

*The Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
Of North America*

*The Diocese of Eagle River and the Northwest
Antiochian Orthodox Church of the Annunciation*

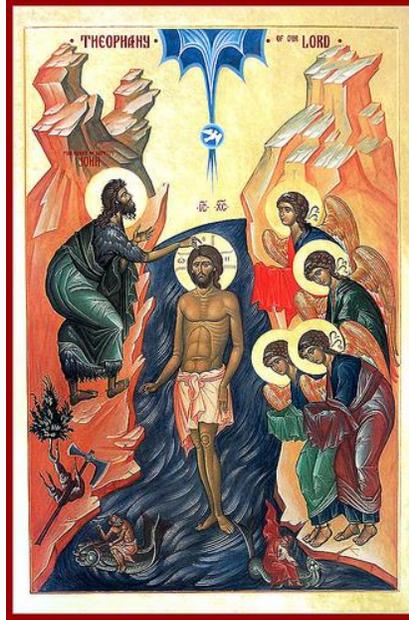
كنيسة البشارة الأرثوذكسية الأنطاكية

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Sunday January 3rd, 2016

Tone 6 / Eothion 9

Sunday before the Theophany of Christ

الأحد الذي قبل الظهور الإلهي.

Sunday Services:

Vespers on Saturday 6:00 PM, Sunday Matins 9:30 AM

10:30 AM Divine Liturgy

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SIX

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

(Troparion of the Paramon of Theophany – Tone 4)

Make ready, O Zebulon, and prepare, O Nephtali, and thou, River Jordan, cease thy flow and receive with joy the Master coming to be baptized. And thou, Adam, rejoice with the first mother, and hide not yourselves as ye did of old in paradise; for having seen thee naked, He appeared to clothe thee with the first robe. Yea, Christ hath appeared desiring to renew the whole creation.

Troparion of the Patron Saint

Kontakion of the Theophany:

Today hath the Lord appeared in the courses of the Jordan, crying to John and saying, Be not dismayed at my Baptism; for I have verily come to save Adam, the first to be created.

طروبارية القيامة (بالحن السادس)

إِنَّ الْقَوَاتِ الْمَلَائِكِيَّةَ ظَهَرُوا عَلَى قَبْرِكَ الْمُوقَّرِ، وَالْحُرَّاسَ صَارُوا كَالْأَمْوَاتِ، وَمَرِيْمَ وَقَفَّتْ عِنْدَ الْقَبْرِ
طَالِبَةً جَسَدَكَ الطَّاهِرَ، فَسَبَّيْتَ الْجَحِيمَ وَلَمْ تُجْرَبْ مِنْهَا، وَصَادَفْتَ الْبَتُولَ مَانِحاً الْحَيَاةَ. فَيَا مَنْ قَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ
الْأَمْوَاتِ، يَا رَبُّ الْمَجْدُ لَكَ.

(لتقدمة الظهور الإلهي – بالحن الرابع):

استعدي يا زبولون، وتهبأي يا نفتاليم، وأنت يا نهر الاردن، فف وامسك عن جريك، وتقبل السيد بفرح، آتياً ليعتمد. وبأدم ابتهج، مع الأم
الأولى، ولا تخفيا ذاتكما، كما اختفيتما، في الفردوس قديماً. لأنه لما، نظركما عريائين، ظهر لكي يلبسكما الحلة الأولى. المسيح ظهر،
مريداً أن يجدد الخليقة كلها.

ترتل طروبارية القديس شفيح الكنيسة

(للبشارة – بالحن الرابع)

اليوم رأس خلاصنا، وإعلان السر الذي منذ الدهور، لأن ابن الله يصير ابن البتول، وجبرائيل بالنعمة يبشّر، فلذلك ونحن معه لنهتف نحو
والدة الإله، إفرحي أيتها الممثلة نعمته الرب معك.

القتناق:

اليوم حضر الرب في مجارى الأردن، هاتفاً نحو يوحنا وقائلاً: لا تجزع من تعميدي، لأنني أتيت لأخلص آدم المجدول أولاً.

The Epistle:

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my God.

