

**St Ignatius of Antioch
Melkite Greek Catholic Church
1003 Merry Street
Augusta, Georgia 30904
706 364-6219**



**The Sunday after Theophany
January 8, 2023**

Sunday after Theophany



“He Who Descended” (Eph 4:9, 10)

THE LORD JESUS’ PUBLIC MINISTRY begins, as it were, where John the Forerunner left off. He travels through Galilee, the Gospels assert, preaching like John, *“Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”* (Mt 4:17). *“News of Him went out throughout the surrounding region and He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all* (Lk 4:14-15).

Finally, Luke adds, Jesus came to Nazareth *“where He had been brought up”* (Lk 4:16) and people were amazed at Him – they knew Him simply as Joseph’s son. Over and over in the Gospels we see people wondering just who Jesus is, the disciples growing in faith and emboldened to proclaim, as Peter did on Pentecost, *“that God has made both Lord and Messiah this Jesus whom you crucified”* (Acts 2:36).

The Apostles’ faith continued to develop as they began preaching the risen Christ. By the time St Paul wrote his so-called prison epistles (Philippians, Ephesians and Colossians) some thirty years later, the apostolic Church had come to recognize that Moses and the Prophets had intimated something deeper about the Messiah. Their

deepening faith in Jesus' eternal existence as the Word of God is expressed repeatedly in these epistles.



In the Epistle to the Colossians St Paul makes a straightforward confession of the unity of Christ with the Father. *“He is the image [ikon] of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation; for by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominations or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. He is before all things and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the Church who is the beginning, the firstborn of the dead that in all things He may be preeminent, for it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross”* (Col 1:15-20).

And so, Paul taught, Jesus who was crucified and risen was also the pre-eternal icon of the Father through whom all things were created. In the Epistle to the Ephesians he describes the mystery of Christ in puzzling terms of a downward motion (descent) and an upward motion (ascent). Commenting on a verse from Psalm 68, St Paul writes, *“Now this ‘He ascended’ – what does it mean, but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things”* (Eph 4:9-10).

Kenosis: Christ Empties Himself

This movement of descent and ascent is perhaps most clearly explained in the Epistle to the Philippians as a voluntary self-emptying of Himself and thus as a model for our lives. *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God has also highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow – of those in heaven and of those on earth – and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father”* (Col 2:5-11).

From the Greek word translated here as “emptied Himself” we have the word *kenosis* to describe the Son of God’s voluntary descent to assume our nature. He put aside the glory of His divinity to take up our humanity, only allowing it to be seen by Peter, James and John at the Transfiguration. Christ is described as the opposite of many of us who refuse to let our status symbols free from our grasp. He puts aside the glory of being the Father’s icon to become Son of Man. The One who is enthroned upon the cherubim now has nowhere to lay His head.

Glorification: Jesus is Lord

While *kenosis* expressed the downward movement of the Word’s voluntary setting aside of His glory, the upward movement of His glorification is connected with the term *kyrios* (Lord). This is the term we regularly associate with Christ but we do not realize how revolutionary that association was at first. In the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament, *Kyrios* was the word spoken in place of the unpronounceable name of God, “Yahweh,” the name God gave to Moses at the burning bush (see Ex 3:15), a term we roughly translate as “The One Who Is” or “The Existing One.” Similarly observant Jews today refuse to speak this name, referring to God simply as *Hashem* (“the name”).

The most basic “creed” in the apostolic Church was connected with this term. St Paul incorporates it into his Epistle to the Romans: “*If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord [Kyrios] and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved*” (Rom 10:9).

And so the apostolic Church, which had first met Jesus in the villages of Galilee, came to know Him as the pre-eternal Son of the Father who descended to become one of us and ascended once more as Lord, bearing humanity with Him to where He was before.

In our Liturgy the emphasis is principally on Jesus as *Kyrios*, the eternal Word. At the end of Orthros or Vespers the priest turns to the icon of Christ and proclaims, “Blessed is He-Who-Is, Christ our true God, at all times...” The icon to which he points – and all icons of Christ – is inscribed with the same Greek word, Ὁ ΩΝ (the One-Who-Is): Jesus of Nazareth, the One-Who-Is, now in glory as God and Man.

Kenosis in the Liturgy

Our liturgical poetry frequently alludes to the contrast between Christ’s divine state and His incarnation.

Today, He who holds the whole creation in the hollow of His hand is born of the Virgin! He whose Essence none can approach will be wrapped in swaddling clothes as a mortal. God, who established the heavens at the beginning of time will lie in a manger. He who rained down manna on His people in the desert will be nourished by milk from His Mother's breast! The Bridegroom of the Church, who called the Magi, will accept their gifts as the Son of the Virgin. We bow down and worship Your Nativity, O Christ! Show us also Your Theophany! *Ninth Royal Hour*

Beholding him who was in God's image and likeness fallen through the transgression, Jesus bowed the heavens and came down. And without change, He took up His dwelling in a Virgin's womb: that He might fashion corrupt Adam anew, who cried out to Him: "Glory to Your Theophany, O my Redeemer and my God!" *Liti of the Nativity*

For our sakes, Christ has come forth from the seed of Abraham, to raise up to the dignity of sons those who had fallen into the darkness of sin, which bowed them down to the earth. Despite His great dignity, He who dwells in endless Light has willed to dwell in a manger for the salvation of mankind. *Canon of the Nativity*



Sunday Collections

Attendance	Date	Collection
26	November 13, 2022	70.00
19	November 20, 2022	
16	November 27, 2022	240.00
26	December 4, 2022	20.00
---	December 11, 2022	---
21	December 18, 2022	2,132.00
24	December 25, 2022	349.00
20	January 1, 2023	1,277.00

Divine Liturgy Intentions: For the Living:

Bishop Francois, Fr. Eugene Mitchell, Fr. James Graham, David Mangelsdorf, Brian Frank, Maria Barklage, Nookid Graham, Ali de la Vega, Jan Munn, A Special Parish Intention, Medical Personnel and First Responders

For the Dead:

Announcements

We are live-streaming on our Facebook page at the following days & times:

Friday 6:00 PM Weekday Vespers

Saturday - 6:00PM Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00AM Orthros & 10:00AM Divine Liturgy

HOUSE BLESSINGS! With the Feast of Theophany and the blessing of Holy Water we now begin the season of blessing homes between now and the start of Great Lent. Let Father Michael when you'd like him to come and bless your house.

PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES AROUND TOWN –Most Holy Trinity parish will be hosting a Men's Holy Hour every Friday morning from 6-7am. There will also be a coffee hour and reflection time afterwards – Men from all parishes are invited to attend for whatever portion of the time they are available. For the Ladies – St. Joseph's will be hosting a Women's Holy Hour on the first Monday of each month at 7pm.

Resurrectional Troparion

(Tone 6)



The an - ge - lic Pow - ers were a - round Your tomb,



and the guards be - came as dead; and Ma - ry



stood at the tomb seek - ing Your spot-less bo - dy;



then You des - poi - led Ha-des with - out be-ing



tried by it, and You met the Vir - gin, O Be-stow-er of



Life. O Lord who rose from the dead, glo - ry to You.

Troparion of Theophany

(Tone 1)



At Your Bap-tism in the Jor - dan, O Lord, the wor-ship of



the Tri - ni - ty was re - vealed: For the Fa-ther's voice bore



wit - ness to You by cal-ling You His Be-lov - ed Son,



and the Spi - rit in the form of a dove



con-firmed the truth of these words. O Christ God who



have ap-peared to us, and en-ligh - tened the world,



glo - ry to You.

