Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church

A parish of the New England Diocese ✣ Orthodox Church in America
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Sunday, Jan. 7, 2018 *Sunday after Theophany / the Synaxis of Saint John the Baptist*

Today's readings are:

Ephesians 4:7-13 and Saint Matthew 4:12-17
Acts (of the Apostles) 19:1-8 and Saint John 1:29-34

Weekly calendar:

Today				church school and coffee hour
Jan.	8	Mon	5:30pm	Daily Vespers
Jan.	9	Tue	5:30pm	Daily Vespers
			6:30pm	parish council meeting
Jan.	10	Wed	5:30pm	Daily Vespers
Jan.	11	Thu	5:30pm	Daily Vespers
Jan.	12	Fri	5:30pm	Daily Vespers
Jan.	13	Sat	4:30pm	Panikhida- 40th day remembrance of Martha Odaynik
			5:00pm	**Great Vespers and Confessions**
Jan.	14	Sun	**9:00am**	**Divine Liturgy-** *32nd Sunday after Pentecost / leave-taking of Theophany*
				[I Timothy 1:15-17 and Saint Luke 18:35-43]
				church school and coffee hour

This week we return to the regular and normal Wednesday and Friday fast.

The names of the members of the nominating committee are posted on the downstairs bulletin board. If you would like to serve in any capacity on the parish council, speak to any member of the nominating committee.

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THE WATERS OF BAPTISM *from a sermon by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh*

We are now keeping the feast of the Baptism of Christ, a dread event, an event that should keep us spellbound, in awe: He who is pure shares the impurity of human sin so that He may save us. We bless the waters, the natural waters that surround us, and we pray the Lord to send upon these waters grace and blessing for them to become pure and holy, endowed with the power to cleanse and to renew, to make us and all the objects and all the places where they will be sprinkled, partakers of this purity of the waters of Jordan which had touched the holy and pure body of the Incarnation, of the One who had taken upon Himself all the evil of world. We pray that the grace of the Spirit of God may come upon these waters and that they may be truly blessing and salvation by the power of Christ, by the power and dwelling of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE BLESSING OF WATER *by Father Thomas Hopko*

People sometimes think that the blessing of water, and the practice of drinking it and sprinkling it on people and things, is a "paganism" which has crept into the Christian Church. We know, however, that this ritual was practiced by the People of God before the coming of Christ, as well as at the time of His manifestation. (See John 5-7) And we know that it has existed among Christians from very early times, being witnessed from the beginning especially in connection with the practice of baptism.

The service of the Great Blessing of Water itself reveals the action's meaning for the Christian people. The readings from the Bible, particularly the messianic words from the prophecy of Isaiah, together with the prayers, petitions and hymns all serve to manifest the meaning of the great festival of the Manifestation of the Messiah.

Thus says the Lord, the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing...they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God... He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.... (Isaiah 35:1-10)

God has sent His only-begotten Son "not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." (John 3:17) He has sent the Lord Jesus Christ not only to save people's souls, but to save their bodies, and not only to save human beings, but to save the entire creation.

You are great, O Lord, and Your works are wondrous, and there are no words capable of hymning Your wonders... For of Your own will You brought all things into being from nothing, by Your power You uphold the whole of creation, and by Your providence You order the world... The sun sings to You, the moon glorifies You, the stars meet together before Your face, the light obeys You, the deeps shudder before You, the water springs serve You... We confess Your grace, we proclaim Your mercy, we conceal not Your gracious acts: You have set free our mortal nature. By Your birth, You have sanctified the virgin's womb. All creation sings praises to You Who have revealed Yourself.... (*The Main Prayer from the Great Blessing of Water*)

Since the Son of God has taken human flesh and has appeared in the world, manifesting Himself in His baptism in the Jordan, all flesh and all matter is sanctified. Everything is made pure and holy in Him. Everything that is corrupted and polluted by the sinful works of men is cleansed and purified by the gracious works of God. All death-dealing powers of the devil that poison the good world of God's creation are destroyed. All things are again made new. Through the "prime element" of water on the feast of the Theophany the entire creation is shown to be sanctified by God's Word through the same Spirit of God who "in the beginning...was moving over the face of the waters." (Genesis 1:2)

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Сегодня- *Попразднство Просвещения / Собор Св. Иоанна Предтечи*
[Послание к Ефесянам 4:7-13 и от Матфея 4:12-17]
[Деяния Святых Апостолов 19:1-8 и от Иоанна 1:29-34]

Субб. 5:00чд Великая Вечерня и Исповедь

Воск. 9:00чу Литургиа- *32-я Неделя по Пятидесятнийа / Отдание праздника Богоявления*
[Первое Послание к Тимофею 1:15-17 и от Луки 18:35-43]