The Reading from St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy. (4:5-8)

Timothy, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill 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, and 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.

الرسالة

خلص يا رب شعبك وبارك ميراثك،

إليك يا رب أصرخ إلهي.

فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول الثانية إلى تيموثاوس 4:5-8

يا ولدي تيموثاوس تيقظ في كل شيء واحتمل المشقات واعمل عمل المبشر وأوف خدمتك أما أنا فقد أربق السكيب عليّ ووقت انحلالتي قد
اقترب وقد جاهدت الجهاد الحسن وأتممت شوطي وحفظت الإيمان وإنما يبقى محفوظاً لي إكليل العدل الذي يجزييني به في ذلك اليوم
الرب الديان العادل لا إياي فقط بل جميع الذين يحبون ظهوره أيضاً.

The Gospel

The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (1:1-8)

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 thy face, who shall prepare thy 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 strap 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."

الإنجيل

فصل شريف من بشارة القديس مرقس الإنجيلي البشير (1:1-8)

بدء إنجيل يسوع المسيح ابن الله. كما هو مكتوب في الأنبياء هاءنذا مرسل ملاكي أمام وجهك يهيء طريقك قدامك صوت صارخ في البرية أعدوا طريق الرب واجعلوا سبله قويمه كان يوحنا يُعمد في البرية ويكرز بمعمودية التوبة لغفران الخطايا وكان يخرج إليه جميع أهل بلد اليهودية وأورشليم فيعتمدون جميعهم منه في نهر الأردن معترفين بخطاياهم وكان يوحنا يلبس وبر الإبل وعلى حقويه منطقة من جلد ويأكل جراداً وعسلأ برياً وكان يكرز قائلاً إنه يأتي بعدي من هو أقوى مني وأنا لا أستحق أن أحنى واحل سير حدائه* أنا عمدتكم بالماء وأما هو فيعمدكم بالروح القدس.

The Great Blessing of Water

by Fr. Thomas Hopko

The rite of the Great Blessing of Water is celebrated in the Orthodox Church after the vespertal divine liturgy on the eve of the feast of the Epiphany [Theophany], and after the eucharistic liturgy on the day itself. It begins with the chanting of special hymns with the incensing of the water, and concludes with bible readings, petitions and prayers.

Today the nature of the waters is sanctified, The Jordan bursts forth and turns back the flood of its streams, Seeing the Master wash Himself.

To the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, You came, O Lord, taking the form of a servant, Asking for baptism though you have no sin. The waters saw You and were afraid. The Forerunner began to tremble and cried out, saying: How shall the lampstand illumine the Light? How shall the servant lay hands upon the Master? Sanctify both me and the waters, O Savior, Who takes away the sins of the world.

.....

God has sent His only-begotten Son "not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." (Jn 3:17) He has sent the Lord Jesus Christ not only to save people's souls, but to save their bodies, and not only to save human beings, but to save the entire creation.

You are great, O Lord, and Your works are wondrous, and there are no words capable of hymning Your wonders... For of Your own will You brought all things in to being from nothing, by Your power You uphold the whole of creation, and by Your providence You order the world... Therefore, O Master, be present here now by the descent of the Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water. Give it the blessing of Jordan. Make it a fountain of incorruption, a gift of sanctification, a remission of sins, a protection against disease, a destruction of demons... and may it be for those who will partake of it, to the cleansing of their souls and bodies, to the healing of their passions, to the sanctification of their homes, to every expedient purpose...

Since the Son of God has taken human flesh and has appeared in the world, manifesting Himself in His baptism in the Jordan, all flesh and all matter is sanctified. Everything is made pure and holy in Him. Everything which is corrupted and polluted by the sinful works of men is cleansed and purified by the gracious works of God. All death-dealing powers of the devil which poison the good world of God's creation are destroyed. All things are again made new. Through the "prime element" of water on the feast of the Epiphany the entire creation is shown to be sanctified by God's Word through the same Spirit of God who "in the beginning... was moving over the face of the waters." (Gen 1:2)

...

Come, O ye faithful, Let us praise the greatness of God's dispensation toward us, For He who became Man because of our transgressions And who alone is clean and undefiled, Was for our cleansing Himself cleansed in the Jordan That He might sanctify both me and the waters... Let us then draw water in gladness, O brothers, For upon those that draw in faith The grace of the Spirit is invisibly bestowed by Christ The God and Savior of our souls.

❖ Church Announcements

- ❖ **Feast of Theophany Services:** Tuesday January 5th: 6 PM Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy and the Great Blessing of water.
- ❖ **Christmas Community get together:** Father and Khouryia would like to thank all those who came and honored them by their presence, may our Lord continue to bless our community.
- ❖ **Thank you:** to all those who worked hard to make our upcoming New Year Celebration a success. Happy New Year 2016 to all of you and your loved ones.
- ❖ **Don't ask** only for physical health for the New Year, ask God that your soul may be saved. Make time for God this coming year. Attend church more often, pray at home daily, live in the fear of God and His presence every minute.
- ❖ **Instruction for blessing of homes:**
 1. The home of every Orthodox member of our community should be blessed every year by the priest. Father is going to make sure to contact all members to bless their homes. You may call Father to schedule a time to visit your home at 403/993-7945.
 2. **Meals are not required or expected,** just coffee and visiting with you and your family.
 3. The whole family should be gathered together. Please have an icon of Christ, the Theotokos, or the baptism of Christ, plus a bowl for Holy Water (you can pick up Holy Water from church or Father will bring it with him), a candle, and several icons for the children to carry in procession.
 4. TV and music should be turned off during the prayer.
 5. Try to learn the Troparia in English or Arabic so the whole family can sing it together.
 6. Father will lead first followed by the dad, mom, then and the children in procession throughout the house as he blesses with Holy Water.
- ❖ **Do you know your Orthodox Faith?** Visit www.antiochian.org/discover to learn more about our Church teachings.

- ❖ **Visit this link for education and encouragement:** <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/faithencouraged>, and ancientfaith.com. Also visit: www.patristicnector.org
- ❖ **Orthodox Christian Mission Center:** A true community is one that produces bishops, priests, deacons, and monastics. Do you feel called to go and evangelize other nations? OCMC is planning many short term mission trips (2 weeks). There are mission trips to: Alaska, Albania, Guatemala, Kenya, Indonesia, Mexico, and Uganda. Visit OCMC.org for more information or talk to Father. If a group of young people would like to go to serve in one country, Father will be happy to lead the team.
- ❖ **The Word Magazine:** You can read it online at www.antiochian.org It is full of great information about our sister communities and their activities, as well as educational articles.
- ❖ **Giving back to God:** Everything we have belongs to God. If we come to church every few weeks or months and give only a few dollars, how can our church continue paying its bills? Give regularly and consistently. Give a portion of your income back to God. Look at the suggested guide below.

Guide to Proportionate Giving

Annual Income	10%	8%	6%	4%	3%
\$25,000	2,500	2,000	1,500	1,000	750
\$35,000	3,000	2,800	2,100	1,400	1,050
\$40,000	4,000	3,200	2,400	1,600	1,200
\$50,000	5,000	4,000	3,000	2,000	1,500
\$60,000	6,000	4,800	3,600	2,400	1,800
\$70,000	7,000	5,600	4,200	2,800	2,100
\$80,000	8,000	6,400	4,800	3,200	2,400
\$90,000	9,000	7,200	5,400	3,600	2,700
\$100,000	10,000	8,000	6,000	4,000	3,000
\$120,000	12,000	9,600	7,200	4,800	3,600
\$150,000	15,000	12,000	9,000	6,000	4,500

Stewardship Part 4: Giving **Thanks unto the Lord**

By Archbishop Mark

In the first Chapters of Genesis, we were taught that all that exists was created by God, whether things visible or invisible, and nothing exists without originating from Him. All of Creation has

God as its Source and ultimately belongs to God.

