

January 12, 2025



# THE IMAGE...

(Jn 12:45 & 14:9; Heb 1:3; Col 1:15)

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

Publication of St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church, Poway, CA

29TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—TONE 4

AFTERFEAST OF THE THEOPHANY

SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY

MARTYR TATIANA OF ROME

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**Welcome!**

...to all who have gathered to follow Jesus Christ & manifest the Kingdom of God in the Liturgy of His Church. If this is your first time with us, give us a chance to get to know you and fill out a visitor card.

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### A Word from the Holy Fathers

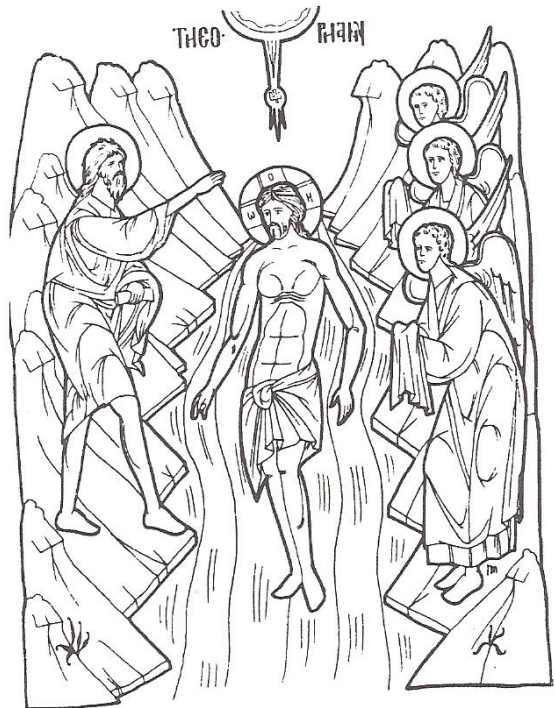
John was setting forth the anticipatory and ancillary value of his own baptism, showing that it had no other purpose than to lead to repentance. He did not say he baptized with water of forgiveness, but of repentance. He pointed toward Christ's baptism, full of inexpressible gifts. John seems to be saying: "On being told that he comes after me, you must not think lightly of him because he comes later. When you understand the power of Christ's gift, you will see that I said nothing lofty or noble when I said 'I am unworthy to untie the thong of his sandal.'"

*St. John Chrysostom*

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**Include Something in the Bulletin or  
Be Included in our Weekly E-mails**

E-mail [info@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:info@stjohnofdamascus.org)



ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS ORTHODOX CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

## Parish Life

### **SAVE THE DATE St John's 50th Anniversary May 25, 2025**

The weekend of Sunday May 24 and 25, 2025 we will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of our beloved parish.

His Eminence Archbishop Benjamin along with other special guests will be with us.

There will also be a celebratory banquet at Vintana Wine + Dine in Escondido

More details to follow



### **All-American Council AND Diocesan Assembly July 14-18, 2025 Phoenix, AZ**

The 21st All-American Council will take place in Phoenix, AZ at the Grand Arizona Resort from July 14-18, 2025.

We will be sending our usual clergy and lay delegate to the Council but other parishioners are welcome and encouraged to come as well.

There will be a special celebration in connection with the glorification of Matushka Olga of AK, Mark your calendars and be on the lookout for hotel, scheduling and other information.



### **Sunday Youth & Children Classes**

1st and 3rd Sundays—Church School

2nd and 4th Sundays — Youth Choir

**PLEASE ENTER HALL QUIETLY AFTER  
LITURGY TO AVOID INTERRUPTING CLASS**

### **Youth Sunday Sunday Feb 2**

This year our parish's annual "youth Sunday" will take place on Sunday Feb 2 in connection with the Feast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple which is also the World Day of Orthodox Youth.

Our younger members will take on various aspects of the Divine Liturgy.

Please mark your calendars and plan on attending.



### **Dates for 2025**

#### ***MOVABLE FEASTS***

Palm Sunday	April 13
Pascha	April 20
Ascension	May 29
Pentecost	June 8

#### ***FASTS***

Great Lent	Mar 3– April 27
Holy Week	April 14 - 20
Apostles Fast	June 16-28
Dormition Fast	August 1-14
Nativity Fast/Advent	Nov 15-Dec 24

#### ***FAST-FREE WEEKS***

Publican & Pharisee	March 10-14
Bright Week	April 21-26
After Pentecost	June 9-13
After Christmas	Dec 25-Jan 4

## Parish Life

### House Blessings

Following the feast of Theophany until the beginning of Great Lent (Jan. 7 - Mar. 2) Fr. Michael will be blessing homes.

Please contact Fr. Michael to arrange a date and time.



### Metropolitan TIKHON Request Parishes Reflect for All-American Council Wednesdays June 15-29—7:00pm

In preparation for the All-American Council coming up this summer in Phoenix, His Beatitude is asking for parishes to submit reflections on this moment in the life of the Church. A companion study guide has been made available to help guide these discussions.

We will be exploring this study guide on Wednesdays beginning January 15 through January 29.

Discussions will take place in person in the church hall as well as via Zoom.



### Parish Annual Meeting Nominations for Parish Council, Lay Representative & Auditors

Our annual meeting is coming up in February. We will be electing people for positions on the Parish Council as well as a Lay Representative for our Diocesan Assembly and All-American Council (Phoenix, AZ July 14-18) and 2 Auditors for 2025

If you would like to be nominated to run for any of these positions please see Fr Michael or any member of the current Parish Council.

### List of Current Voting Members Posted

In preparation for our upcoming annual parish meeting in February, the list of voting members (those parishioners who have submitted pledge forms for 2025) has been posted in both the church narthex and in the church hall.

If your name is not on there, please submit your pledge form ASAP.

### Online Giving System

We have an online giving system that enables people to be able to manage their giving to our church.

You can set up automatic ongoing donations each month to cover your pledges. You can also use the system to make occasional donations for things like charities, flowers, candles, memorial donations, etc. You can even pay for your bookstore purchases.

There is an option to cover the bank processing fees if you would like to do that.

Not only is this a convenience for you it helps reduce the work required of our Counters on Sundays

[https://www.aplos.com/aws/give/  
StJohnofDamascusOrthodoxChurch/donations](https://www.aplos.com/aws/give/StJohnofDamascusOrthodoxChurch/donations)

Or visit our website at:

[www.stjohnofdamascus.org](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org) and click on DONATE and then "Donate Now."



## Today's Worship — Hymns

### TROPARIA

#### **Resurrection—Tone 4**

When the women disciples of the Lord  
learned from the angel the joyous message of  
Your Resurrection,  
they cast away the ancestral curse  
and elatedly told the apostles:  
“Death is overthrown!  
Christ God is risen,//  
granting the world great mercy!”

#### **Theophany—Tone 4**

When You, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan,  
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.  
For the voice of the Father bore witness to You,  
and called You His beloved Son;  
and the Spirit in the form of a dove  
confirmed the truthfulness of His word.  
O Christ our God, You have revealed Yourself//  
and have enlightened the world, glory to You.

#### **St John of Damascus —Tone 8**

Teacher of Orthodoxy, piety, & purity!  
Enlightener of the universe!  
& divine inspiration to monastics  
by your teachings we are all enlightened,  
& by your spiritual music, O all-wise John of  
Damascus,  
pray to Christ our God for the salvation of our  
souls!

### KONTAKIA

#### **Resurrection—Tone 4**

My Savior and Redeemer  
as God rose from the tomb and delivered the  
earth-born from their chains.  
He has shattered the gates of hell,  
and as Master,//  
He has risen on the third day!

#### **St John of Damascus — Tone 4**

Let us the faithful sing praises to John,  
worthy of great honor the composer of hymns.  
The star & teacher of the Orthodox Faith,  
the defender of its doctrine.  
Through the might of the Lord's Cross he  
overcame heretical error!  
Now he is fervent in prayer to Christ God,  
to grant forgiveness of our sins.

#### **St Tatiana—Tone 4**

In your sufferings you shone brightly  
in the royal purple of your blood,  
and like a beautiful dove you flew to heaven,  
passion-bearer Tatiana.//  
Therefore, always pray for those who honor you!

#### **Theophany—Tone 4**

Today You have shone forth to the world, O  
Lord,  
and the light of Your countenance has been  
marked on us.  
Knowing You, we sing Your praises:  
“You have come and revealed Yourself,//  
O unapproachable Light.”

## Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

### Epistle — Ephesians 4: 7-13

<sup>7</sup> But grace has been granted to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. <sup>8</sup> Therefore, God says, "When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." <sup>9</sup> Now what does "he ascended" mean, if not that he first descended into the lower parts of the earth? <sup>10</sup> He who descended is the [same] one who also ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.

<sup>11</sup> He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the perfecting of the saints, for a work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ. <sup>13</sup> This is until we all attain to the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, having reached the very fullness of Christ

### Gospel — Matthew 4: 12-17

<sup>12</sup> Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. <sup>13</sup> Leaving Nazareth, he came and lived in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup> so that what had been spoken through Isaias (Isaiah) the prophet might be fulfilled:

<sup>15</sup> The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,

toward the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,

<sup>16</sup> the people who sat in darkness saw a great light,

to those who sat in the region and shadow of death,

to them light has dawned.

<sup>17</sup> From that time on, Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent! For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

### PROKEIMENON

**Tone 1** — (*Sunday After*) Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on You! (Ps. 32:22)

V. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just! (Ps. 32:1)



### ALLELUIA

**Tone 5** — V. I will sing of Your mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Your truth from generation to generation. (Ps. 88:1-2)

V. For You have said: Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens. (Ps. 88:3)

## Our Life in Christ—the Feast of Holy Theophany

The sixth of January is the feast of the **Theophany or 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 Wisemen, 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.

