



# 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

## Theophany of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ (Baptism of the Lord)

6 / 19 January

**Theophany of our Lord, Troparion, Tone I** —When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan,/ the worship of the Trinity was made manifest;/ for, the voice of the Father bare witness unto Thee,/ calling Thee His beloved Son;/ and the Spirit in the form of a dove/ confirmed the certainty of His word./ O Christ our God, Who hast appeared and enlightened the worlds,// glory be to Thee!

**Kontakion of the Feast, Tone IV** —Thou hast appeared today to the whole world,/ and Thy light, O Lord, hath been signed

upon us/ who hymn Thee with understanding./ Thou hast come, Thou hast appeared,/ the Light unapproachable.

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**Matins Gospel: Mark 1: 9-11**

**Epistle : Titus 2: 11-14, 3: 4-7**

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

### **FOR THE GRACE OF GOD THAT BRINGS SALVATION HAS APPEARED TO ALL MEN**

This in no common degree awes and humbles the soul, that when it had innumerable sins to answer for, it did not receive punishment, but obtained pardon, and infinite favors...But do not think that grace stops at the pardon of former sins - it secures us against them in future, for this also is of grace.

Since if He were never to punish those who still do amiss, this would not be so much grace, as encouragement to evil and wickedness ...And this is of grace, to deliver us from worldly things, and to lead us to heaven. He speaks here of two appearings; for there are two; the first of grace, the second of retribution and justice ...For nothing is more blessed and more desirable than that appearing. Words are not able to represent it, the blessings thereof surpass our understanding ...

'Peculiar: that is, selected from the rest, and having nothing in common with them. 'Zealous of good works.' Do you see that our part is necessary, not merely works, but 'zealous;' we should with all alacrity, with a becoming earnestness, go forward in virtue.

*St. John Chrysostom. Homily V on Titus II. B#57, pp. 535-537.*

## **Gospel St. Matthew 4: 12-17**

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

### **Baptism of the Lord.**

Have you noticed, brothers and sisters, how the Holy Church continually connects our life with events from the life of Christ? During the days of Christmas, while worshipping at the manger of Christ, we received the "spirit of adoption/" On the day of the Lord's Circumcision, we gave our heart to Christ and began our spiritual New Year. And here, for these past days, the Holy Church has been calling us to the shores of the Jordan, and today, on the day of the Baptism of the Lord, she reveals to us a great mystery — the Manifestation of God.

Placed before us is the purpose of our whole life, and this is Communion with God. And we are given Grace, divine help for this kind of life. This help, this Grace comes to us from the One God worshipped in Trinity, Who is revealed to us in today's Gospel reading. And as material proof, as a symbol of this Grace, we are given this Baptismal water, the blessing of which we will now perform. It is tangible. So often, through something tangible the Holy Church unites us with the intangible, with the Grace of God.

Be attentive to what the Holy Church says to us today through the Apostle's reading: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13).

Today we are given not only knowledge, but also renewal. While present at our church service, perhaps we haven't heard everything or understood everything; but at the same time, just as it happens in God's world, when you walk out — it is spring and there is the breath of a kind of mysterious power. Maybe this is incomprehensible to us, intangible. But today, for all of those who were expecting this power of Grace, it must visit us and prepare us for our future way of life which will be bound up with our will.

Therefore, following these days begins the week after Baptism, where it will be said: "Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" (Mt. 4:17). And so begins a whole academy, the great Lenten Triodion (Lenten Triodion — a liturgical book which contains the cycle of services for Great Lent and the four weeks that precede it, dealing especially with the Passion of Jesus Christ), which will reveal to us the laws of life and the laws of our heart which we need so much. It may happen that even this year we will join our fathers and forefathers who are already in eternal life. For this reason, let us strive to fill our hearts with everything the Holy Church now gives us.

*Archbishop Andrei, "The One Needful Thing"*

### **Saints of the week**

#### **6 / 19 January — The Theophany of Our Lord, God, & Saviour Jesus Christ (Baptism of the Lord)**

— When the Lord Jesus had lived for thirty years from His birth in the flesh, He began His teaching and saving work. He marked this very beginning of the beginning by His Baptism in the Jordan. St Cyril of Jerusalem says: 'The beginning of the world—water; the beginning of the Gospel—the Jordan.' At the Baptism of the Lord in the water, that mystery was revealed to the world that was predicted in the Old Testament and fabled in ancient Egypt and India—the mystery of the Holy Trinity of God. The Father revealed Himself to the sense of hearing, the Spirit to the sense of sight and the Son, further beyond these, to the sense of touch. The Father gave His testimony of the Son, the Son was baptised in the waters and the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, hovered over the waters. And when John the Baptist bore witness of Christ and said: 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world' (Jn. 1:29), and when he immersed the Lord in the Jordan and baptised Him, there were thus revealed both the mission of Christ in the world and the path of our salvation. That is to say: Christ takes upon Himself the sin of the whole human race. He dies under it (the immersion) and rises again (the coming up out of the water), and we must die to the old, sinful man and rise again, cleansed, renewed and re-born. Here is the Saviour and here is the way of salvation. The Feast of the Theophany is also called the Illuminating, for in the Jordan there is given to us an illumining, revealing God to us as Trinity, consubstantial and undivided. That is one thing. And the other is that each of us baptised in the water is illumined by the Father of lights, through the merits of the Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

TODAY THE nature of the waters is sanctified. Today the Son of God is baptised in the waters of Jordan, having no need Himself of cleansing, but in order to cleanse the sinful human race from defilement. Now the heavens open and the voice of God the Father is heard: This is My beloved Son. The Holy Spirit descends upon the Saviour of the world, Who stands in the Jordan, thereby confirming that this indeed is He Who is the incarnate Son of God. The Holy Trinity is clearly made manifest and is revealed to mankind. The waters of the Jordan are sanctified, and together with them all the waters of creation, the very nature of water. Water is given power to cleanse not only the body, but also man's whole soul, and to regenerate the whole man unto a new life through Baptism. Through water all of nature is cleansed, for out of water the world was made, and moisture penetrates everywhere, giving life to everything else in nature. Without moisture neither animals nor plants can live; moisture penetrates into rocks, into every place in the world. The waters are sanctified and through them the whole world, in preparation for renewal and regeneration for God's eternal Kingdom which is to come.

Every year on this day the glory of God is revealed, renewing and confirming what was accomplished at Christ's Baptism. Again the heavens are opened; again the Holy Spirit descends. We do not see this with our bodily eyes, but we sense its power. At the rite of blessing, the waters which are thereby sanctified are transformed; they become incorruptible and retain their freshness for many years. Everyone can see this—both believers and unbelievers, both the wise and the ignorant. Whence do the waters acquire this property? It is the action of the Holy Spirit.

Those who with faith drink these waters and anoint themselves with them receive relief and healing from spiritual and bodily infirmities. Homes are sanctified by these waters, the power of demons is expelled, God's blessing is brought down upon all that is sprinkled with these waters. Through the sanctifying of the waters God's blessing is again imparted to the whole world, cleansing it from the sins we have committed and guarding it from the machinations of the devil.

Today the Holy Spirit, descending upon the waters when the Cross of Christ is immersed into them, descends upon all of nature. Only into man He cannot enter without his will. Let us open our hearts and souls to receive Him and with faith cry from the depth of our souls: "Great art Thou, O Lord, and marvellous are Thy works, and there is no word which sufficeth to hymn Thy wonders."

*Man of God, St. John of Shanghai & San Francisco, p.163*

**Also commemorated on this day:** Repose of St. Theophan the Recluse, bishop of Tambov (1894). New Hieromartyr Archpriest Andrew Zimin, his wife Lydia, his mother-in-law Domnica, his two daughters and his servant Maria, of Ussurisk (1919). St. John (1942). Venerable Laurence of Chernigov (1950)

**7 / 20 January — Afterfeast of Theophany - Synaxis for the Holy, Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist, John** — John's greatest role during his life was enacted on the day of the Theophany, and because of this the Church has, from the earliest times, dedicated the day following that feast to his memory. This day is also connected with an event involving the hand of the Forerunner. The Evangelist Luke desired to take John's body from Sebaste, where the great prophet had been beheaded by Herod, to Antioch, his own birthplace. He succeeded, though, in acquiring and taking only one hand, which was kept in Antioch till the tenth century. It was then moved to Constantinople, whence it disappeared during the Turkish occupation. (It is related that each year, on his feast-day, the archbishop would bring it out before the people. Sometimes the hand appeared open, and sometimes clenched. In the first case it indicated that it would be a fertile year, and in the second that it would be a year of famine.) St John is commemorated several times during the year, but his greatest feast is on this day, January 7th. Among the Gospel-figures surrounding the Saviour, the person of John the Baptist holds a very special place, by the manner of his birth in this world and of his earthly life, by his role of baptiser of men to repentance and his baptism of the Messiah, and, lastly, by the tragic manner of his departure from this world. He was of such moral purity that he indeed deserved the name 'angel', as he was named in the Scriptures, rather than being thought of as just a mortal man. John differs from all the other prophets in that he had the joy of showing forth to the world the One Whom he had foretold.

Tropar of St. John the Baptist (Tone 2): The memory of the just is praised, but thou art well pleased, O Forerunner, with the testimony of the Lord. For thou hast verily been shown forth as more honoured than the prophets, since thou wast counted worthy to baptise in the stream Him whom they foretold. Therefore, having mightily contended and suffered for the truth, with joy thou hast preached also to those in hell the good tidings of God made manifest in the flesh, who takes away the sin of the world and grants us great mercy.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Martyr Paphnutius (1938). New Hieromartyr Basil, priest (1939). Martyr John (1940). Martyr John (1942). St. Cedd, bishop of Lastingham (664). St. Brannock (Brynach) of Braunton (6th c.). St. Kentigerna, hermitess of Loch Lomond.

**8 / 21 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — The Holy Martyrs Julian and Vasilissa** - They were both of rich and noble families and, though married, agreed to live in celibacy as brother and sister. They gave their goods to the poor and embraced the monastic state; Julian founding a men's monastery of about 10,000 monks and Vasilissa one for about a thousand nuns. When a violent persecution of Christians was launched under Diocletian, Vasilissa besought God that none of her nuns should suffer torture nor repudiate the Orthodox faith. The Lord hearkened to the petition of His worthy servant and, during the next six months, took all the nuns to Himself, one by one, and finally their abbess Vasilissa. Before her own death, Vasilissa had a vision of her sisters in the other world. They were all bathed in light and were rejoicing like the angels. They appealed to their spiritual mother to join them as quickly as possible. Julian's monastery was burned by fire, and Julian was inhumanly tortured, being killed only after the most horrible sufferings. The Lord inspired and strengthened him in his torments and he endured them with heroism, keeping faith and glorifying the name of Christ. Together with Julian were beheaded the son and wife of the persecutor Marcian, Celsus and Maronilla, who, seeing Julian's heroic and patient sufferings, were themselves converted to Christianity. Also martyred with him were twenty Roman soldiers, seven brothers from that locality, a priest named Antony and a man called Anastasius whom Julian, at the time of his own martyrdom, raised from the dead by his prayers. They all suffered with honour for Christ and became citizens of the Kingdom of heaven in about the year 313.

