

St. Mary Protection of the Theotokos Parish

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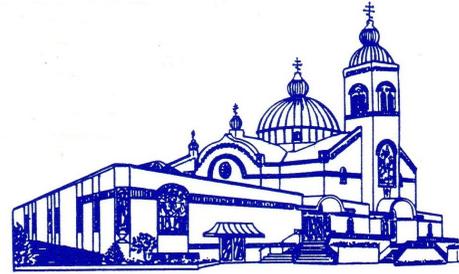
GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!

GLORIFY FOREVER!

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“The Jordan Turned Back” (A Prophecy of the Baptism of Christ)

God’s ultimate victory at the end of the age [with foretastes given at the Messiah’s first coming] is also depicted as God dominating the forces of the sea: “In that day the LORD with his hard and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the twisting serpent, Leviathan the crooked serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea” (Isa 27:1). This is why the description of the final paradise of the new heaven and new earth contains the phrase, “the sea was no more” (Rev 20:3; see also Daniel 7:9-14).

All of this imagery informs John’s account of Jesus walking on the sea during the storm [and of His baptism in the Jordan... when “The (sea monster) Jordan turned back!”].

Jesus Christ, Lord over the Sea

John identifies Jesus as the Son of Man to whom the Father has given the authority to execute judgment (John 5:27; compare Matt 26:57–68). John also asserts repeatedly that Jesus is God incarnate. In John’s Gospel, Jesus invokes the divine name (“I AM”) seven times in reference to Himself (e.g., John 6:35; 15:1). He declares oneness with the Father (John 10:30), and He proclaims that the Father is in Him and He is in the Father (John 10:37–38).

For John, a Jew familiar with the Old Testament, the image of Jesus walking on the sea [and being baptized in the Jordan... when the sea monster “Jordan” turned back due to His presence] was a dramatic portrayal that Jesus is Yahweh—the one who subdues the forces of chaos and imposes His will on the waters and everything the waters represent. The kingdom of the Son of Man had begun, and all forces opposing God’s ordained order would now be defeated. Like Jesus’ disciples, we can find comfort in knowing that the one who treads upon the volatile sea can subdue whatever chaos threatens to overwhelm us.

Heiser, M. S. (2014). *I Dare You Not to Bore Me with the Bible*. (J. D. Barry & R. Van Noord, Eds.) (pp. 140–141). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press; Bible Study Magazine.

Theophany & Pre-Lenten Worship Schedule

Wednesday	1/18	9:00AM 10:30AM 7:00PM	Royal Hours of Theophany (Church) Vespers Liturgy of Theophany (Church) Great Compline of the Theophany w/Litya and Blessing of Water (Church)
Thursday	1/19	10:00AM *** SIGN-UP FOR HOUSE BLESSINGS ***	Divine Liturgy of THEOPHANY (Church)
Saturday	1/21	4:00PM	Cathedral Vigil (Chapel)
Sunday	1/22	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour
Saturday	1/28	4:00PM	Cathedral Vigil (Chapel)
Sunday	1/29	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy of Zacchaeus, Coffee Hour
Saturday	2/4	4:00PM	Cathedral Vigil (Chapel)
Sunday	2/5	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy of Publican and Pharisee Coffee Hour, Education
Saturday	2/11	4:00PM	Cathedral Vigil (Chapel)
Sunday	2/12	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy of Prodigal Son, Coffee Hour
Tuesday	2/14	4:00PM	Cathedral Vigil of the Meeting of our Lord
Wednesday	2/15	10:00AM	Divine Liturgy of the Meeting of our Lord
Saturday	2/18	4:00PM 4:30PM	Panakhida for Soul Saturday (Chapel) Cathedral Vigil (Chapel)
Sunday	2/19	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy of Last Judgment Son, Meatfare!!!

Check our website for the full listing of services & activities!!

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Adult Education

Sundays (11AM). We will resume our “Spiritually Speaking” series on 2/5. It will meet the first Sunday of each month.

Wednesdays (7PM). We will resume our journey through the Old Testament on 1/25. It will meet every Wednesday.

