

## SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR THE DAY

### Epistle Lesson: St. Paul's Letter to the Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7

TITUS, my son, 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 the great God and Savior 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.

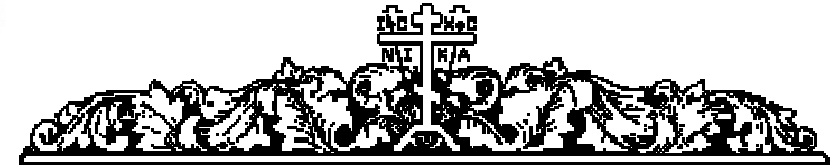
Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

### Gospel Lesson: Gospel According to St. Matthew 3:13-17

At that time, Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

**In Our Hearts and In Our Prayers.** This week we offer up heartfelt prayers for the health and salvation of the following persons who are struggling with illness or difficult life situations. Please remember them in your prayers; they are: Nikki and Alexander Chibucos (Chicago), Barbara and Michael Denny, Irene and Louis Govatos (Florida), Ryan Holifield (Flint) and Jerry, Pamela and Leon Lysaght (Plymouth), Rebekah Olechnowicz (Ypsilanti), Angeliki O'Non, Harriet Rennie, and Judy Weston. A special paraklisis for these people (and any others that are brought to our attention) will be offered on Friday at 4:30 PM.

**Farewell to Our College Students.** We were pleased to have Matthew Bemis, son of Pamela and Stephen Bemis visiting with us over the Christmas break. And we were blessed to have Rebekah Olechnowicz with us since July as Father and Presvytera transitioned into the posting here in Traverse City. Rebekah sacrificed a year of university in order to help launch our mission effort here. Both of our college students are returning to continue their studies this semester. Matthew is a senior at Azusa Pacific University in California majoring in political science. Rebekah is a senior at Eastern Michigan (transferred from Mansfield University in Pennsylvania) majoring in music education. Best of luck to our scholars.



### TRAVERSE CITY ORTHODOX MISSION

*A Ministry of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit*

*Meeting at 1030 Hastings St., Traverse City, Michigan*

[www.tcorthodoxchurch.org](http://www.tcorthodoxchurch.org)

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Sunday, 6 January 2008

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### † PARISH CALENDAR OF EVENTS †

- Sunday 6 January** **Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ.**  
9 AM Orthros and Liturgy of St. Basil the Great  
11:00 AM Church School  
11:30 AM Great Blessing of Water followed by installation of Council Officers  
Noon Fellowship Hour Hosted by Helen Dalbo  
4:30 PM Ninth Hour and Vespers for the Feast of the Synaxis of the Holy Forerunner and Baptizer, St. John
- Monday 7 January** **Synaxis of St. John the Baptizer.**  
9 AM Orthros and Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos  
TBA Theophany House Blessings
- Tuesday 8 January** **St. George the Chozebite.**  
TBA Theophany House Blessings
- Wednesday 9 January** **St. Eustratios the Wonderworker.**  
Strict Fast Day  
TBA Theophany House Blessings  
5:30 PM Monthly Council Meeting at Munson Hospital
- Thursday 10 January** **St. Gregory of Nyssa.**  
TBA Theophany House Blessings  
6:30 PM Spirituality and Self Defense Class Nr. 9

**Friday 11 January**      **St. Theodosios the Cenobiarch.**  
Fast Day—Wine and Oil Allowed  
TBA Theophany House Blessings  
4:30 PM Paraklisis for the Sick of the Parish

**Saturday 12 January**      **St. Tatiana the Martyr.**  
TBA Theophany House Blessings  
4:30 PM Ninth Hour and Vespers

**Sunday 13 January**      **Sunday After Theophany.**  
9 AM Orthros and Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos  
11:00 AM Church School  
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour

**Theophany Feast Celebrated Today.** The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, Theophany, is celebrated today. This is one of the 12 Great Feasts of the Church. As part of the observance we have the Great Blessing of Water this morning. Together with the seven Sacraments, the Orthodox Church provides this sacramental blessing of water in order to sanctify and arm her faithful Christians against the merciless enemies of Man, the wicked spirits of evil, lethargy and slander.

It is customary to have some of this Great Blessing water at your home to facilitate the priest's visit to bless your home before the apodosis (leave taking of the Feast). It is also customary to have the priest visit your home during this period to bless it with the waters of the Jordan, blessed during the special services.

