia Napariu if you want to discuss.

Firm Name: Stifel

DTC Number: 0793

Account Name: Saints Constantine and Elena Romanian Orthodox Church

Account Number: 74340471

Point of Contact at Stifel is Patty Horner at (317) 808-7341.

-Isaac Lashbrook

ON THE THEOPHANY

St. Romanos the Melodist

1. In Galilee of the nations, in the country of Zavulon and the land of Naphthalim, as the prophet said, a great light has shone-Christ. For the darkened, a shining beam has appeared, blazing out of Bethlehem, or rather, out of Mary-

the Lord, the sun of justice, has made his rays dawn on the whole inhabited world. Therefore let us all, Adam's naked children, put him on that we may be kept warm; for as a covering for the naked and a light for the darkened you have come, you have appeared, the unapproachable Light.

2. God did not despise the one who was robbed by trickery in Paradise and lost the garment woven by God, for he came towards him calling to the disobedient once again with his holy voice, "Adam, where are you? From now on, do not hide from me; I want to see you. Though you are naked, though you are poor, do not be ashamed, for I have become like you. Though you desired it you did not become a god, but now, by my own will, I have become flesh. Draw near me then and recognize me, that you may say, 'You have come, you have appeared, the unapproachable Light.'"

3. "In my mercy, I was overcome by my compassion and came to my creature, stretching out my hands to embrace you. So do not be ashamed in front of me; for your sake, naked as you are, I am stripped naked and baptized. Already the Jordan opens for me, and John prepares my ways in the waters and in minds." The Saviour spoke thus to humankind, not in words but in deeds, and came, as he said drawing near to the river on foot, but to the Forerunner as the unapproachable Light.

4. When John saw the river in the desert and the dew in the furnace and the shower of rain in the Virgin, Christ in the Jordan, he was troubled by fear, as his father had trembled at Gabriel; for at that moment something happened, greater than at any moment; for at that moment the Master of the angels had come to a slave wishing to be baptized. And so the Baptist, recognizing the Creator and taking his own measure, spoke trembling. "Stop, Redeemer. Let this suffice you. I know who you are, the unapproachable Light."

5. "If I perform what you command me, Saviour, I shall exalt my horn, but nevertheless I will not snatch what is beyond my power. I know who you are and am not ignorant of what you were, for, from the womb, I know you. How then should I not know you, now that you appear, you whom I saw when you were hidden and in the womb I leapt for joy? Desist then, Saviour, and do not burden me. It is sufficient that I have been allowed to see you. It is good enough for me if you call me your forerunner, because you are the unapproachable Light."

6. "I seek to yield to you the office of Baptist, for it is fitting for you, since I need to be baptized by you. But you come to me and in anticipation ask what I would ask of you. What do you seek from a human, O Lover of mankind? Why do you bow your head beneath my hand? For it is not used to holding fire. Poor, it does not know how to lend to the rich. Weak, it cannot compete with the strong. It is useful for sinners as they need it; for you are the unapproachable Light."

7. "Why have you come to these streams? What do you wish to wash away or what sins, you who, without sin, were conceived and born? You come to me, but heaven and earth are watching to see if I shall dare. You say to me,

