

# The Outdoor Blessing of Waters at Theophany

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*See parish website for updates*

# OUTDOOR BLESSING OF WATERS AT THEOPHANY

## JANUARY 6

### THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

#### OUTDOOR BLESSING OF WATERS

*Following the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, a procession is made to a platform, upon which is placed a covered table with candles and a small basin of water, near the body of water. The clergy, being fully vested, are led by the servers carrying first the processional cross, then the lights, banners, and fans. The priest carries the Gospel book and cross which will be tossed into the body of water. As the procession is made, the choir sings the following stichera: by Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem:*

#### STICHERA AT THE GREAT BLESSING OF WATER

##### **Tone 8 (by Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem)**

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters crying:

“Come, one and all,  
receive the Spirit of wisdom,  
the Spirit of understanding,  
the Spirit of the fear of God, //  
from Christ Who now has shone forth!” *(thrice)*

Today the nature of the waters is sanctified:  
The Jordan is parted in two.  
It holds back the flow of its waters, //  
as it beholds the washing of the Master. *(twice)*

You have come to the river as a man, O Christ the King,  
hastening to be baptized like a servant by the Forerunner //  
on account of our sins, O good God Who love mankind. *(twice)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## Tone 8

To the voice of one crying in the wilderness,  
 “Prepare the way of the Lord,”  
 You came, O Lord, taking the form of servant.  
 You asked to be baptized though You have no knowledge of sin.  
 The waters saw You and were afraid.  
 The Forerunner trembled and cried aloud:  
 “How will the Lamp illumine the Light?  
 How will a servant lay his hand on the Master?  
 You take away the sin of the world, O Savior.//  
 Sanctify both me and the waters!”

*When the clergy assemble around the table on the platform, the service begins with the deacon lifting his orarion and intoning:*

Deacon: And that we may be accounted worthy to hear the holy Gospel, let us beseech the Lord our God.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Deacon: Wisdom. Let us attend. Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Choir: And to your spirit.

Priest: The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark. (1:9-11)

Choir: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you.

Deacon: Let us attend.

Priest:

At that time, Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. And immediately as he was coming up from the water, he saw the heavens being parted and the Spirit like a dove coming down upon him. And there was a voice from heaven, You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Choir: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you.

## The Litany of Peace

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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Deacon: For this holy house, and for those who enter with faith, reverence and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our Metropolitan (N.), for our Bishop (or Archbishop) (N.) for the honorable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the President of our country, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city, for every city, town and village, and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For seasonable weather, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For travelers by land, by sea, and by air; for the sick, the suffering, for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That these waters may be sanctified by the power, operation and descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That there may come upon these waters the purifying operation of the supersubstantial Trinity, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That there may be granted unto them the grace of redemption, the blessing of Jordan, by the power, operation, and descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That satan may quickly be crushed under our feet, and that every evil counsel directed against us may be brought to ruin, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the Lord God may deliver us from every attack and temptation of the adversary, and count us worthy of the good things that are promised, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: That we may be illumined with the illumination of understanding and piety through the descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the Lord God will send down the blessing of Jordan, and sanctify these waters, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this water may be a gift of sanctification, and a deliverance from sins, for the healing of soul and body and for every good purpose, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this water may spring up unto eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That it may be shown to be the averting of every snare of enemies, of visible and invisible, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For them that draw from it and take of it for the sanctification of their homes, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That it may be to the cleansing of soul and body of all that with faith draw and partake of it, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That we may be counted worthy to be filled with sanctification through the partaking of these waters, by the invisible manifestation of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the Lord God may hearken unto the voice of supplication of us sinners, and have mercy on us, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

People: To you, O Lord.

*The Priest reads the following prayer in a low voice.*

Priest: Hear us, O God our Savior, the Hope of all the ends of the earth, and of those who are far off upon the sea; and be gracious, be gracious, O Master, toward our sins, and have mercy on us.

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For you are a merciful God and love mankind, and to you do we send up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

People: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads unto the Lord.

People: To you, O Lord.

*And the Priest says the Prayer in a low voice.*

Incline your ear and hear us, Lord, who accepted to be baptised in Jordan and to sanctify the waters, and bless us all, who signify our calling as servants by the bending of our necks. And count us worthy to be filled with your sanctification through the partaking and sprinkling of this water. And let it be for us, Lord, for healing of soul and body.

*Exclamation*

For you are the sanctification of our souls and bodies, and to you we give glory, thanksgiving and worship, with your Father who is without beginning, and your All-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

*And immediately, blessing the water in crosswise form with the Precious Cross, he dips it perpendicularly, sinking it in the water and raising it, holding it by the crossbars with both hands, and singing this Troparian,*

### **Tone 1 Troparion**

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.

*And the same is sung by the choir. Again, a second time, in like manner the priest signs the water; and likewise a third time. Each time the priest signs the water, the choir sings the troparion a second and a third time.*

*The priest makes the sign of the cross over the body of water and tosses the cross into the body of water; then those who would retrieve it dive after it. Upon its being retrieved, the troparion is sung for a third time as the retriever brings the cross to the priest. When the priest receives the cross, he offers it to be kissed by the retriever who kneels before the priest. The priest then sprinkles the retriever with the sanctified water, as the deacon says:*

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

*The retriever rises and the priest says the dismissal:*

**Priest:** Glory to you, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to you.

**People:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Master, bless.

*Then the priest takes some of the sanctified water in a bowl, and turns to face the west. He holds the Cross in his left hand and the sprinkler in his right hand. Then all approach and kiss the Precious Cross, and the Priest signs each in the face with the sanctified water. And the Troparion is sung many times, until everyone has been sanctified by the sprinkling of the water. Then these hymns are sung:*

### **Tone 6**

Let us the faithful praise the greatness of God's plan for us.  
 For He Who alone is pure and undefiled  
 becomes a man because of our transgressions.  
 He is cleansed with our cleansing in the Jordan,  
 sanctifying both us and the waters,  
 and crushing the heads of the dragons in the water.  
 Therefore, let us draw water in gladness,  
 for upon those who draw in faith  
 the grace of the Spirit is invisibly bestowed by Christ God,  
 the Savior of our souls.

### **Tone 1 Troparion**

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.

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O Christ our God, You have revealed Yourself//  
and have enlightened the world, glory to You.

### **Tone 4                      Kontakion**

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.”

### **The Dismissal**

Priest:        May he who deigned to be baptized by John the the Jordan for our salvation, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of his all-immaculate and blameless holy Mother; by the might of the precious and life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable bodiless powers of heaven; at the supplications of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, of the holy, glorious, all-laudable apostles; of our father among the saints, Nicholas the Wonderworker, archbishop of Myra in Lycia, the protector of those at sea; the holy, glorious and right-victorious martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; of (*patron saint of the Church*); of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the holy saints:

Make our prayer acceptable;

Choir:        Amen.

Priest:        Grant us forgiveness of our trespasses;

Choir:        Amen.

Priest:        Shelter us and those at sea under the shelter of your wings;

Choir:        Amen.

Priest:        Drive away from us every enemy and adversary;

Choir:        Amen.

Priest:        Give peace to our life.

Choir:        Amen.

Priest:        O Lord, have mercy on us and on your world, and save our souls, for you are a merciful God and love mankind.

Choir:        Amen.

Priest:        Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.

Choir:        Amen.

*The service being ended, a procession is made back to the Church.*