



## St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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### Afterfeast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ / St. Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa January 10, 2021

#### **Troparion – Tone 6**

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, // glory to Thee.

#### **Troparion – Tone 1**

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, and called Thee His beloved Son; and the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truthfulness of His word. O Christ our God, Who hast revealed Thyself // and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

#### **Troparion – Tone 4**

In truth thou wast revealed to thy flock as a rule of faith, an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence; thy humility exalted thee; and thy poverty enriched thee. O Hierarch Father Gregory, entreat Christ our God // that our souls may be saved!

#### **Kontakion – Tone 6**

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

#### **Kontakion – Tone 1**

Thou didst keep watch with the eyes of thy soul, O holy bishop, revealing thyself as a watchful pastor for the world. With the staff of thy wisdom and thy fervent intercession, thou didst drive away all heretics like wolves, // and didst preserve thy flock free from harm, O most wise Gregory.

#### **Kontakion – Tone 4**

Today Thou hast shone forth to the world, O Lord, and the light of Thy countenance has been marked on us. Knowing Thee, we sing Thy praises: “Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, // O unapproachable Light.”

#### **Prokeimenon – Tone 1**

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee!

*V. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just!*

## **Afterfeast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**

The fourth day of the Afterfeast of Theophany falls on January 10. Some of the hymns of this period compare the streams of the Jordan to the life-giving waters of Baptism.

### **St. Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa**

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, was a younger brother of Saint Basil the Great (January 1). His birth and upbringing came at a time when the Arian disputes were at their height. Having received an excellent education, he was at one time a teacher of rhetoric. In the year 372, he was consecrated by Saint Basil the Great as bishop of the city of Nyssa in Cappadocia. Saint Gregory was an ardent advocate for Orthodoxy, and he fought against the Arian heresy with his brother Saint Basil. Gregory was persecuted by the Arians, by whom he was falsely accused of improper use of church property, and thereby deprived of his See and sent to Ancyra. In the following year Saint Gregory was again deposed in absentia by a council of Arian bishops, but he continued to encourage his flock in Orthodoxy, wandering about from place to place. After the death of the emperor Valens (378), Saint Gregory was restored to his cathedra and was joyously received by his flock. His brother Saint Basil the Great died in 379.

Only with difficulty did Saint Gregory survive the loss of his brother and guide. He delivered a funeral oration for him, and completed Saint Basil's study of the six days of Creation, the Hexaemeron. That same year Saint Gregory participated in the Council of Antioch against heretics who refused to recognize the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God. Others at the opposite extreme, who worshipped the Mother of God as being God Herself, were also denounced by the Council. He visited the churches of Arabia and Palestine, which were infected with the Arian heresy, to assert the Orthodox teaching about the Most Holy Theotokos. On his return journey Saint Gregory visited Jerusalem and the Holy Places.

In the year 381 Saint Gregory was one of the chief figures of the Second Ecumenical Council, convened at Constantinople against the heresy of Macedonius, who incorrectly taught about the Holy Spirit. At this Council, on the initiative of Saint Gregory, the Nicene Symbol of Faith (the Creed) was completed. Together with the other bishops Saint Gregory affirmed Saint Gregory the Theologian as Archpastor of Constantinople. In the year 383, Saint Gregory of Nyssa participated in a Council at Constantinople, where he preached a sermon on the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In 386, he was again at Constantinople, and he was asked to speak the funeral oration in memory of the empress Placilla. Again in 394 Saint Gregory was present in Constantinople at a local Council, convened to resolve church matters in Arabia.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa was a fiery defender of Orthodox dogmas and a zealous teacher of his flock, a kind and compassionate father to his spiritual children, and their intercessor before the courts. He was distinguished by his magnanimity, patience and love of peace. Having reached old age, Saint Gregory of Nyssa died soon after the Council of Constantinople. Together with his great contemporaries, Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, Saint Gregory of Nyssa had a significant influence on the Church life of his time. His sister, Saint Macrina, wrote to him: "You are renowned both in the cities, and gatherings of people, and throughout entire districts. Churches ask you for help." Saint Gregory is known in history as one of the most profound Christian thinkers of the fourth century. Endowed with philosophical talent, he saw philosophy as a means for a deeper penetration into the authentic meaning of divine revelation. Saint Gregory left behind many remarkable works of dogmatic character, as well as sermons and discourses. He has been called "the Father of Fathers."

