



Pastor:

Fr. Andrew Jacobs
(209) 984-4595

Deacon Elias Union
(209) 532-7899

Natalie Teshin
(209) 536-1495

Today the Maker of heaven and earth comes to the Jordan in human flesh./ The sinless One asks to be baptized, / that He may cleanse the world from the error of the Enemy./ The Master of all is baptized by a servant;/ through water He gives cleansing to the human race./ Let us cry aloud to Him:// "O our God Who shone forth, glory to You!"

—Vespers Aposticha Sticheron of Theophany

Holy Theophany

This is the feast in which we learn anew that every one of us has need of God's saving grace. Even God Himself modeled the humility that He asks of us, when He dignified to be baptized by John the Forerunner. John himself avowed that he was not worthy to loose the latchet of Christ's sandals, and yet, Jesus underwent baptism by John, and as we read in Matthew 3:13-17, both the Father and the Holy Spirit bore witness to the righteousness of this action.

What does this mean? It could be said that, when we know something is the right thing to do, we should do it, without hedging or quibbling. So often, we get severe cases of the "Yeah, but..." disease, in which we are perpetually trapped in the small space between what we actually want to do—and all the reasons why we can't, most of which reasons we have already (and even long ago) dismissed. Yet, we cling to the security of the known limits in which we all-too-often go through life on "automatic pilot."

Christ, being God and man, was bound by nothing as "necessary." Obviously, as He Who through Whom creation was made, Christ was not bound by the laws of creation—rather, creation (including us) is bound by His laws. Yet, He knew us well enough to recognize the "yeah, but"-ism in all of us. He very kindly showed us the way. Even though, of all the persons in and beyond

Creation, He was most assuredly the One for Whom baptism was not necessary, He did it, to get us to go "into the water" of the life-changing Orthodox Christian faith. He took His human and divine self into the waters to teach us all that there is no reason compelling enough to keep us from doing what is right and good.

We must remember that, just as those waters wash us spiritually clean, so, too, each and every one of our actions is a baptism-like testament to what we believe, and hold dear. So it is, that we are spiritually faced with going "into the waters" many times every day.

A Visit From His Grace, Bishop Benjamin

This was a very joyous event in our parish year, as His Grace brought His wisdom, great good humor, kindness, love and gentleness to



*Corner of Jamestown Rd.
& Robinwood Ln.
(2 blocks north of
Racetrack Rd.)

our Patronal Feast Day celebration. It is no exaggeration to say that we were all touched and delighted by having His Grace among us—not only to serve us a beautiful Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, but also to regale us with his wit, wisdom and practical advice.

Adding to our joy was the presence of the knowledgeable and talented Deacon Brendan Doss, and the exceedingly humble and intelligent Subdeacon Elias Mukasa. Deacon Brendan is attached to Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco. He and your humble priest go back a long way, and I must admit, I was very glad to see him. Subdeacon Elias is a very fine young man from Uganda who graduated from the

M. Div. program at St. Tikhon's Seminary not long ago, and has been traveling with Bishop Benjamin. He will be returning to Uganda in June, to be married and then ordained to the priesthood.

Again, His Grace was in top form—and his homily during Liturgy brought home to us that we are all more than mere appearances; in each one of us exists the very Temple of the Holy Spirit. Just as we beautify our church temple, so we should beautify our inner temples with those actions and attitudes that call down upon us God's grace. This was a truly memorable visit. Eis polla, eti Dhespota!

In the Love of Christ,
Fr. Andrew



Liturgical Schedule for January 2009

January

- Saturday, January 3** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers
- Sunday, January 4** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—2 Timothy 4:5–8 and Mark 1:1–8
- Monday, January 5** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers with **Blessing of the Waters for Theophany**
- Tuesday, January 6** 6:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **Theophany**
Scripture Readings—Titus 2:11–14; 3:4–7 and Matthew 3:13–17
- Saturday, January 10** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers
- Sunday, January 11** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—Ephesians 4:7–13; 2 Corinthians 4:6–15 & Matthew 4:12–17; 11:27–30
Note: There will be a potluck luncheon and a Parish Council Meeting following Divine Liturgy.
- Saturday, January 17** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers
- Sunday, January 18** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—1 Timothy 1:15–17 and Luke 18:18–27
- Saturday, January 24** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers
- Sunday, January 25** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—1 Timothy 1:15–17; 1 Corinthians 12:7–11 & Matthew 15:21–28;
John 10:9–16
- Saturday, January 31** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **Zacchaeus Sunday**

February

- Sunday, February 1** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **Zacchaeus Sunday**
Scripture Readings—1 Timothy 4:9–15 and Luke 19:1–10
Following Divine Liturgy—Great Vespers for **The Meeting of Christ in the Temple**
- Monday, February 2** 6:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **The Meeting of Christ in the Temple**
Scripture Readings—Hebrews 7:7–17 and Luke 2:22–40
- Saturday, February 7** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee**
- Sunday, February 8** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee**
Scripture Readings—2 Timothy 3:10–15 and Luke 18:10–14

MANY YEARS

Birthdays:

Dave Harmer January 14
Layne Williams January 24

Anniversaries:

Alex & Natalie Teshin January 26

St. Susanna Cleaning Teams

Church Cleaning Teams:

TEAM ONE: # 1

Rebecca Teshin-536-1625 (team leader)

Leslie Hurst-984-4436

Jan Williams-533-1056

Mat. Elizabeth-984-4595

Judy McIntosh-795-4342

TEAM TWO: # 2

Jeanne Harmer-536-0254 (team leader)

Mat. Anna-532-7899

Natalie Teshin-536-1495

Catherine Weightman-928-3735

Please arrive promptly at 9:00 a.m. ready to work. It will take approximately two hours to complete all tasks. If for some reason you are not able to make it please notify your team leader.

Clergy, please when it is possible come and clean the altar while your wives are cleaning the rest of the church building. Thank you everyone for your help in beautifying our temple.

St. Susanna Cleaning Team Schedule

*Blessed are those who love the beauty
of God's house*

Team 1—January 17th; 9:00 a.m.

Prayer List

PLEASE JOIN US IN GIVING THANKS TO GOD:

- For the skill and devotion of those beautifying our temple and gardens.
- For the beauty of the Mother Lode, and for the privilege we have been given to live here.
- That the Holy Mother of Jesus continues to care for the unborn.
- That many of our petitions are being answered.
- For the sale of her house and the successful disposition of Natasha's property in Russia.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR GOD'S HELP:

- "St. John, please intercede for us before God for the membership growth of St. Susanna."
- That St. Susanna Mission may receive a Church Planting Grant.
- For repose of the souls of our service men and women who have given their lives for the people of Iraq.
- To safeguard all the troops who remain in heathen lands.
- To help us forgive the heathen fanatics who continue to murder our soldiers and their own citizens and children.
- That many may come to Orthodoxy through our witness and example.
- To bless our monasteries and the men and women who dwell in them.
- For the well-being of Matushka Anna and her family.
- For health and welfare for Ann, Fr. John, and Elisa.
- For the healing and comfort for Stephen.
- For Natasha's success in securing a permanent art teaching position.
- For Nadine's successful therapy.

To ask us to pray for you, your family or friends, please call Alex Teshin at 209-536-9999.