



OUR LADY OF THE CEDARS CHURCH

A MELKITE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

140 MITCHELL STREET, MANCHESTER, NH 03103

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REV. THOMAS P. STEINMETZ, Pastor

RT. REV. ANDRE ST. GERMAIN (retired)

REV. ROGER BOUCHER - Weekend Ministry

REV. THEOPHAN LEONARCZYK, Eparchial Chancellor

"Enter the Church and repent ... for here is the physician, not the judge. Here one is not investigated, one receives remission of sins." (St. John Chrysostom)

January 6, 2019

GREAT AND HOLY THEOPHANY

Parish Advisory & Finance Council:

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MARTHA DAGHER, TIM ERMATINGER, KEN KOMISAREK, MARYLOU LAZOS, JESSICA LOMANNO,
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Sunday School Coordinator: MARTHA DAGHER

N.A.M.Y. Advisor: ROBIN ANDERSON

HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION: Before or after any service, or by appointment;

HOLY MYSTERY OF CHRISTIAN ILLUMINATION: Please contact the clergy in advance to arrange for the required baptismal instructions;

HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING: At least six months prior to the proposed wedding, please contact the clergy to arrange for the required interview and instructions;

HOLY MYSTERY OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Please contact the pastor at any time when this sacrament is needed;

HOLY COMMUNION FOR THE SICK: Anyone too infirm to attend our services may receive Communion in the home. Please advise the clergy whenever this sacrament is needed.

THE ORDER OF TODAY'S LITURGY

The Troparion of Theophany (1st Tone-three times)

At Your baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was revealed, for the Father's voice bore witness to You by calling You His beloved Son, and the Spirit in the form of a dove, confirmed the truth of these words. O Christ God who has appeared to us and enlightened the world, glory to You!

Hypacoi of the Feast (2nd Tone)

When You enlightened all things at the time of Your manifestation, the sea of unbelief ebbed away and the Jordan River reversed its course, flowing uphill and carrying us to heaven. Through the prayers of Your Mother, O Christ God, keep us in the loftiness of Your divine commands and save us.

The Kontakon of Theophany (4th Tone)

Today You have appeared, O Lord, to the universe, and Your light, O Christ our God, has been impressed upon us who sing to You with full knowledge. You came and appeared, O Inaccessible light!

THE PROKIMENON:

BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!

GOD IS THE LORD, AND HE HAS APPEARED TO US!

Sing to the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endured forever!

Today's Readings: Titus 2:11-14 & 3:4-7 and Matthew 3:13-17

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday (January 5) 4:30 PM:

For the repose of George Abood (47th), Susan Attalla (46th), Zahia Elias (34th), Leo Elias (12th), Sam Elias (68th), Cassie Gallagher (37th), Ernest Baroody (45th), Mary Noufel (37th), and Mariam Haddad (37th)

Sunday, (January 6) 10:30 AM

For the repose of Abraham Dagher (18th Anniversary) by his parents, Jamil and Rosemonde Dagher, and Family

Next Saturday, (January 12) 4:30 PM:

For the repose of John Fawaz (64th), Anna Kessop (58th), Mary Abood (10th), Frederick Alexander (27th), Selma Michael (1th), Chester Doolittle (13th), Josephine Saide (19th), Donna Hanneman (27th), and George Saide (30th)

Next Sunday (January 13) 10:30 AM:

For the repose of Alice Auclair (40 Day Memorial)



THE FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

(THEOPHANY)

Theophany (a Greek word meaning "Manifestation of God") is one of the great feasts of the liturgical year. It is a celebration not only of God's manifestation as Holy Trinity, but also of His mercy and compassion expressed in the Person of Jesus who became man for our sake in order to open the gates of salvation to all people. The Church commemorates this event with the Great and Solemn Blessing of Water.



"The true light has appeared and it gives illumination to all. Christ is baptized with us, He who is the purest of all, supernatural; He sanctifies the water, and this becomes a purification for our souls." (from the Office of Lauds).

