

Holy Cross Day-Eve of Theophany

Mark 1:1-18

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him. Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. (KJV)

God's Holy Church has arrived at the Eve of the Great Feast of Theophany. The Lord Jesus Christ's Baptism in the Jordan is of central importance. John the Baptist was chosen from all men to Baptize the Lord Jesus Christ.

St. John the Baptist preached repentance. The Lord Jesus Christ preached repentance. Individuals do well to heed the importance of repentance. Repentance offers new beginnings in life.

Each person commits sins and errors in life. Each person benefits from opportunities to begin life anew. Individuals have personal relationships needing improvement.

Repentance fosters and encourages the renewal of relationships. The relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important relationship. Repentance involves putting sin behind and restoring wholeness in the relationship with Christ.

Purity in life is related to and integral with wholeness in Christ. When a person lives a pure life, he or she has a healthy relationship with Jesus Christ. Purity in life leads to healthy marital relationships, personal and work relationships.

Persons living pure lives strengthen the local parish and local community. Constant repentance is necessary to attain purity and unity with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ's mercy and forgiveness are needed in the journey to purity.

Filling the heart, mind and soul with the nourishment of the Gospel are required to attain purity and unity with Jesus Christ. Believers begin the journey to God's Kingdom at Holy Baptism. Believers are expected to remain pure after Baptism.

Sin enters life either intentionally or unintentionally. Personal sin needs constantly addressed if the person is to thrive in life. Addressing sin is not to be neglected. The Church provides Confession for believers to put sin behind them.

Thank God for the opportunity to repent. Thank Jesus for the love expressed on the Cross enabling the forgiveness of sins. Repenting is the way to honor Jesus' Crucifixion and to express love and gratitude to Jesus Christ.

Repenting places value on Jesus' suffering on the Cross. Jesus wants individuals to reject sin. Jesus wants individuals to embrace His teachings and to adhere to the path to the Kingdom.

God's Holy Church opens the pathway to the Kingdom. The Church provides the teachings and nourishment for the journey to the Kingdom. God is present in the Church for believers to experience and grow in life and toward life eternal.

The arrival of the Great Feast of Theophany is a time of great joy in the Church. Creation is renewed with Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan. The world is transformed when Jesus is Baptized. The Holy Trinity is manifested at Jesus' Baptism.

Jesus Christ's birth and circumcision are fresh in attentive believers' minds. Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan is a learning experience each year. Growth in Jesus Christ is to occur throughout life.

Repentance fosters growth in Christ. Joy in Jesus Christ is immeasurable and unending. The life in Christ extends beyond the earthly to the eternal. Jesus removed the barrier of death when He rose from the Tomb.

Learning in Christ continues in life for believers choosing to repent. Sin leads to death of the self. Repentance brings new life in Jesus Christ. God's Holy Church is where to repent and begin anew in Christ.

Confession and receiving the Precious Body and Blood of Christ brings renewal and unity with Christ. Communion is union with Christ and a new beginning in life. Thank God for new beginnings.

The world is renewed with Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan. Believers are renewed with Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan. Cherish the Great Feast of Theophany, Think carefully about Jesus' Baptism and the message of repentance.

Cherish the joy of renewal in Christ. Honor Jesus' Baptism. Live in ways pleasing to Christ. Seek healthy relationships with each other in the home, the parish and the community.

Eve of Theophany. Holy Cross Day. Holy Theopemptus and Theonas. Venerable Syncletica. January 5/18,2026. Father Rodney Torbic