

Sts. Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church

First-enthroned of the apostles, teachers of the universe: Entreat the Master of all to grant peace to the world, and to our souls great mercy!

Rev. Nicholas Dellermann (*Rector*) (860) 861-7468 – Very Rev. H Gregory DuDash

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January 5, 2020

29TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: SUNDAY BEFORE THE THEOPHANY,
EVE OF THE THEOPHANY, HIEROMARTYR THEOPHANTUS AND MARTYR THOMAS
TONE 4

Today	10:00am	Divine Liturgy Vespers/ Blessing of the Waters
Mon 06	10:00am	Divine Liturgy (<i>Theophany</i>)
Wed 08	7:00pm	Bible Study
Fri 10	6:00pm	Fun Night
Sat 11	6:00pm	Vespers & General Confession
Sun 12	10:00am	Divine Liturgy

One must be baptized and chrismated an Orthodox Christian to receive Holy Communion. Guests are invited to receive a blessing at the chalice and partake of the post-Communion bread (Antidoron).

Fast Days: Every day. (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil, wine and hard spirits as you are able. Wine and oil are permitted on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Fish is also allowed on Saturday.)

Troparion – Tone 4 **Troparion of the Forefeast**

*The river Jordan was turned back by the mantle of Elisha,
after Elijah had been taken up to heaven.
The waters were parted in two,
and the stream became a dry path.
This was truly a type of baptism,
by which we pass over the stream of life.
Christ has shone forth in the Jordan to sanctify the waters.*

Kontakion – Tone 4 **(Resurrection)**

*My Savior and Redeemer
as God rose from the tomb and
delivered the earth-born from their chains.
He has shattered the gates of hell,
and as Master,
He has risen on the third day!*

Welcome to all visitors! Please join us upstairs in the church hall for coffee hour after liturgy.

Prayers for those in our Sts. Peter and Paul community (parishioners, family, friends) can be listed for remembrance in our litanies during the Liturgy. Feel free to give names to Fr. Nicholas - please indicate how each person listed is connected to us (parishioner, family, friend, etc.), as well as why we are praying for them (health, memory, travel, etc.).

Confessions can be heard by appointment. If you need, I will come to you during the week. Please do not hesitate to call for a time to drop by the church or to have me visit you.

Remembrances for both the living and the dead during the prayers of preparation of the Eucharistic Lamb and during the Augmented Litany should be given the week before the desired remembrance so that the names can be put into the bulletin and given to the Deacons for the prayers. Any names of the living that are not marked as sick or traveling will be listed under general prayers.

SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK

Church Lectionary

Today

1 Corinthians 9:19-27
Luke 3:1-18

Monday

1 Corinthians 10:1-4
Mark 1:9-11

Tuesday

Hebrews 9:8-10, 15-23
Luke 21:12-19
Acts 19:1-8
John 1:29-34

Wednesday

Hebrews 10:1-18
Luke 21:5-7, 10-11, 20-24

Thursday

Hebrews 10:35-11:7
Luke 21:28-33

Friday

Hebrews 11:8, 11-16
Luke 21:37-22:8

Saturday

Ephesians 5:1-8
Luke 13:18-29

Reading the Bible in a Year

Jan 05: Genesis 17-20
Jan 06: Genesis 21-24
Jan 07: Genesis 25-28
Jan 08: Genesis 29-32
Jan 09: Genesis 33-36
Jan 10: Genesis 37-40
Jan 11: Genesis 41-44




Special Prayers

Ill/Home-bound:

Ruth Rifkin, Virginia Daka, Emmelia Stone, Liam, Denise Gormley, Sonya, Anna, George, Lyanna, Barbara, Katelyn, Margarita, Annmarie, Shpresa, Ralph John, Christina, Mary, Alexandra, Matthew, Fran, Sophie Plasari, Donna, Fr. Gregory & Mat. Linda DuDash, Leon, child Luka, child Makayla, Rhonda, Ashley, John, Lev, Margarita, Ludmilla, Jake, Amanda, David, Thomas, Helen, Nahum

General:

Michael, John, Darian, Tammy, Jean Dimitri, Cheryl Dimitri, Jason, Anna, George, Sonya, Catherine, Alisha, Sasha, Joseph, Kimberly, Niko, Kristin, Robert, Jerry, Pina, Jerry, Chris, Matt, Gianna, Menina, John, Sophia and the child to be born of her, Catherine and the child to be born of her,

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"He has shown you, O mortal what is good; and what does the LORD require of you? but to do justice, to live kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

- Micah 6:8

Memory Eternal: Newly Departed Fr. Paul Pentalis, Newly Departed George Tsiadis, Newly Departed Mira Judi,



January

05 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Vespers of Theophany
Blessing of the Waters
06 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Theophany
08 - 7:00pm Bible Study
10 - 6:00pm Fun Night
11 - 6:00pm Vespers
12 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Sunday School

January/February Events

15 - 7:00pm Bible Study
18 - 6:00pm Vespers
19 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Sunday School
23 - 7:00pm Bible Study
25 - 6:00pm Vespers
26 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Sunday School
3:00pm Blessing of the Waters
at Camden Boathouse

29 - 7:00pm Bible Study

February

01 - 6:00pm Vespers & General
Confession
02 - Divine Liturgy
Meeting of Christ in the
Temple
05 - 7:00pm Bible Study
08 - 6:00pm Vespers

The Pan-Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Philadelphia is holding the Great Blessing of Waters at the Cooper river in three weeks, on Sunday, January 26 2020. The event will be held at 7050 N Park Dr, Pennsauken Township, NJ 08109 and will begin at 3:00 PM. All are invited to come and experience this wonderful event.

