



St. Michael's Parish Bee

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St. Michael's Orthodox Church is a parish family serving the Lord since 1904.
American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, www.acrod.org

St. Michael's Orthodox Church
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(607)729-0261, www.saintmichaels.info

www.facebook.com/StMichaelsBGM/

Bee for January 16, 2022

Sunday before Epiphany/Theophany

Antiphons, Beatitudes, Resurrection Tropar, tone 5,

Tropar, Kondak, Alleluia of the Sunday before Theophany, p. 142

Our Schedule of Activities this Week

- Sunday: * Sunday Divine Liturgy, 9 AM
* Church School Classes, 10:30-11:30 AM
* Coffee Shop, 10:30 AM
* Blessing of the Rivers for Theophany, Confluence Park, 3 PM
- Monday * Grab and Go Take-Out Dinner, 5:30- 7 PM
- Tuesday: * Complines of Theophany, Blessing of Water, 6 PM
* Live-Streaming Blessing of Homes, 8:30 PM
- Wednesday: * Holy day of Theophany/Epiphany, Liturgy, 9 AM
* Moleben to the Mother of God, St. George Orthodox Church, Taylor, PA, 6 PM
- Thursday: * Holyday of St. John the Baptist, Liturgy, 8:30 AM
CHOW Pantry, Lower Lounge, 4:30-6 PM
- Saturday: * Liturgy, Special intention, Fr Jim & Pani Kathy, 8:30



Be sure to
join us today
at 3 PM
for the
Great Blessing
of the Rivers
Confluence Park!

Sunday after Theophany/Epiphany, January 23

- * Divine Liturgy, 9 AM
- * Church School Classes, 10:30-11:30 AM
- * Coffee Shop, 10:30 AM

The Complines of Epiphany and the Great Blessing of Water at St. Michael's this Year

Unfortunately, we have had to cancel our annual Parish Epiphany Eve Supper again this year because of the high numbers of COVID in the area. However, we will gather at the Church at 6 PM (rather than the usual start of 7 PM) to share in the beautiful prayers of the Complines of Epiphany, followed by the magnificent Blessing of Water! Be sure to join us and to take some of the Sanctified Water home .

Live-Stream of the Blessing of a Home, Tuesday Evening, 8:30 PM

Because of the COVID Pandemic existing in the Southern Tier, the Blessing of Homes in the parish will have to be postponed until conditions improve. However, we will live-stream the blessing of our home in Vestal following the Compline Service and Blessing of Water at the Church which will begin at 6 PM.

This Live Stream Home Blessing will begin at 8:30 PM on Tuesday evening. You can join in the prayers and sprinkle the rooms of your own home with Holy Water at this time. Simply log onto our live-streaming channels: www.saintmichaels.info or www.facebook.com/StMichaelsBGM/

Tropar for the Feast of Epiphany/Theophany (tone 1)

*At Your Baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, worship of the Trinity was revealed,
For the Father's voice bore witness to You, calling You His "beloved Son,"
And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of these words,
O Christ, God, Who appeared and enlightened the world, glory be to You!*

Scripture Readings of the Week of Epiphany/Theophany

Sunday:	2 Timothy 4: 5-8	St. Mark 1: 1-8
Monday:	Hebrews 11: 17-23, 27-31	St. Mark 12: 13-17
Tuesday:	1 Corinthians 9: 19-27	St. Luke 3: 1-18
Wednesday:	Titus 2: 11-14, 3: 4-7	St. Matthew 3: 13-17
Thursday:	St. James 1: 19-27	St. Mark 12: 38-44
Friday:	St. James 2: 1-13	St. Mark 13: 1-8
Saturday:	Colossians 1: 3-6	St. Luke 18: 2-8
Sunday:	Ephesians 4 7-13	St Matthew 4: 12-17

Read the daily scriptures on line: WWW.ACROD.ORG



Epistle Reading: 2 Timothy 4:5-8

But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only 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 the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You."

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD, make His paths straight.' "

John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

And all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose.

"I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."



