



Sunday, January 5, 2020

*Sunday before Epiphany*

English Liturgy

*Eve of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, The Holy Martyrs  
Theopemptus and Theonas, Righteous Syncletike of Alexandria*

First Antiphon

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all  
that is within me bless His  
holy Name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and  
forget not all that He has  
done for you.

The Lord in heaven has prepared  
His throne, and His kingdom  
rules over all.

Second Antiphon

Praise the Lord, O my soul; I will  
praise the Lord in my life; I  
will chant unto my God for as  
long as I have my being.

Blessed is He of whom the God  
of Jacob is his help, whose  
hope is in the Lord his God.

The Lord shall be King unto  
eternity; your God, O Zion,  
from generation  
to generation.

Third Antiphon

This is the day the Lord has  
made; let us rejoice and be  
glad in it.

Let the heavens and the earth  
praise Him.

HYMNS AT THE SMALL ENTRANCE

**The Resurrection Apolytikion, Mode 4**

Joyous tidings of Your Resurrection that the angel proclaimed to the women disciples and brought an end to the ancestral curse and with pride they declared to the disciples: Death has been defeated and Christ our God has risen bestowing upon the world great mercy.

**Isodikon**

Come let us worship falling down before Christ. Save us O Son of God who didst arise from the dead sing we to Thee Alleluia.

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**Preparation Apolytikion**

The Jordan River once turned back when Elisha struck its stream with his mantle in the wake of Elijah's ascent; and the water was parted to the one side and to the other. And thus the fluid stream became a dry way for him, a symbol and truly a type of Baptism, by which we now pass over the streaming passage of the present life. And Christ appeared at the Jordan River to sanctify the waters.

**Troparion of Saint Sophia (Holy Wisdom)**

Blessed are You O Christ our God, Who as all wise the fishermen You showed forth; By sending your Holy Spirit down upon them and through them the universe You drew unto your net. O lover of mankind Glory to You.

**Preparation Kondakion**

Today in the waters of the Jordan the Lord has come crying unto John, Do not be afraid to baptize me, for I have come to save Adam the first created man.

**SAINT SOPHIA CATHEDRAL**

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**V. Rev. Father John S. Bakas**

*Dean*

**Fr. Christopher Kolentsas**

*Assistant Priest*

# Scripture Reading

*Faith comes by hearing...*

Epistle Reader George Bellias

**Priest:** Let Us Attend...

**Reader:** O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance...O Lord, I have cried, O my God.

**Priest:** Wisdom.

**Reader:** The reading is from St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy (4:5-8)

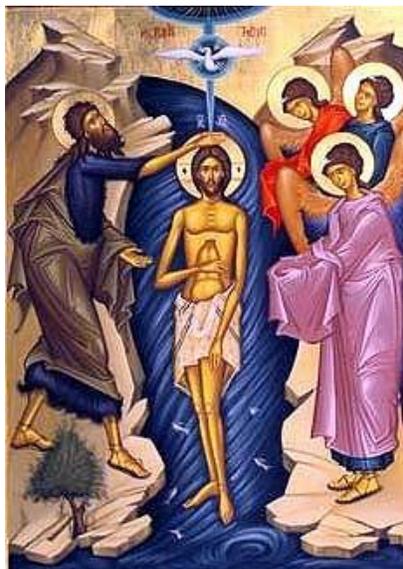
**Priest:** Let us be attentive...

TIMOTHY, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry.

For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

## **THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK (1:1-8)**

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' John was baptizing in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."



# Memorials

*May their memory be eternal...*

*Among the spirits of the righteous perfected in faith, give rest, O Savior to the souls of your servants...*

*Linda V. Kollias (40 days)*

## ALTAR CANDLES

Offered in loving memory of Linda V. Kollias by her children, Jim (Doris), Bill, Sophia, and grandchildren, Harrison and Christina.

## The Tradition of the Vasilopita



The tradition of baking and cutting a special "pita" (which can mean a loaf of bread, a cake, or even a pie) each year on January 1st is observed in honor of our holy father Basil the Great, archbishop of Caesarea in Cappodocia-- hence its name "Vasilopita" meaning "St. Basil's Bread." This tradition is observed in both parish churches and in the homes of the faithful. What is the meaning of this tradition and how did it begin?

For centuries upon centuries, parents, grandparents and godparents have related the following to Orthodox children about St. Basil and the Vasilopita. One year, during a time of terrible famine, the emperor levied a sinfully excessive tax upon the people of Caesarea. The tax was such a heavy burden upon the already impoverished people that to avoid debtors' prison each family had to relinquish its few remaining coins and pieces of jewelry, including precious family heirlooms. Learning of this injustice upon his flock, St. Basil the Great, the archbishop of Caesarea, took up his bishop's staff and the book of the holy Gospels and came to his people's defense by fearlessly calling the emperor to repentance. By God's grace, the emperor did repent! He canceled the tax and instructed his tax collectors to turn over to St. Basil all of the chests containing the coins and jewelry which had been

*continued*

paid as taxes by the people of Caesarea. But now St. Basil was faced with the daunting and impossible task of returning these thousands of coins and pieces of jewelry to their rightful owners. After praying for a long time before the icons of our Master Christ and His All-Holy Mother, St. Basil had all the treasures baked into one huge pita. He then called all the townspeople to prayer at the cathedral, and, after Divine Liturgy, he blessed and cut the pita, giving a piece to each person. Miraculously, each owner received in his piece of Vasilopita his own valuables. They all joyfully returned home, giving thanks to God who had delivered them from abject poverty and to their good and holy bishop St. Basil the Great! In remembrance of that miracle wrought by God as a result of St. Basil's love and defense of his people, Orthodox Christians have observed the tradition of the Vasilopita each year on January 1st-- the date on which St. Basil reposed in the Lord in the year 379.

In some places the Vasilopita is prepared as a loaf of rich bread (like that used for Artoklasia), while in other places it takes the form of a spicy sheet cake (without frosting). But no matter what form a Vasilopita may take, they all have one thing in common-- each contains a single coin. After placing the bread dough or cake batter in the proper baking pan, the baker makes with the foil-wrapped coin the sign of the Cross over it, closes his/her eyes, and then secretly places it into the unbaked Vasilopita. After the Vasilopita is baked and cooled, it is blessed and cut following Divine Liturgy for the feast of St. Basil on January 1st.



### **The Mission of Saint Sophia Cathedral**

- 1. Proclaim and teach the Gospel according to the Orthodox Christian Faith*
- 2. Sanctify and enhance the spiritual life of the faithful through Orthodox Christian worship.*
- 3. Receive persons into the Church through instruction, baptism and/or chrismation.*



### **Sunday, January 5**

- 8:30 am — Orthros
- 9:45 am — Memorials
- 10:00 am — *Divine Liturgy*
- 12:30 pm — Bible Faith Studies

### **Monday, January 6**

- Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*
- 9:00 am — Orthros
- 10:00 am — *Divine Liturgy*

### **Tuesday, January 7**

- Synaxis of John the Holy Glorious Prophet, Baptist and Forerunner*
- 9:00 am — Orthros
- 10:00 am — *Divine Liturgy*