Saturdays (3:30PM). We will begin chanting practice on 1/28. It will meet each Saturday. We will work on basic skills and music for upcoming (non-choir) services. Come early (3PM) to help prepare the Vigil books and bulletins!

Thursdays (10AM). On 2/2 we will begin a weekly discussion group. Everyone is invited for coffee, tea, a light breakfast, and a discussion on what we can learn from the upcoming Sunday Epistle and Gospel readings. It will meet at the Perkins house at 819 Fernwood St., Emmaus PA. Over time (and there is no rush!), it is my hope to add more small group meal/discussion groups at homes throughout the Valley!

Welcome to the God-loving and God-protected Orthodox Christian parish of *Pokrova* (“St. Mary Protection of the Holy Theotokos” or “St. Mary’s”)!

It is a blessing to have you with us today and we encourage you to come back as often as you are able. Like us, you may find that you have found your spiritual home here (and a wonderful home, it is)!

We are a parish of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA under the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and our doors and hearts are open to you, your family, and your friends!

January 15th; Sunday after Theophany

The Order of Worship

(A more complete version is found in the black prayer book in the pews)

Blessed is the Kingdom Amen. Heaven and earth are joined in praise of God.

Great Litany. Prayers of supplication to God w/ refrain “Lord have mercy!”

Psalm 102. The Psalms are the greatest hymns of the Church. It is followed by a Small Litany (“Again and again...”).

Psalm 145 & “Only Begotten Son”. This psalm and song remind us why we are here. It is followed by a Small Litany (“Again and again...”).

The Beatitudes. The wisdom of the Logos offered in song – beautiful consolation. We take on the virtues of and in Christ to become “blessed.”

The Little Entrance/Gospel Entrance. This symbolizes Christ coming from heaven into the world. We can kiss the Gospel (an icon of “The Word”) in celebration saying; “Christ is in our midst” “He is and shall be!” “*Khristos Posered Nas*” “*I Ye I Budet*”

Hymns for Today. As with all the music, everyone is encouraged to sing along!

Tone 6 Tropar *(Resurrection)*

The angelic powers were at Your tomb; / the guards became as dead men. / Mary stood by Your grave, / seeking Your most pure body. / You took captive hell, / not being tempted by it. / You came to the Virgin, granting life. // O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You.

Tone 1 Tropar *(Theophany)*

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

Tone 4 Tropar *(Parish Patron/Pokrova)*

O Mother of God, sheltered by thy coming / we faithful people today keep feast in joy, / and looking at thy most pure image, / moved to the depths of our hearts, we say: / “Protect us with thy precious veil / and deliver us from every ill, // by entreating Christ, thy Son and our God, to save our souls.”

Tone 6 Kondak *(Resurrection)*

When Christ God the Giver of Life, / raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, / He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 4 Kondak *(Theophany)*

Today Thou hast shone forth to the world, O Lord, / and the light of Thy countenance has been marked on us. / Knowing Thee, we sing Thy praises: / “Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, // O unapproachable Light.”

Tone 2 Kondak *(Parish Patron/Pokrova)*

The Choirs of Saints and the Virgin / stand in church praying to God for us. / Angels and hierarchs bow in adoration, / Apostles and Prophets all rejoice / in thee, O Mother of God, // who for us prays to God Eternal.

Trisagion. We join the angels in proclaiming God’s glory (Holy God, Holy Immortal...)

Prokimen Tone 1 *(Sunday after Theophany)*

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee! (Ps 32/33:22)
v: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just! (Ps 32/33:1)

Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13 *(Sunday after Theophany)*

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

v: I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. (Ps 88/89:1)

v: For Thou hast said: “Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens.” (Ps 88/89:2)

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17 *(Sunday after Theophany)*. Children are encouraged to come up front; “Let the little children come unto me.” (Matthew 19:14)

Litanies for the Faithful and for the Catachumens. Catachumens are Christians preparing to enter into the Mysteries of the Orthodox Church.

Cherubic Hymn. This song reminds us to “put aside all earthly cares!”

