

Homily For The Sunday Before Theophany 2015

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Glory Be To Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Can you feel the excitement in the air? If you can't I know you can feel the chill in the air! Yes today is an awesome day as we gather together here for worship on the Eve of one of the most beautiful and holiest days of the year, the eve of Theophany or Epiphany if you will or as our Rusyn forbearers would say Yordani. Tonight at vigil when we bless the waters, we will here some of the most beautiful and powerful prayers that are filled with light and hope and joy and power. As the waters are blessed we will recall the beauty of God's creation and together we will once again have the opportunity to participate in the renewal of creation. As we enter into the service, you will hear me pray with great enthusiasm and excitement the following

Today the streams of Jordan are changed into healing by the presence of the Lord. Today all creation is watered by mystical streams. Today the failings of mankind are being washed away by the waters of Jordan. Today Paradise is opened for mortals and the Sun of justice shines down on us. Today the bitter water as once for Moses' people is changed to sweetness by the presence of the Lord. Today we have been delivered from the ancient grief, and saved as the new Israel. Today we have been redeemed from darkness and are filled with radiance by the light of the knowledge of God. Today the gloomy fog of the world is cleansed by the manifestation of our God. Today all creation shines with light from on high. Today error has been destroyed

and the coming of the Master makes for us a way of salvation. Today things on high keep festival with those below, and those below commune with those on high. Today the sacred and triumphant festal assembly of the Orthodox exults.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, I speak from personal experience and by knowledge of each of your life situations as your spiritual father that each of us here is struggling in many different ways. Life is difficult and challenging. There is much darkness, that overwhelms us from time to time. However, each of us knows as well when we look through the eyes of faith, that the Light of Christ burns brighter than the darkness. The light of Christ always shines, but sometimes our eyes become clouded like that of cataracts on the physical eyes. The Church our holy and blessed Mother knows this and offers us on this Holy Feast of Theophany to cast away the Darkness, through this great mystery of the Sanctification of Water. We have the opportunity to bless our selves with this newly sanctified and grace filled water. We will have our homes and places of business' blessed. This very church building will be blessed. Orthodox communities throughout the world will bless reservoirs and lakes and streams. What we do in our Churches will have an impact on the entire world, it will help rid it of the pollution of sin and evil and the filthiness of Satan's misdeeds.

Do you know how wonderful it is that all of you welcome your priest into your home to extend the blessing of the Lord in the Jordan to you? Many priests who are in larger parishes no longer can do this, and even in some smaller parishes, they do not care to have the priest come. By one week's time there will be over 40 lighthouses burning brightly with the light of holiness stretching south from Armonk new york to north in Newtown, west to Wallingford and East to Hinganum.

In This morning's Epistle, St Paul instructs Timothy to do the work of an evangelist to be holy to be pure... to make a difference. I say the same to you Come and see and participate in this feast day tonight and Tommorrow, Teenagers and young people come and serve with me and help sing at Liturgy, since you will be off from School for Martin Luther King day. Come prepared to receive Holy Communion and to drink of the Sanctified water. By doing so you and I will be lights to the world. You will be an evangelist one who preaches the word of God, not by words but by your life. Your friends and neighbors and all you come in contact with this week will know something is different, they will see in you, light and hope and the Grace of God. You may very save their lives, by reminding them that Christ is indeed in our Midst, and Is and ever shall be.

Do you feel the excitement now? I thought you would. Come celebrate the feast and chase a way the darkness of your troubles. Be filled with the water of the Holy Spirit, be renewed, refreshed and strengthened.

Christ is in our Midst! He is and ever shall be.