



*Sunday Bulletin January 3, 2021*  
*Greek Orthodox Church of the*  
*Annunciation*

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**Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-  
Proistamenos**

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## **Epistle Reading**

**Prokeimenon. Plagal Second Mode. Psalm 27.9,1.**  
**O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance.**  
**Verse: To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.**

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

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.

## **Gospel Reading**                      **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."

*Message from Fr. Michael....*

Dearly Beloved Faithful in the Lord:

As we celebrated the New Year, the feast of St. Basil the Great, the Circumcision of the Lord, and will be the feast of our Lord's Holy Theophany, we reflect back at what everyone witnessed at the time of our Lord's Holy Theophany. Those who were on the banks of the Jordan River, witnessed the manifestation of the incarnation of our Lord. They witnessed our Savior as both Man and God. All righteousness was fulfilled when St. John baptized the Lord in the Jordan River. The water was so affected by the Lord's immersion that it caused itself to flow backwards.

This reverse flow of the Jordan has persisted since that time! The Blessed Holy Trinity was there for all to see. God the Father parted the Heavens as God the Son came out of the water. The voice of God the Father proclaimed "This is my Beloved Son of Whom I am well pleased." God the Holy Spirit appeared overhead in the form of a dove. Thus, the Triune God appeared to all. There was no doubt! There was no negotiation! Our God in His complete form was present! He was there for all to witness. We are sprinkled with the water of the Jordan, the very water which Baptized our Lord Jesus, for those of us who came to Church today on the feast of the Lord's Holy Theophany. We remember that during the Divine Liturgy, we sang, " For as many that are baptized in Christ, put on Christ! Alleluia." By being sprinkled with the Holy Water, the Aghiasmo, we essentially put Christ on ourselves.

In doing so, we give Glory to The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. We become one with the Lord! Today we enter into the Jordan River with Him and we pray that the sins that we carry will be thoroughly washed away.

We pray that the illumination cast by the upcoming celebration of the feast of the Lord's Theophany continues to shine on our path leading us to righteousness and to the grace of our Lord.

Prayerfully in His service,

+Fr. Michael

## Gordios the Martyr of Caesarea

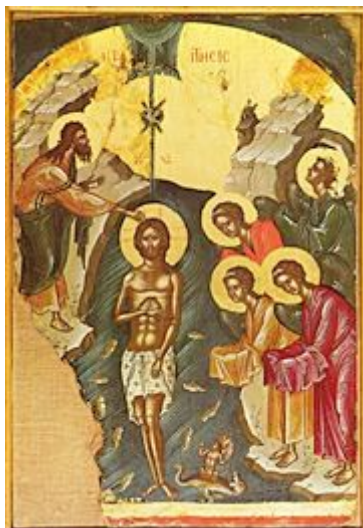


The Martyr Gordios who was from Caesarea of Cappadocia, was a centurion by rank. Unable to bear the impiety of the heathen, he withdrew to the wilderness to purify himself through prayer and fasting. After he perceived that his ascetical training had prepared him sufficiently, he came down from the mountains when a certain pagan festival was held in Caesarea, attended by all, and presented himself before the multitude. Although the spectacles of the festival continued, no one paid them any heed, but all eyes were turned upon him. From his sojourn in the mountains, his look was wild, his beard was long, his raiment squalid, his body like a skeleton; yet a certain grace shone round about him. He was recognized, and a loud shout and

tumult was made as his fellow Christians rejoiced, and the enemies of the truth cried out for his death. He boldly professed his faith before the Governor, and after torments was beheaded, in the reign of Licinius in the year 314. Saint Basil the Great delivered a homily on Saint Gordios, mentioning that some of those in his audience had been present at the saint's martyrdom (PG 31:497).

## Forefeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

### Apolytikion of Forefeast of the Theophany



Be thou ready, Zabulon; prepare thyself, O Nephthalim. River Jordan, stay thy course and skip for gladness to receive the Sovereign Master, Who cometh now to be baptized. O Adam, be thou glad with our first mother, Eve; hide not as ye did of old in Paradise. Seeing you naked, He hath appeared now to clothe you in the first robe again. Christ hath appeared, for He truly willeth to renew all creation.

### Malachi the Prophet

The Prophet Malachi ("messenger of God") is the last of the twelve minor Prophets, and also of all the Prophets of the Old Testament. He prophesied in the days of Nehemias, a wise man among the Jews, who also held a high and powerful position in the court of Artaxerxes the Long-armed, King of the Persians, who reigned from 465 to 424 B.C. Malachis' book of prophecy is divided into four chapters; he foretold the coming of Christ as the Sun of Righteousness (4:2)

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS...**that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Ted Simon, John Gianakos, Maria Lambrinos, Steve Anastos, Angelo Romas, and Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

**REMAINDER OF CHRISTMAS SERVICES FOR 2020  
CHRISTMAS SEASON:**

**Wednesday, January 6, 2021**

Feast of Holy Theophany

Orthros 8:45 am and Divine Liturgy 9:45 am

The Great Blessing of the Waters is to be at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on this day.

## **Wisdom of the Fathers**

It is the sole and peculiar property of the Substance that transcends all, to be able to bestow on men the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and make those that draw near unto It partakers of the divine nature.

**St. Cyril of Alexandria**

Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke, Homily 10., 4th Century

But this exists in Christ, not as a thing received, nor by communication from another, but as His own, and as belonging to His substance, for He baptizes in the Holy Spirit.

**St. Cyril of Alexandria**

Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke, Homily 10., 4th Century

*Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael (607) 795-1474. For all other matters, please notify Fr. Michael or a member of the parish council. Deadline for suggestions to the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.*