Parishioners desiring a visit during this season are asked to schedule with Father Iakovos at their earliest convenience. Father will be trying to group visits in the same region together; so if you have neighbors that would like their homes blessed, please try to coordinate your availability so that Father can bless a number of homes in a region at the same time. Also, while Father is more than happy to make pastoral calls and "visit" we would like to try and schedule these outside of the house blessing itself to make it possible for Father to get to all of the homes by the leave-taking of the Feast.

**New Council Members (2008) Installed This Morning.** Our parish recognizes the installation of our parish council officers for 2008 elected at our General Assembly held in September of 2007. Our 2008 Council consists of: Harriet Rennie, President; Karen Kain, Vice President; Michael Dennon, Treasurer; Judy Weston, Secretary; John Batsakis, Douglas Partlo, Robert Underwood; and new members this year: Helen Knapp, Stephanie Long, and Theresa Patterson. These individuals will be given their oath of office this morning. Our congregants are asked to remember them in their prayers throughout the year that they might with honesty and diligence serve their terms of office to the extension of the Kingdom here on earth and to the greater glorification of Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The new council will have its first meeting on Wednesday of this week to deal with the regular monthly business of the parish. This meeting will be held at the Munson Medical Center at 5:30 PM in order to facilitate conference call capabilities for absent council members.

**Thanks to Our Carpet People.** The parish wishes to recognise the following persons for their work on the carpet replacement project recently completed in our church. They are: Karen and Randy Kain, Angie and Roger Dunlap, Dustin Ockert, Holly and James Olszewski, Tina and Doug Partlo, and Linda and Greg

Nelson. Each of these persons received recognition of their work on behalf of our community and for the service they have rendered to the congregation. Again, thanks to all for sacrificing part of their holiday week to make this a reality.

**Classes Re-start to Run Through Beginning of Lent.** Our adult education program returns this week with the ninth meeting of the Spirituality and Self-Defense Class meeting on Thursday at 6:30 PM. The class will continue meeting until 14 February, which should be the last class. Our Enquirer's Class will meet on Monday, 14 January at 6:30 PM and will continue meeting on Mondays through 25 February which will be the last meeting until after Pascha. Everyone is welcome to participate in these educational offerings.

**Pastor's Question Time.** One thing that has become clear, from the classes for adults that Father has been running, is that there are usually more questions than there is time to answer them; and the questions don't always follow the outline for the class for that evening. In order to meet the demand for access to information, Father Iakovos will be offering a program he is titling "*Pastor's Question Time*" which will provide an opportunity for parishioners to ask questions on any topic and have them addressed. Father requests that the questions be submitted in advance; he will choose the topic for the meeting, publicize it ahead of time and we will be spend an hour or so on a Saturday morning, sipping coffee or tea and dealing with the answers to our parishioner's questions. The first meeting is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, 19 January beginning at 10:30 AM. It will last approximately an hour to an hour and a half. Forms to submit questions for consideration are located on the table in the narthex of the church and may be turned in via the specially provided box. Questions may also be submitted by e-Mail through our web site or directly to Father's e-Mail.

**Book Store News.** What better way to start off the New Year than to thank all our patrons for their support during the past year - 2007. Your strong response to our new Bookstore ministry and the resulting "proceeds" benefiting our Mission Parish is sincerely appreciated. It is gratifying to see that our selection of icons from St. Isaac of Syria Skete and Orthodox music from Liturgica.com in particular, has been well received.

We are currently formulating our next book, icon, and music orders. We invite to you to visit our Bookstore following the Divine Liturgy to peruse our selection of constantly expanding Orthodox religious items. We would be happy to answer (& research) any questions you may have. As hard as we try, there is bound to be something that we do not carry. We stand ready however, to accommodate you by way of special orders. We simply ask that you submit your special order by our announced deadline of January 20, 2008. Your adherence to these announced deadlines will allow us to serve you in the most efficient manner possible. We wish to extend to you a heart-felt "THANK YOU" for your past and continued support. Happy New Year to all!! From Roger & Angie Dunlap, Bookstore coordinators.

**2008 Stewardship Program to Launch.** We're running a little late on this for a number of reasons this year, but you should be receiving a mailing with respect to stewardship pledging in 2008 sometime this week in the mail—after our council meeting on Wednesday. Over the next several weeks we will want to have some frank discussions with our membership about the importance of stewardship and the role that we need *you* to play in this important aspect of our community life. Please start thinking now about your level of support and what you feel God is calling you to do to support the spreading of the Holy Gospel in Northwestern Michigan during the 2008 fiscal year.