

Interesting Facts about the Celebration of Theophany

River Jordan is mentioned in the Bible more than 150 times, but the most important episode is involving undoubtedly Epiphany: **"The Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ"**; this is reported by all 4 Evangelists (Matthew 3: 13-17, Mark 1: 9-11, Luke 3: 21-22 and, John 1: 29-34).

The Old Israel attributed the crossing of the river Jordan to coming to the Promised Land, that was the end of slavery in a foreign land.

For the **Christian Church – the New Israel** – Jordan represents flowing to a new spiritual state and the purification through baptism in order to enter the kingdom of God.

Those who have visited the Holy Land or those who plan to visit in the future, should know that **when one stands on the Israeli side, the current of the Jordan always flows toward the right.** This can be confirmed by anyone who visits the Jordan at any time of the year.

Every year, however, on the day before Epiphany (according to the Julian Calendar, January 18), during the blessing of the waters, the miracle of the River Jordan reversing its flow takes place. The miracle repeats every January 18 – some years with more intensity.

According to our Holy Orthodox Church, the miracle occurred when Jesus entered the Jordan River to get baptized by the Great Prophet and Saint: John the Baptist when **"the Jordan reversed its flow!"**



Ss Constantine & Helen

Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Pacific



January 3, 2021

Sunday before Theophany

930 Lunalilo Street, Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 521-7220 www.greekorthodoxhawaii.org
Office: office@greekorthodoxhawaii.org
Fr. Alexander Leong: fralexanderleong@yahoo.com

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Commemoration of: Prophet Malachi; Martyr Gordios of Caesarea

Apolytikia - Entrance Hymns

Ton sinanarhon Logon (Hymn of the Day) Tone 5

Coeternal with the Father and the Spirit is the Word, who of a Virgin was begotten for our salvation, as the faithful we praise and worship Him, for in the flesh did He consent to ascend unto the Cross, and death did He endure and He raise to life the dead, through His glorious Resurrection.

Etimazu Zavulon (Hymn of the Forefeast) Tone 4

*O Zabulon, 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 Foremother. * 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.*

Tou Stavru Sou (Hymn of the Church) Tone 8

Having seen in the sky the form of Your Cross and, like Paul, having received his calling not from men, Your apostle among Kings, Lord, placed his reigning city in Your hand, which forever you guard in peace, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, for You alone are the lover of mankind.

Kontakion

En tis rithris simeron Tone 3

*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."*

Epistle Reading 2 Timothy 4:5-8

TIMOTHY, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill 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 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."

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This Week

- ✠ SUN, 1/3– *Sunday before Theophany*
- ✠ TUE, 1/5– *Vesper-Liturgy of St. Basil via Zoom 9 a.m., followed by the Blessing of the Waters; ***Strict Fast Day*** Special Parish Council Meeting via Zoom 6 p.m.*
- ✠ WED, 1/6– *Theophany/Epiphany via Zoom: Orthros 8:30 a.m., followed by Liturgy and the Blessing of the Waters*
- ✠ THU, 1/7– *Synaxis of St. John the Baptist via Zoom: Orthros 8:30 a.m., followed by Liturgy*
- ✠ SAT, 1/9– *Great Vespers 5:30 p.m.; Philoptochos Garage Sale 8 a.m.-noon in the church parking garage. Contact Eres Eddy for information at guljep@gmail.com*
- ✠ SUN, 1/10– *Sunday after Theophany; Philoptochos Meeting via Zoom 1 p.m.; Adult Religious Education via Zoom: "The Fruit of the Spirit- Kindness" 1:35 p.m.*

Announcements

- ✠ **Parish General Assembly:** Sunday, January 17, 2021 via Zoom
- ✠ **Stewardship 2021:** Forms are located on our church website under Our Ministries/Stewardship. Please send your completed form via scan/email to stewardship@greekorthodoxhawaii.org or Sts. Constantine & Helen Cathedral ATTN: Stewardship, 930 Lunalilo St, Honolulu, HI 96822. Email any questions to stewardship@greekorthodoxhawaii.org ATTN: Cleo or call the office at 521-7220.

Wisdom from the Holy Fathers on Theophany/Epiphany

"The Father was revealed to the sense of hearing; the Spirit was revealed to the sense of sight, and in addition to these, the Son was revealed to the sense of touch. The Father uttered His witness about the Son, the Son was baptized in the water, and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove hovered above the water. When John the Baptist witnessed and said about Christ, "Behold, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29), and when John immersed and baptized the Lord in the Jordan, the mission of Christ in the world and the path of our salvation was shown. That is to say: The Lord took upon Himself the sins of mankind and died under them [immersion] and became alive again [the coming out of the water]; and we must die as the old sinful man and become alive again as cleansed, renewed and regenerated. This is the Savior and this is the path of salvation."

-St. Nikolai Velimirovich (an excerpt)

