



Saint Nicholas Romanian Orthodox Church Shrewsbury Massachusetts
Biserica Ortodoxă Română Sfântul Nicolae Shrewsbury Massachusetts

34 Gold Street, Shrewsbury, MA, 01545

Parish Priest Vasile Aileni

www.stnicholaschurch.org || tell (508) 320 0645



WEEKLY BULLETIN



Sunday January 05, 2025



The Theophany of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ

Apolytikion of Holy Epiphany

Lord, when You were baptized in the Jordan, the veneration of the Trinity was revealed. For the voice of the Father gave witness to You, calling You Beloved, and the Spirit, in the guise of a dove, confirmed the certainty of His words. Glory to You, Christ our God, who appeared and enlightened the world.

Kontakion of Holy Epiphany

You appeared to the world today, and Your light, O Lord, has left its mark upon us. With fuller understanding, we sing to You: "You came, You were made manifest, the unapproachable light."



The Sunday before Theophany of Christ

Apostol: Epistle: 2 Timothy 4:5-8;

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8.

Tone 3 † Resurrection Gospel 6

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

KONTAKION OF THE FOREFEAST OF THEOPHANY

In the running waters of the Jordan River, on this day the Lord of all crieth to John: Be not afraid and hesitate not to baptize Me, for I am come to save Adam, the first-formed man.



This Week's News

VERY IMPORTANT - Sunday, January 5:

- **9:00 Matins;**
- **10:00 Divine Liturgy;**
- **11:30 The blessing of the waters service. No coffee hour! Strict fast day!**
Please bring the bottles that you used last year for the Holy Water or bring your own.
Also, please the teaching about "Preparing for a House Blessing" below.

THE ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP APPEAL is underway. Our church relies upon the offering of time, talents and treasure from each of us. We ask that you prayerfully consider an offering of time, talents and treasure to sustain our beloved church for the glory of God. Wishing you and your loved ones a blessed Holiday Season.

HOUSE BLESSINGS - The blessing of homes at Theophany will begin on January 5, 2025, and continue until all homes are blessed. As in the past, we will be setting times when we will be coming to bless your home. If there is a specific time that is more convenient for you, please call Fr. Vasile to arrange it 508.320.0645 or fr.vasileaileni@gmail.com

OUR PARISH GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING will be held on Sunday, January 26, 2025 following the Divine Liturgy. Your attendance is important, not only to be updated over the last year with various reports, the meeting also gives everyone an opportunity to present questions, concerns and any ideas you may have for our parish.

ORTHODOX FOOD CENTER - St. Nicholas is in need of volunteers this Saturday, January 4, 2025. If you are available to assist, I am sure they will appreciate the additional support. It's our duty to volunteer in the first Saturday of the month...



"At the moment when eternity was revealed to Silouan, an unusually high state of spirit was imparted to him. He began to pray for the whole of Adam as for himself. We are all small cells of the great body of all humanity. Through us passes the cosmic life, even the life above the cosmos, the divine life. And we are obliged to prepare ourselves to understand this, for then we will become, in part, similar to Adam before the fall, and we will begin to carry within ourselves the whole of humanity, the whole of Adam, as something unified, created by God."

Father Sophrony Sakharov
1896 - 1993

Happy Birthday! God Grant You Many More Years!

Jan 14 - Zhaka, Natasha
Jan 16 - Elizabeth Anderson
Jan 18 - Dorogi, Irena
Jan 21 - Ronald Anderson
Jan 23 - Althea Shaheen
Jan 25 - Fr. Vasile Aileni
Jan 25 - Apostola, Sophia Amyra
Jan 28 - Clem, Michael Walter
Jan 30 - Zaruha, Cristian

Let us Pray for the good health of:

Andrei, Mark, Irene - Ekaterina, Psa Aza,
Betty Ekaterina, Psa Ileana, Luiza, Andrew,
Margareta, Marius-Nicolae, Loredana-Anca,
Teodora, Joanne, Deborah-Ann, Rebeka, Fr.
George, Fr. Stefan and his son Andrei for their
helath and for their salvation!
Amin!

Dates to remember:

January 6 - The Theophany of our Lord,
God, and Savior Jesus Christ
January 7 - Synaxis of John the Holy
Glorious Prophet, Baptist, &
Forerunner
January 30 - Synaxis of The Three
Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory
the Theologian, & John Chrysostom

A Prayer of Fr. Laurence

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD! O Lord, our God, light of all the world: The brilliance of this feast of lights dazzles the eyes of our souls. For today you enlighten us with the intimate knowledge that you are three in one. Today, you enlighten us by the appearance and manifestation of the Lord Jesus in the Jordan. Today, you enlighten us with the understanding that your salvation is for all peoples without exception. Therefore, by the never-fading radiance of your light, rescue us from the power of darkness and make a place for us in your kingdom. Fill us with your glory and reveal the splendor of your presence to every nation, that we may all find forgiveness of our sins and true freedom. For you are indeed our God, the Father of lights, and we give glory to you, your co-eternal Son, and your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen!



LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Time	Service Type
Jan-25			
Sunday	5-Jan	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	The Sunday before Theophany of Christ Great Blessing of Water; No coffee hour! Strict fast day!
Monday	6-Jan	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	(†) The Theophany of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ Great Blessing of Water at end of Liturgy
Tuesday	7-Jan	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	(†) Synaxis of John the Holy Glorious Prophet, Baptist, & Forerunner Sunday after Holy Theophany
Sunday	12-Jan	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	The Sunday after Theophany of Christ
Sunday	19-Jan	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	Sunday 29 after Pentecost (Jesus Heals the 10 Lepers)
Sunday	26-Jan	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	The Thirty-Second Sunday after Pentecost - The Conversion of Zaccheus
Thursday	30-Jan	9:30 AM	Akatist
		10:00 AM	Synaxis of The Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, & John Chrysostom

Preparing for a House Blessing

The annual blessing of homes at the Feast of the Theophany brings the presence of Jesus Christ into our lives and our homes tangibly through blessed water. By the prayers of the Church and the descent of the Holy Spirit this water is blessed with the same divine grace with which the waters of the Jordan were sanctified when our Lord condescended to be baptized therein. In having our homes blessed, we ask God to drive away every evil influence from our home and our hearts, and to renew the power of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. The Church Fathers speak of the home as a “small church” or an icon of the Church. As the Church is holy, so are we to pursue the same life of grace in our family life, that our homes may reflect the holiness of God’s Church. In preparing for a house blessing, please keep the following things in mind:

Create a Quiet and Holy Environment

Please encourage as many members of the family as possible to be present for the blessing. Turn off the television and radio before the priest arrives. Take the phone off the hook and turn off the ringer on your cell phone(s).

Clear a Pathway

Move objects and furniture to allow a clear path for the priest to walk as he moves throughout the house, sprinkling of the holy water. Keep pets under control. If it is in the evening, turn on the lights throughout the house, and make sure all doors - including closets - are open or ajar.

Food and Drink

It is not necessary to provide food and drink for the priest at a house blessing. The priest may be blessing many homes, so if you would like him to stay for a brief visit with the family either after the house blessing or at another time, it is best to arrange this with the priest in advance of his visit.

Prepare the Icon Table

Place these items on a small table at the icon corner or other convenient area (ideally near the eastern wall of the main room of the house) covered by a clean, white cloth:

- ❖ an icon of Christ with a candle in front of it
- ❖ a censer (if you own one), with incense and lighted charcoal
- ❖ a small, clean bowl (that will not be used for any other purpose than holding holy water) and blessed water
- ❖ sprigs of basil or evergreen tied with a ribbon – **Note: You are welcome to do so, but otherwise Father will use his own sprinkler)**

The Service of Blessing the Home

Assemble members of the family in the home around the icon corner, or in front of the icon prepared for the occasion. The brief service begins with “Blessed is our God...” followed by the Trisagion Prayers *which all may recite together*. The prayers are followed by the singing *once* of the Troparion (Hymn) for Theophany (“When Thou, O Lord, was baptized...”). There is a brief prayer for the blessing of the home said by the priest. Then the priest begins the blessing of each room of the house beginning with the icon corner as all sing the Troparion until the entire house has been blessed.

It is customary for one person (or all the young children!) to lead the priest from room to room with a lit candle. Sometimes the priest gives the hand cross to someone to carry. All but the candle-bearer(s) follow behind the priest. The candle-bearer leads the priest to each room and may lead him around the room (for larger rooms) or may simply stop at the entry as the priest enters and sprinkles the holy water on the four walls. There is no need to enter smaller rooms and the priest will quickly sprinkle bathrooms and closets from the doorway. The priest may bless the garage and cars as well (there does exist a separate service for the sanctification of vehicles which the priest can do at any time upon request). Upstairs and downstairs levels should be blessed as well (of course elderly and others who may have difficulty need not follow the priest up and down stairs).

When the whole house has been blessed the candle-bearer will lead the priest back to the icon corner where the service concludes with the dismissal and singing of “Many Years.” It is also customary in some places to provide a list of living and departed for the priest to commemorate. The blessing is concluded as the priest has everyone venerate the holy cross and sprinkles the bowed heads of those present with some of the blessed water.

Personal Use of Holy Water

Water blessed by the Church has the power to sanctify and heal. The waters of the Great Blessing of Theophany are particularly grace-filled and sacramental (note the prayers of blessing on Theophany are almost identical with those for the Sacrament of Baptism). These waters should be used throughout the year for blessing, healing, and sanctification. Technically the waters of the Great Blessing are to be received before ingesting any food or drink (except in the case of those who are ill). There is also a service of *Lesser Blessing* of waters that may be served any time during the year. In some Orthodox countries it is served in churches on the first day of each month.

Keep blessed water on your home altar for future use. You are encouraged to drink the blessed water of Theophany daily with your morning prayers, or otherwise drink of it and anoint yourself with it often. It can also be used in times of need, before starting a new venture or trip, for blessing yourself or others, or when someone is ill.

Orthodox FOOD CENTER

A collaboration of the Worcester area Orthodox churches; its mission is to distribute food to low income and homeless individuals residing in the Worcester area.

OPEN SATURDAYS 10AM-12PM
ST. SPYRIDON GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL



102 Russell St. Worcester, MA 01609

CHURCH & FACILITY NEEDS

The list below contains **ongoing needs for the Church as well as special needs that may arise**. Any and every offering is most appreciated. If you have any questions, or would like to donate for or towards one of these items, please speak with [Fr. Vasile](#), any member of the Parish Council, or use the [online giving](#) site.

\$25 - Box of Three Kings Charcoal (100 pieces)
\$100 - Beeswax Candles for the Holy Altar

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
34 Gold St | Shrewsbury, MA 01545-6238
508-845-0088 | e-mail: info@StNicholasChurch.org
www.StNicholasChurch.org

Sunday Services: Matins at 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am