### **Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13**

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

### **Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17**

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

## Service Schedule for the week of January 10 – services will be streamed live

Today – MASKS NOT REQUIRED 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Saturday January 16 – MASKS NOT REQUIRED 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy and 5:00 PM Vespers

Sunday January 17 – MASKS REQUIRED 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

## Weekly Giving

December 26 & 27 – 52 adults, 17 youth, \$2,338

January 3 – 34 adults, 10 youth, \$1,508

## Parish Announcements

***Masks will be required at all Holy Day services. Masks may be worn during any service, even those indicating No Mask.***

**Upcoming service schedule (Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM):**

Saturday January 9 – Masks required

Sunday January 10 – Masks not required

Saturday January 16 – Masks not required

Sunday January 17 – Masks required

Saturday January 23 – Masks required

Sunday January 24 – Masks not required

Saturday January 30 – Masks not required

Sunday January 31 – Masks required

Saturday February 6 – Masks required

Sunday February 7 – Masks not required

Saturday February 13 – Masks not required

Sunday February 14 – Masks required

There will be a Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday January 12 at 7:00 PM in Daria Hall.

St Vladimir FOCA Club (formerly called the Senior R Club) will be selling chicken parmigiana sandwiches on Sunday February 7 after Divine Liturgy. All sandwiches will be packaged to go, and may be picked up in Daria Hall. The cost is \$7/sandwich. A sign-up sheet is on the table in the back of the church across from the candle desk. Last day to place an order will be Sunday January 31. Thank you for your support!

In order to properly social distance, we ask that parishioners fill the front pews as well as all pews in the church before congregating in the back. Individuals should attempt to sit in a pew (one at each end) with another individual in order to free up pews for families. The choir loft is also available for a family. We must be vigilant in trying to prevent the spread of germs, so please do not attend church services if you have a fever, sniffles, cough, cold, sore throat, loss of smell or taste, etc. If individuals who attended church services are diagnosed with Covid, the church may need to shut down for a period of time. Father Volodymyr live streams Saturday Vespers and Sunday Divine Liturgy every weekend, so if you are home you may still participate in the services on line. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation!

Father Volodymyr has received the following instructions from the Diocese regarding Theophany:

~ **Distribution of the newly-blessed Holy Water:** After Divine Liturgy today, one person wearing a mask and gloves will ladle the Holy Water into containers brought by the faithful, who will stand in line and maintain social distancing as they approach. Please be patient during this process!

~ **Home Blessings:** In light of the overall continuing increases in COVID cases and COVID deaths both in New York and in New Jersey, home blessings will be postponed until after Pascha and begin on a date after Pascha, which has yet to be determined. This measure will prevent Father Volodymyr from risking unneeded exposure to the Coronavirus, it will alleviate any fears parishioners might have regarding home blessings during the Pandemic, and it will enable the eventual home blessings to become an opportunity for pastoral conversations with the families in our parish.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

In order to prevent the spread of germs, the Communion prosphora and prosphora after Divine Liturgy will be handed out by an Altar server. We ask that you receive the prosphora in your hand and not reach for the prosphora on the tray or bowl.

The church has been set up for appropriate social distance seating. However, if you are feeling ill, please stay home. Also, those age 65 and over are still considered high risk and should make careful decisions about attending services. Father Volodymyr will continue to stream live Vespers and Sunday Divine Liturgy.

During the pandemic we are grateful that our parishioners have continued to contribute every week so the church can remain operational. Please continue to pray for everyone's health and well-being!