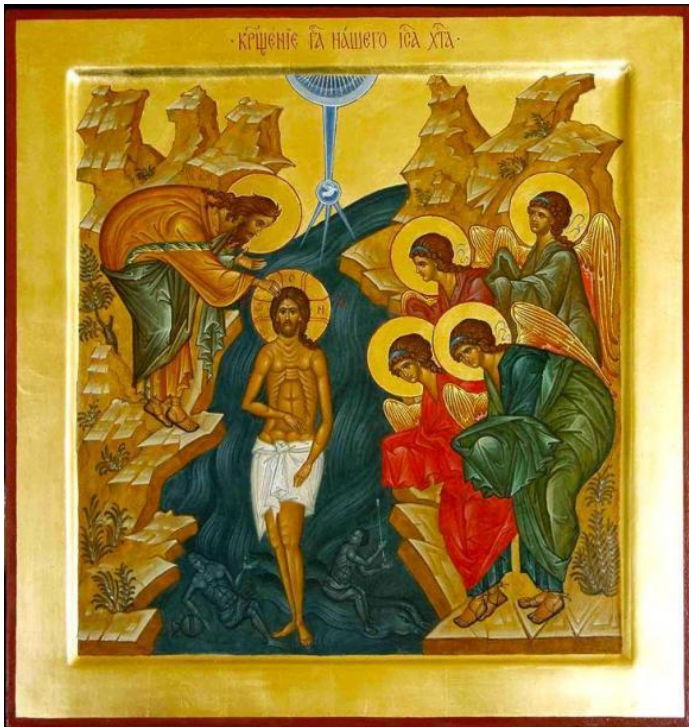


January 10, 2021: The Sunday after the Epiphany (The beginning of the Lord's ministry)

Epistle reading: Eph. 4:7-13:

"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things). And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;"

Gospel reading: Mat. 4:12-17:



"Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

With the Sunday after the Lord's Baptism or God's revelation (Epiphany), the Orthodox Church concludes the series of the three Royal Feasts celebrated in less than a month: The Lord's Nativity, Circumcision and Baptism.

In the Epistle reading of this Sunday, St. Paul is telling us that each one of us, as members of the mystical Body of Christ, the Church, have received certain gifts: *"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift."* These gifts constitute the assignment, the ministry, the role, each one of us ought to play in order to contribute to the

proper functioning of this Body (the Church, all of us), whose ultimate goal is spiritual perfection: *"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."*

In the Gospel reading, St. Matthew is quoting from the prophet Isaiah in order to show that in the person of the incarnate Son of God all prophecies are fulfilled: *"And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali..."*

Indeed, Messiah, the Son of God is the fulfillment of all prophecies of the Old Testament. This is why, since the incarnation of Christ there was no need for other prophets because God revealed Himself to the world through the sending of His only-Begotten Son. The reading concludes with the first public message/warning addressed by Christ to the world: *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

By using the message of St. John the Baptist, Christ is telling us the even though John had been arrested (and ultimately would be killed), the message lives on. Only this time the message carries much greater weight because it comes from God Himself, the Word made flesh.

Those who have ears to hear, let them hear!

Fr. George Bazgan

Sunday Service Attendance

Due to the continuing State of Emergency, and the recent measures imposed by the provincial authorities, the maximum number of people attending Church services is 20.

In order to give more people a chance to attend, we ask those who attended last Sunday, to skip this upcoming Sunday, establishing some sort of a rotation system. Also, only one person from the same family, please!

We apologize for this inconvenience and hope that the restrictions will continue to be relaxed in the near future.

Those who attend, are kindly asked to observe the recommendations of the experts, such as: wearing a mask, washing hands, social distancing, etc.

Thank you all and may God keep us safe!

We are live streaming the Liturgy

As we continue to operate under these restrictions, we are live streaming the Divine Liturgy on You Tube. To access the Sunday Services, [click here](#).

Prayer at the time of pandemic

O Lord, our God, who are rich in mercy and, with Your wise care, guard our lives, listen to our prayer, receive our repentance for our sins, stop this pandemic, as You have ceased the punishment of the people in the days of King David. You who are the Physician of our souls and our bodies, give healing to those contaminated with this disease, hastily raising them from their bed of suffering, to glorify You, the Most Merciful Savior, and protect those who are healthy from any disease.

Bless, strengthen and shield, O Lord, with Your grace, all those who, with love of people and sacrifice, care for the sick at their homes or in hospitals. Remove all disease and suffering from the people and teach us to value life and health as gifts coming from You.

Grant us, O God, Your peace, and fill our hearts with unwavering faith in Your protection, with hope in Your help, and with love towards You and our neighbor.

For Yours is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and to You we give glorify: Father and Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen!