

DIVINE LITURGIES FOR THIS WEEK**Sunday Before Theophany, January 5, 2025**

9:00 AM - Lit. For intentions of all parishioners
Blessing of water for the Feast of Theophany

11:30 AM - Lit. + Fr. Edward Semko
 r/by Elizabeth Wutkowski

Monday, January 6, 2025**Theophany of Our Lord**

8:00 AM - Lit. Birthday blessings for our parish Choir
 Director, Alla Korostil

6:30 PM - Liturgy for Parishioners
 Vigil of Theophany with the Great Blessing of Water

Tuesday, January 7, 2025

7:30 AM - Lit. for Sisters Servants of the Lord
 and the Virgin of Matara

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

7:30 AM - Lit. + Philip, Anna, Helen, John, Nicholas,
 Steve, Marie Romanko - Legate

Thursday, January 9, 2025

7:30 AM - Lit. + soldier Andriy r/by friend Ivan

Friday, January 10, 2025

8:45 AM - Lit. For God's Blessings and health of Olga,
 Vitaliy, Olena, Oleksandra

Saturday, January 11, 2025

8:00 AM - Lit. Special Intention

5:00 PM - Lit. + Deceased Members of Holy Name Society

Sunday After Theophany, January 12, 2025

Epistle - Eph 4:7-13; Gospel - Mk 4:12-17

9:00 AM - Lit. For God's Blessings on Our Parishioners

11:30 AM - Lit. + Stepan, Andriy, Sofia, Maria, Paraskevia

Sacraments of Initiation.

Congratulations and Best Wishes are extended to:

JOSEPH LEV GALLAGHER, son of Joseph and Olha
 upon receiving the Holy Mysteries of Christian Initiation:
 Baptism, Chrismation and Holy Eucharist.

Donation to Church

\$500.00 - Ukrainian National Federal Credit Union

Special Request

Do you have Christmas gifts that don't fit your style, that you already have, or that you don't need? St. Ann Society is currently planning their annual gift auction and can put to use any new, unused items. Please consider donating to the gift auction! See something on a great sale for 75 or 90% off - the gift auction can use it! St. Ann auction committee will gratefully accept donations of items or gift cards. Drop off at the rectory, at Bingo, or leave in the church hall labeled for St. Ann Society. Thank you!

Parish catechesis for January:

- January 10 - children 3-7 years old (up to and including 1st grade), Friday, 6:30-8:00 pm
- January 14 - women (Ukrainian), Tuesday, 6:30 pm
- January 17 - children 8-10 years old (grades 2, 3, 4), Friday, 6:30-8:30 pm
- January 18 - teenagers (13-18 years old), Saturday, 6:30-8:30 pm
- January 19 - youth, over 18 years old, Sunday at 11:15 a.m. after coffee
- January 24 - children 10-12 years old (grades 5, 6, 7), Friday, 6:30-8:30 pm
- January 25 - teenagers (13-18 years old), Saturday, 6:30-8:30 pm
- January 26 - youth, over 18 years old, Sunday at 11:15 a.m. after coffee
- January 28 - women (English), Tuesday, 6:30 pm

Blessings of Homes 2025

It is time to sign up for house blessings. If you would like to have your house blessed, please use the sign-up sheet in the church vestibule to indicate the date and the time for your home blessing or phone Fr. Ivan directly (202 368 2408). House blessings begin after Theophany, the Baptism of the Lord, starting on Tuesday, January January 7.

Feast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord.

God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by Saint John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove. From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine "those who sat in darkness," and "in the region of the shadow of death" (Mt.4:16), and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace. In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind.

The Vertep (Nativity Play).

Last Sunday, our parishioners witnessed a theatrical production of "Vertep" (a Nativity scene) following the 9:00 a.m. Liturgy. Many parishioners lent their theatrical, vocal and oratorical talents, and the Vertep organized by the religious sisters and our parish youth group was beautifully enhanced with the singing of Christmas carols by the choir "Boyan" under direction of Mrs. Alla Korostil. The stunning costumes and the wonderful dramatic acting captivated over 300 people, who witnessed a powerful and spiritually uplifting event in the church. The Vertep was enthusiastically organized by Sister Veronica, the Superior of the parish convent and Sisters Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matara SSVM with the help of Sisters Svitanku and Triytsi. After church, carolers traveled from house to house of our parishioners, spreading Christmas cheer through carols and performance of the Vertep, Ukraine's traditional nativity scene. All donations from the play on Sunday, \$912, and from the carolers house visits, will help to equip the hero soldiers amid the ongoing war in Ukraine. This Sunday 01/05, the Vertep Play will be presented to the parishioners of St. John the Baptist church in Newark, NJ and on Sunday 01/12 at Sr. Vladymyr parish in Elizabeth, NJ.

ASK FATHER:

- *If Jesus was a Jew, why are we Catholic and not Jewish?*

The term Jew is used in at least two senses in Scripture: to refer to those who are ethnically Jews and to those who are religiously Jews. Jesus was a Jew in both senses. In fact, he completed the Jewish religion by serving as the Messiah (Christ) whom the prophets had long foretold. The completed form of the Jewish religion is known as Christianity, and its adherents are Christians or "followers of the Christ."

Unfortunately, many people who were ethnically Jewish did not recognize Jesus' role as Messiah and so did not accept Christianity, the completed form of Judaism. Instead, they stayed with a partial, incomplete form of Judaism. Other Jews (the apostles and their followers) did recognize that Jesus was the Messiah and embraced the new, completed form of Judaism.

Shortly thereafter it was recognized that one could be a follower of Christ even if one did not ethnically join the Jewish people. Thus the apostles began to make many Gentile converts to the Christian faith. It is thus possible for a person to be a Jew religiously (because he has accepted Christianity, the completed form of the Jewish faith) but not be a Jew ethnically. This is the case with most Christians today.

Unfortunately, over the course of time some Christians broke away from the Church that Jesus founded, and so a name was needed to distinguish this Church from the ones that broke off from it. Because all the breakaways were particular, local groups, it was decided to call the Church Jesus founded the "universal" (Greek, kataholos = "according to the whole") Church, and thus the name Catholic was applied to it.

That is why Jesus was a Jew and we are Catholics: Jesus came to complete the Jewish religion by creating a Church that would serve as its fulfillment and be open to people of all races, not just ethnic Jews. As Catholics, we are those who have accepted the fulfillment of the Jewish faith by joining the Church that Jesus founded.