

THE SACRED WATER OF THE JORDAN RIVER

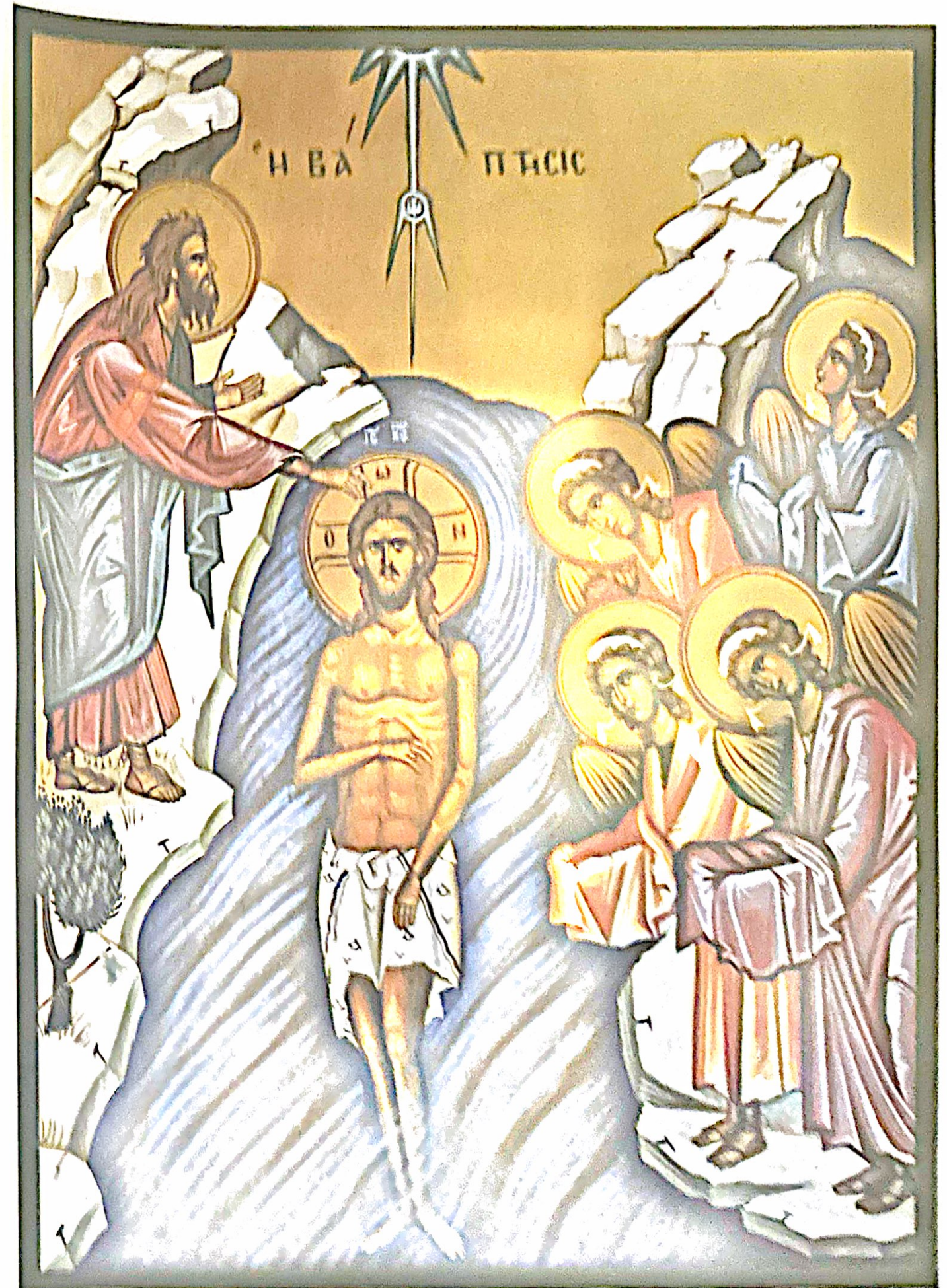
The Baptism of our Lord is closely identified with the Jordan River, a body of water that had great significance for the Israelites long before this mysterious event. After wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, this was the river God's chosen people crossed to enter the "promised land." It was from the banks of the Jordan that the Prophet Elias was taken up into heaven by a chariot of fire. It was also in these waters that Elisha – the successor of Elias – commanded that Naaman the Syrian wash and be cleansed of leprosy. The Second Book of Kings chronicles how Naaman was skeptical of this, claiming that the rivers of Damascus could be used to cleanse him just as well. Nevertheless, he did as Elisha instructed him to do and he was healed.