**Also commemorated on this day:** St. George the Chozebite, abbot (7th c.) and St. Emilian Bishop of Cyzicus (9th c.). Venerable Domnica of Constantinople (395). Venerable Gregory, wonderworker of the Kiev Caves (1093). Venerable Gregory, hermit of the Kiev Caves (14th c.). Hieromartyr Isidore and 72 companions at Yuriev (Dorpat) in Estonia, slain by the Latins in 1472. New Hieromartyr Victor priest (1937). New Hieromartyrs Demetrius, Vladimir priests, Paphnutius, Martyr Michael (1938). New Hieromartyr Basil priest (1939). Martyr John (1940). St. Michael confessor, priest (1941). Venerable Paisius of Uglich (1504). Hieromartyr Carterius of Caesarea in Cappadocia (304). Martyrs Theophilus the Deacon and Helladius in Libya (4th c.). Venerable Elias the Hermit of Egypt (4th c.). Martyr Abo the Perfumer of Baghdad, who suffered at Tbilisi, Georgia (786). Sts. Atticus (425) and Cyrus (714), patriarchs of Constantinople. Venerable Agatho of Egypt, monk (4th c.) Holy Virgin Gudula of Brussels (659). St. Gregory of Ochrid, bishop of Moesia (1012). St. Severinus, apostle of Noricum, Austria (482). St. Theodore of Constantinople (595). St. Erhard, bishop of Regensburg (700). St. Emilian the Confessor, bishop of Cyzicus (9th c.). St. Macarius (Macres) of Vatopedi, Mt. Athos (1431). St. Severin, bishop of Cologne (397). St. Nathalan of Aberdeenshire. St. Pega, hermitess, of Peakirk. St. Wulsin, bishop of Sherborne.

**9 / 22 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — The Holy Martyr Polyeuctus** - The Armenian town of Melitene was soaked in Christian blood, as was all the land of Armenia. The first blood shed for Christ in that town was that of St Polyeuctus, spilled in about the year 259, during the reign of Valerian. There were in the town two friends who were officers: Nearchus and Polyeuctus, the former baptised and the latter unbaptised. When a decree went out from the Emperor that all Christians were to be killed, Nearchus prepared himself for death, though with great sorrow at not having brought his friend Polyeuctus to the true Faith. When Polyeuctus became aware of Nearchus' sorrow, he promised to become a believer. On the following day, he related to Nearchus a dream that he had: the Lord Himself had appeared to him in light, stripped his old clothing from him, clothed him in new and shining raiment and set him upon the saddle of a winged horse. After relating this dream, Polyeuctus went off to the town, tore up the royal decree on the persecution of Christians and smashed many statues of idols. He was tortured and condemned to death. On the way to the place of execution, he caught sight of Nearchus in the crowd and called joyfully to him: 'Save your soul, my dear soul-friend! Remember the vow of love confirmed between us!' And St Nearchus later ended a martyr for Christ in the fire. His feast is on April 22nd.

**St. Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow** - Sainted Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow, in the world Feodor (Theodore), was descended from the illustrious boyar-noble lineage of the Kolychevi, occupying a prominent place in the Boyar дума at the court of the Moscow sovereigns. He was born in the year 1507. His father, Stepan Ivanovich, "a man enlightened and filled with military spirit", attentively prepared his son for government service. Pious Varvara (Barbara), the mother of Feodor, who ended her days in monasticism with the name Varsonophia, implanted in the soul of her son a sincere faith and deep piety. Young Feodor Kolychev applied himself diligently to the Holy Scripture and to the books of the holy fathers, upon which the old Russian enlightenment rested, then transpiring within the Church and in the spirit of the Church. The Moscow Greatprince, Vasili III Ioannovich, the father of Ivan the Terrible, brought young Feodor into the court, but he was not however attracted to court life. Conscious of its vanity and sinfulness, Feodor all the more deeply immersed himself in the reading of books and visiting the churches of God. Life in Moscow repelled the young ascetic. The sincere devotion to him of the young prince Ivan, presaging a great future for him in government service, could not hold in check within the earthly city his searching out of the Heavenly City. On Sunday, 5 June 1537, in church for Divine Liturgy, Feodor felt intensely in his soul the words of the Saviour: "No one is able to serve two masters" (Mt. 6: 24), which determined his ultimate destiny. Praying fervently to the Moscow wonderworkers, and

without bidding farewell to kinsfolk, he secretly in the attire of a common person left Moscow, and for a certain while he hid himself away from the world in the village of Khizna, near Lake Onega, earning his livelihood as a shepherd. His thirst for ascetic deeds led him to the reknown Solovetsk monastery on the White Sea. There he fulfilled quite toilsome obediences: he chopped firewood, dug the ground, and worked in the mill. After a year and an half of testing, the hegumen Aleksei, at the wish of Feodor tonsured him, giving him the monastic name Philip and entrusting him in obedience to the starets-elder Jona Shamina, who conversed with the Monk Alexander Svirsk (+ 1533, Comm. 30 August). Under the guidance of the experienced elders the Monk Philip grew spiritually, and strengthened in fasting and prayer. Hegumen Aleksei sent him in obedience to work at the monastery black-smith forge, where Saint Philip combined the activity of unceasing prayer amidst his working with an heavy hammer. At the beginning of the service in church he always appeared first and was the last to leave. He toiled also in the bakery, where the humble ascetic was comforted with an heavenly Sign. In the monastery afterwards they displayed the "Bakery" image of the Mother of God, through which the heavenly Mediatrix bestowed Her blessing upon the humble baker-monk Philip. With the blessing of the hegumen, Saint Philip spent a certain while in wilderness solitude, attending to himself and to God.

In 1546 at Novgorod the Great, archbishop Theodosii consecrated Philip as hegumen of the Solovetsk monastery. The new-made hegumen strove with all his might to exalt the spiritual significance of the monastery and its founders - the Monk Savvatii and Zosima of Solovetsk (Comm. 27 September, 17 April). He searched out the Hodegetria image of the Mother of God brought to the island by the original first head of Solovetsk, the Monk Savvatii; he located the stone cross which once stood before the cell of the monk. Found also was the Psalter, belonging to the Monk Zosima (+ 1478), the first hegumen of Solovetsk, and his robe, in which from that time hegumens would vest during service on the days of memory of the wonderworker. The monastery was revived spiritually. For regulating life at the monastery, a new ustav (monastic rule) was adopted. Saint Philip built on Solovetsk majestic temples - a refectory church of the Uspenie (Dormition) of the Mother of God, consecrated in the year 1557, and a church of the Transfiguration (Preobrazhenie) of the Lord. The hegumen himself worked as a simple labourer, helping to lay the walls of the Transfiguration church. Beneathe the north portico he dug himself a grave, alongside that of his guide, the starets Jona. Spiritual life in these years blossomed at the monastery: asceticising amidst the brethren amongst the students of Hegumen Philip were the Monks John and Longin of Yarengsk (Comm. 3 July) and Vassian and Jona of Pertominsk (Comm. 12 July).