2nd Annual Theophany Great Blessing of the Waters!
Confluence Park, Binghamton NY
Sunday, January 16, 3 PM

*"At Your Baptism in the Jordan, O Christ our God, worship of the Trinity was revealed,
for the Father voice was heard proclaiming the truth of these words..."*

Join area Orthodox Clergy and Faithful as the prayers of Sanctification of the Waters
are offered at Confluence Park, Sunday afternoon, January 16th at 3 PM.

Important Information for Camp Nazareth Planning for the Summer of 2022!

Dear Fathers,

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Camp Nazareth is eagerly awaiting and preparing for the arrival of the 2022 Summer Camping Season. Camp is planning to be in-person and at full capacity for all its 2022 events including our Diocesan Summer Camping Weeks. The 2022 Summer Camping Schedule and other important information is available on the Camp's Website: campnazareth.org.

REGISTRATION for Camp will begin on March 15, 2022 at 6pm. The link will be on the Camp's website, but will also be sent directly to you via email and will be posted on the Diocesan and Camp websites and social media accounts. Please use the *Save the Date Poster* and the *Bulletin/Social Media Insert* attached to this email to help Camp disseminate this information in your parishes.

Also, please encourage those who are of age (at least 18 by the beginning of the Summer Season and have completed High School), to be part of the Camp's Summer Staff. Please tell potential staff members that this is a wonderful opportunity for them to get involved in this vital and meaningful Diocesan apostolate, form lasting friendships, and use their God-given talents for the benefit and up-building of our Church. We have worked with a number of students to design internship positions that help them earn credit in their program of study as well. Attached to this email is a Staff Application Bulletin/Social Media Insert for the Staff Applications. Staff Applications can be found on the Camp's website campnazareth.org.

On Tuesday, March 1st and Thursday, March 3rd (prior to Registration opening on March 15), Camp will be offering two informational webinars (they are the same webinar, but will be offered twice) about the 2022 Summer Camping Weeks for all our campers, parents, clergy, volunteers and potential Staff. Both webinars will be offered at 7pm. Plan on attending one of the webinars to get the latest information on our 2022 Summer Camping Weeks including information about the Camp's facility, kitchen, medical and program plans as they relate to up-to-date information about the Coronavirus. The links to register for the Webinars are as follows (registration just requires your name and email and then you will be sent a link to the webinar):

- Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 7pm: [Register for March 1, 2022](#)
- Thursday, March 3 2022 at 7pm: [Register for March 3, 2022](#)

If you have any questions, please call or email me at 724-662-4840 or campnazareth@acrod.org.

Thank you very much for your past help in encouraging our youth to come to Camp as Campers and as Staff. Please continue to offer them this necessary pastoral encouragement.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Stephen
Camp Administrator

St. Michael's Live-Streaming for Folks Who are Ill or Home-Bound

With the increased dangers from the new spread of the COVID virus, please be to sure to share our Live-Streaming sites with your loved ones who are home bound or hospitalized or in nursing homes. All of our services are on:

St Michael's Web page: www.saintmichaels.info

St. Michael's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/StMichaelsBGM/

Reflections on the Feast of Epiphany/Theophany

By Fr Thomas Hopko, Volume II-Worship, The Church Year

The sixth of January (19th OC) is the feast of the Epiphany. Originally it was the one Christian feast of the “shining forth” of God to the world in the human form of Jesus of Nazareth. It included the celebration of Christ’s birth, the adoration of the Wise men, and all of the childhood events of Christ such as His circumcision and presentation to the temple as well as His baptism by John in the Jordan. There seems to be little doubt that this feast, like Easter and Pentecost, was understood as the fulfillment of a previous Jewish festival, in this case the Feast of Lights.

Epiphany means shining forth or manifestation. The feast is often called, as it is in the Orthodox service books, Theophany, which means the shining forth and manifestation of God. The emphasis in the present day celebration is on the appearance of Jesus as the human Messiah of Israel and the divine Son of God, One of the Holy Trinity with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Thus, in the baptism by John in the Jordan, Jesus identifies Himself with sinners as the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn 1.29), the “Beloved” of the Father whose messianic task it is to redeem men from their sins (Lk 3.21, Mk 1.35). And he is revealed as well as One of the Divine Trinity, testified to by the voice of the Father, and by the Spirit in the form of a dove. This is the central epiphany glorified in the main hymns of the feast:

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan the worship of the Trinity was made manifest! For the voice of the Father bare witness to Thee, calling Thee his Beloved Son. And the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of his Word. O Christ our God, who hast revealed Thyself and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee (Troparion).

Today Thou hast appeared to the universe, and Thy Light, O Lord, has shone on us, who with understanding praise Thee: Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, O Light Unapproachable! (Kontakion).

The services of Epiphany are set up exactly as those of Christmas, although historically it was most certainly Christmas which was made to imitate Epiphany since it was established later. Once again the Royal Hours and the Liturgy of Saint Basil are celebrated together with Vespers on the eve of the feast; and the Vigil is made up of Great Compline and Matins.

The prophecies of Epiphany repeat the God is with us from Isaiah and stress the foretelling of the Messiah as well as the coming of His forerunner, John the Baptist:

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make His path straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God (Is 40.3–5; Lk 3.4–6).

Once more special psalms are sung to begin the Divine Liturgy of the feast, and the baptismal line of Galatians 3.27 replaces the song of the Thrice-Holy. The gospel readings of all the Epiphany services tell of the Lord’s baptism by John in the Jordan River. The epistle reading of the Divine Liturgy tells of the consequences of the Lord’s appearing which is the divine epiphany.

For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds (Titus 2.11–14).

The main feature of the feast of the Epiphany is the Great Blessing of Water. It is prescribed to follow both the Divine Liturgy of the eve of the feast and the Divine Liturgy of the day itself. Usually it is done just once in parish churches at the time when most people can be present. It begins with the singing of special hymns and the censing of the water which has been placed in the center of the church building. Surrounded by candles and flowers, this water stands for the beautiful world of God’s original creation and ultimate glorification by Christ in the Kingdom of God. Sometimes this service of blessing is done out of doors at a place where the water is flowing naturally.

The voice of the Lord cries over the waters, saying: Come all ye, receive the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of the fear of God, even Christ who is made manifest.

Today the nature of water is sanctified. Jordan is divided in two, and turns back the stream of its waters, beholding the Master being baptized.

As a man Thou didst come to that river, O Christ our King, and dost hasten O Good One, to receive the baptism of a servant at the hands of the Forerunner [John], because of our sins, O Lover of Man (Hymns of the Great Blessing of Waters).



The Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan
St. Michael's Church
Binghamton, NY 13905

Following are three readings from the Prophecy of Isaiah concerning the messianic age:

Let the thirsty wilderness be glad, let the desert rejoice, let it blossom as a rose, let it blossom abundantly, let everything rejoice . . . (Is 35.1–10).

Go to that water, O you who thirst, and as many as have no money, let them eat and drink without price, both wine and fat . . . (Is 55.1–13).

With joy draw the water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall you say: Confess ye unto the Lord and call upon his Name; declare his glorious deeds . . . his Name is exalted . . . Hymn the Name of the Lord . . . Rejoice and exult . . . (Is 12.3.6).

After the epistle (1 Cor 1.10–14) and the gospel reading (Mk 1.9–11) the special great litany is chanted invoking the grace of the Holy Spirit upon the water and upon those who will partake of it. It ends with the great prayer of the cosmic glorification of God in which Christ is called upon to sanctify the water, and all men and all creation, by the manifestation of his saving and sanctifying divine presence by the indwelling of the Holy and Good and Life-creating Spirit.

As the troparion of the feast is sung, the celebrant immerses the Cross into the water three times and then proceeds to sprinkle the water in the four directions of the world. He then blesses the people and their homes with the sanctified water which stands for the salvation of all men and all creation which Christ has effected by his “epiphany” in the flesh for the life of the world.

Sometimes people think that the blessing of water and the practice of drinking it and sprinkling it over everyone and everything is a “paganism” which has falsely entered the Christian Church. We know, however, that this ritual was practiced by the People of God in the Old Testament, and that in the Christian Church it has a very special and important significance.

It is the faith of Christians that since the Son of God has taken human flesh and has been immersed in the streams of the Jordan, all matter is sanctified and made pure in Him, purged of its death-dealing qualities inherited from the devil and the wickedness of men. In the Lord’s epiphany all creation becomes good again, indeed “very good,” the way that God Himself made it and proclaimed it to be in the beginning when “the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters” (Gen 1.2) and when the “Breath of Life” was breathing in man and in everything that God made (Gen 1.30; 2.7).

The world and everything in it is indeed “very good” (Gen 1.31) and when it becomes polluted, corrupted and dead, God saves it once more by effecting the “new creation” in Christ, his divine Son and our Lord by the grace of the Holy Spirit (Gal 6.15). This is what is celebrated on Epiphany, particularly in the Great Blessing of Water.

The consecration of the waters on this feast places the entire world—through its “prime element” of watering the perspective of the cosmic creation, sanctification, and glorification of the Kingdom of God in Christ and the Spirit. It tells us that man and the world were indeed created and saved in order to be “filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph 3.19), the “fullness of him who fills all in all” (Eph 1.22). It tells us that Christ, in Who in “the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,” is and shall be truly “all, and in all” (Col 2.9, 3.11). It tells us as well that the “new heavens and the new earth” which God has promised through His prophets and apostles (Is 66.2; 2 Peter 3.13; Rev 21.1) are truly “with us” already now in the mystery of Christ and His Church.

Thus, the sanctification and sprinkling of the Epiphany water is no pagan ritual. It is the expression of the most central fact of the Christian vision of man, his life and his world. It is the liturgical testimony that the vocation and destiny of creation is to be “filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph 3.19).

Preparation for 2022 Annual Parish Meeting

The bylaws are clear that the annual parish meeting is to happen in February. The bylaws also state that to conduct parish business a quorum of 50 is needed. With COVID, here is the plan. Please only attend the parish meeting if you feel safe in doing so. The Annual Parish Meeting will be scheduled for February 20, 2022.

If a quorum of 50 is not present, the meeting will be held provided 2/3 of 50 are present (34). With a minimum of 34 present a bylaw change to reduce the size of a quorum to 35 can be passed provided at least 2/3 of 50 people support the amendment. For the meeting, sign in will be done once everybody is seated. Chairs will be spread out. Given current state mandates, masks need to be worn when not seated. Coffee and snacks will be served. The meeting will be kept as brief as possible.

All presentation materials will be available two weeks prior by either picking up a package in the church office or sending an email to randymichaelmay@gmail.com and requesting an electronic version of the materials. At the meeting, presentations are not going to be made. The content is in the package. For each agenda item, discussion will be limited to 5 minutes. If there are no contested board positions and no nominations from the floor, the entire slate of new officers will be done with a single vote.

Any parishioner wishing to submit a proposal to amend the bylaws, must submit their proposed change(s) in writing to Parish President Randy May by 6PM on Sunday Jan 23, 2022. The contact information for Randy May is phone number 607 621-5113 and email randymichaelmay@gmail.com. Shellee May and Carole Paccio are now accepting names for nomination to the 2022 parish board.

Volunteering during can change a life – maybe yours

By Erik Weir | Fox News <https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/volunteering-holidays-change-life-erik-weir>



Some Volunteers at our Community Meal Program which has been in a Grab and Go Format Since Covid

As a financial adviser, my clients come to me seeking help with [growing their wealth](#). Perhaps the greatest lesson I share is that being rich isn't a dollar amount; it is a perception that includes happiness, peace of mind, comfort and security. There's a big difference between *being* wealthy and *feeling* wealthy.

So, what does it mean to [feel wealthy](#), and how can we achieve it?

The great speaker and author Zig Ziglar once said, "You can have everything in life you want, if you will just [help other people](#) get what they want." Accordingly, one of the best ways I advise others in building their wealth is this: the secret to *having* more is *giving* more.

Volunteering, especially during the holiday season when it is needed the most, is a perfect way to give back.

Volunteers give out food and essentials in Minneapolis in July 2020. (City of Joy) Serving others lifts our eyes to see – and meet - the needs of other people. Even helping someone with a small task can make a remarkable difference in that person's life, and in turn, provide you with an incredible feeling of accomplishment.

In fact, studies have shown that people who volunteer weekly exhibit an increase in happiness that is comparable to the happiness reported by those who earn a high income. Donating your time makes you grateful for all that you have, and you'll have the unmatched joy and excitement of knowing you made a huge impact for the good of others.

Volunteering enables you to expand your network to others in your community and make it a better place. It also increases your relationship skills, encourages you to have conversations with people from very different walks of life, builds your self-confidence, counters the sadness that some experience during the holiday season, and keeps you physically active. You can even make new friends.

Anyone can volunteer, and it is a wonderful activity that families can do together. This has the added benefit of serving as a good role model to your children, by showing them how serving others can really make a difference in their lives. I am encouraging my kids to volunteer in a shelter this season and experience this power of love for themselves.

Without fail, every time I volunteer at a local nonprofit, I have conversations that change my life in some way. I was once volunteering at a local shelter and was asked to help sort jackets for the homeless ahead of the approaching winter. I struck up a conversation with the others who were volunteering – local business owners and contractors.

As we chatted about everything from our backgrounds and why we were volunteering, to more personal issues like having kids with problems, tough marriages, drug addiction, and homelessness, we all suddenly realized that everyone in the building, including the volunteers, had pain in their lives.

It was an incredibly powerful moment for me: the overwhelming gratitude of those receiving the jackets acted like a nuclear bomb going off in my heart, and it also touched the other volunteers, making us all realize how truly blessed we are. Giving our time, money, and energy is by far one of the great expressions of love. It gives us the opportunity to make a positive change in someone else's life, which in turn lifts our spirits and gives us a sense of purpose and fulfillment like nothing else.

We need other people. We were created for community, and nothing grows community like working *for* and *with* other people.

The truth is that something happens in our hearts when we give; it causes us to see the world through someone else's eyes. If "wealth" really is a perception of relative happiness, comfort, and security, we must learn to get outside our own experience and understand what wealth means to other people.



You could change someone's life with a simple gift, maybe even your own.

Reflections: We are always in need of some helping hands with our Food Programs here at St. Michael's. Whether it is helping unload trucks, sorting groceries, assisting in cooking in the kitchen, helping fill the many boxes of food that go out the back door to our faithful on a special St. Michael's Meals on Wheels program, lending a hand with the Thursday CHOW pantry distributions or assisting with our monthly Free Grocery Give-Away, every effort of reaching out to help becomes a blessing for those who receive and all who give.

May Our Lord Bless our coordinator, Barb Knighton, and everyone who is anyway helps make this miracle of generosity a reality. To one and all, Many Blessed Years!



Live-Streaming Blessing of Homes

Tuesday Evening,
January 18th, 8:30 PM

Since it is not possible again during this COVID-19 Epiphany season to personally visit each of your homes at this time, please join us with your family as we share together in the Home Blessing prayers. Home after all is the place where we live out our salvation!

The Home Blessing service will begin at 8:30 PM on Tuesday evening, January 18th, immediately after the service at St. Michael's of the Complines of Epiphany and the Great Blessing of Water.

Please gather at a table with a candle, a bowl of Holy Water, an Icon and Bible. Share in the joyful singing together of the Tropar of the Feast:

*"At Your Baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, worship of the Trinity was revealed,
For the Father's voice bore witness to You, calling You His "Beloved Son,"
And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of these words,
O Christ, God, Who appeared and enlightened the world, glory be to You!"*

After we offer the prayers, sprinkle each room in your home with the Holy Water.

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**Our January Grocery Give-Away takes place on Thursday, January 27th from 3:30-6:30 PM
Volunteers can come at any time since help is needed throughout the entire distribution.**

BTW, We need additional helpers in delivering food on Monday evenings. If you could deliver to either one or two addresses, it would be very helpful since our numbers of faithful receiving food are increasing.

Please know that deliveries will be made even in the event of snow for people are hungry and food is still being prepared. You can pick up food to deliver after 5:30 PM at the back entrance to the hall.