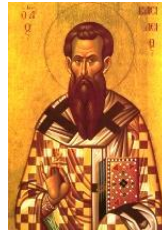


ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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THE THEOPHANY OF THE LORD

Like Christmas Eve, Theophany Eve is a *paramony*, a day of continual prayer and fasting, leading up to the celebration of the feast. Part of what makes this a day of continual prayer is the celebration of the *Royal Hours* which replaces the ordinary First, Third, Sixth and Ninth Hours served every day in Byzantine practice. The Divine Liturgy is not served until the end of the fasting day, when it is joined to vespers to begin the feast. The Royal Hours are served on the Paramony of Christmas, the Paramony of the Theophany and on Great and Holy Friday which we might call the “Paramony of Pascha.” In addition, some Greek Churches serve the Royal Hours on the Eve of Pentecost, but without fasting.

Our cycle of daily services has its origin in the experience of the Jews during the Babylonian exile. Since the prescribed round of morning and evening sacrifices could only be conducted in the Jerusalem temple, the exiled Jews developed a cycle of prayers, hymns and Scripture readings to be said throughout the day instead. When the Jews returned to Jerusalem after the exile, these prayers were incorporated into the usage of the temple. Jews today observe three daily services (morning, afternoon and evening) corresponding to the times of the three daily temple sacrifices.

The first Christians continued the custom of praying at these specific times. The Acts of the Apostles records St Peter going apart to pray at the sixth hour (Acts 10:9) and at the ninth hour (Acts 3:1). With the development of monasticism these daily prayers took on the character of formal services. Other services were added in imitation of the Psalmist’s witness, “*Seven times a day I praise You, because of Your righteous judgments*” (Ps 119:164). The hours came to commemorate important events which the Scriptures say took place at those times. Thus, our Third Hour recalls the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (see Acts 2). The Byzantine Sixth and Ninth Hours evoke the memory of Christ’s crucifixion and death:

“Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice ... and yielded up His spirit” (Mt 27:45, 50).

What Makes These Hours “Royal”? They are served solemnly in church with hymns, Scripture readings and ceremony. They are generally served without interruption and conclude with the Typica. The name “Royal Hours” comes from the practice of the Great Church in Constantinople. The emperor and his court would attend the Hours on these days, emphasizing their importance in the life of the Church.

Scripture in the Royal Hours: As a rule, the Scriptures read at the Hours are all taken from the Psalms. In the Royal Hours, however, selections from both the Old and New Testaments are read, in addition to the Psalter. The New Testament selections recount the ministry of John and the baptism of Christ as well as the meaning of baptism in the Church. The Old Testament readings, all taken from the Book of Isaiah the Prophet, provide us with an illustration of how Old Testament prophecies are ultimately fulfilled in Christ.

The Prophet Isaiah lived in the eight century BC and, like other prophets, called on his hearers to repent and to conform their lives to God’s way. The following passage, read at the Third Royal Hour, illustrates Isaiah’s message:

“Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow” (Is 1:16-17).

Isaiah warned that, if people did not repent, the nation would suffer at the hands of its enemies (at that time, the Assyrians). If they did repent, however, they would be restored and given new life. We see this in the selection read at the Sixth Royal Hour,

“With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His Name; make known His deeds among the nations, proclaim that His Name is exalted. Sing praises to the Lord, for He has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel” (Is 12:3-6).

(Jan2021Leaflets)

THE THEOPHANY OF THE LORD Saturday, January 9 & Sunday, January 10, 2021

WEEKLY SERVICES

Daily Liturgy: Monday-Friday 8:30AM
Holy Liturgy: Saturday 4:30PM, Sunday 11:00AM
Matins/Orthos: Sunday 9:00AM
Holy Confession: Monday 4-6PM
Vespers: Saturday 3:00PM
Holy Rosary: Sunday 10:30AM

SPEEDY RECOVERY

Please continue to pray for our convalescing friends, including Maggy Atallah, Jean Benoit, Nadia Casab, Jeanette Farewege, John & Nancy Gazzal, Daniel Klockowski, Rose Pawlinga, Brian Sagrestano, and Karen Zalatan. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

WEEKLY COLLECTIONS. THANK YOU!

Weekly Collection Jan 2/3: \$ 890.00
Fuel Donation: \$ 245.00
Christmas Donations: \$ 150.00
Memorial Mass Offerings: \$ 10.00

ST BASIL FUEL & MAINTENANCE CONTRIBUTIONS

Sincere acknowledgment to the following parishioners for their monetary donations: (1) Anthony & Sandra Showa, (2) John Kawam, (3) Doris Hutchinson, (4) Michelle Roth, (5) Maryann Astour, (6) Mary Nassimos, (7) Robert Lalli, (8) David & Janet George, (9) Travis & Han Starin, (10) Juan Thomas. Your contribution is very important to the life of St Basil Church. Thank you and many blessings

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

THIS SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Olga Hutchinson Byrne & Family
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Richard & Joanne Tehan

THIS SUNDAY, JANUARY 10

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Dorothy Donneson & Robin Greiner
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Cheryl Kopyt & Family

NEXT SATURDAY, JANUARY 16

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Olga Hutchinson Byrne & Family
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Kevin & Ameena Copeland

NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 17

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Dorothy Donneson & Robin Greiner
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Cheryl Kopyt & Family
† **Pierre Kawam, 18th Memorial Anniversary**, By his wife Lorraine & Children