It is traditional for the parish priest to visit the homes of his parishioners during the coming weeks, and to bless the homes with this sacred water. If you would like Father Tom to bless your home, please notify him by leaving a message in the collection basket, or by leaving a phone message at the rectory.



Newborn in Christ!

The Servant of God, Johannes Paul Isaac Theophan Nashland will receive the Holy Mysteries of Illumination – Baptism, Chrismation, and Holy Communion – on Sunday morning. Johannes is the daughter of Theodore and Melissa Nashland. Johannes' sister, Catherine Marie Josephine Nashland, will also receive Holy Chrismation and Holy Communion. Congratulations to Johannes and Catherine and to their family! May God grant them many years in health and happiness.

BISHOP'S APPEAL: TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

Donations for the Bishop's Appeal 2018 will be credited towards our parish goal until the end of January, 2019. After that time, donations will be credited to Appeal 2019. Currently only about 20 families from our parish have donated and we are only about halfway towards our parish goal of \$11,000. If you have not yet made a donation, please do so today and help us reach our goal. And remember: 50% of the money raised beyond our goal is returned to our own parish!

Attendance Last Sat. 4:30 PM: 30 Sun. 10:30 AM: 109

Last Weekend's Collection: \$785.⁷⁵ Mortgage: \$348.⁷⁵

The average Sunday envelope donation: \$28.⁴⁸

The balance remaining on our mortgage is: \$67,060.²⁵

SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

Wed. Jan. 8	7:00 PM	Divine Liturgy: For the deceased members of the parish
Sat., Jan. 12	4:30 PM	Divine Liturgy: The Sunday after Theophany
Sun., Jan. 13	9:45 AM	Sunday Orthros
Sun., Jan 13	10:30 AM	Divine Liturgy: The Sunday after Theophany

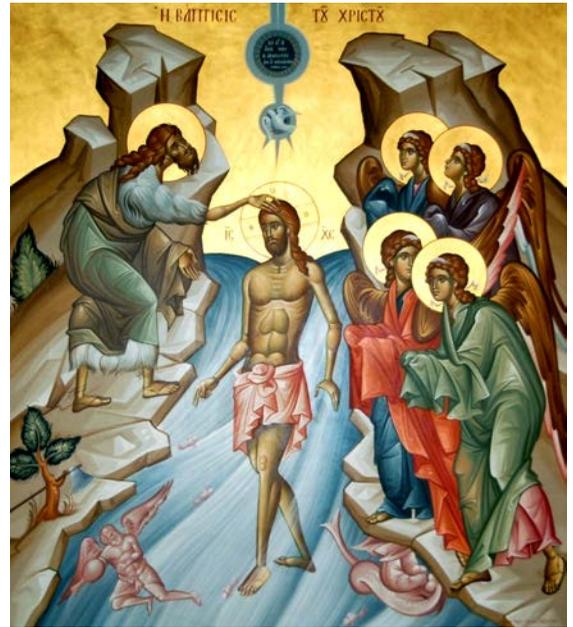
THE ICON OF THEOPHANY

The paradox that Jesus Christ might be revealed as God through an act of submittal to a mere man, John, is shown well in the icon. Though John is the one who is baptizing, it is John who is shown bent over in reverence to Christ. John is shown with his face turned toward heaven and beholding the miracle of the Theophany. Despite being the baptizer, he is not central to the scene.

Near to John is a tree with an axe laid at the root, recalling John's own preaching to those who came to him: *"And now also the ax is laid to the root of the trees: therefore every tree which brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."* (Matt 3:10). Present in the icon, this shows that the Baptizer must now "decrease so Christ may increase." On the riverbank opposite to John the Baptist, angels wait invisibly to receive the newly baptized Christ and clothe Him. And so, on the left is the forerunner of Christ, John, with his sermon of repentance represented by the tree and axe; on the right, the angels wait with reverence to accept the newly revealed Son of God, Who stands in the middle at the moment of revelation itself.

Jesus Christ, despite being the one submerged in the Jordan, is shown as though standing up. His body is depicted as strong and beautiful, as it is understood classically, and in older icons He is naked. Christ appears almost as wide as the river Jordan itself; indeed: it is as though it is Jesus Christ, rather than the river, that cuts a swathe through the rocky wilderness on either side.

The Icon of the Theophany reveals the manifestation of the Holy Trinity: The Father above, the Son in the Jordan and Spirit descending in the form of a dove. The icon also answers the question of John the Baptist: *I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?* The answer is in what Jesus does with His hands. While in Western art Jesus is shown as submitting to John's authority, in Byzantine icons Christ's hands are not shown in prayer, but in a sign of blessing. Rather than the waters of Jordan cleansing Christ, it is Christ Who cleans the waters. This is why in the bottom of most Theophany Icons, little creatures appear to be fleeing from the feet of Christ. This is a reflection of the words of the Psalmist regarding the Messiah (Christ): *"the sea saw and fled, the Jordan turned back"* (Psalm 114:3). This is the depth and profundity of the Baptism of Christ; the feast of lights which revealed the Holy Trinity, and cleansed the waters of baptism so that we, like the fishes shown in the icon, may swim in pure waters.



The Fathers Speak..... *On the Feast of Theophany*

Christ is illumined, let us shine forth with Him. Christ is baptized, let us descend with Him that we may also ascend with Him. Jesus is baptized; but we must attentively consider not only this but also some other points. Who is He, and by whom is He baptized, and at what time? He the All-pure; and He is baptized by John; and the time is the beginning of His miracles. What are we to learn and to be taught by this? To purify ourselves first; to be lowly minded; and to preach only in maturity both of spiritual and bodily stature. -*St. Gregory Nazianzen, Oration on the Holy Lights.*

He as God of all gave strength to me, weak as a mortal, as He said: 'Hold out your hand and I shall give you strength.' For how would I have had the power unless the very thing happened which He said would take place? How would I have had the ability to baptize the abyss, since I am mortal, Had I not first received and claimed power from on high? For I realize now that He is standing by me and that I am greater than I was formerly. I am something different, I am changed, glorified, as I behold and baptize The Unapproachable Light. -*St Romanos the Melodist - On the Baptism of Christ*

Why is not that day, on which the Lord was born, considered Theophany -- but rather this day on which He was baptized? This present day it is, on which He was baptized and sanctified the nature of water. Because on this day all, having obtained the waters, do carry it home and keep it all year, since today the waters are sanctified; and an obvious phenomenon occurs: these waters in their essence do not spoil with the passage of time, but obtained today, for one whole year and often for two or three years, they remain unharmed and fresh, and afterwards for a long time do not stop being water, just as that obtained from the fountains.

Why then is this day called Theophany? Because Christ made Himself known to all -- not then when He was born -- but then when He was baptized. Until this time He was not known to the people. And that the people did not know Him, Who He was, listen about this to John the Baptist, who says: "Amidst you stands Him Whom you know not" (Jn.1:26). And is it surprising that others did not know Him, when even the Baptist did not know Him until that day? "And I -- said he -- knew Him not: but He that did send me to baptize with water, about This One did tell me: over Him that you shall see the Spirit descending and abiding upon Him, This One it is Who baptizes in the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 1:33). -*St. John Chrysostom (Discourse of the Baptism of Christ)*

John, recognizing the Lord as his God through the Holy Spirit, declared that he was unworthy to bear his sandals. He excused himself from doing what he was directed to do, because he could not conceive that baptism was necessary for the One whom he knew had come to blot out the sins of the world. He rather pled that he himself ought to be baptized by Christ, saying, "It is I who should be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" It is as if he were saying, "I am a man. You are God. I am a sinner because I am a man. You are sinless because you are God. Why do you want to be baptized by me? I do not refuse the respect you pay me, but I am ignorant of the mystery. I baptize sinners in repentance. But you have no taint of sin. So why do you want to be baptized? Why do you want to be baptized as a sinner, who came to forgive sins?" This is what John in effect was saying to the Lord.

-*St Chromatius of Aquileia - Tractate on Matthew 12.1.*

The Lord Manifested in the Jordan

“THE HOLY DAY OF THE LIGHTS to which we have come, and which we are celebrating today, has for its origin the Baptism of my Christ, the True Light that lightens everyone who comes into the world, and effects my purification...” These words, which begin St Gregory the Theologian’s homily “on the Lights,” reflect what was already a well-known custom when he spoke them (AD 381). They also point to the reason why this is an especially appropriate term for this feast of the Theophany.

It has been suggested that the feast was introduced in third century Alexandria, where January 6 was observed by the pagans as the birthday of Aeon, the patron god of the city. By the fourth century it was observed in Jerusalem and it was not long before this feast was kept throughout the East.

At first the feast observed the theophanies of God at Christ’s birth, at His baptism and at His first miracle at Cana. Eventually the Western date of December 25 was adopted in the East for the remembrance of the Nativity and January 6 for the theophany at His baptism. To this day, however, the Armenian Church celebrates both manifestations on January 6.

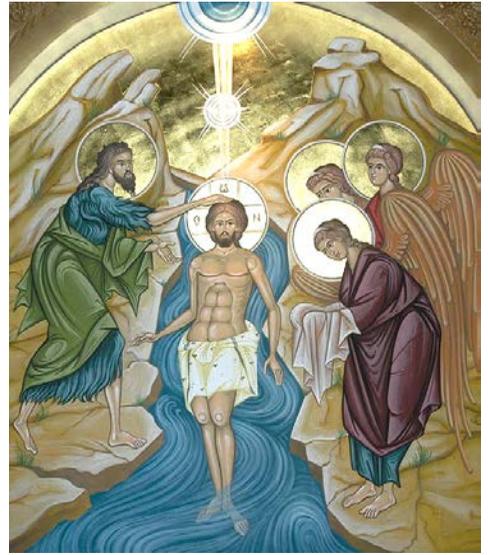
Why Lights?

One explanation, mentioned in some synaxaria, is offered by Seberian, Bishop of Gavalon. He remarks that in the Church there was great abundance of light on this feast day because the Christians carried lighted candles. The same is mentioned by Ephraim the Syrian in his hymn on the Epiphany (9th verse). The ceremony in Jerusalem, as described by the 4th century pilgrim Egeria began with a procession during the night from Bethlehem to the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem. They enter the church before daybreak “where an exceedingly great number of lights are already burning.”

The theme of light resounds on this feast because light frequently represents the divine in the Scriptures. The most evocative for Christians is found in the Gospel of John where the Lord says “*I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life*” (Jn 8:12).

St Gregory in his homily links a number of the Scriptural verses on light. “Therefore listen to the Voice of God, which sounds so exceeding clearly to me, who am both disciple and master of these mysteries, as would to God it may sound to you: “I am the Light of the world” [Jn 8:12] Therefore “approach Him and be enlightened, and let not your faces be ashamed,” [Ps 33:5, LXX] being signed with the true Light.

“This is a season of new birth, let us be born again. It is a time of reformation, let us receive again the first Adam. Let us not remain what we are, but let us become what we once were. “The Light shined in darkness,” [Jn 1:5] in this life and in the flesh, and is chased by the darkness, but is



presence was limited in time; His spiritual presence will last as long as time itself will last.

The focus on Christ's spiritual presence is His Body, the Church. It is the mystery or sacrament of the risen Christ, which – like all sacraments – reveals His presence behind a veil. The Church is the world being transformed in Christ; at the same time it is Christ transforming the world.

The faithful, insofar as they are living a life of repentance, seeking to model their lives on Christ's, are the world being transformed. The faithful, insofar as they celebrate Christ's presence in the Scriptures, in baptism, the Eucharist and the other mysteries – including the mystery of love for others – are Christ transforming the world. The saints are those who witness by their lives that we can be transformed and transform others in Him.

Christ's presence in the Scriptures was at first practically limited to its public reading in the assembly. People would listen carefully so as to memorize what they heard. Only the wealthy could afford hand-copied Scriptures for their personal use. In addition Books of Scripture, particularly the Gospels, would be richly adorned, carried in procession and offered for veneration, reminding believers that Christ was truly in them. Since the invention of printing the Scriptures have become increasingly available; as a result we may not be as quick to recognize the divine presence in a paperback Bible as in the Gospel on the holy table.

What enables us to experience the presence of Christ when we read the Scriptures – or, for that matter, when we assist at the Liturgy or other mysteries? St Isaac the Syrian offers the following advice: “Never approach the words of the mysteries that are in the Scriptures without praying and asking for God's help. Say, ‘Lord, grant me to feel the power that is in them.’ Reckon prayer to be the key that opens the true meaning of the Scriptures” (*Ascetical Treatises*, 73).

Even more hidden to us is the presence of Christ in others. This presence calls silently for us to acknowledge Him, a call that we often are too deaf to hear. Some, like Mother Teresa and others like her, can hear that call and they become the light and salt of the Gospel sayings. The presence of these saints with their acute hearing of Christ's voice is one of the signs that Christ is transforming the world even now.

Christ's Return Will Transform Us

“*Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing*” (2 Tm 4:8). St Paul expresses here his hope in the final transformation of “all who have loved His appearing.”

Like St. Paul we await our ultimate transformation at Christ's return. As the Church celebrates Christ's appearing in the flesh (the Nativity) and His appearing in power at the Jordan (the Theophany), we are reminded that Christ's first coming would find its ultimate fulfillment only in His second coming.

“In His first coming He was wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger. In His second coming He is clothed with light as with a garment. In His first coming He bore the cross, despising its shame; He will come a second time in glory accompanied by the hosts of angels.

“It is not enough for us, then, to be content with His first coming; we must wait in hope of His second coming. What we said at His first coming, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,’ we shall repeat at His last coming. . . .”

-From the Catecheses of St. Cyril of Jerusalem

Today's Readings:

A reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus (Titus 2:11-14 & 3:4-7)

My son Titus, the grace of God our Savior has appeared to all men, instructing us, in order that, rejecting ungodliness and worldly lust, we may live temperately and justly and piously in this world; looking for the blessed hope and glorious coming of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and cleanse for Himself an acceptable people, pursuing good works. But when the goodness and kindness of God our Savior appeared, then not by reason of good works that we did ourselves, but according to his mercy, He saved us through the path of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He has abundantly poured upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior, in order that, justified by his grace, we may be heirs in the hope of life everlasting.

الرسالة تيطس (2: 11-14 و 3: 4 - 7)

يا ولدي تيطس، لقد ظهرت نعمة الله المخلصنة لجميع الناس، مؤدبة إيانا لئلا نُنكر الكفر والشهوات العالمية، فنحيا في الدهر الحاضر على مقتضى التعقل والعدل والقوى، منتظرين الرجاء السعيد، وظهور مجد الهنا العظيم ومخلصنا يسوع المسيح. الذي بذل نفسه لأجلنا، ليفتدينا من كل إثم ويُطهر نفسه شعباً خاصاً غيراً على الأعمال الصالحة. فلما ظهر لطف الله مخلصنا ومحبه للبشر خاضنا هو، لا اعتباراً لأعمال بر عملناها، بل بحسب رحمته، بغسل الميلاد الثاني وتجديد الروح القدس. الذي أفاضه علينا بوفرة بيسوع المسيح مخلصنا حتى إذا بُررنا بنعمته نصير ورثة على حسب رجاء الحياة الأبدية.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (3: 13-17)

At that time Jesus came from Galilee to John, at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. But John was reluctant, and said, "It is I who ought to be baptized by You, and You come to me?" But Jesus answered and said to him, "Let it be so now, for this is how what is right must be fulfilled." Then He let him do it. And when Jesus had been baptized, He immediately came up from the water. And behold, the heavens were opened to Him. And he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and coming upon Him. And behold, a voice from the heavens said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

الانجيل (متى 3: 13 - 17)

في ذلك الزمان، أقبل يسوع من الجليل الى الاردن الى يوحنا ليعتمده منه. فكان يوحنا يمانعه قائلاً: انا محتاج ان اعتمد منك وأنت تأتي اليّ؟ فأجابه يسوع قائلاً: دع الآن، فهكذا ينبغي لنا ان نتم كل بر. حينئذ تركه. ولما اعتمده يسوع صعد للوقت من الماء، واذا السماوات قد انفتحت له، ورأى روح الله ينزل مثل حمامة ويحل عليه. واذا صوت من السماء يقول: هذا هو ابني الحبيب الذي به سررت.

Please remember to pray for the health and protection of Genevieve Allen, Donna Andruskiewicz, Olivia Aragon, Elizabeth Ashooh, Elsie Ashooh, Alice Auclair, Erin Baroody, Michael Baroody, Henry Bilodeau, Anthony Blando, Helena Burkush, Fr. Michael Carl, Danielle Caron, Michael Cavanaugh, Meghan Connors, Sarah Cullen, Theresa Cullen, Sarah Dagher, Bishop John Elya, Sher Farrow, Julie Fregeau, Mary Fregeau, Peter Fregeau, John Gallagher, Marguerite Ganem, Mary Ann Garvey, Loretto Gauvin, Bonnie Gomez, Gail Fisher, Laurice Haddad, Nick Haddad, Lucille Harper, Laura Jorba, Virginia Kearney, Leila Khoury, Shirley Lanoue, Susan Latvis, Diana Label, Haley Lesmerises, Sadie Grace McCallum, Miriam McCallum, Ramona Matias, Susan Merrill, Maria Moser, Joanne Nader, Mimi Nasser, Alfred Nasr, Afef Nasr, Raymond Nehme, Samira Nehme, Steve Notter, Steven O'Leary, Ellen Osgood, Alice Paymant, Marco Enrique Peschiera, MaryJo Pond, Ellen Powell, Sheila Quinn, Daniel Quintal, Deborah Roberts, Adam Rubin, Fr. Andre St. Germain, Kara Salvias, Barbara Schultz, Raymond Sherburne, Tarrant Smith, Catherine Waldron, George Webber, Martha Webber, Marilyn Whitmore, and Iris Angelina Velasquez.

If you are visiting our church, our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Please give us the chance to get to know you by joining us for some coffee, pastry, and conversation in the church hall following the Divine Liturgy. If you would like to know more about the Melkite Catholic Church, check out the brochure entitled *"Welcome to this Holy House,"* located on the table in the back of the church.



  <p>Joe Ashooh, Agent 297 South Willow St Manchester, NH 03103 603-624-1000 www.joesthere.com</p> <p>Providing Insurance and Financial Services Call us for a free quote</p>	<p>NORTH HILLS REALTY GROUP, LLC <i>Residential Real Estate Brokers</i> Abraham Dagher, Realtor 814 Elm St., Suite # 302 Manchester, NH 03101 (603) 629-9988</p>	 <p>Chuck Stephen 814 Elm Street, Suite 503 Manchester, NH 03101 Tel # 603.606.3391 Toll Free 866.491.9675 chuck@glenwoodinvestment.com www.glenwoodinvestment.com</p> <p>Glenwood Investment Group <i>"Grow and protect your hard-earned wealth"</i></p>
<p>THE STEPHEN GROUP</p> <p>814 Elm Street, Suite 309 Manchester, NH 03101 Office 603.625.8825 Cell 603.419.9592</p> <p>JOHN STEPHEN <i>Managing Partner</i> jstephen@stephengroupinc.com www.stephengroupinc.com</p>		 <p>Stephen LAW GROUP P.L.C.</p> <p>Robert Stephen, Attorney at Law 582 Chestnut Street Manchester, NH 03104 phone 603-663-1007 www.StephenLaw.com</p>
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