



SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
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SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY

Tone 5. Eothinon 8 — *Afterfeast of the Theophany. Martyr Tatiana of Rome (226-235). Martyr Mertius of Mauretania (284-305). Martyr Peter Apselamus of Palestine (309-310). Ven. Eupraxia of Tabenna, in Egypt (393). Virgin Martyrs Neollina, Domnina, and Parthena (1375).*

FIRST ANTIPHON

*When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, Judah was in his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion! **Refrain:** Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!*

*The sea saw Thee and fled: Jordan was driven back. What ailed thee, O sea, that thou fleddest, and thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? **(Refrain)***

*Glory... Now and ever... **(Refrain)***

SECOND ANTIPHON

*I am well pleased for the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer. He hath inclined His ear unto me; therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live! **Refrain:** Save us, O Son of God, Who wast baptized by John in the Jordan, as we chant to Thee, "Alleluia"!*

*The sorrows of death encompassed me, and the pains of hell took hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow, and called upon the Name of the Lord. **(Refrain)***

*Gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea, our God is merciful! **(Refrain)***

*Glory... Now and ever... **(Only begotten Son and Word of God ...)***

THIRD ANTIPHON

Troparion of the Theophany (see below) introduced by the following verses:

- *Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever!*
- *Let the house of Israel confess that He is good, for His mercy endures forever!*
- *Let all who fear the Lord confess that He is good, for His mercy endures forever!*

AT THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

*Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.
Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead; who sing to Thee. Alleluia.*

TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION (Tone 5): Let us believers praise and worship the Word co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection!

TROPARION OF THEOPHANY (Tone 1): When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity wast made manifest. For the voice of the Father bore witness unto Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son; and the Spirit in the likeness of a dove confirmed the truthfulness of His word. O Christ our God, Who hath appeared and enlightened the world: glory to Thee!

TROPARION OF SAINT ANTHONY THE GREAT (Tone 4, Russian): Like the zealous Elijah thou didst become, and followed John the Baptist in his upright ways. A dweller in the wilderness, thou didst steady the world by prayer. O Father Anthony, intercede with Christ our God for our souls' salvation.

KONTAKION OF THEOPHANY (melody of "Today the Virgin gives birth"): On this day Thou hast appeared unto the whole world; and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, is signed on us who sing Thy praise and chant with knowledge: Thou has now come, Thou has appeared, O Thou Light unapproachable!

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

From Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians

Prokeimenon: *Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.*

Today's epistle echoes something that we confess in the Creed: that Christ died, rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven *for us and for our salvation*. He is not the Messiah (Hebrew for "the anointed one") to impress us with His wisdom and power, to parade God's glory before our eyes without benefiting us in the least. Quite the contrary is true: **"grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."** In other words, whatever He has, he gives to us. As we hear in the many parables about God's generosity, He does not hold back from us the fatted calf, the best wine, the finest robe—the full measure of Christ's gift is a grace *for us*.

If God comes to be with us in the flesh (as we have just celebrated at Christmas), he does so in order to take up before God the very human nature he had taken on: **"He who descended is the same who also ascended far above the heavens."** Whatever He touches, He sanctifies; therefore, if he came to be one of us, he also made it possible for us to be like Him: "as many as received the Son of God, He gave the power to become sons of God" (John 1:12).

It is on the basis of this theology that Saint Paul speaks of the grace given to all believers in Christ. The Giver is one, yet the gifts are many and of many kinds: **"some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers"** (and, in fact, we can add many more and varied gifts).

Note, however, that these gifts from God have a definite purpose. They are not for the enjoyment of those who receive them, they are not some magical powers, so that we feel good about ourselves and become puffed up. The grace of God is not some "cosmic energy" that we can tap into to boost our well-being, and Christians are not in the business of "white magic"! Rather,

the gifts are “for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain ... to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” In other words, the many kinds of gifts are given *for our brothers and sisters*, and they serve our common growth in the Spirit.

Let us keep in mind that the events we have just celebrated—the birth, circumcision, and baptism of our Lord—are the beginning of our salvation, the door through which “**grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.**”

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

(Matt 4:12-17) At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulon and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.” From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Today is the Sunday after Theophany—we are, in other words, still under the light of the celebration of Christ's Baptism. The Gospel text selected for today speaks of the transition between the Baptist and the Lord.

Christ continues the proclamation of the Baptist: “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!**” Even though the words of Christ's proclamation are the same ones that John the Baptist had used before, there is now also a sense of fulfillment, because the prophecies announcing that God *would come* have now been fulfilled: the One so long awaited has arrived!

The Gospel (or “Good News”) is indeed *good* news, and it concerns every one of us, creatures fallen into sin and mortality, dwellers in the Valley of Tears: “**the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.**”

The words of the proclamation (“repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand”) mean something like “Change your life, be transformed: God's kingdom is here!” The good news is, first, that God has come to be with us, and, second, that we can, therefore, change our life and turn around to meet Him. But can we really change our lives? We “can” just as we “can” received Baptism: that is, we can entrust ourselves and our whole life to God, who is the one doing the baptizing and making the change. Our part, as we hear, is to “repent,” to stop preventing God from doing His holy work in us.

INVITATION TO ST. ANTHONY'S PARISH FEAST!

Come celebrate our spiritual patron, Anthony the Great! Join us anytime you can on **Saturday, Jan. 18** (Vespers at 6PM) and **Sunday, Jan. 19** (Matins, 9AM; Liturgy, 10AM).

Our guest speaker is **Dr. Mark Mourachian**, a scholar and former professor of Early Christianity. His presentation is titled *From Symbols and Revelation to Christian Discipleship: Learning From Saint Ephrem the Syrian*.

Dr. Mourachian earned his Ph.D. in 2012 from the Early Christian Studies Program at the Catholic University of America with a dissertation on St. Ephrem the Syrian's theological anthropology and the centrality it affords to human freedom. He co-edited, with the late Father Matthew Baker, a valuable collective volume entitled *What Is the Bible? The Patristic Doctrine of Scripture* (Fortress Press, 2014). After teaching for six years at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Dr. Mourachian now lives with his wonderful family in Cranberry, PA, as part of a community of families intent of cultivating Christian discipleship in the midst everyday family life.

This will also be a day of feasting! Our parish feast also features a spectacular chili cook-off, with many, many types of chilis: hot, mild, with beans, no beans, vegan, Texas style, Chicago Style, Cincinnati Chili, German Chili (with sauerkraut!). Don't worry if you are vegetarian, there will be meatless option. Trust us, you won't regret this.

Since we are celebrating Saint Anthony the Great, "the father of monks," we intend to take a special collection to assist the nuns at the Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City. Please be generous to these followers of Saint Anthony, who remember us always in their prayers before God.

- **HOUSE BLESSINGS** – Father Bogdan is available to come on Saturday or Sunday afternoon/evening.

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: Don (Dollie's brother); Frank (Seba's brother); Ann (Wilson), surgery; Nyal, Jean's son-in-law (motorcycle accident); Joseph Totin (recovering from illness and surgery); Ion, Marius & Katherine (Stan); Serbanescu and Becker families; Gabriel; Karen (Jane Best's daughter); Charitini; Stella & Dimitrios; Christine (Abraham); Dollie; Venetia; Maura; Ann; Ed, Peter, John, Jonathan and Joanna; Andrei; Kent, Bob, David (relatives of Jean); Stelian; Diane; Maura (Andronic); Susannah; Ed Sr (Totin).

DEPARTED: Kurt (Melinda's father); Jackie (Rose Totin's mother); Maria (Stella Lyras' sister); Sula; Kurt (Diane's son); Viorica; Norma; Miltiades; Tim (Becker); Silviu; Ross (Chrissi's friend); Richard Johns; Viorica; Bishop Antoun; Vito (DiPento); Jim and Marion (Raimondi); Stephanie (Yazge); Job; George (Georgiades); Abie (Abraham); Bill (Thomas); Marta.