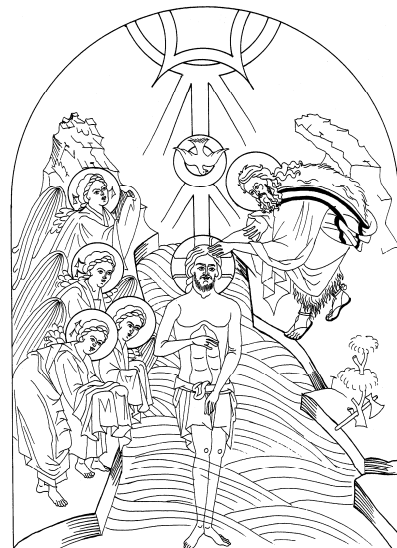
It is the faith of Christians that since the Son of God has taken human flesh and has been immersed in the streams of the Jordan, all matter is sanctified and made pure in him, purged of its death-dealing qualities inherited from the devil and the wickedness of men. In the Lord’s epiphany all creation 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 fulness 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 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*).

Taken from *The Orthodox Faith* by Fr. Thomas Hopko



## Our Life in Christ—Blessing of Homes

The blessing of homes of faithful Christians following the feast of Holy Theophany is an ancient custom. It is the central sign of God's sanctification of all things through Christ's epiphany to the world and His baptism in the Jordan River.

From the feast of Theophany until the beginning of Great Lent, the Orthodox priest visits all the members of the Church in order to pray with them in the place where they live, and to bless their surroundings with the sanctified water.

According to the Orthodox Christian Faith, the family is considered to be a "small church" and the family table is the "home altar" where the people gather each day to receive their "daily bread" from God with thanksgiving in the Name of Christ. Thus, during the Theophany season, the priest, who is the father of the great "family of God," the Church community, comes to each of the "small churches" bringing the blessings of God the Father and all of the brothers and sisters in Christ.

The sanctification of the home takes place not only by the words of prayer, but by the sprinkling with the blessed water which stands for the new creation of the Kingdom of God in which God Himself "fills all things with Himself" including even the smallest particles of material existence.

The priest asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. All pray together for the good of the living and the departed of the family, and of all who live and have lived in the house. All sing together the great hymn of salvation that Christ, the Son of the Father by the grace of the Holy Spirit, "has revealed Himself and has enlightened the world." This the house itself, together with the living persons of the family, is "filled with all the fullness of God."

### **Preparing for your house blessing**

When the priest comes to bless the family and its house it is not something to worry about. The priest comes to bless a house that is lived in, not one that has to be in Better Homes and Gardens. There are some basics that are normally observed:

- A lighted candle, an icon and a wide bowl for the blessed water should be placed on the main table in the house.
- All radios, televisions, video games, mp3 players etc. should be turned off. Phones should be on silent.
- All who are present in the house should come together and stand by the table until the end of service.
- Those who are able should join in the singing of the hymns and responses of the services.
- The first names of those for whom special prayers are to be offered, including, of course, all members of the family and those living in the house, should be clearly printed on a sheet of paper, with the clear distinction between the living and the departed.

*Taken and revised from the Introduction to the Great Blessing of Water by Fr. Thomas Hopko.*

**Following the feast of Theophany until the beginning of Great Lent  
(Jan. 6-Mar2) Fr. Michael will be blessing homes.**

**Please contact Fr. Michael to arrange a date and time.**



## LOOKING AHEAD

*The following are services & parish events **IN ADDITION** to the usual weekend services (Sat 6pm & Sun 8:30am).*

### Monday January 6-March 2

Annual House Blessings—Contact Fr Michael to Schedule

### Monday January 13

6:00pm—Adult Ed: Orthodox Christianity 101

### Tuesday January 14

7:00pm — Parish Council Meeting

### Wednesday January 15

7:00pm — Adult Ed: Parish Reflections for All-American Council (In person in Church Hall & Via Zoom)

### Monday January 20

6:00pm—Adult Ed: Orthodox Christianity 101

### Tuesday January 21

11:30am—Diamond Circle Meeting

**For more dates & links please visit our website: [www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar)**

## Many Years!

### *Name Days*

Tanya (Tatiana) Franchak, Rhea Tatiana Stafford	1/12
Nino Kiria, Nino Kapanadze, Sava Stafford	1/14
Lily Neskin	1/16
Carmen (Anthony) Brown	1/17
Ethan (Athanasius) Menig	1/18

### *Birthdays*

Vladimir Korolev, Michael Pluta	1/12
Cody Garrett Carlson	1/13
Susan Miller, Dennis (Dionysius) Stavrou	1/17
Kelvin John Brown	1/18

### PARISH CONTACT INFO:

**Church:** 16903 Espola Rd Poway — **Mailing Address:** PO Box 28291 San Diego, CA 92198

**Web:** [www.stjohnofdamascus.org](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org)

**Email:** [info@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:info@stjohnofdamascus.org) — **Phone:** (858) 674-1931

**Priest:** V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

**Email:** [powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org) — **Phone:** (858) 717-2172

**Attached Clergy:** V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired, Rev. John Robinson, Retired & Pdn. George Shumaik

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA