



# **The Orthodox Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross, Lancaster, UK.**

## ***The Stavronian***

*Monthly magazine and newsletter publicised by the Holy Cross Synodia*



*Ἰσθρονος Χριστός, Ζωοδότης,  
(Φ. Κόντογλου, 1962).*

*The Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,  
belongs to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland.  
The Patriarchate of Antioch is third senior of the Orthodox Churches.  
The Patriarch is His Beatitude John X.*

*The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch  
(Acts 11:26)*

## THE MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST

Soon we Orthodox Christians will be preparing to meet Christ at His Theophany. The world has many distractions to divert our attention from this most holy Feast. Current affairs provide an ever present focus for those immediate concerns that take our eyes from following Him who is the Alpha and Omega. Hebrews 12:2; *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith*;

Secular values are more easily attuned to the present realities of politics rather than Divine spiritual truths. Popular fashion and political correctness dictates an erosive approach to the Feasts of our Lord Jesus Christ. The media has once again skilfully avoided the real meaning of Christmas and the Good News of God becoming man.

There was the Christmas Tree and tinsel, Christmas Pudding and Turkey, crackers and drinking of course but the modern festive spirit of “X-mas” votes for empty and frivolous rituals without Christ. As we begin to celebrate the Incarnation and Theophany of Christ, after our forty day fast, the world is moving on to advertising summer holidays.

Sin, is to miss the target – to fall out of range, to have therefore a wrong focus and aim. Christmas and Theophany is an ever present reality of that most awesome mystery of the God the Father’s greatest present of His Son born in the flesh to live amongst us and to make Himself known to the world. The unfolding life of the babe born in Bethlehem and the Baptism of the *Theanthropos* is not a corollary to politics and current affairs; it is the answer.

Fr Jonathan



## DISCOURSE ON THE DAY OF THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

We shall now say something about the present feast. Many celebrate the feast days and know their designations, but the cause for which they were established they know not. Thus concerning this, that the present feast is called Theophany – everyone knows; but what this is – Theophany, and whether it be one thing or another, they know not. And this is shameful – every year to celebrate the feast day and not know its reason.

First of all therefore, it is necessary to say that there is **not one Theophany, but two**: the one actual, which already has occurred, and the second in future, which will happen with glory at the end of the world. About this one and about the other you will hear today from Paul, who in conversing with Titus, speaks thus about the present: *“The grace of God hath revealed itself, having saved all mankind, decreeing, that we reject iniquity and worldly desires, and dwell in the present age in prudence and in righteousness and piety”* – and about the future: *“awaiting the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ”* (Tit 2:11-13). And a prophet speaks thus about this latter: *“the sun shall turn to darkness, and the moon to blood at first, then shall come the great and illuminating Day of the Lord”* (Joel 2:31).

Why is not that day, on which the Lord was born, considered Theophany – but rather this day on which He was baptised? This present day it is, on which He was baptised and sanctified the nature of water. Because on this day all, having obtained the waters, do carry it home and keep it all year, since today the waters are sanctified; and an obvious phenomenon occurs: these waters in their essence do not spoil with the passage of time, but obtained today, for one whole

year and often for two or three years, they remain unharmed and fresh, and afterwards for a long time do not stop being water, just as that obtained from the fountains.

Why then is this day called Theophany? **Because Christ made Himself known to all – not then when He was born – but then when He was baptised.** Until this time He was not known to the people. And that the people did not know Him, Who He was, listen about this to John the Baptist, who says: *“Amidst you stands Him Whom you know not of”* (Jn. 1:26). And is it surprising that others did not know Him, when even the Baptist did not know Him until that day? *“And I – said he – knew Him not: but He that did send me to baptise with water, about This One did tell to me: over Him that shall see the Spirit descending and abiding upon Him, This One it is Who baptises in the Holy Spirit”* (Jn. 1:33).

Thus from this it is evident, that – there are two Theophanies, and why Christ comes at baptism and on whichever baptism He comes, about this it is necessary to say: it is therefore necessary to know both the one and equally the other. And first it is necessary to speak your love about the latter, so that we might learn about the former.

Just as it was fitting that the Giver of all holiness should enter this world by a pure and holy birth, so it is fitting that He comes to sanctify creation.

Even so Lord Jesus as you have come to sanctify our souls and bodies and all Creation through your Holy Baptism we await your coming in glory at the end of the world: Revelation 22:20-21; *“He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”*

--- St John Chrysostom



**Troparion:** When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan the worship of the Trinity was made manifest! For the voice of the Father bare witness to Thee, calling 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:** Today Thou hast appeared to the universe, and Thy Light, O Lord, has shone on us, who with understanding praise Thee: Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, O Light Unapproachable!

## PARISH NEWS

We are so very grateful to those who remember us in their prayers and show their love as generous benefactors of our Parish. We would like to thank Patricia

Chiracu and her parents for sending a parcel from Romania containing wine, candles, charcoal, incense, myron, Icon cards, chocolates and a beautiful Blessing Cross! Many thanks also to the family of Vasileios Oikonomou who have given candles, incense, chalice cloths and other items for our holy Orthodox Community. We thank them and congratulate Vasileios on his Master's Graduation in December. Such generosity of spirit and love from our benefactors is most appreciated. May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ reward your kindness!

The Orthodox Fellowship of Saint John the Baptist  
[www.forerunner.org.uk](http://www.forerunner.org.uk)

**Study Weekend**  
**Truth, Love, Fellowship**  
**in the Epistles of Saint John**



**1-3 February 2019**  
£50 non-residential  
meals and refreshments  
**Saint Demetrios Orthodox Church**  
**London N9 0LP**  
[www.saintdemetrios.org.uk](http://www.saintdemetrios.org.uk)

## OLD STAVRONIAN CORNER

We have news from our Old Stavronian, Oleg Lychkovskiy and his family, who are

now living in Moscow. Please read his message below.

Dear Father Jonathan,

We greet you and the members of the Holy Cross parish! Hope you are doing well.

Our life goes in a moderate pace. I work as a research scientist in the Skolkovo Institute for Science in Technology in Moscow. Natasha works part-time as a researcher, part-time as a school teacher, and full time as a mum. Elizaveta is 7 and Liuba is 9 now. Elizaveta started her junior school this year. Time flies, and this is particularly clear when looking at children...

We visited the Rostov Kremlin this summer while travelling to my home village, Loyma, which is 1200 km north-east from Moscow. Our route passed through old cities and towns of Northern Russia - Sergiev Posad, Pereslavl-Zalessky, Rostov, Yaroslavl, Vologda, Veliky Ustyug. Each of them used to have an abundance of beautiful churches and monasteries. Many of them were destroyed in the soviet era, but others survived. Some of those survived are now operative, others are turned into museums. We travelled by car without hurry, it took us three days to cover this route. This was the third time we were travelling to Loyma by car, and each time we had a lot to see and admire on the way there. Last year we made a detour to the Ferapontov Monastery, famous for its Virgin Nativity Cathedral painted by Dionisius. Natasha's father was involved in scientific research of Dionisius murals in this monastery. So we got a good opportunity to have a guided tour through the Cathedral which is now turned to a museum. I attach some photos from this trip.

Quite a time (3 years?) passed since you moved to the new church building. How are the things going? Do students



manage to get to the service? How is the Sunday school doing?

Hope to visit Lancaster some day and see you all,

Yours,

*Oleg, Natalia, Liuba, Liza.*



*Ferapontov Monastery, Russia*



*Frescos at Ferapontov Monastery, Russia*



*Frescos at Ferapontov Monastery, Russia*



*Fresco of Pantocrator at Ferapontov Monastery, Russia*

## **NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE RE- MEMBERED THIS MONTH**

Jan. 6: *Fr. Michael Harper*

Jan. 14: *Nina*

Jan. 16: *Fr. Jacob Myers*

Jan. 30: *Ioannis*

## **MEMORY ETERNAL!**

Please send us the names of your departed loved ones and date of their departure in order for them to be remembered.



## MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

1<sup>st</sup> Jan: St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Ceasarea in Cappadocia

6<sup>th</sup> Jan: The **Theophany** of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

9<sup>th</sup> Jan: St. Adrian and St. Brithwald, Archbishops of Canterbury (†710 and †731 A.D.)

17<sup>th</sup> Jan: St. Anthony the Great

18<sup>th</sup> Jan: St. Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria

20<sup>th</sup> Jan: Righteous Euthymius the Great

24<sup>th</sup> Jan: St. Xenia, the Fool-for-Christ of St. Petersburg (†1803)

25<sup>th</sup> Jan: St. Gregory the Theologian

28<sup>th</sup> Jan: St. Ephraim the Syrian

30<sup>th</sup> Jan: Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom

For the lives of Saints please visit the Calendar of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: [www.calendar.goarch.org](http://www.calendar.goarch.org)

**Home blessing at Theophany! Please contact Fr. Jonathan**

### Services at St Martin's in January\*

Sat. 5 <sup>th</sup>	15:00	Great Vespers, Homily and Confessions
Sun. 6 <sup>th</sup>	09:30	Matins, Divine Liturgy of St Basil, and <b>Great Blessing of Waters for Theophany</b>
Sat. 12 <sup>th</sup>	15:00	Great Vespers, Homily and Confessions
Sun. 13 <sup>th</sup>	09:30	Matins and Divine Liturgy
Sat. 19 <sup>th</sup>	10:00	Divine Liturgy, Homily, Memorial, and Confessions
Sun. 20 <sup>th</sup>	09:30	Matins and Divine Liturgy
Sat. 26 <sup>th</sup>	15:00	Great Vespers, Memorial, Homily and Confessions
Sun. 27 <sup>th</sup>	09:30	Matins and Divine Liturgy followed by Parish Lunch

\*Help setting up the church is greatly appreciated and starts half an hour before the service.



*For further information please contact:*

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Top and bottom sketches are created at the Holy Monastery of "The Annunciation of the Theotokos" Chios, Greece, courtesy of Fr Theodosios Dendrinos, Ithaca, Greece.  
The sketch of Christ by Photis Koutoulas was scanned from the Orthodox calendar of the Aponoulidi Diakonia of the Church of Greece.