

Theophany: When Christ Who is Our Life Shall Appear

In the space of twelve days, we celebrate the whole of God’s manifestation to the world: Who He is and who He calls us to be. God revealed Himself in the flesh as a young babe—God and man—in Bethlehem: “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (*John 1:14*)

At the River Jordan, God now reveals Himself to the world as Father, Son and Holy Spirit: “This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” And the Spirit, in the form of a dove confirms the certainty of that word. (*cf. John 1:31*)

These are the two key doctrines of our Orthodox faith: Jesus is fully God and fully man. And God is triune: One God, three persons. Taken together, the Incarnation and the Trinity reveal Christ’s will for us, that we might be one with Him, as He and His Father have been for all eternity. St. Paul speaks of this, pointing to the Second Coming “when Christ Who is our Life shall appear, then shall [we] also appear with Him in glory” (*Col. 3:4*). This is the whole goal, the entire hope of our Christian life, to become like Christ, living in Him and He in us.

Blessing homes anew each Theophany, consecrates once more our whole existence in preparation for Christ’s second appearing, His coming again: worshipping the Holy Trinity “Who has saved us.”
— *Fr. John*

Memory Eternal, Effie!

If you knew Effie Zuck, you knew of her love of nature and her fondness for organic living. Those two elements were combined at her funeral. Her plain Amish coffin was covered with flowers, a floral tribute painted by her son Jimmy.

Effie had specifically asked for a wooden coffin which would allow her body to return back more quickly to the earth from which she and we all have been made. The traditionally shaped, pinch-toed coffin was locally and economically made in the settlement of Tylersville (near Rebersburg) by a man who fashions coffins for his local Amish community.

I’ve long told my family that this is the type of coffin which I want for my own burial. Effie’s funeral pioneered something which I hope might become a trend, even a tradition at Holy Trinity: simple coffins, made simply and locally. It really says much about our hope in the Resurrection.

Thank you, Effie! May your memory be eternal!
— Fr. John Reeves

Why Bless a Home?

by Fr. Sergei Sveshnikov

The Orthodox Church teaches that we do not have two separate lives—a secular one and a spiritual one—but one human life, and that all of it must be holy. We must not be Christians for just a few hours on Saturday and Sunday, spending the rest of our life godlessly that is to say, without God. The
(continued—see ON THE BLESSING OF HOMES)

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Schedules

	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Altar Servers*
January 1	Mat. Jennifer Cadman and Megan Leathers	Leslyn and Mark Radomsky	Team A
January 8	Anne Swisher and Corene Swisher	Melody Thompson and Mark Fedkin	Team B
January 15	Judy Fryncko and Holly Torbic	Megan Leathers and David Swisher	Team A
January 22	Carol Strauss and Jean Miranda	Beth Roberts and Ed Miranda	Team B
January 29	Melody Thompson and Laura Rush	Leslyn and Mark Radomsky	Team A
February 5	Elaine Files, Ginny Anthony, and Dee Patel	Melody Thompson and Mark Fedkin	Team B

* Team A: C. Doty, N. Fedkin, A. Miranda, N. Pelikan, S. Oleynik,, D. Stickle, and Jo. Stickle
Team B: M. Doty, P. Doty, K. Kucheryavyy, J. Miranda, B. Oleynik, Je. Stickle, and a trainee.

■ SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

A Time to Serve the Lord

by Dn. Mark Oleynik

One of the most favored verses of scripture for families and in particular for the head of the household is from the book of Joshua, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (24:15). Yes, isn’t this the hope and desire of every Christian family—to serve the Lord? But as we know saying or wanting something doesn’t make it so. As one of my football coaches liked to say, “If you talk the talk then you better walk the walk.” In other words, if you say you will do something then you should do what you say you can do.

When Joshua expressed his choice and his resolve, it was made publicly, to the whole nation. Perhaps not to the assembled thousands, but to their representatives. From his words let us gather some timely and practical suggestions as we enter into the New Year as a parish family.

First, Joshua’s was a high resolve. It was to the highest possible usefulness. It was "to serve the Lord." That does not mean mere occasional work. Nor does it mean only external activity. This understanding is not easy for adults and it is especially not an easy concept for children to comprehend as they tend to be absorbed in themselves. Hopefully, with continuous reinforcement, we and our children can learn to truly embrace the meaning of serving.

Second, Joshua’s resolve to serve God implied the adopting of God’s will—in all things—as the supreme law of his life. “Lord, what will You have me to do?” (Acts 9:6) is the proper attitude to have as we enter the New Year. Let us not limit ourselves or our children in doing the works of the Lord.

Next, such resolve as Joshua’s implies the making of love for God the dominant motive of our life.

Extra “Scoops”

STUDENTS ATTEND ANNUAL RETREAT
Last month nine of our middle school students (plus three chaperones) attended the St. Herman of Alaska retreat at the Antiochian Village in Ligonier. It was once again a wonderful weekend for the students to share in fellowship and learning with other Orthodox students throughout Western Pennsylvania.



HELP KEEP THE PARISH HALL QUIET
Please respect the students and teachers during Sunday School instructional time. Our Parish Hall is quite busy on Sunday and the noise level is easily elevated. If you don’t have a need to be downstairs, consider attending Matins during class time.

To serve him truly implies a willing devotion, loving constraint, a motive which will enlist all our powers at *all* times out of supreme regard to God.

Finally, Joshua’s resolve included his family, his household. Who among us to whom God has entrusted families make this same resolution for the New Year? We must resolve to truly find in our families ways to serve the Lord and to share the Good News—His truth, His Love, and our salvation in Him. ■

vessels, once sanctified and set aside for sacred use, can no longer be used for anything profane, in the same way a Christian washed in the baptismal waters, and his home, and all his works can no longer be the dwelling of sin and the works of Satan, but only and always the temple of the Holy

Spirit and the fulfillment of the will of our Heavenly Father. This is why the Church blesses everything that can be found in a Christian home; and if something is not worthy of being blessed, then there should not be a place for it in the home of a Christian. ■

2012 Holy Trinity House Blessing Schedule

Every January is set aside for home blessings for the entire parish. Several days have been reserved by ZIP Code to allow Fathers John and Basil to bless all of our homes expeditiously. Using sign-up sheets located in the Narthex, please indicate your preference (first, second, and third) for up to three of the following shifts listed below. This year

you can email your preferences to Dn. Alexander (dnalex@holytrinity-oca.org) or use the online form at holytrinity-oca.org. You will then receive a phone call to confirm the specific time of your appointment. Every effort will be made to accommodate your choices, personal availability, and special needs or requests. ■

LOCATION	AVAILABLE DATES AND TIMES	
State College South/East (16801, 16827, 16828, 16851)	Tuesday, January 10	7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
	Saturday, January 14	1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Wednesday, January 18	10 a.m. – 12 noon, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Thursday, January 19	10 a.m. – 12 noon, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
	Friday, January 20	10 a.m. – 12 noon, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Tuesday, January 24	10 a.m. – 12 noon, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
	Tuesday, January 31	2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Penn State Campus (16802)	Friday, January 20	7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
	Tuesday, January 24	7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
	Friday, February 3	2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
State College West (16803, 16870)	Tuesday, January 17	10 a.m. – 12 noon, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
	Thursday, January 19	3 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Saturday, January 21	1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Tuesday, January 24	2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Tuesday, January 31	10 a.m. – 12 noon, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
	Wednesday, February 1	2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Friday, February 3	10 a.m. – 12 noon, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Greater Bellefonte Area (16823, 16853)	Tuesday, January 17	3 p.m. – 5 p.m., 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
	Saturday, January 28	1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Wednesday, February 1	10 a.m. – 12 noon
Snyder County (178xx)	Sunday, January 15	12 noon – 4 p.m.
	Sunday, January 29	12 noon – 4 p.m.
Other Locations/Make-ups	Tuesday, January 31	7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
	Saturday, February 4	1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Wednesday, February 8	10 a.m. – 12 noon, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
	Friday, February 10	10 a.m. – 12 noon, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

On the Blessing of Homes *(continued from page 1)*

person who has united with Christ in the sacrament of baptism cannot be a part-time Christian, but must be faithful to Christ everywhere and at all times—in church, at work, at home, in relationships with other Christians, and in those with non-Christians. We must be faithful to Christ in the fullness of our life.

The Orthodox Church teaches us that a temple is not only a building in which we worship, but that we are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16); that the Body of Christ is not only that of which we partake at the Divine Liturgy, but that we are the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27). And just as the Gifts of the Eucharist are treated with reverence and kept in sanctified vessels in the altar, so should every Christian’s life be full of reverence and sanctity not only during a church service, but likewise outside the walls of the temple. A Christian’s home must become a small temple, a small Church.

The Church blesses the very foundation of a home in the same way that it blesses the foundation of a church; it blesses a new Christian home in the same way that it blesses a new temple; and yearly, after the blessing of a parish temple with the water of Theophany, the Church brings this holy water into the homes of the faithful. The prayers for the blessing of a temple are different from those for the blessing of a home, because the function of a home is different from that of a temple, but the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit is one. And just as in the baptism of our Lord all of creation is washed clean and sanctified, every year after the feast of the Baptism of the Lord (January 6), Christians sanctify themselves and their homes with the water of Theophany.

