

January 4, 2026  
Sunday before Theophany



*Veil of Protection*  
SAINT MARY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

*Christ is Baptized! In the Jordan! ~ Christos Krescajetsja! Vo Jordani!  
Христос Крестается! в Иордане!*

Propers: Resurrectional Tone 5: pg. 146, Sunday before Theophany, pp. 309 – 312

**St. Mary Divine Services for the Week:**

SUN., JAN. 4 ..... SUNDAY before THEOPHANY

10:45 A.M. .... THIRD HOUR

11:00 A.M. .... DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom

*Intention: For the People of St. George, St. Mary, and St. Nicholas Chapel*

MON., JAN. 5 ..... Vigil of Theophany, **Obligation Holy Day**

6:00 P.M. .... VESPERAL DIVINE LITURGY of St. Basil the Great

Great Blessing of Water

*Intention: Private*

SUN., JAN. 11 ..... SUNDAY after THEOPHANY

10:45 A.M. .... THIRD HOUR

11:00 A.M. .... DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom

*Intention: Spiritual & Temporal Welfare of Isabella Rubino, requested by Todd and Ann Wilson*

*Fr. Anthony will be away January 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>. Please call Fr. Joseph Raptosh our Protopresbyter, at St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church in Canonsburg at 724-745-7117 in case of a sacramental emergency.*

**Happy Birthday Greetings:**

None for the week

**Wedding Anniversaries:**

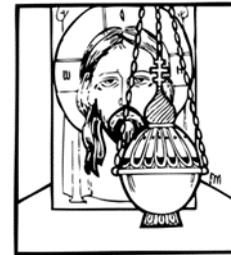
None for the week

**Please Pray for Our Sick and Shut-ins:**

**HOME:** Penny Furis, Ron Jones, William Killian, Joyce Rose, Eleanor Soltis

**Franciscan Manor** (71 Darlington Rd., Beaver Falls, PA 15010) - George Cirka

*Christ is Born! Glorify Him!*



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

January 4 - 10, 2026

*Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:*

**The Parishioners**

**Parish Offerings for December 28, 2025**

God bless your generosity! "Everyone must give according to whatever he has inwardly decided; not sadly, not grudgingly, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor 9:7)

Offertory .....	\$407.00
Loose Currency .....	\$30.00
Candles .....	\$21.00
Christmas .....	\$2540.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$2998.00</b>

Do not neglect good deeds and generosity, God is pleased by sacrifices of that kind."  
(Hebrews 13:16)

*In the Old Slavonic, the feast of Theophany is called "Bohojavlenije," equivalent to the Greek "Theophany," which means the manifestation of the Godhead.*

**Q. Why should I have my home blessed?**

A. As our souls, so also our homes become tainted by the sins of those living in them and, consequently, lose God’s protective power. Every year, then, at the Feast of Theophany, they should be blessed again to secure for them God’s blessings and protection. As we renew the insurance on our home every year, so we should renew our insurance of God’s protection and his blessing which is of greater importance and more effective. As we welcome our priest during the holy season of Theophany to bless our home, let us be mindful that he is bringing to us the ” blessing of Jordan,” and that unless God protect and bless our home, we “labor in vain.” (Ps. 127:1)



*In our Byzantine Rite, we have inherited many meaningful customs which make our liturgical worship inspiring, spiritually rich and close to the heart of our people. **The Holy Spirit reminds us “not to reject the traditions of our elders, which they have learned from their fathers”***

*(Sirach 8:9)*

**More about Holy Water**

St. Basil the Great affirms that the blessing of water came to us as a “mystical tradition” and that the water, through the prayer and blessing of the priest, receives a “quickenning power of the Holy Spirit.” St. Ambrose also taught that it was the Holy Spirit Who “consecrated the waters through the prayer of the minister.” Consequently, in the prayer for the blessing of the water we always find the epiklesis-the invocation of the Holy Spirit.

