

The Feast of Epiphany – January 6th

This Feast Day is one of the greatest days of the Christian year. It ranks in importance with Christmas and Easter. In many parts of the world, this Feast Day is celebrated with more solemnity than Christmas itself. In English, we call this Feast Day "Epiphany" which means "appearance." On this day the Orthodox Church celebrates the Baptism of Jesus Christ in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist (he is called "the Baptist" because he baptized Christ.) Epiphany Day is also called "Theophany" which means "God shows himself to us." On this day, the Holy Trinity was first revealed for all of humanity to know and believe. When Jesus



Christ was baptized in the River Jordan, a voice was heard from God in the heavens above saying, "This is my Son in whom I am well pleased." A white dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus Christ the Son of God. So we have the Holy Trinity being shown to us on that day 2000 years ago. This is why we call this day the "day of illumination (light) and manifestation (appearance.)" The Holy Trinity made its appearance and we have been illuminated by this wonderful truth and blessing. Since the waters of the Jordan were blessed by the presence of Jesus Christ, it is a source of Divine Grace and blessing, and we bless ourselves and our homes with the waters of the "Sanctification Service" which is held every January 5th and 6th.

*"O Lord when you were baptized in the Jordan,
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.
And the voice of the Father bore witness to You, calling You His Beloved Son.
And the Spirit in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of that word.
O Christ our God, Who did appear and illumine the world, Glory to You."*

- Apolytikion of Baptism of our Lord

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When Jesus was baptized by Saint John the Baptist in the River Jordan, God the Father spoke saying, "This is my Son. I am pleased with Him." At the same time the Holy Spirit was seen as a white dove that landed on Jesus. This day is called Epiphany Day or Theophany, which means "God has been shown to us." Because Jesus blessed the waters when he was baptized in the River Jordan, water is blessed in our Church Services for Epiphany for us to drink and to bless our homes.