For his efforts of secret prayer Saint Philip often withdrew for quiet to a desolate wilderness spot, two versts from the monastery, which received afterwards the name the Philippov wilderness.

But the Lord was preparing the saint for other service and other work. At Moscow Ivan the Terrible remembered fondly about the Solovetsk hermit from the time of his childhood years. The tsar hoped to find in Saint Philip a true companion, confessor and counsellor, who through his exalted monastic life would have nothing in common with the sedition of the boyar-nobles. The holiness of the metropolitan, in the opinion of Ivan the Terrible, ought to be of a certain spiritual meekness to quell the treachery and malice, nesting itself within the Boyar soul. The choice of such an arch-hierarch for the Russian Church seemed to him the best possible.

The saint for a long time refused to take upon himself the great burden of primate of the Russian Church. He did not sense any spiritual affinity with Ivan. He attempted to urge the tsar to abolish the Oprichniki [the tsar internal terror shock troops]. Ivan the Terrible attempted to argue its civil necessity. Finally, the dread tsar and the holy metropolitan came to an agreement, that Saint Philip would not meddle in the affairs of the Oprichniki and the running of the government, he would not resign as metropolitan in case, if the tsar be not able to fulfill his wishes, and that he would be a support and counsellor of the tsar, just as former metropolitans were supports for the Moscow sovereigns. On 25 July 1566 occurred the consecration of Saint Philip to the cathedra-seat of the Moscow sainted-hierarchs, whose number he was soon to join.

Ivan the Terrible, one of the greatest and most contradictory figures in Russian history, lived an intensely busy life, he was a talented writer and bibliophile [i.e. lover of books], he involved himself in the compilation of the Chronicles (and himself suddenly sundered the thread of the Moscow chronicle-writing), he delved into the intricacies of the monastic ustav (rule), and more than once thought about monasticism and abdicating the throne. Every aspect of governmental service, all the abrupt measures undertaken by him for a setting to root restructuring of civil and social life, Ivan the Terrible tried to rationalise as a manifestation of Divine Providence, as the acting of God within history. His beloved spiritual heroes were Saint Michael of Chernigov (Comm. 20 September) and Saint Theodore (Feodor) the Black (Comm. 19 September), military men active with a complex contradictory destiny, moving on towards their sacred ends through whatever the hindrances rising up afront them, and fulfilling their duties to the Rodina (Native-land) and Holy Church. The more the darkness thickened around Ivan the Terrible, the more resolutely he demanded of his soul cleansing and redemption. Journeying on pilgrimage to the Kirillo-Belozersk monastery, he declared his wish to the hegumen and the gathered

elders to be made a monk. The haughty autocrat fell on his knees to the hegumen, and that one blessed his intent. All his life from that time, wrote Ivan the Terrible, "it seems to me, an accursed sinner, that halfways I am already black-robed". The Oprichnina was itself conceived of by Ivan the Terrible in the form of a monastic brotherhood: serving God with weapon and military deeds, the Oprichniki were required to dress in monastic garb and go to church service, long and tiring, lasting from 4 to 10 o'clock in the morning. Upon "brethren", not appearing at 4 o'clock in the morning, the tsar imposed a penance. Ivan himself with his sons sought fervently to pray and sing in the church choir. From church they went on to refectory (meal), and while the Oprichniki ate, the tsar stood alongside them. The remaining food the Oprichniki gathered from the table and distributed to the poor at the doorway of their refectory (dining hall). Ivan the Terrible, with tears of repentance and wanting to be an esteemer of the holy ascetics - the teachers of repentance, he wanted to wash and burn away his own sins and those of his companions, cherishing the assurance, that even the terrible cruel actions would rebound for him to the welfare of Russia and the triumph of Orthodoxy. The most clearly spiritual action and monastic sobriety of Ivan the Terrible is revealed in his "Synodikon": shortly before his death by his orders there were compiled full lists of the people murdered by him and his Oprichniki, which were then distributed throughout all the Russian monasteries. All his sins against the nation Ivan took upon himself and besought the holy monks to pray to God for the forgiveness of his tormented soul.

The self-styled monasticism of Ivan the Terrible, a dark most grievous oppression over Russia, tormented Saint Philip, who considered it impossible to mix together the earthly and the heavenly, serving the cross and serving the sword. Even moreso was it, that Saint Philip saw, how much unrepentant malice and envy was concealed beneath the black hoods of the Oprichniki. There were among them outright murderers, hardened in lawless bloodletting, and profiteers in it for the rewards, rooted in sin and transgression. By the sufferance of God history often is worked with the hands of the impious, and Ivan the Terrible as it were wanted to whiten before God his black brotherhood, - the blood, spilled in the name of its thugs and fanatics, cried out to heaven.

Saint Philip decided to oppose Ivan the Terrible. This was connected with a new wave of executions in the years 1567-1568. In the Autumn of 1567, just as the tsar was setting out on a campaign against Livonia, he learned about a boyar conspiracy. The plotters intended to seize the tsar and deliver him over to the Polish king, who already was on the move with an army towards Russian territory. Ivan the Terrible dealt severely with the conspirators and again he shed much blood. It was bitter for Saint Philip, and the conscience of the saint at length compelled him boldly to enter into defense of the executed. The final rift occurred in the Spring of 1568. On the Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross, 2 March 1568, when the tsar with his Oprichniki entered the Uspenie (Dormition) cathedral, as was their custom in monastic garb, Saint Philip refused to bless him, and began openly to denounce the lawless acts committed by the Oprichniki: "Metropolitan Philip did instruct the sovereign of the enmity in Moscow concerning the Oprichnina". The accusations of the Vladyka shattered the harmony of the church service. Ivan the Terrible in a rage said: "Thou wouldst oppose us? We shall see thine firmness! I have been too soft on you", - retorted the tsar, according to eye-witnesses.

The tsar began to show ever greater cruelty in persecuting all those that opposed him. Executions followed one after the other. The fate of the saintly confessor was sealed. But Ivan the Terrible wanted to observe a canonical semblance of propriety. The Boyar дума obediently carried out the decision to have a trial over the Primate of the Russian Church. A cathedral trial-court was set up over Metropolitan Philip in the presence of a thinned-out Boyar дума. False witnesses were found: and to the deep sorrow of the saint, these were monks of the Solovetsk monastery beloved by him, his former students and novices. They accused Saint Philip of a multitude of transgressions, even including sorcery. "I am come upon the earth, just like all my ancestors, - humbly answered the saint, - prepared to suffer for truth". Having refuted all the accusations, the holy sufferer attempted to halt the trial by declaring voluntarily to resign the metropolitan dignity. But his abdication was not accepted. New abuse awaited the martyr. Even after bringing forth a sentence of life imprisonment, they compelled Saint Philip to serve Liturgy in the Uspensk cathedral. This was on 8 November 1568. In the midst of the service the Oprichniki burst into the temple, they publicly read the council sentence of condemnation, and then abused the saint, tearing from him the hierarchical vestments, they dressed him in rags, dragged him out of the church and drove him off on a simple peasant's sledge to the Theophany monastery. For a long while they oppressed the martyr in the cellars of the Moscow monasteries, the feet of the elder they shoved into stocks, they held him in chains, and put an heavy chain upon his neck. Finally, they drove him off to the Tver Otroch monastery. And there a year afterwards, on 23 December 1569, the saint accepted a martyr's death at the hands of Maliuta Skuratov. Only three days before this the holy elder foresaw the finish of his earthly efforts and communed the Holy Mysteries. His relics were committed to earth initially there at the monastery, beyond the church altar. Later on they were transferred to the Solovetsk monastery (11 August 1591) and from there - to Moscow (3 July 1652).

**St. Adrian of Canterbury (710)** - When Archbishop Deusdedit of Canterbury died in the year 664 the Pope decided that the best man to succeed him was an African named Adrian who was already abbot of a monastery in Italy, near Naples. But Adrian did not want this high office. Bede tells us that when the Pope summoned Adrian and instructed him to go to Canterbury as archbishop, the abbot excused himself, saying that he was not fitted for such a great dignity, but that he would find someone else more suited for the task.' The first substitute was too ill to become archbishop. Again the pope urged the post on Adrian. Again Adrian begged permission to find someone else. At that time a monk from Tarsus named Theodore was in Rome. Adrian nominated Theodore to the Pope. Theodore was willing to become Archbishop of Canterbury, but only if Adrian agreed to come to England and help him. So on 26 March 668 Theodore was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury, and two months later he and Adrian set sail for England. They were a perfect team. Theodore appointed Adrian abbot of the monastery of St Peter and St Paul at Canterbury. Here the saint's learning and great virtues were employed to their best. Scholars came to the monastery from far away and Adrian taught there for thirty-nine years. His pupils could often speak Latin and Greek as well as they could speak their own languages, if not better. He knew an astonishing amount - teaching poetry, astronomy and maths (to calculate the church's calendar) as well as the Bible. Into the minds of his students Adrian 'poured the waters of wholesome knowledge day by day,' Bede records. The saint could convey happiness. 'Never,' asserts Bede, 'had there been such happy times as these since the English settled in Britain.' Adrian died in 710.

**Also commemorated on this day:** St. Jonah (Peter in schema), founder of Holy Trinity Monastery in Kiev (1902). New Hieromartyr Paul priest (1943). Prophet Shemaiah (Samaia, Semeias) (10th c. B.C.). St. Peter, bishop of Sebaste in Armenia (395), and brother of St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory of Nyssa. Venerable Eustratius the Wonderworker of Tarsus (821). St. Berhtwald Archbishop of Canterbury (731). St. Fillan (Foelan) of Strathfillan (VIII). New Martyr Parthena of Edessa in Macedonia (1375). Translation of the relics of St. Judoc, hermit of Ponthieu. St. Fillan, abbot of Strathfillan.

**10 / 23 January — Afterfeast of Theophany - Fast Day — St Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa** - The brother of St Basil the Great, he was at first a married priest, but when his wife, the blessed Theosevia, died, he was chosen and consecrated as Bishop of Nyssa. He was distinguished by great secular learning and spiritual experience, and was a great preacher, a translator of the Scriptures and a theologian. As a result of his opposition to the Arians, they did everything in their power to crush him, regarding him as their chief enemy. They were so successful in this that, in the reign of the Emperor Valens, their confederate, they managed to depose him from his episcopal seat and drive him into exile. This was in 376. The holy Father spent several years in patient exile, enduring poverty and humiliation. In 381, he took part in the Second Ecumenical Council, and it is thought that he formulated the final part of the Creed concerning the Holy Spirit. Finally, finishing his life at a great age in about the year 395, he entered into the Kingdom of God and has been commemorated through all succeeding ages as a great light in the Church.

**St. Theophan the Recluse, Bishop of Tambov** - This modern-day Church Father was born in Chernavsk in central Russia. The son of a priest, he entered seminary at a young age, then completed the four-year course in theology at the Academy of Kiev. Though he distinguished himself as a student, his heart turned increasingly toward the monastic life, and he was tonsured a monk and ordained a priest upon completion of his studies. During his time at the Academy he often visited the Lavra of the Caves, and there became a spiritual child of Father Parthenius (March 25).

His desire for monastic life was not fulfilled immediately, for the Church felt need of his intellectual gifts. He served as a professor at the Theological Academy in St Petersburg, then worked for seven years in the Russian Mission to the Near East, mostly in Palestine. During this time he gained a perfect mastery of Greek and studied the works of the Church Fathers in the original languages. Returning to Russia, he was soon consecrated a bishop; but after seven years of episcopal service, he at last achieved his heart's desire, resigning as bishop and retiring to a small monastery at Yvschen, where he spent the rest of his days.

After taking full part in the liturgical and communal life of the monastery for several years, he took up the life of a recluse in 1872. He lived in two small rooms, subsisting almost entirely on bread and tea, visited only by his confessor and the abbot of the monastery. He celebrated the Divine Liturgy every day in his cell. All of his time not taken up by inner prayer was devoted to translating the works of the Fathers into Russian and, increasingly, to writings of his own. Most importantly, he prepared a Russian-language edition of the Philokalia which had a deep impact upon Russian spiritual life.

Though he received no visitors, St Theophan entered into correspondence with many earnest Christians who sought his counsel, and so in time became the spiritual father of many believers throughout Russia. He reposed in peace in 1894.



In addition to the Philokalia, St Theophan produced (among other works): a Spiritual Psalter of selections from St Ephraim the Syrian; The Path to Salvation, an exposition of Orthodox Spirituality written in clear, plain language for those living in the world; collections of his letters to spiritual children; and Unseen Warfare, a treatise on prayer and the ascetical life. This last has an unusual history. In its original form it was written by Lorenzo Scupoli, an Italian Roman Catholic priest. St Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain, recognizing the book's merit, produced a Greek edition in which he corrected various deviations from Orthodoxy in the original. St Theophan in turn revised the Greek edition extensively, removing some material and adding passages of his own; so that the Italian, Greek and Russian versions are in fact three substantially different books. Many of St Theophan's works (including Unseen Warfare) are available in good English translations. They are almost unique in presenting the undiluted hesychastic spirituality of the Orthodox Church in plain, straightforward language accessible to most people.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Venerable Dometian, bishop of Melitene (601). Venerable Marcian, presbyter of Constantinople (471). Venerable Paul, abbot of Obnora (Vologda) (1429), and his disciple St. Macarius, abbot of Pisma Monastery. Venerable Antipas of Valaam (1882). New Hieromartyr Zenobius priest (1920). New Hieromartyr Peter priest (1930). New Hieromartyr Anatolius metropolitan of Odessa (1938). Martyr Arsenia abbess (1939). Venerable Macarius of Pisemsk and Kostroma (14c). Blessed Theosebia the Deaconess (385), sister of St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory of Nyssa. Venerable Ammon of Nitria, monk (5th c.). Venerable Antipas of Galapodeshti, Romania and Valaam Monastery (1882). Martyred Elder Ephraim and six incorrupt monks of Obnora (1538).

**11 / 24 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — Our Holy Father Theodosius the Great** - The first founder and organiser of cenobitic monasticism, he was born of devout parents in Cappadocia, in the village of Mogarisses. As a young man, he visited Simeon Stylites, who blessed him and predicted for him great spiritual glory. Theodosius set out in search of a place in which to found a monastery. He took with him a censer containing cold charcoal and incense. At the place where the charcoal suddenly ignited of itself, he stopped, settled down and began to lead a life of asceticism. There very quickly gathered round him many monks of different nationalities and with different languages. He therefore built a church for each language-group, so that services were conducted and God praised at the same moment in Greek, Armenian, Georgian and so forth. But on a day when they were to receive Communion, all the brethren gathered in the great church, where the service was conducted in Greek. The refectory was common to all; they held all possessions in common, laboured in common, endured in common and often hungered in common. Theodosius was a sublime example to all the monks; an example in work, in prayer, in fasting, in vigils and in all the Christian virtues. And God endowed him with the gifts of wonder-working, to heal the sick, to be present and help from a distance, to tame wild beasts, to predict the future and to increase bread and wheat. Prayer was on his lips day and night. He entered peacefully into rest in the Lord in the year 529, at the age of 105.

**Venerable Michael of Klopsk Monastery, fool-for-Christ** - The Monk Michael of Klopsk was descended of boyar (noble) lineage, and he was a kinsman of Great Prince Dimitrii Donskoi (1363-1389). He took upon himself the exploit of Fool-for-Christ: he left Moscow and in rags he arrived at the Klopsk monastery, near Novgorod. No one knew, how he got into the locked cell of the priest-monk Makarii, who then was making a censuring at the 9th Ode of the Canon and was going round the cell censuring. But there sat a man in monastic garb and beneath a candle he wrote copying from the Acts of the holy Apostles. After the finish of matins the hegumen with brethren came and started to ask the stranger: who is he and of what name? But he answered only by a repeating of the questions and did not reveal his origin. In church the saint sang in the choir and read the Epistle, and at meals he read the Saint-Lives. All who listened were moved by the beauty and spirituality of his reading. On the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, the Klopsk monastery was visited by prince Konstantin Dimitrievich (son of Great Prince Dimitrii Donskoi). After Communion he together with the princess was at the refectory, during the time of which the unknown stranger read from the Book of Job. Hearing the reading, the prince approached the reader and, having looked him over, he bowed down to him, calling him by name his kinsman Mikhail Maksimovich. The fool remarked: "The One Only Creator knoweth of me, who I be", but confirmed that his name was Michael. The Monk Michael soon set example for the brethren in all the monastic efforts. He lived at the Klopsk monastery for 44 years, exhausting his body in work, vigils and various deprivations, and he received from the Lord the gift of perspicacity. He denounced the vices of people, not fearing the powerful of this world. He predicted the birth on 22 January 1440 of Great Prince Ivan III (1462-1505), and the taking of Novgorod by him. He denounced prince Dimitrii Shemyaka for blinding his brother the Great Prince Vasilii the Dark (1425-1462).

On a sandy spot the Monk Michael summoned forth a spring of water, having written upon the earth: "I shalt take up the cup of salvation (Ps. 115 [116]: 13), let shew forth on this spot the well-spring". And during a time of famine, the supplies of bread at the monastery granary did not diminish, though they distributed grain abundantly to the hungry. Having directed beforehand the place of his burial, the monk died on 11 January (+ c. 1453-1456).



**Also commemorated on this day:** New Hieromartyrs Nicholas, Theodore and Vladimir priests (1919). St. Vladimir confessor, priest (1932). Venerable Theodosius of Antioch (412). "Chernigov-Eletskaia" Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos (1060). Sts. Theodore and Agapius of Apamea in Syria. Martyr Mairus. St. Agapius of Apamea in Syria. Hieromartyr Hyginus, pope of Rome (142).