The Great Entrance. The priest brings out the bread and wine that will become the Body and Blood of Christ. The children are welcome and encouraged to line the aisle.

Commemoration of the Last Supper and Consecration of the Gifts. This is when the Holy Spirit comes down and changes the gifts. We either stand or, as is customary among many Ukrainian Orthodox, kneel during this portion of the service.

Hymn to the Birthgiver of God, Mary. Today we have a special hymn for the feast!

Litany of Preparation. Lord’s Prayer. Please join us as we pray together.

Communion of the Faithful. Communion is reserved for those who are members of an Orthodox parish and have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting, and regular confession. All are invited to join this parish and commune with us!

Post-Communion Prayers, Dismissal & Distribution of the Antidoron. At this point everyone is invited forward to kiss the cross and receive the blessed bread cut from the Eucharistic loaf before the service.

Parish News and Events

The “Men's Auxiliary” will have its first meeting on 1/25 at 7PM at the Zimmerman house! This group is dedicated to taking care of the practical needs of our parishioners (e.g. fixing a poorly hung door; providing basic help with computers). If you have projects to suggest for the queue or are interested in being a part of this ministry, please see Joe Zimmerman. The plan is to meet once a month to plan activities (and eat together), and spend the rest of the month carrying out projects. It is so exciting serving in a parish that lives the Gospel in such real and tangible ways!

Al Mackiewicz has agreed to be the “Parish Champion” for the UOC-USA Strategic Plan, a set of projects that are designed to reinvigorate our parishes and Orthodoxy in America. If you would like to assist him in this important work, please see him!

Parishioner end of the year statements of donations/contributions and dues owed are completed for you to pick up from Judy Miller.

The St. Mary Seniors' next hoagie session is 1/25. In February, they will meet on 2/6 (Old Country Buffet 11AM), prepare hoagies on 2/22, and have their Pre-Lenten Luncheon on 2/26 (Red Lobster, 11AM).

We will have a Kitchen Session on Saturday 1/28! Come for fellowship, lunch, and the opportunity to help raise money for the parish.

The Grief Support Group meets at 6:30PM on Tuesdays in the Hall. See Joe Truchan or Vera Muzychka for details.

The next Parish Board Meeting will be on 1/23 6:30.

Our Ukrainian Dance Group meets on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:00PM.

Be sure to sign up to have your house blessed!

For your calendar: we are hosting the Sunday of Orthodoxy on 3/5!

Reading and Greeter Schedule

Date	Epistle Schedule	Greeters
1/22	Robert Noecker	Judy Miller & Vera Muzychka
1/29	Alex Mackiewicz	Richard Rosko
2/5	Richard Bodnar	Eleanor Fox
2/12	Robin Bodnar	Judy Miller & Vera Muzychka

Please let Fr. Anthony know if you will not be able to greet/read and cannot find a replacement. Also let him know if you would like to be added to the schedule!

Today's Scripture Readings

Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says:

*“When He ascended on high,
He led captivity captive,
And gave gifts to men.” (Psalm 67:18)*

(Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

*“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles:
The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light,
And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death
Light has dawned.” (Isaiah 9:1, 2)*

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Theophany House Blessings

When a home is blessed, the priest brings everything needed for the blessing (holy water, brush, bowl, and candle), but families are welcome to have these ready for his visit, as well.

When the priest comes, televisions and radios are turned off and all the lights and doors of rooms to be blessed are turned on (note that the bathroom is not usually blessed; its door can remain closed). A child or another family member leads the priest through the house holding the candle.

Some homes like to offer the priest a little something to eat and chat; others like to keep the blessing short. Both approaches are appropriate.

When a priest visits (or does anything else), it is NEVER required that the family gives him money. The scripture tells us "Freely you have received, freely give".

It is a pious custom among some to give the priest a donation at this time (i.e. “trebi” or треби) but this should never be thought of as a requirement. The priest comes because he wants God's blessing to be upon the home and because he wants to know and be available to his parishioners.

Ideally, the priest visits all the homes in his parish each year. This is a sign of a healthy Orthodox parish and a good relationship between its priest and people.