

HOLY TRINITY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

January 4, 2026
Sunday before Theophany

Contact Us

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Catholic Church

Office Hours

9am–5pm Tuesday–Friday

Weekend Services

5pm Saturday Vigil Divine Liturgy

9am Sunday Divine Liturgy

Confession

6–6:30pm Wednesday

4–4:30pm Saturday

*After Elijah had been taken up, * the River Jordan was parted in two by Elisha's mantle; * and a dry path was opened in the waters * as an image of true baptism * by which we pass beyond this fleeting life. ** Christ appeared in the Jordan to sanctify the waters.*

Troparion of the Vigil of Theophany (January 5)

Week at a Glance

Our return to God for His abundant gifts (12/21, 12/25, 12/28): \$2,092, \$4,458, \$1,735
Online giving: <https://holytrinitysykesvilles.org/onlinegiving>

Sat, Jan 3 5pm Vigil Divine Liturgy

Sun, Jan 4 Sunday before Theophany
9am Divine Liturgy

Mon, Jan 5 Vigil of the Theophany of Our Lord
6pm Vespers and Divine Liturgy of St. Basil with the Great Blessing of Waters
(+ Bob Rosman, given by Bethany Ministry)

Tue, Jan 6 THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD (Obligation)
9am Festal Divine Liturgy and Great Blessing of Waters (N)
6:30pm Vespers for the Synaxis of John the Baptist

Wed, Jan 7 Synaxis of John the Baptist
11am Divine Liturgy

Sat, Jan 10 5pm Vigil Divine Liturgy (+ Sue Morris, given by her family)

Sun, Jan 11 Sunday after Theophany
9am Divine Liturgy (N)
11am Divine Liturgy (Holy Trinity) followed by procession and blessing of the
creek (social to follow)

Coffee Social Bakers for the next social (January 11): Julie Chrusch, Maria Morgan



Brad Lashinsky (January 4)
Michael Gresock (January 8)
Kathryn, Megan, and Andrew Slawson (January 8)
Irena Tapsak (January 8)
Cathy Ovenshire (January 9)
Hunter Gregory (January 11)

Brett Butkewich (January 9)
Mark Gilga (January 9)
Kitty Greiner (January 9)
Cathy Ovenshire (January 9)
Stella Yamrick (January 9)

CANTORS' CORNER

Saturday	Sunday
<p><u>1/3</u> Cantor: Victor K. Propers: Start (104), “O Lord I have cried” and 3 stichera in tone 5 (143), closing hymn, “Now you may dismiss” (452)</p>	<p><u>1/4</u> Sunday before Theophany Cantor: Zeb B. Lector: Corey M. (2 Tim 4:5-8) Propers: Tone 5 (146), the rest of prefeast of Theophany (309ff), Cherubikon in “A”</p>
<p><u>1/10</u> Cantor: Victor K. Propers: Start (104), “O Lord I have cried” and 3 stichera in tone 6 (149), prokeimenon and all else from postfeast (317ff), closing hymn, “Now you may dismiss” (452)</p>	<p><u>1/11</u> Sunday after Theophany Cantor: Victor K. Lector: Mike K. (Eph 4:7-13) Propers: Tone 6 (152), the rest is Sunday after Theophany (316ff), Cherubikon in “B”</p>
<p><u>1/17</u> Great Vespers Cantor: Zeb B. Propers in supplement</p>	<p><u>1/18</u> Sunday of Zaccheus Cantor: Victor K. Lector: Joseph C. (1 Tim 4:9-15) Propers: Tone 7 (156ff) Cherubikon in “C”</p>
<p><u>1/24</u> Cantor: Victor K. Propers: Start (104), “O Lord I have cried” and 3 stichera in tone 8 (159), closing hymn, “Now you may dismiss” (452)</p>	<p><u>1/25</u> Sunday of the Prodigal Son Cantor: Zeb B. Lector: Corey M. (2 Tim 3:10-15)) Propers: Tone 8 (161ff), troparion for Sunday of Prodigal (215), Cherubikon in “A”</p>

SPECIAL SERVICES: THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD

<p><u>1/5</u> Vigil of Theophany 6pm Vespers with Divine Liturgy of St. Basil and Blessing of Water Cantor(s): Victor K. Lector(s): Joseph C. (OT: Exodus 14: 15-18, 21-23, 27-29; Joshua 3:7-8, 15-17; Isaiah 1: 16-20; Isaiah 49: 8-15), Corey M. (1 Cor 9:19-27)</p>	<p><u>1/6</u> Theophany of Our Lord 6:30pm Vespers for the Synaxis of John Cantor: Zeb B.</p>
<p><u>1/7</u> Synaxis of John the Forerunner 11am Divine Liturgy Cantor: Teresa K. Lector: Natalia T. (Acts 19:1-8) Propers in paper supplement</p>	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

✠ Dates to Remember

- Tuesday, January 6: Great Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord
- Sunday, January 11: Blessing of the Creek in Sykesville

✠ Creek Blessing on the Sunday after Theophany

Last year, we blessed the creek in Sykesville after Divine Liturgy on Theophany. This year, we're bringing it to Sunday! Bundle up and join us for a procession after Divine Liturgy (starting at 11am) down to the creek. We will gather again in the parish social hall afterwards for soup and hot chocolate. Hope to see you there!

✠ The start time for ECF will be 9:30am on Sunday, January 11, due to the Creek Blessing. Please plan accordingly!

✠ House Blessings in 2026

A sign-up sheet for house blessings will be posted in the narthex. House blessings will be offered on weekdays during the months of January. If you did not have a chance to get your house blessed last year, now is your chance to sign up. House blessings will be scheduled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

✠ Liturgical calendars and donation envelopes for 2026 are available in the rear of the church.