**12 / 25 January — Afterfeast of Theophany — The Holy Martyr Tatiana of Rome** - She was a Christian, of an eminent family, a deaconess in the Church. After the death of the Emperor Heliogabalus, the Emperor Alexander came to the throne in Rome. His mother, Julia Mamaea, was a Christian, but the Emperor himself was unsure and hesitant about his faith; an uncertainty that was clearly expressed by his keeping statues of both Christ and Apollo, of both Abraham and Orpheus, in his palace. His chief advisors took it into their own hands to persecute the Christians without his orders. When the virgin Tatiana was led to martyrdom, she prayed for her executioners. And lo, their eyes were opened and they saw four angels around the martyr. Seeing this, eight of them were converted to Christ, for which they were tortured and killed. St Tatiana's martyrdom was long-drawn-out: she was flogged, parts of her flesh were cut off, she was sawn with an iron saw, and then, all disfigured and bleeding, was flung that evening into prison to be brought out on the following day for further torture. But God sent His angel to the prison, to give her courage and heal her wounds. Tatiana, therefore, appeared before her torturers each morning in perfect health. She was thrown to a lion, but the lion became tame before her and did her no harm. Her hair was shorn, from an idea that occurred to their godless minds that some sorcery might be hidden in it, some magical strength. Finally she was led out, together with her father, and the two were beheaded. In such manner this heroic maiden finished her earthly life in about the year 225, and was crowned with an immortal crown of glory. She had the weak body of a woman, but a manly and valiant spirit.

**The Holy Martyr Peter Apselemus** - A native of Eleutheropolis in Palestine, he suffered as a youth for the Christian faith in the year 311, under the Emperor Maximian. After terrible tortures, he was condemned to death. Hearing the sentence pronounced, he cried out with great joy: 'My one desire is to die for my God!' He was crucified, like his Lord, and gave up his spirit on the cross.

**St. Sava, first archbishop of Serbia** - in the world Rostislav (Rastko), was a son of the Serbian autocrat Stefan Nemani and Anna, daughter of the Greek emperor Romanos. From his early years he fervently attended church services and fostered an especial love for icons. At seventeen years of age, having met a Russian monk from Holy Mount Athos, Rostislav secretly left his father's house and set off to the Russian Panteleimonov monastery. (By Divine Providence in the year of the saint's birth - 1169 - the ancient monastery of the great-martyr and healer Panteleimon was restored for eternal keeping to Russian monks.) Knowing that his son was on Athos, his father mobilised his retainers headed by a faithful voevoda and wrote to the governor of the district which included Athos, that if his son were not returned to him, he would go to war against the Greeks. Having arrived at the monastery, the voevoda / military-chief was ordered not to take his eyes off Rostislav. During the time of evening Divine-services, when the soldiers were fallen asleep under the influence of wine, Rostislav took monastic vows (the year 1186) and sent to his parents his worldly clothes, his hair and a letter. The monk Sava sought to persuade his powerful parents to accept monasticism. The monk's father (the commemoration of the Monk Stefan, in monasticism Simeon, Tsar of Serbia, is situated under 13 February) together with his son pursued asceticism at the Batopedeia monastery. On Athos they established the Serbian Khilendaria monastery, and this monastery received its name by imperial stauropegia / grant. At Khilendaria monastery, the monk Sava was ordained to the diaconate and then presbyter. For his monastic deeds on Mount Athos, the monk was deemed worthy of the dignity of archimandrite at Soluneia / Thessalonika. At Nicaea in the year 1219 on the feast of the Dormition / Uspeenie of the Most Holy Mother of God, the OEcumenical Patriarch Germanos ordained archimandrite Sava to the dignity of Archbishop of All Serbia. For this the monk petitioned the Greek emperor for permission that the Archbishop be consecrated by a Sobor of bishops in Serbia - a very important consideration in this time of frequent wars between eastern and western powers. Having returned to the Holy Mountain from Nicaea, the saint made the rounds of all the monasteries for the last time; he made prostration in all the churches and, calling to mind the blessed lives of the wilderness fathers, he made his farewells with the ascetics in deep remorse, "leaving from the Holy Mountain, as though from some Divine paradise". Dejected by his grievous separation from the Holy Mountain, the saint went along the path from Athos just barely moving. Only the words of the Most Holy Mother of God that had come to the saint in a dream - "having My Patronage to the King of all, My Son and God, about what dost thou still sorrow?" - these words roused him from despondency, changing sorrow into joy. In memory of this appearance, the saint commissioned at Soluneia large icons of the Saviour and of the Mother of God, and put them in the Church of the Philokalia.

In Serbia, the activity of the Hierarch in organising the work of his native Church was accompanied by numerous signs and miracles. During the time of Liturgy and the all-night vigil, when the saint came to cense over the grave of his father the monk Simeon, the holy relics exuded fragrant myrrh.

Being in charge of negotiations with the Hungarian king Vladislav, who had declared war on Serbia, the glorious sainted bishop with heavenly signs not only brought about the desired peace for his country, he also brought the Hungarian monarch to Orthodoxy. Having secured a beginning for the historical existence of the autonomous Serbian Church, Saint Sava contributed also to the strengthening of the Serbian state. In order to insure the independence of the Serbian state, the holy archbishop Sava crowned his powerful brother Stefan as tsar. Upon the death of Stefan - his eldest son Radislav having been crowned tsar, Saint Sava set off to the Holy Land "with tears to worship at the holy grave of Christ and fearsome Golgotha". Having returned to his native land, the saint gave his blessing and crowned Vladislav as tsar; to further strengthen the Serbian throne, he betrothed him with the daughter of the Bulgarian prince Asan. The holy hierarch made the rounds of all the Serbian land, he reformed monastic rules on the model of the athonites and palestinians, and he established and consecrated many churches, strengthening the Orthodox in their faith. Having finished his work in his native land, the saint appointed as his successor the priestmonk Arsenii, ordaining him bishop and giving his blessing to all. He then set off on a journey of no return, wanting "to end his days as a wanderer in a foreign land". He passed through all of Palestine, through Syria and Persia, Babylon, Egypt and Anatolia, everywhere visiting the holy places, conversing with great ascetics, and gathering up the priestly remains of saints. The saint finished his wanderings at Trnovo in Bulgaria at the home of his kinsman Tsar Asan, where with spiritual joy he offered up his soul to the Lord (+ 1237). At the time of transfer of the holy relics of Sainted Sava to Serbia in 1237 the healings were so numerous, that the Bulgarians began to complain about Asan, "that he had given up such a treasure". In the saint's own native country, his venerable relics were placed in the Church of Mileshevo, bestowing healing on all who approach with faith. The inhabitants of Trnovo continued to receive healing from the remnants of the grave of the saint, which pious Asan ordered to be gathered together and placed in a newly built sarcophagus.