Secondly, we learned from the offerings of Cain and Abel that one's attitude is of the utmost importance. Do we offer our very best—i.e., the first fruits of our labors and the choicest of all with which He has blessed us? Is it an acknowledgement that all that we have comes from Him? What we offer should be done as an expression of gratitude. Our attitude in giving has a direct bearing on whether it is acceptable to God. With this in mind, do we see our offering of our time, talent and treasure as a means of communion with God, or as an obligation or debt?

So far, as we have studied offerings and sacrifices in Genesis, we have seen nothing prescriptive as to what is expected—i.e., what is to be offered or how frequently or how an offering is to be made. We were only told that the Lord accepted Abel's offering of the firstlings of the flock, but had no regard for Cain's offering at the end of days and the Lord was pleased with the burnt offerings of Noah after the flood.

When we get to Genesis 12:1-3, Abram is called by God to leave his people and land of his fathers and go to the place the Lord will show him. It reads as follows: "Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves.'"

Then in verse 7, the Lord appears to Abram and promises to give him the land of Canaan, and Abram builds an Altar to the Lord. Though the passage is silent about what Abram offered, in the Old Covenant books, a sacrifice or offering was always offered upon an Altar. As the Lord had promised to bless Abram, he likely built the Altar to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Again in Genesis 13:14, the Lord promises to bless Abram with numerous descendants and to give to him and his descendants the land in which he had come to dwell. Once again, Abram expresses his gratitude by building an Altar to make a sacrifice. We are not told what he offered, nor was he instructed by the Lord to make an offering. Abram just did it as an expression of gratitude and love and as a means of communion with the Lord. What did Abram have that the Lord did not give him? Nothing! Yet, in his heart Abram desired to show his love for God through his offering.

In Genesis 14, we are told of a battle between various kings in the land, resulting in Abram's nephew Lot being captured and all his goods carried off. Abram, gathering his household, pursued these four kings. Recovering not only Lot, his goods, women and people, but also the goods, women and people of Sodom, Abram went out to meet Melchizedek, King of Salem, who brought out wine and bread—a prefiguring of the Eucharist, which is derived from the word

“thanksgiving.” Melchizedek was also a priest of God Most High who blessed Abram saying: “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!”

In response to God’s blessing of Abram defeating the kings who captured Lot and recovering Lot’s goods, women and people, Abram gave Melchisedek a tenth of everything (Genesis 14: 20b). This would obviously have been a tenth of Abram’s own sheep, goats, oxen, cattle, camels, etc., as you cannot offer to God something that is not your own. The King of Sodom had also received back his goods, women and people through Abram’s assistance, and he asked Abram only for the persons, but offered to let Abram keep the goods for himself. Abram refused the offer because he had promised the Lord that he would not take as much as a thread or a sandal thong or anything belonging to the King of Sodom, lest the king should say, “I have made Abram rich.” This is quite a remarkable passage, as Abram could have seen an opportunity to enrich himself by laying claim to all the spoils of war or by accepting the goods of another as payment for his assistance in defeating a common enemy. Certainly, Abram and his nephew Lot would have suffered some loss in the battle, yet Abram knew God was the source of His many blessings and he partook of the bread and wine in thanksgiving for the Lord’s blessings.

In gratitude and thanksgiving for the safe return of his nephew and his nephew’s household, Abram offered a tenth of his own possessions to Melchizedek, King of Salem and a priest of the Most High God. Abram is depicted as an un-mercenary in this passage as he assists his nephew and the four kings of Canaan in recovering their people and their goods, expecting nothing in return from them.

As we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, we prepare to receive the Eucharist. As mentioned above, the word “Eucharist” is derived from the Greek word for “thanksgiving.” In 1 Corinthians 11:23-24, Saint Paul writes: “For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, ‘This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’”

As the Lord delivered Lot and his household from certain slavery, the Lord has also delivered us from death and slavery to sin. The freedom we acquired through Christ is a freedom we could not achieve, buy or pay for on our own, no matter how rich we may be. It is a gift. Is what we offer back to God a reflection of our thanksgiving for the gift of eternal life? He already owns the world and all it contains. What He does not own is our freedom to love and serve Him, with our time, treasure and talent. That is where we are all called to offer back to God our very best!