The Church teaches us to sanctify everything: dwellings, places of work, all our pursuits, and the fruits of our labor. And just as a temple and sacred

A Call to Read the Scriptures Daily

Do not let anyone say to me those vain words, worthy of heavy condemnation, “I cannot leave the courthouse, I administer the business of the city, I practice a craft, I have a wife, I am raising children, I am in charge of a household, I am a man of the world; reading the Scriptures is not for me, but for those who have been set apart, who have settled on the mountaintops, who keep this way of life continuously.”

Your wife provokes you, for example, your son grieves you, your [employee] angers you, your enemy plots against you, your friend envies you, your

neighbor curses you, your fellow [worker] trips you up, often a law suit threatens you, poverty troubles you, loss of your property gives you grief, prosperity puffs you up, misfortune depresses you, and many causes and compulsions to discouragement and grief, to conceit and desperation surround us on all sides, and a multitude of missiles falls from everywhere. Therefore, we have a continuous need for the full armor of the Scriptures.

We must thoroughly quench the darts of the devil and beat them off by continual reading of the divine Scriptures. For it is not possible for anyone to be saved without continually taking advantage of spiritual reading. Actually, we must

be content, if even with continual use of this therapy, we are barely able to be saved. But when we are struck every day, if we do not use any medical care, what hope do we have of salvation?

Reading the Scriptures is a great means of security against sinning. The ignorance of Scripture is a great cliff and a deep abyss; to know nothing of the divine laws is a great betrayal of salvation. This has given birth to heresies, this has introduced a corrupt way of life, this has put down the things above. For it is impossible for anyone to depart without benefit if he reads continually with attention.

— St. John Chrysostom

Holy Trinity to Provide Van to March for Life

This year, Holy Trinity will be providing its own transportation to the 25th Annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., on Monday, January 23. The trip is being coordinated by our parish’s campus and Sunday School ministries; and all parishioners are welcome and strongly encouraged to attend.

The annual rally is held on the National Mall beginning at noon followed by a march to the Supreme Court, ending at approximately 4 p.m. As in years past, Metropolitan JONAH will be one of the pre-march speakers and will offer a prayer service on behalf of abortion victims at its conclusion.

Holy Trinity’s van will depart from the church parking lot promptly at 7 a.m. and return at 10 p.m. Attendees should plan to wear warm clothing, pack a lunch, and bring money for the dinner stop on the way home. If you would like to join us, contact Dn. Alexander (dnalex@holytrinity-oca.org). RSVPs are appreciated.

Planned Parenthood Closes State College Clinic

STATE COLLEGE [via LifeNews.com] – Citing the economic downturn and a decrease in taxpayer funding, Planned Parenthood officials closed four abortion referral clinics in two states, giving pro-life advocates an early Christmas gift. The Planned Parenthood center at 137 S. Pugh St. [closed December 20] after operating for more than a decade. A press release from Planned Parenthood of Northeast and Mid-Penn indicated it came about because of the economic climate.

The center did not do abortions but referred students and others in the city for them. One employee at the center took another Planned Parenthood position while a second left the abortion business to find employment elsewhere.

“Real Break” Registration Open

Registration for each of the Orthodox Christian Fellowship’s (OCF) eight 2012 “Real Break” trips opened last month. Entering its 11th year, Real Break offers transformative, edifying trips led by priests. Students going during Penn State’s Spring Break (March 10-17) have the option of traveling to either Guatemala (\$1,300) or Romania (\$1,600). Participants must secure their own domestic airfare (*international* travel from Miami to Guatemala or from New York’s JFK to Romania is included in the trip cost), but it will be refunded if an individual’s fundraising covers it. A \$150 deposit is required up front; full payment is due by January 30. For more details, visit www.ocf.net.

Archdiocese to Sponsor Family Skating Party in Pittsburgh

For only \$13 per person, you can enjoy an afternoon of fun and fellowship at Pittsburgh’s Market Square on Saturday, January 28 beginning at 12:30 p.m. (includes admission to The Rink at PPG Place, skate rental, and lunch). Contact Elizabeth Goehring (412-369-7098 or elizabethgoehring@gmail.com) by January 17 if you are interested.

For the Record

BIRTH

➤ **Luke Theodore Stevens**, son of Shane and Maria Stevens, grandson of Ellen George, born November 8, at 8 lbs. 9.5 oz. and 20½ in. long.

DEATH

➤ **Eftychia “Effie” Amprazis Zuck**, 77, fell asleep in the Lord on December 5, while visiting family in Maryland. Funeral services were at Holy Trinity on December 10. **Memory eternal!**

APPOINTMENT

➤ **Dn. Alexander Cadman** was appointed as the Orthodox Church in America representative to the Orthodox Christian Fellowship Board of Directors by Metropolitan JONAH on December 1.