The legacy of Sainted Sava lives on in the orthodox Church traditions of the Slavic nations. With his legacy is linked the first introduction of the Jerusalem Ustav to Slavic Monastic Rules: the Serbian Khilendaria monastery on Athos lives by the Typikon of Saint Sava to the present time. The redactions of the book "The Rudder" belonging to the Sainted Bishop - with the commentaries of Alexis Aristines, are the most widely disseminated in the Russian Church. In the year 1270 the first copy of "The Rudder" of Saint Sava was sent from Bulgaria to the metropolitan of Kiev Kirill. From this was copied one of the most ancient of the Russian "Rudders" - the Ryazansk "Rudder" of 1284. It in its turn was the source for a printed "Rudder" - published in the year 1653 and invariably since that time republished in the Russian Church. Such was the legacy of Sainted Sava to the canonical treasury of Orthodoxy.

**The Icon of the Mother of God, "She who gives suck"** - This is the name given to the icon of the Mother of God that St Sava of Serbia brought from the monastery of St Sava the Sanctified near Jerusalem and placed in his hermitage at Karyes on the Holy Mountain. In that way a prophecy, made 800 years previously by St Sava the Sanctified, was fulfilled—that one day a Serbian priest called Sava would come and would be given the icon and his staff. When Sava of Serbia visited the community of St Sava the Sanctified, the monks called to mind the prophecy of their founder and gave the icon and the staff to Sava. The icon was placed at the right-hand side of the Royal Doors in the hermitage, and the staff in a cell which received the name 'Pateritsa'(the father's rod), also situated at Karyes.

**Also commemorated on this day:** Venerable Martinian of White Lake, abbot (1483), and Galacteon, his disciple (1506). Martyr Mertius of Mauretania (284-305). Martyr Peter Apselamus of Eleutheropolis in Palestine (309). Venerable Eupraxia of Tabenna in Egypt (393). Icons of the Most Holy Theotokos "Popskaya". Virgin Martyr Euthasia. Venerable Benedict Bishop, abbot of Wearmouth (689-690). St. Theodora of Alexandria, instructress of nuns (5th c.). Martyr Philotheus of Antioch (ca. 305).

### ‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

**Monday** - Hebrews 11:17-23, 27-31; Mark 9:42-10:1; Acts 19:1-8 (Forerunner); John 1:29-34 (Forerunner)

**Tuesday** - Hebrews 12:25-26; 13:22-25; Mark 10:2-12

**Wednesday** - Luke 6:17-23 (Matins Gospel); James 1:1-18; Mark 10:11-16; Hebrews 13:17-21 (Hieromartyr Philip); John 10:9-16 (Hieromartyr Philip)

**Thursday** - John 10:1-9 (Matins Gospel); James 1:19-27; Mark 10:17-27; Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (St. Theophan); John 10:9-16 (St. Theophan)

**Friday** - Luke 6:17-23 (Matins Gospel); James 2:1-13; Mark 10:23-32; 2 Corinthians 4:6-15 (Venerable); Matthew 11:27-30 (Venerable)

**Saturday** - Colossians 1:3-6; Luke 16:10-15 Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (St. Sava); John 10:9-16 (St. Sava);  
Ephesians 6:10-17 (Saturday After); Matthew 4:1-11 (Saturday After)

### **CONTEMPLATION**

To contemplate the event of the Baptism of the Lord:

1. His humble coming to the Jordan river unknown to all, except John;
2. His immersion in the water; the hovering of the Dove over Him; and the Voice from on High.

### **HOMILY**

**-About the mystery of [Heavenly] Divine Trinity-**

**"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit and the water and the blood: and these three are together"(I John 5: 7-8).**

When we read Holy Scripture, we should be alert to keep an eye on every word. To the rapid reader, for example, this distinction which the Evangelist draws between the Heavenly Trinity and the earthly trinity will not become apparent. Concerning the Heavenly Trinity, he says, **"And these three are one;"** and concerning the earthly trinity, he says, **"And these three are together."** There is an enormous difference between **"being one"** and **"being together."** The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are One, whereas the spirit, water and blood are only together and are not one. Even enemies could be together as one, but are not one. All the people on earth are together, but they are not one. Water and blood constitute the body and the spirit is the spirit. **"For the flesh has desires against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh" (Galatians 5:17).** However, they are not one, but they are still together. When man dies the union is broken apart and ceases to exist. Blood and water go to one side and the spirit goes to another side. Whereas the [Heavenly] Divine Trinity in the heavens not only are they together but they are also one.

There is also another trinity in the inner heaven of man which should be, not only a unity, but a oneness so that man could be blessed in this world and in the other world. That is the union of the mind, heart and will. As long as these three are only in togetherness, man will be at war with himself and with the Heavenly Trinity. However, when these three become one, so that neither one rules and that neither one is enslaved, then man becomes filled with **"the peace of God that surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4:7)**, man's every word, every explanation, every fear and every sorrow. Then the small heaven in man begins to resemble that great heaven of God, and the **"image and likeness of God"** becomes apparent in man.

O Triune God, help us to resemble, at least, those who resemble You.

**To You be glory and thanks always. Amen.**