Kondakion

(Tone 2)



To - day You have ap-peared, O Lord, to the u - ni-



- verse, and Your light, O Christ our God,



has been im - pressed up - on us who sing to You



with full know - ledge: You came and ap - peared,



O In-ac - ces-si-ble Light.

Prokimenon

Reader: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in you.

All: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in you.

Reader: Exult, you just, in the Lord; praise from the upright is fitting.

All: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in you.

Reader: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us,

All: For we have hoped in you.

Readings for the Week:

Monday:	James 2:14-26	Mark 1:9-15
Tuesday:	James 3:1-10	Luke 3:19-22
Wednesday:	James 3:11-4:4	Luke 4:1-15
Thursday:	James 4:7-5:9	John 10:39-42
Friday:	1 st Peter 1:1-2:10	Luke 20:1-8
Saturday:	1 st Thess 5:14-23	Luke 12:32-40

Jan. 8: 3rd Day of Theophany; Venerable Mother Dominica; our Father George the Chosebite

Jan. 9: 4th Day of Theophany; Holy Martyr Polyeuctus

Jan. 10: 5th Day of Theophany; Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa; Marcian, Priest and Procurator of the Great Church; Dometian, Bishop of Melitene
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Jan. 11: 6th Day of Theophany; Holy Father Theodosios, Founder of Monasteries
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Jan. 12: 7th Day of Theophany; Holy Woman Martyr Tatiana

Jan. 13: 8th Day of Theophany; Holy Martyrs Ermylus and Stratonikos
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Jan. 14: Leave-Taking of Theophany; Commemoration of the martyrs of Sinai and Raitho

Jan. 15: Holy Fathers Paul of Thebes and John the Hut-Dweller
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Word Search

Q	T	M	S	Y	M	T	H	T	E	R	A	Z	A	N	K
Z	T	P	E	H	X	U	I	U	E	T	T	J	S	C	I
T	K	O	Q	B	A	E	A	Z	X	H	U	F	H	T	N
L	F	T	X	O	N	I	M	N	A	S	L	P	A	H	G
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R	C	D	U	W	F	N	H	U	X	V	N	P	R	P	C
P	P	D	X	J	M	V	Z	P	C	O	V	O	X	X	Z

Capernaum

Darkness

Galilee

Gentiles

Heaven

Isaiah

Jesus

John

Jordan

Kingdom

Light

Naphtalim

Nazareth

Prophet

Repent

Shadow

Zabulon

Parish Information:

Rt. Rev. Michael Skrocki, JCD
Pastor

abounamike@aol.com

Knights of Columbus **JFK Council**

1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm.

Odd-numbered months at St. Ignatios

Even-numbered months here at Most Holy Trinity

4th Degree Assembly

2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm

Odd-numbered months at Most Holy Trinity

Even-numbered months here at St. Ignatios

Publicans Prayer Group

Postponed until Further Notice

New Parishioners:

Please register with Fr. Michael.

Mystery of Holy Confession

Please contact Fr. Michael to set up a convenient time.

Mystery of Christian Initiation

Expectant parents should notify Fr. Michael prior to the birth of the child. Adult converts should contact Fr. Michael so arrangements may be made for any necessary instruction and sacraments.

Mystery of Holy Crowning

Those planning to marry should notify the Fr. Michael
at least six months prior to the desired Wedding date.

Mystery of Holy Anointing

Please notify Fr. Michael when you or a family member is in need of anointing.

To report sexual abuse by clergy, parish personnel or volunteers of the Eparchy of Newton,
please call the Victim Assistance Coordinator at 1-800-479-5910.

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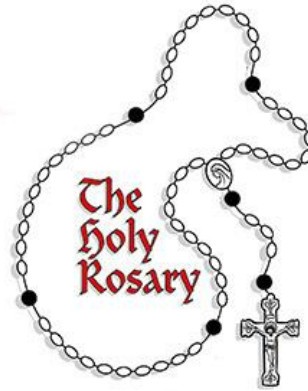
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