



January 2, 2022
SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY

Parish Schedule

- Jan. 1 (Sat) CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD
FEAST OF ST. BASIL
NEW YEAR'S DAY**
Divine Liturgy **7:00pm**
Janet Belliveau & David Yarosik - 10th Anniversary

- Jan. 2 (Sun) SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY**
Divine Liturgy **10:30am**
+Jane Guyer req by Chris & Jamie Fekete

- Jan. 6 (Thu) THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD**
Blessing of Water
Divine Liturgy **9:00am**

- Jan. 8 (Sat) Divine Liturgy** **5:00pm**
+Alfred & Mary Crocker req by Steve & Judi Muchoney

- Jan. 9 (Sun) SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY**
Divine Liturgy **10:30am**
+Charles Zeleznik req by Family

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**Our Tithe to our Parish - December 25 & 26, 2021 - \$6,971.00**  
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Let us remember in our prayers all of our friends and parish family members who are sick at home or in a nursing facility and for all who are in need of our prayers.



Tillie Abraham, Ron Bishop, George Bodnar , Monica Boggs,
Pamela Seech Dawson, Steve Fekete, Margaret Gegick, Kevin Ianni,
Ted Race, Clarence Rizzi, Helen Rizzi, Joseph Rusinko Sr.

*CIRCUMCISION OF THE LORD
FEAST OF ST BASIL*

Following the prescriptions of the Law, Mary and Joseph took their child to be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. At this time he was given the name “Jesus”, which means God saves [his people].

We also remember St. Basil the Great, a monk, bishop and great teacher of the Church. As we begin this New Year, we are surrounded with images calling us to holiness and dedication.

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*A special “Thank You” to the James Shirley Funeral Home for again sponsoring our yearly calendars.*

The calendars are available, however, due to a shipping delay we have not received the “2022 donation envelopes”. Hopefully they will arrive soon. Please be patient, and until they arrive, please use a plain envelope with your name on it and # if you still have it. Thank you.

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Wishing all a healthy and blessed New Year!

FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN - DECEMBER 27th

On the third day of Christmas, we commemorate the holy apostle and first-chosen deacon of the early church, Stephen ... who also became the first martyr in the Christian tradition.

The very moving story of Stephen may be found in the *Acts of the Apostles* (Chapter 6 & 7).

It is well worth our while to re-read this account ...to hear how the early church solved its problem about not having enough ministers ... how Stephen was chosen as the first of seven deacons whose task it was to distribute food to the widows and the needy ... how he was unjustly accused ... to listen to the stirring words of his address when he was on trial ... and finally to hear his final words as he was being stoned to death: “*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit ... Lord, do not hold this sin against them.*”

The word *martyr* means one who bears witness. The church has known many martyrs over the centuries ... even to our own day where people are persecuted for their faith ... but remain faithful and thus *bear witness* to Christ.



For Stephen and the other apostles ... they were not bearing witness to a doctrine or any set of teachings. Rather, they were bearing witness to a *person* ... Jesus the Christ, whom they had known personally ... whom they had heard and seen.

They were so touched by his words and actions ... that they would continue to recount all he had said and done ... even if it meant persecution, suffering and death. Thus, we celebrate the *death* of the martyrs as their *birth day in heaven*.

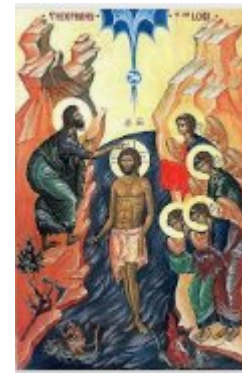
When we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, it is always celebrated on an *antimension* ... a small piece of cloth in which the relics of the martyrs are sewn. In this way, each Divine Liturgy commemorates the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ ... and also unites our offering with that of the holy martyrs ... the *witnesses* for our faith.

THE ICON OF THEOPHANY

The Feast of Theophany is celebrated in the Church 12 days after Christmas (January 6). The feast of Theophany is when Christ was baptized by John the Baptist. We can find the account of Christ's baptism by John in all four Gospels (Matthew 3, Mark 1:19, Luke 3:21-22, John 1:31-34).

At first, John did not want to Baptize Jesus, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and You are coming to me?” (Mat. 3:14). Jesus answered and said, “Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness”. (Mt. 3:15) Jesus' baptism symbolizes what He would do for all of us - lifting us up and cleansing us from our sins. St. Gregory of Nyssa writes, “Jesus enters the filthy (sinful) waters of the world and when He comes out, brings us (purifies) the entire world with Him.”

The word Theophany means a “manifestation of God to the world”. The events of this feast are a Theophany because it was the beginning of Christ's earthly ministry but also because it was a revelation of the Trinity. The Father's voice is heard saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” and the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove, resting upon the head of Christ.



We see this and so much more in the icon of the Feast. We see the dove above the head of Christ representing the Holy Spirit. The dove is surrounded by blue and white light, representing the presence of God the Father. Notice the three rays of light below the dove, representing the three persons of the Trinity.

On the left of the icon, we see John the Baptist. One of his hands is on Christ's head, representing that Jesus is man, while one of his hands is pointing towards the heavens, representing that Jesus is also God. We see Christ Himself, of course, in the center of the icon, in the waters of the Jordan River. On the right side, we see angels, with their heads bowed in reverence to Christ.

“CHRIST IS BAPTIZED IN THE JORDAN”