Coffee Hour

Today: No Volunteer
Next Week: No Volunteer

Birthdays/ Anniversaries

John Rubis N - 1/7
John Douris N - 1/7

House Blessings are coming up in 2020! Please sign up on the sheet upstairs so that we can begin to organize and schedule House blessings. Please be sure to leave your name and phone number. Alternatively, you can call Fr. Nicholas at 860-861-7468 and he will take your information.

1 Corinthians 9:19-27 (Epistle)

For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you. Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

Luke 3:1-18 (Gospel)

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: "Prepare the way of the LORD; make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?" He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you." Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages." Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." And with many other exhortations he preached to the people.

Children's Word

Give God the glory!

Have you ever had to admit somebody was better than you are at something? Maybe you lost an arm wrestling match, or maybe you lost a race. Maybe you lost at a spelling bee or another contest. It is humbling when we have to admit somebody is better than we are!

Today's Gospel reading tells us about a saint who always admitted that God was better than he is. Saint John the Baptist, remember, came before his cousin, Jesus. But he told everybody about Jesus. He said, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie."

Saint John knew that Christ was better than he was. He knew that Jesus Christ is God. So he knew that Jesus Christ had the real power from God! In our Church, we know that Saint John is a great saint. His icon is always on the iconostasis right next to the icon of our Lord. We pray to him in lots of our prayers. We know he is a great saint...but what made him great was that he knew God was better! Saint John gave God the glory.

We can give God the glory every day too. We can always remember that God gives us everything. God helps us be strong. God helps us be smart. God helps us help others. Let's give God the glory, like Saint John did, too!

HOLY THEOPHANY GOD SHOWS HIMSELF TO US!

What is your favorite day of the year?

You might say your birthday or Christmas, but in the early Church even bigger than Christmas was Theophany, when we celebrate the baptism of our Lord, Jesus Christ. As Christians, we know how important this day is!

We remember how important Holy Theophany is by the name! "Theophany" means showing of God. When our Lord was baptized in the Jordan River, God showed Himself to the world. God the Father showed His voice. God the Son was Jesus in the water. God the Holy Spirit was shown by the dove over Jesus's head. God showed Himself as the Holy Trinity to us. That's why it is called Theophany!

Today and tomorrow our priest will bless the water to make it holy. We might take a little bottle of holy water home with us to bless us and our homes. When we have holy things, we know that God is still showing Himself to us! God blesses us every day, so Theophany, or "showing of God," isn't just a day long, long ago. God still shows Himself to us today, when He blesses us and our families! Let's ask God to bless us and to show Himself to us.

We celebrate Holy Theophany tomorrow, Jan. 6th

Make Jesus KNOWN in 2020!

January 3, 2020 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

Christ is born!

There was a day when I actually worked as a “promotions director” for a leading media ministry. My job was to make sure the religious media consumers knew about our radio, TV, and print materials available and to get folks to watch, listen, and read our stuff. I was even a member of the Public Relations Society of America for a short time!

Nowadays, it seems that “getting the word out” has been taken over by “make sure they know me!” And that means doing anything you can to promote and publicise your particular message. Now don’t get me wrong, the reality is something horrible happens when you don’t advertise – Nothing! But the ditch on the other side of this narrow road is to make excuses for “the ends justify the means” activities that can be more “marketing” than a genuine desire to share beauty with others. It’s a tightrope that can only be maneuvered well through two very powerful spiritual virtues.

Look at our Gospel Lesson today in John 1:18-28:

No one has ever seen God; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.

And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed, he did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” And he answered, “No.” They said to him then, “Who are you? let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water; but among you stands one whom you do not know, even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” This took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The Gospel writer makes the provocative statement about the Son making the Father known and he follows up that insight by telling us about St. John the Baptist and how that great prophet handled both the limelight of his ministry and the challenge of not forgetting his purpose. And The Blessed Forerunner accomplished this narrow path by the energetic practice of the twin spiritual virtues of honesty and humility.

Notice how The Forerunner handles the questions of the religious leaders of his day. He never claims to be more than he is. “Are you the Christ?” “No.” St. John doesn’t embellish his answers and he doesn’t say more than is necessary. He is asked “Are you Elijah” and St. John tells them “no.” Of course we know that he did come in the spirit and power of Elijah, but the Jews of his day were expecting Elijah himself to precede the Messiah, having misunderstood the prophecy. And John doesn’t leave them in their misunderstanding but practices an honesty that risks his ministry. He refuses to take his eye off his purpose. He is to “make straight the way of the Lord.”

But he also practices the virtue of humility in always remembering and practicing his ministry knowing full well that there will come a day when his temporary “popularity” will disappear. There will be a day when St. John will decrease and the Lord Jesus will increase. It’s that humility that allows John to always be at peace with his calling, his true identity as the Lord’s servant. In fact, John testifies that he isn’t even worthy to untie the shoes of the One for Whom he is preparing the Way! Even though this One was in the midst of them and they did not know Him, they soon would see what St. John sees: “The Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the World!”

Today, as we move into a new year and toward the celebration of the Lord’s Baptism by John in the Jordan, let’s all of us understand that our calling is to make His Gospel known in our day as well. Not with the ever tempting “marketing strategies” of manipulation, but with the power of honesty and humility, focusing all our gifts into making known the Lord Jesus Who then makes known the Father. It’s that radical honesty and humility that will protect us from the crass promotion that demeans and toward the life-giving evangelism that is normal Orthodoxy.