✠ *Life and Liturgy* Adult Catechesis Series

- Next Session: "The Design of the Church and God's Design for Our Lives" on January 17.
 - 5pm Great Vespers
 - 6pm Potluck and Presentation
- Session Recordings
 - Parish website: [holytrinitysykesville.org/resources](https://www.holytrinitysykesville.org/resources)
 - YouTube: Search "Holy Trinity Byzantine Sykesville" and find the "Life and Liturgy Adult Enrichment Series 2025–2026" playlist
<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhMUIKohjH84WPLgf3eWj1stcEvZr7d26&si=CLkimL6ToHBx-XXV>
- As a reminder, these sessions will take place on a monthly basis until June 2026. This is a wonderful opportunity to gather for beautiful liturgical prayer outside of the Divine Liturgy and to learn more about why we do what we do at church and how it relates to the rest of our lives.

✠ Standing Reminder

After Pentecost 2026, we will be celebrating Great Vespers or Vigil only on Saturday evening (no longer with Divine Liturgy). Until then, any change in the Saturday schedule is only on those dates when a session of *Life and Liturgy* takes place.

✠ Youth Events in 2026

Keep your eyes and ears out for events coming up for our youth! Our fundraising efforts typically go towards sending our youth to these events. There are a few things in the works for 2026: first, the Byzanteen Rally in Cleveland (see the flyer below). An announcement will be made when registration opens up. Second, mark your calendars for April 11: the Archbishop has asked us to host a youth event for our entire Archeparchy. More details will come as they are available.

EARLY BIRD
(BEFORE APRIL 1)
&
SIBLING DISCOUNT
\$350

Registration Opens **JANUARY 2026**

BYZANTEEN RALLY
AGES 13 THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL

“TAKE COURAGE!
I HAVE OVERCOME
THE WORLD.”
JOHN 16:33

JULY 9-12 2026

FULL PRICE
\$380
AFTER APRIL 1

JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY
CLEVELAND OHIO

✠ Great Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord (January 6)

In the eastern tradition this feast celebrates Our Lord's baptism in the Jordan, not the adoration of the Magi. The general pattern of services is the same as at Christmas, with a special *paramony* (vigil day) and the reading of the Royal Hours on January 5, which is observed as a strict fast. Theophany is marked, however, by a distinctive ceremony, not held at Christmas—the Great Blessing of the Waters. This is performed twice, on January 5 after the liturgy, and on January 6 at the end of Matins or after the Liturgy. The first blessing is held in church; the second, if possible, in the open air beside a river or spring, or at the sea shore. In countries where winter is of extreme severity, holes are dug in the ice of the frozen rivers.



The culminating moment in this ceremony of blessing occurs when the officiating priest plunges or throws the Cross three times into the water, thus recalling the triple immersion of Christ in the Jordan, as well as the triple immersion which every Byzantine Catholic undergoes at his own baptismal initiation. Lest the phrase “Great Blessing of the Waters” be misunderstood, it should immediately be emphasized that the blessing is effected, not by the officiating priest and the people who are praying with him, but by Christ Himself, who is the true celebrant in this as in all the mysteries of the Church. It is Christ who has blessed the waters once for all at His baptism in the Jordan: the liturgical ceremony of blessing is simply an extension of Christ's original act. This is a point of primary importance.

The basis meaning of the feast as a whole is summed up in its [Western] title *Epiphany*, meaning “manifestation,” or more specifically, [by its Byzantine title] *Theophany*, “manifestation of God.” Christ’s baptism in the Jordan is a manifestation of God to the world, in the public place, because it forms the beginning of Our Lord’s public ministry; but secondly, and in a deeper sense, because at this baptism there was granted to the world a revelation of the Holy Trinity. All three Persons were made “manifest” together: the Father testified from on high to the divine Sonship of Jesus; the Son received his Father’s testimony; and the Spirit was seen in the form of a dove, descending from the Father and resting upon the Son. This threefold disclosure is the subject of the Troparion of the feast:

*At your baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, * worship of the Trinity was revealed. * For the father’s voice bore witness to you, calling you his beloved Son, * and the Spirit in the form of a dove ** confirmed the truth of these words. *** O Christ, our God, you appeared and enlightened the world, glory to you!*

To be continued in next week’s bulletin.

Kallistos Ware, *Festal Menaion*

MYSTERIES OF THE CHURCH

Parish Membership: To be a parish member, you must (1) be registered in the parish; (2) demonstrate faithful and consistent participation in the liturgical life of the parish on Sundays and holy days; and (3) regularly offer time, talent, or treasure to the parish according to your ability. Parish membership is required for participation in the sacraments below (but exceptions may be made with Fr. Nate's discretion). All are welcome to become members after attending the parish for one year.

Contact Fr. Nate to register.

Mysteries of Initiation (Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist): Contact Fr. Nate to schedule pre-baptism instruction. Sponsors must be practicing Catholics.

Mystery of Crowning: Contact Fr. Nate before setting a date or reserving your reception hall (at least six months before the desired wedding date). Pre-Cana program and three sessions with Fr. Nate are required. The ceremony will be celebrated according to the Byzantine Rite.

Mystery of Anointing and Visitation of the Sick: This mystery may be celebrated upon request for anyone navigating spiritual or physical challenges. If you or your loved one is homebound or hospitalized, notify Fr. Nate as soon as possible to ensure they can be visited.

Funerals: Families of the deceased or the funeral director must contact Fr. Nate before setting the time and date of funeral. The deceased need not be a member in good standing. Cremation is discouraged but permitted within certain limitations.

Liturgy Intentions can be requested through the offertory envelopes provided or in person from Fr. Nate or Dcn. Luke. A liturgy may be requested with or without the conventional \$20 stipend, which is considered a donation not a requirement.