**Lamb and Redeemer**

John’s baptism was looking toward repentance. Its purpose was to bring hearers to the point of experiencing conviction for their offenses. John, however, did not want anyone to draw the conclusion that Jesus himself also came to the Jordan to repent of his sins. So he sets this point straight from the outset by calling him both Lamb and Redeemer of all the sin that is in the world. He who is able to take away the sins of the whole world was himself without sin.

*(St. John Chrysostom, Commentary on Matthew)*

**St. George Divine Services for the Week:**

**TUE., JAN. 6 ..... THEOPHANY **Obligation Holy Day****

**10:15 A.M. .... Chrismation of Christopher Winslow**

**11:00 A.M. .... DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom  
Great Blessing of water**

*Intention: + Connie Hersh, requested by Butch & Judy Dzumba*

**SUN., JAN. 11 ..... SUNDAY after THEOPHANY**

**8:15 A.M. .... FIRST HOUR**

**8:30 A.M. ....DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom**

*Intention: Private*

**St. Nicholas Chapel Divine Services for the Week:**

**TUE., JAN. 6 ..... THEOPHANY, **Obligation Holy Day****

**6:00 P.M. .... DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom**

*Intention: For the People of St. George, St. Mary, and St. Nicholas Chapel*

**SAT., JAN. 10 ..... SUNDAY after THEOPHANY**

**5:00 P.M. .... DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom**

*Intention: For the People of St. George, St. Mary, and St. Nicholas Chapel*

**Eve of Theophany**

In preparation for the Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord, the Eve of the Feast, which is Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, is a day of fasting/strict abstinence for all Byzantine Catholics.

**Seasonal Christian Greeting for the Theophany Feast**

The greeting that we salute each other with January 6 - 14 is **Christ is Baptized!** The response is **In the Jordan!** And in Slavonic, **Christos Krescajetsja!** With the response **Vo Jordani!** Let us glorify the Lord this festive season by greeting and responding with this traditional custom celebrating the Lord Jesus’ Baptism!



### A Note from Fr. Anthony

Dear Parishioners,

A reminder that Theophany, is a **Holy Day of Obligation**, meaning it is to be treated the same way as a Sunday. Its vigil, January 5th is a traditional day of strict fast.

I am pleased to announce that on Theophany, Christopher Winslow will be chrismated and received into the Catholic Church at St. George prior to the 11:00am Divine Liturgy. It is always a joy to welcome a new member of the Catholic Faith.

Please note we will have no weekday services this week Jan 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> or Vespers on Jan 10<sup>th</sup>. I am frankly exhausted from the last several weeks and need a little break before resuming our normal cycle of services. Next week we will be back to our "regular" schedule (more or less).

I will be beginning Theophany house blessings next week. If you have not received one yet, please expect a phone call from me to schedule.

Please join us for 6:00pm Great Vespers and 7:00pm Trivia at St. George on Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup>. We have some great prizes picked out for the winners!

In Christ,  
*Fr. Anthony*

### The Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord

The Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan River reveals wondrous salvific events:

- The Mystery of the Holy Trinity was revealed.
- Christ blessed the water, making it holy water for our renewal and regeneration.
- A model of Baptism was established for the followers of Jesus Christ, so that they could have their sins washed away and be freed from the tyranny of demons.
- The Forerunner, St. John the Baptist was blessed by Christ.

The word Theophany (meaning manifestation of God) comes from the apostolic passage, "God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory" (1 Timothy 3:16). Another name for the Feast is Epiphany (meaning manifestation from above), "the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). A third name is the "Feast of Lights", as Christ reveals Himself as the "Light of the World" (John 8:12).

*Christ is Baptized! In the Jordan!*

### *Sunday before Theophany*

John the Baptist's life was fueled by one burning passion -- to point others to Jesus Christ and to the coming of His kingdom. Who is John the Baptist and what is the significance of his message for our lives? Scripture tells us that John was filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15, 41) by Christ himself, whom Mary had just conceived by the Holy Spirit. When Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth John leapt in her womb as they were filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:41).



The fire of the Spirit dwelt in John and made him the forerunner of the coming Messiah. John was led by the Spirit into the wilderness prior to his ministry where he was tested and grew in the word of God. John's clothing was reminiscent of the prophet Elijah (see Kings 1:8). John broke the prophetic silence of the previous centuries when he began to speak the word of God to the people of Israel. His message was similar to the message of the Old Testament prophets who chided the people of God for their unfaithfulness and who tried to awaken true repentance in them. Among a people unconcerned with the things of God, it was his work to awaken their interest, unsettle them from their complacency, and arouse in them enough good will to recognize and receive Christ when He came.

Are you eager to hear Gods word and to be changed by it through the power of the Holy Spirit? John the Baptist was more than a prophet (Luke 7:26). John was the voice of the Consoler who is coming (John 1:23; Isaiah 40:1- 3). He completed the cycle of prophets begun by Elijah (Matthew 11:13-14). What the prophets had carefully searched for and angels longed to see, now came to completion as John made the way ready for the coming of the Messiah, God's Anointed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. With John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit begins the restoration to the human race of the divine likeness prefiguring what would be achieved with and in the Lord Jesus.

John's baptism was for repentance -- turning away from sin and taking on a new way of life according to God's word. Our baptism in Jesus Christ by water and the Spirit results in a new birth and entry into God's kingdom as his beloved sons and daughters (John 3:5). Jesus is ready to give us the fire of his Spirit that we may radiate the joy and truth of the gospel to a world in desperate need of God's light and truth. His word has power to change and transform our lives that we may be lights pointing others to Christ. Like John the Baptist, we too are called to give testimony to the light and truth of Jesus Christ. Do you point others to Christ in the way you live, work, and speak?

*Lord, let your light burn brightly in my heart that I may know the joy and freedom of your kingdom. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and empower me to witness the truth of your gospel and to point others to Jesus Christ.*

# SAINT MARY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

624 Park Rd.- Ambridge, PA 15003

**PRIEST: FATHER ANTHONY COSTANTINO**

**Deacon Thomas J. Klacik**

Fr. Anthony's Cell #: (878) 226-0878

OFFICE PHONE: 724-266-2030

CHURCH FAX: 724-266-1834

CHURCH HALL: 724-266-8642

PARISH WEBSITE: [www.stmaryambridge.org](http://www.stmaryambridge.org)



**Cantors: Alex Broussard, Tasney Broussard, Naedia McCann, Catherine Richthammer**

**E.C.F. coordinator: Jonathan Dohanich**

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation..... Wednesdays 4:45-5:45 P.M. & after Sunday Liturgy.

Holy Mysteries of Initiation.....Contact the church office.

Holy Mystery of Anointing .....Ask prior to surgery or serious illness.

Holy Mystery of Marriage .....Contact the church office eight months prior to wedding.

Religious Education Classes.....September through May.

Pirohi Sales ..... Every Friday

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*Wherefore, O Master, sanctify this water by your Holy Spirit!*

*Grant sanctification, blessing, cleansing, and health to all who touch it, are blessed with it, or who partake of it...*

# ADULT TRIVIA Night

**Friday, January 16, 2026**

**6:00 pm – Great Vespers for  
St. Anthony the Great**

**7:00 pm – Trivia in the Social Hall**

**Snacks & drinks  
provided!**

**21 and  
over**

**Prizes for the  
winners!**

**St. George Byzantine Catholic Church  
1001 Clinton St., Aliquippa**



## THEOPHANY-EPIPHANY COMMUNITY CONCERT

**SUNDAY JANUARY 11, 2026 3:00PM**

A program of seasonal choral & chant music in celebration of  
The Nativity & Baptism of Jesus Christ

**LOCATED AT**  
ST. GREGORY CHURCH  
2005 MOHAWK ROAD  
UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA  
15241

### FEATURING

- ST. GREGORY CHANT GROUP  
(ST. GREGORY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH, UPPER ST. CLAIR)
- SCHOLA CANTORUM OF ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL  
ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH (PITTSBURGH)
- OUR LADY OF VICTORY MARONITE CHURCH CHOIR  
(BEECHVIEW)

Hospitality reception follows in the church hall | Visit us at [stgregoryusc.org](http://stgregoryusc.org)