

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!

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January 10, 2021

30TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: FOREFEAST OF THE THEOPHANY
HOLY PROPHET MALACHI

TONE 5

Today 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Wed. 13 7:15pm Bible Study
Sun. 17 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: Strict fast on Wednesday and Friday.(fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil, wine and hard spirits as you are able.)

**Troparion – Tone 1
(Feast)**

*When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized
in the Jordan,
the worship of the Trinity was made
manifest.
For the voice of the Father bore
witness to Thee,
and called Thee His beloved Son;
and the Spirit in the form of a dove
confirmed the truthfulness of His
word.
O Christ our God, Who hast
revealed Thyself
and hast enlightened the world,
glory to Thee.*

**Kontakion – Tone 1
(St. Gregory)**

*Thou didst keep watch with the eyes
of thy soul, O holy bishop,
revealing thyself as a watchful
pastor for the world.
With the staff of thy wisdom and
thy fervent intercession,
thou didst drive away all heretics
like wolves,
and didst preserve thy flock free
from harm, O most wise Gregory.*

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

Ephesians 4:7-13
Matthew 4:12-17

Monday

James 2:14-26
Luke 19:37-44

Tuesday

James 3:1-10
Luke 19:45-48

Wednesday

James 3:11-4:6
Luke 20:1-8

Thursday

James 4:7-5:9
Luke 20:9-18

Friday

1 Peter 1:1-2, 10-12, 2:6-10
Luke 20:19-26

Saturday

1 Thessalonians 5:14-23
Luke 12:32-40

Reading the Bible in a Year

Jan 10: Genesis 37-40
Jan 11: Genesis 41-44
Jan 12: Genesis 45-48
Jan 13: Genesis 49-50
Jan 14: Exodus 1-4
Jan 15: Exodus 5-8
Jan 16: Exodus 9-12

“When God revealed himself, he united himself with our mortal nature in order to deify humanity through this close relation with deity. Since this is so, through his flesh, constituted by bread and wine, he implants himself in all believers.”

- St. Gregory of Nyssa

The Quest for Humility

Struggling with pride, we must focus on bringing our own will into conformity with the will of God. We must take up the tradition of the Church, and make it our own, while recognizing that false humility is almost wholly the product of self-righteous hypocrisy. It is precisely this humility which Saint Paul reveals to us when, boasting of his sufferings and exploits, he tells us that they have meaning only in Jesus Christ.

Health of the Parish



\$15,000.00

\$10,000.00

\$5,000.00

We must fight off the temptation of making our faith a form of ideology, for we know the knowledge of Jesus Christ, when transformed into an ideological and moralistic knowledge, closes the door to others, and turns Christianity into a list of requirements, denuding the message of the Church into yet another worldly political force.

It is only through our immersion in a life of prayer that our faith becomes something other than an ideology. Through our uniting ourselves in the prayer of the Church that we lose ourself, and become one with Christ, and with all Christians. Our quest for humility comes through our having united ourselves to the humility of Christ, Who condescended to take on our flesh in order to unite His Divinity with our humanity.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

January Events

January

- 10 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 13 – 7:15pm Bible Study via Google Meet
- 17 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 20 – 7:15pm Bible Study via Google Meet
- 24 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 27 – 7:15pm Bible Study via Google Meet

O Lord Who has appeared to us in the Flesh, and has descended into the waters of the Jordan to baptize the whole of creation, grant me to SEE You today in the faces of those who surround me, and fill me with that blessed cleansing of baptism so that I will hunger and thirst only for the “food” and “drink” that truly satisfies and gives real life. Amen.

Children's Word

Ephesians 4:7-13 (*Epistle, Sunday After*)

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

Matthew 4:12-17 (*Gospel, Sunday After*)

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The great light!

Imagine sleeping in your bed at night. Everything is dark. You can't see anything, even your own hands. Then, suddenly, somebody flips on the lights. Now what? All of a sudden, you can see everything! Everything is as clear as day.

Today's Gospel reading tells us about a different kind of light. This light is the light of Christ! The Gospel tells us how people had been waiting for a long time for this special light of Christ. The Gospel tells us how the words of the prophet came true, "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light."

Before Christ came into the world, it was like that darkness, as you lay in bed! The people didn't know a lot about God. They didn't know what was going to happen. They didn't know what to expect.

But when Christ came into the world, it was like that flood of light, when you turn the switch! This "great light" let the world know God. Our Lord Jesus Christ made everything as clear as day.

Nobody wants to sit in darkness! We can have this "great light" of Christ in our lives too. When we read about our Lord in the Bible, and when we try to be like Him, that "great light" makes our lives clear and bright too.

SAINT GREGORY OF NYSSA "THE FATHER OF FATHERS"

Do you have a brother or a sister? If you do, you might have heard somebody call you, "Peter's sister" or "Maria's brother," or whomever. Sometimes you might have thought you don't have a name, just somebody's brother or sister!

Today we celebrate a saint with a very wellknown brother. Saint Gregory of Nyssa was the younger brother of Saint Basil, and everybody loves Saint Basil. We celebrated his day on the first of January. In Greece, children get little presents on that day, and they remember Saint Basil. But do you know his brother, Saint Gregory too?

Saint Gregory did so much for our Christian Church. Long ago, lots of people were saying that our Lord, Jesus Christ, was not really God. They said the Son (Christ) was not equal with God the Father. But Saint Gregory argued and argued against these people. He showed that they were wrong.

Saint Basil made his younger brother Gregory a bishop, and they loved and respected each other very much.

When Basil died, Gregory finished some of his brother's writings, and we still have them today! Saint Gregory was a good little brother, but a great Church Father!

We celebrate St. Gregory today, January 10th.

Now Appearing!

January 6, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

Christ is Baptized!

“Now Appearing!” I read the words with a mixture of pride and embarrassment! You see, this was part of a sign advertising a book signing I was doing in an area. Ugh!

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm thrilled to be a “published author.” Frankly, coming from the back woods of the American South, being the first member of my family to have a Master's degree, a passport, and going to Europe (voluntarily!) gives me a sense of accomplishment. It's just not part of the world I grew up in. But it has been an amazing experience for me.

I just can't let this “Now Appearing” foolishness intoxicate me into believing something that isn't true! Because the appearance of something means that it's true nature is being revealed. Otherwise, it's just one more delusion and fantasy, and that's not an “appearance” at all! An Appearance is supposed to be a Revelation of Reality!

Look at our Lesson today in Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7:

TITUS, my son, the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

Three times St. Paul uses the word “appearance” in this passage to his spiritual son, St. Titus. And these three “appearances” reveal the very nature of WHY Jesus appeared and WHAT His Appearance is supposed to accomplish for you and for the whole world!

First, The Grace of God APPEARED FOR salvation. The whole point of God stepping into His creation as the “theanthropos” – Jesus Christ, the God-Man, is for us. God didn't NEED to appear among us. God doesn't need anything or any one. It is the pagan gods and the false gods of false religions that “need” to do anything. But our God needs nothing, including us! So everything He has done, is doing, or will do is for our benefit, our salvation. This revelation tells me a great deal about the God we “SEE” in Jesus Christ. It tells me He is selfless AND humble. God doesn't think about Himself. God thinks about YOU!

Next, The Appearing of the Glory of God. Jesus Christ is God's glory. And Paul let's us know that if we ever hope to enjoy God we are going to have to deal with His loving actions in the Person of Jesus Christ. We are going to have to authentically wrestle with the implications of God becoming human for our sake. We are going to have to deal with the reality that if God really has done this, then nothing, especially me, can ever be the same. This Appearance means even my very behavior is transformed and this affects my past, present, and future, because Jesus' Appearing isn't a one time event – it's going to happen again!