This was the river to which Christ came to be baptized. It was already "sacred water" for the Israelites, and our Lord's baptism in the Jordan served to reinforce Christ's claim to be the Messiah. There is no doubt that its relevance was not lost on the pious Jews of His time. Nor should its importance be lost on us either.

We cannot cross over into the "promised land" of God's heavenly kingdom unless Christ leads us there, just as Joshua led the Israelites across the Jordan. Only Christ can wash and cleanse us of our spiritual illnesses. He is our only source of spiritual healing – just as Naaman had only one source of assistance for his physical ailments.

As we celebrate the great Feast Day of Theophany, may we remember how the Jordan River was sanctified forever by Christ's baptism in its waters.

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey Litho in USA.



**ST.DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
NORTH WILDWOOD, NEW JERSEY
JANUARY 7, 2024**

SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY EPIPHANY:

WELCOME ALL VISITORS:

On behalf of the Parish Council, Fr. Michael, and the entire family of St. Demetrios, we would like to welcome our Visitors for joining us today in our sacred worship service. If you need any assistance please notify any of the Parish Council members. God Bless our Visitors and may your stay here be pleasant and memorable. Please don't hesitate to come again.

SPONSORING COFFEE HOUR:

If anyone is interested in sponsoring the coffee hour please contact the Church Philoptochos. Please contact Dina Bilios (609) 675-8786 or Bessie Giouros at (609) 602-8545.

STEWARDSHIP NEWS:

All our local and seasonal members and visitors are invited to register and enroll in our parish for the 2024 membership and join in weekly worship and to support of our parish "Stewardship Program" and ministries. The annual minimum enrollment offering is \$750 per family, and \$500 for single people. Please complete the parish membership registry forms that are available in the Narthex. Families that are in arrears are invited to reinstate their membership and participation in our parish life and ministries.

GREEK SCHOOL: Classes are every Friday night 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm.

SUNDAY SCHOOL: On behalf of the Parish Council, Fr. Michael, and the entire family of St. Demetrios, we would like to notify parents that Sunday school has already started! We would like all parents to have their children at the church by 9:45 am. Every Sunday after the Gospel reading the children will go to their Sunday school classroom and then come back to receive their Holy Communion.

OUR NEW ST DEMETRIOS WEBSITE: Attention everyone: We have a new website! Please add www.stdemetriosnewjersey.com as a favorite on your devices. Be advised that the new website is now LIVE. Please review and enjoy. Donations are able to process on our website via the DONATIONS tab where you will find the VANCO QR Code (shown below).

LITURGICAL WINTER SCHEDULE:

(For Sunday Hours -9:00 am Orthos and 10:00 am Divine Liturgy)

(For Weekday Services -9:00 am Orthos and 9:30 am Divine Liturgy)

(For Vesper Services-6:00 pm)

LITURGICAL PROGRAM FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY:

MONDAY, JANUARY 1ST: "H A P P Y N E W Y E A R" EVERYONE. On behalf of the Parish Council, Fr. Michael, the Church Staff and the entire family of St. Demetrios we would like to wish everyone in the Parish a Happy and Blessed New Year filled with much Love, Peace, Health, Joy, and Happiness.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7TH: The Synaxis of the Forerunner/ St. John the Baptist.

Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am .

ATTENTION ALL PARISHIONERS: In last week's bulletin it was mentioned that the Holy Epiphany Service on the ocean was to take place on Saturday January 6th after church. Because of bad weather that was going to reach us on Saturday, Fr. Michael rescheduled this event for today. The service for the blessing the waters at the ocean, will take place after the Liturgy today. Please attend this memorable service.

Sunday, January 14th: Leavetaking of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Orthros- 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

Sunday, January 21: 12th Sunday of St. Luke. Orthros – 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00am.

Sunday, January 28: 15th Sunday of St. Luke: Orthros- 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

METROPOLIS ANNUAL "VASILOPITA CELEBRATION:

His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey, cordially invites everyone to the Annual "Vasilopita Celebration" which will take place at St. George Greek Orthodox Church at 1101 River Road- Piscataway, New Jersey 08854. Time: 6:00 – 9:00 pm.

GREEK SCHOOL NEWS:

The Greek School P.T.A. members have decided to so the following fundraisers. Cutting of the Vasilopita on January 14th. Please consider making a donation. All proceeds will be sent to the National Philoptochos Society.

OUR HOLY METROPOLIS NEWS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY:

ANNUAL METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY VASILOPETA CELEBRATION: Tuesday, January 9, 2023 at 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Hosted by St. George Greek Orthodox Church 1101 River Road Piscataway, N.J. 08854.

2024 GREEK LETTERS DAY CELEBRATION: Honoring the Three Hierarchs of our Orthodox Church. Sunday, January 28, at 4:00pm at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church 808 N. Broom Street, Wilmington, Delaware 19806

STEWARDSHIP NEWS: By now everyone in the Community has received their new 2024 Stewardship Pledge Card. Please read it over and fill out the information and send the card back to the church. Thank you very much for your continued support to the Church of St. Demetrios. God Bless all of our faithful "Stewards".

ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟΣ

Ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην ἀγίου Εὐαγγελίου
τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα.

ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟΣ

Ἰωα 1:29-34

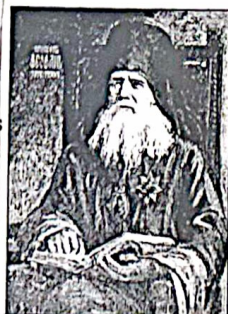
Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, βλέπει ὁ Ἰωάννης τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐρχόμενον πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ λέγει· Ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου. οὗτός ἐστι περὶ οὗ ἐγὼ εἶπον· ὀπίσω μου ἔρχεται ἀνὴρ ὃς ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὃτι πρῶτός μου ἦν. κἀγὼ οὐκ ᾔδειν αὐτόν, ἀλλ' ἵνα φανερωθῇ τῷ Ἰσραήλ, διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι βαπτίζων. καὶ ἐμαρτύρησεν Ἰωάννης λέγων ὅτι τεθέσμαι τὸ Πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον ὡς περιστερὰν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ ἔμεινεν ἐπ' αὐτόν. κἀγὼ οὐκ ᾔδειν αὐτόν, ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με βαπτίζειν ἐν ὕδατι, ἐκεῖνός μοι εἶπεν· ἐφ' ὃν ἂν ἴδῃς τὸ Πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον καὶ μένον ἐπ' αὐτόν, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ βαπτίζων ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ. κἀγὼ ἐώρακα καὶ μεμαρτύρηκα ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ.

DEACON

The reading is from the holy Gospel
according to John.

Jn. 1:29-34

At that time, John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John bore witness, "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." (RSV)



St. Theophan became a recluse, but he never stopped helping people in the world!

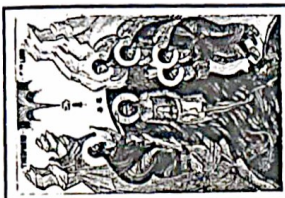
St. Theophan was a Russian saint who spent the last 20 years of his life all by himself, not talking or visiting almost anybody!

But what did St. Theophan do when he was all by himself? Mostly, he prayed! He wrote books too, so that he could help people who needed advice. St. Theophan taught many people how to do what St. Paul told us to do. St. Paul told us to "pray without stopping." St. Theophan wrote about how we can do that!

What do YOU do when you are all by yourself? Watch TV? Play on the computer? We read about the saints so that we can be like them. Can you try to be like St. Theophan sometimes, too? When you are alone, take some time to pray, to ask God to help you, your family, your friends, and even your enemies!

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

Today, we celebrate Saint John the Baptist's feastday. Can you find him in the icon? Can you find the dove? The dove shows us the Holy Spirit was there at Jesus's baptism too. We pray that the Holy Spirit is at every baptism, don't we?



The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

Sunday, January 7, 2024

Volume 12, Issue 1

A Ministry of the
Orthodox Christian Network



The Holy Spirit gives life!

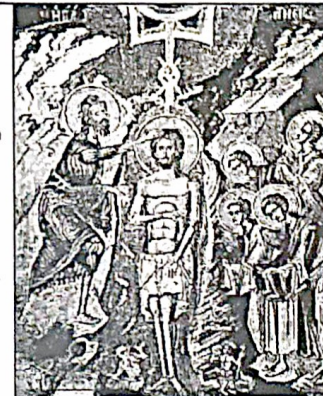
Did you ever get a toy for a present...but you didn't have batteries for it? What happened? It didn't work, did it? Your toy needed something to give it power to go, to really work.

In today's epistle reading, we find out what makes the Church go. We find what gives the Church strength, what gives it life. That power is the Holy Spirit!

In the reading, we hear how Saint Paul visited some followers of John the Baptist. He asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they answered, "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." These believers knew about baptism. They followed Saint John the Baptist. They knew about Jesus Christ. But they hadn't even heard of the Holy Spirit.

Saint Paul baptized them. Then the Holy Spirit came on them.

In our Church, we still need the Holy Spirit too. We can build a church building, but we need the Holy Spirit to give us life. We can have the Bible, but we need the Holy Spirit to use it. We can read the Creed, but we need the Holy Spirit to help us to have faith. We need the Holy Spirit to give us power to go, to really work...kind of like the batteries in your toys!



WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

Feastday
Followers
Forerunner
Holy Spirit
Holy Water
John the Baptist
Pray
Recluse
Saint Paul
Silence
Spread the Gospel
Theophan

R P L B Z Q M N S J P B N K S
V E R N J O L L N O X R D J P
F B T M A O H A E H L D A K R
C O C A P H H U E N O Y R S E
H Z L R W P Y A D T S A E F A
G O A L O Y D E P H I E H F D
G Y L E O L L M X E Z C A P T
T J H Y O W U O L B P N T N H
S T E A S U E A H A V E C B E
D P W E U P A R P P B L V U G
G G G J W G I Q S T Q I C M O
E S U L C E R R C I N S Q E S
Z M G U T L B W I S O I Q J P
D R J E R W J L A T S Z A K E
W V F O R E R I N N E R N S I

Ἀπολυτίκιον Ἀναστάσιμον.

Ἦχος πλ. β'.

Ἀγγελικαὶ δυνάμεις ἐπὶ τὸ μνήμα σου,
καὶ οἱ φυλάσσοντες ἀπενεκρώθησαν· καὶ
Ἰστατο Μαρία ἐν τῷ τάφῳ, ζητοῦσα τὸ
ἄχραντόν σου σῶμα. Ἐσκύλευσας τὸν ἄδην,
μὴ πειρασθεὶς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ· ὑπήντησας τῇ
Παρθένῳ, δωροῦμενος τὴν ζωὴν. Ὁ ἀναστὰς
ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

Ἀπολυτίκιον τῆς Ἑορτῆς.

Τοῦ Μηναίου ---

Ἦχος α'.

Ἐν Ἰορδάνῃ βαπτιζομένου σου Κύριε, ἡ
τῆς Τριάδος ἐφανερώθη προσκύνησις· τοῦ
γὰρ Γεννήτορος ἡ φωνὴ προσεμαρτύρει σοι,
ἀγαπητόν σε Υἱὸν ὀνομάζουσα· καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα
ἐν εἰδεί περιστερᾶς, ἐβεβαίου τοῦ λόγου τὸ
ἀσφαλές. Ὁ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς Χριστέ ὁ Θεός, καὶ τὸν
κόσμον φωτίσας δόξα σοι.

Μνήμη Δικαίου μέτ' ἐγκωμίων, σοὶ δὲ
ἀρκέσει ἡ μαρτυρία τοῦ Κυρίου Πρόδρομο·
ἀνεδείχθης γὰρ ὄντως καὶ Προφητῶν
σεβασμιώτερος, ὅτι καὶ ἐν ρείθροις βαπτίσαι
κατηξιώθης τὸν κηρυττόμενον. Ὅθεν τῆς
ἀληθείας ὑπεραβλήσας, χαίρων εὐηγγελίσω
καὶ τοῖς ἐν Ἄδῃ, Θεὸν φανερωθέντα ἐν σαρκί,
τὸν αἶροντα τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ
παρέχοντα ἡμῖν τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

Κοντάκιον.

Ἦχος δ'. Αὐτόμελον.

Ἐπεφάνης σήμερον τῇ οἰκουμένῃ, καὶ
τὸ φῶς σου Κύριε, ἐσημειώθη ἐφ' ἡμᾶς, ἐν
ἐπιγνώσει ὑμνοῦντάς σε. Ἦλθες ἐφάνης τὸ
Φῶς τὸ ἀπρόσιτον.

Resurrectional Apolytikion.

Mode pl. 2.

When the angelic powers appeared at
Your tomb, the soldiers guarding it feared and
became as dead. And standing by the sepulcher
was Mary, who was seeking Your immaculate
body. Unassailed by Hades, You divested it of
spoils. Then You met the Virgin. You granted
life. O Lord, risen from the dead, glory to You!

[GOASD]

Apolytikion of the Feast.

From Menalon ---

Mode 1.

As You were baptized in the Jordan, O
Lord, then the worship of the Trinity became
manifest, for the voice of the Father bore
witness to You, naming You the Beloved Son;
and the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed
the certainty of the word. O Christ God, who
appeared and illumined the world, glory to
You. [SD]

The memory of the just is observed with
hymns of praise; for you suffices the testimony
of the Lord, O Forerunner. You have proved
to be truly more ven'erable than the Prophets,
since you were granted to baptize in the river
the One whom they proclaimed. Therefore,
when for the truth you had contested, rejoicing,
to those in Hades you preached the Gospel,
that God was manifested in the flesh, and takes

Mode 4. Automelon.

Ἐπεφάνης σήμερον.

You appeared today to us * on earth,
O Master, * and Your light was signed on
us * who cry aloud to You and say * with
understanding, O Christ our God: You came
and shone forth, O Light unapproachable. [SH]

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος βαρύς. Ψαλμὸς 63.

Εὐφρανθήσεται δίκαιος ἐν Κυρίῳ.

Στίχ. Εἰσάκουσον, ὁ Θεός, τῆς φωνῆς μου.

ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟΣ

Σοφία.

ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΤΗΣ

Πρ 19:1-8

Ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις, ἐγένετο ἐν
τῷ τὸν Ἀπολλῶ εἶναι ἐν Κορίνθῳ Παῦλον
διελθόντα τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη ἐλθεῖν εἰς
Ἐφεσον· καὶ εὐρὼν μαθητὰς τινὰς εἶπε
πρὸς αὐτούς· εἰ Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον ἐλάβετε
πιστεύσαντες; οἱ δὲ εἶπον πρὸς αὐτόν· ἄλλ'
οὐδὲ εἰ Πνεῦμα Ἅγιόν ἐστιν ἠκούσαμεν.
Εἶπέ τε πρὸς αὐτούς· εἰς τί οὖν ἐβαπτίσθητε;
οἱ δὲ εἶπον· εἰς τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα. Εἶπε
δὲ Παῦλος· Ἰωάννης μὲν ἐβάπτισε βάπτισμα
μετανοίας, τῷ λαῷ λέγων εἰς τὸν ἐρχόμενον
μετ' αὐτὸν ἵνα πιστεύσωσι, τοῦτ' ἔστιν
εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν. Ἀκούσαντες δὲ
ἐβαπτίσθησαν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου
Ἰησοῦ. Καὶ ἐπιθέντος αὐτοῖς τοῦ Παύλου τὰς
χεῖρας ἦλθε τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτούς,
ἐλάλουν τε γλώσσαις καὶ προεφήτευσον. Ἦσαν
δὲ οἱ πάντες ἄνδρες ὥσει δεκαδύο. Εἰσελθὼν
δὲ εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν ἐπαρρησιάζετο ἐπὶ
μῆνας τρεῖς διαλεγόμενος, καὶ πείθων τὰ περὶ
τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Prokeimenon. Grave Mode. Psalm 63.

The righteous man shall be glad in the
Lord. [SAAS]

Verse: Hear my voice, O God. [SAAS]

DEACON

Wisdom.

READER

Acts 19:1-8

In those days, while Apollos was at
Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country
and came to Ephesus. There he found some
disciples. And he said to them, "Did you
receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"
And they said, "No, we have never even heard
that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into
what then were you baptized?" They said,
"Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John
baptized with the baptism of repentance,
telling the people to believe in the one who
was to come after him, that is, Jesus." On
hearing this, they were baptized in the name
of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid
his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came
on them; and they spoke with tongues and
prophesied. There were about twelve of them
in all. And he entered the synagogue and
for three months spoke boldly, arguing and
pleading about the kingdom of God. [SH]