

JANUARY 05 & 06
THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST
THE SERVICE FOR THE GREAT SANCTIFICATION OF THE WATER

IDIOMELA IN TONE EIGHT

The voice of the Lord upon the waters crieth, saying: Come ye all, and take the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of the fear of God, by the appearance of Christ.

Today the nature of water is sanctified, and the Jordan is cloven, and its waters shall be held from flowing, the Master being shown washed therein.

Thou didst come to the river as a man, O Christ King. Thou dost hasten, O good One, to receive baptism as a servant at the hands of the Forerunner, for the sake of our sins, O Lover of mankind.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Toward the voice in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Thou didst come taking the likeness of a servant, seeking baptism, O Thou Who knowest no sin. The waters saw Thee and were afraid, and the Forerunner trembled and cried, saying: How shall the Light seek to be lighted for the lamp? How shall the servant place His hand upon the Master? Wherefore, sanctify me and the waters, O Savior, Who takest away the sin of the world.

- *NOTE: Either during the reading of the Old Testament passages, or the intonation of the Augmented Great Litany by the Deacon, the Priest says QUIETLY the first prayer: “O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son...” on Page 5.*

THE OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

The First Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the prophecy of Isaiah. (35:1-10)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: These things doth the Lord say: the wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the lily. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, and fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.” Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not pass over it, and fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The Second Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the prophecy of Isaiah. (55:1-13)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: These things the Lord doth say: Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Hearken diligently to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness. Incline your ear, and come to Me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, My steadfast, sure love for David. Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. Behold, you shall call nations that you know not, and nations that knew you not shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for He has glorified you. Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake His way, and the unrighteous man His thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that He may have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it. For you shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign which shall not be cut off.

The Third Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the prophecy of Isaiah. (12:3-6)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: These things the Lord doth say: With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His Name; make known His deeds among the nations, proclaim that His Name is exalted. Sing praises to the Lord, for He has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

THE EPISTLE

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: The Lord is my Light and My salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the Protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (10:1-4)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Brethren, I would not have you to be ignorant, that all our ancestors were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual meat; and all drank from the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Priest: Peace be to thee that readest!

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

THE GOSPEL

Deacon: Wisdom! Attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (1:9-11)

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Deacon: Let us attend!

Priest: In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when He came up out of the water, immediately He saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove; and a voice came from Heaven: Thou art My beloved Son; with Thee I am well pleased.

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

THE AUGMENTED GREAT LITANY (FOR THE BLESSING)

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace from above, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, for the good estate of the Holy Churches of God, and for the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this Holy House, and for those who with faith, reverence, and fear of God, enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our father and Metropolitan N., (for our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.), for the venerable Priesthood, the Deaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For Metropolitan Paul, Archbishop John, and for their quick release from captivity and safe return, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: (In the United States) For the President of the United States, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

(In Canada) For Her Majesty, the Queen, for the Prime Minister of Canada, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city, and for every city and land, and for the faithful, who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For healthful seasons, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For travelers by sea, by land, and by air; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this water be sanctified by the power, act and descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That in this water may be planted the action of purification which belongeth to the Trinity transcendent in essence, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That it may be granted the grace of redemption and the blessing of the Jordan, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That we may be lighted by the light of knowledge and true worship, by the descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this water may become a gift for sanctification, redemption for sins, for the healing of soul and body, and for every meet benefit, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this water may be beneficial for eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That it may drive away all the cunning devices of our enemies, visible and invisible, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For those who drink therefrom and take home for the sanctification of their homes, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That it may be for those who drink and receive there from in faith a purification for their souls and bodies, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That we may be worthy to be filled with sanctification, as we receive of these waters, by the appearance of the Holy Spirit, in an invisible manner, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the Lord may answer the voice of our beseeching, even of us who are sinners, and have mercy upon us, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: (*QUIETLY*) O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son, Who remaineth in the bosom of the Father, true God, Fountain of life and immortality, Light of Light, O Thou Who comest into the world to lighten it, lighten our minds by Thy Holy Spirit and accept us as we offer Thee magnification and gratitude for Thy great and wonderful works which are from eternity, and for Thy dispensation of salvation in these last days, in which Thou didst put on our weak, poor creation, condescending, O King of all, even to become Man. And Thou didst consent also to be baptized at the hand of a servant, that by the sanctification of the nature of water, O sinless One, Thou mightest prepare for us a way for the renewal of birth by water and the Spirit, restoring to us our first freedom. Wherefore, as we celebrate the memory of this divine mystery, we beseech

Thee, O Lover of mankind, to sprinkle us, Thine unworthy servants, according to Thy divine promise, with purifying water, and the gift of Thy compassion. May the prayers of us sinners over this water be wholly acceptable to Thy goodness, that Thou mayest grant through it Thy blessing to us and to all Thy believing people, to the glory of Thy holy, adored Name.

(ALoud) For unto Thee, together with Thine unoriginate Father and Thine all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, belong all glory, honor and worship; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THE BLESSING OF THE WATER

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Trinity, transcendent in essence, in goodness and in Divinity, the Almighty Who watcheth over all, invisible and incomprehensible, O Creator of intelligent essences, natures endowed with speech, the Goodness of utter and unapproachable Light, that lighteth everyone that cometh into the world: lighten me also, Thine unworthy servant. Illuminate the eyes of my mind so that I may venture to praise Thy countless benevolences and Thy might. Let my prayer on behalf of this people be wholly acceptable, so that my sins may not prevent the descent here of Thy Holy Spirit; that I may be allowed to cry to Thee without condemnation, and say: We glorify Thee, O Master, Lover of mankind, the Almighty King before eternity. We glorify Thee, O Creator and Author of all. We glorify Thee, O only begotten Son, Who art without father on the side of Thy Mother, and without mother on the side of Thy Father; for in the preceding feast we have beheld Thee a babe, and in this present feast we behold Thee perfect man, O our perfect God, appearing from the Perfect; for today we have reached the time of the Feast, and the rank of saints gathers with us, and the angels celebrate with humans.

Today the grace of the Holy Spirit hath descended on the waters in the likeness of a dove. Today has shone the Sun that setteth not, and the world is lighted by the light of the Lord. Today the moon shineth with the world in its radiating beams. Today the shining stars adorn the universe with the splendor of their radiance. Today the clouds from heaven moisten mankind with showers of justice. Today the Uncreated One accepteth of His own will the laying on of hands by His own creation. Today the Prophet and Forerunner draweth nigh to the Master, and halteth in trembling when he witnesseth the condescension of God towards us. Today the waters of the Jordan are changed into healing by the presence of the Lord. Today the whole universe is watered by mystical streams. Today the sins of mankind are blotted out by the waters of the Jordan. Today hath paradise been opened to mankind, and the Sun of righteousness hath shone for us. Today the bitter water is changed at the hands of Moses to sweetness by the presence of the Lord. Today are we delivered from the ancient mourning, and like a new Israel we have been saved. Today we have escaped from darkness and, by the light of the knowledge of God, we have been illuminated. Today the darkness of the world vanisheth with the appearance of our God. Today the whole creation is lighted from on high. Today error is annulled, and the coming of the Lord prepares for us a way of salvation. Today the celestials celebrate with the terrestrials, and the terrestrials commune with the celestials. Today the assembly of noble and great-voiced Orthodoxy rejoiceth. Today the Lord comes to baptism to elevate mankind above. Today the

Unbowable bows to His servant to deliver us from slavery. Today we have bought the kingdom of heaven, for the kingdom of heaven has no end. Today the land and the sea have divided between them the joy of the world, and the world hath been filled with rejoicing.

The waters saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee; they were afraid. Jordan turned back when it beheld the fire of the Godhead coming down and descending upon it in the flesh. Jordan turned back at beholding the Holy Spirit descending in the likeness of a dove and hovering over Thee. Jordan turned back when it saw the Invisible visible, the Creator incarnate, and the Master in the likeness of a servant. Jordan turned back and the mountains shouted with joy at beholding God in the flesh. And the clouds gave voice, wondering at Him Who cometh, Who is Light of Light, true God of true God, drowning in the Jordan the death of sin, the thorn of error, and bond of Hades, granting the world the baptism of salvation. So also am I, Thine unworthy and sinful servant, as I proclaim Thy great wonders, encompassed by fear, crying reverently unto Thee, and saying:

- *The following is done THRICE.*

Priest: Great art Thou, O Lord, and wonderful are Thy works, and no word doeth justice to the praise of Thy wonders.

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

- *The Priest Continues:*

For by Thy will Thou didst bring out all things out of nonexistence into existence; and by Thy might Thou dost control creation, and by Thy providence Thou dost govern the world. Thou it is Who didst organize creation from four elements, and crowned the cycle of the year with four seasons. Before Thee tremble noetic powers; Thee the sun praiseth, the moon worshipping; the stars submit to Thee, the light obeyeth, the tempests tremble, the springs worship Thee. Thou didst spread out the heavens like a tent; Thou didst establish the earth upon the waters. Thou didst surround the sea with sand. Thou didst pour out the air for breathing. Thee do the angelic hosts serve; Thee the ranks of the archangels do worship, the many-eyed cherubim and the six-winged seraphim, as they stand in Thy presence and fly about Thee, hiding in fear from Thine unapproachable glory. While remaining a boundless God, beginningless and ineffable, Thou didst come to earth, taking the likeness of a servant, and became like man. By the feeling of Thy compassion, O Master, Thou couldst not bear to see mankind defeated by Satan, but didst come and save us; for to Thee do we attribute grace, and preach mercy, and conceal not benevolence. The sons of our nature Thou didst free; the virginal womb by Thy Nativity Thou didst sanctify. Therefore, all creation hath praised Thee in Thine appearance; for Thou our God didst appear on earth, and among men Thou didst walk. The courses of the Jordan Thou didst sanctify, having sent unto it from heaven Thine All-holy Spirit, and didst crush the heads of the dragons nestling therein.

- *The priest makes the sign of the Cross over the water THRICE, saying each time:*

Priest: Wherefore, Thou King and Lover of mankind, be present now by the descent of Thy Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water.

Choir: Amen.

- *The Priest Continues:*

And grant it the grace of redemption and the blessing of the Jordan. Make it a fount of incorruptibility, a gift for sanctification, a redemption for sins, a elixir for maladies, a destroyer of demons, unapproachable by the adverse powers and full of angelic powers; so that to all who drink there from and receive thereof it may be for the sanctification of their souls and bodies, for the healing of sufferings, for the sanctification of homes and for every befitting benefit. For Thou art our God Who with water and the Spirit renewed our nature made old by sin. Thou art our God Who didst drown sin in the water at the time of Noah. Thou art our God Who in the sea didst deliver the Hebrews from the bondage of Pharaoh at the hands of Moses. Thou art our God Who didst cleave the rock in the wilderness, so that the waters gushed out and the valleys overflowed, thus satisfying Thy thirsty people. Thou art our God Who with fire and water didst deliver Israel from the error of Baal at the hands of Elisha.

- *The following is done THRICE.*

Priest: Wherefore, O Master, sanctify this water by Thy Holy Spirit.

Choir: Amen.

- *The Priest Continues:*

Grant to all who touch it and who are anointed by it and who receive thereof sanctification, blessing, cleansing and health.

Save, O Lord, Thy servants, our faithful civil authorities. Keep them under Thy shadow in peace. Subdue under their feet every enemy and adversary. Grant to them the means of salvation and eternal life.

Be mindful, O Lord, of our father and Metropolitan N., (for our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.), all the priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, every priestly order, and all Thy people here present, together with all our brethren who are absent for a just cause. Have mercy on them and on us according to Thy loving-kindness, that Thine All-holy Name may be glorified by the elements, by angels and by humans, by visible and invisible creatures, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE PEACE

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

- *All bow their heads as the priest says the following prayer:*

Priest: Incline Thine ear, O Lord, and hear us. O Thou Who didst sanctify water when Thou didst consent to be baptized in the Jordan, bless us all, who by the bowing of our heads have signified our bondage; and make us worthy to be filled with Thy sanctification, by the receiving of this water and its sprinkling. Let it be to us, O Lord, for health of soul and body.

For Thou art the sanctification of our souls and bodies, and to Thee we ascribe glory, thanksgiving and worship, with the Father Who hath no beginning and Thine All-holy, good and Life-giving Spirit, the God and Author of life, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

- *The priest blesses the water in the form of a cross, and immerses the hand cross up and down, holding it straight, into the water.*

APOLYTIKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ our God, Who hath appeared and enlightened the world, glory to Thee. (THRICE)

- *As the priest sprinkles the Holy Water on all the people, the choir sings the following hymns.*

KONTAKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

*(**On this day Thou hast appeared**)*

Today Thou hast appeared to the universe, O Lord, and Thy light hath been shed upon us, who praise Thee with knowledge, saying, Thou hast come and appeared, O unapproachable Light.

IDIOMELON IN TONE SIX

Let us praise, O believers, the great dispensation of God that worketh for us; for He Who alone is pure and spotless, having become man because of our fall, purifieth us in the Jordan, sanctifying us and the waters and crushing the heads of the dragons in the water. Let us, therefore, O brethren, draw water with gladness, for those who draw it in faith shall be granted in an invisible manner the grace of the Spirit, by the presence of Christ God, the Savior of our souls.

- *The Sanctified Water may be distributed amongst the clergy and faithful after The Great Dismissal of the Divine Liturgy.*