Finally, Our Good and Loving God HAS Appeared. And He has done this loving work for me, not because I “deserved” it, or because I had “earned” it. No, God does all this for me even before I knew I needed Him to do this for me! His salvation is in His Appearance. Why? Because in His Appearance, He weds my physicality to His Deity! He invites me to become like Him. And it's only in being like Him that I can enjoy His salvation.

All of this appearing that our Lord does at His Birth, at His Baptism, during His life, on His cross, in His tomb, at His resurrection, and during His ascension is all meant to get you and me to “see” Him so that we can become like Him and enjoy His life, His eternal life that He has granted the whole world. Face it; you are going to live forever. Christ has trampled down death! Now the question is will you know how to enjoy life forever with Him.

Today, as we finally SEE God in His appearance and this invitation to KNOW Him changes me, my whole life, and all my relationships. His comprehensive Appearing is meant to restore, rescue, and remake His humanity into what we were intended from the beginning to be – Like Him.

К Ефесеянам 4:7-13

Каждому же из нас дана благодать по мере дара Христова. Посему и сказано: восшед на высоту, пленил плен и дал дары человекам. А 'восшел' что означает, как не то, что Он и нисходил прежде в преисподние места земли?

Нисшедший, Он же есть и восшедший превыше всех небес, дабы наполнить все. И Он поставил одних Апостолами, других пророками, иных Евангелистами, иных пастырями и учителями, к совершению святых, на дело служения, для созидания Тела Христова, доколе все придем в единство веры и познания Сына Божия, в мужа совершенного, в меру полного возраста Христова;

От Матфея 4:12-17

Услышав же Иисус, что Иоанн отдан [под стражу], удалился в Галилею и, оставив Назарет, пришел и поселился в Капернауме приморском, в пределах Завулоновых и Неффалимовых, да сбудется реченное через пророка Исаию, который говорит: земля Завулонова и земля Неффалимова, на пути приморском, за Иорданом, Галилея языческая, народ, сидящий во тьме, увидел свет великий, и сидящим в стране и тени смертной воссиял свет. С того времени Иисус начал проповедывать и говорить: покайтесь, ибо приблизилось Царство Небесное.

Efesianëve 4:7-13

Po secilit nga ne iu dha hiri sipas masës së dhuntisë së Krishtit. Për ç'ka Shkrimi thotë: “Kur ai u ngjit lart, ai e burgosi burgosjen dhe u dha dhurata njerëzve.” Tani kjo: “Ai u ngjit,” ç'do të thotë tjetër përveç se ai më parë edhe kishte zbritur në pjesët më të ulta të dheut? Ai që zbriti është po ai që edhe u ngjit përmbi të gjithë qiejt, për të përmbushur të gjitha gjërat. Dhe ai vetë i dha disa si apostuj, të tjerë si profetë, të tjerë si ungjilltarë dhe të tjerë si barinj e mësues, për përsosjen e shenjtorëve, për veprën e shërbimit dhe për ndërtimin e trupit të Krishtit, derisa të arrijmë të gjithë te uniteti i besimit dhe të njohjes së Birit të Perëndisë, te një njeri i përsosur, në masën e shtatit të plotësisë së Krishtit,

Mateu 4:12-17

Jezusi, mbasi dëgjoi se Gjonin e kishin futur në burg, u tërhoq në Galile. Pastaj la Nazaretin dhe shkoi të banojë në Kapernaum, qytet bregdetar, në kufijtë të Zabulonit dhe të Neftalit, që të përmbushej ç'ishte thënë nëpërmjet profetit Isaia kur tha: “Toka e Zabulonit, toka e Neftalit, mbi bregun e detit, krahina përtej Jordanit, Galileja e paganëve, populli që dergjej në errësirë ka parë një dritë të madhe, dhe përmbi ata që dergjeshin në krahinë dhe në hijen e vdekjes, doli drita.” Që nga ajo kohë Jezusi filloi të predikojë dhe të thotë: “Pendohuni, sepse mbretëria e qiejve është afër!”