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Sunday, January 4th, 2015

## Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church Sunday before Theophany

### *The Sanctification of the Waters*

On Tuesday, January 6th, the day of Theophany, we celebrate the Blessing of Water. During these special services we invoke the Holy Spirit to come and sanctify the water which has been placed in a bowl in the Church as a cross is immersed into it three times, symbolic of our Lord's own immersion into the Jordan River.

This celebration of Epiphany is a time of great rejoicing as we celebrate the Feast of Lights commemorating the baptism of Christ and the manifestation of God in three persons commonly referred to as the Holy Trinity (Matthew 3:13-17)

When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and Lightening upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from Heaven, saying "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

According to our Faith, this water has the power to sanctify and heal. The celebration as we see it today is in fact recorded in the history of the early Church where we see references in which sanctified water was used for the purpose of restoring health and in warding off diseases. In the 4th century it was a common practice to sprinkle people, animals, and homes with holy water.

At the conclusion of the service of Great Vespers and the Divine Liturgy, the faithful receive the water which should be brought to the home where it may be kept with the family icons and other religious items. One should bless the house and partake of the water in times of illness and other adversities.

#### **HOLY COMMUNION REMINDER— *Please follow Ushers Instructions***

We welcome those visiting with us today and ask that only Baptized/Chrismated Orthodox Christians who are properly prepared through prayer, fasting and Holy Confession to come forward to receive Holy Communion. Women are kindly asked to remove their lipstick prior to receiving Holy Communion. Non-Orthodox visitors are welcome to receive the blessed bread from the Priest at the end of the Divine Liturgy and to join us for fellowship in our hall. We ask that everyone please dress appropriately for church.

**Visitors: we ask that you fill out a yellow welcome card & give it to an usher.**

#### COMING UP...

- ♦ STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY TODAY!!!
- ♦ NO SUNDAY SCHOOL TODAY
- ♦ GOYA: TODAY following Liturgy MEETING
- ♦ HOLY EPIPHANY  
Tues. Jan. 6th  
Orthos 9AM  
Div. Lit. 10AM
- ♦ St. John the Baptist  
Wed. Jan. 7th  
Orthos 9AM  
Div. Lit. 10AM
- ♦ Choir: Wed. Jan. 7th 6PM PRACTICE
- ♦ Circle of Friends:  
Thurs. Jan. 8th  
6PM  
MOVIE NIGHT
- ♦ House Blessing  
begin Jan. 8th—  
Jan 31st
- ♦ Ladies Philoptochos Society:  
Mon. Jan.. 12th  
BOARD MEETING

## 2ND TRAY CONTRIBUTIONS

Our Church passes 2 offering trays. The 1st goes towards our Operating Budget, the 2nd tray will continue for the NEW Education Building Fund until paid in Full. In order to receive credit for your donation, for income tax purposes, make sure to put your cash donation in an envelope with your name on it or pay by check.

### EPISTLE READING

#### **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

#### **The Gospel of Mark 1:1-8**

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, '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 the baptizer appeared 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."

### Resurrectional Apolytikion

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,  
Τὸν συνάναρχον Λόγον Πατρὶ καὶ Πνεύματι (Page 45)

### Apolytikion for the Forefeast

O Zabublon, prepare, and be ready, Nephthalim. Jordan River, hold your course, and exultantly receive the Master who is coming to be baptized. Adam leap for joy with Eve the Fore-mother. No longer hide yourselves, as once in Paradise; for having seen you naked He has appeared to clothe you in your former vesture. The Christ has appeared, wishing to renew the entire creation

Ἐτοιμάζου Ζαβουλών, καὶ εὐτρεπίζου Νεφθαλείμ.

Ἰορδάνη ποταμέ, στήθι ὑπόδεξαι σκιρτῶν, τοῦ βαπτισθῆναι ἐρχόμενον τὸν Δεσπότην. Ἀγάλλου ὁ Ἀδάμ σὺν τῇ Προμήτορι· μὴ κρύπτετε ἑαυτοὺς, ὡς ἐν

Παραδείσῳ τὸ πρὶν· καὶ γὰρ γυμνοὺς ἰδὼν ὑμᾶς ἐπέφανεν, ἵνα ἐνδύσῃ τὴν πρώτην στολὴν. Χριστὸς ἐφάνη, τὴν πᾶσαν κτίσιν, θέλων ἀνακαινίσαι

### Kontakion

To the flowing streams today of River Jordan comes the Lord and cries aloud to John the Baptist, and He says, "Be not afraid to baptize me now; for I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man."

Ἐν τοῖς ρεῖθροις σήμερον τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, γεγονώς ὁ Κύριος, τῷ Ἰωάννῃ ἐκβοᾷ· Μὴ δειλιάσης βαπτίσει με· σῶσαι γὰρ ἤκω, Ἀδάμ τὸν πρωτοπλαστον.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION: HYMNS AND WHERE THEY CAN BE FOUND

Hymns of Divine Liturgy insert can be found in the pews to allow you to follow along. The hymns in the bulletin will be the variable ones specific to that week or change from the common hymns that you will find in the insert located in the pews.

### SAINTS COMMEMORATED

#### TODAY, THURSDAY JANUARY 4th

- Synaxis of the 70 Holy Apostles
- Our Righteous Father Theoctistus, Abbot of Cucomo in Sicily
- Forefeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

## **SAINT BASIL THE GREAT— JANUARY 1st**

Saint Basil the Great was born about the end of the year 329 in Caesarea of Cappadocia, to a family renowned for their learning and holiness. His parents' names were Basil and Emily. His mother Emily (commemorated July 19) and his grandmother Macrina (Jan. 14) are Saints of the Church, together with all his brothers and sisters: Macrina, his elder sister (July 19), Gregory of Nyssa (Jan. 20), Peter of Sebastia (Jan. 9), and Naucratius. Basil studied in Constantinople under the sophist Libanius, then in Athens, where also he formed a friendship with the young Gregory, a fellow Cappadocian, later called "the Theologian." Through the good influence of his sister Macrina (see July 19), he chose to embrace the ascetical life, abandoning his worldly career. He visited the monks in Egypt, in Palestine, in Syria, and in Mesopotamia, and upon returning to Caesarea, he departed to a hermitage on the Iris River in Pontus, not far from Annesi, where his mother and his sister Macrina were already treading the path of the ascetical life; here he also wrote his ascetical homilies.

About the year 370, when the bishop of his country reposed, he was elected to succeed to his throne and was entrusted with the Church of Christ, which he tended for eight years, living in voluntary poverty and strict asceticism, having no other care than to defend holy Orthodoxy as a worthy successor of the Apostles. The Emperor Valens, and Modestus, the Eparch of the East, who were of one mind with the Arians, tried with threats of exile and of torments to bend the Saint to their own confession, because he was the bastion of Orthodoxy in all Cappadocia, and preserved it from heresy when Arianism was at its strongest. But he set all their malice at nought, and in his willingness to give himself up to every suffering for the sake of the Faith, showed himself to be a martyr by volition. Modestus, amazed at Basil's fearlessness in his presence, said that no one had ever so spoken to him. "Perhaps," answered the Saint, "you have never met a bishop before." The Emperor Valens himself was almost won over by Basil's dignity and wisdom. When Valens' son fell gravely sick, he asked Saint Basil to pray for him. The Saint promised that his son would be restated if Valens agreed to have him baptized by the Orthodox; Valens agreed, Basil prayed, and the son was restored. But afterwards the Emperor had him baptized by Arians, and the child died soon after. Later, Valens, persuaded by his counsellors, decided to send the Saint into exile because he would not accept the Arians into communion; but his pen broke when he was signing the edict of banishment. He tried a second time and a third, but the same thing happened, so that the Emperor was filled with dread, and tore up the document, and Basil was not banished. The truly great Basil, spent with extreme ascetical practices and continual labours, at the helm of the church, departed to the Lord on the 1st of January, in 379. at the age of forty-nine.

His writings are replete with wisdom and erudition, and rich are these gifts he set forth the doctrines concerning the mysteries both of the creation (see his Hexaemeron) and of the Holy Trinity (see On the Holy Spirit). Because of the majesty and keenness of his eloquence, he is honoured as "the revealer of heavenly things" and "the Great."

Saint Basil is also celebrated on January 30th with Saint Gregory the Theologian and Saint John Chrysostom.

## **SYNAXIS OF THE 70 HOLY APOSTLES— JANUARY 4th**

The Seventy Disciples and Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ are those Whom our Saviour chose in addition to the Twelve and sent forth unto the work of preaching. With the passage of time, others were added to their number by the Holy Apostles, who, with the accompaniment and assistance of the Seventy, were preaching the Gospel of Christ in various lands. Although their number eventually exceeded seventy, they were all nonetheless referred to as "of the Seventy" out of reverence for the number of Apostles which the Lord chose.

The divine Apostle and Evangelist Luke describes the calling and the sending forth of the Seventy as follows in his Holy Gospel (Luke 10:1-16): "After these things the Lord appointed another seventy disciples, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come. Therefore said He unto them, the harvest is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth labourers into His harvest. Go then: behold, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry neither purse, nor bag, nor sandals: and greet no man on the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter first say, Peace be on this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. And into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you; And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveeth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding know ye this, that the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be brought down to hades. He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me."

After the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord, and after Pentecost, on which all the Apostles and men and women disciples of Christ, together with the Most Holy Theotokos (some 120 in number), were gathered in the upper chamber, they received the grace of the All-holy Spirit and went forth throughout the ends of the world, everywhere preaching and teaching the Gospel of Christ, and leading to the true Faith the peoples who were sunk in the darkness of impiety and idolatry.

## **TODAY IS STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY !!!**

*"I CARE ENOUGH" IS THE 2015 Theme. We will have a special prayer service as our Gifts of Time, Talents and Treasures are offered by you, the Faithful of Annunciation Parish.  
Everyone please pledge for 2015!*

### **MEMORIAL**

Today, we offer a 4 year Memorial for the servant of God, Rev. Fr. George Pappas, husband of Pres. Evangeline Pappas. May his memory be eternal. Pres. Evangeline is sponsoring coffee hour in his honor.

### **40 DAY BABY BLESSING**

Argiro, the daughter of Eve Beos & Andrew Rozakis will receive her 40 Day Blessing today. We welcome Argiro, Andrew & Eve to our Annunciation Parish family and pray our Lord will continue to bless them as they prepare for Argiro's Baptism.

### **LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY**

On behalf of the Ladies Philoptochos Society with our President Ginny Amend, we would like to wish each and everyone of you a very Happy New Year and Blessed 2015. May we all enjoy the gifts our Lord has given us each and everyday. See you next year 2015!

### **HELLENIC-AMERICAN SOCIAL CLUB:**

Happy New Year to all our dear friends and members and all our parishioners. Our first meeting of 2015 is scheduled for Tuesday, January 13th, at 7:00 p.m. in the Fr. Arthur Kontinos Community Center. We are inviting all to attend, become a member and join in the fun. We will be discussing the upcoming events which are already scheduled, as well as welcoming new ideas. Also, save the date: February 5th. Panigiri – Greek Picnic – Fund Raiser for our new Classroom Building. Details to be announced in future Bulletins.

### **DANCE TROUPE**

\$50 enrollment fee to include dancer tee shirt & costume cleaning fees. Dance director; Georgia Kline, 239-898-3138 ([gpeach725@aol.com](mailto:gpeach725@aol.com)) fellow instructors; Cassandra DiStefano, Alaina Todd & Kalianna Karras (*when available*).

**Name of Troupe:** HARA TIS ELLADAS - JOY OF GREECE

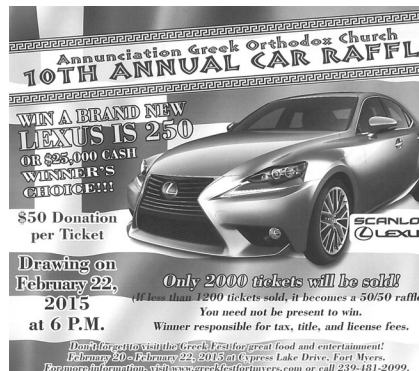
**Practice Times;** Agape "Love" (preK - Grade 2). Sun. after church 45-60 min. Kardia "Heart" (Grades 3-6). Monday & Thursday 5:30-6:30 Thiname "Strength" (Grades 7-12). Mon. & Thurs. 6:30-8:00

**Please note:** All groups will practice on Sundays additionally. You will receive notifications or modifications if any occur in the future.

### **\$AY YES TO THE FEST**

"Don't forget to \$ay Yes to the FEST" and check off a BOX and make your donation to offset festival product costs. It's a fun way to be a part of a great event -- celebrating our 40th Year! If you didn't receive a card in the mail, stop by the office to pick one up or call 481 2099.

### **10th ANNUAL CAR RAFFLE 2015**



### **DOLLAR \$\$ CASH RAFFLE TICKETS**

Spend \$5 Bucks & Test Your Luck!!

\$5 for a book of 6 tickets

### **\$\$\$ CASH PRIZES \$\$\$**

\$1000--1st Prize • \$500 -2nd Prize • \$250-3rd & 4th Prizes

**Winners drawn on Feb. 22, at the Festival. Our Mission? Sell out 7,000 like last year. Let's Do This!! Help Sell by Calling Tina Kucera at 239-980-1520.**

### **RELIGIOUS ED**

Effective next Sunday, January 11th, students in all Religious Ed Classes OTHER than the Teen Class, will worship in Church at 10am and then go to the Fellowship Hall for Classes from 10:15am **until** Communion time.

The Teen Class students should begin with worship in Church at 10am until Communion time, and then proceed to the Fellowship Hall **after** Holy Communion for their classes until 11:30am. This will continue for at least 4 weeks. Please be prompt as to not interrupt valuable class time.



### **Praying for You**

We offer prayers for health and the needs for the servants of God for Maria Mourgis, Kostantia Tsolakis, Eugenia Loughney, Terry Kalogridis, Louis Eftim, Sophia Katsaris, Doug and Tina Kucera, Lanette Howard, Michael and Ann Conidaris, Jonathan Finley, John Kontinos & Penelope Kontinos. Please notify the office if there is someone that needs to be added to the prayer list. 239-481-2099