

**St. Nikolai Orthodox Church, Divine Liturgy, 9:30 / Saturday Vespers, 4 pm.
9837 State Street, Louisville , Ohio 44641**

**Right Rev. Bishop Alexander, Bulgarian Diocese, Orthodox Church in America
Very Reverend Father Joseph Cervo, Archpriest (AOCANA-retired) Rev.**

Protodeacon James Gresh, Mission Administrator (Bulgarian Diocese OCA)

January 3, 2016: 31st Sunday after Pentecost

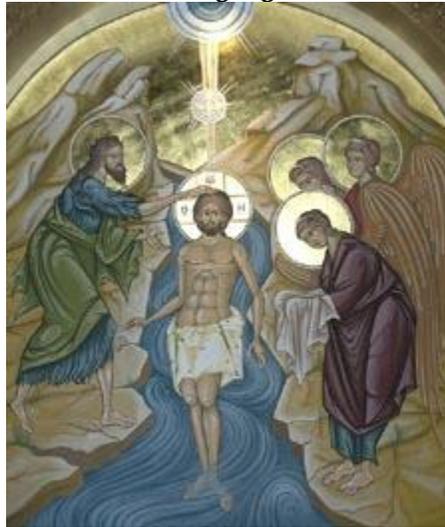
Sunday before the Theophany/Forefeast of the Theophany

Holy Prophet Malachi/Martyr Gordius/Ven Genevieve of Paris

Website <http://www.stnikolaiorthodoxmission.com/>

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SaintNikolaiOrthodoxMissionOfAlliance

Welcome to Visitors. Thank you for coming and praying with us today. In the Orthodox Church, Holy Communion is reserved only for Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and confession during the Church fasting seasons. We invite you to introduce yourself to Father Joe and Deacon James at the end of the Liturgy and receive a piece of the blessed bread and join us for fellowship and Christian education. We look forward to seeing you again and encourage you to learn more about the Orthodox Faith.



Tone 6 Troparion (Resurrection)

The angelic powers were at Your tomb; the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Your grave, seeking Your most pure body.
You took captive hell, // not being tempted by it.
You came to the Virgin, granting life. //
O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You.

Tone 4 Troparion of the Forefeast

Prepare, O Zebulon; and adorn yourself, O Naphtali!
River Jordan, cease flowing and receive with joy the Master coming to be baptized!
Adam, rejoice with our First Mother and do not hide yourself as you did of old in Paradise;
for having seen you naked,
He has appeared to clothe you with the first garment. //
Christ has appeared to renew all creation.

Tone 4 Troparion (Martyr Gordius)

Your holy martyr Gordius, O Lord, through his suffering has received an incorruptible crown from You, our God. For, having Your strength, he laid low his adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons. //

Through his intercessions save our souls!

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Nikolai)

In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith, an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence; your humility exalted you; your poverty enriched you. Hierarch Father Nikolai, entreat Christ our God that our souls may be saved!

Tone 6 Kontakion (Resurrection)

When Christ God the Giver of Life,
raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.//
He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 4 Kontakion (Prophet Malachi)

Endowed with the gift of prophecy, O Malachi,
you clearly proclaimed the saving coming of Christ to the world.//
His brightness has brought light to the whole universe.

Tone 4 Kontakion (of the Forefeast)

Today the Lord enters the Jordan and cries out to John:
“Do not be afraid to baptize me.// For I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man.”

Tone 6 Prokeimenon

O Lord, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance!
v: To You, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!

Epistle: 2 Timothy 4:5-8 **(Sunday before Theophany)**

Tone 8 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v: O God, be bountiful to us and bless us, show the light of Your countenance upon us, and have mercy on us!

v: That we may know Your way upon the earth, and Your salvation among all nations.

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8 **(Sunday before Theophany)**

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

THEOPHANY (Epiphany) Vespertine Liturgy with Great Blessing of Water.

Tuesday, January 5, 6:30 pm. Note: Tuesday is a Strict Fast Day in preparation for the festal Liturgy. Those preparing to receive Holy Communion should abstain from food and drink after lunch on Tuesday (the exception to this discipline is for the elderly, those in ill health and those on medication).

Those wishing to have your home blessed should schedule an appointment with Father.

The second day of the Forefeast of Theophany falls on January 3. Today's hymns invite us to go in spirit to the Jordan River where the Creator comes to be baptized. He is the Light which shines in the darkness (John 1:5), and today He begins to overcome that darkness.

Thoughts on Theophany by Saint Nikolai Velimirovich

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 baptized 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 takes away the sin of the world'* (John 1.29), and when he immersed the Lord in the Jordan and baptized 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 Savior 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 (i.e. each Person of the Holy Trinity having the same substance) and undivided. That is one thing. And the other is that each of us baptized in the water is illumined by the Father of lights, through the merits of the Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit.